

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

OF THE 23RD SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST  
SESSION (1986) OF THE FIFTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD

AT 14:00 HRS

ON MONDAY - 1986-12-22

IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, GEORGETOWN

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (75)

Speaker (1)

\*Cde. Sase Narain, O.R., S.C., J.P., M.P., Speaker of the  
National Assembly

Members of the Government - People's National Congress (63)

Ministers in the Cabinet (9)

Prime Minister (1)

Cde. H. Green, M.P., Prime Minister

Other Vice-President and First Deputy Prime Minister (1)

Cde. Dr. M. Shahabuddeen, O.R., S.C., M.P., Vice-President,  
First Deputy Prime Minister and Attorney General (Absent)

Other Vice-Presidents and Deputy Prime Ministers (2)

Cde. R. Chandisingh, M.P., Vice-President, National Mobilisation,  
and Deputy Prime Minister

Cde. Viola V. Burnham, O.R., M.P., Vice-President, Education and  
Social Development, and Deputy Prime Minister

Other Deputy Prime Minister (1)

Cde. W.A.L.H. Parris, C.C.H., M.P., Deputy Prime Minister,  
Planning and Development (Absent - on leave)

Senior Ministers (4)

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

\*Cde. C.B. Greenidge, M.P., Minister of Finance

Cde. S. Prashad, M.P., Minister of Manpower and Housing

\*Cde. W.S. Murray, C.C.H., M.P., Minister of Trade

Other Ministers (14)

Senior Ministers (4)

Cde. J.R. Thomas, M.P., Minister of Regional Development

Cde. Dr. R.A. Van-West-Charles, M.P., Minister of Health

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

\*Cde. Dr. P.L. McKenzie, A.A., M.P., Minister in the Ministry  
of Agriculture

\*Non-elected Member

### Ministers (7)

- Cde. Urmia E.H. Johnson, M.P., Minister within the Ministry of National Mobilisation
- \*Cde. R.C. Fredericks, A.A., M.P., Minister of Youth and Sport within the Ministry of Education
- Cde. C.G. Sharma, A.A., J.P., M.P., Minister within the Office of the President (Absent - on leave)
- \*Cde. D.M.A. Bernard, M.P., Minister within the Ministry of Education
- Cde. D. Sawh, M.P., Minister of Forestry
- \*Cde. J.R. Kranenburg, M.P., Minister of Transport
- \*Cde. V.V. Parvatan, M.P., Minister within the Ministry of Agriculture

### Ministers of State (3)

- \*Cde. D.A.N. Ainsworth, M.P., Minister of State within the Ministry of Manpower and Housing
- Cde. J.T. Kissoon, M.P., Minister of State within the Ministry of Health
- Cde. Dr. Faith A. Harding, M.P., Minister of State within the Ministry of Planning and Development

### Parliamentary Secretaries (3)

- Cde. A.K. Habibulla, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Office of the President
- Cde. Stella Odie-Ali, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Home Affairs
- \*Cde. Jean M.G. Persico, A.A., M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Education

### Government Chief Whip (1)

- Cde. Jennifer A. Ferreira, M.P., Government Chief Whip

### Other Members (24)

- Cde. R.H.O. Corbin, M.P. (Absent - on leave)
- Cde. Agnes W. Bend-Kirton, M.P. (Absent - on leave)
- Cde. E.H.A. Fowler, M.P.
- Cde. Joyce Gill-Mingos, M.P. (Absent - on leave)
- Cde. M. Ally, M.P. (Absent)
- Cde. Elaine B. Davidson, M.P.
- Cde. H. Doobay, M.P.
- Cde. Joyce M. Munroe, J.P., M.P.
- Cde. Edwina Melville, M.P. (Absent)
- Cde. Anna Ally, M.P.
- Cde. L.R. Arthur, M.P.
- Cde. J.R.L. Bovell-Drakes, M.P.
- Cde. N. Calistro, M.P. (Absent)
- Cde. G.W. Chin, J.P., M.P.
- Cde. F.M. Cumberbatch, M.P.
- Cde. M.I. Deen, M.P.
- Cde. Cyrylda A DeJesus, M.P.
- Cde. Edith Deygoo, M.P.
- Cde. Clarice A. Edwards, M.P.
- Cde. C.L. Geddes, M.P.
- Cde. G. Marshall, M.P.
- Cde. B. Persaud, M.P.
- Cde. E.W. Trotman, M.P.
- Cde. K. Sankar, M.S., M.P. (Absent - on leave)

\*Non-elected Member

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

Cde. E. Mohamed, M.P.  
Cde. Rose I. Semple, M.P.

Members from the Regional Democratic Councils (10)

Cde. Nellie R. Charles, M.P. (Region No. 7 - Cuyuni/Mazaruni) (Absent)  
Cde. R. Bishop, M.S., M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)  
Cde. Bhagmatee Latchminarayan, M.P. (Region No. 5 - Mahaica/ Berbice)  
Cde. Y. Khan, M.P. (Region No. 2 - Pomeroon/Supenaam)  
Cde. Enid E. Abrahams, M.S., J.P., M.P. (Region No. 3 - Essequibo  
Islands/West Demerara)  
Cde. I. Ally, M.P. (Region No. 6 - East Berbice/Corentyne)  
Cde. B.L. Domingo, M.P. (Region No. 1 - Barima/Waini)  
Cde. S.I. McGarrell, M.P. (Region No. 8 - Potaro/Siparuni) (Absent)  
Cde. M. Stephens, M.P. (Region No. 9 - Upper Takutu/Upper  
Essequibo) (Absent)  
Cde. Joycelyn Thom-Lindie, M.P. (Region No. 10 - Upper  
Demerara/Berbice)

Members of the Minority (11)

(i) People's Progressive Party (8)

Minority Leader (1)

Cde. Dr. C. Jagan, M.P., Minority Leader

Deputy Speaker (1)

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud, J.P., M.P., Deputy Speaker of the  
National Assembly

Other Members (6)

Cde. Janet Jagan, M.P. (Absent)  
Cde. C.C. Collymore, M.P.  
Cde. S.F. Mohamed, M.P., Minority Chief Whip  
Cde. H. Nokta, M.P.  
Cde. I. Basir, M.P.  
Cde. C.C. Belgrave, M.P.

(ii) United Force (2)

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

(iii) Working People's Alliance (1)

Mr. E. Kwayana, M.P.

OFFICERS

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

14:05 hrs

OATHS

The Speaker: Comrades and Honourable member, I have received from Cde. Robert Williams a letter tendering his resignation as a member of the National Assembly with effect from 13th November, 1986. With Cde. Williams' resignation a vacancy has been created in the National Assembly. In accordance with section 99A of the Representation of the People Act, Chapter 1:03 I called upon the Representative of the list of Candidates from which Cde. Williams' name was extracted to further extract from the said list the name of a person to fill the vacancy. I have been informed that the name of Cde. Faith Azalea Harding has been extracted from the list and Cde. Harding was on the 17th December, 1986 declared an elected member of the National Assembly. Cde. Harding ceases to be a non-elected member of the Assembly and having been elected will have to take the oath as an elected member. The oath will now be administered to Cde. Harding.

Cde. Dr. Harding who was present made and subscribed the oath.

The Speaker: On behalf of the members of the Assembly and myself, I wish to congratulate Cde. Harding on her becoming an elected member of the Assembly and to extend our best wishes to her. She can now vote in the National Assembly.

LEAVE TO MEMBERS

The Speaker: Leave has been granted to Cde. Parris up to the 27th December, Cde. Amna Ally up to the 31st December and Cdes. Sharma, Corbin, Bend-Kirton and Sankar and Mr. M.F. Singh for today's sitting.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS ETC.

The following papers were presented:

- (1) Annual Report of the Guyana National Co-operative Bank for the year 1985.
- (2) Financial Paper No. 4/1986 – Schedule of Supplementary Provision on the Current and Capital Estimates totaling \$29,446,898 for the period ended 2nd December, 1986 (Advances made from the Contingencies Fund in 1986).

In terms of Standing Order No. 68(1) the Minister of Finance named Monday 29th December, 1986 as the day for the consideration of the Financial Paper in Committee of Supply.

- (1) Loan Contract between the Co-operative Republic of Guyana and the Inter-American Development Bank (Industrial Reactivation Programme) dated November 1, 1985 – Loan No. 154/IC-GY.
- (2) Loan Contract between the Co-operative Republic of Guyana and the Inter-American Development Bank (Programme for the Rehabilitation of the Guyana Electricity Corporation) dated November 1, 1985 – Loan No. 163/IC-GY.
- (3) Loan Contract between the Co-operative Republic of Guyana and the Inter-American Development Bank (Programme for Human Resources Training and Development) dated December 27, 1985 – Loan No. 780/SF-GY
- (4) State Pension (Joseph Augustus Alexander) Order 1986 (No.58) made under Section 4 of the State Pensions Act, Cap. 27:04, on 18th November, 1986 and published in the Gazette on 22nd November, 1986. [The Minister of Finance]
- (5) Annual Report of the Ministry of Agriculture for the year 1985.  
[The Minister in the Ministry of Agriculture].

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

The Minority Leader (Dr. Jagan): Cde. Speaker, in view of the mis-information which was carried in the media, confirmed by the State and the ruling PNC Party as Leader of the Opposition I wish to take this opportunity to put the records straight.

I issued a statement on December 6th, 1986 that neither the Daily Chronicle nor the New Nation published in detail nor in full and the facts are: (1) It is not true that the New Nation on the 3rd August in its editorial stated that it was quoted seeking to negotiate increase salary and emoluments for myself.

**TAKE**  
**14:15 – 14:55 HRS**  
**MISSING**

Order No. 34 is intended to further the process of rationalisation of consumption tax rates and in this particular case, it is intended to modify the rates associated with some luxury items imported in Guyana and involve 5 per cent movement in the rates of the item shown.

Motion proposed.

Cde. Dr. C. Jagan: Cde. Speaker, the hon. Minister referred to rationalisation in this exercise of raising consumption taxes by 5 percent on the rates which are listed in the Consumption Tax Act of 1984. The amount of 5 percent meaning that 25 percent will increase to 30 percent and 45 percent will go to 50 percent. In looking through this previous Order No.68 of 1984, one sees all kinds of thing being imported in the country.

15:05 hrs

(Cde. C. Jagan continues)

and I don't know whether this has to do with the goods produced in this country. We know when the Caricom came into being, because of its duty free provisions the Government sought up a new device of consumption tax in order to compensate for the loss it would have made/ by giving duty free concessions to Caricom produced goods. taxation What alarms me is I would have thought that/ be in customs duties or consumption tax should be linked to the question of production and the national objective of import substitution and so on, also to keep in mind the question of the cost of living and to ensure that certain things do not rise. We have in socialist countries, for instance, where basic things, prices remain virtually constant for many many years and if there is an increase, then maybe a small increase over a long period of time. That is basic necessities of life but here we have a five percent increase blanket on everything. Medicine for instance, we know what a difficult time people have in getting medicine in this country, the public medical hospital cannot provide adequate drugs then people have to go, even Doctors in the medical service prescribe drugs to be bought outside of the dispensary. We should be trying now to keep down the cost of living for people, people who cannot meet the very high cost of living, the Government constantly saying we cannot afford to pay no more, please tell us where to get the money from. They refuse to index wages for cost of living, constant refusal on this question, the TUC again is asking for this and yet the government keeps trying to alleviate the cost of living by putting on further taxation. Why tax basic essentials like medicine for instance, poor people have to get fuel for cooking for instance, prices have gone up, they have leaped, okay maybe due to the hike from the people who are selling the goods, that is one problem, but why should the Government add to the misery and burden of the poor people of this country. Those are essential basic things of life, why increase by another five percent. Take agriculture, our agriculture is in a parallel state, there is no doubt about that, why increase agricultural implements by another five percent.

Housing, the Ministry of Forestry, not so long ago mentioned



Mr. Speaker, the very high cost of building materials. The Government has removed price controls, on top of that there is a consumption tax on building materials which all the sawmillers have to pay and that is passed on to the poor house builders. Imagine in Trinidad you can buy imported lumber from Canada at \$2.50 per square foot and here you have to pay as much as five dollars per square foot. You are exploiting the poor people. Canadians at least are subsidising their export, what are you doing, you are putting on a five percent consumption tax already on the very high consumption tax which the sawmillers have to pay and which is then passed on to the consumers. Cde. Speaker, we are taking up cases right now for house lots for sugar workers for instance. In some cases house lots are not available, in other cases house lots have been given but the workers cannot build because all that they get from the Sugar Industry Welfare Fund is \$15,000 and that figure was elevated quite recently to reach \$15,000. \$15,000 you cannot build chicken coop now and you expect the workers to build and yet the Government is putting on 5% consumption tax. They know the perilous state of the housing situation in Georgetown, you cannot find a place to rent in Georgetown. One of our Comrades is living in a mudlur in Vreed-en-hoop. He tried to get a place he could not get it now he has to go and live in LBI and everyday he has to fetch water, he jump from the frying pan into the fire. What are we coming to. Diplomats come to Guyana and they have to live in the Pegasus, they cannot find houses in Georgetown and if they do, 4 or 5,000 dollars and they are requested to pay in foreign currency.

The Speaker: Comrades you don't want the business of this Parliament to go on. The moment you tell Dr. Jagan something contrary you have to hear a whole treatise on that subject.

Cde. Jagan: The Yugoslav Ambassador cannot find a house. Have you found a house for him, how many of them are living in the Pegasus. I am saying, in the agricultural policy, what could be the agricultural policy. I just heard on BBC a report on this question of hunger in the world. They said in the developed countries, you have the whole situation today where they are producing more than they can consume and they don't know what to do with the surplus because they pay the

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people a higher price than they can sell it for either internally, they subsidise the internal consumers and they try to dump it outside. In the third world countries, we don't have, we cannot produce enough food to eat, the opposite, why, because they have<sup>political</sup> elite living parasitically on the poor producers in the countryside and we tax them on top of that with files, cutlasses and all these things, not only are not available but go and find out what the prices are. Little implements, son one would have thought that the tax mechanism should be used in such a way as to achieve your development policy, if you want to build houses, I am sure the Minister of Forestry will agree with me, take out the consumption tax so that you can encourage the people who have houses to get an opportunity to buy lumber at a lower price. That is one way of you want to solve the housing problem otherwise you are only talking and making noise. A few weeks ago I made a statement and the Chronicle said that the Ministry of Housing is considering a housing policy. Imagine after twenty one years in Government, when they said in 1972 they would feed, house and clothe the nation.

The Speaker: Budget is coming up you will get an opportunity to speak on that.

Cde. Jagan: I am talking of the policy of the Government with certain aids to solve the housing crisis.

15:15 hrs

This is not the time to talk about formulating a housing policy. Sixty-five houses were built from 1972 to 1976. Just imagine how ridiculous these people are. They are talking about housing policy now. Lower the prices of the consumer items. Go in Guyana Stores and find out how much building materials cost. The PPP had to buy toilet fittings the other day for the guest house and one toilet set cost \$2,500. Can you imagine that? This is ridiculous and therefore I am saying use your tax mechanism more selectively to attain your goals in housing, in agriculture and whatever else. Do not come to this Assembly and make a blanket of 25% going up to 30% and 45% going up to 50%. That is what is done here. Most of the items listed in the previous order are 25%, some in different places are higher. Okay, the Government wants to raise money, we understand that therefore they put a 5% hike on everything. The Minister called them semi luxury and luxury. The point I want to make is that some of the things I mentioned are not considered luxury items. Building materials are not luxury items, agricultural implements are not luxury items. So it is wrong to say that they are luxury items. Fuel for the ordinary person is not a luxury item and so on. I would say, Cde. Speaker that the Minister should think again and withdraw this bill and then come back. Revoke the order and come back with selected items that is items that are non-essential but we have to keep the goals set by the Government. In that way you must discriminate and leave out certain things. In fact, you must leave out certain things. In the Soviet Union certain things were reduced. Certain things were raised and some were very small and some higher. So that was done I might say wisely in keeping with your objective but we cannot support this order the way it was done. It is not done properly and it is not done in keeping with the aims of the people with the aims of the Government and in keeping with the aspirations of the Guyanese people who are suffering today with the very high cost of living. Only a few people can live today to get the essentials of life and so we cannot give our support to this motion. Applause.

15:25 hrs

(Mr. Kwayana continues)

And I should like to hear in his reply where the reason lies except that they are scraping the barrel for more revenues and find it very convenient to drop this weapon of the consumption tax here and there indiscriminately, falling very heavily on the poorest, like the \$67 a month old-age pensioners and others.

Cde. Greenidge: Cde. Speaker, I beg to start by making a couple of observations of fact. When the principal Order was the subject of discussion by this Assembly, the comrades on the other side of the Assembly also made the very erroneous allegation that rationalisation meant only increases and I spent the last two or three minutes trying to see whether I had kept the jottings of the response I made at that time. I do not have them here but I would just like to restate that as a matter of fact rates went up and rates went down. If comrades bothered to look not only at the Consumption Tax Order that they have before them but at the report of the meeting at the time, they will find that I referred them to the different pages at random and on those pages they found rates both rising and declining.

It is quite inaccurate to say, for example, that either this or the previous legislation increased the consumption tax associated with medicines. Consumption tax associated with medicines is 10 per cent and this particular amendment makes no reference to medicines. So I do not know where Dr. Jagan got his information from. Even basic items, many food items captured by this Consumption Order attract a duty also of 10 per cent. The Order specifically raises those items that happen to fall in the 25 to 45 regime and increase them by 5 per cent. We contend that those items are not the basic items to which he refers.

For example, he made mention of consumption tax on petrol and petroleum products. This legislation makes no difference whatsoever to the tax as it stands to petroleum products.

As far as the observations by the other Member is concerned, I would just like to say in so far as they dealt with generalities rather than specifics, I am glad that he has noted that indirect taxation has been creeping up. But

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if he were to look carefully enough he will find that this is not a characteristic peculiar to Guyana. Throughout the Caribbean, for very good reasons, there has been an increasing incidence for indirect as opposed to direct taxation, given the structure of economies that we have and given the changes that have taken place over the last years in the structure of those economies, it is not surprising that indirect taxes have proved more easy to administer - that is the major reason - than direct taxes. This is especially the case where you have fairly large agricultural sectors and it is not so easy to levy direct taxes on the income of agricultural . . . Whilst I am very pleased to know that these matters of physical changes are engaging the attention of the Minority, it is perhaps useful that they look more widely than just at a specific piece of legislation or in a very selective manner that they seem to be doing.

I should also say I heard quite a lot about policies and the review of policies with respect to housing and so forth. But circumstances change, needs change and therefore the housing policy, as with all other policies, have to be reviewed from time to time and I do not think we should apologise for this and I do not think that one should assume that that is an undesirable thing. It is important that we exercise our minds in response to different and changing circumstances and if the Members of the Minority find this a problem well I do not think it is for us to apologise for that.

Question put.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: Division!

Assembly divided: Ayes 41, Noes 8, as follows:

<u>Ayes</u>	<u>Noes</u>
Cde. Thom-Lindie	Mr. Kwayana
Cde. Domingo	Cde. Belgrave
Cde. I. Ally	Cde. Basir
Cde. Abrahams	Cde. Nokta
Cde. Khan	Cde. Collymore
Cde. Latchminarayan	Cde. S.F. Mohamed
Cde. Bishop	Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud
Cde. Semple	Cde. C. Jagan - 8
Cde. E. Mohamed	
Cde. Trotman	
Cde. B. Persaud	
Cde. Marshall	
Cde. Edwards	
Cde. Deygoo	

Carried Forward: 14

Brought Forward: 14

Cde. DeJesus  
Cde. Deen  
Cde. Cumberbatch  
Cde. Chin  
Cde. Calistro  
Cde. Bovell-Drakes  
Cde. Arthur  
Cde. A. Ally  
Cde. Munroe  
Cde. Doobay  
Cde. Davidson  
Cde. Fowler  
Cde. Ferreira  
Cde. Odie-Ali  
Cde. Habibulla  
Cde. Harding  
Cde. Kissoon  
Cde. Sawh  
Cde. Johnson  
Cde. Harewood-Benn  
Cde. Van West-Charles  
Cde. Thomas  
Cde. Prashad  
Cde. Jackson  
Cde. Burnham  
Cde. Chandisingh  
Cde. Green - 41

Motion carried.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

The Speaker: Comrades and hon. Member, this may be the last Sitting before Christmas and I would like to take this opportunity of extending best wishes for a Merry Christmas to all Members of the National Assembly, to the Clerk and Deputy Clerk, to the Official Reporters and Sergeant-at-Arms, to all other members of staff including the Office Assistants and Cleaners, the representatives of the Press and the technicians. To all of you/a Merry and Joyous Christmas. I would also like to take this opportunity of inviting Members for refreshments in the Committee Room after the adjournment.

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15:35 – 15:45 hrs

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

15:35 hrs

The Prime Minister: Cde. Speaker, as you observed a moment ago, this significant religious anniversary would be celebrated before we meet again and I think for most of us the most significant of Guyanese festivals is Christmas come 25th December, not only for small children but those of us who are adults look forward to this particular event on our annual calendar, not only to make merry, not only to forget the normal chores of the day but I think most of all we look forward to this time in this country when traditionally we can forget our differences and really enjoy the season of peace and goodwill. A peace which we in this country enjoy and will continue to enjoy for some years to come and I will like Cde. Speaker, in the spirit of goodwill and harmony to thank you for your very kind wishes on behalf of the Government benches and to add my own special wishes to you Cde. Speaker, and to my friends on the other side, particularly my good friend, the very charming person Dr. Cheddi Jagan. It is at this time that Dr. Jagan's charm really comes out. To Mr. Eusi Kwayana, Mr. Marcellius Singh who is not in his seat today to wish them a very very happy season and to extend a hand of friendship and look forward to us working together as a team, a strong patriotic team to make 1987 a significant year where we can work together to turn things around and make this country a great place. Once more, Cde. Speaker, joyous greetings so you and all of us and may we all with a degree of control enjoy the peace that we have in this country at Christmas.

Cde. C. Jagan: Cde. Speaker, I too would like to joint in expressing our good wishes to you and your staff in this House, also to the people in this section of work, parliamentary section who have to do the donkey work in the back rooms. We at this time obviously would like to join in the merry making which is traditional in Guyana at Christmas time. I do hope that the Government will change its mind and not only we in this House will be celebrating but they will pay the people the five percent which they promise to pay early this year and did not pay so that they too can enjoy a little bit because you cannot enjoy Christmas unless you have some material thing. The spirit does not work well when the material things are not there to grease it and the material things are very essential specially when you have to buy and the five percent will go a long way to help. It is not much but it was promised and the people are expecting it and I will urge the Prime Minister, he is a charming fellow too but unfortunately he does not implement that smile when it comes to certain policies and so I would like to make an appeal to the Government, also to urge that this House functions a litter better. They started out well this year and they slipped again and I don't know what is the reason for this. Cde. Speaker, I am afraid about two dozen motions and questions have not yet found themselves on the notice paper, over two dozen and as usual we have been complaining about the House not meeting on Wednesdays. Since the recess we only met I think twice and we did not meet on a Wednesday as we are supposed to meet. I would suggest that the Government and the Prime Minister and the Leader of

the House should look into the staffing of the House. The Speaker, does not even have a secretary, how do you expect the Speaker, to work properly. The Clerk of the Assembly needs more help, please look into the budget of the Parliament so he can function more efficiently with a lot of cheer and happiness in this House. Anyway Happy Christmas.

Mr. Kwayana: Mr. Speaker, I am sure that for yourself your recent experience is a bit of damper at this time and for that reason I shall curtail my remarks somewhat. I am not known for social graces. I should like to say that we should wish Happy Christmas not only to one another as colleagues but to the wider community beginning with the staff here who served us very faithfully at our all too infrequent meetings, meetings which often ended in utter futility in which the Executive failed to honour the orders of the Assembly except perhaps when it was to offer condolences.

Many of us at Christmas time forget the humility of the stable of Nazareth and acquire devious taste which drives us sometimes into all kinds of errors. While the masses of the people cannot really think about a really happy Christmas or at least one lasting more than for one meal. I am a country boy. I cannot help this. However, the Prime Minister said that in his graciousness he was able to find a home for a certain Ambassador. I congratulate him. I met a female citizen a few months ago who was complaining of having a housing card since 1960 without being able to find a house.

**ADJOURNMENT MISSING**  
**15:46 HRS**