

THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
OFFICIAL REPORT

/Volume 07/

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE THIRD PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF GUYANA.

214 Sitting

2 p.m.

Tuesday, 15th April 1980

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (63)

Speaker (1)

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

(Absent – on leave)

Deputy Prime Minister (1)

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

Senior Ministers (11)

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,
Minister of Energy and Natural Resources

*Cde. F.E. Hope, M.P.
Minister of Finance

(Absent)

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

(Absent-on leave)

*Cde. M. Shahabuddeen, O.R., S.C.,
Attorney General and Minister of Justice

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

(Absent – on leave)

*Cde. J.A. Tyndall, A.A.,
Minister of Trade and Consumer Protection

*Non-elected Ministers

Ministers (2)

Cde. O.E. Clarke,
Minister –Regional
(East Berbice /Corentyne)
Cde. C.A. Nascimento, M.P.
Minister, Office of the Prime Minister (Absent – on leave)

Minister of State (10)

Cde. F.U.A. Carmicheal,
Minister of State –Regional (Rupununi)
Cde. P. Duncan J.P.,
Minister of State -Regional (North west)
Cde. K.B. Bancroft, J.P.,
Minister of State-Regional (Absent – on leave)
(Mazarun /Potaro)
Cde. J.P Chowritmootoo, J.P.,
Minister of State –Regional
(Essequibo Coast /west Demerara)
Cde. J.R. Thomas,
Minister of State, Ministry of Education,
Social Development and Culture.
Cde. R.H.O. Corbin,
Minister of State for Youth and Sport,
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. F.U.A..Campbell,
Minister of State for Information (Absent)
Ministry of National Development
*Cde. H. Rashid,
Minister of State
Office of the Prime Minister.

Parliamentary Secretaries (6)

Cde. M.M. John, C.C.H.,
Parliamentary Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister, and
Government Chief Whip (Absent)
Cde. E.L Ambrose,
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture (Absent)
Cde. M. Corrica,
Parliamentary Secretary,
Ministry of Education, Social Development
and Culture (Absent – on leave)
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.
Cde. J.G. Ramson,
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Works and Transport

*Non-elected Ministers

Other Members (15)

Cde. W.G. Carrington, C.C.H., (Absent)
Cde. S.M. Field-Ridley
Cde. E.H.A. Fowler
Cde. J. Gill
Cde. W. Hussain
Cde. K.M.E. Jonas
Cde. P.A. Rayman
Cde. A. Salim, C.C.H.
Cde. E.M. Stoby, J.P.
Cde. S.H. Sukhu, M.S.
Cde. H.A. Taylor
Cde. H.B. Walcott, J.P.
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 (Absent)

Deputy Speaker (1)

Cde. Ram Karran,
Deputy Speaker

Other Members (12)

Cde. J. Jagan (Absent)
Cde. Reepu Demand Persaud, J.P., Opposition Chief Whip
Cde. Narbada Persaud
Cde. C. Collymore (Absent – on leave)
Cde. S.F. Mohamed (Absent)
Cde. I. Basir
Cde. C.C. Belgrave (Absent)
Cde. R. Ally
Cde. Dalchand, J.P.
Cde. Dindayal
Cde. H. Nokta
Cde. P. Sukhai

(ii) Liberator Party (2)
Mr. M.F. Singh, J.P.
Mr. M.A. Abraham

OFFICERS

Clerk of the National Assembly - F.A Narain, A.A.
Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly - M.B. Henry

PRAYERS

15:4:80

2.10 - 2:20 p.m.

2.10 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Acceptance of Apology

The Speaker: Cde.Persaud, I am wondering whether I should really accepted your apology. I am not seeing how you are behaving. Anyway, some time ago you apologised for certain remarks you made in this Chamber. I have considered the matter and decided to accept your apology.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: Thank you

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS

The following Paper was laid:

Minutes of the Third Meeting of the Committee of Selection held on 15th April, 1980 [The Speaker, Chairman, Committees of Selection/].

PUBLIC BUSINESS

MOTION

APPROVAL OF ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE FOR 1980

BUDGET DEBATE

Assembly resumed the debate on the Motion moved by the Minister of Economic Development and Co-operative for the approval of the estimates of expenditure for the financial year 1980.

The Speaker: We will now resume the debate on the Motion for the approval of the estimates of expenditure for the financial year 1980. Cde. Dalchand.

Do you think you could be kind enough as to press the button so that I will know which microphone you are using.

Cde.Dalchand: Cde. Speaker, a week ago the P.N.C. Government presented this nation with another unrealistic, anti-working-class, anti-people Budget. All the proposals in the P.N.C. Budget are aimed at further hardening the living conditions of the Guyanese people. The economy of this once progressive and prosperous country under the P.P.P Government has now been wrecked and it is in shambles. Since 1976 there is one permanent feature in the annual Budget. The notable feature is deficit and ever-growing deficit. Even though the P.N.C Government is very late in presenting this year's Budget, the Minister had to amend the Budget Speech and make further insertions in the Estimates. The members of the Government were in such a hurry to present this late Budget that they even wrongly numbered the various heads. This shows how confused the P.N.C. Government is and how many problems it had in order to present this, as I described, unrealistic Budget. It is full of guesstimates!

Last year, in the three major sectors of the economy, namely, sugar, bauxite and rice, this Government failed hopelessly to achieve its targets. This landed this country in a massive budget deficit. These three heads alone were responsible for the fall in revenue to the tune of \$106 million. It is as clear as day follows night that the P.N.C. Government is moving with more speed in the reverse than forward. In this year when the cost of everything is going up, when we need more money to pay for oil and other things, in the wake of many pleas for more production and productivity, the P.N.C. Government has set a lower production target, even lower than last year. From 360,000 tons of sugar last year, it plans to produce this year 335,000 tons. Bauxite – from over 2,182,000 tons it plans to produce this year 2 million tons. Rice: from 210,000 tons to 200,000 tons. This is why the Government started this year with an even greater deficit, \$161 million current estimates and over \$38 million in capital estimates.

The workers and producers of this country are now terribly frustrated. They do not have even a hope under the P.N.C. Government. As long as this Government continues with its policies production in this country will drop. Stop putting the blaming on the workers, stop putting the blame on the farmers, stop blaming the weather. Put the blame squarely on the back of those over there, the members of the P.N.C. Government. They are responsible for this situation in the county.

We have heard that several man-days were lost because of strikes and absenteeism. Let the P.N.C. Government tell this House how many thousand of man-days are lost by the people having to queue up for food and other essential items. Let them tell the nation. Queuing is the order of the day, GUYLINES as we call them. [Cde. Green: “They queue up every day in Russia”] I am talking about Guyana; this is Guyana.

The farmers are being cheated; workers are being cheated. Imagine this shameless Government is giving a 5 per cent increases to workers last year the workers should have received \$14 per day but the Minister put it on his glib tongue that they are giving 5 per cent increase. What does this 5 per cent increase mean? Fifty-five cents per day more. The cost of transportation and other means of communication have gone up by 33 per cent. The minimum consumption tax has gone up to 8 per cent and the workers will get 5 per cent. One can see straight off the bat that the workers and farmers of this country are being held as sacrifice for the wanton waste of public funds by the P.N.C. Government. The time will come when those over there will have to answer for the misuse and misspending of the public funds. Take heed! Last week a sum of six million guilders was found in a drawer in the office of the Director of Public Works in Suriname. Corruption! This is what you have over there. Corruption! A sum of \$ 45 million for fancy cars. This is what is taking place even in Guyana with the P.N.C. Government.

The price last year for sugar was very good again. Even the Prime Minister admitted that the price is increasing. The Minister has not admitted it in his Budget speech that the price is increasing yet the cane farmers received the same price they got in 1978. All they got was a small increase for molasses. And the price of molasses sky rocketed from 49 cents to 92 cents. This is the only extra that the farmers in this section got from this heartless P.N.C. Government

The Minister of Agriculture in an amended note to the Minister of Economic Development when he was presenting his Budget Speech spoke of cane farmers getting back \$2.60 per ton in relation to their contribution to the stabilisation fund. It is not a grant or an increase by the Government to the cane farmers. This is money that is being taken out of their earnings to take care of the stabilisation fund. This is nothing new - \$2.60 per ton of sugar. This is what the Minister said that he was going to give back.

I wonder if the Minister is going to return this money to the cane farmers, because from the time they started to take it out, from that time to now, not a single farthing of that money has been used to benefit the cane farmers.

Farmers are being cheated not only by not being fair prices but they are cheated when they take their cane to the estate to sell. They are being robbed in weight. When the cane is being processed into sugar, again they are being robbed. At Diamond they took as much as 30 tons of cane to make one ton of sugar. When the same was being shifted to L.B.I. it took 10 tons of cane to make one ton of sugar. This was bare-faced robbery! You can see clearly how this Government intends to muster even the short amount they have in the estimates. This same pattern is going about in every section of farming. That is to show that inefficiency was responsible for the farmers being penalised. The farmers were being penalised when the factory efficiency was poor.

As I said, this is the same trend that is taking place in every farming sector. Let us take, for example, the farmers in the tobacco cultivation at Laluni. There are 45 families there planting tobacco. The maximum price they get for the highest grade of tobacco is \$5.12 and yet Customs and Exercise Duty take \$12.87. You can see where the money from the procedures is going. The Government is benefiting; it gets the hog of it.

Low prices, bad treatment, lack of transportation, lack of maintenance of essential services to the farming community. Look at Wakenaam and Leguan. The Prime Minister visited those islands. When he went there, they “polished” up the road. Look at the condition of the road! That is a farming community. Ninety per cent of the people there are farmers and yet the roads are horrible. Cde. Speaker, the same applies at Leguan. They started the road project at Leguan two or three years ago. It has now been abandoned. Leguan is a big rice growing area, rice farming are. People are now moving away from rice, they are doing vegetable and kitchen gardens. The livelihood of those people is now being threatened. The next move is that they are going to shift away from Leguan to other places. This is because of the attitude of the P.N.C. Government, yet it has the mouth and the will to call on the people to produce more.

2:20 p.m.

Cde. Speaker, last week Tuesday I visited the North West District in the interior. That is a farming area. To my surprise, Cde. Speaker, when I went there bora, boulanger, tomato, cabbage, plucked iced chicken and pork were taken by hucksters from Georgetown to be sold up there. That is an agricultural area, and the people grabbed them up. Look at the fanatic prices! One can see what is going on. In the Waini - I understand it is a very good area for growing cabbage - starvation is actually facing the people in the Interior. At Matthews Ridge I was told by a comrade who was living there for over sixty years that now starvation is facing them. One packet of biscuits is \$1, one pint of cooking oil is \$3, a gallon of rice \$5 and you cannot get it. This is the reality of the poor people in the Interior. Comrades, to get from Hosororo to the air-strip costs \$20. You have to wait for a long time at the G.A.C. Office at Mabaruma for further transportation, a distance of less than five miles. Poor people cannot get guaranteed prices for their produce. Since the introduction of Kumaka, there has not been a regular cargo boat - farmers' produce is there perishing, customers not buying. We know very well the G.M.C. cannot buy, it does not have money, even when it buys it takes three and five and six months to pay the poor farmers. You just simply have to imagine the plight of the farmers - they cannot replant. A pound of cassava at Morawhanna is 75 cents - farming area, food is scarce. People are trekking away, the Amerindians and other people are trekking across the border to Brazil and Venezuela to go and work, not to plant farms, to go and work to earn a day's pay in order to live. Cde. Speaker, this is the plight.

The Minister of Health was talking about health facilities - they do not even have the medicated salt for the people to use in the North West District. I checked it out. Cde. Speaker, in Georgetown, there are lines for foodstuff. In North West there was a long line, about thirty-five canoes and small boats lining up at the Hosororo Spring to get a little bit of drinking water. It is a living fact and they had to go there in the high tide just to get a little bit of drinking water, even as far as the border coming across to Hosororo Creek, to get a little bit of water. There is a drought, the pump had broken down there and nothing is being done by this Government to repair it. This is the interest this Government has for the working - class people of this country, for the peasants and farmers whom they are asking to produce more.

Cde. Speaker, they spoke of transportation facilities in the industry. The Cde, Minister of State was saying how much improved the facilities are. Go to Anna Regina now. There is a silo at Somerset and Berks. The paddy has to be taken from Charity, New Road to Anna Regina to be sampled and tested and then sent back all the way to Somerset and Berks to be stored. This is a living fact. Cde. Speaker, this is the situation in the area.

Local Government, Cde. Speaker, because of lack of democracy, out of 53 local authorities, five are functioning. Since 1973, this Government has not held any Local Government elections. Why? The local government is an immediate representative of the people. These people offer immediate services that are required. People are frustrated, even the present councillors. They are paying them, they give them subsistence and travelling allowances to go to meetings but they do not go. Many councils cannot function because of a lack of a quorum. Cde. Speaker, this is the situation. All they do there, they sit there and they put increased rates and taxes on the poor people who can ill afford to pay. What do you pay rates and taxes for? For services. Only yesterday a farmer from Good Intent was complaining to me that

his village council collected some arrears of rates from Wales Estate, now they are doing a trench and they are now destroying their crops. Farmers are pleading for representation. How are we going to increased production?

Comrades, today we are asking the members of this Government to understand the situation – it is serious. We are asking them to get off the backs of the people, hold democratic local government elections immediately, and then there will be an example of how the people want the P.N.C. Only that will show. That is the first phase. If it holds general elections it will see that it is out by the border. That is where the members of the Government are going to be - by the border - because they cannot gain more than 13 cent of the vote of the people in this country. This is a leading fact. The referendum in 1978 showed clearly what support they can muster in this country. This is because of the attitude of this Government.

Cde. Speaker, Last year, on agriculture, the Government even failed to spend the meagre allocation it had in the 1979 Estimates. For example, on the Capital side, Purchase and installation of pumps in the Black Bush Polder Scheme, the Government voted \$1.5 million. Do you know what they spent? They spent \$3,527. On the grains and legume programme, they vote \$33,000. Do you know what they actually spent? They spent \$16,000. This is how they want to encourage agriculture. Soil research - they voted \$193,000. They spent \$17,014. Food crop production, marketing, they voted a million dollars, they spent \$55,590. Agricultural sectoral planning, they voted \$1,988,000 they spent nothing.

Cde. Speaker, this is how the Government wants increased production and productivity. One can see clearly it is doing nothing tangible to encourage increased production. Even the money they put in the Estimates, they fail to spend. This is why, today this little drought has affected rice production. Even the cane cultivation is affected. In every sector of agriculture, because the Government failed to maintain even the existing work, even the legacy it got from the P.P.P. Government, it failed to maintain. Today is a nightmare scene.

Much was said last year about field market roads. Where are these field to market roads? Go and see the people in Luluni, go to Parika backdam, De Hoop backdam, that area is now considered a food basin for the city. Go and see the type of roads. [Interruption.] Shut up. Comrade, you do not understand. You understand a different thing.

Cde. Speaker, even for one of their projects they had earmarked for last year, I see \$2 million for interest charges, consultancy, \$1,776,000, administration expense, \$954,000. Fifty per cent is going to meet these overhead expenses. The members - are now prattling over the radio, “swine fever is now threatening”. What did this Government put on the Estimates for the Emergency Animal Disease outbreak-one token dollar in the 1978 Estimates. And they are saying that we have a threat, the swine fever, which can destroy the whole stock of Guyana’s pigs in a short period.

2:30 p.m.

Cde. Speaker, I want to ask the Government to come to its senses. It must understand the needs of the people; it must pay the workers not only \$14 a day but more than \$14 a day. It must pay wages commensurate with the cost of living. The P.N.C. spoke of what it is going to give; 5 per cent is just fancy language to fool the nation. I want to ask that provision be made in the annual estimates this year. It must make provision for funds to do the internal work for the Boerasirie and Bonasika works, re-introduce the subsidy on agricultural products carried by G.A.C., call for the tripling of the subsidy to G.M.C from half a million to \$2 million, give the G.M.C more money so that it can buy the farmers' produce at good prices; there must be a committee set up to see that the benefits of the additional funds that the P.P.P is calling for are given to the farmers, and are not squandered in the offices. They must go direct to the farmers, those are the producers.

Cde. Speaker, we call for proper transport from farm to market. If this Government fails to honour or to meet the demands of the Guyanese people after sitting on their backs for over fifteen years, after fifteen years of misrule, after fifteen years of incompetence, after 15 years of ruining the economy of this country, I would suggest that the P.N.C's only alternative is to get off the backs of the Guyanese people, hold free and fair elections. Then they will find themselves where they are supposed to be. This is what the P.N.C is afraid of.

The Minister of State in the Office of the Prime Minister spoke of the poor sugar prices on the world market. He spoke also of the increased prices in 1974 - 1976. Let the Minister tell this House what was done with all those huge sums of money, over \$500 million they got from the sugar industry. Production will continue to fall. The P.N.C Government will fail to achieve even that shrunken target it set for 1980. I, now, Cde. Speaker, call on the P.N.C. Government to forthwith resign and remove, and allow a progressive P.P.P Government to lead prosperity to Guyana.

The Minister of Works and Transport (Cde.Naraine): Cde. Speaker, the Minister of Economic Development and Co-operatives in the Budget Speech, mentioned the very many projects which have been completed and are being undertaken by the P.N.C. Government. What I would like to spend my time, my contribution, on would be to explain the supporting services and facilities which are necessary for this major expenditure to be meaningful to develop and to the people of the country. I can understand the opposition having some qualms about certain deficiencies or inadequacies which may occur in some of these services and facilities.

The Minister in his budget presentation explained that these difficulties are generated by problems not necessarily relating to conditions in Guyana. Of course, there are also national problems which have to be faced but, Cde. Speaker, these problems cannot be faced in the manner described by speakers of the Opposition because rather than attempting to look at the problems realistically and in a practical way, they spent their time in their contribution in trying to say that every decision, every step that has to be taken by the Government, everything done by the Government is wrong and that were they in office, then you would have had all the right decisions.

I would like Cde. Speaker, to mention just as an example, one of the things, and that is the scrapping of the railway. Now, it is true that we had the railway possibly from Mahaica, as was mentioned, to Georgetown, we might have had certain savings on fuel but when the Cde. Minister of Economic Development spoke about the high cost of fuel, he did not relate only to the few vehicles running in the transport system, but the consumption of fuel in the country as a whole. If the comrades on the other side bother to check the facts on fuel, they will find that in terms of the total consumption of fuel in the country, that portion used on public transportation is a rather small percentage. Therefore, the consumption of fuel used by buses against that which would have been used by the railway would not have affected significantly the total situation on fuel consumption and cost in the country.

2:40 p.m.

But let us go a little further in this. The P.P.P., when it was in office, had a firm by the name of Del Conte and that firm was paid \$330,000 to work out the design of road, not a railway to be built on the railway embankment. So that time the members of the P.P.P. did not have in their minds any thought that the railway would not be scrapped. It was because as early as then they made that decision that the railway would be scrapped, that the railway was run down to a state that it was in when this Government took office.

It therefore meant that when the P.N.C. took office it had to decide what to do. Should it rehabilitate a railway that was losing millions of dollars every year, which was in a very poor state of repair? Or should it contract a road to replace one which was in an even worse state than the railway? Remember that at that time the price of fuel was very, very low. I think that the cost of gasoline was not even 75 cents per gallon at that time and diesel fuel was about 30 cents a gallon. On the circumstances at the time the decision was taken to rehabilitate the road which the people of this country are enjoying and benefiting from so much.

The comrades raised the question of the Bridge and they say that we have put a millstone around the necks of the people of this country with the bridge. These comrades keep talking about being close to the people, of doing things that will make the people happy, of doing things that will be of benefit to the people. Comrades, we all know that when that bridge was completed and declared open, there was at that function a crowd of not less than 100,000 people. They want to tell the people, all that crowd of a hundred thousand people and the rest of the country, who could not have been there, people who have great pride of having this wonderful bridge, a thing that they have been looking forward to for generations, if not for centuries, they want to tell the people of this country, "you are all damned fools". That bridge is worth nothing. You all should not have been there.

This is the way that this opposition treats the people of this country and they come to this House trying to make out a case that they are thinking so much about the people of this country.

In transportation today, under the circumstances in which we are operating, we have to work under certain constraints and objectives and I would like to mention a few because unless we look at these problems in relation to things that are relevant to our present circumstances we sometimes are led astray. I would suggest that whatever we do should at least satisfy these objectives. Transport should provide access to all developing areas, elimination of deficiencies in the existing transport system, avoidance of bottle-necks in future transport systems, replacement of absolute transport facilities and equipment, the containment of transport costs, reduction of accidents, improvement of the transport services, improvement of the operation of transport facilities and improvement of international flows.

We try to satisfy some if not all of these objectives in what we are doing and I would like to mention a few examples; there was the harbour service, a very good service but there was run-down equipment. Today what do we find? Two of the pilot launches - they need four - were replaced in October last year and the two other pilot launches will be replaced by June/July this year. Some of these steamers are very old, antiquated, and obsolete. We have had the Kurupukari brought into service, we had

the two cargo boats which we purchased and the Oranapai for West Indian Service. Recently we had the Kumaka put into service and right now we have a contract signed for another cargo passenger vessel for Berbice River Service; a cargo vessel for the North West services, and a tug. This contract will cost the Government \$20 million and the contract has been signed for these vessels.

The harbour needs maintenance dredging. Part of the dredging equipment came into the country last year October, the remaining dredging equipment should be in the country. This will be done at a cost of \$3 million. This year steps will be taken to rehabilitate and improve on the maintenance of existing vessels being used by the Transport and Harbours Department.

But while we are doing all of this improvement at a considerable cost to the people of this country and with the very high cost of maintenance and fuel, the Government had made just a 33 per cent increase in fares across the board. It may be useful for us to see what will be the effects of this increase in terms of certain categories of workers and school children. Let us take the Demerara and Berbice ferry fares. The monthly season ticket for an adult is \$9.10, considerably lower than if they had to pay for a ticket every day. That \$9.10 will be increased to \$12.14. A school child pays \$1.20 for the monthly season tick. That child will now have to pay \$1.60. The Parika/Leguan ferry has the same pattern. The monthly ticket was \$3 for a school child and has increased to \$4. This is the level of increases that we are talking about, Cde. Speaker, and the Opposition is trying to make heavy weather of it.

2.50 p.m.

Cde. Speaker, let us take now what has been happening in Guyana Airways. The peaker in the Opposition raised the question about certain inconveniences. But, when you are developing, there must be some inconvenience. Certainly, if the Lethem airstrip needs rehabilitating so that aircraft that cost millions of dollars can operate safely, then a short closure of the airstrip so that the necessary improvement can be undertaken should be something that must be taken with understanding. It should not be put, as the Opposition as the opposition has been trying to do, in a way that we are doing is something deliberate to harm the people living in that area. Nothing of the kind. That airstrip will now be made at a standard whereby larger aircraft can go on that airstrip and so larger quantities of food and other items, that are needed there for the people, can be taken in adequate quantities. The Guyana Airways Corporation has been giving a very good service and I would like just to give some facts of its operation. In 1979, the number of passengers moved to the hinterland was 47,814, freight - 5,955,000 pounds, and mail - 33,000 pounds. The projection for 1980 is 49,263 passengers, freight, 6,176,000 pounds, and mail, 29,000 pounds. In addition to this, by charter, a total of over two million pounds of freight is taken to the hinterland areas.

On the international scene, where Guyana Airways more and more is playing an important part, during 1979, 9,101 passengers were taken to Port-of-Spain and 8,407 were taken to Barbados. In 1980 it is proposed that 10,764 passengers will be taken to Port-of-Spain, and to Barbados, 21,000 passengers will be taken. These services are here for the benefit of the people of the country, to give them the kind of service that they need, not only in terms of their day-to-day requirements of life, but also for recreation and for international business. Also as you know, Cde. Speaker, the Guyana Airways Corporation does a bi-weekly service to Miami, by which essential items are brought into the country.

GTSL was mentioned, Cde. Speaker, and GTSL, I will admit, has its problems. The point is that the maintenance facilities for the fleet of buses are not adequate at the present moment. And, so, last year work was started at Ruimveldt for the improvement of those facilities. That work will continue this year so that the necessary maintenance facilities can be improved. The emphasis this year, Cde. Speaker, is not to bring in more than twenty buses, already ordered, but to bring in the spare parts necessary to rehabilitate and bring back on the road the buses which have been laid up for want for spares. But the spare parts problem is a big one and we should know what is really happening. Let us take, for instance, one item like freight. The freight to bring a bus from Bombay to Georgetown in 1976 was less than \$2,000 U.S. Today, the cost to bring a bus is about \$13,000 U.S.

Now, one may ask: why continue buying the buses and spare parts from India? The fact of the matter is that even with the higher freight cost, the total cost including the freight is still cheaper when coming from that source. Recently we have been exploring buying from Brazil and we have been buying some parts from Brazil, but even here we have a shipping problem. We have been able to bring in some spare parts by air and I hope that that kind of trading will continue so that we can get all the spare parts we need to put the buses back into good repair. Here again the increase that has been mentioned in the Budget Speech is rather nominal, by comparison, to what these overall increases in cost are. I would like

to mention also, Cde. Speaker, that in addition with the concessionary fares being paid by school children and workers on season tickets, pensioners can travel on any of the Government services free of charge, something unheard of when the Opposition was in office.

I should mention also that while these major development projects are going on, the question of communications becomes rather important. We have read in the newspapers and we have heard the GUYTELECO expansion programme where they spent as much as \$32 million over the past three years in the improvement and expansion of the telephone services. This year it is not proposed to spend more than about \$4.2 million. This year, we wish, rather than expanding further, to consolidate our position and to improve the services that already exist. During 1981 – 85 it is proposed to improved services in places like Ituni, Kwakwani, Mahaica, Corentyne, West Berbice, Lethem, and so forth.

3:p.m

In order to cope with some of the very difficult problems facing us, particularly, in relation to mechanical equipment, it has become necessary for the Government to make certain institution changes so that the problems can be attached more intensively and more effectively. With this in view Guynec, the Corporation that deals with heavy-duty equipment, particularly the Guytrac Branch, has expanded its facilities so that it can give a more efficient and a more expansive service not only to the Government, but to the people, the owners and users of equipment generally. The Government has established the plant maintenance and hire pool division in the Ministry and that organisation will be taking great pains to bring into use a number of new workshops, like the Melanie Damishana workshop mentioned in the Budget Speech, and to consolidate and improve on the existing workshops, whereby better use can be made of them and more effective repairs can be done to Government equipment.

All of this is necessary, Cde. Speaker, so that we can contain the cost of the operation and maintenance of the equipment. The G.T.S.L. has done it, the Ministries have to do it, the Corporation have to do it so that the need for the conservation of foreign reserves can be maintained and the reserves kept at some controllable level. If we do not do this, Cde. Speaker, then things will get out of hand and we will not be able to operate and maintain the services and the facilities which we are giving to the people.

I should like to close by suggesting to the members of the Opposition. Some of them keep using the time in this House for a “busing” session. Some I think, are more reasonable and rational in calling for national unity and co-operation but what we need today in this country, more than anything else is understanding, understanding of the problems, and rather than trying to misguide the people as to the true objectives and the aims of the Government, they should try to understand the national issues, they must understand that there is a shortage of foreign exchange and we must use that foreign currency to the best advantage of the people. They must understand that we must not abuse our equipment, we must use it for the effective maintenance of the drainage and irrigation and other facilities mentioned on the other side. If we can get that kind of understanding, that kind of appreciation, then possibly we can talk about national unity, we can talk about the general welfare of the people, but when one group in this House makes up its mind that it is going to preserve its position by entrenching deeper and deeper into this country, division based on racism, then this country will not progress. I hope that they will reform. I hope that they will take more mature and practical view of the problems of this country and of the welfare of its people and I

am sure that, if that happens, we can make even better use of the expenditure and facilities which we have to improve the country generally.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: Cde. Speaker, the present state of our economy is a reflection of the Government's failure to mobilise our rich resources and channel them wisely to even decrease inflation. I make that point Cde. Speaker, ever conscious of our potential and resources and ever aware of inflationary problems in the world, but I make the point, also, very conscious of the fact that in Guyana we have got potential, we have got the resources we have the skills and the manpower to produce not only for the satisfaction of our consumption locally, but to answer the requirements of the Caribbean countries. For the Government to continuously hide behind inflation and behind oil crisis and increases, undoubtedly, is not justifiable. What seems abundantly clear is that the Government is functioning and operating without a plan, without a programme. It has not carried out the necessary feasibility studies that are required to ensure all our potential both in terms of agriculture and the riches of our mineral resources.

After 15 years, Cde. Speaker, the Government has not succeeded in structuring the economy to achieve maximum performance. Instead, we have been led to a state of uncertainty and frustration. These manifest themselves in a high migration rate, falling production in every sector and lethargy which now grips the entire nation. The challenge before the Government is to reverse the current state of the people and to infuse in them some measure of hope and confidence so that they could be motivated into repairing the great damage that has been done to our economy and the country as a whole. There is urgent need to reinstate democracy and to provide the opportunity for the people's will to prevail.

On page 29 of the Budget Speech, the Minister said these words; "The Government has always recognised the importance of keeping in close contact with the people and tapping their collective wisdom. This Governmental style will be maintained". I want to challenge that statement. One of the reasons for the economic disaster of the country is that the Government has not been in tune with the mood and the feeling and the aspirations of the people. It is far away from the people and it is time the Government comes to grips to understand and appreciate the mood, the feeling, if not the anger, and I am tempted to use the word disenchantment, but that would have been too kind, but it is time that the Government comes to the realization of the anger of the people in this country so that will stop hiding behind phrases and speeches and, indeed, let its words, its utterances be matched with deeds.

I do not question that many of the things written in the Government's speech whether in the Budget Speech or made public through the communication media, sound good but what I do challenge and what I say truthfully is this, that what they say they do not do, and this is revealed manifestly in so many areas of decline in this country. As a result, today we are called upon to approve a budget which projects a deficit of nearly \$200 million.

3:10 p.m.

But while the projection is \$200 million, by the time we reach 31st December that will increase. I am ever conscious that in the current Budget they did a lot to contain. I am conversant with those figures. I looked at them but that was done to the detriment of many projects and many social facilities which have been controlled and it is not a case where we have proper facilities, whether medical, social or otherwise, so that we are able to curtail. If we curtail, one can imagine under what conditions and in what circumstances people of the country will have to live, hence, curtailment is to the detriment of the people's health, their welfare and, indeed, their well-being.

Democracy is a vital ingredient to the motivation of the people, the absence of which undoubtedly stultifies, impedes production and activity and performance. What is clear over the years is that we have had not only a migration rate leaving the shores of Guyana and going overseas, but we have a substantial figure in migration from rural Guyana into urban Guyana. I am sure that the Government is not in possession of the figures to show what that rate is but if you were to carry out a census, you would find that people who can contribute and subscribe and, indeed, help to reverse the current trend of the economy, if they were contained in their respective areas more employment would have been provided and there would have been greater production and productivity.

We have to ask the question: why are people migrating. And when that question is analysed objectively and assessed, one sees the tremendous disparity between urban life and rural life. One does not advocate any magical change to narrow that gap but one would like to see some testimony that will lead ultimately, not simply to the narrowing, but the complete removal of the disparity between rural and urban life. Indeed, our greatest resources exist in rural Guyana and there is dire need for many facilities that area vital to keep these people in the area.

Much talk is made about rural electrification and Cde. Seeram Prasad spoke vigorously about water in technical terms but coming down to earth, stepping down from the astral in which he was, I want to tell him that for several months people have not been getting water in various parts of this country, forgetting Georgetown, and if he were to go to the West Coast Berbice between Abary and Ithaca he would see the hardship and the suffering of those people for water supply which is so vital for the sustenance of the body of the rural man. And not only water is in short supply. They have been doing without electricity for several months now.

Cde. Speaker, I make that point because of first-hand information. I have visited that area on more than one occasion. We are establishing the M.M.A. scheme there but when the scheme is completed – That will be several years from now because the Government is guilty of wrong priorities. I recall in the year 1976 in this Chamber moving a Motion calling for the immediate implementation of this scheme. They took several years before they decided to start and today the scheme is not even off the ground. /Interruption/ You do not understand. The farmers have started empoldering their land ever conscious that the scheme will come into operation.

When the scheme was amended by an eminent engineer by the name of Steve Sahai Naraine and another, one Bobby Comacho, who said there should be no piecemeal implementation of the scheme, it has to be comprehensively done, the Government did not heed that advice of two eminently qualified engineers. Within the areas where we can have production, several factors must be borne in mind, the people's livelihood, and recreational facilities. You have to encourage them to keep them there so they can produce and reverse the trend of the economy, but because of all these set-backs people are compelled to migrate to the city of Georgetown which, undoubtedly, is becoming over-crowded. You have several problems, an employment problem, a housing problem, and there can be no doubt that you have a social problem, a housing problem, and there can be no doubt that you have a social problem with the increase in prostitution and crime. This is what is happening in Guyana today. So when one looks at a Budget Speech one has to examine it in a global way to come to grips with all the realities which the nation faces in Guyana.

I want to call on the Government today ever conscious that it has been in office for 15 years - not only has it been in office for 15 years but it has been there against the wishes of the people of Guyana. If one looks at page 20 one finds support for my contention about the decline. I quote:

“Growth, Exports and Imports and Balance of Payments”.

That is the heading.

“In the circumstances of low production in 1979, the growth, export and financial projections were not realised since they were all interrelated and hinged upon the production expectations.

The economy obviously could not and did not grow. In fact, it suffered an estimated decline of over 2% from 1978 levels.”

If you were to read continuously all the figures given in your own budget Speech, this Budget can be described as a confession of failure on the part of the government and when one looks at the confession we say like the government – and I repeat – that the answer is production. We say that. We do not deny that factor that people have to be motivated and the atmosphere has to be created where they can live, exist and produce in an atmosphere of total security. That is what is not there today in the country.

In the budget Speech the Minister spoke of contraband and he undoubtedly made a clear statement about some rascals who are benefiting from this exercise. I want to say in unequivocal terms that we do not support people who are indulging in contraband goods but as a member of this House I am compelled to pose the question: Why has Guyana taken to this path and particularly within the last four of five years? Something is radically wrong with the administration and the members of the Government must at times expose themselves to criticism that is objective with a view to examining the weaknesses that exist in so many areas of their functioning. I would speak with the assumption that that very Minister who presented the Budget Speech is not aware of all that is going on and I think that one are that needs immediate investigation where the centres are, who are operating those centres, what is happening in these centres. Many small shopkeepers on whom the rural communities depend to supply them with their goods are forced to close their doors and I can name some of them in many parts of this country. Because of that fact, many people from rural areas are compelled to come to Georgetown to buy. It costs them

about \$5 return passage from, say, De Willem. Let me give an area, De Willem/Meerzorg/Zeelugt.

There was a line of about 300 people at Guyana Stores yesterday and the majority of those people work on the West Coast. At the distribution centre there is a man called Mongul. That place needs immediate investigation. There are signs on the shop – and I was in the area last evening – “Don’t ask for scarce commodities.” That is for the retailer but indeed, Cde. Speaker, even shopkeepers are compelled to go and buy from him and many of them – and I have spoken to some of them – have grave reservations of what is taking place. You talked about decentralisation and you talk about accessibility, that instead of asking a man to come from West Coast to buy in Georgetown, let him buy on the West Coast. It sounds good but what happens to the man? He doesn’t get the requirements nor does he get a reasonable requirement so that he can keep the shop going. Like you say, buy it in New Amsterdam from Wreford’s, I think that is the name of the place. Similar complaints come from the citizens in New Amsterdam that they are not getting their supplies but if, Cde Speaker, you permit me, I am told by the shopkeepers that when they go there and they cannot get their quota they are told: go to a particular lady in the Ministry of Trade and Consumer Protection and she will give the approval. It would be a good thing if you could get to see the lady. [Interruption.]

3:20 p.m.

We are very deeply concerned. Let us take the farmers - you want them to produce and they are producing the local food but other items that need for their sustenance, they cannot get it. They have to come to Georgetown, they have to pay black-market prices and even when they come to a Georgetown sometimes they do not get. If you want the farmers to produce, it is not simply saying: look, the farmers are the greatest people in the country. Those words or words to that effect appear in the Budget Speech, but what is the Government doing in tangible terms to encourage them, to inspire them? My humble submission is: absolutely nothing. Instead, they are being frustrated and hence, Cde. Speaker, I want to say in this Parliament this afternoon that an inadequate number of outlets particularly in the rural areas, have increased the hardship on consumers who have to pay high transportation costs to the outlets and use up a lot of time and energy in order to obtain, in some cases, a few essential items. Discrimination in selling at the Government outlets and Co-op shops exists in every area where they are located. This frustrates many consumers who travel to the city.

Let us take, flour. Originally, people could have bought directly from the flour mill. Now, they are compelled to go to agents, agents appointed by the Ministry of Trade and Consumer Protection, or by a single person in that Ministry. [Cde. Field-Ridley: “Somebody must have the responsibility - jumbie could have the responsibility”.] All right, that is a good point that the comrade made and let me answer. Cde. Speaker, something could be wrong with the single people too, things may not be going right. We are not without evidence that several people in that Ministry were prosecuted and a Minister had to resign. That would have been my evidence and I stand on that ground. Even if somebody has to exercise the authority, I say something can be wrong. Let me give you an example. One organisation was given a license to bring agarbatti and I have so many facts on that matter because I want it to be look at. There could be no doubt that that organisation sold the agarbatti to businessmen. It cost less than \$2 per roll, Amber 99 is the name and that Agarbatti was sold buy that organisation which is supposed to be religious, at \$7 a roll – between \$7 and \$9 – and then that agarbatti was sold back at between \$10 and \$12, in some

cases \$ 14 per roll. One of the members had the audacity, if not the cheek, to say the profit accrued from sale of that agarbatti helped them to acquire a building. If that is true, the person giving that licence would be guilty of collusion to the detriment of the consumers of this country, and it needs investigation. I am prepared to give you the rest of information. Cde. Speaker, these are the areas.

Today, because we are not ensuring that essential items come into the country and proper scrutiny is given to all applications, so many items have sky-rocketed in price far beyond the reach of the pocket of the people. Why stop the people from buying flour the flour-mil in general terms and allows a few P.N.C. people to do that? We have their names too. In fact, we have some letters on this issue from people who are complaining. On the West Coast, before a shop could be named and identified as an outlet, one Cde. Peter Joshua Chowritmootoo has to sanction the application. Cde. Speaker, there is a Sampson's Enterprise on Regent Street that controls the destiny of the people at Bourda Market. If you were to investigate your distribution system and everything else, you would find what is taking place in this area.

This is a particularly sensitive area in this country. What I found at Guyana Stores yesterday was that while some came from the West Coast, East Coast and Georgetown, they had one thing in common. They were all terribly angry with the P.N.C. Government for putting them in that kind of embarrassment and suffering. I call then, on that score, Cde. Speaker, for the immediate appointment - this concerns the nation, it is a sensitive issue - for immediate appointment of a Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry to go into the distribution system in this country so that there could be fair distribution of all essential commodities to the people of this country.

Cde. Speaker, let me on the agricultural score point to a few factors that need consideration. The current expenditure is \$22,180,900 The current expenditure for the G.D.F. and the discipline forces, excluding the Ministry of Home Affairs, is \$47 ½ million. One sees exactly where budgetary allocation goes the non-productive sector. Why do we need to militarise the country? In fact, we need to cut the votes there and throw it into the productive sector in this current period which the Government says is the austere period, it is a period of constrain, it is a period in which you have to show caution and you have to exercise all the care to ensure that expenditure is properly allocated. Indeed, if the agricultural sector is properly fed, there could be no doubt that not only there will be some employment but the agricultural sector is one on the strongest areas if not the area that can earn foreign currency so that we can buy those items that we need.

3:30 p.m.

Cde. Speaker, we talk about milk. We know of a shortage of milk. What is clear is that it was recommended and found to be workable, not only by expert, Dumont, but indeed by many other local people who looked at the development of dairy farming. Not one isolated on the highway, but Dumont spoke of coastal dairy development and he pin-pointed areas and the potential which existed in those areas. There could be no fooling there: there could be no doubt that because that proposal was not accepted and there is no programme up to now as I speak in this House for the development of coastal dairy farming, we still are not producing enough milk. Instead, we have to use our hard earned foreign

currency to import milk. We could have been in a different position today. We would not have had need to import milk, because we would have been able to establish a condensery so that from milk we could have produced milk we could have produced milk power, cheese, items that we are importing at the moment, but I can pose a question for the benefit of the young comrades who have not been here so long. Where is the condenser? And where is the maximum production of our milk? In fact, before they have an increase in price, they have to go on strike.

Talking about roads, I simply have to say they are wasting money on the Upper Mazaruni Project. It is literally abandoned at the moment, what about Mahdia, when people were invited to go on free excursion trips under the guise that they were building roads? Those were years when the members of the P.N.C. were under an illusion, they soon realised that those mistakes resulted in the state in which we are today, but the damage had already been done. Would my friend, Oscar Clarke, deny that Mahdia is now covered with bush?

Infrastructural development must be interrelated with the agricultural possibilities and potential that there are in the country, but roads that are required and needed in areas where there are arable lands and where they are certain facilities where farmers can easily go, those roads have been abandoned. For example, there is Orealla road where there is a substantial acreage of land that can be brought under cultivation. Now I could ask another question. Have you ever gone to a place called Ruby, Farm, on the East Bank of Essequibo where there are families settled and producing? There is no road to get to the people, there is no water supply, there is no alcohol, there are no medical facilities and those are the people producing and bringing for us in the country. Why is consideration not given to those people?

Talking about M.M.A., I understand very reliably, Cde. Speaker, that while major work is going on, there is need to have work done that will link the major conservancy to the farm lands of the people. Work on these inter-drains, I understand, has been stopped. I do not want to say abandoned. It is going on at the moment and one wonders why. Cde. Speaker, you should know, I visit, I speak from first-hand information. I want the House to know that that project at the moment which is at phase one, will only take care of the area between Abary and Blairmont. But the people will continue to suffer in the Mahacia-Mahaicony area because no attention is given there. I will wait until the Cde. Minister is here, because I want to positively ask these questions, what he proposes to do to relieve the suffering of the people in these areas.

My charge then against the Government is that its list of priorities is wrong. We still have an imbalance in relation to land in this country. What the constitution has is, land to the tiller. That is all. One Judge was asking what it is because that provision exists I think, in the objective factor of the Constitution, but nothing occurred subsequently to that for the enforcement of that objective which is stated in the earlier part of the Constitution. We have got not only Hope, but Taymouth Manor and many other areas. Farmers who are tilling are still being exploited. They do not until this day enjoy proper security of tenure. Even the courts that are suppose to hear their cases are not active enough. That question I will direct to the Minister of Justice at the proper time.

Nearly 90 per cent of our farmers in this country have under 16 acres of land which really does not go for good production and good farming, they need greater acreages, there is need for more work, there is need for all these factors to be examined, with the sole idea and object that you can provide the kind of technical facilities, the kind of credit, the kind of loans that the farmers will need so that once again there can be revived in them that confidence and that faith to produce for our country. There is need to give them certain concessions which they enjoy in the past, to make machinery and parts easily accessible to them. The budget needs to be examined, claims need to be examined so that licences may be provided for an adequate supply of machinery.

In talking about some of the projections, I propose to give some figures because I have them for all the years so that I can deal with them comparatively from the Bank of Guyana report, but let me just cite two. In 1960, a total of 334,000 tons of sugar was produced but what is ridiculous is that in the year 1980, twenty years after, the Government expects a production of 320,000 tons. I do not think you need to know about mathematics to see that 334,000 tons would indicate the state of the economy in the country. In fact, we should have been far above that if all the people who were involved were properly treated and the industry properly run.

Let me give you an example, Cde. Speaker, let me cite rice. The Government projected for the year 1980 200,000 tons of rice. In the year 1965, just after the P.P.P. left the Government in 1964, the farmers had already shyed the rice waiting to reap the benefits obviously, of the People's Progressive Party Government, the production was 165,000 tons of rice. It means that fifteen years after, you add to it 30,000 tons of rice. Indeed, we should have been doubling the production from 1965 to now, hence, what we are hoping to achieve and realise is far below our potential, our capacity and our resources. For these reasons I definitely advance the argument that the Government does not have the right priority, the Government is not using the facilities that we have in the country for the betterment, the welfare and the well-being of our people.

Cde. Speaker, I think, Cde. Narbade Persaud, referred to some of the projects in the industrial sector which should have been completed but I was looking through the Budget Speech and this is what I saw occurring almost every year, leather factory, glass factory and they appear again in the Budget Speech, to be completed this year. The people are being deceived and the people are being fooled. Among the projects we started were the factory building for the leather tannery and tube factory in New Amsterdam. In fact, Cde. Speaker, agricultural development has to go side by side with industrial development.

3:40 p.m.

The Speaker: Four minutes more.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: Agriculture provides the base for real development and what the Government has not succeeded in doing is to use that base, or to provide that base, so that there will be an incessant flow one to the other and so that our raw material can be utilised in so many areas providing jobs and building the economy magnificently, which is what we all would like to see in this country.

The People's Progressive Party wants to see Guyana move towards the road of real development whereby people and their children can be happy, whereby better social services can be provided for them so that life can be worthwhile. It does appear that in many homes and for many individuals, life has become a literal burden. That trend must be changed so that people can live happily in a country with tremendous riches. When one looks again into these areas one is compelled to make the point again and again that the Government has failed the people, the Government has failed to utilise our resources and the Government has failed to encourage and inspire the people to stay at home and to provide.

Most of the projects undertaken recently, be it M.M.A. or Tapakuma, the sums involved now must have quadrupled since these projects were initiated. Indeed, not only the sums have become exorbitant to bring these projects to finality but many of our skilled Guyanese, many of the technically qualified Guyanese - I do not want to name them but if you were to look up the reports of '67,'68', '69 from the Ministry of Agriculture – that is the last one which came out came out - if you look up those reports and pursue then you will find how many people have left this country who could have been making a tremendous contribution to Guyana.

Talking about fisheries. So many things are being said by the Minister, but let me make one point: the Government cannot deny that there is complete absence in the market of cheap fish at 35 cents per pound. The cheapest fish available at the moment is \$2.35 per pound. Indeed, the trawlers that used to catch that type of fish have been replaced. You tell me if it is not true that 35 cents per pound fish is no longer on the market. Tell me if it is not true that fishermen in ... have been complaining for the last six months that they are not getting licences to bring engines and other pieces of equipment that are required and that are necessary. While they are getting twine, they are not getting those facilities. I speak after thoroughly investigating these areas. What the Government has done is to hold back. The Government declared open a number of half-finished projects simply to allow the Korean camera to film a glorified picture that Guyana is moving forward to the road of development but in truth and in fact the development is not there in reality.

I call upon the Government to re-think its policy, to end discriminatory practices against the farmers as well as the consumer. Indeed, to look at our potential objectively and try to reach the understanding that unless there is a return to democracy, to justice, to fair play, until such time, Guyana will not be able to make any real progress for the well-being and welfare of all the people. [Applause (Opposition)]

The Speaker: Cde. Jack

The Minister of Energy and Natural Resources (Cde. Jack): Cde. Speaker, at this time in world history when it is recognised that all countries are experiencing economic difficulties, the Government has presented to this House a budget in which we have clearly set out what are the difficulties. We have not finished from mentioning where our plans have not been completed nor have we attempted to hide areas in which there have been shortcomings. However, listening to some of the speakers on the other side, one would believe that we were some desert island, completely divorced from the rest of the world.

Let us for a moment look at the prospects before us as regards the developments which are likely to take place during this year and during the course of the next few years. First of all, let us turn our attention to energy. It has been said that the Government had not prepared feasibility studies. This is clearly inaccurate. In the case of the Upper Mazaruni Hydro-Electric Scheme, the Government had prepared a detailed feasibility study which it has presented to the World Bank for consideration. We have heard that money was wasted on the Upper Mazaruni road. The fact is that if we had to build today the amount of road which we did build from Bartica to Sand Landing in the Mazaruni, it would cost at least double, perhaps four times, what it cost at the time when we did in fact build it so that I would say that we have, represented in that road, positive saving.

I want to say something further with regard to this scheme. We would have listened to a lot of criticism in the past about the site of the Upper Mazaruni Hydro-Electric Scheme. The fact is that with the implementation of this Scheme we will solve substantially the energy problem in this country and, with the ancillary aluminium smelter which we are proposing to build, we will lay a solid foundation for the industrialisation of this country. This has been the result of foresight dating back to 1971.

Apart from this, however, we have been investigating hydro-electric sites in various parts of the country where we can supply, for local area, small quantities of power which would not necessarily be tied to the national grid. For instance, in the North West District we are investigating now the Eclipse Fall which has a potential for 4 megawatts of power and in the Rupununi we are looking, at the Wannkabra, which would have a potential initially of 500 kilowatts of power but possibly even one megawatt of power. We shall be looking in the Bartica area and in other areas where we can have what you call “micro-schemes” because I think we will agree that the days of dependence upon petroleum for the generation of energy are past.

Apart from that, we are also investigating our peat deposits. With assistance from OLADE we are going to set up a bio-gas scheme in the country and, of course, we will be utilising our wood waste in the Upper Demerara forestry project.

It is a pity that some of the members of the other side of the House do not avail themselves of the opportunity of visiting some of these schemes. For instance if they had gone to Mabura Hill when we opened the road, they would have seen--- [Interruption.] In view of the fact that the Opposition is asking to be invited, I make a promise, a public promise, that I will invite them during the course of this year. I doubt that they will really want to come and see the vast amount of progress that has taken place in this country since they vacated office.

3:50 p.m.

Apart from that, Cde. Speaker, we are, as you know, exploring for oil. Indications do far points to the possibilities of our being fortunate enough within the next year or two to find oil in this country.

Turning to the forestry sector, we are going to be developing an export trade from \$14 million in 1979 to something like \$24 million in 1980. The forestry project - Demerara Woods, which we are developing with assistance from the IDB and the World Bank will come on stream in 1981, and because of the assistance which Government has given to the private sector, there is a large private concern which should also be on stream either later this year or in 1981 which should produce almost as much wood as the Upper Demerara Forestry Project. Of course it will not have the infrastructure, it will not have the township and the other amenities which this larger project will have. We have also heard of the plywood factory that is going to be established and all in all, I can say that at this stage the forestry sector is well set for very rapid development this year and in the coming years. Apart from that, we are now winning markets in the Middle East and are expanding our market in the Caribbean area.

Now there has been some talk about the need for democracy and production. The fact is that democracy is that democracy depends upon consensus. It depends upon an understanding on both sides or on all sides of what the real issues are. When one hears castigation about not supplying sufficient water to every place in this country, not supplying rural electricity to every place in this country, let me remind those who were talking about the inadequacy of our efforts, that when we assumed office the installed capacity of the G.E.C. was 13 megawatts. Now it's over 113 megawatts. We have expanded electricity into areas where the people of normal consideration would not have been able to get that electricity. It is true that the G.E.C. has experienced certain difficulties over the last years, but we are right now on stream with regard to the second boiler which we are repairing and I would expect we should, around June or July, have greatly overcome the frequent stoppages which have plagued the country during the last year or more.

Turning to our mining sector, we have established now a Geological and Mine Commission and as a result of that we have accelerate both the collection of revenue as well as the development aspects of our mineral potential. For instance, this year we will be investigating phosphate in the southern region of Guyana, stantalite, columbite, in the Mazaruni area, we will be developing a gold prospect at Konawaruk in conjunction with the Yugoslavs, and at this moment there is a team of Russian experts who are discussing with us gold development on a joint basis in other areas of our gold-bearing hinterland. Apart from that, we are in receipt of a number of inquiries from interested companies, who are attracted, no doubt, by the high price of gold and by the fact that we do possess immense gold potential. We have also carried out a study of our granite potential and with assistance from the E.E.C. we would hope that by next year to be able to establish an industry exporting sliced granite for decorative purposes. We are also doing a feasibility study of our shell deposits in the North West District for the purpose of producing fertilisers, which, of course, would allow us to cut down significantly on the foreign exchange which we use now to import fertilisers. These are merely some of the things which the Government, through the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, is doing at this moment.

I do not propose to deal with the question of trade because this is the province of the Ministry of Trade, but I would like to make a few comments in reply to the remarks which were made by the last speaker. Obviously, he has not been to Mahdia for a long time, perhaps for the last two or three years. I was at Mahdia about four weeks ago and it is a thriving community. As a matter of fact, there was established a new kindergarten school of very modern design. The roads are in order, we are going to be carrying electricity from Tumatumari to Mahdia and will link it up eventually with Konawaruk, so that we will have a triangle of activities - Konawaruk, Tumatumari and Mahdia.

When we look at what this Government had done over the past year with the resources which have been available to us, I think one must accept the fact that despite the hardship and despite the serious difficulties which we encountered, we have acquitted ourselves well. To hear anyone say that in 1960 sugar was 336,000 tons and in 1980 it was 320,000 tons as if that was a criticism is surely to fail to understand what has taken place between 1960 and 1980 and more importantly what took place between 1960 and 1976. Between 1960 and 1976, the sugar industry, as everybody knows, was in private hands and owned by Bookers and the target which was set and the maintenance which they carried out were all geared to give perception of their own nature, and since 1970 when we nationalised the Demerara Bauxite Company, the sugar industry has carried out a deliberate policy of running down its plant. Everybody knows that, so to speak now about what happens in 1980, four years after we have taken over is clearly to miss the entire point and to pretend that we are not living in this country and what we do not know what is happening.

4.00 p.m.

I want to go back to the question which is being raised about the difficulties of this country and the question of migration. Everyone knows that the movement of people from the country to the town is a phenomenon to be found in every developing country in the world, not only in every developing country of the world but I think it is fair to say a phenomenon to be found in every country in the world. Which country is there where there is not a movement of people from the country to the town? We in this country can pride ourselves on the fact that there has been less movement of people from the country to the town than in most of the other developing countries and when one speaks of the disparity of income or the disparity of living standards between town and country, again, even hostile critics who have come to this country have remarked upon the very small gap between rich and poor in this country as compared with the gap in other developing countries, and in other countries generally in the world. I challenge members of the Opposition to pick another developing country where the living standards of the people in country and town are less equal than they are in Guyana. Let them think of a country that they may wish to call where the urban dweller and the rural dweller are as close together as they are in Guyana.

We can now travel on the same bridge, which has been criticised, of which our friends over there make the best use, and we can go from here today to Parika and we will pass through, pass along a very well-made road and we will pass through areas, all of them with well-built, well-painted houses representing prosperous people. It is a pity that some of the speakers on the other side do not seem to have had a trip abroad recently. They have obviously forgotten, and I think we should redress that, and let them see some of the other places of their own choices where they will see people living not half as well as they are in this country.

Let us go for a moment to the question again of the challenges, as it was said, before this Government. The challenges before this Government as set out in this Budget Speech are challenges for development, but these challenges could only be realised if the people of this country recognise that we are all in a difficult situation. It is no use talking about inflation and brushing it aside. The cost of petroleum products has escalated hundreds of times since 1970 to the present time and it has had an effect not only on power per sec but it has had an effect on the cost of money, it has had an effect on the cost of all the things which we buy in this country, of course, has not escaped those effects. However, what we can point out too is that with the solid base which we have laid over the years, we have been able in 1979 to weather the storm so far.

Our bauxite industry is now on the road to recovery. There was a strike, which has already been mentioned by the Cde. Minister of Economic Development, aided and abetted by certain elements in the country who would not wish to see progress in this land that strike seriously impeded the progress of bauxite production in 1979, but this year, I am happy to say that with the schemes which we have put into effect and particularly with the incentive schemes which are becoming more and more a feature of production in all of our corporations, we have every good prospect of meeting our targets.

I am not prepared to enter into the broken record song which some people think passes for debate. What I wish to say, Cde. Speaker, is that the Budget which we have presented to this House is a realistic budget, the targets which we have set are attainable and if we all recognise the need to produce, and I think those on the side are admitting that we need to produce, if we recognise the need to produce then we can achieve the targets set out in this budget.

Of course, there may be those who may set out to ensure that the targets are not achieved because it augurs not so well for their prospects if the targets are achieved, but I believe that the ordinary man in this country is more concerned with the bread and butter issues, the issues of production and remuneration than with indulging in futile recriminations and criticisms which lead no one anywhere, and it is with these remarks that I commend the budget to this House. I am sure that in 1981 when we come here we will be able to show what we have done in 1980. [Applause.]

The Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Trade and Consumer Protection (Cde. Bynoe): Cde. Speaker, permit me first to congratulate the Minister of Economic Development and Co-operatives, Cde. Desmond Hoyte, for presenting such a comprehensive budget in this honourable House. In fact, I want to term it the people's budget, not as some may say, the P.N.C. budget but the people's budget. In making my contribution in this House, Cde. Speaker, I should like to touch on distribution, particularly of basic commodities and perhaps to some extent give some explanation to comments and statements made in this House by members of the Opposition.

As far as is practicable, Cde. Speaker, the Ministry of Trade is working studiously to ensure that all consumer items reach the consumers in the areas in which they live with less difficulty. As a consequence, efforts are being made to decentralise distribution and also to monitor same as far as possible. For instance since we have tried to decentralise distribution, we have assisted in very many ways shopkeepers in the various areas. Perhaps, Cde. Speaker, it is good for this basic House to know that since

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we have tried to implement decentralised distribution of basic commodities throughout the country, some shopkeepers and some consumers have been satisfied to a great extent.

4:10 p.m.

I want to touch on some of the comments being made by some of the speakers. Cde. Jagan spoke of the cost of food items, Cde. Narbada Persaud, in his contributions, referred to the various outlets being set up and I will come to that later, the distribution centres. I am not afraid to say it. He spoke about the long lines and boarding and discrimination in distribution and so on. He made reference to K.S.I. and he said also that a senior official of the party has been appointed as manager of the K.S.I. If I can stop there, then I will come to the other speakers. The fact remains that if this party to which I belong -- And I have no apology to make, the People's National Congress - regardless of whether I die today or tomorrow, I remain a member of the People's National Congress - and the People's National Congress Government of this country owe an obligation to the nation, as a result of which they had to devise measures, way and means, in order to honour their obligation.

One of the measures and ways and means which it devised was to ensure that basic commodities which come into this country reach the consumers. I cannot see for one moment -- /Interruption./

The Speaker: Just a minute, Cde.Bynoe, everybody is so concerned about distribution and now when you are getting an opportunity to hear, a lot of noise is being made. Are you really interested in hearing? /Cde. Ram Karran: “we are all concerned about the pretty lady, sir”./

Cde.Bynoe: I cannot see for one moment why any member of the Opposition, a loyal Guyanese, should be so worried if the People's National Congress decides to open outlets. We had Gimpex in the P.P.P. days and it is still there? Who is the Manager of Gimpex? Is it a member of the People's National Congress? Certainly no one, no sound person, would expect a member of the People's National Congress to be Manager of Gimpex. In the same way no one with some sense would expect a member of the P.P.P Opposition to be Manger of K.S.I. We owe an obligation to no one.

We have to ensure that consumers get goods. When I assumed office at the Ministry of Trade, what existed there? You had the private merchants - and it was really alarming to know that these private merchants were getting so much of goods and yet there were no goods in Georgetown. When shopkeepers went to them, they would say they do not have. When other shopkeepers went to them, they know when to sell to them. Moreover they were more interested in sending their goods to Berbice. I am not speaking from information; I am speaking from what I know. They were more interested in sending their goods to Berbice because there was a direct link from Georgetown right up to Corriverton and across the ferry. They were concerned, not because they were sympathetic to the consumers in Berbice but but because they wanted to create that sort of problem for this Government. To my mind, there was a deliberate attempt to bring down this Government by way of foodstuff. The fact remains that because this Government saw what was happening, perhaps through some crystal ball, it decided that it would not hesitate but get on with the business and set up outlets to assist the people.

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That is not all. This Government has been working with the Ministry of Co-operatives to set up consumer co-operatives in other areas of this Country. Recently meetings were held at Bath. The members talked about discrimination. I spoke to over 300 Indians Bath Estate. They are interested in setting up a consumer co-operative and I want to have a discussion with them with the Co-operative Officer.

There are some areas on Black Bush Polder where three co-operatives are to be set up. The corner-stone of a building for one has already been laid. One will be laid at any time this months and another at some time next month.

It is not that the Ministry of Trade or this Government is concerned only with - I do not know whom they were referring to. As far as I am concerned, and the party to which I belong and the Government, they are concerned with people regardless of who they are.

Cde. Nokta, spoke of no food in the interior and he said also that Government must go back to the tula. I would not have expected something like that from Cde. Nokta, because the fact remains that the tula is part of the Indian custom. [Interruption.] I am not supposed to call it correctly. The fact remains that when they their religious functions they much use it. Why go against it if Government is requesting people living in rural areas to use it in order to help the people? I have one at home. If have a fireside. We have asked people to assist themselves, not to assist the Government, but to assist themselves, to go back to the use of the fireside, particularly in the rural areas where you have wood and those who do not have wood can use coals. That does not say that they will not have stoves. They will still have their stoves, but I would say in this House that one of my neighbours said, "Cde. Bynoe, I am following your example" I asked, "in what why?" "Because you told us to buy a fireside and I have bought a fireside." And she made a separate kitchen. I do not see what is wrong with a fireside and I cannot see why the Opposition must speak against the tula.

He spoke of no food in the interior. None of the members of the Opposition can go into the interior and say there is no food. We went with the Constituent Assembly to Lethem and Guyana Stores is stocked with foodstuff. When the airstrip was to be close - I thought Cde. Abraham would have brought this out – when the airstrip was to be closed, the corporation ensured that it took in enough food – stuff to guarantee the sale of food to consumers until the airstrip was rectified. I am surprised to know that Cde. Abraham did not bring that out. He mentioned no flour in Lethem. My Minister will deal with that. He is more able to deal with that matter.

I would like to touch on the point raised by Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud. He said that some people are going to the mill to get flour and they cannot get flour now form the mill. It is true. They cannot get because some of them, instead of selling the flour in the shops or in the areas where they have their business, they sell the flour across the border. With regard to a certain area where the problem is with manufacturers and bakers, some of the manufacturers who have been given flour from the mill to make chowmein and bran are making egg noodles and selling at a higher price because chowmein is cheaper than egg noodles. We do not want eggs noodles, we want chowmeain and they have given a supply of flour to manufacture chowmein but instead - for better reasons, maybe known to themselves

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and maybe to the Opposition, that is why they raised that - they say that they are making egg noodle. The Ministry of Trade is going to get into that and I think the Minister will deal with that.

4:20 p.m.

Bakers, what have we found? That some of the bakers, instead of baking bread to supply shops, are selling flour. This is a fact because we have found where a baker on the West Coast of Berbice was receiving a hundred-odd bags of flour per fortnight and instead of baking bread he was selling flour in the night to people with cars. And he admitted this to me and to the Ministry, and he admitted also to the Bakers' Association of which he is a member. They went and inspected his building and investigated the situation and he agreed and he accepted, he admitted that he did sell flour to people and not to the people in the area. If he had sold it to the people in the area, okay, then we would have said, "Well, you should not have done that but still you rendered assistance to the people in the area." But he did not sell it to the people in the area, he sold it to people with cars who used to go there in the night to collect the flour.

Cde. Speaker, I would like to know, since the members of the Opposition are speaking so much about corruption, if they would agree with some of the members of the Bakers' Association that they should receive flour from the mill and sell it, instead of baking bread to supply to the consumers. [Interruption.] Cde. Speaker, it appears to me that whenever the members of the Opposition realise that this Government has found a loop-hole where the P.P.P. is concerned and is trying to tackle that loop-hole right away, they are very much concerned and worried.

They spoke about distribution on the West Coast of Demerara and they identified a particular subject but they did not identify the other one, but the same complaints that we are receiving on that particular district we receive from the other one too, but they do not mention that one's name for reasons better known to themselves. The fact remains that we cannot sit down and be quiet lukewarm and allow shopkeepers to do what they like when they get these basic commodities. And in that very West Coast Demerara, at face the community meetings, the people themselves say in the areas that some of the shops whose names I called, those shopkeepers' names, that they never knew that those shopkeepers were receiving goods because of the fact that those shopkeepers have not been selling the goods to the people in those areas. Those shopkeepers, I repeat Cde. Speaker, have not been selling the goods to the people in those areas. And it is time that we call a spade a spade in this House because the fact remains that we have to ensure that the people who get the goods are the people who are recommended by the people in the areas concerned.

Now, Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud did not take time off to say what facilities they enjoy from the Ministry of Trade. When camphor came into this country a few months ago, I think it was about two months ago, before any other organisation got camphor, Ghandi Youth Organisation, got ten cartons, he spoke about somebody selling agarbatti above the controlled price or something like that - I do not really think about that - but he did not mention the cartons of camphor that their Youth Organisation got from the Ministry of Trade. [Interruption.] The Ghandi Youth Organisation, this is one of your organisations. They did not also mention that when they had their P.P.P. Conference, that they got assistance from the Ministry of Trade. [A Cde. Member: "After going through all that trouble?"] Regardless of any trouble, they got it.

The Speaker: Five minutes more, comrades.

Cde. Bynoe: we have to ensure, Cde. Speaker, that when people come to the Ministry of Trade stating that they propose to have a function, we have to be concerned if there is a function or not because we got a lot of fictitious invitations coming to the Ministry of Trade for Yag and all those things and when those invitations were investigated there were no such things in those areas, and so we are very much concerned.

To wrap up, Cde. Speaker, I would say that the Budget touched and evaluated every aspect of our country's economic situation for, in fact, it has called a spade a spade and as much, I would like to associate myself with its presentation and commend it to all Guyanese for their for their acceptance particularly members of the Opposition – if they really have Guyana and the people of Guyana at heart – so that together, Cde. Speaker, we would combine our efforts to foster greater production and productivity so that together also, we can work and win in the field, in the office, in the factory and in the communities in which we are living.

But perhaps, Cde. Speaker, if I should just pause for a few moments to ask what contribution the P.P.P. had made, in their respective communities, to assist the in getting rid of black marketing. I am quite certain, Cde. Speaker, I have not heard it from the lips of any of the speakers over on the other side of the House what they have done to assist their community in getting rid of black marketing because we face that quite a lot. Particularly we are concerned that we have to maintain those outlets, by they “K.S.I.” or whatever “S.I.” We are going to maintain those outlets because we want to assured that the nation is fully serviced by these outlets - not the Party people, the nation. With regard to the Corentyne, Cde. Speaker, we are very much concerned with what is happening on the Corentyne and I will call on the representative on the Opposition side who lives on the Corentyne to ensure that goods going up to the Corentyne are not taken across the border. Thank you very much, Cde. Speaker.

Cde. Dindayal rose—

The Speaker: I have not called on you. It seems that you are rearing to go. Yes, Cde. Dindayal.

Cde. Dindayal: Mr. Speaker, for the past two days we have been here in this Parliament to debate this 1980 Budget and we have been hearing from many speakers on the Government Benches about the achievements and the progress that this Government has made. Still in the Budget Speech, the hon. Minister of Economic Development and Co-operatives has clearly stated that we had not done well so that we could not pay our indebtedness and as such the workers and the farmers are being called to produce more. And in this Budget Speech – I will quote from page 7 – it is stated that,

“...we intended to be masters in our own land and moulder of our own destiny; We opted for political independence and economic self-reliance. We declined to be pawns of any country. And on the basic of overwhelming national consensus we chose to build our society on foundations of social justice and equity.

In the translation of this policy into action, we domesticated our economy by bringing under Guyanese ownership and control the dominant and strategic sectors. Thus, today, not only is the economy fully, legally and effectively under Guyanese dominion but the major enterprises are owned by the Guyanese people as a whole and operated for their sole benefit.”

but the major enterprises are owned by the Guyanese people as a whole and operated for their sole benefit.”

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Cde. Speaker, in the contribution of the Minister of Agriculture, he also praised the farmers and thanked them for their performance since the farmers had done so overwhelmingly remarkably well in production and this Government owned about 80 per cent of this economy. I would like to ask a vital question to any one of the members of the Government Benches. Why is it then that we are unable to pay our indebtedness? I would like to ask this question, and I must point out to this Government that there is something definitely wrong.

Cde. Speaker, last year's budget was named, tax-free fight-back budget, but, in reality we have seen more taxes than ever on the backs of the people. In my contribution to the last Budget Debate, I said that there is nothing to stop the Government from bringing to Parliament mini budgets. And this was so. We had mini budgets. Mr. Speaker, the Government is trying to fool the people but the people are no longer fooled. Time will catch up with them. Again, like in the past, the Government is putting blame on the oil crisis and bad weather and the main issue is being side-stepped and bypassed. The fact is that stagnation or decline in production has been a long-term phenomenon. Blame is placed on the weather but what is not mentioned is the fact that the Government until very recently, had deliberately downgraded agriculture and sabotage comprehensive water control and drainage and irrigation projects. Long before the oil crisis of October, 1973 the economy was already showing signs of stagnation, as early as 1971. Dr. Wilfred David, the then Economic Adviser to the Government, commenting on the premature collapse of the 1966-72 development plan, stated that we have had growth without development, the problem has been exemplified by a high level of unemployment and foreign dependency.

In the 1977 World Bank atlas on population, per capita, product and growth rates listed Guyana's gross national product per capita real at 1.5 per cent for the 1960-75 period and a mere 1.1 per cent during 1970-75. Compare for instance, the farmers during the time of the P.P.P. Government and the time of the P.N.C. In the 1958-64 period, during the time of the P.P.P. Government, rice and sugar production increased by 74 per cent and 44 per cent respectively. In the 1968-74 periods during P.N.C. control, the figures were only .6 per cent and 6 per cent respectively and this trend has continued. For 1980 new production and export targets have been set with the usual appeals and warning "Produce or Perish." The hon. Prime Minister warned that unless a minimum of 335,000 tons of sugar, 1,700,000 tons of bauxite, 300,000 tons of alumina, and 200,000 tons rice were produced, the economy would be in shambles.

Cde. Speaker, we have seen in this election year, this budget contains a little sprinkling of sweet here and there, but if you examine it, the bitter is more than the sweet. The fact is that acts of omission by the P.N.C., wrong economic planning strategy, pragmatic opportunistic domestic and foreign policies, incorrect allocation of loan capital, lack of democracy, racial and political discrimination, corruption, wage freeze, credit freeze, uneconomic prices to farmers, improper grading, have all contributed to falling production and productivity and to grave social, economic

and financial crisis. The balance of payments and budget deficits, the of shortage of foreign exchange and the attempts to resolve the crisis, have placed further burdens on the backs of the people- increased taxation, cuts in social services.

Cde. Speaker, the profit of the Rice marketing Board, which is from the sweat and the tears of the farmers, is being misused. Millions of dollars which have been put into the hands of the Rice Action Committee have been used and cannot be accounted for. Loans and favours are being given to P.N.C. patrons who are not genuine farmers, they are only dong so as a catch-hand business and as such, loans cannot be recovered. Check the records of the Rice Marketing Board and this can be verified. While genuine farmers are being denied, the hiring of agricultural machines is being done with discrimination against certain sections of farmers and being misused also. This can be verified also by the previous Chairman of the Rice Marketing Board, Mr. Stanley Yearwood, who published in the Guyana Chronicle on Wednesday, 23rd August, 1978:

“More than \$18 million worth of equipment less than 5 years old was non operational and lying around various sites in scrap heaps. Farmers are losing several days and money also at the Guyana Rice Marketing Board centres to obtain inputs. They are like beggars at these centres. The quality of rice the farmers get to eat is not fit for human consumption, they are getting stock feed while having to pay high prices.”

While the Government is talking about black marketing, it is black marketing in this case and I urge that a price control officer should look into this matter and lace charges on those who are reasonable. Cde. Speaker, while the hon. Minister of Agriculture told this House that the Government has given rice farmers three increases, he did not say how much these three increases amounted to. He also appeared to say that from 1964 to now, rice prices have been increased to about 100 per cent while cost has increased about 600 per cent. For instance, the M.M.A. scheme would have cost \$35 million in 1964. It is now costing about \$100 million. While in the contribution of the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, he said just now that that road they have built would have cost double and they have done some saving. Why is it they did not do that project and let us have some savings? What has prevented them? The hon. Minister has admitted that cost is more than prices received, according to Guyana Chronicle, Tuesday, 26th June, 1979. With all of this admission, the Government finds it fit to recently increase the price by \$1.00 per bag of rice and 50 cents per bag of paddy. This is an insult to the farmers. I wonder if this is the prize the hon. Minister meant to give the farmers for their good performance that he so much praised. It is a shame and a disgrace on the part of the Government to treat farmers in this way not realising that these very farmers are making sacrifices to produce and to feed all those sitting over there and to bring in foreign exchange which is so vital to this economy.

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When one takes all of this into consideration one can only come to the conclusion that this Government is carrying out a vindictive spite against the farmers and that spite is now recoiling when the whole economy of this country is affected. The whole nation is feeling the

effect with the exception of those who sit on the Government benches because they are well fed; things are always good. It means that the Government is bent on sacrificing this whole nation for the benefit of a few bureaucrats because it is involved in power.

I wish to warn the members of the Government that power does not last forever. The days will be numbered. It will leave them one day. They will be buried, scorned by society. It reminds me of a very famous king who had asked for a boon that he must not die in the day and he must not die in the night; he must not die by man; he must not die by beast; he must not die by the sword and he felt that he would never die. Eventually he had to go, power does not last forever.

Cde.Speaker, the sum of \$35 million had been spent on silos and the assurance was given to farmers that the silos would take care of all the paddy and rice and that there would be no more spoilage; we would produce the best quality of rice which would earn the best prices. Instead of high quality rice we have seen more...

spoilage and a low quality of rice. High grades of paddy are reaped and left for weeks to be transported through the slow intake of the Guyana Rice Board's silos and mills. As such, farmers lose. High grade paddy purchased by the Guyana Rice Marketing Board spoils in these silos. Over 40,000 bags of stockfeed and 10,000 bags of damaged rice were being produced by 1979. There are three mills on the Essequibo coast milling stockfeed and damaged rice. Let me name them: David Lawrie, Kayman Sankar, and S. Ramnath. We calculated 40,000 bags of stockfeed and 10,000 bags of damaged rice. Millions of dollars would have been coming into this economy; the farmers would have benefited, the economy as a whole would have benefited.

The Speaker: Cde.Dindayal, how do you come to a million dollars? You said 40,000 bags of rice and 7,000 bags of stockfeed. How do you calculate that at a million dollars. You must make accurate statements in the House.

Cde.Dindayal: Forty thousand bags at \$ 50 a bag.

The Speaker: Fifty dollars a bag for stockfeed and \$50 a bag for rice.

Cde.Dindayal: If there was no spoilage.

The Speaker: I read the Gazette and I am sure the price is not \$50 per bag for rice and it depends on the quality of rice too.

Cde.Dindayal: I am not speaking about paddy, I am speaking about rice.

The Speaker: you say one million dollars and even your own figures do not give you a million dollars.

Cde.Dindayal: Cde. Speaker, during the period 1962-1964 the P.P.P Government did not have any silos. We had small mills operating on drying floors and with the educational programme by the R.P.A., the industry produced very high quality rice so that the Rice Marketing Board could not get broken rice to blend to make second quality rice. The hon. Minister can verify this. He was then the chairman of the Rice Marketing Board while I was a member of that very Board. The P.N.C. Government, through its grading system, robbed the farmers and millers and this put the millers first out of business. Now the farmers are in a state of bankruptcy and will be soon forced to go out of business. The Government will have to be blamed for this. [Interruption.]

The Speaker: We hear of an allegation of gasoline on one side and kerosene oil on the other side, maybe that is why there is a fuel shortage and you are making more noise.

Cde.Dindayal: Cde. Speaker, Local Government all over this country is being run by nominated members and not members who are elected by the people. These persons, nominated by the P.N.C., not elected by the people, are sabotaging production. They are causing the people to suffer by collecting rates and not giving services. Let me give you an instance where the local authority's Chairman, Mr. Bacchus, used the Government grant which was given to the Wakenaam Local Authority. He hired a Mustang dragline and tidied up his private estate and then increased his rental on his tenant's holdings. This matter has been reported to the Regional Minister, Cde.Chowritmootoo, and up to now nothing has been done. As a matter of fact, the people in the island totally rejected the Regional Minister when they told the Prime Minister that they did not want to see the Regional Minister because they never saw him before. He only

knows Azeez Bacchus where he goes drinking whisky. As one speaker from the other side of this House--

Cde.Chowritmootoo rose--

The Speaker: I hope it is a point of order and not a correction. Let me hear the point of order.

The Minister of State-Regional (Essequibo coast/West Demerara) (Cde.Chowritmootoo): I am sure that it is provided in the Standing Orders that a statement issued in this House will have to be verified.

The Speaker: that is not a point of order. I want to hear because everybody is making wrong statements.

Cde.Dindayal: Cde Speaker, as one speaker from the other side of this House said, the hon. Prime Minister is putting up a prescription for increased production and the recovery of the economy of this country. I wish to advise him to tell the doctor that prescriptions cannot work anymore. It needs emergency surgery. [Interruption.]

The Speaker: I think I will suspend the Sitting because I cannot imagine the Government benches behaving like this.

Cde.Dindayal: I advice them to tell the Prime Minister to take his butcher's knife and wipe off--

The Speaker: You cannot make disparaging statements of the Prime Minister.

Cde.Dindayal: I am saying to advice the--

The Speaker: I do not want to know what you are saying. I am telling you what you cannot say.

Cde.Dindayal: What is needed is a butcher's knife to square the round pegs in the holes. There is a 5 acre rice plot adjacent to the rice mill at Anna Regina. My proposal is that the Government should take that piece of land and build drying floors which are more economical. More employment will be created, we will conserve fuel, and stop spoilage. Give prices commensurate with the cost of production to farmers, recognise democratic farmers' organisations such as the R.P.A., a body that has demonstrated its competency during 1962 to 1964; practice workers' participation in general, non discrimination in employment and hiring of agricultural machinery; implement agrarian reform now and save farmers from exploitation. Cde. Speaker, we all know that we have the resources, that we can do better, but if these obstacles are not removed there can be increased production. Cde. Speaker, I support the last comrade who spoke and I call upon the Government--

4:50 p.m.

The Speaker: The member who spoke last was Cde. Bynoe. If you are supporting Cde.Bynoe, I don't know--

Cde. Dindayal: No, I was referring to Cde. Persaud, when he called on this House that we must not look at each other in a racial point of view, we must not look at each other in a

political point of view, but we must look at each other as Guyanese. I am calling upon the Government to heed this call and let us come out of this crisis. How well we manage will depend on how well we grasp the real issue.

The Speaker: Cde. Field-Ridley.

Cde. Field-Ridley: thank you very much, Cde. Speaker. As a member of the Back Bench in this honourable House, I will now congratulate the Government, the Cabinet, on this budget that we have before us because I believe that we have grown to expect this kind of standard of care from the People's National Congress Government. Of course, times are hard, times must be hard for a country like this, primarily an agricultural country, a third World country, a developing country, being developed by decedents of slaves and indentured servants, it must be hard, it always had been hard. I defy any member of the Opposition to tell us when in Guyana life has not been hard. But, Cde. Speaker, it could have been harder if we had not had the kind of Leadership that we now have.

Some years ago when our Prime Minister said that it was necessary for a country like this to own and control our own resources, members on the other side sneered because a few years before in their 1964 election manifesto, they had given a guarantee that they would never nationalise bauxite or sugar, so they sneered when this Government said we shall own and control our own resources. When a few years ago the Prime Minister said we must feed, house and clothe...

this nation, they said it was a slogan, we should not take it seriously, but, Cde. Speaker, we have lived to see that the Prime Minister set us on the course for survival and has given us a chance for our country to survive in a way many other countries have not had a chance to do.

We have heard international predications of the real possibility of food shortages. Cde. Dindayal said, let us think of ourselves as Guyanese, and when he has taken the beam out of his own eye, perhaps he will think of himself as a Guyanese. We, as Guyanese, can confidently say that now in 1980 when there are problems all over the world we can feed ourselves and we can help others to feed themselves. Sure! There are times when we do not get cheese; there are times we do not get milk. This is a problem all over the world.

When Cde. Hope was speaking about the facts of life, when he mentioned, for example, that the Socialist Bloc is becoming more and more financially dependent on the Western Bloc, the opposition looked embarrassed and uncomfortable and Cde. Ram Karran from his seat said, and I am repeating because I am sure you did not hear what he said from his seat, that they are part of the world. And that is true. There is nothing for the Opposition to be embarrassed about or ashamed about because the Socialist Bloc finds itself in such difficulties that it has to increase its borrowings from the Western Bloc. It is a world crisis that we are in.

The Western world has problems too and its problems show themselves in different ways. I heard a television interview on Buffalo Station just a few weeks ago, and what were they complaining about? That there were so many houses in the north of North America where householders would not this winter be able to afford heating for their houses, they were complaining about the escalating price of oil and the difficulty of getting it, they were complaining about the hardship on the small man and they were trying to develop because that is where in the capitalist world you will see the squeeze. They were interviewing the Chairman of the Board of Directors of one of the multinational oil companies and he was happily driving a Lincoln Continental and he did not have, as the rest of the residents had to do, to keep his thermometer within his house at 65 degrees F because they were not allowed to keep their houses warmer than that in this winter in a developed country.

There is a world economic crisis on, and jump high or low, we must face it, we are not playing dolly house, we are not talking about things in the air, we are talking about life and living. Those of us who are fortunate enough to see that masterful production by Cde. Billy Pilgrim, done on the occasion of our Prime Minister's birthday, will remember the story of the slaves on the estate when they sang: life is hard, and they were singing centuries ago, life is hard, life is hard, life is hard not only in Guyana, life is hard all over the world. But when life is hard, because life is hard, we must put our minds and our energies towards finding a solution to build a better way of life for all of us descendants of slaves and indentured servants that we are. This is not the time for mewling and puking like infants.

Cde. Speaker, when I was a girl at school, and I confess that was a long time ago, we had our text book--

The Speaker: Cde. Ridley, you still look like a girl.

Cde. Ridley: We, the women of Guyana, will always be indebted to the Caribbean male.

They do say..... But I remember those days very well, we had to do the text book, As you like It and we had to learn certain passages from it, and one of those passages was,

“All the world’s a stage”.

You remember it, Cde. Speaker, I thought perhaps, we should remind ourselves a little more of that because I was under the impression that the majority of the members on the other side have really reached the last stage, but I was wrong, let me say that from the start. I was wrong.

The Speaker: I would like to tell you that when you are finished with that last stage, we will take the Suspension.

Cde. Field-Ridley: The last, according to Shakespeare there is a

“...second childishness and mere oblivion,
sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.”

But by some queer process of nature, I find that members of the Opposition have passed through the last stage and have reached back to the first stage, that is. Cde. Speaker,

“At first the infant,

Mewling and puking in the nurse’s arms”

At a time of crisis, we cannot be like infants. We have to sand up like men and women and take those decisions that will ensure not merely survival but the good life for all which the P.N.C. has guaranteed for us.

The Speaker: I think we will take the suspension. The sitting of this House is suspended for 30 minutes.

Sitting suspended at 5 p.m.

5.35 p.m.

On resumption--

Cde. Field-Ridley: I was saying that at a time like this when there is a problem all over the world, we as Guyanese must behave like men and women, stop crying and look at life in the face, examine the realities of the situation and convert those realities to our best advantage. Listen to the arguments of the Opposition. It seems to me that two main points came through. One, I think, was summarised by Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud, when he said this is a country of fantastic opportunities and potential. Now I believe that every civic Guyanese has known that for a very long time, it is the one thing that we believe but unfortunately these are not the days of Mary Poppins or Cinderella and fairy God Mother or any other mythical or mystical figure. The only way to convert the potential into reality is by hard work.

The other argument of the P.P.P., I think, was put very boldly to us by Cde. Narbada Persaud, when he said and I quote: Give the P.P.P. the productive Ministries and we will ensure production. He is man of great courage and I admire him. In the face of the records and in the face of our memories, he has dared to get up and make a statement like that that. I had not even planned mentioning that the P.P.P. had an opportunity to convert potential into reality- had it not been for that statement.

Because I believe that some people insult the intelligence of the people of Guyana by thinking that their memories are short- our memories are like the memories of elephants, they go on to eternity- I do not think it is enough for me as a member of this House to stand and call upon my memory or the memory of anyone. I have brought along a report on British Guyana, a report on the financial position by K.C. Jacobs, C.B.E., Esq., and August, 1963. This gentleman was sent at the period when the P.P.P. was exhausting its energies and floundering like a little fowl when you cut off his head to prepare him to put him into a pot. This was not a P.N.C. member; this was not even a Guyanese; this was somebody who came out to examine the economy. He looked at the situation and all the facts and figures produced for him by the books and records right here in Guyana and he analysed them and he came to the conclusion which we knew, those of us who were here at the time, that the state of the country was in a mess, that as a result of P.P.P. bumbling and mismanagement, things had got into a sorry state.

I do not particularly, Cde. Speaker, want to look at that, I just want to look at the elements which are the productive Ministries, as Cde. N. Persaud said, which the P.P.P. now wants to have because he said, "we will ensure production." What did they do in those days? One can go through this book, I am not going to go through the book, I am just going to take little bits, but one can practically look anywhere. Here he is on page 9 looking at projects of past economic objectives. He said, "...even those projects that have economic objectives have yielded virtually no revenue to the Government" and he talked about the expenditure they had put into it and the high debt charges which had to be met in respect of these projects. If you compare them percentage wise, Cde. Speaker, perhaps I should say that it is perhaps a little unfair and I found myself at a loss dealing with a few million dollars here and there. Because that was the nature of the budget which the P.P.P. was able to assemble, when we are dealing with the kind of budget of a real country that we are now dealing with.

The P.P.P. had successfully miniaturised Guyana so that the dolly House that I am talking about seems to be what they were doing, but even in dealing with the dolly house in so far as economic projects were concerned they got no revenue. And he gives examples of it. The Boeraserie project costing over \$15 million was not successful in its main economic purpose or increasing rice production. Expenditure of \$18 million on the Black Bush Polder project had so far yielded negligible amounts of revenue to the Government. And he goes on to give examples. That is the kind of production that Cde. Narbada has been talking about and guaranteeing to us. That is not the kind of production we want. We are talking about a real world, but then look at the ability to manage. They managed in various ways and they manage by various devices.

Cde. Steve Naraine, mentioned one of techniques they used- using contractor financing. He mentioned the Parika/ Bartica Road; he mentioned the money that had been expended for the initial work, but looking at this report, it was more than the sum that Cde. Steve Naraine mentioned because the Government also found itself, having advanced \$31/3 million, risking to lose money already spent. This was the position of either letting that go as a dead loss or spending an additional \$7 million with the hope of recouping. When we took over the Government, we rescued some of the equipment which was left lying on that road exposed to the elements and with the typical English gift for understatement, this is what Mr. Jacobs said:

“The Government may have been misguided in the choices of contractors, but they also seem to have been unlucky, over the complications”. He said that in the case of this road, very early on they were in unusual and unfortunate difficulties. Narbada Persaud said: give us the productive Ministries and we shall ensure production. But they tried sometimes to manage by themselves as they had to; they were in charge of Ministries. What was the record there? Perhaps we can look at another part of the record to see what they did.

5:40 p.m

During their period in office they acquired the Electric Company and they have certainly attempted from time to time to use this, they say, to discredit the Government. But what was their record with the Electricity Company? When they talk about this Government nationalising, they who had given a guarantee that they would never nationalise, have criticised us for paying at all. What did they do? First, they made an initial down payment which they got as the result of a loan. And from whom did they get this loan? You would not believe it, Cde. Speaker. From Barclays Overseas Development Corporation. They borrowed the money to make the initial down payment and then they committed themselves to future payments month by month.

They criticised us for paying in the case of bauxite. We will pay out of future profits. What had they undertaken to do? They undertook to pay the company the revenue- all the revenue of the company month by month, not the profits or the surplus but all the revenue of the company would be used to pay the initial instalments. That is how they managed...

when they did it themselves. I do not want to go into detail about the state of their management of the Ministries because the record is really a sorry one but perhaps we should pause to look at the fact that they who criticised this Government, as they say, for not having control of our finances, not giving reports, were the people whose behaviour had led Jacobs to say”

“...mention should be made of the shortcomings in the control of Government revenue and expenditure which is set out in the annual reports of the Director of Audit. Largely, these are due to shortages in, and in cases like the Accountant General’s Department congestion of, staff and they must have been the cause of substantial financial loss. The orderly and systematic conduct of Government affairs and its services cannot be expected when there is the necessity constantly to count the money in the till or look up the overdraft in the passbook and to alter course according to what is found.”

This is how they behaved. These are the people who say we have no plan. This is how they did it: constantly change the plan, change the direction and then move.

Lest they say that they found themselves in this parlous state because of the strikes, I just want briefly to say that Mr. Jacobs examined the reasons for it and he accepted that the strikes and riots were part of the problem. He did not say it but I think we all knew and all know that the riots and strike were the result of the political ineptitude of the People’s Progressive Party, the alienation of the people of the country which necessitated them locking themselves in this building and putting barbed wire around the fences, to keep out the people of Guyana.

Their ineptitude and their political bandying were the kind that caused the Premier at that time to shut out from Press Conferences forever and aye people like Kit Nascimento and Percy Armstrong.

Jacobs found that the strike and the riots were part of the problem. He says more than this. He says:

“Looking back it seems clear that the scale of expenditure in the development plan adopted in 1959 and the reliance, in addition to heavy borrowing involving debt charges, on contributions from annual surpluses of revenue over expenditure imposed a strain that might in any event have led to difficulty.”

in which they found themselves.

The Speaker: Five minutes more.

Cde.Field Ridley: When we are faced with these kinds of statements from the other side we must remember that they are not coming de-novo. They are coming with a record bungling and ineptitude behind them and therefore we the people of Guyana must not make the mistake of acceding to the request of Cde.Narbada Perasud of giving them those productive Ministries or, indeed, any Ministry. [Applause. (Government)]

There is not much time left, Cde.Speaker, and I would like to say this: that we have heard from one member of the Opposition that we threatened the people some time ago with the slogan “Produce or Perish”. I myself am very proud to be an officer of the W.R.S.M which is the organisation that used that slogan and it gave me occasion for a slight smile when I saw early in this year, 1980, that motto that we use at our Biennial Conference two years ago- in this year, 1980, the Time magazine, issued out of the developed world carried for several weeks a full page advertisement saying “Produce or Perish”.

This year we are coming to the Biennial Conference and our motto this year is “Work and Win” because that is the only solution to the problem. And we the women of the country will join with the men in the country to work and if part of that work means ensuring that there is a policy of energy conservation, we will do it. If it means using firesides and tulas and coal pots, it will have to be done. We will not be like the foolish virgins that the bridegroom is upon them and their lamps are not lit, because they can’t get the oil.

The Speaker: Perhaps they want to remain virgins.

Cde. Field Ridley: That, Cde. Speaker, that analogy is not applicable.

In closing, Cde. Speaker, I would like to say this. I do hope that I am not doing the Opposition an injustice but I cannot remember one occasion since this Government has been in office when they have thought of themselves as Guyanese and said to the nation of Guyana, “Let us produce”. I have heard them say, “Let us boycott”, I have heard them say “Let us pursue a policy of civil disobedience”. I have heard them tell the farmers, “Don’t bring your produce to market”. I have heard them tell the lawyers when Cde. Jagan was a member of their side not to go to Court. And he went. I have them say, “Don’t turn up to work.” If they are saying then that they are willing to remove the beam out of their eyes and to see themselves, as they in fact are, as Guyanese with the potential and capacity for production, then we welcome them in what must be a national effort to produce. Work and win.

Cde. Speaker, it is a pleasure to be part of a Government that produces a Budget that provides a framework, not just for survival, but a framework that will continue the process that it started a long time ago of making the small man a real man [Applause]

The Speaker: Cde. Tyndall.

The Minister of Trade and Consumer Protection (Cde. Tyndall): Cde. Speaker, the Cde. Minister of Economic Development in presenting the 1980 Budget sought to give an indication of the international environment, those factors which we must take into account in planning and financing our economic activities and the activities of Government, in particular, in the current year in the context of our broader developmental perspectives. It is very important that we make an unbiased and an objective appraisal of this background, that we are in tune with the salient developments in the international economy, that we recognise the way these developments impact on our own economy, if we are to appreciate the responses which we must make as a Government, as a responsible Government, in the unswerving pursuit of the developmental objectives for our people.

Listening to the debate, particularly over the first two days, I cannot resist the feeling that these are the impacts upon our situation. The external imperatives which constrain our action at the national level are either ignored or are not clearly understood by many of the hon. Members opposite in the consideration of the budget proposals. There are three factors on which I would like to focus some attention- areas which are of particular relevance, not merely in respect of our consideration of the budgetary proposals in general, but more particularly in the consideration of the role of the Ministry of Trade and Consumer Protection in the national effort towards the restoration of our economic momentum.

The first area I wish to bring into focus is the global nature of the economic crisis.

[Cde. Joe Tyndall continues]

5.50 p.m.

The economic difficulties which are being experienced today by Guyana are not confined to this country, are not confined to the Caricom region, are not confined to the developed countries, are not confined to the developing countries; they are worldwide in scope, a global crisis, embracing, albeit to different degrees, in different ways, both the developed and the developing countries—East and West, Socialist and non-Socialist. Even the oil exporting countries are not insulated from this global economic crisis, have not escaped its consequences. Indeed, their pricing and production policies which have had such serious consequences for all oil importing countries, reflect an attempt on their part, in terms of their own perception, to deal with the global problem of the instability of international currencies and the realization that their precious asset, their petroleum resources, will not last forever.

The second point which I would like to bring into focus is that, apart from the oil exporting countries, the problem of oil—the preoccupation and the effect of prices and the problem of availability—is a universal problem—problem in the East as well as a problem in the West, a problem in the North as well as a problem in the South. The late Mr. M.V. Shashim, for many years the U.S.S.R.'s Minister of Petroleum, expressed great concern over the adequacy of oil supplies in the Soviet Union to meet the needs of his country and to maintain his country's commitment to the oil importing countries of the CMEA region in the decade of the 80's. He was concerned as well with the possible implications, price implications, of a shortage of petroleum for the development of the countries of the CMEA group. Today the countries of the east have not only come face to face with the problems of an increasingly difficult energy supply situation, they have also accepted the necessity to raise prices in response to the situation. In 1979, Hungary raised gasoline prices in stages by 50 per cent, and other fuel and power prices by 34 per cent. Czechoslovakia also raised its prices in 1979 by some 50 per cent and imposed substantial price increases for some other goods. East German prices for oil, gas and electricity for use in industry were raised up to 30 per cent early in 1980. Romania, Bulgaria and even Poland where earlier attempts to raise prices had met with strong popular resistance, were compelled to raise the prices of petroleum products as well as of a variety of other goods to a substantial degree.

The greatest disservice we can pay to the Guyanese people—as responsible leaders or as persons aspiring to responsible leadership—is to obscure the fact that the prices we pay for our petroleum products and the inevitable consequences of such increases on the prices of other goods are due to factors beyond our control; or to try to mislead the people of Guyana into believing that the phenomenon of rising prices, the worldwide phenomenon is an evil perpetrated within our own economy, within our society. It is, to me, less than amusing that a speaker after speaker on the opposite side of what should be the most responsible forum in this land, has shown a tendency to treat the oil crisis and the general problem of world inflation as if it has been conjured up as an innocent scapegoat to explain away the difficulties which our economy is now experiencing.

The third area which I would like to mention is the openness of our economy, a factor

which is so very often forgotten, and the effects of that openness on our economic efforts. To put matters very simply, out of every average dollar of domestic expenditure, a sum of roughly eighty cents is spent on imported goods or services. This is what we mean when we say that imports represent roughly 80 per cent of Gross National Product. It is a matter of very simple arithmetic which we can all understand whether we can distinguish between French and Latin, that a ten per cent increase in the average price of our imports will have a direct effect on our domestic price level, and important inflationary effect of eight per cent. And when we take into account the indirect effects, the increases that are internally generated, we may well end up with an increase in excess of ten per cent.

When we consider the raging, almost uncontrollable inflation in the outside world- up to 20 per cent and over in the economies of our major trading partners - and in one Eastern European country, for which I have been able to verify the figures, the inflation rate was 22 per cent in 1979, that is, for Yugoslavia from the fourth quarter in 1978 to the fourth quarter of 1979, 22 per cent- it takes only a little bit of common sense and imagination, some knowledge of elementary arithmetic to understand the inevitable consequences for our economy and to appreciate that apart from the manipulations of unscrupulous operators with whom this Government is determined to deal, there is a legitimate upward movement in prices over which no Government and no one in Guyana, no one in this House, by the exercise of individual or collective wisdom can exercise any control. This does not say that there may not be opportunities to ameliorate the effect of these increases and, indeed, the Minister of Economic Development has presented a very imaginative package of proposals to bring relief particularly to the small man, to the masses of people. Perhaps it would help drive home the point if I should quote a passage from the Budget Speech delivered last December by the Minister of Finance of Hungary. I quote from the Hunguru Press, No. 23 and 24 of 1979;

“Improvement of the foreign trade balance continues to remain a pivotal point of our economic policy, therefore the current national economic plan reckons with a reduced negative balance which can be achieved if imports are reduced, if imports grow by one more than 2 per cent and exports by more than 8 per cent, improvement in the equilibrium, multiplications in the proportions of distribution and better efficiency. All these are interdependent processes. These are to be supported by new rules of prices and price change in the system. The most substantial changes are scheduled in the price system. In the future, domestic prices will be more closely adjusted to the world market price.”

Needless to say this, I think, is convincing evidence that no country in the world whether in the East or in the West is isolated from the ravages of external inflation and the chaos in the world economy. We are not alone in the problems we face in our efforts to contain the growth of imports, to expand exports, to restructure the patterns of our distribution, in our drive for greater production and productivity as a means of improving the external balance, in our relentless battle against rising prices. To agitate against these efforts of the Government, to condemn the efforts being made by the Government is nothing short of the meanest politics-a manifestation of callousness, indifference to the general welfare and interest of the masses, a manifestation of naked ignorance of the realities of the world in which we live.

15.4.80

5.50 - 6 p.m.

6 p.m.

Cde.Speaker, the Minister of Economic Development has given in his address, some indication of the efforts being made by the Government in the area of my Ministry's responsibilities to deal with the problems confronting us in the field of international trade and to contribute towards the general objective of restoring the momentum of economic growth. I wish to spend the remainder of my time in dealing in more specific terms with some of these difficulties.

I will, in supplementation of what has been said by the Parliamentary Secretary of my Ministry, deal with four areas, first, with the problem of prices, a burning issue, a very sensitive issue. I will deal next with the question of distribution, also a very burning issue. Then I will deal with this question of our foreign trade relations; and finally. I will touch up on the question of the organisation of my Ministry, the Ministry of...

Trade and Consumer Protection, to show how determined this Government is to do everything possible to deal with the problems encountered in this sector of Government's operation.

I begin by making three basic incontrovertible points. Is there anyone seated opposite who will be willing to put at risk his intellectual integrity or what may be left of it in a foolhardy effort to controvert these three points? First point: What we have to contend with in Guyana is a general rise in the level of world prices. In other words, it is not a question of individual isolated price increases but a general rise in the price level on a global scale or what is termed as world inflation. Second point: Our currency is linked with the U.S. dollar. It is clear that if the U.S. dollar declines relative to the currencies of our other trading partners there is an automatic unavoidable increase in the prices of our imports. Third point- freight rates have been going up and have been contributing to the increase in our import prices. We have tried to deal with the problem by efforts to secure greater participation in the business of our ocean freight. This is only one of the means that we adopted to deal with the problem of escalating freight prices.

In what ways, other than those I have mentioned, are endeavouring to cope with the problem of rising prices? First we are using the mechanism of price control. Needless to say, the price control regulations do not cover all items. The primary concern is with essential items. To cover all items will be administratively impracticable. Universal experience suggests that price control is a very difficult area but I am satisfied that we have achieved substantial, indeed, even an enviable degree of success in controlling the prices of essential items.

Let me give some practical examples relating to imported goods. In Georgetown, flour is now 32 cents per pound as against 59 cent in Paramaribo; evaporated milk is 84 cents as against \$1.46 in Paramaribo for a 14 ounce tin; condensed milk is \$1.00 as against \$1.60 per tin of the same size; a two kilogram tin of powdered milk is \$14.27 in Georgetown; in Paramaribo, it is \$25.69. I can go on to mention cooking oil, domestic gas, sugar and various other items. I am speaking of items which we import, which we buy at the same price from the same source; and I am comparing the relative capacity of our Government and of our economy to control those prices. We have problems with enforcement despite the tremendous efforts of the price control squad, sometimes very serious problems, I admit, but in the re-organisation of the Ministry, we have provided for a substantial increase in the price control squad and for increasing its mobility.

Another device which we employ to contain the upward movement of prices is our procurement practices. In the first place, we can arrange our contracts to take advantage of low-price periods and to fix a duration calculated to grant us stable prices as long a period as possible. In the second place, we are resorting more and more to bulk procurement to meet national needs. In fact, we are doing this for almost all the price-controlled items and in doing this we place ourselves in the best position to negotiate the most favourable prices. In the third place, we procure wherever possible or feasible, direct from suppliers. Ever so often cases are revealed where this country has literally been plundered by agency arrangements and we are determined to stop these exploitative practices. In the fourth place, we are looking into the possibilities of bringing together separate consignments, bulking consignments as far as possible to be in a position to negotiate freight discounts. This is a part of our interest in greater

participation in the business of ocean freight.

The third way in which we have sought to contain prices, and I rather feel I am mesmerizing the Opposition with the multiplicity of our devices, is to require importing Government Corporations, in certain cases, to absorb price increases and to seek through operational improvement, to offset at least in part, these increases. But as could be appreciated, there are obvious limitations to the use of this device. Among commodities which have benefited from this measure are cheese, coffee, salt, bicycle tyres, tubes, to name a few which come to mind, and there are a number of commodities which have remained stable in price since 1978. They have remained stable because of our procurement practices.

A fourth device used to contain local selling prices is the device of the suggested price where distributors are appointed and a suggested selling price is agreed on, any breach of which would lead to the termination of the distributorship. We began with cement. The Guyana Pharmaceutical Corporation has adopted this device for many products and we are about to introduce it for paints and related products. It is a device which we plan to use more extensively in the future and if malathion a product to which the member of the Opposition refers, is a problem, surely, we will cover malathion. I would like to introduce measures, if possible, to prevent the misuse of that by any of my friends opposite.

Finally, I wish to mention the introduction of a pricing policy in the Government trading corporations. I can well appreciate the concern of the hon. Member of the Opposition, Cde. Janet Jagan - we are an honest Government- when she referred to the prices of shoes and kitchen utensils among other things. I can assure her that these very commodities have been included in proposals being worked out to secure for the consumer, reasonably priced articles of acceptable quality. In fact, the policy is already being implemented for certain commodities since the Budget Speech by the hon. Minister of Economic Development. We move very fast.

6.10 p.m.

Now for distribution. Let me acknowledge from the outset that there have been, and still are, deficiencies in the system. We are dealing with several thousand retailers, not to mention the unofficial, unlisted ones and those that work underground and literally undermine the system. We have to deal with all of these. Of course, if we had no foreign exchange problem and if our production and exports can improve to an extent which will guarantee us a healthy foreign exchange position, we will have no distribution problems and no complaints about distribution. In a very real sense the problem is in the hands of those who produce.

We have a problem, but we should not underestimate the improvements over the past year. Flour has been of great concern within recent times and we are soon to introduce measures- this, I am sure, will be of some comfort to my friends opposite- which will eliminate the queues that we find in the city and alleviate the shortages experienced in the countryside. We are introducing measures which will also deal with problems of this nature.

While the Ministry is making every effort to ensure fair distribution, many wholesalers and retailers deliberately operate to frustrate the system. The biggest problems are diversion of supplies, hoarding and smuggling. We all know that. There are some retailers who are prepared to carry only those goods which will enable them to maximise their profits. We have been taking strong action and will take even stronger action in the future against those who refuse to co-operate with the system for the good of the people.

I say unapologetically that the ultimate interest of the Government is the consumer, not the distributor, not the wholesaler or retailer. The distributor, the wholesalers and the retailers should operate as instruments for the public purpose, for the public good. As long as they toe the line and serve the interest of the public, serve the consumers, fairly and equitably, they will continue to operate in the system. If they are found out to be frustrating the system, to be cheating the consumers, to be dealing with them inequitably, they will be cut right out of the system and I will listen to no shouts of "Discrimination!" against these bandits.

Whenever there are gaps in the distribution system, whenever we feel that the interests of the consumers are not well served, we will not hesitate to establish distribution centres. I say so unapologetically. If existing operators are not prepared to co-operate, the Government will be delinquent in its responsibilities if it does not step in to establish these facilities and if there is anyone in this room who is against this policy, then let me see the enemy of the people. [Applause.]

Finally, with respect to the distribution system, I wish to mention the appointment of a task force to recommend proposals for the improvement of the distribution system, to ensure that we have an equitable distribution system, free of all the bandits. The task force has already submitted a first report which has been considered by Cabinet.

The Speaker: Five minutes more.

Cde.Tyndall: Executives will now move into the field to test and to define their assumptions and proposals.

May I now turn to foreign trade. The main thrust of the Government is trade

diversification both in commodity structure as well as in sources and destination. This is a very important way to ameliorate the effects of the openness of Guyana's economy.

CARICOM continues to be of central concern in our external economic relations. We have signed, along with 56 other countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, a new Convention with the E.E.C. and ratification procedures will soon be initiated. We have signed a new economic co-operation Agreement with Canada along with our CARICOM partners. This Agreement replaces the old 1926 Canada / West Indies Agreement and most recently we have succeeded in representations to have Guyana's sugar exports restored to preferential treatment in the U.S. market.

We have developed and have been advancing trade and economic co-operation with a large number of socialist countries, the G.D.R., the U.S.S.R., Hungary, Yugoslavia, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Cuba, the People's Republic of China and the D.P.R.K. I have before me for signature in the near future, at the earliest convenient time, special trade agreements with Cuba, with Bulgaria and with Czechoslovakia. We also have trade arrangements with Brazil, Venezuela and, as a result of a recent visit of a trade mission to Brazil, trade with that country will be intensified. Imports from that country will benefit from a new and an increased line of credit. In fact, Guyana enjoys lines of credit arrangements with many of the countries mentioned including Brazil, the G.D.R., the U.S.S.R., Hungary, the People's Republic of China, if I remember correctly.

Finally, a word on re-organisation. The Ministry of Trade and Consumer Protection will be re-organised under proposals presented in the 1980 Budget. We will now have, apart from the general administration division, three district divisions, an import administration division, which will have a section to deal with imports, a section to deal with exports, and a section to deal with trade intelligence, which is very important. I hope that reference to trade intelligence drives no fear in the minds of any of my friends opposite. It will also have a supplies, distribution and prices department which includes a consumer protection section under which comes the price control unit and a research department.

The Speaker: Two minutes more

Cde. Tyndall: Thank you. The price control unit will be expanded, as I said, under provisions in the 1980 Budget.

I wish finally to express publicly my Ministry's appreciation of the closer working relations which it has been developing with certain private sector organisations such as the G.M.A., the Chamber of Commerce and the Guyana Consumer's Association. I wish in particular to express my Ministry's appreciation of the very valuable contributions they have made—both in their complaints and in their suggestion-contributions to the development of the operations of the Ministry.

My Ministry does not under-estimate the task before it. My Ministry is not afraid of criticism, of constructive criticism. It is not unmindful of the criticisms and the complaints of the public and even of the inarticulate noises which I sometimes hear coming from my friends on the opposite side. Even those I will not ignore.

May I join in congratulating the Cde. Minister of Economic Development for the

15.4.80

6.10 - 6.20 p.m.

direction he has given to the national effort, and to the efforts of my Ministry. I pledge the full support and the full authority of my Ministry in discharging its responsibilities within the framework of the Budget, our responsibility to the citizens of Guyana. [Applause]

The Speaker: Cde. Gill

6:20 p.m

Cde. Gill: Cde. Speaker, I must congratulate the Cde. Minister of Economic Development for giving the small man a chance in the budget to become a real man. I sat here for the past three days and i listened attentively to the Opposition speaking on the budget. They say they were...

speaking on behalf of the small man but, Cde. Speaker, let us ask ourselves who really speaks for the small man. I don't think that the Opposition can speak for the small man because anyone can look around at those in the seats of the Opposition and see if there is any small man over there. I am a living example through the dynamic leadership of the leader, Cde. Linden Forbes Sampson Burnham, of the People's National Congress, of a small man who has made a real man, and I am here in the National Assembly to prove the point.

Cde. Speaker, you know that in the days gone by there was no person like me who could have entered into this Chamber unless he had been sent an invitation to come as a visitor. This is one of the reasons why we say that this Government through the leadership of our leader, Cde. Forbes Sampson Burnham is a real man and not a "mook" as the Opposition might wish to say. Cde. Speaker, I would like to move on.

I heard a lot of things that the Opposition said during the debate, about distribution, about flour, some of their colleagues cannot get goods. But Cde. Speaker, let me explain the reason why. [Interruption.]

The Speaker: Cde. Ram Karran, I do not expect any further interruptions from you.

Cde. Gill: Let me explain the reasons why they cannot get any of these goods. Cde. Speaker, as you know, there is a man in the Stabroek Market, I would not call names as they do, and that man collects all the goods that he can get from the Ministry of Trade, flour, butter, everything. I know he is a supporter of the P.P.P. Everything he sells to the poor man out on the street, flour-\$50 per bag, margarine-\$50 per carton, and they have to sell those things back so as to make a profit. I called them in and I spoke to them and they explained what is going on. I then called the Ministry of Trade and his quota was cut out. We, the people who belong to the People's National Congress, have to protect the citizens of Guyana, especially the small man and that is what the Ministry of Trade is doing.

I was proud to hear what the Minister said just now, that he is going to strengthen the price control squad, I welcome it. But, Cde. Speaker, I want to sound a word of warning to the Minister that the price control men must not only go for the small man out on the street, they must also look for the big man who is trying to destabilize this Government and to make the people of Guyana say that the Government is bad. We have to be ruthless with these merchants. I think the Minister of Economic Development is the Minister of Local Government too and I am calling on him to throw them out of the market when they are convicted, take away their licences, because it seems to me that the jail term has done nothing to some of them.

Cde. Speaker, we the arm of the People's National Congress, the Women's Revolutionary Socialist Movement will not sit by and allow this Government to fall. This Government has given us the opportunity as women to play our part fully and to get justice and rights under the new Constitution. We have a guarantee of equality for women. In the budget we have been given income tax free allowances for reputed wives and children who are born out of wedlock and if the men are sleeping, we the women of the Women's Revolutionary Socialist Movement are not asleep.

Cde. Speaker, I am from the grass roots and when I speak, I speak for the grass root

women and men. We welcome the budget. I speak to a lot of small men who are receiving old-age pensions and they told me that they are proud of this Government. I am fifty years so you can imagine how many years have gone by and they say that they never knew about drawing back pay so if their grandchildren have to hold their hands and take them to the place, they have to drink a shot of whisky and praise this Government that it might reign and reign forever. Cde. Speaker, there is a next point which I want to clear up because I was hearing a lot about Sampson. Sampson is a distribution centre and that centre is for the small man where he can buy something to sell. We are proud of Mr. Sampson. Cde. Sampson, excuse me. We are proud of him because a lot of small men know where they are. A lot of people like these young boys who come from prison who do not want to go back stealing, make their livelihood by getting a case of milk at the Government controlled price, a carton of coffee, and many more items and selling. We are asking him to continue and asking the Ministry of Trade to supply him with more goods so that other people, other poor men would come out and make an honest living of their own. The members of the P.P.P. say that the Government has nothing to give the people so we are showing them that they can make a living by self-reliance.

6.30 p.m

Cde. Speaker, we are proud of the People's National Congress. We are grateful for the leadership of Cde. Linden Forbes Sampson Burnham. Cde. Speaker, he has made me a woman, I was in Guyana but yet I was out of Guyana because I could have never tell whether I am a woman or a man but today I know that I am a woman, and I am proud of being in the People's National Congress. May he reign forever. Thank you, Cde. Speaker. *[Interruption.]*

The Speaker: Hon. Member, Mr. Feilden Singh.

Mr. M.F. Singh: Mr. Speaker, I am trying to recover from the shock of that startling revelation.

Cde. Speaker: Hon. Member Mr. Singh, you are not from the grass roots, therefore you cannot understand what she means by that.

Mr. M.F. Singh: I find it difficult to understand how somebody could make me realize I am a man. *[Interruption.]*

Mr. Speaker, the 1980 Budget was presented to this honourable House on the 8th April, 1980. However, article 111(1) of the Guyana Constitution reads as...

follows:

“The Minister responsible for finance shall cause to be prepared and laid before the National Assembly before or not later than sixty days after the commencement of each financial year estimates of the revenues and expenditure of Guyana for that year.”

Sixty days, Mr. Speaker. It is clear therefore that article 111(1) of the Constitution has been breached. The 8th April is the ninety-ninth day after the commencement of the financial year also I would like to point out the provisions of Standing Order 61(1):

“The Estimates of revenues and expenditure for a financial year shall be laid before the Assembly by a Minister before or not later than sixty days after the commencement of that year.”

It is clear that standing order 61(1) has been ignored. I am not saying that the Government, after it did not meet the deadline, should not bother to bring the estimates to Parliament. I say that the Government should have complied with the existing law and should have brought the estimates within the sixty days. After all, it is not as if the Government had just taken office after an election. The Government has been there for years and it has the continuity. There is no reason why it should not comply with the existing law. The Government should set an example as the Government of the country. In case it is argued that the present constitution is a colonial Constitution, let us look at the Government’s own new Constitution, and article 218(1) on page 124. This new Constitution has not been promulgated as yet but it says:

“The Prime Minister or any other Minister designated by the President shall cause to be prepared and laid before the National Assembly before or within ninety days after the commencement of each financial year estimates of the revenues and expenditure of Guyana for that year.”

The Speaker: Hon. Member, Mr. Singh, those are merely permissive, not mandatory.

Mr. Singh: Mr. Speaker, I beg to differ. But like the Appeal Court where they can differ with the Government, I can differ with you. I say that those are clear, specific provisions in the Constitution and I humbly submit in my opinion that those provisions of the Constitution should have been complied with. What was the point of putting ninety days in the constitution when you are going to break your own Constitution. If it is that way then put it out of the Constitution. Do not put it in at all. Mr. Speaker, a Constitution is the supreme law of the land. The Government must have considered it important to put in this provision for ninety days in the new Constitution, so why then does it break it with impurity. And not a word of explanation or apology to this honourable House, no Standing Order was suspended, no Constitution amended, just a presentation saying that it is a wonderful budget. I think Mr. Speaker, that this House has been grossly insulted.

Turning to the Budget Speech, it begins that “This 16th Annual Budget of the People’s National Congress Government” but that is simply not true. Mr. Speaker, and I must correct the record. Sixteen years ago, after the 1964 Elections, no single party won a majority. The P.P.P had the most seats. They had 24 seats. The P.N.C. had only 22 seats, the United Force had seven.

The P.N.C. therefore could not govern with its 22 seats. It was a coalition of the P.N.C. and the United Force. Who is to put the record straight and that is why I raise this point. At that first 1965 budget, the speech was presented by the Leader of the United Force, Mr. Peter D'Aguiar, who was then Minister of Finance. He also presented subsequent budgets until he resigned so, it is not a P.N.C. 16th budget. That first budget was a U.F.- P.N.C. Coalition Government Budget.

In 1968 Elections, Mr. Speaker, I remember clearly the P.N.C. asked the electorate to give it a clear majority because it said it had been hindered by having to work with coalition partner. If they were hindered by having to work with a coalition partner, how are they now saying that it was a P.N.C. Government? So intent are they on self-praise that they even distort history. So this seems to me.

I noted recently on page 7 of the Daily Chronicle of 3rd April, 1980, P.H. Daly wrote in Historical Perspective, and he also seems to have made the same mistake, he said;

“ the Anniversary of their martyrdom is observed every year as a fitting reminder to - talking about the Enmore Martyrs-workers of the tribulations they experienced in the colonial Guyana until Independence was wrested from the rulers 1966 by the Government the People's National Congress which went on to Republicanism in 1970”.

6.40 p.m.

The People's National Congress did not wrest Independence. It was the United Force team and the P.N.C. team that went up to the Independence Conference. I was there; I went there. It was not the P.N.C alone; it was the Coalition Government. I appeal to the P.N.C; Let us have the full truth in this honourable House.

I would like now to praise the hon. Minister publicly for having made a Budget Speech in which there is not a single mention of the word “socialism” or “socialist”, the mention of which has been the hallmark of previous Budget Speeches. I have searched the Budget Speech from beginning to end. There is no mention of either word. Previous speeches have been replete with emotional references to socialism. For example, in the 1976 Budget Speech on page 2 it is stated:

“The task of transforming the society into a Socialist one is to increase its momentum... the health and physical fitness of our people must receive growing attention as part of our thrust to create a new socialist society in Guyana:”

In 1977, at page 25 of the Budget Speech, there was an emotional approach again:

“If, however, the Programme is to take into account, as it must, necessary changes in terms of the establishment of a Socialist State in Guyana...”

In 1978 at page 5:

“The process of revolutionising the society for the achievement of socialist objectives would continue to move apace ...”

In 1979 at page 27:

“We continue to strive for the orderly transformation of our country into a socialist state.”

Those statements were in the previous Budget Speeches. In this one there is not one single word about socialism or socialist transformation. Dr. Jagan lamented this omission. I welcome it. Maybe there is still hope for Guyana if we start moving away from the idea of the kind of socialism in Cuba which I read about in the Guyana Chronicle of Wednesday, April 9, 1980. It is that Cuban people are running away from socialism and I quote from page 19 of the Guyana Chronicle, which is a Government newspaper:

“Thousands of Cubans crammed into the Peruvian Embassy here appeared yesterday to be losing hope that their wish to leave the country would soon be granted.”

Then it continued:

But others, who have endured appalling conditions with little food, virtually no sanitation and the risk of diseases, refused to leave the embassy because they feared the police would prevent them from returning.

If socialism in Cuba is as glorious as the socialist parties would want us to believe, why do so many thousands of Cubans want to escape to an unknown and uncertain future in Peru?

Another matter in respect of which I must praise the hon. Minister, Mr. Hoyte, is his frank acknowledgement of the help afforded us by the International Monetary Fund. He said on page 12 - I think it is worthwhile to quote it:

“In support of this effort to restore equilibrium, we entered into a one-year standby Arrangement with the International Monetary Fund which provided us with an inflow of resources totalling \$45 million. This Arrangement yielded successful results in that, on the financial side, we were able to restore to the economy some measure of balance.”

It is nice to know who are your friends in times of need, not a socialist friend, in this case, but the capitalist I.M.F.

After that praise, when we come to through appraisal of the 1980 Budget Speech it does make very depressing and disappointing reading. It is an academic document rather than a realistic projection of a seasoned, experienced and disciplined Government. The entire budget acknowledges failure in the past year, which has placed us in the present depressing financial situation, and there seems now to be no immediate solution.

I recognise that the Budget is intended to be an election Budget and that is why the speech is so full of self-praise. It is noticeable for its flamboyance and high-sounding words. However, on a microscopic examination, the words and phrases are seen to be a conglomeration and manipulation of every section of the economy, which in the final analysis would result in more suffering for the small man.

On page 25 the foundation is laid and the door left open to blame the workers. In paragraph 2 on the same page it is said;

“If the gloomy predictions are accurate, many developing countries may not survive the 1980s as politically independent states.”

In paragraph 3 it goes on:

“It is within our power to avoid the grim fate which threatens to engulf many a developing country. We have the resources and capacity to stabilise our economy, to survive and to prosper. How well we manage will depend upon how well we grasp the real issues, mobilise our resources and organise ourselves for the task”

So it is up to us, says the Budget Speech. It is acknowledged that the task of survival demands industry and dedication from the Guyanese worker. What encouragement is the Government giving the Guyanese worker to perform? We all know that the cost of living has continued to spiral. We know that the buying power of the Guyanese dollar is now considerably less than it used to be. We know that Guyanese worker did not get the \$14 a day that he was promised in 1979, that thousands of man-hours are wasted in lines as people try to buy scarce essential items, that man-hours are wasted also as result of the deplorable services in the areas of water and electricity. Therefore, knowing all these things, let us look at the additional burdens which the 1980 budget imposes and we will look at the benefits.

On page 13 of the speech it is said that:

“Government...will cease to hold the price of wheaten flour at its present unrealistic level. Although the commodity will continue to be subject to price control, its price will be allowed to find a more realistic level”

But what will the new controlled price for flour be? We have not been told. Is it still a secret or is it being worked out? The objection seems to be against the spending of \$35 million annually on the importation of wheat, but we have been told that several cassava mills had been set up throughout the country, that cassava production had been intensified, and that significant quantities of cassava flour would be mixed with the wheat flour. Yet I am now reliably informed that there is no reliable supply of cassava flour to mix with wheat flour. Surely the Government must take the blame for this. I understand the mills are lying there and they are being utilised very little or not at all. And now the worker does not even know how much he will be called upon to pay for flour in the future.

Turning to page 41, the worker will be called upon to pay one – third more on his electricity bill over and above the rate he paid in December 1979. This is blamed on the fuel crisis, but what about the Luckhoo Report of 1978 which documents the gross inefficiency and lack of maintenance resulting in the loss of millions of dollars and poor service to the consumer? I have a copy of the Luckhoo Report in my hands now. If we are blaming the oil crisis, then it is very important for Guyanese to know what also is responsible for the rise in electricity prices. On page 6 of the Interim Report it is stated:

“Board (chairman)
General Manager
Chief Generation Engineer et al.

held responsible for:

1. No planned MAINTENANCE to Station.
2. Negligence failing check water.
3. Negligence failing check oil.
4. Negligence failing record Faults.
5. Negligence failing enquiry Why equipments breakdown.
6. No enquiries - No reprimands when operators clearly guilty Negligence.
7. Operating as contractors to corporation when lacking engineers and expertise.

8. Ignoring 3 ODM experts sent to head Planning Team.
9. Inadequate spares.
10. No check on expensive Tools.
11. Repeatedly ignoring advice of consultants.
12. Becoming their own contractors there by depleting station staff.
13. No standard instructions to Engineers and operators when faults occur.
14. No proper documentations and logging.
15. No investigation after damage to machineries.
16. No statistics on life of engines.
17. No basic routine servicing.

And so on, how then can we wholly blame the oil crisis? Let us blame the inefficiency which is so blatantly reflected in that well documented Luckhoo Report. Let us be fair, don't blame the oil. I know and recognise and appreciate that there is an oil crisis that prices have gone up but that is not the entire reason for our problem there, we must recognise the other factors. Surely, in view of their report, sir, somewhere along the line the worker and the industry must be subsidising inefficiency.

6.50 p.m.

Next, there is an increase in the fares by Guyana Transport Services by a penny per mile. is this concern being run efficiently? One needs only to take a look at the various grave-yards of buses in Kingston and elsewhere to realise that there must be room for improvement. I note that having apparently decided to standardise their Tata buses and workshop, the Company now seems to be moving towards Mercedes Benz buses from Brazil - more taxpayers' money down the drain when we will be moving away from Tata buses and spares. Maybe, because then we will have to stock two sets of spare parts. Maybe we are phasing out the Tata buses, I do not know, but somewhere along the lone there must be inefficiency.

How much cheaper and more efficient would it not have been if we still had our railway? Why did the Government decide to scrap the railway? My friend, the present Minister, he knows that when I was Minister there, the decision was that the railway should remain up to Mahaica. That decision went by the wayside somewhere along the line. Now school children and commuters generally have to stand for long hours in the burning sun and rain waiting for buses. Now that is an ingredient which the railway has, the railway station, the advantage to the commuters. They had shelter, they had regular service with the trains coming at regular intervals. I travelled to St. Stanislaus College over there from Buxton in the days when Uncle Ram used to be on the train and those were efficient days. I left school at a certain time, I caught the train, I arrived home at a certain time—all precision. Now what happens? Invariably, the buses are packed like sardines, you do not know whether you can get in or not. In the old days when a private operator had a single person standing up, he used to be harassed by the Police and charged, prosecutor. With the present arrangements, with the scrapping of the railway, the worker stands to lose—higher fares, poorer service due to unavailability of buses. It goes on.

Next, the fares charged by Transport and Harbours Department and Guyana Airways Corporation will go up by one-third. In the last paragraph on page 28 we are told of a study of our tourist potential being undertaken and construction of a project primarily for the benefit of Guyanese workers and holiday makers but it is now clear that in order for a Guyanese to afford to take a holiday, he will have to spend more for travel. On page 42, it states: “With effect from 14th April, 1980, there will be an eight per cent ad valorem consumption tax on all imports into Guyana whether or not they are subject to import duty.” It is felt that the corporations’ mark-ups will be revised downwards and that, I quote, “The overall effect will be to bring down prices on many categories of commonly used goods”. They used the word “many” but will there really be any significant reductions? Will there really be when you take into account that the new 8 per cent consumption tax will, by the Government’s own admission on page 42, bring in an extra \$15 million dollars?

Also it must be borne in mind that the Corporations are still expected to make surpluses. As one Corporation official told me, when they were allowed to bring in new motor cars and vehicles, they used to be able to make handsome surpluses as a result of the sale of motor cars and vehicles. He said after that was virtually stopped, then they were still expected to make the same surpluses, so they had to raise their mark-up on spare parts. That is why we have to pay so much for spare parts. This was admitted. In order to make the same surpluses— you say surpluses, I say profits, it means the same thing— they sent up the mark-ups. Now, if you are going to bring the mark-up down, if you are going to put on 8 per cent consumption tax, and if the corporations are still expected to make the same kind of surpluses for the Government, do you know what the official told me? He will have to call in Mandrake the magician. He could not do it, he said.

Mr. Speaker, as against these additional burdens, what has the Government given to the worker? Some encouragement— an average of 5 and 10 per cent increase in wages in the public sector. Agreed, great! Seven per cent in sugar and bauxite industries with possible awards from productivity-linked incentive schemes, and a 25 per cent increase in personal income tax

allowances. Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, I should ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister to say when he is replying. It merely says in the Budget Speech that that is with effect from 1st January. It does not say whether it is year of assessment 1980 based on 1979 income, or year of assessment 1981 based on the 1980 income. That is not clear. Which one is it? Let us bear in mind that for year of assessment 1980 on the 1979 income, the taxpayer has already paid his tax under the P.A.Y.E. system --

The Speaker: Hon. Member Mr. Singh, please bear in mind that you have only five minutes more.

Mr. M.F. Singh: Do you hear that? We have five days and I have five minutes

Mr. Speaker, an examination of this 25 per cent, even though it sounds a lot, with a man, his wife and three children will make it quite clear that he will not benefit. His wage is \$3,600; 5 per cent earned income- \$ 180, allowances for himself and his wife - \$2,000; three children - \$1,200. For the average man, wife, three children, with a salary of \$300 – he does not have to pay income tax right now, so the additional benefit you are giving him will not accrue to that kind of person.

Mr. Speaker, I would have liked to go on to deal with something that I am sure that my learned friend, Shirley, would like to hear and that is to re-echo the cry of my dear departed, Eleanor Da Saliva, when she asked for separate assessment for the working woman, to have equality for women, that is a sine qua non. At the present moment if a wife is separated from her husband and she wants an income tax clearance to go out of the country, she cannot get it unless she can persuade her husband to pay up his tax. If he does not pay up his tax, she is stuck here. Is that not true? If she is a working wife, she will have to sue him.

Mr. Speaker, if we are to survive, it is clear that the Guyanese people will need to be imbued with a spirit of love and confidence in their leaders in a conducive atmosphere, to spur them on the kind of productivity necessary for survival. At the present moment there is division and dissatisfaction among the Guyanese people.

The T.U.C. leadership attested to that when they gave evidence, and I was here, before the Constituent Assembly. They advocated that there should be changes in the Elections Commission and the elections procedure. They advocated these changes to eliminate the charges of fraud, fraudulent elections. They also advocated that it should not be winners take all, but that there should be a sharing of power.

7 p.m

Mr. Speaker, at page 44 of the Budget speech there is a nice reference to the T.U.C. The Government would like to pay tribute to the leadership of the T.U.C. for the constructive, courteous and objective way in which they approach these decisions since their Budget Speech. May I now ask, Mr. Speaker, the Government to take cognizance of the T.U.C.'s recommendations. The recommendations were made before the Constituent Assembly. May I ask that they hold free in fair election now. The new constitution has now been approved; there is no longer any excuse for delaying such elections. To my mind, Mr. Speaker, the results will provide the workers of Guyana with a government of their choice, it will set the stage for a concerted and indeed emotional and meaningful jolt on the part of the Guyana people for what is required for greater productivity and a buoyant economy for the benefit of our beloved Guyana.

Cde.Ram Karran: Thank you sir, Your Honour, we have listened to the contribution made so far and we no doubt have been entertained by the comedy that has been portrayed before us on this budget. We can understand. They said that while Rome burned Nero was fiddling. We have a similar situation here. We have a Laurel and Hardy situation, drama, comedy. I do not remember, I am not a picture goer, which was Laurel and which was Nardy, but one was fat and chubby and the other one seems to have a lean, mean and hungry look.

On one hand, we have a budget presented to us and we are told in no uncertain manner that the situation is very difficult, very depressing and reading through this budget speech, one can get no other impression but that we are in a very difficult situation. I can understand that. Our friend, the Minister of Finance, who has been refusing, I am told, to present the budget with the statutory responsibility, has not praised the budget, has not dealt with the budget, but seems clumsily to have detoured to Moscow and to the CMEA and the irrelevant issues. One would have thought that the Hon. Minister of Finance who has to administer the budget would have dealt with it in such a way as to give the House and the nation the impression that some effort will be made to hold the line which we are told is necessary.

On the other hand, the other proposals of the budget have come out with a rosy picture of the economy. Many of the comrades have made out that we have no problems at all, all the problem in this country is the P.P.P. In fact, some of them have gone back 15 years to tell us with the argument of a child that we are getting a little bit of tit-for-tat because Jacobs, the agent for imperialism, came here with collusion with them following the 1962 riots and subsequent events, to say the economy is bankrupt. It similar to the situation in 1926 when Wilson Snell came here

after the legislature took a line against the British Government and the administration for their support of beet sugar against cane sugar in the Caribbean. The Wilson Snell commission came and said identically what Jacobs said in 1962. In fact, the Constitution was suspended in 1926 as it was suspended in 1964 to make way for our Cde. Collaborator with Imperialism, but let us leave that aside because I do not want to call my friend a neophyte.

I would say the young hon. member seems to, perhaps not understanding the situation, talk about national unity. I think that word was mentioned, I was not here to hear but I was told. Let us examine this chamber to see where we can arrive at national unity. My friend just made the point, we have five days for this debate, he is given five minutes more. Such a graphic way of expressing it.

The Speaker: Cde.Ram Karran I am going to take objection at that. The rules provide that he speaks for 30 minutes; he was given 30 minutes. That has nothing to do with five days and five minutes.

Cde.Ram Karran: I am only quoting what he Hon. Member said.

The Speaker: So what? He says, I am telling you what the rule says, you know that too.

Cde. Ram Karran: As well as you do, sir. What I am saying here is to put it in as graphic a way as my friend did, that we have a debate lasting for five days, or suppose to last for five days, not more than 5 days, but time is rationed in this Chamber.

The Speaker: I will not have you saying that. The rules provide that each member be given 30 minutes. He has been given 30 minutes.

Cde.Ram Karran: That can be debated but you know as well as any Member of this House that there are hundreds of Motions and Questions that never see the light of day and that is what I am referring to, that this chamber is being run like a theatre house, a place for comedy and not for serious business. If the economy is to be rearranged, if the country is to progress, then we've got to start as Cde. Jack said, with the democracy starting right here. I am not criticising, Your Honour, I know that when the time comes for them to go behind bars perhaps we will have to give evidence of the denial of democracy in this Chamber. I am saying that thousands of matters that ought to be discussed in this Chamber never see the light of day, I am not blaming you. There it is, only a few days ago an attempt was made, and a Motion will be put, but your Honour will see, I am not a prophet but I know that it will not be brought here. The Jonestown issue- which created such havoc to our country, the Jonestown massacre or whatever you call it, has created such shame to this country, it was done quietly. Efforts to bring it to have it discussed in this Chamber were never permitted. Not by you sir, the Minister refused to bring it. Jonestown is an issue that ought to be cleared but now we are told that Jonestown had gone under. I am not

referring to the Rabbi, that is another matter, but I am quoting. I am not quoting, sir, I am merely drawing attention to the fact that the New Times of December, 1979, long before the bubble exploded-referred to the Miaow people. I do not know if they are related to the hon. Member Mr. Greene.

The Speaker: The correct term is Mung people

Mr. Ram Karran: They are also called "Miaow". They are people who have been closely associated with the C.I.A. I am not as much concerned with that but they are a people who make a living from the planting of drugs-dope, opium. This country has a problem with drugs. I read in the papers that two people were caught with strong opium-only recently. Does the Government hope to salvage itself by the planting of these narcotics? Why is it that the members of the Government are afraid or ashamed to bring it before the country, before the Parliament- you talk about its being the most important court in the country. Why? You cannot have democracy, you cannot have production if democracy is denied in this very chamber. You cannot have it.

7.10 p.m.

I am saying that unless this House functions properly we will not be able to talk about these questions although efforts are being made by the P.P.P. and in fact when we talk about national unity- I am sorry Hon. Member Mr. Jack is not here-when we talk about national unity, it is rejected. We sincerely, as Guyanese, not as agents of any other force, have been calling.

You will recall, sir, that my friend said in the last debate that you cannot want to court a woman and cuss her at the same time. If the woman is afflicted with bad sick you must tell her to cure herself before you can make an approach. That is what has happened. We have been appealing to the P.N.C. members for as long as I can remember to dispose of the disease they suffer from so that we will be able to make meaningful courtship to them. But they are not heeding our advice. They cannot maintain the disease and expect us to associate with them. Who would have that?

I want to diverge just for a minute to answer two questions as I mentioned my friend's name, Cde. Rashid. I am not sure if he is a comrade. You know I have never called the Speaker "Cde. Speaker". I always say "Your Honour". He is alleged to have said that it was the P.N.C. which brought about a situation where sugar workers got the poll. That is one point. Secondly, that was the P.N.C. that was responsible for sugar workers getting the house lots for \$1 and there was another note that it was the P.N.C. that dispose of the logies. There is a story written in the Mahabharata. I am sure that your Honour and Cde. Steve Naraine as erudite Hindus will know. The Mahabharata said that Arjune had a son whose name was Manu and that was a very tricky situation developed in the war. The father was engaged in another struggle elsewhere and this lad offered to extricate the Pandavas section out of the attack but he said that he only knew two of the three ideas to get out of it. Unfortunately, he said that when his father was telling his mother of these things he heard only two because he was in his mother's womb at the time and during

the time when his father was explaining the third form of attack the mother fell asleep so the poor chap....., could not get that, but he very faithfully carried out the two methods of attack and was able to repulse the enemy. On the third, of course, he died.

I want to warn my friend. He must have been in his mother's womb when he heard these things because what he said there is not true. It was the struggle of the sugar workers dating back to the 1920's culminating in the struggle of 1948 in which five of them lost their lives that the logies were abolished in this country. A Report was out up by the P.P.P., not yet the P.P.P., the P.A.C., to the commission which came here and as a result of that Venn Commission. I do not think you were born at that time and if you were, you were still creeping. The P.N.C. was not in existence; it was not yet in its mother's womb. One has to be cautious.

The Speaker: Cde. Ram Karran, they were not in their mother's wombs so they could not hear the story.

Cde. Ram Karran: they must have been in some other primeval form. So I merely deal with this one.

One member of the Opposition-coming events seem to cast their shadows- one member of the Government said that the Opposition, the P.P.P. was saying that the Government could not bring the Budget before because the Government is bankrupt and here it is the Budget has come. I am glad my friend Mr. Singh has been able to point out the illegalities of this exercise here today. I maintain, all of us maintain, that the Government could not bring the Budget before because it had hoped to capture the leadership of the T.U.C. and get their puppets to say "Yes, we agree with the five per cent increases."

Fortunately for the workers of this country, this is not 1977/1976. This is not 1972 or 1973 when these things were done. Today the T.U.C. will have to look up and look around before they commit themselves and the hundreds and the thousands of workers in this country who are cheated.

I have never heard in my long life- and I have lived long- of a Government that has reneged completely on an agreement which it signed. The trade union movement has been strongly opposed to the T.U.C. making representations in that manner, that is, to sign a single agreement for all the industries because the minimum wage which has been signed by the T.U.C. has now become the maximum. Not only that, the T.U.C. having signed away the rights of the people prevents the individual unions from negotiating based on ability to pay and so many other factors. What we are seeking to do here it to make one common level wages and salaries through the T.U.C., which is easier to capture- I mean the leadership of it- and to get this sort of rigmarole which is likely to happen. That is why the worker, through their individual unions, have been fighting very much to ensure that it does not occur.

Talking about that brings me to the point made by my friend the Hon. Minister of Labour. He referred here and he refers elsewhere-Shirley, make a note about this- to the so-called "political strike" of 1979 immediately after the agreement was signed. I know that there was a strike in 1977. I know that the strike was justified having regard to the fact that the Government has refused to pay the workers large sums of money dues to them on an agreement which is in existence, not only an agreement but a Commission's report, the Guya Persaud Commission Report which says that the profits earned in the sugar industry ought to be put up in three parts- 10 per cent of it should go to the industry as interest on capital and the remainder should be divided into two parts, 60 per cent for the workers, 40 per cent to the industry.

No sooner had the Government assumed control of the industry that it brought a law which was challenged in the House, which was challenged outside. There were private discussions between the Leader of the Opposition and the Prime Minister. This is not the way to do it. You are going to cheat the workers. Why did you not impose an excess profits tax on the industry at the time when the price of sugar has escalated beyond any expectation. No, the levy imposed, robbing the workers of their share.

We cannot have production in a country where workers are cheated with their eyes wide open. Why cannot we have the agreement or the report compiled with? The Government tried to get the International Labour Organisation to say it was a political strike but it could not say so because one week after the strike was called the T.U.C. was meeting in Congress and the T.U.C. accepted a proposal by the union involved in the strike on terms of resumption which the Government dragged on and on to the end of the year when the strike had to be resolved because of the...

7.20 p.m

The Caribbean Council of Churches came here and expressed very strong criticism of the Government. The Caribbean trade union movement comprising of representatives from Cuba, Guadeloupe and all the Caribbean English-speaking countries came here and denounced this Government. Of course, they were riding high in those days and they did not anticipate that the axing would bring about a situation in this country where they are almost paralyzed; they are almost helpless, in so far as the country's economy is concerned. We cannot, if we deny democracy here in this chamber, if we deny democracy in industry, and if we try to be bullies, if we try to become bullies all around, as some of our friends over there are likely to do, then we are not going to be able to make any progress whatever in Guyana.

I want to respond, if I may, to the call made by two young comrades, friends, as to the future. They are the ones we have to look to. They are the ones who have to live in the years to come and as far as national unity is concerned, the P.P.P. stands ready, but the P.P.P. cannot talk about national unity when the Government deliberately denies democracy at this level, at the industrial level, and even in all activities. Cde. Chairman the New Guyana Company prints a

newspaper- the Mirror—

The Speaker: Cde, Ram Karran, you see how you have forgotten. You say you do not call me “Comrade”

Cde. Ram Karran: I hope you will pursue that calling, Sir, and you will respond accordingly. The New Guyana Company prints the Mirror and I say it is an influential newspaper. It is used to educate the people along socialist lines. You cannot deny that. It is used as a means of getting the people to analyse the situation.

Somebody over there very sensibly said that you cannot go through things unless you discuss. We are discussing it but what does the Government do? In an arbitrary fashion, it imposes a law in this Chamber, after an order had been made for the importation of machinery for printing, that all printing equipment and all newsprint must come under a licence. Wonderful! One could have thought, if any action had taken place before the imposition of the law, that action should be allowed to fructify notwithstanding the existence of the law. But like the recent Bill, the members of the Government said that the law, even though it was passed afterwards, must catch this attempt by the P.P.P. to improve its machinery and more than that. As a result of court activities, the Government decided to sell newsprint to the New Guyana Company, but now the situation, perhaps because of elections, perhaps because of the same bullying attitudes, there is no more newsprint and the Mirror has to be printed on very expensive piece of paper which so far is available and which soon be run out. In order to silence what they call, counter revolutionaries. They call us counter revolutionaries.

My friends, the Hon. Ministers, the senior ones at least, have been giving the impression that all our problems, all the problems we face in this country, balance of payments, foreign exchange, this, that, and the other, are due to the oil crisis and they monopolize the Press and put it on the radio and everywhere else, and even in this House they try to suffocate us with this propaganda, that oil is the cause of everything. Like my friend who spoke last, I have no doubt that the crisis of oil has embarrassed the economy of many countries including the countries of the Caribbean. But, oil is not all. Other things have contributed to the nakedness of our economy at this time. Most of those things. My friend talks about importation. My friend talks about distribution.

Everyone is aware of the situation in the sugar industry. At least, my friend, the Minister of Home Affairs, knows because he lives in that area. The sugar workers get up very early in the morning, in fact, as they say, “before cock crows”. They cook their meals, they take a bath and they come back rather late in the evening. They do not have the facilities of refrigeration and what not that we have. And, if you remove the traditional means of their food it is not that they cannot gradually change over, but it disturbs production. My friend says that they are going to produce everything you consume. All well and good. That will help the economy, that will help

the people but one must view these things within limits, gradually in certain cases.

Now, I am not supporting black-marketers and illegality but I am saying that the Government cannot arbitrarily tell people they are black-marketing and they are hoarders and therefore they cannot get supplies. I am saying that when they are convicts, the Government can pass a law here to abandon their quotes.

The Speaker: Cde.Ram Karran, you know, you are the Deputy Speaker and I am the Speaker. We may not have the opportunity of being here in that position when the next budget is read and I am going to use my powers of not seeing the clock for the next 15 minutes.

Cde. Ram Karran: I am very grateful to you, sir, and that sort of co-operation should exist between the Speaker and his Deputy. I can assure you that you will get ready reciprocation from this end. I am saying that you cannot arbitrarily do it because the people in the areas suffer. We have in our area, sir, two shops and I can vouch for the fact that they do not black-market. I can vouch for the fact that they do not hoard. It is a closely-knit community and many people who are there as Cde. Naraine knows, are related. But, why do they not get milk, why do they not get split peas, why can't they get flour? These are questions that we ask ourselves and what is happening in that small area is, from all the complaints I hear, happening all over Guyana. I cannot go on like this. I am a very busy man but I had to be running in all the stores here and there to try to get a pound of this and a pound of that. Sir, how can we have production and productivity, as they say in very clear terms?

I am sorry that my friend is not here. Shirley, please take a message. The Hon. Minister of Health, Housing and Labour is reported in the newspapers to have said while he was attending a function at the Public Hospital, when the Hospital Administrator said, "we are getting no ends of trouble with the P.N.C. boys" The party has no apologies to make for the employment of P.N.C comrades." He said so. Comrades, if the Party and the people who appoint people are only seeing P.N.C. comrades, who do not produce, a statement corroborated by the Hospital Administrator--- /Interruption/

7.30 p.m.

He did not say that? The report was wrong. If the Party can only see P.N.C. members when vacancies occur, why come here and bleat to us about the importance of production and productivity? They must produce it, they must instill in the minds of their boys the need for production and that is all. The people who are not members of the P.N.C. are not people, do not pay taxes; do not make a contribution to anything. They are hopeless as far as the Government is concerned. Not only in this chamber, but throughout the country, we seem to be laughing stock of the Caribbean.

When I was in Grenada the other day, I go fairly often out of the country, and when you

go, sir, everyone wants to know why it is that things are so bad. But the same answer goes. I would like to walk arm in arm with my friend the Minister over there and to say that we are Guyanese, but believe me, when I go abroad, if there is any P.N.C. member there, I keep very far away from him because one gets the impression that you are in the same company.

One thing my young friend said, and I congratulate him on his on his elevation to the Ministry. I heard him read a speech on the 110th Anniversary of Lenin's birth, and it was very good but I heard him read a speech in here that was very halting. Obviously, it had to be because of the untruth that was addressed to it. He like so many of his colleagues accused the P.P.P. of racialism. So many of them, it is embedded in their heart. Whom did you run with the guns at Mon Repos? And that is another reason for the refusal of the people at Non Peril to produce. I want to congratulate the Government and perhaps the two comrades. I understand that they set up a new institution to go into research to find out if kerosene and malathion can be made potable. I understand that the two comrades have applied to serve in that institution. I want to congratulate them.

What has happened? These farmers who were producing, had their lands taken away, allegedly because they were P.P.P members, and my friends went with guns- he cannot deny that here or anywhere else- and chase them off the land. This land was given to their supporters who had left it abandoned. The Non Pariel Co-operative is no longer there and they talk about co-operative production and co-operative republic and all sorts of high-sounding words which are meaningless. That is why my friend was so halting in his speech.

One excuse they make and my friend seems to have supported them that it is only the West that can help them and that they turned to the West. Well obviously, they are pawns of the West. They cannot go to the North, but I merely want to read from the Thunder of July 1952. This is going back into history a little to an article which was written by Mr. L.F.S Burnham. He was not yet a doctor. He was writing on the World Bank. He said that at this conference he attended they were saying that the attitude of their representatives of the World Bank and associated institutions was to ensure that the equipment from these countries, or the principle of those groups, was to sell their equipment. The situation has not changed. This Government wanted to bring water meters, to bring pumps, to bring silos and all these things are useless. They are what you call white elephants; they are not being used because the production today is just what it was in 1961. In fact, in some of those years, the production was greater than what it is now and if you were working without silos then, the money paid for the silos was a waste of the taxpayers' money. I am not saying that the silos would not have been necessary five years from now, or ten years from now, or ten years, but the Government has been supporting these people in order to buy their useless equipment. Cde. Steve Naraine wanted to buy meters to burden the people; they put pumps all over the place. They intended bringing a pump to pump the place in case we had a flood like that at Mount Ararat.

15.4.80

7.30-7.40 p.m

One day I met a comrade and he was hustling. I said, "Where you going boy?" And he said, "I was going to buy a roll of toilet paper for my mother for Mother's day" That is what this Government has brought the people to.

The Speaker: Cde. Ram Karran, the hands of the clock have started moving again. You have five minutes more.

Cde. Ram Karran: What is the situation here in this House? We are told that we get the money here but what are the terms and the conditions? In fact, I read in the newspapers that the Latin American people had met in Lima and they had come to the conclusion that the terms and conditions of the I.M.F., World Bank and all those associated concerns, are not in the interest of the developing nations. They cannot be, because you can get your money by creating democracy in this country, when all the Guyanese people would be working like the people in Grenada, where there is no distinction. You do not select P.N.C. people and give them work as Hammie said at the hospital, you give jobs on the basis of qualifications, you give jobs on the basis of ability, and you give jobs on the basis of everything.

7.40 p.m

I want to end with the few minutes remaining. You cannot get production if you give an increase of 50 cents or 5 per cent on wages in a situation where the cost of living is skyrocketing. I want to end what I have to say with a sincere and genuine appeal on behalf of the Opposition, the P.P.P., to the Government to say that the situation in our country is tragic. It is very tragic and it hurt us to see that a comedy is being made of it in this Chamber. I want to ask the Government to make a genuine effort because all that is happening here is not believed, is not accepted, by Guyanese people and rather than allowing the situation to deteriorate, let us think of those two young babies who have come into this Chamber only recently and the mass of the young people in this country, to make this country a better place in which they will grown up and live. [Applause (Opposition)]

The Speaker: Cde. Reid.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Ministers of National Development (Cde. Reid):Cde. Speaker, fortunately for me I have been in this House for a little while and so I have listened to my good friend, Cde.Ram Karran, many a time. For those who are new, for those who are strangers, they would believe that Cde. Ram Karran has just come into this House, new and fresh, with all sorts of ideas. Those of us who know him would believe that probably he is playing Rip Van Winkle in this House and he has now awakened from some deep slumber finding himself tied up with proposals for nationality unity and all sorts of new things, so to speak. I am happy that some of us in this House know him very well.

I will, however, deal first with my good friend, the Hon. Feilden Singh, who has laid a lot

of weight on the Budget being presented at this time. It is good to note that on our side we see those rules, those regulations, as pointers, as guides, to the presentation of the Budget and so there is no irregularity, no illegality, in the presentation of the Budget at this time. I would wish that he would take note of what and observe it a little more closely.

He made a point about the Caribbean and the P.N.C. Government. I think he is really courageous to come to this House and to point to the coalition as being not led by the People's National Congress. As a matter of fact, the Leader of the United Force has seen good sense that after a few years it was better for him to escape from this kind of work where you have to show great concern for people and to make the necessary sacrifices for development. Unfortunately, he is now in that position. I do not know whether he is United Force or part of the Liberator Party. I am not too sure which one he is representing.

And then he comes to the word "socialist" as if you need to put that in every document to prove that you are following a socialist path. I think that if you are looking for something, then you must look for the content of the thing and not mere words. We have established in this country a socialist programme, a socialist plan, and you see it evolving day by day, night by night, but he is looking for just the word "socialism" and if that word is not there, no matter what the content is, it is not a socialist Budget and he thinks we are moving away from socialism and he has great joy. He believes that we are moving away from socialism and he has great joy. He believes that we are moving away from socialism. For us, we are not moving away and we shall never move away from the transformation of this country into a new Guyana and a socialist society. This party remains firmly a socialist party.

The hon. Member mentions that people from Cuba are leaving. If you do not believe in the system, if you are really covetous and selfish, if you believe still in the exploitation of man by man, then it is not unusual for such people to escape because in constructing this society where you have to stamp out exploitation, some people who have planned their lives for years and years, who had gained qualifications and expertise with the hope that they in turn would exploit other people now find that they cannot do that with the approval of Party and Government will find all sorts of explanations for leaving. I think you must give some consideration.

The hon. Member, I think has come to the point where he is irritated with the changes that are taking place in Guyana where children of the poor find places in some of the schools that were sacrosanct. When he sees them at St. Rose's and St. Stanislaus and he sees them in those schools that he and others had as their private ..., he is irritated. As a matter of fact, one family left because that family claimed that children of that family could not attend school with those children of those schools. Therefore that family has left this country. It is because of those

changes for the betterment of all the people that there is cause for movement of some people.

Then he called this an election Budget, an election Budget with all the sweetness. He then asked “what about the \$14 a day?” If this was really that kind of budget one of the first things that would have happen would have been to say \$14 a day. This Budget, as you have heard from Cde. Bynoe, is a people’s Budget. It is a Budget for the development of the people of this country and it is not just a Budget for elections, because elections will come and elections will go and, as a matter of fact, you know what the people of this country, and it is not just a Budget for elections, because elections will come and elections will go and, as a matter of fact, you know what the people of this country, with their good common sense, notwithstanding the shouting the hon. Member is making, will do at election time, that is, to vote for the People’s National Congress.

We on this side are not doing things merely for elections. Not at all. We are concerned with the development of people and that work, even under difficult circumstances, is continuing.

I agree that some of our troubles, some of our difficulties, are not to be pointed to the rise in the prices of petroleum. I do not think that we on this side have said that, because we know that in this country of ours we are still a young country and we lack some of the skills of management as you noted from the Lukhoo Report. Action has been taken to remedy some of those shortcomings, but when you talk about the railway that is hindsight. In the days when petroleum products were cheap it was more economical to do the change over that was done in this country. It was cheaper using gas and oil than using wood and coal. It was much cheaper then and it was good sense at that time.

The tax relief is immediate for this year and I think those who are filling up income tax returns have been given that direction already that these changes are to take place effective from this year. I will deal later when I come to divisions among Guyanese.

The question about elections: This Government has the position of holding election on or before 31st January, 1981. That is the position that the Government has constitutionally elections will come on or before 31st January, 1981.

[The Deputy Prime Minister continues/

7.50 p.m

Now to Cde.Ram Karran. I wish to remind him of something and I want to leave him with these words from the Cde. Leader and Prime Minister of this nation:

“Our country had been brought to the brink of ruin by a phrase mongering soi disant leftist Party, the People’s Progressive Party, whose leaders stirred up, emphasised and sought to exploit racial differences in this a multiracial society for mere and narrow political purposes. The economy was run down and had to be retrieved, many of our people were confused and lacked self confidence, mutual suspicions stalked the land and there was an obvious cleavage in our society- thanks to colonialism and seven previous years of mismanagement, corruption and misrule. Our first task in Government was to bind up the wounds, remove tensions, restore national self confidence and proceed to political independence as rapidly as possible. The people reacted magnificently and within less than six months the Government was well on its way to achieving the first three objectives. Christmas 1964, as you all remember, was the first relaxed Christmas for many a year.”

Cde.Linden Forbes Sampson Burnham’s analysis, evaluation and assessment of our position in the year 1964. And now today we hear from Cde. Ram Karran as if he is a new-born coming into this House. I don’t know whom he is trying to deceive. He talks about national unity. When you sit down to discuss national unity in a socialist way, for a cause, for the grouping of the working-class people, what does the P.P.P. talk about. These are what they are concerned about- carpets for floor, how many members they are going to get on a Board and things like that. That kind of bargaining and hustling, like somebody hustling on the street. That is what they been doing . P.N.C. sat down with them for months – I was at those meetings – we sat down with them for months and they would not get down to any real meat of the matter to come to any proper conclusion and resolution. All you hear about: carpets on floor, how many members will get on the Board and Commission-like real hustlers along the way. As a matter of fact, when we were to have the nationalisation of Demba, we really had to bargain with them for all sorts of things. A kind of horse trading went on.

And that is their behaviour but they come here and they talk of national unity. We have stated our position about that, that the working-class people, in time, I am sure, will come together and we will have this national unity that we are pursuing day by day. There was a time in this country when the P.P.P. believed that all that looked like Cde. Ram Karran belonged to them, that they had bought them out, that they had rights to them. Today all that is changed. I remember well in 1961, in my first campaign, it was difficult for any ethnic group besides my own to be with me on a platform. The terror was so great in the community that you could not really persuade anyone. Today, all that has changed and it is changing very quietly but very effectively because people are coming to their senses, people are seeing the light.

I remember too in 1964 there were not much change and some people, because of the instigation they got from fellows like my good friend, Cde. Ram Karran, were ready to do all sorts of things to you as you campaign and they really believed after we had won that election in 1964 that there would have been a reaction in bitterness and spite them. I remember

particularly, certain people certain areas, were so confused after we had won the elections that they believed that they had no friend in the P.N.C. and when we stretched out that right hand of friendship, it was like magic in this country. The Cde. Leader himself stalked this country from community to community to speak with people in groups of all ethnic groups, all religious persuasions, all sort of organisations, to bring them together and so we were able to carry on the Government on to this day.

And Cde. Speaker, this business is not mere words, it is how you relate to the people, it is your concern for the people that matters, how you exert yourself for the improvements and the betterment of people and not only idle talk. Sugar workers still had logies not so long ago. I pass Diamond every day. There were logies there, so Cde. Rashid is quite right that those logies were –As a matter of fact, by a plan we decided not to remove all the logies. [Interruption] He does not even know. We said not to remove all, so that at Diamond you still have one and there are others. We are talking the facts. Indeed, if you pass there you will see the one remaining there. There is no reason for that because that is a reminder to our younger people not to forget the history, not to forget from where we came. And so that one was left there.

He talked about the \$14 per day. [Cde. Ram Karran: “\$ 21 is due now.”] Now he is talking about. In 1977 he talked about \$218 million; I think in back pay for the sugar workers. They must be jokers, cannot be real people, some fancy figures like that with no concern for this socialist programme that they talk about and this socialism, communism, that they talk about, but one group of people must get \$ 218 million from sugar surpluses. Now he talks about \$ 14 a day, he is raising it now to \$21. Those who listen to the Prime Minister when he made that arrangement will remember that he said at the time we were not producing even to quality for the \$8 but he was doing this as an act of faith. I do not know if he has forgotten that. I am certain he has not. But he so wants to deceive the Guyanese people, not remembering that by 1977 the economy had got into deep trouble, and I say again, because of the change in the price of petroleum product. That was the mai factor.no matter what he says, that is the main factor. To move from \$23 million for oil to \$390 million for the same quality of oil, only a madam would think that would be the substantial factor in the trouble that the economy is in today.

8 p.m.

From \$23 million in 1970, by 1980 for the same quantity, this country must pay \$390 million and these comrades come here to talk as if they are fast asleep, as if they are deep slumbers.

The world is so organised that we are called upon to produce more and more and to increase productivity so that we can earn that internationally accepted currency, and because of that factor, the Government of the day has decided that there must be a foreign exchange budget. All organisations, all the people of Guyana were told that it is time to conserve.

They talk about the New Guyana Company. They have no regard for these directions and projections and went on their wicked way, fast asleep, publishing and publishing with no regards for anything and so the crunch came when papers had to go. Not only the Mirror went. The citizen, a state paper is also no more.

He mentioned that only the P.N.C. members get work. I do not know if these fellows are insane. What kind of membership does the P.N.C. have? This country has hundreds of thousands of workers? He says that P.N.C. members alone get work. Examine the happening. Now the Government is finding that some members of the P.N.C. also, are without work. Well, what is happening in this country if it is only the P.N.C. members' get work. Do you know how many members the P.N.C. has? It is 200,000 members it is 300,000 members the P.N.C has? The P.N.C. has less than 25,000 members. So that when we are waiting to see whether you are P.N.C. or not before you get work, that must be nonsense, because if you look around the employment in this country, you will notice the difference. They were asked at the same time when we were having the same meetings about national unity to let us take a census of the employed people all over the country, do not select any one section or one area of activity, let us go all through and then you will get the facts of the matter where the employment is. We are working towards full employment but we have not said that this Guyana is a socialist Guyana. The party is socialist and now we are in the transition period in transforming this country to a socialist society.

Cde.Speaker, I think that takes care of what Cde.Feilden Singh has been saying, my apology, what Mr. Feilden Singh was saying, and what Cde. Ram Karran said. But this budget, Cde. Speaker, as has already been said, is a people's budget. It has come, I would say, partly out of the People's New Constitution. The People's New Constitution has been followed by the people's recovery budget and there are people, in the Opposition too who, after analysing our situation, have come to the conclusion that the plan and programme that the P.N.C. is pursuing will cause that recovery to take place sooner than you expect; and as a matter of fact, they are planning other things now to prevent this from happening. But I know that the people of Guyana will not heed them, for too often the Oppositions have been trying to deceive the people of Guyana. For Independence, for Republic, for the Referendum, for the new Constitution, there were all sorts of rumors and confusionists going around telling people that all evils will befall them. The people are still alive today, and in this severe global economic crisis, the people of Guyana are doing fairly well. I need to congratulate them for their spirit in going through the experience of a crisis which is described as being worse than during the last war. They do this because there is no hunger in this country; there is no famine in this country, there is no death from hunger and famine in this country while we live in a world where as we talk here, every hour, thousands of people are dying from famine and lack of water and shelter.

Guyana stands tall because of the vision of the Cde. Leader of this country, a vision of which we must be aware and it is that vision that is causing this county to keep moving forward. I take, for example, in more recent times, our exercise with the mass games. The technical and

professional people talked just like Cde.Ram Karran, that it was stupid, but it demonstrated the courage of the Leader and the vision of the Leader. When that decision was finally made, we decided we must work to achieve the accomplishment of the mass games. It was a great revelation to all the people of this country to see what their children could do if the circumstances are right and I think it is something that will live on for all time. It is that vision of this leader that is carrying this country onward and upward.

You heard a while ago, “what about the hydro projects?” After you have heard in this house, you have discarded that now. We are hearing anything more. Now you have heard about it, you are not mentioning anything. It was the courage and determination of the leader that caused it to be brought to where it is now so that those who had no interest in it are now beginning to take a meaningful interest and in time we will have that facility for the people of Guyana, where we will have cheap power to do the development of our resources in this country as we progress.

One great hope too is the recent Mashramani celebrations because in some places, some people would not have been able to apply their minds to have Mashramani as a productive exercise but the Cde. Leader with his vision saw that we could have Mashramani, we could make it productive and this country could benefit, and so out of Mashramani we did not only have marching and jumping up. It was good to see the thousands of people who march past, men and women and their children, the longest ever march-past in the country and the number of projects that caused rehabilitation to field, office and factory. And so, in this recovery budget, we proceed even with our training still at a maximum.

I was enquiring not so long ago when I learned that Guyana has some 800 students overseas sponsored by the Government of this country because to improve our weaknesses in management and other areas, we need more and more training for our people, not only at the local level, but overseas as well and so we have students in all sorts of countries. Regardless of ideology, our students are pursuing further training.

8.10 p.m

At home we have even non-formal education taking place and the Ministry of National Development is always very busy in mobilising people because for us mobilisation is not just getting people together, it is a learning exercise, a meeting of minds so that people can get to know one another better and become more deeply concerned and more aware of the development that is taking place in this country. It would be interesting if we could have before this session is closed a little document distributed to let these comrades become aware of the thousand of things happening in the development of this country, the thousands of projects that are finishing and that are in the process of being finished so that they can become deeply aware of what is going on.

Some of them, I think, are not very conscious of what is happening around them. Even our military and paramilitary groups are engaged in development works, some of them earning substantial revenue because they believe in the philosophy of People's National Congress, that philosophy of development of man by man and it is, I believe, because of that reason that my comrades on the other side look so well, are thriving so well, even under these difficult circumstances because when we build a road in this country now we build it for the community.

I remember my good friends when they were concerned in constructing infrastructure in this country on the West Coast exempted a little village when they were building roads. They caused a little village to suffer from the dust because they believed that they were not getting political support from that village; and I know in my own village when they were doing the Tapakuma scheme, the rascality that took place so that those people should suffer. When other areas had two trenches and two dams, when they reached Dartmouth they put it in such a way that those people would always suffer and when we came into office we had to rehabilitate and old sluice that was put in since the days of C.V. Wight so that those people could prosper.

That is what they were doing and they continue to believe that notwithstanding the objective conditions, we are doing thing on a racial basis. I want to inform you, Comrades, that racism cannot develop this country. Those who depend on racism to develop this country are losers and really they have lost; but they would not recognise that they have lost. They have lost for all times. As the Government houses people, efforts are made to have mixed groups in every area. Our masters and rulers in the past separated us. In all sorts of ways they separated us. Now the exercise is to bring us to work together as one people and one nation and there is evidence that there is success. You just have to look around. Talk about this House. You can look around this very house, the evidence faces you. You go into the communities; the evidence faces you, round the country. I think that is what is so irritating, especially to Cde. Ram Karran, because I think I speak as one who knows him well.

They mentioned too a lot about the Knowledge Sharing Institute. I just want to make one observation. I thought these communists, these socialist would have welcomed such a development because they know that if you are trying to transform this economy you will have disturbed so many people who are traders, for an area that is still open in the trading area where people commit all sorts of irregularities. Some of them will apply for a license, get the foreign exchange and then they do not buy any goods anymore. They will get the goods, pass them over the border especially commodities that are a little cheaper than the commodities over the border. They indulge in that kind of behaviour and if they remember the events in Chile- this one was one of the sore points in Chile- when Allende lost, and it was declared that he killed himself. It was the distribution of commodities that caused the confusion and so this Government is organising all the time. Deliberate and concerted efforts in organising are affected so that people would not get an opportunity to use the trading system to disturb the community to irritation. Some of them are still going it but the K.S.I. is not here to take over all businesses. The K.S.I is

pointing the way and acting as a deterrent so that those who are in private business will have the decency to project fair play and justice to their customers. That is what really the K.S.I is there to do because unless we do that then they will continue with those practices that are inimical to the service of the people. If they are part of black marketers then I am certain we will follow what you said to get them out of this, but one way to prevent black marketing is to prevent the person who is black marketing from having any goods to black market. That is a more effective method to get rid of black-marketing.

So in areas where the private service is not giving the service we expect the Knowledge Sharing Institute is there to spread the knowledge around and train people to do the job. We are concerned with the deeds in this country, and the record of development points to the deeds by the People's National Congress. We know that in this country at this time they are hired puppets and lackeys. We know that. Some people get dreadfully afraid and they talk about the C.I.A. and all sorts of things but we have here in this very House people who admit they are puppets to some big powers. So I do not know how they will lead this country, how they will manage the affairs of this country because as soon as you become a pawn of any of the super powers you are really under domination. How can you manage the affairs of your country then in the interest of the people of the country? You cannot, because you have to take direction from those rascals. Probably you all are becoming awakened to what happens when you have to take direction from the big powers because some of them have no intention of causing any development to happen in as small country like ours. Their business is to exploit these countries, to dominate them at world forum and everywhere, you have to do their bidding and we therefore have taken the position that we will be pawned neither to East nor West, neither to South nor to North. We will continue to cause genuine developments you happen in this country.

I know, Cde. Speaker that this is a difficult question for Comrades like Cde. Ram Karran to accept. I appreciate that. I even pity him but the development of the this country has to go on and even if these lackeys and puppets join in an unholy alliance with strange bedfellows, this great motley crowd getting together to do all sorts of evil, the People's National Congress Government, because of the type of organisation that it is, will be able to overcome even those evils. Already, some of those who came out shouting have recognised that notwithstanding what they were doing, the P.N.C Government has been succeeding. But this is a great world crisis and sometime we have to look back to give us the strength to go forward.

8.20 p.m

From our history of achievements, we are confident that we will overcome these difficult circumstances. With the referendum, we had all sorts of opposition. Today, we know that this is past and people have lived. Once you start to develop a country, not in the capitalist way, then you get certain pressures, certain nations and countries that were friendly might change their position. We must expect that to happen. The world itself we live in is a harsh world. When we deal with an organisation like the International Monetary Fund, the I.M.F we do not believe we

are dealing with angels. We do not believe that the world is a little Sunday school. We are not so naive to think that they are very anxious for us to succeed. But, what is important is that you have to study the circumstances carefully so that when you make a decision, any decision at all, you make it in the interest of the people of Guyana and this country of Guyana.

As the Foreign Minister told the Leader of the Opposition not so long ago, whenever we vote at any International conference, we do not vote for East, we do not for West, we do not vote for North, we do not vote for South. We vote for the people of Guyana and the country of Guyana. Our concern is outside because the world is so organised that even the crisis that we go through is not by chance. My belief is that this is organised by the people of this world and it would be a good thing if all our legislators, as matter of fact, even our school children in nursery schools begin to learn about this world in which we live. I think if we have some appreciation, some little understand of the organisation of the world's economy, sometimes you would not rave and rant as we do, for the world economy is controlled by a few nations. As a matter of fact, in one book, The Rockefeller Five, it is said that a handful of people controls the world's economy. That is why there is a call now, an urgent call, for a new International Economic Order which should be fair and just to all.

Notwithstanding the rise in the price of petroleum products this country would not have been in this difficulty. It is because of the in iniquitous system in the world that we are in this position now. For while the price of oil is going up and the refiners are making billions and billions of dollars, surpluses, profits, call it what you may, they are making billions and billions, even some of those poor oil producing countries remain poor, and those refiners are making the billions.

We must understand that part of it. We understand that part of it so that we know when we are bargaining, with whom we are bargaining, and what we are bargaining for. Already many small countries have succumbed and become puppets and lackeys to save themselves from final destruction. But, Guyana because of the vision it is able to hold its head high, for early in the sixties there was a call to feed ourselves. People responded to that call even though in certain areas the production itself has not increase; in other areas new commodities have come on the markets and so people in this country can still feed themselves. I believe that if we can get rid of some of the prejudices for the food for which we produce, there will be no alarm in this country as far as feeding ourselves is concerned, and I am satisfied this is working because I do not see any person in this House looking weak and sickly because of lack of food. For the world in its economy has already controlled the Finances of the world and this new economic order is calling for a change so that the same people do not price the goods on both sides. Even if we understand that little bit we would have done a lot for ourselves and our country. Imagine that our sugar is priced by the international market where we have no control over it and the tractors and the combines we buy are priced by the procedures of such equipment.

The Speaker: Dr. Reid, are you going to be much longer?

Cde. Reid: Just another few minutes, Cde.Speaker. If , we, Cde. Speaker, understand that, then that alone will make us work together because the surpluses that are made in this country now are used for the benefit of all the people of this country. There cannot be anything else. Where is it going? There are road that are being built. Some road at a million at a mile and things like that. I do not know. There is a heavy cost of building those roads. Look at Canals' Polder. Good roads at canal No.1, Canal No2 West Coast. I remember some years ago there was a man at Parika stelling and he was betting me that that road would never be done. I was happy to be present when Cde. Ramsaroop declared that road open and name it to our joy and satisfaction, that, we of the People's National Congress in Government have been able to put in that kind of infrastructure for the people. The bridge across the river, the Canje Bridge, the Mabura Hill Road and all those deeds. What about free education? In 1964, we spent \$ 300,000 on scholarships and education for overseas training. Last year we sent \$10 million for the training of our people in Guyana.

So when you ask where the money is going, that is not difficult to identify in this country. I tell you: Deal with the content and not the form- the road structure, the canals, the M.M.A schemes, the extension of Black Bush Polder, the improvement of Anna Regina Tapacuma Scheme, where there will be instituted some 55 miles of all weather road for the farming community so that some of the distress and tears can be reduced. This is the kind of substantial work that is being done in this country of ours, and so we round it off by giving the people the training and education and expertise for the development of this country. Cde.Speaker, I wish to repeat, that in1964, British Guiana's economy was in shambles after seven years of P.P.P Government.

8.30 p.m

The P.N.C Government brought it out of the doldrums and retrieved it and the P.N.C Government is well on its way to recover from the economic crisis that is facing us today.
[Applause (Government Benches)]

The Speaker: Comrades and hon. Members, tomorrow we will complete the debate on the Budget and we will go into the detail of the Estimates. When we finish the general debate; we will proceed of the Committee of Supply.

Cde. Ram Karran: Do you have any idea of the heads we will do tomorrow?

The Speaker: That information will be circulated.

ADJOURNMENT

Resolved: "That this Assembly do now adjourn until Wednesday, 16th April, 1980, at 2 p.m. " [Cde.Ramsaroop]
Adjourned accordingly at 8.32 p.m.