

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

OF THE 24TH SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST
SESSION (1986) OF THE FIFTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD

AT 14:00 HRS

ON MONDAY 1986-12-29

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

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

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
*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 (Absent - on leave)
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)
Cde. Agnes W. Bend-Kirton, M.P.
Cde. E.H.A. Fowler, M.P.
Cde. Joyce Gill-Mingo, M.P. (Absent - on leave)
Cde. M. Ally, M.P. (Absent - on leave)
Cde. Elaine B. Davidson, M.P.
Cde. H. Doobay, M.P. (Absent)
Cde. Joyce M. Munroe, J.P., M.P.
Cde. Edwina Melville, M.P.
Cde. ~~Anna~~ Ally, M.P.
Cde. L.R. Arthur, M.P.
Cde. J.R.L. Bovell-Drakes, M.P.
Cde. N. Calistro, M.P.
Cde. G.W. Chin, J.P., M.P.
Cde. F.M. Cumberbatch, M.P.
Cde. M.I. Deen, M.P.
Cde. Cyrilda A. DeJesus, M.P.
Cde. Edith Deygo, 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. (Absent - on leave)
Cde. K. Sankar, M.S., M.P.

*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) (Absent)

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

TAKE

14:00 – 14:20 HRS

MISSING

14:20 hrs

(Cde. Dr. Jagan continues)

and the international financial institutions are quite correct. Why should they keep bailing out money to this country when it is being spent in a way which helps to infuse the deficit and that in turn causes big problems especially with debt payment in the country/because when we have a deficit like that we have to borrow from the local banking system and this means paying about eighteen million dollars/per year, eighteen million dollars in interest alone, therefore this country needs financial stringency. Every now and then you read that the President has this Adviser and that Adviser and we don't even know how much they are being paid. So many Advisers, so many Ministers, so many Vice Presidents. Why do we need more people here when we have so many Ministers so many Vice Presidents and Deputy Prime Minister, then that whole question of the applies also to the/Guyana Natural Resources Agency. Government has not come here before, even as a matter of courtesy to the House to say that for so and so reasons we want such an Agency. What is the role of this Agency, what will it do that a Ministry cannot do if the Ministry was functioning properly so I don't know if this is one of the means of giving one of our boys who are returning a job. We have the same thing on the next page where my colleague asked for information relating to what was spent for publication as against security. This country spends a lot of money here. Here to we see an/estimate almost equal to what was sought at the beginning of the year, \$290,000 sought at the beginning of the year and now there is a supplementary of \$225,000. What do we need so many publications for, reams and reams of publications are being put out all the time, what for! Do we have the need to sell Guyana so much. Does the Government see the need to do that, that is why we are spending so much money for this head. I don't know, we should be told exactly what the printed publications are, is this distinct from what the Ministry of Information is doing or is this printing referring only to what is done at the Presidential Office. Then there is this item 11, overtime to pay Guyana Management Institute for services rendered. I would like to know Cde. Speaker, what is Guyana Management Institute and what are the services

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they are talking about here. These are the questions I would like to ask.

The Speaker: Cde. Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister: Cde. Chairman, on item one, this here relates to funds needed to meet increases paid to certain staff which included as I think my good friend alluded to salary to Cde. Tyndall who is Special Representative on Trade and Investment and Communication posted in the United States of America. As you are aware the world is becoming a very complex place and it is felt by the Government that we needed someone with the experience and calibre of Cde. Tyndall to follow up a number of matters which arise from time to time, negotiations, discussions, proposals, because we found that very often at the level of correspondence and even telephone messages we were not as effective, ^{experience the} it was felt that with his investment is a worthwhile one and in fact we have already seen work by the appointment of Cde. Tyndall.

In addition, established with ⁱⁿ the Office of the President was a Public Interest unit which is headed by Cde. Rashid and it is to deal with the several things raised by members of the public so that we can be sensitise and also to sensitise the public in terms of what is happening in the system generally. The other one raised about NIS is a routine matter and I am surprised there is question about it, I have no response to this except it is to meet ^{employees} contribution due to the increase in the permanent cost in the head one to which I just alluded

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud asked about the categories falling under the head of subhead 205. This really Cde. ~~Speaker~~, is to deal with the same thing we are talking about, the additional Advisers, we need to provide for the gratuities and pensions of these very new Officers referred to in section 1, so in fact it is the same question which covers 4 and 5.

The Guyana Natural Resources Agency, Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud is not accurate. We do not at this point in time have a Minister nor a Ministry of Energy and Mines as he said. If you look carefully there is no such Minister unless you can identify a person here who is the Minister of Mines, so my friend is not accurate and therefore the person appointed there was Cde. Winston King a man with enormous experience in

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dealing with these international agencies and energy and mines is primarily concerned and big Corporations and entities and we need someone with the experience and some with the calibre of Cde. Winston King who has a good patriot has returned to serve his country and has already put to the services of this country a wealth of experience he gathered over the past few years. The office is in Brickdam, east of Camp Street on the northern side of Brickdam, you can go and see it there and the question whether there is a legal status for it, I am not sure what is meant by that. It is established and what we are doing here is part of the formalisation of that Agency or Entity.

Fuels and lubricants, yes Cde. Speaker, I myself, we are always concerned with the way these things are presented but we have a problem with the financial people. Very often we do not get statements in time and the bills for the current year and therefore there is always hang over from one year to the next and they represent two things, unpaid bills and the fact that you have had an increase in a number of things in this particular Agency.

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(Cde. Jagan continues)

You are the biggest machinery for making evil propaganda against yourself what you are performing as a Government and no public relations firm could clean out all that dirt. Ask the Prime Minister when he went to New York what kind of reception he got. /The Prime Minister: Excellent/How many of them blood you? /The Prime Minister: None./Cde. Speaker, I am repeating again, this should be scrapped out of the Estimates and if they have already paid then let us conclude the arrangements. I notice Mr. Nascimento is now back in Guyana. Send him back we do not need him here. I do not know if the CIA sent him here.

The Minister of Information and Public Service: (Cde. Harewood-Benn): Cde. Chairman, if I were in a court I would have said I rest my case because Mr. Jagan's exhibition just now I think is amply evidence of the fact that we need more printing done, even more publicity campaigns to counter the things that he has obviously gone on saying. It was significant too that he was constrained to say that not all is lie. Clearly again in a court of law, certainly some lie. We propose to do our utmost to conquer this.

On the question of, I believe I am permitted to answer this, Mr. Kwayana alluded to it, of the insecurity. I would like to say here that all managers concerned have good and proper reasons for whatever stops, whatever action they took. It was all in an arrangement to improve circumstances, improve functioning of the various agencies. Today is the 29th Cde. Speaker, the day after tomorrow is the time when we make resolutions and I would be very grateful if perhaps we could advise Mr. Kwayana to resolve not to champion causes when there is no good to champion a cause. Champion when there is a need.

As far as the Guyana News Agency concerned, it has the function which it continues to perform. The question of increased subventions was asked 26 times this afternoon. I cannot give the answer now. I do not know the exact amount of the subvention. It is an agency that is performing a function that is very necessary. I do not know if that answers all the questions which have been raised so far.

Cde. Dr. Jagan: I would like to ask a question on Item 14, dealing with increased subscriptions to overseas news agency. I mentioned this because I think the Minister should look into this. When you read the Chronicle you see a lot of items from A.P. and sometimes from U.P.I. These are the imperialist agencies that the Minister of Foreign Affairs will complain about. Mr. Nascimento the Communications Advisor to the President will also complain about this. We complain about them and then we talk about a new information order, where we must use our own agencies in the Third World, agencies from the socialist countries and so on. You look through the papers even the New Nation and you

will see a lot of imperialist news. Why is it we are not using CANA. It is a regional entity and we are not using that. We are using that rarely, why is that so? Here is an institution which is developed in the Caribbean as an attempt to bring about more information and give more publicity to the region as a whole. I would have thought that the Government not only should not pay more subscriptions to these people, I am speaking specifically about those agencies which are originating in the capitalist world. We must shift, or if we want to use them down-grade them. Do as you do with CANA. Shift the emphasis around as you do with CANA and other progressive socialist agencies. Why are you not using the progressive socialist agencies? You are using mainly capitalist agencies in the imperialist states and you have to pay a lot of money too. I wish to ask the Minister to look at this and give it some attention because it is in the interest of the country.

Cde. Faroze Mohamed: Cde. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister will give an undertaking that she will make available to Members of Parliament the materials produced by this firm. I ask this keeping in mind that this will help us to better appreciate or understand the usefulness and effectiveness of this firm doing work which the Minister says is necessary for us in Guyana. I think this will be a very good gesture on her part if she makes materials available to us.

Cde. Harewood-Benn: Cde. Chairman, perhaps I need a little clarification from the Member is necessary. Are you referring to minutes of meetings and so on?

The Speaker: I think what he is asking for is whatever publication you have on the press or radio.

Cde. Harewood-Benn: I think Cde. Chairman, I am going to have a little problem with that because I would have to go back some years to get newspaper clippings and so on.

The Speaker: No, he is talking about publications from now on.

Cde. Harewood-Benn: I will certainly give that undertaking in the coming year. On the question of socialist news agencies, we have an arrangement with TASK and Pronsa Latina and the only time when we do not get materials from them is when for some reason or the other our machine break down. Right now there is a man in the Soviet Union learning how to operate the machine and maintain it. There is no conspiracy on our part of anything like that to keep out your people. Concerning CANA, we have an extremely warm relationship with them. You would know that we did not have anything for some time but last year we started and I think that programme is going very well indeed so we really have not forgotten anybody.

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Mr. Kwayana: Mr. Chairman, we get no answer or excuse for the lack of an answer on the question of security. I ask for a near guess to the nearest thousand dollars of ten thousands if you like.

Cde. Harewood-Benn: Cde. Chairman, I think you said that there is no need to answer everything. I have said that I do not deal in guesstimates especially in this Assembly with people like Mr. Kwayana. /Applause/

15:10 hrs

The Chairman: Pages 3 and 4, items (15) to (22).

Cde. Basir: Cde. Chairman, I wish to make some observations on item (17). This has to do with benefits and allowances. Here we are asking for \$7,600 to meet telephone charges for Members of Parliament. On this issue I have a personal comment to make. As a Member of this Parliament of Guyana I have been denied telephone services and I wish to use this forum to make very strong objections. I have applied and paid for the service but I have not been given that service unto now. I think it is a question of discrimination. I would like to make this complaint so that the Minister concerned can look into this question.

Cde. Thomas

The Minister of Regional Development (Cde. Thomas): Cde. Chairman, this is the first time that I am hearing of this complaint by the Member. I am sure that if we knew of such a problem we would have been able to ensure that the telephone service was made available. I would be happy if the Member could draw it to the attention of the Minister responsible for communications so that we could look into the problem.

The Chairman: Page 4, items(23) to (25), inclusive.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: Cde. Chairman, I would like to enquire under item (24), Public and Police Service Commissions, Expenses Specific to the Agency, whether the Ministry has been doing anything to attract Guyanese qualified doctors who are outside, and probably within the Caribbean, to come and serve this country. I do not know, and I would like to enquire again, is it true to say that expatriate doctors enjoy better facilities. There seems to be a current view that they get far better facilities than local doctors. As a result that is a dis-incentive to our doctors. I am not opposed to bringing doctors from outside if we need them. I think we should get an adequate amount of doctors to man the health centres. What is being done to attract Guyanese qualified doctors to come and serve in Guyana?

The Prime Minister: Cde. Chairman, when we advertise and recruit **physicians** from outside Guyana we do so on the basis of the person's competence. Naturally, we prefer Guyanese to come back but we focus our attention to filling felt needs and in any case the Ministry of Health has put in place

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an excellent programme for the training of Guyanese physicians here in Guyana. In fact, we have in the system for the last year a substantial increase in physicians from the Co-operative Republic of Guyana.

The Chairman: Pages 5 and 6, items (26) to (37), inclusive. Page 6, item (38).

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: Cde. Chairman, item (38), Ministry of Energy and Mines, Subsidies and Contributions to Local and International Organisations. The legend here states to meet inspection fees associated with the Guyana/Venezuela Oil Agreement. This agreement was never laid in this Parliament. I think the Government is obligated to lay agreements of this kind to this Assembly. The Government cannot operate in isolation of the total Parliament. This country does not belong to a single political party or any party for that matter. I think it is time that we recognise that areas as sensitive as the one that deals with oil should be given a proper examination. What kind of agreement the Government has entered into. We should see it and know what it is. How long will this agreement last? Will we have to face the experience we had in the past? What is the nature of the agreement? Are we paying in cash for the oil supply? If not, how much we owe or will owe at the 31st December, 1986. I think these are all areas pertinent for any Parliament to look at when we deal with matters of this kind. I want to say in spite of the fact that I hear that there is no Ministry of Energy, there is a Ministry of Energy stated on the estimate. What purpose this institution will serve and how long they will guarantee supply of oil to this country and on what basis.

Mr. Kwayana: Mr. Chairman, the presentation of this vote here after Members of this Assembly have called for the agreement to be presented and after it has not been presented is really a piece of presumption. I can describe it in no other terms. The Deputy Prime Minister on the other side, in answering a question, said he would be ready to make agreements available once they did not contain anything secret, to paraphrase his words. Is there anything secret in these oil agreements with Venezuela? Is that the reason? Do they in any way compromise the sovereignty of the country?

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We are left open to all these questions. There must be some reason and I do not think it is a question of mere secrecy. I do not think the Government has any interest in hiding from the country or even from the Assembly the price at which fuel is landed. So I feel very uncomfortable being asked to vote for these inspection fees when our requests for the agreements have not been met even in summary, inspection fees to some local or international organisation.

Can we please be told what organisation is carrying out this inspection?

It is really/^{too}general for us to accept.

15:20 hrs

Cde. C. Jagan: Cde. Speaker, I would like to ask, what are we inspecting. I know that we are exchanging bauxite for oil, is it that we are calling for the inspection to see what is coming into the country? Whether the grades of oil we are buying, whether those are the ones being supplied or whether the bauxite which we are sending is of the quality and grade etc. that we have committed ourselves to supply. I don't know what this inspection is all about and we certainly would like to know a little bit more especially since we don't have the benefit of the agreement. I would like to look a little ahead on this question too in relation to ^{the} Trinidad situation. I know that we did not pay our debts to Trinidad and as a result oil supplies were cut off. Are we making any improvements in that area? Being a member of ^{obviously} Caricom we have to think in terms of inter regional trade and oil is very important for the Trinidad Government and Trinidad's economy and so we would like to hear whether something has been done on that score. I raise this not only by way of any divulgence but to point out that we may be faced I hope not with a similar situation in Venezuela, maybe not in the far distant future, I don't mean that we would not be paying Venezuela because it is a barter arrangement but we understand that large ore findings have been made of bauxite in Venezuela and Venezuela from the reports which have been publicised can become self sufficient in bauxite requirements for its alumina factory and the plan to build an alumina factory is already operating in Venezuela so in the near future we may very well find ourselves I hope not as I said where we can be cut off from fuel because they may not need our bauxite any longer.

I would like the Minister to tell us too whether there are any problems with respect to the bauxite we are sending to Venezuela, whether the Venezuelans are happy with the quality and quantity of the ore which we send to them so we can continue to get the oil supplies which are so essential to the consumer public and also to industry and commerce in this country.

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The Deputy Prime Minister, Planning and Development (Cde. H. Parris):

Cde. Speaker, I would dearly love to confine my comments to the matter at hand on the paper, so let me begin by doing that very simply. The inspection fees which are referred to here are fees paid to some standard firm. There are about three of them, I don't remember their names right now that anybody in the oil business, anytime you buy oil whether it is out of Trinidad, Curacao or where you will find these three firms represented. You always have to pick one for commercial purposes as certifying to the documentation that what has been put on the ship meets the specification that the documentation says. It is a firm that does the analysis of the oil and that kind of thing that you put on the ship. Really there is nothing more that I can think of, it is simply a standard firm that you pay for doing a standard service. You have to do the service otherwise you can't process the documentation and that is all it is. With respect to this matter, the suggestion Cde. Speaker, I really don't want to deal with them but this whole question of the agreement. There seems to be some view across that any agreement not laid in Parliament is one full of secrecy and all sorts of shadows that people need to worry about but I assure you that perhaps on our side maybe we are suffering from something that we have grown accustomed to. We do this kind of business so often that we don't really feel a compulsion to bring everything to Parliament. Let me say at the beginning there will be piles of paper on the table. Let me say the following things about the Agreement. First of all, as has been said in a number of things published in the press, the Agreement has nothing to do, it makes no mention of and it was not based on any discussion on anything to do with the border now, before or in the future. It in no way deals with that. It is a straightforward commercial agreement. (2) The Agreement is not a barter agreement as I have heard said. There is no barter element in it. There is an element of purchase of oil, there is an element of purchase of bauxite but you will not find the same of bauxite in the same contract that is in the contract of oil and this notion of saying 'the Agreement' is posing a problem. There is no one agreement. There

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are three agreements. One for the purchase of oil. Two - for
purchase of bauxite from Bidco, a separate agreement. Three - an
agreement between the Venezuela Investment Fund and the Bank of Guyana
that has to do with the credit that is associated with payment of oil.
There are therefore three Agreements, no one Agreement. In none of those
Agreements is there anything mentioned about the Venezuelan border
issue or anything of that sort. It is a straight bauxite purchase agree-
ment such as you will find in anybody who has got bauxite. There is a
straight oil Agreement such as you will find in the case when we bought
from Esso. You will find an oil Agreement is an FOB Agreement so that
this matter of hiding the delivered cost of oil, even if you had the
Agreement you would not know the delivered cost because the oil is sold
FOB to port to Esso or Shell or Texaco or Guyoil.

Cde. Speaker, as I said I would not go in to all the complexities.
The straight answer to this question is that it is a routine inspection
intended to certify the quality of the product that we take under that
oil Agreement. Thank you Cde. Speaker.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: We would like to know how long this
Agreement is binding for. Whether one year, two years, five years, and
whether this Agreement has an element that is why we would like to see
it. If it is one Agreement that affects oil or two. Are we not entitled
in this Parliament to ask for any Agreement. We would like to see all
Agreements but on this particular occasion we are asking to see the oil
Agreement. The Parliament is calling upon us this afternoon to pass a
sum of money for this inspection based on an Agreement. We are expected
to contribute to this without knowing what the Agreement is. Cde. Speaker,
I can speak as a member of this House and there is no question of Minority
of debates
and majority in so far as the procedure and rules/are concerned. I have no
doubt about that at all. I feel very strong about that point, so we are still
calling to see this Agreement in spite of the Cde. Deputy Prime Minister's
answer and for some more detail because this is a very important area. We have
not had explanation so far for constant blackout, outages or whatever you call

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it, everybody is speculating why. We would wish to know, this is one area that the Parliament ought to be made aware of. You cannot operate as I said particularly in certain areas in isolation. We must have the opportunity to air our views because our views would have been the views of the people in the street.

15:30 hrs

And so if we do not express our view who will and in order to do it we are saying clearly no complexities, no agreements will be carried. So how long the agreement will be binding for so that people could be assured or reassured in so far as oil is concerned. What is so complex about that.

The Speaker: Who will respond to that?

Cde. Parris: I respond reluctantly. I am now dragged into the question of GEC and I admitted that I did not want to deal with that.

The Speaker: Cde. Parris only those questions you think are relevant are bound to be answered. They are saying that as Members of Parliament they are entitled to see the agreements. Whether or not you will let them see the agreement is a matter for your determination. They want to know what is in the agreements so that they could make useful contributions or tell the people something.

Cde. Parris: Cde. Speaker, I will be prepared to answer any questions that people have about the agreements. In terms of dealing with only those matters which are relevant apart from what was said about being prepared to answer any questions about the agreement, the agreement I believe was made on May 1 and it was made for one year. In November we already had the agreement with the Venezuelans to the extension of that agreement to a calendar year so we are talking about all of 1987. So the agreement will now be on a calendar year basis so it is only a matter of signing up the document. So the answer to your question is that the agreement has already been agreed in terms of an extension for the rest of 1987. That is past the original date in May 1987. I should note that the bauxite agreement is on a normal calendar year basis. Any scrutiny that you wish to give to the agreements I assure that we will be pleased to assist you.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: Cde. Speaker, if I may crave your indulgence in spite of the Minister saying that the agreement itself does not deal with price I am sure the Minister must know or have an idea of prices. We would like to know what is the actual landed cost, how much the Government get out of this.

The Speaker: I think the Minister is saying look if you want to see the agreement come into the office and we will make it available to you and you can see whatever is inside but I am not going into price and all kinds of structure at this time.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: Cde. Chairman, is it an agreement which requires payment then supply of the oil or is there a credit system?

The Speaker: As I understand it he is saying if some person go into the office they will make available/^{a copy}of the agreement or for you to look at the agreement to be precise.

Cde. Dr. Jagan: Cde. Speaker, I had asked here from time to time, lay it on the table a lot of agreement with the IDB --

The Speaker: He said he is making it available to you, you do not hear?

Cde. Dr. Jagan: Yes, but I am trying to rebut his argument.

The Speaker: He said he is willing to give it to you. You could go and see it.

Cde. Dr. Jagan: I do not know what is the problem. The Minister said some time ago when we were asking for agreements that if it is secret the Government cannot put out things which are secret. If this is not a secret why is it not on the table?

The Speaker: It is not a secret. He said he is prepared to let you have a look at it.

Cde. Dr. Jagan: Why is it not on the table then?

The Speaker: He said he is not prepared to lay it here.

Cde. Dr. Jagan: Why did he not make it available to all members of the Assembly? Is this how business is done? I would like to raise one point though. The Minister said the agreements provided for F.O.B. prices or F.O.B. delivery. The shortages which we have from time to time is that due to the fact that we have to contract other people to bring the fuel in and the question arise from time to time that we do not have the foreign exchange to pay them. Would it not be better to ask the Venezuelans who run shipping companies to supply us here with C.I.F. transportation and so on. The Minister is confirming that we have a P.O.B. arrangement. That means that we have to find other people to transport the oil and I understand that these people are demanding foreign exchange. Would it not be better to go back to the Venezuelans and ask them to bring the oil here and we will pay you in bauxite. The Minister told us that they had three agreements but we all know in reality it is bauxite in exchange for oil.

We understand how the thing is working but that is the reality of it. Let us therefore negotiate with them to pay our transportation cost too with bauxite so we would not have this hold up from time to time and the everybody suffering in the darkness.

The Speaker: You see, Cde. Parris, if you had stopped just when I said I would not have had all this trouble.

Pages 7,8,9, and 10. Items 39 - 67.

Cde. Basir: Cde. Speaker, items 59 Head 36, subhead 301. There is a number of heads dealing with health programmes and so forth but I want to raise some questions on this specific head which says, other health programmes, expenses specific to the agencies. I am wondering if under other health programmes Malaria is included in this programme because we have a serious problem of dealing with Malaria and whether it has to do with the eradication of Malaria. If so would the Minister be in a position to say what is the present position of Malaria eradication programme in view of the position that this question of Malaria is a serious one for residents in the interior. It is creating a problem/in the gold and diamond areas but also in the farming areas because the people are migrating. I am wondering if the Minister is in a position to say whether in these Estimates if there is a programme to deal with the eradication of Malaria.

Cde. Dr. Jagan: Item 44 Cde. Speaker subsidies/^{and contributions}to local and international organizations. From about three-quarter million dollars estimated we now have nearly one and one-third million dollars. This is an extraordinary jump. Maybe the Minister will be able to tell us what we mean here by Local and International Organizations. Does it mean for instance the University for the training of Doctors. If that is so then maybe we need to increase this amount.

TAKE
15:40 – 15:50 HRS
MISSING

15:50 hrs

(Cde. Van West Charles continues)

So he is aware of the responsibility, I am glad that he can help us being a responsible Member of Parliament to carry the drug preventative programme. With regard to his observations I would not agree with you as far as the Ministry of Health because the building which you have seen is the entomological section which is just being repaired, it is about to be painted and as far as the number of people you see on the spares, those are people who come out of the Cuyuni and come to Georgetown for diagnosis but the capability has been improved as far as placing people at Itabali and within Bartica itself so within the coming years there should be no need for people to come out from those areas to have the diagnosis in Georgetown. I think I have answered all the questions.

The Speaker: Page 10, items 68 and items 69 to 78 on pages 11-12. Page 12, items 79 to 83, page 13, item 84.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: Cde. Speaker, again we have to make the same criticism and I am sure you will find favour with it. This sum of 2.3 million dollars is to be spent in the first instance for increased compensation claims. What kind of compensation, we ought to know and we would like to know what portion of the total sum would be spent for those claims or have been spent on those claims. (b) Expenses on conferences held in Guyana, we feel that that sum also should be separate and clear and not bulked in this total sum because C speaks of expenses in relation to official missions and visits to Guyana. Since it has not been spelt out I hope the Cde. Minister answering would find no difficulty in stating to the House exactly what sum represents compensation claims, conferences held in Guyana and then what sum represents official missions and visits to Guyana.

The Minister of Finance (Cde. C. Greenidge): Thank you Cde. Chairman. The two questions can be quite easily answered. The Government has you know has on various occasions been required to compensate persons for injuries suffered, either as Policemen, students

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as employees of the state and it is not a new head, it is a fairly standard one. In relation to the amount associated with these three elements, I can say that the item (a) these compensation claims amounts to about \$460,000, the conferences \$1,707,600 and the official missions are \$107,200.

The Speaker: Page 13, item 85, page 14, items 85 - 93.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: Cde. Chairman, we are not opposed to any effort or campaign by the Government to control smuggling, so long as . . . but there is a very soaring question and I think it is known throughout the country, I am sure the Government is aware, is that pursuant to these campaigns, these anti smuggling campaign, goods are usually seized from people, there seems to be no procedure to the disposal of these goods. I have got names but I don't want to indulge in names, I want the Minister to say to the House if there are procedures and what are these procedures? I am sure you are not unaware Cde. Chairman, of rumours. A man specifically says they seized X number of a particular item from him but when he is charged sometimes he is charged for less than fifty per cent of what seized from him, what happens to the remaining fifty per cent? This is countrywide, if the Minister does not know this, if the Government does not know this, something is wrong. Everyone knows what is happening. In fact, it would appear in this country that because this anti smuggling campaign is on that sometimes people who are supposed to carry out these campaigns carry them out without even authority from upstairs and then they distribute what is seized among themselves without any action. It is very true and the people who feel it most are the very small people, very small people with little items. I feel that Parliament should be alerted on this matter and I would like a very positive response from the Minister on this question so that if goods are seized from anybody these people should immediately be given receipts saying what was taken from them at the time of seizure. This is not being done and I want to call for this very strongly this afternoon with a view that something really happens because people are entitled to legal recourse. They ought to be able to say these are the items, I have got the necessary documentation to support, but what happens on many occasions when

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seizures are carried is that the people are not in possession of their duty slips and what have you and the items are taken away. So the people ought to be armed with receipts to say what was taken from them with the right of any recourse, that is representation and legal recourse and it reaches the point where there is an order based on the relevant procedures of the law, the statute or orders by the Magistrate, then I would expect that the Magistrate must make an order with respect to its disposal and the way of disposal should be very clear to everyone because one would ask, what the revenue accrues from these seized items are they reflected in any way in the estimates. One would be forced to ask a question like that because one would like to know that at the conclusion of all these campaigns during the course of a year and if there have been seizures and those articles were sold, what amount of that has been collected from such sales and where those amounts are reflected in the estimates. Apart from all of that I think it is very opportune, it is very timely that something be done positively at the highest level, that the Parliament be alerted, that the Minister takes action to tell those who are going to carry out this process that they are not a law unto themselves.

TAKE

16:00 – 16:10 HRS

MISSING

16:10 hrs

(Cde. Greenidge continues)

, rather than pay. So when we hear these complaints about people having to in order not to be harrassed, make payments, /it is usually a signal that they themselves have something to hide. We will prosecute officers where evidence is brought to us of people making demands in these types of action.

May I say finally that the arrangements as they stand require that the person who has his goods seized signs something indicating that they are in agreement with the quantity that is seized. This means that there ought not to be instances of any disparity of the amount collected and the amount taken to court. As far as perishable commodities are concerned it is not always possible if the matter is not taken to court immediately, for the specific seized amount /to be taken to court. So, Cde. Chairman, as far as the concerns that are raised are concerned, I would like to say that on this side of the Assembly we also have a concern to ensure that agencies operate within the confines of the law. If the comrades on the other side have specific instances, we would be happy to investigate those instances. As far as the rules that govern the operations of the department of Customs and Excise are concerned, those rules set down very clearly what officers can do, what they ought to do to ensure that citizens are protected from the improper disposal of the commodities and the rules also apply to the disposal of commodities when the court has pronounced after action has been taken.

The Chairman: Pages 14 and 15, items (94) to (100). Page 15, item (101). Page 16, items (103) and (104). Page 16, item (105).

Mr. Kwayana: Mr. Chairman, my question comes under (item (105), Rates and Taxes and Subventions to Local Authorities. I take it that since it appears here it is a subvention. While I welcome it, I assume it has to deal with the piling up of rubbish around the town. I hope they will not miss the Lamaha canal in its present state and others flowing through the city. I would like to know something of the policy in the rural areas which are also in a very bad state for sanitation and environmental condition.

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Cde. Thomas: Cde. Chairman, as the Member recognises, this provision represents a subvention to the Georgetown City Council. Unfortunately, the Member might be aware that articulation of Government's policy is normally done during the course of debate and since we are to be debating the 1987 estimates then I expect that the Member will be able to question policy and seek for clear articulation.

Mr. Kwavana: I thought the Minister was going to promise an articulation of Government's policy. He wants me to question again and again.

The Chairman: Capital Estimates, items (1) to (3).

Cde. Nokta: Cde. Chairman, I just have a few short questions on item (1), Ministry of Works, Mausoleum. The legend says to meet additional expenditure on the Mausoleum. The voted provision was \$1,000,000 and now we are asking for \$2,000,000 more. In the context of Guyana and our economy, I think this is quite a huge sum of money for a construction of that type. I would like to ask the Minister what type of material was used for the construction of this Mausoleum. Secondly, is this the final sum being asked for or does the Minister envisage that more money would be voted in some supplementary estimate in the future.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: Cde. Chairman, item (2), Acquisition of Property. We have a sum of \$1.5 million under this subhead and this sum is supposed to represent two areas. One is, to provide for the acquisition of Charlestown Saw Mills Limited and, two, land for the President's College. Would the Minister tell us what sum represents acquisition of the Charlestown Sawmills and what sum represents the lands for the President's College. Are these sums the final sums or they are initial payments?

Mr. Kwavana: Mr. Chairman, I have some accounting problems with this first item, Mausoleum. I am sorry that relatives of the deceased are present in this Assembly at the moment. The original amount voted in 1986 Estimates was \$3.5 million to be expended between February, 1986 and June, 1987. The amount for 1986 was \$1 million.

16:20 hrs

(Mr. Kwayana continues)

The foreign element of that was \$1.275m. does this supplementary means that this provision sought of \$2M is supplementary to the 1986 element as voted or to the entire amount of \$3.5M and so far as the other accounting problems are concerned I should like some breakdown of the expenditure. There are some artistic work going into that and I should like to know whether that artistic work has been paid for or whether it is simply the casting of it by an honourable member's firm I think, despite the suggestions in the constitution about contracts, I say suggestion, which are included in that reported sum for artistic work. So it is a question of the structure and the expenditure, whether it is all finished now, whether the \$3.5 has been spent and this is an additional \$2M or whether this is \$2M on the 1986 element since it was to run until June 1987.

The Prime Minister: Cde. Speaker, this sum is for the supplemental to the 1986 element and the breakdown, I am not sure what is meant by artistic work and other work, except to say that in so far as the first question is concerned the majority of materials used/and the whole approach is of an indigenous nature. Those of us who saw the beautiful structure and I believe that every patriotic Guyanese should be proud of that structure and I do not intend Cde. Speaker, to descend to vulgarity here for a mausoleum that every patriotic and decent Guyanese should be proud of for a man who has been, whether you liked him or not great service to this service to this country and I believe I will avoid bringing this matter which we feel very strongly of into the realm of vulgarity. We have used, consistent with the honour we paid to the greatest Guyanese, the Greatest Son of this soil local materials, the glass is local, the work is local, the artists were local, the materials used to decorate the outer panel is local and the artistes are local and I believe it is a structure that we should be all proud of, in fact I have heard non Guyanese say it is something we should be justifiably proud of and it is a matter we should export and boast of and these costs are extremely conservative and every country east and west, north and south paid tribute to their heroes and very often the cost

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of that tribute is almost an irrelevant matter.

The Speaker: Item 2.

The Prime Minister: Cde. Speaker, I don't have the precise figures, but my recollection is that the acquisition of land for the President's College constitutes something of about sixty five percent of this sum here but those figures are available if required and if the proper notice is given.

Mr. Kwayana: I wonder where the vulgarity arose, I think the only sign of vulgarity here was in the refusal to put the figures on the table and I think the member is . . . your function which I think is to rule out of order any vulgarity that may arise.

The Speaker: Item 4.

Cde. F. Mohamed: Cde. Chairman, I simply seek some additional information with respect to the supplementary provision now sought. I know the legend says \$3.8M are required for additional expenditure but I would like to know the reasons for this additional expenditure. Is it because cost for materials have gone up and therefore you need more for 1986 or is it that the construction work has quickened and therefore more money was needed and therefore we will see the construction of this college concluded before the projected time, so I will ask the responsible Comrade to help with this additional information.

The Vice President, Education and Social Development and Deputy Prime Minister (Cde. V. Burnham): Thank you very much Cde. Chairman and I thank the Comrade for helping me with the answer. In fact part of my answer has to do with both of the suggestions that you gave me in that the expenditure now required caters both for escalation in the cost of wages and materials as well as in some variations of the original contract to do with things like the inclusion of the dental clinic, the Medex clinic as well as the accommodation for the Medex Officer and the Dental Technician for additional staff housing for house mother, house father and other staff. Provision of gym facilities because we could not in fact build the gymnasium as anticipated as a result of stringency and austerity measures. Provision of library facilities, again because the proper library could not be built and for extended kitchen facilities

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to accommodate the additional intake of students because the dining room and the proper kitchen facilities are still to be built. In anticipation of a possible question on breakdown, I would like to say that expenses incurred as a result of the escalation in cost accounts for \$2.8M and the balance of that \$1.027M has to do with the commencement of the signs teaching block which if not begun now within the last few months of this year would not be able to be built on target for the intake in 1987 and that figure that I just mentioned, it is responsible for the mobilisation advance for the contractors who are about to proceed with building of the signs.

Cde. F. Mohamed: Am I to understand Cde. Chairman, that since part of this increase means that there was an increase in cost of materials that the amount projected for the construction of the President's College will now be revised upwards and if so can the Cde. Vice President indicate at this stage to what extent will that provision be upwards.

TAKE
16:30 – 16:40 HRS
MISSING

16:40 hrs

(Cde. Greenidge continues)

Cde. Chairman, in relation to item (11), the question was for an explanation of the payment to Ballast Nedam International for the supply of spares. Under the existing agreements under the M.M.A. arrangements, companies have equipment which they used for land clearing work and when contracts are concluded they are in a position to sell us having completed their work or having finished with certain types of equipment. They are then in a position to make available to the Government these pieces of equipment and this is simply an arrangement whereby spares will be purchased for use by Government agencies.

The Chairman: Item (12) to (14) pertain to counter-trade activities which are not strictly speaking straight barter activities and the need for the payments arising from the Ministry of Finance are precisely the reason why they are reflected here. These are unanticipated differences between the price at which the commodities are required, mainly the cement and the price at which the commodities are sold

TAKE
16:40 – 16:50 HRS
(PARTS OF CHAIRMAN
SPEECH)
MISSING

This completes consideration of all the items.

Question:

“That the Committee of Supply approve of the proposals set out in Financial Paper No. 4/1986 – Scheduled of Supplementary Provision on the Current and Capital Estimates totaling \$29,446,898 for the period ended 1986-12-02.” (Advances made from the Contingencies Fund in 1986)”

Put and agreed to

Assembly resumed.

Cde. Greenidge: Cde. Speaker, I beg to report that the Committee of Supply has approved of the proposals set out in Financial Paper No. 4/1986 – Schedule of Supplementary Provision on the Current and Capital Estimates totaling \$29,446,898 and I now move that the Assembly both agree with the Committee in the said Resolution.

Question put and agreed to

Motion carried

FINANCIAL PAPER NO. 5 OF 1986

“Be it resolved that this National Assembly approves of the proposals set out in Financial Paper No. 5/1986 – Schedule of Supplementary provision on the Capital Estimates totaling \$600, 000,000 for the period ended 2nd December 1986.” /The Minister of Finance/

Assembly in Committee of Supply

Cde. Greenidge: Cde. Chairman, in accordance with Article 171(2) of the Constitution, I signify that the Cabinet has recommended for consideration by the National Assembly the Motion for the approval of the proposals set out in Financial Paper No. 5 of 1986, and I now move the Motion.

Motion proposed

The Chairman: We will consider Financial Paper No. 5 of 1986. Capital Estimates, item (1).

Cde. Dr. C. Jagan: Cde. Chairman, I would have thought that the Minister would have given to this Assembly with this request for \$600,000,000 in equity to be taken as a contribution to Guysuco and Bidco with some explanation. We would like to know why this is being done at this time because these, we understand, are state corporations. When the Minister gives his reply perhaps I may be able to say something further.

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Cde. Greenidge: Cde. Chairman, the request is being made for an equity injection into these two papers in order to help to tidy the financial state of these companies. The Government from time to time, of course, will look at the capital structure of the companies and when it is appropriate to make such an injection -- In relation to Guysuco and Guymine, since 1982 as a result of very unfavourable market conditions, the companies have both been showing losses on their operations. In order to help us get these corporations out of their difficulties, we have required that they put in place programmes to improve their performance, including improvements in productivity and so forth. But those improvements could not themselves be sufficient to correct the financial affairs of both the companies and also enable them to go into the market place and secure resources to upgrade the capital equipment and so forth. Therefore, as a result of that it has now been deemed appropriate to make these injections into the companies to help restore them to a situation of financial tidiness.

TAKE

16:50 – 17:05 HRS

ADJOURNMENT

MISSING