

**THE  
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

**OFFICIAL REPORT**

**[VOLUME 7]**

**PROCEEDINGS 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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**181<sup>st</sup> Sitting**

**2 p.m.**

**Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> March, 1979**

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**MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (63)**

**Speaker**

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

**Members of the Government – People’s National Congress (46)**

**Prime Minister (1)**

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

**Deputy Prime Minister (1)**

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

**(Absent- on leave)**

**Senior Ministers (12)**

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

Cde. S.S. Naraine, A.A.,  
Minister of Works and Transport

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

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

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

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

\*Cde. F.E. Hope,  
Minister of Finance

\*Cde. G.B. Kennard, C.C.H.,  
Minister of Agriculture

\*Cde. M. Shahabuddeen, C.C.H., **(Absent)**  
Attorney General and Minister of Justice

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

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

\*Cde. J.A. Tyndall, A.A., **(Absent- on leave)**  
Minister of Trade and Consumer Protection

### **Ministers (2)**

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

Cde. C.A. Nascimento **(Absent- on leave)**  
Minister, Office of the Prime Minister

### **Ministers of State (10)**

Cde. F.U.A. Carmichael,  
Minister of State – Regional (Rupununi)

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

### **\*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  
(Esseguibo Coast/ West Demerara)

Cde. J.R. Thomas  
Minister of State, Office of the  
Prime Minister

Cde. R.H.O. Corbin,  
Minister of State, Ministry of  
National Development

Cde. S. Prashad,  
Minister of State – Regional  
(East Demerara/ West Coast Berbice)

Cde. R.C. Van Sluytman,  
Minister of State,  
Ministry of Agriculture

Cde. L.A. Durant,  
Minister of State – Regional  
(North West)

\*Cde. F.U.A. Campbell,  
Minister of State for Information,  
Ministry of National Development

### **Parliamentary Secretaries (5)**

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. M. Corrica,  
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education,  
Social Development and Culture

### **\*Non - elected Ministers**

Cde. E.M. Bynoe,  
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Trade  
and Consumer Protection

Cde. C.E. Wrights, J.P.,  
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Economic  
Development and Co-operatives

### **Other Members (15)**

Cde. W.G. Carrington, C.C.H

Cde. S.M. Field-Ridley

**(Absent – on leave)**

Cde. E.H.A Fowler

Cde. J. Gill

Cde. W. Hussain

Cde. K.M.E Jones

Cde. J.G.Ramson

Cde. P.A. Rayman

Cde. A. Salim

**(Absent)**

Cde. E.M. Stoby, J.P

Cde. S.H. Sukhu, M.S.

Cde. C.A. Sukul, J.P.

Cde. H.A. Taylor

Cde. L.E. Willems

Cde. M. Zaheeruddeen

### **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. I. Basir  
Cde. C. C. Belgrave  
Cde. R. Ally  
Cde. Dalchand, J.P  
Cde. Dindayal  
Cde. H. Nokta  
Cde. P. Sukhai

**(Absent)**

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

Mr. M.F. Singh, J.P  
Mr. M.A. Abraham

**(Absent- on leave)**

**OFFICERS**

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

Acting Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly – A. Knight

**PRAYERS****ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER****Leave to Members**

**The Speaker:** Leave has been granted to Dr. Reid, to Cde. Jack and to the hon. Member Mr. Feilden Singh for today's Sitting.

**PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS****Publication in the Mirror Newspaper of 20<sup>th</sup> March, 1979**

**The Minister of Education, Social Development and Culture** (Cde. Teekah): Cde. Speaker, I rise to draw to your attention and to the attention of the House certain gross inaccuracies in a report about my speech made to the National Assembly on Friday, March 16, 1979. The report appears in the evening edition of the **Mirror** yesterday, Tuesday, March 20, 1979, under the caption "Education system under heavy fire". In that report it is stated:

"Minister Teekah defended the request to parents for voluntary contributions for the up-keep of schools adding that even in Cuba parents have to pay for the education of their children".

I wish to emphatically state that at no time did I refer to Mao-Tse-Tung's literature in our school, nor did I defend the use of such literature. I do not criticise or defend the use of Mao-Tse-Tung's literature in our schools. Indeed, I made reference to Mao-Tse-Tung in my speech. Having said that in Cuba parents have to pay for the education of their children is a deliberate distortion of exactly what I said. What I did say is that they have a high involvement ratio and even though education is free at nursery level, parents earning between 90 and 250 pesos have to make a contribution of 6 per cent of their earnings and parents earning above that have to make a contribution of 10 per cent of nursery education. It is essential that I made this clarification, for anyone reading the **Mirror** of that date could very well get the impression, having not listened to my address, that I had said that education as such was being paid for in Cuba and, also, that this

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Government had a policy of permitting Mao-Tse-Tung's literature which I defended when, in fact, I made absolutely no reference to the advantages or disadvantages, the perfections and imperfections of such literature. In the circumstances, I therefore solicit whatever remedy your esteemed office might offer.

**The Speaker:** Cde. Teekah, I have read the **Mirror** newspaper of March 20, 1979 and I have seen the two paragraphs. My distinct recollection is that indeed you never said anything in an effort to defend Mao-Tse-Tung's literature, as well as you did not defend the request for voluntary contributions from parents for the upkeep of schools adding that even in Cuba parents have to pay for the education of their children. These two statements are, in my mind, misleading and I will call upon the **Mirror** to apologise to you. If not, I will in future exclude them from this Assembly.

### **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS – FIRST READING**

The following Bill was introduced and read the First time

Teachers' Pensions (Amendment) Bill 1979 – Bill No. 4/1979

**[The Minister of Education, Social Development and Culture]**

### **PUBLIC BUSINESS**

#### **MOTION**

### **APPROVAL OF ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE FOR 1977**

#### **BUDGET DEBATE**

Assembly resumed the debate on the Motion moved by the Minister of Economic Development and Co-operatives for the approval of the estimates of expenditure for the financial year 1979.

**The Speaker:** Cde. Belgrave.

**Cde. Belgrave:** Cde. Speaker, in my contribution to what was considered to be a Budget Speech by the Minister of Economic Development and Co-operatives in this honourable

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Chamber, I will try to draw to this House's attention the importance of the development of any economy which rests in the hands of the people. But one noticeable thing is that we are accustomed to – and one must know why the Government has this new method. They have taken away the right of the Minister --[**Interruption**]

**The Speaker:** Cde. Clerk, please ask that the noise outside ceases. If not, I adjourn the Sitting.

**Cde. Belgrave:** They have taken away the right of the Minister of Finance to make his normal presentation. We found that the Minister of Finance did not further participate in this House but speeches were made by other Members. I know he is a professional and professionals always respect professionalism and as I see it, it was an unrealistic Budget so he did not participate. But all through the speech of the Minister there were tears. The Minister was like Mark Anthony who was crying for his very good friend Caesar when he wanted to wage war between Brutus and Caesar. The Minister of Economic Development wept from page 15 right through to page 58. There were forty-four pages of tears, of economy fall, low productivity, etc.

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It reminds me of that tale of three foolish people. It reminds me that a traveller stopped at an inn where he was given some wine and some food and because of the kindness of the innkeeper and the prettiness of his daughter, he decided to ask for her hand in marriage. The innkeeper's daughter went down to the cellar to get some wine and found a mallet on top of the cask and started to weep because, as she said, "if that mallet falls down when my husband comes down for wine, it will kill him". And the parents seeing her away for so long from the task they had set her to collect the wine, followed. Both father and mother sat weeping. All they had to do was to remove the mallet from on top of the cask so that it would not fall upon her husband after the wedding. This is what the Minister of Economic Development and the whole of the Government benches did. They kept weeping: low production, low productivity etc. They did not attempt in any way, despite the Opposition giving advice time and time again to remove the causes of the drop in production.



Cde. Speaker, in my presentation I will deal with democratisation of the trade union movement as well as the farmers' organisation. Because production must come from the hands of the farmers, the workers and peasants, if there is no democracy at that level it is obvious that you will not have production. But before I pass on to my topic it would be unfair to be sedate and no attempt to challenge some of the speeches made in this House by some of the Government backbenchers and Ministers.

Minister Green in his presentation after the shadow member for Labour, Health and Housing, Cde. Janet Jagan, brought to the attention of the House the various discrepancies in relation to health, housing and labour. The Minister went at length to attack the hon. Member for misrepresenting the facts, for not coming to the House with the truth.

Cde. Speaker, let me give you an example that I myself have encountered. I had to visit the hospital last Friday. An adopted son of mine put some foreign matter in his right nostril and the E.N.T. specialist recommended that this child be taken to the ward and be kept until operation time on Monday. This child was taken in by me personally, a strong healthy child, because on Friday the child was at the clinic in Campbellville and the nurses pronounced the child to be healthy. Cde. Speaker, I had to visit the hospital on Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday and if any one of the members of this community and this House will not agree with me that this hospital is a nightmare, he will be stifling his conscience. My child came out of the hospital on Monday and I will have to take time off from this Parliament this afternoon to take the child back to the doctor for medical treatment. The child is vomiting continuously; he is not eating and has a high temperature of fever.

A child went into the hospital only to take out a foreign matter out of the nostril and the child came out of the hospital with possibly a virus, which means that in the hospital itself there is no proper attention. Go to the children's ward and see it. I had to bathe the child inside the bathroom; the bathroom is in an awful state. I would invite the Members of the Parliament to pay together with us a visit to the public hospital particularly the children's ward and to see the chaos that our children in this land have got to pass through. Yet the Minister stands up and seeks to defend that everything is all right, it is only a little discrepancy here or there. I understand that

when you go to the hospital you got to convalesce. I am positive that when patients enter the public hospital, Georgetown and New Amsterdam, they come out much more sick than when they would have entered.

Cde. Speaker, the Minister failed to heed the advice given in this House on several occasions re housing. We have suggested time and time again: do not attempt to build fantastic houses for low-income people which will add tremendously to their cost of living. We suggested that the people be given the land and the assistance and they would build their houses to suit and they would expand according to their financial development. What is happening in this country is that the Government is building big houses at fantastic prices and according to the cost of the houses and the value of the man's or woman's wages it is taking nearly 50 per cent of their earnings to pay house rent. And this is in self-help. Cde. Speaker, and even in the self-help system where the workers are building, not the Government, it is too costly and the Government seems not to be accepting advice given from the Opposition.

The idea put out by the P.N.C. is that we must build unity, we must assist in building unity. The Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Trade is on record as saying that the P.P.P. must assist the Government in building an economy so that it can be for the benefit of one and all. We are prepared but when there are these obstacles it is obvious that there is no place for assistance in nation building.

The Regional Minister, Cde. Carmichael, was on record as speaking well of the regional system. The regional system is so well geared, but he could not tell this House why within the regions there is no production and productivity. What is the reason? If the regional system is so geared why is it? Do you know why it is, Cde. Speaker? It is because first they have taken out of the hands of the local authorities the right to development of the rural areas. And they set up their political boys and these boys are accustomed to fancy life. Imagine, going home for lunch on New Year's day they have to take a helicopter and drive home. This is the type of life that they want so they are not really looking at the system as they should. They of themselves are subverting the progress of development in this country.

Cde. Van Sluytman in his cries and his queries and his talk about pumps all over the place, laid on record a piece of information which he should not have even mentioned. He said that on the records there is some report by some eminent gentleman which indicates that up to 1980 because of some problem in the sea we will be having erosion. Yet, despite this valuable piece of information, the Department of Works waited until there were breaches in the Essequibo before attempting to run the pieces of cotton wool to patch up the breaches. Why attempt to cure? What the Government must try to do is to prevent breaches and this is what on record it has probably failed to do over a number of years.

Cde. Speaker, let me deal with the Ministry of Mobilisation. As you have noticed, the House is filled today, in the Gallery, and the streets once more are filled. Mobilisation is at work. But what mobilisation? A little rain fell yesterday. Where was the mobilising effort? That is all that Ministry can do, mobilise workers off their duties to picket. Yes. And I even got attacked by the Mobilisation Ministry when I was beaten up during the Referendum. That is what they can mobilise. This is all they are geared to do, mobilise a licking, mobilise picketing. But what about mobilising the farmers to produce. I would agree with Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud that that Ministry should be scrapped. I am not saying, dismiss the Minister, because he would not accept that part. He is supposed to be our Executive Vice-President when the new Constitution is proposed and passed. And he is not going to relieve his –

**The Speaker:** You had a look at the new Constitution?

**2.30 p.m.**

**Cde. Belgrave:** No, the guidelines. He is next in line for the Vice-Presidency.

One Government spokesman in this House spoke at length about the food production. If the walls of this building were not strong, we would have crumbled with food on paper. But I would like him to reconcile what he said with the position that people in rural areas have to travel all the way to the city to buy provisions. The poor citizens in this land have to migrate from their areas of life, when we know that in the past the people from the city had to run to the rural areas to collect their commodities.

Cde. Maraine has a new problem on his hand, the bus service. It is new to him. I trust that in his efforts he will be able to get the people off the road at 5 o' clock in the morning, those who are hustling for transportation to get to work. Workers get home as late as 8 p.m.; after being dismissed at 4 p.m. they have to hustle to get home. He said he will try.

Cde. S.S. Naraine has contributed well in the field of engineering and Cde. Kennard has contributed well in the field of agriculture. But they must be honest to the nation and not come to this House with a pack of untruths to the people of this nation and not come to this House with a pack of untruths to the people of this nation. I would not deal with the other speakers because they spoke from prepared statements and I know very well that they were doing their biddings. But, Cde. Speaker, Cde. Corbin was very strong in his continuous attacks. I hope my remarks will not hurt you a bit, Cde. Speaker. With all due respect to you I have not even heard you announce yourself as a Marxist or your belief in socialism. But this is supposed to be a Parliament made up of the majority of people –

**The Speaker:** That is why I am allowing you to speak.

**Cde. Belgrave:** But I would like to hear your confession in relation to your political beliefs.

**The Speaker:** Cde. Belgrave, when I seek the political arena, you will hear that.

**Cde. Belgrave:** I will be waiting that important day! I would like to ask the Comrades across there to tell us who their friends are. I migrate into the P.P.P. as a youth. At that time, L.F.S. Burnham was a member and he lectured to me on socialism, but we do not have friends like the Luckhoos.

**The Speaker:** No, no.

**Cde. Belgrave:** A little piece of the name would not hurt the individuals. All the rightist elements are in the P.N.C., not the P.P.P. You check the records right through, front benchers of the P.N.C. What they must attempt to do is not to fool this nation. This nation has been fooled for years. We have no intention to destroy that. We would like to push them much further.

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Socialism up front but take a peep in their back pockets, you can see their passports and their permanent papers to migrate to other countries outside of Guyana. You see the P.N.C. is never wrong. Everything it did that went wrong, it was somebody else who caused it. A little while ago the Clerk of the Assembly said prayers, and they all bowed their heads in prayer to Almighty God. But let me quote a passage from the Bible. I am not a believer in this hard and fast religious rule, I am a realist. I am hopeful of becoming a Marxist. I am aspiring to be a Marxist. The Prime Minister himself goes up in pulpits and preaches.

Genesis Chapter 8, verse 21 states:

“And the Lord smelled a sweet savour; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man’s sake; for the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done”.

This is when the earth was flooded. After the flood, the Lord made a pledge to man. What does Exodus, Chapter 32, verses 9 and 10 state?

“And the Lord said unto Moses, I have seen this people and, behold, it is a stiff-necked people:

Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of these a great nation”.

Verse 11 states:

“And Moses besought the Lord his God, and said, Lord, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with power, and with a mighty hand?”

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Moses attacked the Lord. Who knows what he said? See verse 14: “And the Lord repented”. These people in this Chamber are even mightier than the Lord, according to the Book. They are never wrong. They cannot repent. Deliver and repent. Let them bow their heads in prayer. No repentance. I call on them now. Time is catching up with them as it did with Gairy. Therefore let them start now before it is too late.

During the next few minutes I shall deal with democratisation of the trade union movement. Time will permit me. I know that. What has this Government done since it took office? In 1965 the Government took action against the trade union movement, namely the C.C.W.U., which has assisted it in getting into power. Can the comrades remember when the Executives of the C.C.W.U. were thrown out – I am sure Cde. Carrington can remember – because they refused to accept the call to strike? Ajodha Samaroo was one. They threw them out.

What has the Government been doing since that time? It has been attacking the workers, one important ingredient for nation building, time and again. During the strike at the municipality soldiers were brought in. The G.D.F., the National Service, the People's Militia were called in. Only the Police were not brought out perhaps because Cde. Mingo had a little foresight and saw that it was wrong.

What happened to G.A.W.U.'s strike? G.A.W.U. is a recognised union in the T.U.C. A strike was called and the Government deemed it political. Do the comrades know what eventually happened? The cane-cutters destroyed the cane industry. They went into the estates with their cutlasses, with broad hats, water-bags on their shoulders and long boots. They cut the cane the wrong way and messed up the earth. They now call themselves national heroes and have been given national honours. They are no longer called scabs, according to the rules of the international labour organisation. They are volunteers.

What did the Government do to mine workers? When the mine workers went on strike they moved in the Army and National Service to break what was a legitimate cause. These were the attacks of the Government on the workers of the Government. It is action and reaction. The way the workers react is part of a chain link. The members of the Government have been attacking the workers viciously and they are now reacting against them. For this reason production has dropped to a ridiculously low point and will continue to fall.

Let me remind this House that during the last Budget Debate I made certain proposals to the Prime Minister and he himself made an admission. "Yes," he said, "they are nice." Despite the fact that I was later bitterly attacked in this forum, and at other forums, he accepted the

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proposals. I told him, “You cannot in any way build socialism with an elite group controlling the economy of this country.”

Those persons are capitalist oriented. They have passed through the capitalist machine, the capitalist framework. I told him it was easier for the workers to accept socialism because of their position, because they are in a plight and because of the system of exploitation they would accept socialism with the hope that it would move them towards glorious things. Although they do not have the orientation they would accept it.

It is easier for the elements in the ruling class to subvert the Government because they will have to give up their privileges and sweets and they do not want to do that for the reason that the aid of some of those who are very closely link to them.

Why are they doing this? Because they foresee that the ivory towers in which they now are will fall. They foresee that the position which they hold will be taken away. For this reason you hear from the other side of this House that the members of the P.P.P. talk about national unity because they want to share power. Of course, with national unity you must share power. Do you know any part of the world where the organisations for national unity do not share power? How will you move to socialism if you do not want to share power?

The reason why the comrade, the Regional Minister for East Berbice/Corentyne, spoke on that is that he recognises that if there is national unity he will be out of power. He recognises that he has undoubtedly proved himself incompetent first in the Ministry of Home Affairs and then as Regional Minister. He recognises that if there is national unity many of those who sit on the benches on the other side of this House will not be here. The Government will have no use for them. Therefore, they are diametrically opposed to national unity. They are opposed to it because of their own personal aggrandisement.

We must look at these things. The Prime Minister must correct these errors. He has power he says. Whenever the Prime Minister sneezes on the P.N.C. side everybody around him catches a cold. But it is not really a cold that he has. According to the old saying, it is that people

are talking his name. It is said that when someone sneezes steadily it means that people are talking his name. So stop sneezing with the Prime Minister. Try to examine the reason why people are talking his name. Let him go to the market place and sell his papers as he once did.

I should like to renew this call. Democratise! The P.N.C. members must give the trade unions an opportunity to function without putting their hands on them. What are the P.N.C. Members doing now? They are telling the trade union movement that it must affiliate to the P.N.C.

I shall lend the comrade this book. I do not have the time. This is what is said about the trade union movement in the U.S.S.R. – that the trade union movement is separate because it has autonomy. But it associates with the Government. It is right here. That is not what you are doing. You are subverting the trade union movement.

When some the P.N.C. members call up the leaders and say, “Behave yourselves!” they threaten the leaders. When that is done how can they expect the workers within the various ambits of the trade union movement to respect them? Do they know what is happening now? The workers do not have to strike now. In the system they do not have to strike. What is happening is that if the workers are putting up a resistance against you at this level – and it is obvious that production lies at the same level – it means that production will not grow. With resistance from them, production will fall. If you do not understand the simple method of giving freedom you will not be able to bring this economy out of the rut.

I urge this Parliament again, as all my brothers have urged: we are on the crossroads to disaster. A crisis is looming in this country. Do not let us worry about all the smiling faces and laughter.

I trust that the trade union representative on the P.N.C. side will see the value in some of the points I have been making and agree with me where he makes his presentation. I know very well that he cannot accept all the things I have said. They are against party policy. But at least he should agree with some of the things and he should recognise the fact that as long as you push



the worker it is confrontation. This is what this Government is open to: confrontation with the workers.

I do not know if this is a deliberate strategy or if the persons who should look at these things do not have an opportunity to do so. They moved my very good friend from the Ministry of Labour and put him on the back bench. As Minister the Government put a hon. Member who, to my mind, did not have an opportunity to liaise with the trade union movement. Every day there are problems and every day when you go to the Ministry of Labour there is arrogance. You have to wait an hour or two to see the Minister. I am sorry that he is not here so that I can confront him with that charge and let him deny it. Persons have to wait hours and then they are told that the Minister has important business up the East Coast, he cannot stay.

Confrontation with the trade union movement is looming because this Government does not recognise the freedom of the trade union movement.

### 2.50 p.m.

The members of the P.N.C. talk about serving this nation. If you play a game of table tennis, the man who hits the ball to his opponent serves. The same thing happens in badminton, in lawn tennis and to a lesser degree in netball. The Minister must be careful with the service he is giving the people because the people are looking on and they are looking on with a steady eye. And don't believe that their eyes aren't like a needle. Their eyes are as sharp as a needle. I am saying that Gairy said he resigned. He did not resign. Pressure! The Shah says he is leaving Iran temporarily. Pressure! The movement of the people. I would advise you, let history record you as making a contribution to this nation, if not to the members of the P.N.C. in this honourable House. I will tell you, history and your children's children will never forgive you if you do not change the direction which you pursue at the moment.

**The Speaker:** Cde. Carrington.

**Cde. Carrington:** Cde. Speaker, I think it would be considered very refreshing after two years to address this honourable House. Before doing so I would like to make a few comments. On Monday 12<sup>th</sup>, when we started this debate you congratulated three Members of this

Assembly, former members and I. I must thank you for your congratulations and to say that the award was given for work in the trade union movement as well as political work. In the trade union organisation I think full credit for my award should be given to the Amalgamated Transport and General Workers Union from which I came. Because of their co-operation and the solidarity, I was able to make an impact in the trade union movement, but in the political field it is a fact that I worked for many persons in politics, individuals, groups and organisations as well as political parties. But surely, you would agree with me that if any politician wants to shine in the field of politics he must be a member of the People's National Congress. [Applause] And so I must thank you, again, Cde. Speaker.

The previous speaker, Cde. Belgrave, I know him as a trade unionist but I did not know he was a minister of religion. I would want to deviate from what I have to say, Cde.

Speaker, because one would expect that as the debates such as these that we are having in this Parliament at this time should be constructive, should be serious, because the world is passing through a serious period, not only Guyana. It is said that no man is an island and so are governments. You cannot isolate one government from others. No government in the world today can claim to be independent, we are interdependent. And so what happens in one country depending upon your geographical position, will affect the other.

Cde. Speaker, let us trace just for a while the reason for the crisis in Guyana and in other countries in the world. It is not the first time in the history of man that we have had these developments. Our economic history would show us that there have been depressions and recessions since the 18<sup>th</sup> century. We know as a matter of fact from studying that there are cycles in such behaviour of economies throughout the world. The facts are there, Cde. Ram Karran. We remember the '30s and before. The crisis, a serious energy crisis and surely it would have an effect on developing nations, underdeveloped nations and even developed nations. Today, there are ready plans in the United States of America for fuel rationing.

Cde. Speaker, this situation can get worse. We are now passing through a mild recession, a mild recession which, if we do not carefully manage this economy and other countries are not careful in managing theirs, it will become a real depression. And those who have heard and read

about the depression of the '30s would remember by 1929 all was well in the United States of America and by the '30s one year after, there was the great crash and there were bread lines and soup kitchens in Guyana. That is why I think that Cde. Hoyte was very frank and honest. It was not a question of tears. It was being told to the nation to let the nation know what are the facts about the economic situation in Guyana. There are times if you have a patient and you do not tell him how sick he is, he may not want to take the medicine which the doctor prescribes. But if you tell him how sick he is, he will take the medicine and he will recover, as we will recover.

**[Applause]**

We must examine carefully the situation. Be critical but be constructive in your criticism. We set out many programmes in the past for self- sufficiency. How many nations today in the world can claim to be self-sufficient. And we hear that it appears as if in Guyana the words production and productivity are not the best words to use. Production and productivity are used in many countries. If there was no shortage of production and productivity somewhere in the USSR they would not have been buying more grain, and they will be buying more grain from the United States of America in 1979. This is a fact. So there is also low production in the USSR. There is low production in the United States of America. Now Guyana is a poor nation lacking many things. We are not an industrialised nation and why shouldn't we call for more production and productivity if this is to bring us out of this serious economic situation?

**3 p.m.**

There will be others who will be criticising the Government for its various decisions. You can criticise but if your criticisms are not constructive there would be no need. I refer to the crisis – not a fuel crisis, but an energy crisis. This situation is serious and I would say not because we are socialists that we should not hope for peace in the Middle East. For if there is no peace in the Middle East you can rest assured that the world will be faced with a catastrophe because right now there is a shortage of energy. That is why Guyana will have to very speedily develop its hydro-electric resources. There are many things that are dreams but they, after all, become reality. The Government will come out of this crisis hands up. When you win a fight you usually say “the winner”. I will tell you why the Government will come out on top of this crisis. It is

because this Government is a working-class Government. If you look carefully, you may see a plant and you may see it blossoming, but you may not know how far the roots are in the soil. But the roots of this Government are within the working class. We have confidence that we will get the increased production in 1979. We will reach the targets regardless of what the Opposition says.

We need to look at what is taking place in Guyana as national concern to us all, regardless of our politics, regardless of our affiliations. Very well, go ahead, destroy your political party, and destroy your trade union. If possible, if you care and if you could, destroy your trade union. If possible, if you care and if you could, destroy a Government. But do not destroy a nation. The crisis here is not on one side. We are all in the same boat; we are all in the same lines. We want to reduce them. As the Minister of Economic Development said in the Budget Speech, there is one sure way of overcoming our difficulties, and that is by production and productivity. It is not a question of mobilisation alone that is necessary in Guyana to overcome this problem. You can very well mobilise everybody to work in any area. But we are providing other tools and we call them “motivation”, a means of motivating the workers to produce more.

Discussions are presently taking place with the T.U.C. and the Government on incentive schemes. Do not say for one moment that there is something wrong with that because it is done in the Eastern and Western countries. They give bonuses for production and in the Western countries there are such things as “workers’ emulation”.

But the fact is that the Government is seeking ways and means of motivating the workers and so we have these incentive schemes and, as the Minister of Economic Development said, by such schemes there is no limit to your earnings and if there is any union that knows of the benefit of bonuses and incentives and work by results, it is the G.A.W.U. The sum of \$5 million was expended in production bonuses.

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3.10 – 3.20 p.m.

3.10 p.m.

So we must congratulate the Minister of Economic Development for this Budget Statement. Many would have thought that they would have seen taxes on this and that in it. This is a quick way of overcoming difficulties. The strange thing about this situation is that the Government has placed the overcoming of these difficulties on people because we have an interest; we have an abiding faith in people, mainly workers.

Therefore we need to examine the situation critically and when we say that there is no right to strike, there is the workers' right to strike but they must use it only when all other means have been exhausted.

You will find in the Constitution – as it will be a socialist Constitution – that the right to work will come foremost in the Constitution that will be put before the Constituent Assembly. There will be the right to work, the right that workers should have better conditions. If and when the economy gets going again there will surely be more for all but I may repeat that the only way we can overcome this is by greater production and productivity.

We have a commitment to improve the workers' lot and we shall carry through that commitment.

There was a reference to the Ministry of Labour. I am sure that when the Estimates are being discussed the Minister of Labour will reply to some of the statements made by Cde. Belgrave. He is a very efficient and hard-working Minister. **[Interruption]** I am sure that the comrades will appreciate, as the hon. Shirely Field-Ridley said, that being a Minister is a 24 hour a day job. **[Interruption]** We can work at different levels and get satisfaction. I am satisfied with the level at which I am working.

There is no need for us to go and cry over the situation. The Government has set out many plans, as we heard from the Minister of Agriculture yesterday. If our plans come through we have no doubt that in the shortest possible time there will be a recovery of the economy.

I am sure that many of the members of the Opposition did not listen carefully, not only to the Budget presentation by Cde. Hoyte, but to the follow-up discussion by Cde. Frank Hope, who outlined the plans and set a tone for the debate. It was clear from his discussions that he was fully involved in the preparation of the Budget.

We also heard from the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Many may say that we need to cut expenditure in these areas but the first line of defence of any nation lies in Foreign Affairs and we must continue our relations and retain our position in the world because we are respected for our stand and that is to be non-aligned, to take dictation from no side, East or West, Right or Left.

And so there is this call to the workers to produce more. As I said, we plan motivation in the form of monetary incentives or inducements - call it what you like. As I said, you can call workers, mobilise them, but you need to train them and educate them. Therefore more money is spent again on training workers in management. Why are we training them in management? I am sure that many of our comrades did not know that the Government was training workers at the floor level in management because, as socialists, we realise that there is alienation of the worker from his work and so we must train him in management so that he can take his rightful place and participate in management.

There are many who would shout, "We want workers' control now!" but the fact is we want to be honest, as the Minister of Economic Development outlined in his Budget Statement. In certain sectors of our economy we have managers who think they are managers and that is why in some areas we are changing and training until we can find the right people for the right jobs.

Now, if the managers find it difficult at times to manage, what is the sense of putting a worker on a Board to be nothing more than a rubber stamp if he does not know certain principles and practices of management. If he does not know what is management in principle, he will not be able to make a meaningful contribution at that level. We think that workers who are elected or desire to be involved in workers' participation must be trained. Therefore, we have programmes

of training for workers in management. We are in no hurry as regards workers' control. When the time comes for workers' control, the workers must be capable of managing.

And so our programme at the Workers Education Unit goes on. We also have there a planned programme for co-ordinating workers education because we are not satisfied that for the money and for the time that are spent we are getting full value out of these programmes. We want to have a more careful examination of these programmes to make sure that they meet the objectives, not of the Government, but of the nation as a whole.

### 3.20 p.m.

Cde. Speaker, I would like to touch on another matter which worries many a politician, trade unionist, economist and others. And that is the question of the affiliation of workers with political parties; as Cde. Belgrave said, they are having the workers' trade unions affiliated to the Party. I do not know if the G.A.W.U. is affiliated to the P.P.P. Perhaps they did not sign an affiliation agreement but there are times when a man does not have to go to a church to marry a woman. They can live as man and wife in the house and do everything as though they were married. And so I do not know how they will make it. I feel that the closeness between G.A.W.U and the P.P.P. for many years is a good one. There is nothing wrong with it because the People's National Congress has been doing likewise. But it is historical, the British, from whom we inherited many of our institutions, have trade unions affiliated both to the Labour Party and to the Conservative Party and we know it is a fact that when we aspired to win Independence for the colony – but Dr. Jagan knows it is a fact - the only body that was organised and capable of defeating the colonialists at that time was the trade union organisation and many of the politicians saw it fit to align themselves with or to get into or organise or create trade unions. Dr. Jagan was the President of the Sawmill and Forest Workers Union, a very militant and active trade union.

In this question of affiliation, there is no surprise as regards the workers and their trade unions because for years they have been supporting other individual politicians or political parties, and to say that they do not have the right, that they are not free to run their organisation, would not be correct. What we say is that once you have an arrangement, an alliance, or an

affiliation, you must be concerned with the way in which you treat with matters in such situations.

Cde. Speaker, as a trade unionist and one who is close to the workers, I know as a fact that the workers have all confidence in this Government. Where in the world would you find at some time or other there are no differing views and opinions –

**The Speaker:** Five minutes more, Cde Carrington.

**Cde. Carrington:** -- between the government and groups, workers or what have you? But that would not change the relations or the expectations of the Government. We find in Britain there is a big scramble, there is a quarrel between the Labour Party and the Trade Unions. But the trade unions say that they will speed up production and they will help the Labour Party to win the next election. I do not think they will, but I hope they win the elections. So if there is any other difference between the trade unions and the Government at any time, it is no sense wasting time to capitalise on that situation, because the good relations with this Government, the Party and the trade unions are intact.

And so we must consider this Budget as coming at a most appropriate time. This year is known as International Year of the Child and what better gift can we give to the children of this country than to tell them that we hope and look forward to a recovery of our economy? For they will be the men and women of tomorrow and so we must be together – I say together, not separately, but together – as a people. We know as a fact that the Guyanese workers in the past have shown that they can do a number of things. There were many who said that they would not be able to run the bauxite industry. They have done it. There were many who said that they would not be able to run the sugar industry. They have done it. Give them the tools and they will do the job. What are the tools? Education, training, all means of motivating them to production and productivity. Give them the tools and they will do the job, they will rise to the occasion and disappoint many. But, surely, Cde. Speaker, they will recover, we will recover from this economic situation because of our confidence in the working class and because this Government's roots are within the working class. **[Applause]**



**The Speaker:** Cde. Bancroft.

**The Minister of State-Regional (Mazaruni/Potaro)** (Cde. Bancroft): Cde. Speaker, it is the desire of every normal being to aspire to the general improvement of his or her living standard and to be able to enjoy certain basic amenities. It makes life and living both meaningful and useful to seek the fulfilment of the human desires and aspirations. Each succeeding generation looks forward to greater improvement and development of these basic human needs that motivates the minds of men to constantly seek new ways and means of fulfilling this desire. It is said that man is the creator of his environment and if one does not create a condition for moulding and fashioning the type of society which one undertakes to build and things are left to sort themselves out, then instead of development and progress, there would be retrogression and decay. It is the responsibility of the Government and the Party therefore to create the conditions for moulding and fashioning the type of society which it intends to build, and to act in accordance with the Party's philosophy to create the conditions for the fashioning of this new society.

The 1979 Budget, as presented by the Minister of Economic Development and Co-operatives on Monday, March 12<sup>th</sup>, should be examined in the context of the foregoing for it reflects the philosophy of the Party and Government. In the very opening remarks of the Minister, he emphasised basically the philosophy of this Party in speaking about the people and people's development. And as I understand it, Cde. Speaker, that is what socialism is all about, people and people's development.

And the Minister of Economic Development was asking us to reflect on the period after we attained Independence on the 26<sup>th</sup> May, 1966. If we are to really appreciate what this Party and Government have done since we attained Independence it is necessary therefore that we cast our minds back to what was, what is and what will be.

**3.30 p.m.**

I need not take up too much time in asking you to reflect on our colonial past. What did we inherit? At the attainment of Independence we inherited from our colonial masters less than

one hundred miles of good roads on the coast. We remember under the colonial rule the atrocities committed on workers in urging them for greater and greater production, not for their benefit but of those who at the time controlled the destiny of this country, who made the laws and who had no interest whatsoever in the development of people. In other words, to them the workers were just a bucket in the well of the machinery of production and should be treated as cattle.

During those years all the people of this country suffered under that type of system. First of all, our Amerindians suffered because our colonial masters used them, the indigenous people of this country, in their effort to promote greater profits, through the exploitation of sugar cane, and our Amerindians fled from the coast to the hinterland areas in order not to be subjected to that type of treatment. We understand, therefore, the history of the African slaves. They came and we know the atrocities and inhumanities which they suffered. We remember the emancipation period, and it should be borne in mind that during this period, the ex-slaves departed from the coast to the interior to get away from the hands of Slavery. They risked their lives and so they, together with their Amerindian comrades, became those who inhabited the dense forest of the then unknown hinterland.

We are well aware of the period of indentureship, the suffering of those who came under that system, and all of us, I am sure, read our history and understand the indignities which they suffered. It was this suffering that motivated leaders to rise and strive to free the workers from colonial servitude. Throughout the years we have had a history of going with those who fought and those who have died and those who have made the sacrifice in order that we should throw off the yoke of colonialism.

I am going to address my attention for a brief moment – as I said all of us here to some extent are familiar with the period before Independence and what happened with the coastal areas. But if there was very little development where the centres of activity were to be found, in the area of sugar, one can understand what happened to the hinterland areas. Although the Amerindians and the slaves and those who after the emancipation migrated to the hinterland

areas felt that they would not have been subjected to the exploitation on the coast, they did not understand the machinations of the colonial power.

I was doing a bit of research quite recently and I was able to come up with the fact that between the period 1887 and 1927, minerals were extracted and exported to the value of £6 million and the export value to the colony's budget was 28 per cent of the value of the colony's exports, but the revenue collected was the sum of £38,000 or 3.4 per cent of the total revenue collected. It should be borne in mind that in those early days much of the same system was practised with the exploitation of labour in the hinterland areas as was experienced on the coast. It was the system of what we called placer operations where one or two persons were given large areas for exploitation and one of the names that comes readily to mind is Houston. A wage of 40 cents a day was a rule, with the very nourishing rations that read something like this: five pounds flour, three and a half pints rice, two pounds of sugar, one to three pints of split peas, one pound of salted pork, and seven sticks of chocolate. If one wanted anything thereafter, one had to purchase from his princely sum of 40 cents per day. One was expected to work for six months on this diet. It has been recorded that during this period, after six months, one was subjected to a certain type of disease, because of the lack of protein in one's diet. This is just to show that the administration under the colonial system ensured that all of us operated under that system because there were those who wielded powers both legislative and economic to ensure that the sugar barons controlled the entire economy, or they were able to manipulate it within the confines of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce.

We say this in order to bring out the point that within the colonial system all of us, irrespective of whoever we were, suffered at the hands of our colonial master. The system was for the benefit of a chosen few. We understand, and some of us in our time have experienced the indignities we inherited under that system. We understand, where, for example, certain persons, because of the fact that they needed the job, had to change their names under that system. We knew for a fact that children of a certain class did not have to study too hard in the classrooms to pass examination because their jobs were reserved for them. Therefore, on the attainment of Independence, all it meant for us that we were not only seeking to throw off the yoke of our

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**National Assembly**

**3.30 – 3.40 p.m.**

colonial masters, which hung around our necks like an unpaid mortgage, but we were moving into a new era where we had to embark on development.

**3.40 p.m.**

I say this without fear of contradiction: As we look around the country today from Crabwood Creek on the Corentyne to Pointa Playa in the North West, to Konashen in the south watersheds of Essequibo, to Kaikan on our borders, every village and community, wherever you go throughout the length and breadth of Guyana today, has had development. **[Applause]**

But, as we understand it, development is a very slow process. Things do not change overnight and no one in his right mind or his right senses could ask this Government and Party, committed and dedicated as we are to the service of Guyana, to the people of this nation, to change overnight the legacy of colonial neglect and misrule.

The time is not so long ago when, if one wanted to travel from the Corentyne of the Berbice area to Georgetown during the rainy periods, one had to put his car on a truck on the railroad – this was during the days of the railroad – in order to get into Georgetown. Persons made an ample living on the West Coast with their tractors pulling cars out of ditches which were then called “roads”. This is what we inherited.

I remember that in those days we travelled like cattle on the “R.H.Carr” of Sprostons up the Demerara River to reach MacKenzie or Linden. That cannot be denied. Today, however, one can travel in comfort and style from Crabwood Creek to Linden. And if one wants to go beyond, one can go beyond Linden to Bartica and up to the Kurupung Mouth in one day and the distance from Kurupung to Bartica is 126miles. **[Applause]**

It was unthinkable that we in so short a space of time could sit at Matthews Ridge, Port Kaituma, Mabaruma and Bartica and pick up a telephone and do distance dialling with the new equipment which the Guyana Telecommunication Corporation is establishing. Even beyond that, in places like Imbaimadai, you will be able to pick up a telephone and, with the new type of apparatus, dial a number in Georgetown and speak to a person anywhere you wish. If that is not development I wonder what is.

I shall speak about the Guyana Airways Corporation because I speak out of an abundance of knowledge having spent 39 years of my life in the hinterland of Guyana. Prior to Independence, if one wanted to get into certain areas outside of Lethem one use what was then the Grumman Goose a nice rattling water plane of Art Williams. It was nerve racking. Noise were all over the place when one landed in some little place. You took your life in your hands, believe you me, because I saw some of the greatest feats performed. I shall explain for the benefit of this House. You would tie a rope to the aircraft and the pilot would rev it up. You would have a prospecting knife in your hand and at a signal from the pilot you had to cut the rope. If you missed cutting the rope with one cut, it was total disaster. That is the type of situation I am speaking about. I was, and am, part of it.

Today one travels on 748s in luxury and style and if the airstrip cannot accommodate 748s, one travels with the Twin Otter. Whereas it took us two or three weeks to reach places in the hinterland, today you can take breakfast in Georgetown and have lunch at your destination in the hinterland areas. This is because of the policy of the People's National Congress for hinterland development. In the past, in the minds of some of our planners, Guyana was considered to begin at Crabwood Creek and to end at Charity in the Pomeroon district. Therefore, all the development works were centred in and around the narrow coastal strip, and the hinterland area, which comprises about seven-eighths of the total land mass of the 83,000 square miles of Guyana, with all its resources and potential for development, was left neglected and the people who live there were also neglected.

Let me say something about this. Not only has there been neglect. I refer to some of the things which were neglected, for example, education. Because of the system of education and the fact that you did not have trained teachers, few, if any, of our Amerindian children could have qualified to take up positions in the nursing profession or in any profession at all.

This is a fact.

Today, with the improvement of the educational system, our Amerindians are being brought into the full strata of economic life and they are given every opportunity to share in and to be part of the development projects.

Let me state some of the things which have happened since the attainment of Independence with respect to our Amerindians. I shall give you their work since that time. Two hundred and seventy-one Amerindians were given scholarships. Seventy-five were trained at the Guyana School of Agriculture; fifty-five graduated and all the comrades are now placed within the Government sector.

At Carnegie School of Home Economics, 29 persons were trained and all of them graduated. Nineteen were placed. The others are now housewives. At the Government Technical Institute 65 persons were trained. Fifty-four have graduated and all of them have been placed in Government jobs. At the Government Industrial Training Centre 32 persons were trained. All graduated. Some are working for themselves privately and others are employed with Government.

Now that I have said this, we can see the commitment of this Party, and the Government, not to the development of one sector of the economy or one section of people. We see this Government's intention and dedication in its commitment to the over-all development of Guyana and Guyana's people, because it could not have been otherwise.

The Party of which I have the honour to be a member has clearly spelt this out in its objects. I should like to see a copy of the objects of the party to which the comrades on the other side belong. We are a socialist party. We make no bones about it. Let me quote, for the benefit of this honourable House, a few of the objects of the People's National Congress, a socialist party:

1. To secure and maintain through the practice of co-operative socialism, the interest, well-being and prosperity of ALL the people of Guyana.
2. To pursue the commitment to the Socialist ideal and more particularly to ensure that the people of Guyana own and control for their benefit the natural resources of the country.
3. To provide every Guyanese the opportunity to work for and share in the economic well-being of the country and to ensure that there is equality of opportunity in the political, economical and social life of the country.

4. To motivate the people of Guyana to improve by their own efforts and through the Party, the communities in which they live.
5. To pursue constantly the goal of national self-reliance.
6. To work for the closest possible association of Guyana with her Caribbean neighbours and to maintain a link with International Organisations and Agencies whose aims and objectives are consistent with those of the People's National Congress.

And we have seen this manifested over the past few days.

### 3.50 p.m.

The Minister of Economic Development, and some of my friends, especially my friend and colleague on my right say, have given us scientific analysis of and an objective look at the economic situation in Guyana today. He has brought to bear a disciplined mind on a situation which requires self-discipline. He has had the courage and conviction and commitment to state to the nation what we are going through. He has the ability and competence, if he needed that, to hide the facts, but we have nothing to hide. He has never hidden anything from the Guyanese people. We believe that the people should always be brought into our confidence because if we are to motivate the people of Guyana, to improve their efforts –

**The Speaker:** Cde. Chowritmootoo, who is speaking, the Opposition that you want to detract?

**Cde. Bancroft:** The Minister of Economic Development and Co-operatives rightly said in his Budget Speech that the answer to our temporary economic set back is greater production and productivity. I should like my friends on the opposite said to tell me in which Socialist country of the world, from the USSR right down to Cuba, there is no socialist planning, that there are no incentives for production and productivity, and also that there are no sanctions for not producing. Let them name me the Socialist country. I am no mathematician, I cannot count more than one and one, but what I do know, Cde. Speaker, is that nought from nought leaves

nought. Out of nothing cometh nothing. And all the things that the Opposition is asking for can only be attained by greater production and productivity.

I have listened to members of the Opposition bemoaning that they need a national front. I do not know if it is national front, I do not like too many fronts. Cde. Speaker, what I would like to ask the members of the Opposition to do is to address their minds to a question of national unity. I listened to my friend, Cde. Belgrave, who was eloquent a few minutes ago, the Rev. Cde. Belgrave. But I am reminded that it is written –

**The Speaker:** Cde. Bancroft, we have no Rev. Belgrave here, we have only Cde. Belgrave.

**Cde. Bancroft:** My apologies to you, Cde. Belgrave. It is written in the scriptures “seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven and all things shall be added to you”. I say to my friends on the opposite side, seek ye first that worthy and noble objective of the attainment of national unity and all things shall be added on to you. **[Applause]**

And as I listened to the Opposition speaking about national unity, it reminded me of the days when I use to come to Georgetown on holiday from the interior. There was a group of men who used to sit by the corner playing a game they called three cards, they had one in white and with skilful manipulation they said this will win, this will lose, this will win this will lose. I have the impression that the Opposition would like the People’s National Congress to engage in a game of three cards with interest on the nation of Guyana. We have got to be serious if we are to aspire to have national unity. The Opposition must be serious. I have listened throughout this debate. I do not want to single out any one person because I am fearful of the disciplinary action that may be taken by the Party, but I have listened across the Table and believe you me I have heard absolutely nothing said by the Opposition in criticising this Budget. What we were subjected to throughout the days of this debate was nothing more than harassment. What we had was just a lot of ranting and raving and with the exception of one or two comrades from the opposite side, nothing constructive was said.



Now, Cde. Speaker, we must understand and appreciate that this Party and the Government are committed to the people of this country and I am reminded of the biblical quotation, “what greater love hath a man for his people”. When saying this we can think of the Leader of the People’s National Congress, what greater love has that man for the people of Guyana. [Applause.] His honesty, his sincerity, his commitment and dedication to the cause of his people are unquestionable and I challenge any man to say to the contrary.

The Minister rightly said during his Budget Speech that there was no growth. It is a simple exercise, a family exercise. If one has a large family and one has savings and the family demands on the savings continue to draw down on those savings and there is no replenishing of those savings then it means that the family will not be able to enjoy the things that the head of the house should have given to them, because the savings were depleted. It is a simple exercise. In the national economy, our wages and salaries have gone up because of the fact of the increase in the national minimum wage. Our export earnings have not matched the increased salaries and wages. It means therefore that our production and productivity efforts must be greatly increased.

And I would like, Cde. Speaker, to congratulate the Minister of Economic Development and Co-operatives on a very fine document, a document which will classify itself among our most educational and edifying documents. I trust that the leader and my comrades on the opposite side will make full use of this document in order that they can be better educated and properly edified.

Now, Cde. Speaker, as we go on, I remember and I hear my friend Cde. Harry Nokta saying that the road between Bartica and Issano is in a bad condition with over hanging bush and what have you. I agree. But I would like to inform the comrade that not too very long ago, and I am sure that he reached Iassno in one day, it took about three days due to the bad conditions from Bartica to Issano. I would also like to inform him, if the Minister responsible for Works and Transport did not do it before, that there is only one settled community along the road, that is at 72 miles, and at the terminus, Issano, there is a small community, but concerned as we are about people and people’s welfare, efforts are being made this year, and

they are in train at the moment, for the improvement and upgrading of that road. I understand work will begin in the early June or late July. The hinterland road development division is at the moment carrying out a survey to know how many machines, the equipment, the materials, etc., the costing, before it begins this exercise. We are concerned about people as we usually are.

Cde. Speaker, in the opening remarks of the Minister of Economic Development and Co-operatives, he spoke about people and people's development. In the closing paragraph of that debate he said and I would like to quote:

“. . . the party is mobilised for the task of national economic recovery. It has always in times of difficulty rallied the people, inspired them and led them to victory. Under its guidance and leadership, we will recover from this temporary economic setback and move forward to greater victories in the never-ending struggle to build a viable, self-sustaining, nationally independent economy. This is the task, this is the labour to which all Guyanese of patriotic fibre must now bend their efforts”.

**4 p.m.**

Cde. Speaker, the Minister spoke about patriotic Guyanese. In times of crisis, those who are patriotic-inspired and motivated by the love of their country and the love of their fellow men, seek to put aside their selfish pride and ambition. I sincerely hope that in this period when Guyana, like all countries of the world particularly those of the developing Third World, is going through this economic crisis, not of our own making, all of us will seek at this particular point in time to put aside our own selfish interest and seek to help this country to recover. To do otherwise would be a betrayal of the confidence and trust of the people of this country. I believe that the people of Guyana will rise up and accept the challenge, as they have done in the past. We have done it in the past and we will do it again. All we ask is that our task be made much easier.

The Minister of Economic Development and Co-operative pointed out that over the years this Party and the Government have given guidance and leadership in critical times. I

contend that the leadership of the People's National Congress over the years stands out as a shining star which beckons us onward, ever forward, so that we will all be able to work not only towards the economic recovery of this country but towards fulfilment at the end, that we can all stand up and be proud that we can face the world and say that we are proud people, we are Guyanese, because we love this dear land of Guyana. This is the type of leadership and commitment which we have given over the years to attain, to my mind, greater production and productivity. We would also need self-discipline to inspire us to give beyond and above the normal things that we will do during the course of our work schedules.

Over the years, dedication and commitment of the leadership of the People's National Congress have inspired us to move onward ever forward to greater heights and greater achievements. We sincerely hope that all those who have their doubts will understand that we face the international world and we must understand that we have no friends other than ourselves.

Finally, let me offer my praise and congratulations for a very fine document, well put together. I would like to compliment the Minister of Economic Development and Co-operatives for his long hours of work, for his disciplined mind and his approach in this document. This document will rank for all time as one of the greatest documents that we have brought before this honourable House.

**The Leader of the Opposition** (Cde. C. Jagan): Cde. Speaker, over the last fourteen years of P.N.C. rule – perhaps a better word should be “misrule” – we have had several Finance Ministers. It seems that the P.N.C. has run out of them so now they have introduced the Budget through the Economic Development Minister. We have had three Development Programmes and we have had many slogans beginning with “not a soul will go to bed hungry”, to “free milk and cassava”, and “the nation would be fed, housed and clothe by 1976”.

What do we hear today? We hear about the capitalist crisis. Indeed, not the capitalist crisis but the energy crisis. We hear that we have interdependence; we are living in a world of interdependence. We are reminded of the past which we inherited, the miles and miles of roads that we have built and the fact that we sit down in front of our telephone and distant dial

to any part of the country and to the world. Marvellous progress! But when we look around and ask what has all this meant for the people, there are good roads but they cannot have the bus, good roads but they do not have the money to enter a bus, the cost of living for the period November 1977 – November 1978 showed that the food index jumped by 73.7 points, clothing – 52.8 points, and all the other index figures rising by 49 points.

When we talk about the past and what we inherited, why don't they tell the House that in seven years of P.P.P. Government the cost of living index figure rose only 11 points. There was plenty of food, cassava, milk and plantains, and we had to carry a big publicity campaign to get people to eat skin, unscaled fish. There was a big campaign at the Carnegie School of Home Economics to get people to eat skin fish. Today you cannot find skin fish. Kwakwari and cuirass have now become luxuries. Shark meat is a luxury.

#### 4.10 p.m.

A few Budgets ago, Cde. Hope became Minister of Finance; we were told that progress was around the corner. We were told that the world would soon come out of the recession and we would soon be solving the temporary problems that we had. That was his first Budget Statement. We then dubbed the Minister "hopeful Hope".

The time has come when we have to try another Minister and what does he tell us? Behind all the facts and figures presented, the impression created is a tax-free Budget, but the fact of the matter is that this is an \$85 million tax Budget. That is what it is in reality for they have stated in the Budget Statement that had they paid a minimum wage of \$14 a day, it would have cost the Government an additional \$85 million.

What did the Government do in the past? In 1974, it was \$19 million. Last year and the year before, in addition to the removal of all the subsidies and so forth, there was \$44 million in taxes. Now the Government chooses not to pay the \$14 per day, to which it is committed, for which it gave an undertaking to the Trade Union Congress. Now the members come and say, "There are no taxes in the Budget".

The Minister in his Budget Statement, page 56, said and I quote:

“... the stark and inescapable fact is that our expectations for growth in the economy during 1978 have not materialised. Production remained static”.

This is spelt out in greater detail on page 18 of the Budget Statement, where there is an itemised list of the shortfall in production in rice, sugar, bauxite and so on. I do not want to tire the House by enumerating those figures.

We have been talking in this House for a long time about stagnation and what has been the answer? I remember that the Minister of Agriculture, and others, have been telling us from time to time that everything is going well, that production is increasing and expanding. Now there is an admission that we are not producing. This was reality long ago. Obviously it is done for other reasons.

Many times I have told the House about the stagnation in production. I shall quickly summarise what has been said several times:

Rice production over the seven-year period of the P.P.P. Government, 1958/9 to 1964/5, was 873,742 tons, an increase of 74 per cent on the corresponding seven year period of the colonial regime.

In the case of the P.N.C. over the corresponding seven year period, 1968/9 to 1974/5, production was 879,359 tons, which is an increase of only .6 per cent on the P.P.P. production. The P.N.C. had independence; it had all the power. Why this stagnation? It is nothing new; it is there.

I do not want to give the figures for the export of rice. That has also declined. In 1963/4 it was 85,000 tons in round numbers. Ten years later –

**The Speaker:** You said that you did not want to give the figures, and yet you have given them.

**Cde. C. Jagan:** If you take sugar production in the seven year period of the P.P.P.

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**4.10 – 4.20 p.m.**

Government and compare it with the previous seven-year period, it shows a 44 per cent increase. In the corresponding seven-year period for the P.N.C. it was 6 per cent and if you take the thirteen year period, the average increase is 2 per cent.

Let us look at the other categories. Fish production: 14 ounces per person per week. Milk: four-fifths of one pint per person per week. Beef production: 3 to 4 ounces per person per week. Ground provision: 1 1/2 pounds per person per week. These figures were produced by Professor Clive Thomas for the four unions when they spoke before the T.U.C. in 1976.

Stagnation is not a new question, but it is now being brought forward into the light for one specific purpose, to put the blame on the workers, to say to them: “You did not increase production and productivity, therefore we cannot pay you \$14 per day”. That is the excuse. This is why they have gone about giving all those figures in detail, whereas before, for years, they have been hiding and covering up the naked fact that we had a crisis in production in this country, which was responsible for the financial and economic difficulties facing this country. The members of the Government have to find justification for now refusing to pay the workers.

They have, of course, not only been blaming the workers. This was an old story. In the period 1972/4, when the crisis first manifested itself, the members of the Government said it was the oil crisis. Later they began blaming the civil servants who were saboteurs, they said. They began blaming the weather in 1976 and, more recently, they began blaming the P.P.P.

This is a perennial question. Since way back in 1968, plots were invented. They said that the P.P.P. was involved in all kinds of plots. The Prime Minister will remember the Beria plot. We had other plots to wreck and destabilise. Well, all this is to cover up the naked fact that the Government of the P.N.C. is the biggest destabiliser of the national interest. This is the naked fact in Guyana.

**4.20 p.m.**

What do they do instead of this talk about national unity? They talk about it, they pay lip service to it, but the concrete steps which are to be taken to bring about unity, the concrete

facts which have to be undertaken in order to get the brakes removed from production and productivity, these they ignore. Instead, they turn back to their masters who put them in to solve the economic and financial headaches. They turn to the IMF; they turn to the imperialist masters who put them in, instead of getting to the root of the problem to try to find out what can be done to settle those problems. So we have now what was the first secret on June 12 last year, the I.M.F. agreement. And we see the consequences of this now, at the wages level, in domestic policy, in foreign policy. We see the hand of imperialism dictating policy. We had a new Investment Code; a great deal of publicity was given to this.

The last speaker read from the P.N.C. policy statement, or the objects of the Party. **[Interruption by Cde. Chowritmootoo]** You went to University but you cannot understand the difference between objects and policy statement.

**The Speaker:** Cde. Chowritmootoo, how many times must I speak to you? When you interfere and interrupt him, he goes off on a tangent and the thing goes on and on. You don't have to be here listening to it.

**Cde. C. Jagan:** Cde. Speaker, what the hon. Member should have read from was the Bible of the P.N.C., the Sophia Declaration which was made compulsory reading in all schools for all children, and for the benefit of the House I should like to quote from that statement. I read all literature including stinking, dirty literature. This was their policy statement when they were moving away from imperialism under the pressure from the working class and from the intense political and ideological struggle in this country. I quote:

“As we move to control land in the interest of the nation, we will also take control over all foreign trade - import and export.”

We are frequently asked about our Policy in relation to foreign private investment. The time has come now to give, indeed to repeat, the answer once and for all. Private investment from abroad is welcome in specific fields in consortium with Government and/or co-operatives, provided that in each case Government and/or the co-operatives hold majority equity and real control.”

During the period ahead, your Party intends to proceed with the implementation of the policy of ownership and control of national resources.

“The Government, Party and Party members must make a united effort to achieve out of the stated objective during 1975 and bring an end to foreign banks taking and investing local deposits during next year.”

Cde. Speaker, here they spoke well, but we saw a difference between rhetoric and performance. It was only during the period of the Referendum that they were talking about land to the tiller, whereas way back in 1974 they were talking about land control in the interest of the nation.

What is there now in the Investment Code? We warned, before this I.M.F. Agreement was signed, in a document of the Central Committee of the People’s Progressive Party in the middle of 1977 when the Government intended to pursue an open door policy to foreign capital, and this is now what we have. We will now see under the new Investment Code where the Government will restrict itself virtually to infrastructure. This is what the Investment Code said. The strategic activities, “strategic”, note that, which will be reserved for the State are as follows:

1. Mining, beneficiation and exportation of specific grades of bauxite. This does not include the production or smelting of alumina.
2. Power Generation for general public distribution.
3. Public Transportation (excluding feeder and supplementary services).
4. Telecommunication.
5. Education at nursery, primary, secondary or University levels. ( But excluding special training institutions such as secretarial schools.)
6. Importation of specific items for purposes of trading.

What does this mean in relation to the Sophia Declaration? The Sophia Declaration states as regards foreign capital, that if it comes in, it will have to come in partnership with the Government or the co-operatives, with the Government or the co-operatives having a majority share holding, ownership and control of national resources, not just natural, but national, meaning financial resources and so on.



This statement is from a new Investment Code which I have just read. What are the strategic activities will have to be seen in the context of the indicative programme planned for 1978 to 1981. It must not be read separately, it must be read in conjunction with their –  
[Interruption]

**The Speaker:** Cde. Hoyte, you will have an opportunity of replying.

**Cde. C. Jagan:** In the last Budget Statement, the indicative plan for 1977 to 1981 proposed for the manufacturing industry, only 3.9 per cent of the total capital expenditure. For electricity, only 6.5 per cent, and that is mainly conventional electricity, not hydro -electricity.

**4.30 p.m.**

A great deal more of the plan was devoted to agriculture, infrastructure. In other words, the Government in its own developmental projection does not have the money or will not have the money to carry out balanced agricultural industrial development in the country. That is clear. So what will be done? The imperialists, therefore are told: “You can come in the country”, contrary to the principles laid down in the Sophia Declaration, and have virtually a free hand except in one area, that is, specific grades of bauxite. When I spoke to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, he told me that meant calcined bauxite. That means that they can come in other grades of bauxite, they can come in alumina production, and any kind of industry on any basis they want, on their own, in partnership with Government, with co-operatives or with other private capitalists. This is an important development and we say it is due to the dictation of the imperialists and the policies of this Government.

We now turn to the next question. If the imperialists are to come here to invest – and what are they interested in mainly in Guyana? They are concerned with industrialisation of Guyana *per se*. Once they have free trade, which is provided by CARICOM, then they prefer to set up their factories, their multinational branches in Trinidad. We saw them, the \$4.6 billion industrialist scheme at Point Lisas in Trinidad. They are concerned about minerals in Guyana, raw materials. So what are we going to find? We already see where an agreement was signed with the French Company in relation to Uranium. A German industrialist came to see me on the

same question. He wanted to know if we got into Government whether we would honour any such agreement made by this Government.

We had wind of this new investment code long ago, and it is putting into practical reality what Fred Sukhdeo said in May, 1977, and the so-called ideologists of the P.N.C., who can quote scriptures, like the devil quoting scriptures, are now saying, that all socialist countries, including the Soviet Union, are faced with problems of production and productivity, and they are trying to sell this reversal of their own principles as new economic policy of the Soviet Union in the late twenties and early thirties. There is a world of difference, which I will come to, between this regime and the regime which was established after the Russian revolution in the Soviet Union. We must not only talk about form, we must talk about content, and I shall deal with that in a few moments.

What is the other aspect of the pressures from imperialism now on this Government on the economic financial front? Capitalism depends on cheap and docile labour. Therefore, wages freeze is a part of the I.M.F. medicine. Therefore, this regime does not pay a \$14 minimum wage, not because, as it says, it cannot afford it, but because it is told not to pay. This is part and parcel of that position. They also want the working class to be muzzled. Our good friend, the former Minister of Labour, got up in this House and defended the Government. He defends what is going on. But he knows that his head-rolling was also part of this process of emasculating the working class.

**The Speaker:** Dr. Jagan, Cde. Carrington said that his head was not rolled, so you must not make reference to that.

**Cde. C. Jagan:** I apologise. As regards the developmental strategy which I referred to, what we are now doing is going back to the Puerto Rican model which was the first model which formed the basis of the first developmental plan. This is not the first country in the world where services and other things are sold to the capitalist class at cheap prices. In England, they had nationalisation of railways, of electricity and of coal. But they were used in the interest of the capitalist class. When the prices of coal, steel and electricity were higher in other parts of Europe, in England, it was found that they were lower under the Labour Government, to serve

the capitalist class. This is a fact. As regards the telephone, the transport and the electricity which are now regarded as the strategic sectors, strategic activities, foreign capitalists are not concerned with all of that, they do not want that. You sell them the very best services at the cheapest prices and they will lend you the money to do it and you will never get out of paying the debts.

**4.40 p.m.**

I should like to speak on that question now because last year alone we borrowed \$500 million. In the last year of the P.P.P. Government, the national debt in this country was only \$128 million. At the end of 1977 it was roughly \$1,500 million. Last year alone we borrowed \$500 million. The stark nakedness of the financial situation is glossed over in this Statement. Let me bring this to your notice.

As a percentage of the current Budget expenditure, the debt charges today amount to 40 per cent. It was \$10 million only – [Cde. Hoyte: “What was the debt service ratio?”] I am coming to that. The total debt charges as a percentage of the current expenditure was \$10 million in 1964. This year it is projected to be \$234 million. It was 15 per cent then; this year it is 40 per cent.

Let us take revenue now, the current receipts of the Government. If you take the debt charges in relation to what the Government is receiving from the people with steep taxation and so on, despite that, the debt payment is 58 per cent of the current Budget income. In other words, we are going on to paying nearly two-thirds of what we are receiving as debt payments.

Let us look at the deficit in relation to the present current expenditure. Current budget expenditure is \$587 in round numbers. The current deficit is \$186 million, actually \$185.8 million which means that the current deficit as a percentage of the Budget is 32 per cent.

Let us look at another fact. The hon. Minister for Economic Development said, “Let us talk about what portion of the exports it is”. Dr. Maurice Odle at the Institute of Development Studies at the University wrote an article on the International Monetary Fund in the early part of this year and he pointed out that about five years before, our debts in relation to exports was only three per cent. In 1977, it was 18 per cent and this year it is 26 per cent. The total export of goods

and services in 1978 was \$888 million. The total debt charges were \$234 million –  
[Interruption by Cde. Hoyte]

**The Speaker:** Cde. Hoyte, will you allow the Leader of the Opposition to continue.

**Cde. C. Jagan:** I am trying to show how the debt payments are becoming a big problem not only in relation to income and expenditure but also in relation to our exports. It means then that we have problems to balance the Budget. There are Budget deficits and balance of payments deficits, because we have to pay so much outside. The more the Government borrows, the more it spends on what it calls strategic services, the more we will find these problems becoming aggravated.

As I said – and I repeat – stagnation is nothing new. The P.P.P. long ago pointed out what must be done to solve this problem. Way back in 1973 we put forward a seven-point policy statement. In June 1976 our party came out with a seventeen point policy statement. Some are questioning the patriotism of the P.P.P. Let it be put on the record: when the P.N.C. took an anti-imperialist turn in 1975/76, both in domestic and foreign policies, where the balance was against imperialism in the total policies, contrary to the previous period when the balance was on the side of pro-imperialism, when there was talk of destabilisation, the P.P.P. came out and changed its political line to critical support.

More than that. At the personal level we agreed on May Day 1976 to appear together with the P.N.C. leadership to tell the world that there is national unity. The P.P.P. cannot get any publicity in the Government media but on that occasion a photograph of Jagan and Burnham was splashed over the front pages of their glossy magazine and sent all over the world. They made good propaganda of that.

One month later, on Enmore Martyr's Day in June, when I got up to speak I said it is not enough if you are going to fight imperialism for two leaders to stand up together. Equally important, we must have a sound economy, otherwise you cannot stand the pressure of I.M.F. You know what has happened all over the world with I.M.F.

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**4.40 – 4.50 p.m.**

And so we put forward the 17 points. Those were ignored. Up to today they are ignored. Those 17 points of 1976 and 7 points of 1973 included some of the things which the Prime Minister got up in this House and said that his Government would do.

In 1971, when we gave them support to nationalise the bauxite company, we gave them parliamentary support to nationalise and not have to pay immediate compensation. But they never implemented those things. So we had to repeat them in 1973 and we had to repeat them again in 1976. That is the root of the problems.

Therefore, all of this about P.P.P. not being patriotic and being tied to Moscow and this and that are garbage. The record is there. That is the record. [**Cde. Hoyte**: “You said you were tied to Moscow.”]

**The Speaker**: I do not follow the last point you were making about the record.

**Cde. C. Jagan**: The record of our critical support. On important occasions when the national interest was involved, as in 1971, we gave support. In 1976 we gave support but in their own petty bourgeois nationalist self-interest they refused to implement those things which we have been calling for and some of which the Prime Minister himself said would be implemented when the peace plan was enunciated in this House in 1971.

**4.50 p.m.**

Cde. Speaker, let us not live in dreams, in hopes, which are not going to materialise. Many talk of creating a Utopia, such as Robert Owen and other Utopian socialists. Jim Jones promised a haven in Guyana and it all ended in tragedy for an unfortunate number of people who had to run away from capitalism and ghetto life in the United States. Preaching alone is not going to help. What Guyana needs is more than just taking a course dictated by imperialism to make Guyana into a raw material agrarian appendage of the Caribbean Common Market dominated by imperialism which is dependent upon capitalism and deformed industrialisation. That is the reality when we talk about economics. That is where we are being pushed by the I.M.F. and the imperialists and that is where this Government, under pressure is taking us.

Let us look at foreign policy. Here again we see a move to a pro-imperialist position. A shift away from the 1975/1976 position to the 1971/74 position when the balance was on the side of imperialism. This where we are moving the country again. And we have seen some aspects of this already. One aspect is our relations with Brazil. **New Nation** had a cartoon the other day showing two hands clasping. Friends. We have no quarrel with having friendly relations with Brazil but let us refresh our memories. It was only in 1975/76 that the Government was attacking Brazil for wanting to destabilise this Government and this nation. And the previous agreements, which were made with Brazil previous to that period, which were put in cold storage in that period, are now being resuscitated to give Brazil a free port facility in Georgetown, to build a road to the interior, and to get a \$6 million loan from Brazil to build a bridge over the Takutu river. And in the previous context of working with imperialism, they have also signed the Amazon Pact. Brazil, whose dictatorship has stretched its tentacles to the south, to the West, is now moving to the North. And Guyana and Fascist Brazil are now partners, their hands are clasped in unity.

Cde. Speaker, this is not a matter over which we must sit and gloat. This is a serious matter. Imperialism works today through sub-imperialism with puppets like Mobutu in Zaire, with people like those in Central America who are to pounce on any movement, like Brazil in the South. When the American troops withdrew from Dominican Republic, Brazilian troops moved in to maintain order, as they put it. Let us understand these realities of international life.

What has happened to the Minister of Education? Has he forgotten all of these things? He should not only tell us about how much education we are given. Let us not forget what Cde. Carrington told us, how we have to raise the level of education. In India, they had so many B.A.'s and B.Sc.'s and M.Sc.'s and in Sri Lanka too, many of educated people, but they could not even get a job as a bus conductor or a chauffeur, or street cleaner, the economy was so bad, and eventually ending, as you know, in the removal, lock, stock and barrel, of those of the Congress Party in India, and the Sri Lankan Party. These are facts which we have to take into consideration in assessing our own situation.

What is another aspect of this change in foreign policy? On Vietnam, there was an international emergency conference called in Helsinki. Naturally, we went and we thought we would have seen the Guyana delegation there. The Guyana Government, the P.N.C., fought hard to get in the World Peace Council, they used pressures and all sorts of things but on this occasion they hid. What is the statement they put out? Cde. Speaker, I have it here. It says in the first paragraph:

“It is particularly disturbing that involved in the conflicts of socialist States including members of the Non-Aligned movement” –

Cde. Speaker, this is American propaganda that socialist States are fighting. This is imperialist propaganda. The fact is China has betrayed socialism; the fact is a new world axis is being formed, as we had in the war, when we had Japan, Germany and Italy. Now, we have the United States and Nato with the Nato Allies, Japan and China.

Long ago, before Kissinger became Secretary of State, when he was a Harvard University Professor, he wrote in a book called **Necessity For Choice** that the rift was just beginning between China and the Soviet Union and it must be the United States policy to widen that rift and bring China behind United States foreign policy. That is now happening. And these people who say they are socialists absent themselves from an important conference concerning one of the most heroic nations of the world, the Vietnamese, who had been fighting foreign aggression for more than 50 years. They refused to show up. And they begin to regurgitate imperialist propaganda. What is the third paragraph?

“Guyana regrets that in relation to democratic Kampuchea, the Security Council was prevented from taking a decision based upon the principled position put forward by its Non-Aligned members”.

This is again propaganda. The capitalist countries, the imperialist countries were attacking the Pol Pot regime, talking about slaughter and murder. When that regime was overthrown, I remember hearing a debate going on the radio, the Voice of America, that a security debate was coming on, and that the United States would be in a very difficult position because it was constantly attacking the Pol Pot regime, that there was a denial of all kinds of

rights. When that regime was overthrown, I saw films, I saw photographs, I heard a report from journalists who had been there. This is where the P.N.C. should have been to see and hear all those things but they absented themselves. Is it the money, the filthy lucre?

As I said, a new axis is being formed and China is now working on the side of imperialism in all the theatres of the world, be it Chile, be it Kampuchea, be it NATO. In the case of the U.S. base in the Indian Ocean, all the Non-Aligned countries voted against it, yet, China says it is good to have it there. The North Koreans threw the American troops out of South Korea; the Chinese say no, they must stay there.

And so let us get the facts clear. Domestic policy and foreign policy are related, they are interlinked and they react and they inter-react on each other. They cannot hope to be socialists at home as they claim and at the same time, give socialism a bad name. Why are they opening the door in Guyana to foreign capitalism and at the same time lining up with the imperialists and the so-called Communists of China to stop the process of national liberation and socialism?

**5 p.m.**

Incidentally, that part where it says that Guyana rejects, and the Security Council was prevented from taking a decision based upon the principled position of Non-Aligned members, is a serious attack on the Soviet Union because the Soviet Union uses the veto. When we talk about non-alignment, let us understand. There are all kinds of positions in the Non-Aligned Movement. We saw in the Angolan crisis where twenty-two African States lined up with the M.P.L.A. and twenty-two lined up with U.N.I.T.A. and F.N.L.A. and on the latter side was South Africa, Zaire, C.I.A. and China. So this is the line they are now taking in private circles, that the Soviet Union did not give us the money so we must go to the Americans. This is the line.

Cde. Speaker, there is another way out. There is another solution and that was presented by G.A.W.U.

**The Speaker:** Before you go on to that other line, perhaps we will have the suspension. When we return, you will have half an hour.



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5.23 – 5.35 p.m.

The Sitting of House is suspended for 30 minutes.

*Sitting suspended at 5 p.m.*

5.23 p.m.

*On resumption –*

**The Speaker:** When the Suspension was taken, Cde. Jagan, you were speaking.

**Cde. C. Jagan:** When the Suspension was taken, I was dealing with the foreign policy statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, dated March 4, 1979. The last paragraph says the following:

“In the light of its articulated position, the Government of Guyana calls for an end to hostilities, the withdrawal of all foreign forces and the restoration of a regime of peace in the area”.

This is a similar line which is now peddled by the imperialists, that the Chinese must withdraw from Vietnam and the Vietnamese must withdraw from Kampuchea. This is a similar line, incidentally, which the Americas took when they had committed aggression against Vietnam, when world public opinion was demanding a withdrawal of American troops from South Vietnam. U.S. imperialism then took the line that all troops must withdraw, that is, not only American troops but North Vietnamese troops from South Vietnam. So it is clear that the Government both in its domestic and foreign policies is now turning swiftly to the right, to the pro-imperialist positions which it held before.

Now the question which we have to ask ourselves is where this is going to get us. Already, we have to ask ourselves about this question of the payment to the workers of an adequate wage and we have to ask ourselves, as Cde. Pollydore, General Secretary of the T.U.C. asked in his Annual Report for 1978: Is there a way out of the crisis? Can we afford to pay the \$14 a day? Before answering this question, I think the main question which we must ask is, can the working people afford to live on less than \$14 a day? This is the fundamental question. When one considers what is happening in the shops, apart from the scarcities and the high prices – I

have already referred to the rampant inflation and the steep increase in the cost of living – clearly those figures justify the payment of the \$14 a day.

It is strange how the Government is now arguing. Not only is it saying we cannot afford it, but it is saying that increased wages will cause more hardships. This is a statement which the Government has put out and which is more or less saying that the payment of wages will cause more hardships. The members of the Government referred to the poor pensioners, for instance, and the unemployed who will suffer increasingly added pressure. If they were so sympathetic to the pensioners they certainly would have increased the \$16 a month which is being given to them. Trinidad does not claim to be socialist but it has a minimum pension of over \$70 per month food stamps and free transportation, something which the pensioners do not get in this country. So it is remarkable that these pseudo socialists are now shedding tears about pensioners. The fact of the matter is that they are constantly making propaganda.

One so-called journalist by the name of Kester Alves is constantly repeating a lie, propaganda, about “not a cent more”. The P.P.P. when it was in Government had increased the wage for the lowest-paid workers against the recommendations of the Gorsuch Commission in 1958. That is a fact and Kester Alves and the P.N.C. know this but they use the mass media which they control to repeat a lie, hoping to delude workers to make the workers feel: Well, what is the P.P.P. talking about? They did not do it. That is why they keep repeating this statement and taking it out of context and, indeed, distorting what is the meaning of that. It had relevance when it was uttered in relation to the super scale salaries which were to be increased tremendously by the Gorsuch Commission. But, propagandists that they are, and the disseminators of falsehood, they want to repeat a lie over and over.

### **5.35 p.m.**

The G.A.W.U. in its memorandum to the T.U.C. at a special conference pointed out that the Government can afford to pay the \$14, indeed, to restore all the subsidies and to increase personal allowances and so forth. But this calls for revolutionary action, not just talk. If you examine the structure of the Budget, step by step, the sector which is going to social services is being cut from 45 per cent in 1964 to 28 per cent today, and what is growing? The bureaucracy

grows – the privileges, the salaries. To add insult to injury the Government not too long ago promoted three Ministers to Senior Ministers. Their salaries and allowances rose from \$2,000 a month to \$3,000 a month. That is the extravagance we are talking about.

We say first, cut down the waste, cut down the privileges, cut down the extravagances. Those are the first things. Secondly, we say stop the debt and compensation payments. I have said already that 40 per cent of the expenditure of the Government on current budget is going for the payment of debts. More than that, 58 per cent of all the revenues of the Government is going to pay debts and that has come up to a fantastic sum of \$234 million. If, therefore, we take a revolutionary action in stopping those payments then we can balance the Budget. Balance it, not at the expense of the working people as was done last year in increased taxation, in cuts of all subsidies, in retrenchment of 4,000 workers at the bottom.

We can also solve the problem of balance of payments difficulties because the crisis is manifested in these two ways – balance of payments deficit, and budget deficit. Solve the budget deficit by cutting out the extravagance, the waste and the luxurious living of the elite in many areas which, by judicial pruning, can be brought down to a reasonable level; stop those payments, the debt and compensation payments, which will help to solve the problem at the expense of the foreign elite who have exploited this country, who have drained the wealth of this country and who have kept this country in its present state of underdevelopment. That is the way out. That is the answer, but these people only talk about socialism. They talk about national unity. Why do they not take such action? If they take such action they know they will get the support and backing of the P.P.P. but they cannot penalise the worker and expect that the P.P.P. will give them 100 per cent support or whatever support they want.

I remember the last meeting we had with the P.N.C. in 1976 when the Prime Minister issued an ultimatum. He said: “Withdraw the editorial or the talks are not going on”. What was the editorial in the **Mirror**? “Money for Guns not Bread”. These people have set up a paramilitary and military organisation to keep them in power, not to defend the nation. [**Cde. Hoyte**: “They are not set up yet”.]

**The Speaker:** Cde. Hoyte, please allow the comrade to proceed.

**Cde. C. Jagan:** They put in a vote of \$19 million and they sabotaged the People's Militia too. It was to be in every hamlet, in every village, in this country. Instead, they want to establish in this country a P.N.C. force to keep them in power as the dictator Gairy did. This is what they are doing.

At the same time, they were talking about removing all subsidies, that the country cannot afford to pay subsidies and they wanted the P.P.P. to go along with that. Critical support does not mean surrendering the rights of the people to those who want to fight against the people's interest, those who have robbed them and squeezed them.

They say that we are de-stabilisers; that they are revolutionaries and we are counter-revolutionaries; that they are Bolsheviks and we are Mensheviks. They compare themselves with Allende in Chile and they say we are behaving like the de-stabilisers of the Allende Government. Allende did not have an Opposition which gave him critical support at a critical point when, from their own mouths, they were attacking Brazil, United States and North America for trying to de-stabilise them.

This country is one of the few countries in the world where the Opposition is Left, where it is in a more revolutionary position than the Government. Can the Government give the reason why those talks broke down on the very first day the talks opened? I said, "Let us talk comprehensively about a political solution". They said, "No." They wanted to talk step by step, point by point. I knew from the 1971 experience when they had made many commitments here, that they did not intend to fulfil any of those points to recognise the democratic rights of the Guyanese people, particularly the Opposition because that would permit the Opposition to grow even more than it has grown. Therefore, it was necessary to talk about the total situation.

Anything that implies their removal from the Government obviously they would not tolerate and it was in that context we said, "Let us talk about the comprehensive situation, the main question of political unity". They were not prepared for that. So, when they talk about national unity and they shed crocodile tears, it is only to fool the people.

Cde. Kester Alves made a statement the other day.

**The Speaker:** Cde. Jagan, would you please not refer to people who are not in a position to reply. You can say “some correspondent” and use the article.

**Cde. C. Jagan:** They have no reply? They have more than one means. I am talking about an article.

**Cde. Speaker:** Cde. Alves has no right of reply.

**Cde. C. Jagan:** He can reply tomorrow in the Daily Chronicle, and the next day, and he can go on the radio. I am not defaming him. I am talking about an article.

**Cde. Speaker:** Cde. Alves has no right to reply.

**Cde. C. Jagan:** He can reply tomorrow in the Daily Chronicle, and the next, and can go on the radio. I am not defaming him. I am only repeating what he said. He said that the P.P.P. took an extreme position on many issues. I do not want to go into all the details but I want to say it for the record in this House because when I write to the Daily Chronicle they do not publish it. [**Cde. Hoyte:** “That is true. Why should they publish your puppet statements and letter full of lies? Don’t you have your own newspaper?”] They only publish what they like. If the members of the P.N.C. are serious about national unity, how is it that they have not followed, have not taken up the decision of the T.U.C. Special Conference which said that there should be a political solution to the country’s problem?

Many of them come into this House and they distort Marxism. They quote from books taking things out of their context and not only out of context but without relating them to the whole milieu of what was happening, for instance, in the Soviet Union, without looking at the whole class position, the whole question of power, and who wields political power.

It is all right to talk, as they do. I understand one Minister said that in Cuba they use buses to transport people to rallies and they use the Press to mobilise the people. They use the Press, the mass media, for development. This is form but not content.

I have referred already to the New Economic Policy. The question is this: In Cuba there was the 26<sup>th</sup> July movement, revolutionary democrats. Fidel Castro broke away from the petty bourgeois Nationalist Party and formed the 26<sup>th</sup> Of July Movement. And when he came to power, soon after he teamed up with the Marxist/Leninists. Within two years, we have seen that with the Marxist/Leninists of the People's Socialist Party, he formed the Communist Party and took Cuba into the socialist world. That is a reality. In the case of the Soviet Union, the workers took power; a workers' State was established.

**5.45 p.m.**

Can we say in Guyana we have a workers' State? Cde. Speaker, it is one thing to talk of a party and to talk of a workers' State. What is the P.N.C.? What is it? What are its historical roots? Let us not forget its historical roots, an alliance, a merger between the rightist wing of the P.P.P., which became opportunist at a crucial moment when we were facing imperialism, when that wing lost the elections of '57, and the reactionary racist elements who were opposed to the P.P.P. in 1953 and onwards, the U.D.P. and the League of Coloured Peoples. That is the P.N.C. Those are its historical roots; that is the leadership and then let us not be fooled by this thing that the workers are supporting them. They were obviously ... , but workers vote for the Conservative Party in England too and put it in power. They vote for conservatives elsewhere very freely because they are brainwashed, fooled, as the P.N.C. has been fooling them but time is catching up with them as was shown in the last Referendum.

Cde. Speaker, why did the members of the P.N.C. reject the call of the P.P.P.? If they are genuine socialists, if they were revolutionaries, if they were Marxist/Leninists, they would have embraced with open arms the call of the P.P.P. In no country of the world could you have got such a beautiful situation. What Allende was trying to do in Chile could have been achieved in this country, if the premise was correct, that is, that the leadership of the P.N.C. was revolutionary, was socialist, but the P.N.C. rejected it because of the class interest. On Independence, the bureaucrats, petty bourgeois nationalists rose to the top of the administrative governmental ladder. On nationalisation, they rose again to the top and a big bureaucracy has been established. Today, the people have to pay for that. Then there is another side of the

bourgeois developing, attaching itself parasitically, like barnacles on the State Corporations, and bleeding the Corporations. Instead of the profits going to the people and going to the national treasury, they are going to these parasites, commission agents, construction companies, accounting firms, legal firms, architectural firms, shipping firms, and so on. This is the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the G.E.C. Listen to this:

“Question: Are you satisfied with the contract?”

Answer: I am not a lawyer. Clarke and Martin were our lawyers, and they approved.

(Chairman points out several instances in the contract where the clients, that is the corporation, did not seem to be protected. Time was not related to work, etc., and Commissioner Felix points out to observations made by Moss in his evidence and in his letters).

Answer: We were unfortunate in that the lawyers of Shawinigan in Guyana were Clarke & Martin and they were also our lawyers”.

Politics or patronage? Both sides are represented. Listen to this now:

“Question: This is an astonishing revelation surely this is unsatisfactory?”

Answer: Well, this is what happened. We often come across this problem as Clarke & Martin are lawyers for other Corporations and when we should sue, e.g. damage to our vehicles we are told don't worry to do so.

Question: Then you had no independent advice re the Shawinigan's Contract.

Answer: Only from Clarke and Martin”.

We have another instance of a man who holds key positions on the Public Service and Police Service Commissions, being dominant. He has an accounting firm. We have been saying that the accounts of all Corporations must go to the Government Audit Department but his accounting firm gets the business. Recently, we saw that same individual becoming a national capitalist, he is a director of a refrigerator company and he is a director also of a stove company

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**5.45 – 5.55 p.m.**

and this is the same Company in which Guyanese capitalists will now be involved with foreign capitalist, Trinidadian capitalists who own the refrigerator company, and the International Finance Corporations through the World Bank will be giving them loans.

This is the tie up, a new bureaucratic bourgeoisie arising, industrial bourgeoisie, and these fellows are now interlinked through political patronage and they do not want to surrender their privileges and their positions. That is why they refuse our call for National Patriotic Front Government which could have united this country and united the people to take firm position against imperialism.

If you want to build socialism you have to fight imperialism, anti-imperialism is the gateway to socialism. Socialism is not built by verbiage. They say so in that statement “We continue to strive for the orderly transformation of our country into a socialist state”. Hocus-pocus! These are only words to fool the gullible. You cannot go to socialism unless you take an anti-imperialist course firmly in domestic policy and foreign policy. Tell us which country in the world in both domestic and foreign policy took a pro-imperialist course and arrived at socialism. Tell us which one.

In Jamaica, I spoke with one of the leaders of the Uruguay Party, the Leader of which is now in exile. They signed an agreement in that country in 1958. The peso is devalued in that country now. It used to be worth, a few years ago, 27 pesos to \$1 (U.S.). Now it is about 2700 pesos to \$1 (U.S.). The military overthrew the last President named Bordaberry, because the class struggle was advancing, because the revolutionary forces were coming forward. Because they wanted to prevent that happening, they stage a pre-emptive coup...

**The Speaker:** Five minutes more, Dr. Jagan.

**5.55 p.m.**

**Cde. C. Jagan:** which we have been talking about. That is why we have reiterated that solutions to the social and economic problems must come through a political solution. Without a solution to the political crisis, we are not going to have a solution to the economic and social crisis. No matter how they try to rig the Constitution to make the present Prime Minister into a



President and give him an extended term of office, give him unlimited powers, emasculate the Parliament, put in nominated members. Those things are not going to solve the problems of the country. They will help to keep the P.N.C. in power. Now, they can't rig so easily, the world is watching. The International Commission of Jurists, their own friends at one time, have now shown the rigging that goes on. They made a wonderful report on the last Referendum.

I say this, Guyana needs a political solution. The working people of Guyana, through their premier organisations, the T.U.C., have called for this, but they are pressing the T.U.C. to go to the Constituent Assembly to help them rig the Constitution instead of taking the course –

**[Interruption]**

**The Speaker:** Comrades, let us have some order, please.

**Cde. C. Jagan:** I say to these people who, for the time being, hold the Government seats that they must, in the national interest, reconsider the position of the people of this country, and avoid the dangers that we have seen in Uruguay and elsewhere, to genuinely seek to solve the political crisis in the country and let Guyana go forward out of the perpetual depression in which this country has now found itself.

**The Minister of Economic Development and Co-operatives (Cde. Hoyte) (replying):** Cde. Speaker, this general debate on the Budget Statement is intended to afford hon. Members an opportunity to review the economy in the light of the Budget Speech, make in-depth analyses of the economic situation, probe the reasons for non-performance or malfunctioning of the economy, and afford members of the Opposition an opportunity to come up with alternative proposals, tactics and strategies for correcting such errors or mistakes as they may allege. But, of course, it takes a measure of intelligence to pursue such a course of debate and, in the circumstances, it is not surprising that we have not had this kind of approach from the comrades on the other side of the House. Certainly, we have had no alternative suggestions from them as to what we should do with the economy. It is unfortunate that Members should have taken this opportunity to indulge in a roving commission and to indulge in lengthy statements about matters which cannot even be described as having a peripheral relationship to the subject. But some of those matters are sufficiently important for me to dwell upon them since this debate was used by

members of the Opposition not really for dealing with the Budget, but for making a number of propaganda points which, of course, have no basis in truth.

Obviously, the hon. Leader of the Opposition would not have repeated everything that was said by one Member or the other from the Opposition Benches if he had been here throughout the debate to listen to what was said. Unfortunately and certainly for the political faction of which he is the titular leader, for this country, he chose to be in foreign parts at a time when the most important annual topic to be debated in this honourable House was being debated. So he ends up saying the same things which has been said, only more incoherently and certainly with a larger number of solecisms. He had the effrontery to charge this Government with racism. I would say that the facts speak for themselves. If we look at the benches on the Government side and look at the benches of the Opposition side, we have potent and irrefutable evidence, visible evidence, about who is racist and whose approach to racial harmony bears testimony in fact.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition sought the sanctity of this forum to talk about matters relating to the inter-party discussions in 1976 between the representative of the P.P.P. and the representatives of the People's National Congress, talks which were aimed at establishing certain areas of contact and the *modus vivendi* between the two parties. In his usual way he sought to use this forum to show how very poor his memory is or what little regard he has for truth. The talks foundered on the fact that the People's Progressive Party was not prepared to deal with issues, principles and concepts and spent its time trying to raise niggling matters of detail and matters of detail relating to racial issues. It was the Leader of the People's Progressive Party who said that he could not agree to Indians taking part in National Service. Hon. Members will recall that the official line of the P.P.P. at first was "down with National Service". And then they were advised by certain non-Guyanese agencies that to oppose National Service was really to oppose something which was socialist. They consequently changed their tactics, they retreated a bit and took the position, "We are not opposed to National Service but Indian girls must not go to National Service".

6.05 p.m.

It was at that point the Cde. Leader said to Dr. Jagan “Are you talking race or class? Because if you are talking race you cannot claim to be a Marxist. If you are a Marxist you will be talking class”. And Dr. Jagan replied “I cannot forget the fact that I am leader of the Indian”. **[Interruption]** A man like that does not have the right, the moral authority, to stand here and talk about racialism. Let me say that we have verbatim reports of all those discussions. **[Interruption by Cde. Narbada Persaud]** Cde. Narbada Persaud does not hold a sufficient high rank in the P.P.P. to have been present at those talks. Those are the facts.

What is more, the Leader of the Opposition chose to talk about how many places he should get on the Public Service Commission and some Corporation Boards because, said he, he had members and he would like to extend patronage to them. And to show the level of his intellectuality, he said that he wanted 49 per cent of the membership of the Public Service Commission. When it was pointed out to him that if he got 49 per cent on the Public Service Commission, the Public Service Commission would have to have a membership of 100 persons, he said, “What you all say? How much you gun give me?”

And it was the “gie me” mentality which pervaded the Leader of the People’s Progressive Party and those lackeys of his who sat there silently because not one of them could say a word except of course – **[Interruption by Cde. Dalchand]**

**The Speaker:** Cde. Dalchand, they were not interrupting Dr. Jagan.

**Cde. Hoyte:** There was the member Janet Jagan who, whenever there was a pleasant atmosphere developing, walked out of the talks.

The Leader of the Opposition went on to talk about critical support and the support that he and his party gave to this Government and to the People’s Congress. That support, as far as he was concerned, was intended to be the support which a rope gives a hanging man. I recall, since he himself raised the matter and prides himself on the fact that he supported the P.N.C. Government’s nationalisation of DEMBA, the price he exacted. His support was given not out of altruistic motives, not out of socialist convictions, but out of personal greed. What did he want? I

have adverted to this matter in this House before and I have written to the Press and if it were not so he had the remedy. He wanted the Government should use its authority to get his son, Joey, back to Sir George Williams University in Canada from which he had been expelled; secondly, that there should be an increase in his emoluments as Leader of the Opposition; thirdly, that he should get free transportation throughout this country.

That is what he wanted. He was horse trading. He was not a mature political leader. He was not a mature socialist. That was not socialist morality: that was the morality of a horse trader and his difficulty is that he has never been able to rise above the level of a political horse trader.

He is wont to quote. He likes quotations. He is always quoting from some book there is never anything which one can say constitutes an original thought of the Leader of the Opposition. He quotes from a document allegedly written by one Dr. Clive Thomas – I do not know who is the author because the Government and the Party are in receipt of the document, but it bears no signature and is not claimed by anyone; I would hate to think that that document has been prepared by a professional economist because, if it has been prepared by a professional economist, I would say that that economist is incompetent or intellectually and politically dishonest.

The figures quoted from the document by the Leader of the Opposition about the per capita quantity of milk and meat and so on available to the people of this country are based upon what I would call calculated rascality, the misuse of statistics to mislead the unheeding. I would tell you what the author of that document did. He took, for example, in the case of milk, the imports and he divided the imports by the total population, taking no account of the milk production in the country. Similarly, on the question of meat, he divided by the total population. So, according to him, every new-born baby is eating meat. Everybody knows that this is not a proper approach to the question of deciding upon the availability of the food and the quantum of food available to people in this country.

The author talks in that document about the fall in production of metal grade bauxite without adverting to the fact that that was deliberate policy if GUYBAU, as it then was, in reducing the output of the least valuable of its products stream and accentuating the production

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**6.05 -6.15 p.m.**

of calcined bauxite, which is the most valuable. I would say to the author of that document, whoever he is – I shall say it here and at the street corner – that he is either incompetent or politically and intellectually dishonest.

I would advert again to the point made by the Leader of the Opposition. He said that the Government has blamed the workers at one time for the failure of the economy to grow; and that another time, it blamed the civil servants and, at a third time, it blamed the P.P.P. I refute that allegation categorically, because the Government has always had the most excellent and cordial relationship with the working people and public servants and will continue to have that relationship. It is time to stop cheap political ploys to woo an important section of our community. They are so transparent that they would not deceive an infant.

**6.15 p.m.**

But certainly the hon. Leader of the Opposition could not be serious, could not be so deficient in memory as to say that the P.P.P. has never attempted to disrupt, as a matter of conscious policy production in this country. After the elections of 1964 there was a widespread publicised campaign to prevent people from planting, particularly among the rice farmers. In 1973, again after the elections, we had the same phenomenon. I recall that gentleman who is now in Canada, a certain Mr. Ramlakhan, who, while he was going around telling people not to plant rice, was the first man to plant his own rice field and draw the bonus from the G.R.B. The hon. Leader of the Opposition knows these things and comes here to say that he has always co-operated in an attempt to promote production in this country.

And then, Cde. Speaker, we had some other serious lapses of memory on the part of the Leader of the Opposition. Says he: “We must not pay compensation for those industries and interests we have nationalised” and yet it was the People’s Progressive Party, in a manifesto drafted by the Leader of the Opposition, which says – that is his face on the cover – “it is not the Party’s policy –

**The Speaker:** Dr. Jagan was not interrupted. I took particular pains not for him to be interrupted. I do not want any interruptions of the Minister. You must take it just as you want to give it.

**Cde. Hoyte:** Cde. Speaker, I quote from page 12 of the manifesto:

“it is not the policy of the Party to nationalise any industry but if it becomes necessary in the national interest to do so fair and adequate compensation will be paid”.

And he now stands up there brazenly and tells this Government which has taken revolutionary action to nationalise foreign interests in this country and to domesticate our economy, that we must not pay compensation. He has the advantage of irresponsibility, so that he can stand there and say anything and make any claim because his main point is to secure some political advantage rather than to concern himself with the interest of this country. And again he says that we are tied up with the I.M.F. imperialist organisation. I don't believe most members of the P.P.P. Opposition were even around the Party when this document was prepared and I don't think that they are knowledgeable of it. I don't think they have read it because it is the same P.P.P. which on page 10 of its manifesto talks proudly about involving the I.M.F., about establishing a Bank of Guyana and about awaiting only the resolution of a few points in consultation with the I.M.F. before doing so. Cde. Speaker, I shall return to this point in moment. Dr. Jagan talks about private capital. He says that we are allowing private Guyanese bourgeoisie capital to come back into the economy, that we are allowing imperialist foreign capital to come back into the country. Yet, it is the same gentleman representing the same Party, who in this same document says:

“The Party is committed to a mixed tri-sectored economy in which private capital, local and foreign, will have ample scope to develop itself and also in combination with public capital”.

And he says just before that on page 8:

“Contrary to malicious opposition allegations about interference of property rights, the P.P.P. Government has extended the ownership of private property”.

And today he stands here forgetful – let me be charitable – of what he has written. He is so prone to write, but he says that we are encouraging private capital, we are encouraging foreign capital, when he says in this document that that is exactly what he intended to do.

And finally, on these, what I call high comedy points of his speech, he accused us of being non-aligned. What a dreadful thing! But one understands this, because he himself stood in this honourable House and said, “I am proud to be a puppet of the Soviet Union”. We, on this side, look upon that with shame, that one of our countrymen, a man who has been involved in political life over the years should have come to this sorry pass, where he commits himself and his Party to a State, I won’t say of slavery, I would merely say of wardship, to a foreign country and a political Party in that foreign country. On this side, what distinguishes the People’s National Congress from the People’s Progressive Party is that we are puppets of nobody and we will make our own decision, worked out by ourselves, in what we perceive to be in the national interest.

Cde. Speaker, let me rebut a few points which the Leader of the Opposition was peddling in this House, either out of a lack of knowledge or out of a certain deviousness of mind. He has taken a lot of time debating our membership of the International Monetary Fund and the arrangements which we have made with the International Monetary Fund because, he says, our association is the hallmark of being an imperialist stooge. Well, if that is so, how does he explain the fact that Vietnam is not only a member of COMECON of CMEA, but is also a member of the International Monetary Fund. I repeat, Vietnam is a member of COMECON and a member of the International Monetary Fund, and in 1978 signed a stand-by agreement with the International Monetary Fund under which it received \$72 million (U.S.) at the same time when we were negotiating an arrangement with the Fund.

How does he explain that fact that Romania, another Socialist country, is a member of the International Monetary Fund and in 1978 negotiated a stand-by agreement under which it was entitled to draw down \$205 million (U.S.)? Is it that the Leader of the Opposition does not

know? I prefer to believe that. I would not like to believe that he has stood in this honourable House with the intention of misleading his own members and attempting – and I say attempting because he cannot mislead us – to mislead the members on the Government Benches.

**6.25p.m.**

He talked about foreign investment. I have said in this House before that every member country of COMECON, except the U.S.S.R., has legislation permitting the inflow of foreign private capital and, as late as two weeks ago, Poland liberalised its foreign investment laws permitting foreigners of Polish origin to establish companies in Poland. Prior to that, 1976, there were laws which handed back to private entrepreneurs all the distribution outlets under an arrangement by which the shopkeepers kept the profits and paid the State a fixed rent. These things are happening in Socialist countries.

Vietnam published a private investment code inviting foreign capital and, in certain circumstances, permitting 100 per cent foreign ownership. Is it that the Leader of the Opposition and those Members who applauded him so vigorously have no knowledge of these things? Is it that they do not read? Is it that they do not know those things which are necessary to enable them to discharge their parliamentary and political duties properly and faithfully?

Let me go further. During the course of this month – and this has been a development taking place in all Socialist countries, I speak about the development of joint ventures between the Socialist countries and capitalist countries – Vietnam established a joint venture in pharmaceuticals with a French Company. This has been taking place. I do not want to take up a lot of time referring to the hundreds of such arrangements in every Socialist country, Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia, you name them. What is more, last year when Fidel Castro was interviewed for U.S. television and the question of the possibility of foreign capital being invested in Cuba was raised with him. He did not say “never”, he did not say “it is contrary to our political position”. What did he say? He said, “we have had not offers as yet, but if such a situation arises we will not take a sectarian view”. And we know what Castro means by that. In



Poland these are the facts. There has been a large number of such ventures established within recent times. I do not want to spend any more time on that.

We have been criticised because it is said we borrow money. I have made the point in this House that every country in the world borrows. If you do not borrow it is because you cannot, nobody is willing to lend you. And what is the debt position of the Socialist countries? The total indebtedness of COMECON countries as at 30<sup>th</sup> June, 1978, was U.S. \$42.5 billion. The total borrowing of COMECON countries on the Euro dollar market alone in 1978 was U.S. \$4 billion, and if one wants to get a few illustrated examples of borrowing by COMECON countries one can refer to the £15 million line of credit established by the National Westminster Bank of the U.K. to Poland in 1978, and a similar line of credit just established by the same bank to Poland. One can point to the fact that even now using the Bank of America as the lead Bank, Poland is attempting to raise a loan in the United States of \$500 million. Romania has just received a loan from the World Bank for U.S. \$180 million and one can add that to a loan of \$882 million U.S. which it received last year.

Let us come nearer home to Cuba. This is a statement by Leon Torres, the President of the National Bank of Cuba. He estimated the Cuban borrowing on the world market last year at \$200 million U.S. So what is the hullabaloo about Guyanese borrowing? Trinidad borrows because it is prudent to borrow and it is the only way in which the country can proceed with its development plans.

Then, of course, the hon. Leader of the Opposition does not understand this whole concept of debt. He adds together short term internal debt and long term internal debt with external debt and he does some kind of calculation that makes no sense in financial or economic terms. Since 1971 I have been trying to explain to the hon. Leader of the Opposition the concept of the debt service ratio. He still cannot understand, and I do not think I will pursue the matter with him any further. It is time he makes himself knowledgeable. He can read and he must read.

Then we are told about foreign banks in Guyana. Doesn't the hon. Leader of the Opposition know that there are foreign banks in Moscow? Doesn't he know that Chase Manhattan is there? Doesn't he know that the Bank of America is there? Doesn't he know that

there are other American banks in the heart of Moscow, and doesn't he know that there are Soviet Banks, notably the Narodny Bank, in several parts of the world? Banking is international and no country can be in the mainstream of international trade and economic activity unless there are reciprocal banking arrangements. What is he talking about?

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He sought to spend time criticising our foreign policy: we are not principled he says, we have not taken a position on what he calls the Chinese invasion of Vietnam. But let me remind him of the consequences of an unthinking line of "follow-my-leader" policy. When Stalin was committing his atrocities, he defended those actions. Stalin was right, he said at that time. But, of course, after the thaw and the Soviets themselves began denouncing Stalin, then he denounced Stalin too.

We are not in that game; we think for ourselves. We make decision for ourselves, and we follow a foreign policy line which starts off with this proposition, articulated by the Minister of Foreign Affairs on so many occasions: that it is the national self-interest of Guyana which comes first. **[Applause]**

Why is it that the Soviet Union has never closed its Embassy in Brazil? And yet the Leader of the Opposition gets up and tells us, "Abuse Brazil! Attack Brazil! Close your Mission there". But the Soviets do not attack Brazil. They do not close their Mission there. They keep their Mission there. Why? Because as a market for Soviet goods is so great that Soviet self-interest demands friendly relations with Brazil.

Why is it that Romanians have not closed their Embassy in Chile, or the Government of the German Democratic Republic? But he wants us to do things that big powers, mighty powers, have considered imprudent.

And perhaps, since he has brought in the Kampuchea/Vietnam/Chinese issue, he may want to explain to us why it is that the Soviet Union never withdraw its support from Lon Nol, reputedly and widely acknowledged to be one of the most fascist Governments which existed at that time. What kind of double standard is he coming here with? One understands it in the light

of his statement that he is a puppet. If you are a puppet that is how you behave. As the puppeteer manipulates his fingers you hop and you jump.

I would not wish to go into the whole question of tactics of development. I would merely remind him of two things: the statement which came out of the Conference of Communist and Workers Parties of Europe, the Berlin Conference in 1976, I think it was, which accepted, after so many years, the position of Marshal Tito and the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, that every country has the right to pursue its own road to socialism. That was accepted and, in the light of that acceptance, even by the U.S.S.R., why should we be following anybody else's road? Have we not got the intelligence, the common sense and the creativity to devise our own institutions and mechanisms and to follow our own path?

What they said in Berlin in 1976 is nothing new because Stalin, Molotov and Voroshilov had sent a joint letter to the leader of the Spanish Communist party just before the Civil War in which they had said precisely that same thing when they were urging him to form coalitions with those people who, although not socialists were nevertheless willing to put their nationalism first in the fight against the impeding fascist dictatorship.

I think that when leading members of the Opposition get up to debate in this House they must debate with a certain objectivity, they must debate against a background of facts and they must bear in mind, if they claim to be patriotic, that they are dealing with the vital national interests of this country.

I want to say that one cannot debate the performance of the economy in 1978 unless one looks at the wider context of what happened in the world; and the truth of the matter was that in 1978 and, indeed, for some years before that, there had not been a significant growth in the world trade and world output. In 1977, in the industrial countries of the world, output rose only 3.8 per cent. In 1978 it fell to 3.7 per cent and in 1979 it remains at 3.7 per cent. Similarly, world trade in 1977 was 4.5 per cent; in 1978 it was 5 per cent and 1979, 5 per cent. These are low growth rates; and if one per chance were to feel that this was peculiar to what one may call the capitalist western countries, the same phenomenon was exhibited in the Soviet Union where in 1977 their grew by 5.6 per cent, which was considered low, well below the targeted projection. The Soviet

had hoped in 1978 to get back to the 1977 level, but what happened? Production fell and they recorded a growth rate of only 4.5 per cent and it was in this context that there was a meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union to consider the state of the economy.

This meeting was held on the 9<sup>th</sup> February, 1979, and the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union, having reviewed their economy, noted and I quote:

“That industry, transport, agriculture and capital investment during 1978 and during 1979 appeared problematic”.

That is a fancy word to say that those sectors did badly. I continue.

“Some Ministries did not fulfil planned targets in the range of products, did not manufacture the required quality of goods and did not reach the planned target rates in increase in the labour productivity. The plans for oil, coal, raw materials and other outputs were not fulfilled. Rail transport showed numerous problems”.

I think Dr. Jagan would have read, even in the local newspapers, how President Brezhnev stated:

“Managers in some sectors were failing to give leadership and to perform and to ensure that their particular sectors grew”.

I am saying it is a world phenomenon, and it is no point saying that in Guyana the economy did not spark. No economy sparked. This was true not only of last year. It is going to be true of this year, even in the Socialist countries, because already in Poland – let me deal generally with the COMECON countries – the position is that the streets are dark and plants are idle now, because of the energy crisis, because of the terrible winter made the G.D.R., for the first time in its history, import coal from West Germany. The G.D.R. had never done it before. And because of increasing oil prices this has had an increasing strain upon their economy. Oil prices from the Soviet Union last year went up by 20 per cent and it is estimated that they will go up again this year. When one takes into account that those countries get only part of their oil supplies from the Soviet Union and have to go in the world market for the rest one can imagine in what a tight situation they are.

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6.45p.m.

I speak not only from what I have read, but from discussions with high-ranking officials from some of the countries in Eastern Europe. So let us not fool ourselves that there is some magic formula which is going to cause the economy to grow by leaps and bounds. I will turn in a moment, Cde. Speaker, to some of the things that we have to do; but I think that we have to put those things in perspective and we have to understand that what happened to Guyana in 1978 happened to every single country in the world without exception, including the U.S.S.R. and one remembers, Cde. Speaker, that when in March last year the Soviet Union announced price increases over a wide range of consumer goods ranging from 30 per cent to 50 per cent, the Chairman of the Prices Commission said quite unapologetically that, and I quote: “Rocketing commodity prices in the world market and the increasing cost of oil extraction” were responsible and that there was nothing that could be done about that. And if that was true of the Soviet Union, if it is true of powerful countries like the United States of America, what makes us believe that we would be isolated and insulated from these very effects which are rocking the world economy?

Cde. Speaker, I think that it is disappointing that the economy has not grown, but the fact that we have been able at least to keep it stable is a matter for some pride and some self congratulation. **[Applause]** We need to focus upon the positive things, not to waste our time with rambling talk about whether the foreign policy of the U.S.S.R. on Kampuchea or Vietnam is right. Those countries have their problems and they will solve them. We must solve our problems here. In the course of this year we have to ensure a number of things. First of all, that as far as possible there is a climate of reasonable industrial relations and that climate is not going to be created by people going to the street corners and talking about: “Demand the \$14 wage”, “The Shah gone and who ain’t gone”. The Shah gone, Gairy gone, but Jagan went in’64. **[Applause]** The revolution took place here first; other people are now catching up, now following.

So, Cde. Speaker, let us understand and get down to the real task. This Government has always had the most frank and cordial relationship with the Trades Union Congress and with the

workers' representatives, because the whole objective of our efforts is to increase constantly the welfare and well-being of the workers. And it is this context that we are going to pursue discussions with the T.U.C., aimed at achieving some solution to the problems which beset us. That is why, Cde. Speaker, as late as this morning, we were able to sit down and discuss in a friendly way, in a frank way, with the leadership of the Trades Union Congress, the whole question of incentives. The incentive schemes were an integral part of the minimum wage package which we signed in 1977. For one reason or another, those schemes were not put in place. We did not agree with the T.U.C. on the central guidelines. It is my pleasure, Cde. Speaker, to report to this honourable House that this morning, as a result of the discussions held with the leadership of the Trade Union Congress, we were able to agree on the national guidelines. **[Applause]** That is the approach of this Government, reasonableness and consultation.

The next step is to get the schemes going, because more and more countries are beginning to understand that if you are going to have improvements in workers' welfare and well-being, if you are going to provide them with more and more purchasing power, not paper, you could print the paper, that is not the point more and more purchasing power, well then, you have to ensure that there is an increase in productivity. Only recently I was reading in an issue of Latin America Economic Report that the Cubans have now established a system, in fact this was agreed to at the 13<sup>th</sup> congress of the Communist Party of Cuba, which accepted the principle of linking wages with output. Such a system has now been introduced in 13,000 work centres. So what we are doing is nothing strange or exotic, is nothing unsocialist; it is, I believe, the essence of economic commonsense. But the trade unions understand this; the trade unions accept it. What we have to do now is to follow up the successes of this morning by some hard work aimed at getting the various productivity-linked schemes in place in the various sectors of the economy.

Next, Cde. Speaker, there has to be a continuing effort to achieve national efficiency at all levels, to prevent the wastage which is so widespread, prevent the losses which need not occur. And finally, Cde. Speaker, there is no doubt that national unity continues to be, as I said in the Budget Statement, the very cornerstone of our efforts at national progress. **[Applause]** But national unity does not come about by deals, cannot come about by deals between politicians. It

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is no use talking about some arrangement under which a few ambitious politicians share power, what I call the formula of “gie me” – “gie me two and you take two”. Cde. Leader has dealt exhaustively with this matter and he calls it the uneven truce of warlords. This is not the way; we have got to deal with the people. We have got to stop going around dividing people, playing upon prejudices, fanning resentment and peddling rumours and untruths aimed at inflaming communities.

If we are serious, well then, we will pursue with dedication all those positive activities which make for cementing national unity and ensuring the solidarity of this nation.

**6.55p.m.**

Cde. Speaker, what has been the great problem of the Opposition in attempting to debate the Budget Speech? Their great problem has been that this Government has had the courage to lay the facts clearly and plainly before the National Assembly and the nation. This Government has had the courage to give leadership by saying to the people that it is not in the interest of this country to go multiplying our dollars. What we have to do is to stretch our dollars. We have had the courage to say to the people of this country that we will never take a decision which we honestly know to be economically wrong, a decision which may perhaps gain us some cheap popularity for a moment but which, in the final analysis, would destroy the very foundations of this country. I think people will respect the Government for this. People will understand and people will co-operate. What we have to do is to give that leadership to the Guyanese people. The Guyanese people are a competent, able and resilient people. They have always overcome obstacles. No country makes progress without overcoming major obstacles.

We have the tremendously difficult task of achieving economic growth at the same time as we attempt to improve, progressively, the welfare of people. No major country in the world has had that task. We know what happened in the United Kingdom during the period of the industrial revolution. We know what happened in the United States of America. We know what happened in the U.S.S.R. in the Stalin era; those countries achieved accumulation of capital. We do not have that option; our task is more difficult. That is why we cannot waste our time in petty squabbling. We have to devote our time, our intelligence, our innovative skills to finding all

those positive mechanism which will inspire people, which will motivate them not only to work hard, but to work efficiently. I am sure that the leadership which the People's National Congress gives now, and the leadership which the People's National Congress will continue to give, will inspire and motivate the people of Guyana to rise above the difficulties in which they find themselves at the moment.

#### **REPORT OF BUSINESS SUB-COMMITTEE OF COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY**

**The Speaker:** Comrades and hon. Members, this concluded the general debate on the Motion for the approval of the Estimates of Expenditure for 1979. Before the Assembly resolves itself into Committee of Supply to receive and consider the Report of the Business Sub-Committee, I would like to provide you with some statistics. We have had a very full debate on the Budget. Speeches were made by the Deputy Prime Minister, seven Senior Ministers, one Minister, eight Ministers of State, the Leader of the Opposition, four Parliamentary Secretaries, the Deputy Speaker and seventeen other members. There were forty-one speeches by forty members. Twenty-five out of the forty were P.N.C., members, all fourteen of the P.P.P. members spoke, and one of the two Liberator Party members spoke. The Budget Speech and the debate thereon lasted for six days. The speaker who got the longest time was the Leader of the Opposition. He spoke for ninety-three minutes.

The Assembly will now resolve itself into Committee of Supply to receive and to consider the Report of the Business Sub-Committee.

*Assembly in Committee of Supply.*

**The Chairman:** As Chairman of the Business Sub-Committee of the Committee of Supply. I have to report that in accordance with paragraph (2) of Standing Order No. 64, the Business Sub-Committee met on Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> March, 1979, and passed a resolution in terms of the matters set out in paragraph (1) of Standing Order, No. 64, that is, on the allocation of time for the consideration of the Estimates of Expenditure in the Committee of Supply. Copies of the Minutes of the proceedings of the Business Sub-Committee and of the Resolution passed by the Sub-Committee were circulated to members yesterday. The Minister of Economic Development



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and Co-operatives may therefore now move the Motion concerning the Resolution of the Business Sub-Committee.

**Cde. Hoyte:** I move that the Committee of Supply agree with the Business Sub-Committee in its Resolution.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Motion carried.*

**The Chairman:** The Committee will therefore commence consideration of the 1979 Estimates of Expenditure tomorrow.

*Assembly resumed.*

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Resolved,** “That this Assembly do now adjourn until tomorrow, Thursday, 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 1979, at 2 p.m. [**The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Leader of the House**]

**Adjourned accordingly at 6.55 p.m.**

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