

THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
OFFICIAL REPORT
[VOLUME 7]

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

49th Sitting

2 p.m.

Thursday, 12th December, 1974

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Speaker

His Honour the Speaker, Mr. Sase Narain, J.P.

Members of the Government – People’s National Congress (50)

Prime Minister (1)

The Hon. L.F.S. Burnham, O.E.,
Prime Minister

(Absent)

Deputy Prime Minister (1)

Dr. the Hon. P.A. Reid,
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of
National Development

Senior Ministers (8)

The Hon. H.D. Hoyte, S.C.,
Minister of Economic Development

- *The Hon. S.S. Ramphal, S.C.,
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Justice (Absent)
- *The Hon. H. Green,
Minister of Co-operatives and
National Mobilisation (Absent)
- *The Hon. H. O. Jack,
Minister of Energy and Natural Resources (Absent)
- *The Hon. F. E. Hope,
Minister of Finance
- *The Hon. S. S. Naraine, A.A.,
Minister of Works and Housing
- *The Hon. G. A. King,
Minister of Trade and Consumer Protection (Absent – on leave)
- *The Hon. G. B. Kennard, C.C.H.,
Minister of Agriculture

Ministers (5)

The Hon. W. G. Carrington,
Minister of Labour

The Hon. Miss S. M. Field-Ridley,
Minister of Information and Culture

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

*The Hon. Miss C.L. Baird,
Minister of Education and Social Development (Absent)

*Dr. the Hon. O.M.R. Harper,
Minister of Health

Members of State (10)

The Hon. M. Kasim, A.A.,
Minister of State for Agriculture

***Non-elected Ministers**

The Hon. O.E. Clarke,
Minister of State - Regional (East Berbice/Corentyne) **(Absent)**

The Hon. P. Duncan, J.P.,
Minister of State – Regional (Rupununi)

The Hon. C.A. Nascimento,
Minister of State, Office of the Prime Minister

The Hon. M. Zaheeruddeen, J.P.,
Minister of State – Regional (Essequibo Coast/West Demerara) **(Absent)**

The Hon. K. B. Bancroft,
Minister of State – Regional (Mazaruni/Potaro) **(Absent)**

*The Hon. C.V. Mingo,
Minister of State for Home Affairs **(Absent)**

*The Hon. W. Haynes,
Minister of State for Consumer Protection **(Absent)**

*The Hon. A. Salim,
Minister of State – Regional (East Demerara/West Coast Berbice) **(Absent)**

*The Hon. F.U.A. Carmichael,
Minister of State – Regional (North West)

Parliamentary Secretaries (7)

Mr. J.R. Thomas,
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Works and Housing

Mr. C.E. Wrights, J.P.,
Parliamentary Secretary,
Ministry of Works and Housing

Miss M.M. Ackman,
Parliamentary Secretary, Office of the
Prime Minister, and Government Chief Whip

***Non-elected Ministers**

Mr. E.L. Ambrose,
Parliamentary Secretary,
Ministry of Agriculture

Mr. S. Prashad,
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of
Co-operatives and National Mobilisation

Mr. J.P. Chowritmootoo,
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education
and Social Development

Mr. R.H.O. Corbin,
Parliamentary Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister **(Absent)**

Deputy Speaker (1)

Mr. R.C. Van Sluytman, Deputy Speaker

Other Members (17)

Mr. J.N. Aaron

Mrs. L.M. Branco

Mr. M. Corrica

Mr. E.H.A. Fowler

Miss J. Gill

Mr. W. Hussain

Miss S. Jaiserrisingh

Mr. K.M.E. Jonas

Mr. M. Nissar

Dr. L.E. Ramsahoye

(Absent)

Mr. J.G. Ramson

Mrs. P.A. Rayman

Mr. E.M. Stoby, J.P.

(Absent – on leave)

Mr. S.H. Sukhu, M.S., J.P.

Mr. C. Sukul, J.P.

Mr. H.A. Taylor

Mrs. L.E. Willems

Members of the Opposition – Liberator Party (2)

Mr. M.F. Singh, Leader of the Opposition

Mrs. E. DaSilva

OFFICERS

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

Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly – Mr. M.B. Henry, AMBIM

12.12.74
2.20 p.m.

National Assembly

2.20 – 2.30 p.m.

PRAYERS
ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

Leave to Members

The Speaker: Leave has been granted to the following hon. Member Mr. E. M. Stoby for today's Sitting.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS – FIRST READING

The following Bill was introduced and read the First time:

Guyana Missionary Baptist Church (Incorporation) Bill 1974 – Bill No. 37/1974 published on 23.11.74, 30.11.74 and 7.12.74.

[Mr. Ramson on behalf of Mr. Aaron]

PUBLIC BUSINESS

MOTION

APPROVAL OF ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE 1975

BUDGET DEBATE

Assembly resumed debate on the Motion moved by the Minister of Finance on 9th December, 1974, for the approval of estimates of expenditure for the financial year 1975 totalling \$458,687,527.

The Speaker: Hon. Member Mrs. DaSilva

Mrs. DaSilva: Mr. Speaker, I rise to start my contribution in the 1975 Budget Debate on the Budget Speech presented in this House by the hon. Minister of Finance on 9th December, 1974.

I rise sir, first of all, to state that I am at a very great disadvantage and to object to what has happened. This copy of the Budget Speech that I hold in my hands is not the entire Budget Speech as presented to us by the hon. Minister of Finance. I was able to find this out because I pay attention to what the hon. Minister has to say and make notes of pieces of particular interest. When I go home, I check back my notes so that I can prepare my contribution.

I was very interested in the projected receipts from sugar, so when I went home I went through my copy of the Budget Speech very carefully to see where the Minister mentioned this and the sum of \$156 million but I could not find it. I then made enquiries and it was subsequently told to me that a very important part of the Speech was omitted. I lay no blame whatsoever on the printers for this. I also do not blame any one person. We are very sympathetic on this side of the House and appreciate the pressure of work which all departments have this time of the year, in particular, the pressure of work at the Ministry of Finance in preparation for the Budget. Because of this, in error, I do not have part of the important section that deals with the financing of the Budget.

I discovered this on Monday. I had at least hoped that I would have got the rest of the speech, at the latest, this morning, but up to now I do not have it. I did not expect a new Budget Speech but if a couple of pages were not sent down to the printers, in error, as there are only two of us in the Opposition, at least we could have had a typewritten copy of the few pages that were missing and we could have inserted these into our books until such time as the proper copy was presented to us.

I take a very serious view of this and I think it is a very serious matter because the Budget is not a short paper to study. We should have had the whole speech in our possession. With that very unpleasant opening address, that I am sorry I have to make, I will now go on –

The Speaker: Hon. Member Mrs. DaSilva, in view of the very important observations that you have made, I think it is only fair, before you go on to the Budget proper, for the hon. Minister of Finance to give some explanation to this House, if that allegation is correct. I will now ask the Minister of Finance to say something on this aspect of the matter. Hon. Minister of Finance.

The Minister of Finance (Mr. Hope): Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for the opportunity to respond to the allegation made by the hon. Member Mrs. Elinor DaSilva on the Opposition side.

Unfortunately, sir, she sought to put the matter in a context where she would give the impression that someone on the Government side is trying deliberately and advertently to mislead or not to inform. That could not be the case because the full text of what I had to say was delivered in this House. Unfortunately, there was a section which was inadvertently omitted from the printed copy arising out of a printers' error.

That fact was discovered the same afternoon and arrangements for an amendment were made the same evening. The revised copies were received from the printer during the course of this morning and immediate attempts were made to distribute them to all members of the House. I am not in a position to say whether the hon. Member has, in fact, received her copy as yet but, as I said, we got the copies this morning from the printers.

It was an omission which was discovered on Monday afternoon after the Budget Speech was delivered and it has been corrected. Our intention was to withdraw the copies which were previously distributed on Monday afternoon and replace them with these new copies.

That sir, is a very simple explanation to a very simple fact which the hon. Member wanted to blow up, making a “mountain out of a mole-hill” about something which she knew must be a printers’ omission and nothing more.

The Speaker: Hon. Member Mrs. DaSilva, will you please proceed with the comments on the Budget.

Mrs. DaSilva: Yes, sir, but before I do so, I wish to tell the hon. Minister –

The Speaker: I am not going to allow that because if I do so the hon. Minister will want to reply. You have made your comments. The Minister has made his explanations. I think it was clearly stated by you that you did not receive your copy, irrespective of what the Minister said. So will you proceed?

Mrs. DaSilva: Sir, I have just received my copy. What I want to make quite clear is that I do not blame the Ministry. I said due to pressure of work it could have happened.

The Speaker: Will you please proceed?

Mrs. DaSilva: Yes, sir, now that we have received the new copy. I could not have insinuated that the Government was trying to deceive us, as I heard the hon. Minister making the statements to the House. I would not do such a thing because I respect the Minister and I do not think he is trying to deceive.

The Speaker: Hon. Member Mrs. DaSilva, you have made your remarks. We have understood what you have said.

Mrs. DaSilva: Thank you, sir, but I am entitled to an explanation. My leader now has a copy and he can deal with the part that I did not have an opportunity to deal with. Now to carry on with the debate, which unfortunately has started badly.

When the hon. Minister presents his Budget Speech before this House, the ordinary citizen of Guyana is not interested in the high-flown phrases that the hon. Minister, like all hon. Ministers of Finance, is gifted with. He is not interested in the well-couched sentences all beautifully turned to say, “What a wonderful Government we have. How lucky we are to have them,” and “I love me. Whom do you love?” He is not concerned with that. What he wants to know from the Budget is: How has the Government performed during the past year? What he wants to know in plain and simple terms is: How will the Government’s performance in the past year benefit this way of life and in the projection for the year to come, how will he and his family stand to gain? He wants to know how much this Budget is going to mean to him in dollars and cents. How will his cost of living be affected? Will it go up? Will it go down? Will he have a better education? Will he be able to have better schooling for his children? Will he be able to have a better home to live in? Will the health facilities offered be to his advantage? Will he be able to get treatment when he needs it? When his little boy and girl leave school at the end of the next school year in July, will there be jobs for these children to go to? Will there be enough water? Will there be proper drainage for his rice fields and water to irrigate his crops? Will he secure a better price for his rice, for his milk, for his ground provisions? What about his beef and pork? What price will he be paid for them?

2.30 p.m.

If he is an old-age pensioner, will he still have to go on eking out an existence on the miserable little mite that bears no relation whatsoever to the escalating cost of living? He had a little \$3 increase the other day, so now we hear: “Fine, they got an increase.” Well, he wants to know if he is going to have any more help, because the amount of money that he receives as a

[Mrs. DaSilva contd.]

pensioner, \$15 if he is in town and \$12 if he is in a rural area, really does not go very far in this day and age of high prices.

I should like to remind this honourable House, too, that when we were debating our last Supplementary Estimates this year, the hon. Prime Minister gave an assurance in reply to my query about the old-age pensioners. I had pointed out the disparity that exists between the amount of money that the pensioners in the rural areas receive as against that received by those in the urban areas, that the cost of living is no less for them because they happen to live in a rural area, where, very often, it is much higher for them because of things they have to buy, things like milk which is more expensive because of the transportation factor against that received by those in the urban areas, that the cost of living is no less for them because they happen to live in a rural area, where, very often, it is much higher for them because of things they have to buy, things like milk which is more expensive because of the transportation factor. There is always a cent or a penny more allowed on it in the rural areas.

It is time that we talk in terms of putting the two groups on a par so that they receive the same assistance. I was assured by the hon. Prime Minister that the matter was being gone into and that he hoped shortly to bring this about. I was very disappointed that it was not reflected in this Budget for 1975 in that it is not in the books now, but I hope he has not forgotten, and those concerned have not forgotten, and that very soon, we will see the old-age pensioners, both rural and urban, receiving a pension on a par with each other.

These are some of the questions that play around the mind of the average man, of the average citizen, in Guyana. You can call him the small man, if you like, the man in the street, whatever you like to call him. This is what he is concerned about, how this Government is looking after him and looking after his interests. Remember that all Guyanese are looking to see what the Government is doing for them.

The Government has told us that it has a mandate from the people, the majority of the people of Guyana put the Government here; they want it to speak and act on their behalf.

I hope that the Government has remembered that the time has come for it to render an account of its stewardship. It has to show that the party is worthy of representing the people, because the members of the Government tell us that they were put there by the people - other ideas how they got there, but they say they were put there by the people. I hope they have a good account to give these people as time goes by because you can push people so far and one day something just snaps. Then, they may find themselves out of the big top positions.

It is interesting to note that last week when the Budget Speech was being presented by the hon. Minister of Finance, I looked around, as I do now, at the Public Gallery. There is hardly anybody there. On Monday when I counted, there were about eleven persons. **[Interruption by the hon. Minister of Finance]** On Monday, you were speaking, not I. On Monday, when you were presenting your Budget Statement, eleven persons were there, then they drifted in one at a time, until in the end, there were about thirty-four persons in the gallery. That was not much of a gathering. I think it is about one-third of the capacity of the Gallery, and so far for today, I have not had a chance to count them, but it does not seem to be more than eleven persons. **[Interruption]** Even if you say they do not want to listen to me, I hope that when the hon. Minister Mr. Desmond Hoyte replies to me in a little while, people will come to listen to him.

Now in this Budget Debate and the Estimates that will follow, we, the minority, just the two of us, are going to go very minutely into the Estimates, as we have done before. We are going to do our part in probing and seeing that the citizens of Guyana have their interests taken care of, that they are not just covered up in fine words and lovely phrases. One wonders at the small number of people attending to hear this Budget Debate on Monday, when the Minister spoke, and today. Is it just a question of frustration? Are they so fed up? **[Interruption by the hon. Minister of Finance]** You had your introduction; I am having mine. They are saying that they are so frustrated, what is the point of coming.

When my party's patron, Peter D'Aguiar, was Minister of Finance in the Coalition Government it was almost impossible to get into that Gallery. It was filled to capacity. Is it now that they are so frustrated now that they say: "What's the use? They are there, they do what they like anyhow. They have a two-thirds majority. I might as well stay home and not bother to attend." This is very complimentary to the Government. And they know, too, what is going to happen all the time. Just as this Government is notorious for its rigged elections, so, too, rigged elections, so, too, Guyana is known as a country of high taxation. We are one of the highest taxed countries in the world.

We have had the Budget Speech. We had it presented with a great flourish. We had the cheer-leading Ministers, the hon. Desmond Hoyte was one, the hon. Minister of State Mr. Nascimento was not here yesterday, but he is here today. They led the cheers and the claps at the appropriate time and the back-benchers took up the cues. Some of them were a little slow to take it up because they did not realise what was happening, but they caught on eventually and they did the cheering. What were they cheering about from the small man's point of view?

We were told – the hon. Minister Miss Shirley Field-Ridley gave a release to the Chronicle – today I think that we had these marvelous allowances on personal incomes for income tax purposes. Miss Field-Ridley was so happy that we women were becoming equal with the men because now we were going to have the same allowance as our husbands. We had \$600 and we come up to \$1,000 now. We become equal now. We are both going to have an allowance of \$1,000.

What Miss Field-Ridley forgot to bring out is something I have said before. I have said it nearly every year and, as long as I am here, I will be saying it. The Government will not be doing justice to our women in Guyana, if, in assessing for income tax purposes, does not stop putting the wife's income with her husband's. Separate taxation for husband and wife is done all over the world. The Government admires Jamaica so much. In Jamaica the last three years the wife's income has been assessed separately from the husband's.

This additional allowance of \$400, or whatever it is, is nothing if the two incomes are going to be put together and added up, thus pushing the whole family income up into a higher bracket. It would be better for the woman to stay at home and look after the children than go out and try to earn some money to help her husband meet this terrible rise in the cost of living. No wonder the Minister of Education and the Minister of Health cannot get teachers, cannot get nurses, cannot get t doctors, because many of these women are married women. They go and serve in other countries and they have their income tax assessed separately. They pay a fair proportion and so they stay there. It is one thing to be a loyal Guyanese but a local Guyanese has to eat. They appreciate the facilities that are available abroad.

2.40 p.m.

But let us forget the facilities; let us forget the amenities. I will come and serve my country but so long as the wife's income is assessed with her husband's so long will the problems with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education, in particular, be on the increase. Those who talk about the very good Budget with no taxes – because as I said, we got these little allowances, all ah we are one, the women are equal to the men – have forgotten two things. They have forgotten first of all the hidden taxation we pay on practically every single thing we eat or wear. Taxes are hidden in their prices. This is not stated in the Budget but the Minister knows about it. There is no need to look through the Budget but we pay hidden taxation.

We all realize that we must pay taxes. Any fair-minded and fair-thinking person realises that taxes are a necessary evil. We all have to pay taxes because we all hope to share in the amenities the State ought to provide. Those who can afford to pay, pay according to their means. A good socialist maxim.

But the Government has taken one big swipe at the betting shops. This is an absolute disagree. It is absolutely unfair to take advantage of one group of people and to tax them

(Mrs. DaSilva continued)

\$250,000. Before the hon. Minister jumps up again and says that we are hard-hearted and don't feel sorry for all the wives who suffer because their husbands spend their days in the betting shops, let us reassure him and this House that we are very concerned for the wives who suffer because of irresponsible husbands who spend their incomes in betting shops. But to tax these betting shops \$250,000 surely will mean that they will have to close down. They cannot make that kind of profit, no matter what we say, to be in a position to pay the Government \$250,000 in taxes. [An hon. Member: "What's wrong with that?"]

About two hundred people may be out of jobs. I hope the hon. Minister has jobs for these two hundred persons, or thereabouts, who will be out of work because those people have no other means of earning a livelihood. Will he absorb them in the Ministry of Finance? Also, if the betting shops close down the Government is going to lose the sum of \$50,000 that is deposited by the shops plus the \$15,000 tax it now receives from each betting shop. Incidentally, only last year we lashed out at the betting shops so we come back to them again this year.

It is not that we are condoning betting and irresponsible husbands to an increase of 1500.25 per cent on one single organisation. Is it not just as wrong for the Government to do that, to deprive a group of people of their living, to increase the tax on one group of people by 1500.25 per cent and not try to distribute taxation more fairly?

Incidentally, Governments is about betting shops. I am sorry the hon. Minister, Miss Field-Ridley, is not here. It is time that the Government turned its attention to the liquor restaurants and beer gardens that are springing up all over the place under the guise of cultural clubs so that they will get licenses. What happens to the people there? I think the homes are more ruined. There is much more harm done to a home by a drunken husband can beat up his wife. A gambling husband does sometimes win a few cents which allows him to take the wife out.

This Government does not go carefully into these matters. It just picks on one whipping boy – like the fuel crisis – and makes the full use of it. This is just what has happened in the case of the betting shops. The Minister should ask: “Does the end justify the means?”

In his introduction to the Budget speech on page 3, the Minister stated that this Budget gives “economic and financial expression to the ideology and the aspirations of the Party for the social and economic development of Guyana.” That really sounds nice. It writes nice and it reads nice. But what does it really mean? What it means is this: That we want to see how the economic situation of these people is going to be affected. It is important – the Minister has admitted it in his Budget – to establish priorities. When we go into the Budget Speech we see that is not done. For example, the Minister states on page 15:

“During the year substantial changes were made to these proposals in response to the financial and monetary crisis that erupted in the early months of the year.”

I have here notes from my remarks during our consideration in this House of the last Supplementary Estimates. This is an example of how the Minister establishes his priorities. Let us look at Publishing and Publicising in the Ministry of Information and Culture. We are loyal Guyanese, we are very proud of our country, we want everybody to know about Guyana but, as we Guyanese say, “in these hard guava days” we have to establish our priorities. And whilst it is very nice to print elaborate supplements, magazines, some of them in colour, and so on, to tell the world and the Guyanese who live in America, Canada and England what our Government is doing in Guyana for them, you have to put first things first. You have to cut your suit according to your cloth. You cannot waste money as you did. The sum of \$338,000 was allocated to Publishing and Publicising. When you go on to add exhibitions and fairs and public relations and all the other vehicles uses as propaganda – and you can use propaganda which way you like, propaganda for our country or propaganda for your Party – it comes to \$712,080, almost three-quarters of a million dollars. When we have the big “haw haw” about the old age pensioners getting the vast increases, all they get is \$3 per person and the total increases came to just

12.12.74

National Assembly

2.40 – 2.50 p.m.

(Mrs. DaSilva continued)

\$219,600. Can you not see the disparity? \$219,600 for people, for human beings, for the citizens for whom you say you are concerned and nearly three-quarter of a million dollars for Publishing and Publicising.

We have our foreign Embassies established in many of the capital cities of the world. We are accredited to very many more. In fact, we often mention that countries wealthier than ourselves, for example West Germany, are closing their Embassies and trying to consolidate their services. They are doing this in order to save. But you know we in Guyana are big. Some of these foreign Embassies still lecture to the people, have film shows, have seminars, have talks and save their money because, after all, if things are so bad and we do not have money to give the people a decent amount by way of an old age pension, is it right, is it moral, is it just to spend three-quarters of a million dollars on Publishing and Publicising?

2.50 p.m.

Those are the questions the hon. Minister must ask himself and he must not sound hypocritical when he talks about feeling so sorry for the wives and families who are affected because the husband gets a bit of recreation, meets his friends, spends a couple of dollars and places a bet. Sometimes he even wins and he can take the wife to the cinema. This Government must be concerned about Publishing and Publicising and think of how the money is wasted.

Whilst I am talking about the Ministry of Information and Culture there is another point I should like to bring to the attention of that Minister. This concerns the same Ministry because it falls within that Minister's office. It is the question of our cinemas. I am not going to talk about the Board of Film Censors. The Minister has just revised the list and I hope we get better pictures and less on sex, violence, crime and karate. But I am going to talk about is the price charged for admission to the cinemas.

[Mrs. DaSilva continued]

A case was brought to my attention only today of four children in a family. The parents sent them off to a nine o'clock show this morning. Their ages are 14, 9, 8, and 4 years. We will forget the 14 year old child because I think that person over 12 years buys an adult ticket, but the others are children. They went to the cinema this morning and each had to pay the price of an adult ticket. **[Interruption]**

The Minister should go into this, because these are some of the ways by which the Government does not receive the revenue it ought to have. When the children came home, the father was very annoyed and he checked on the matter. He was told, first of all, that no half-price tickets were issued by the Ministry, none were sold to the cinema proprietors.

As you know, cinema proprietors have to buy the tickets in advance; they buy a block of tickets and pay the Ministry. That is how the revenue is collected. **[Mr. Hope:** “And you believe that.] Yes, I believe it definitely and I can prove it to you. I am sure the person from whom I got the information would come and tell you. But this is it: we point out things and you do not want to go into them. First of all, the parents are being robbed and the Government is conniving and getting together with the cinema proprietors if it refuses to go into the question to see whether these people are being robbed. These children should not be sold adult tickets when they should pay half-price. Also, they were told that the Ministry did not advise them that children were not to be allowed into the cinema this morning.

There is the case of another cinema, a drive-in cinema. The question again rises of the children's tickets. Parents are buying tickets at \$1 each and receive one adult ticket, at a price of \$1.20, for two children. Even my mathematics would tell me that two into \$1.20 is 60 cents and two into \$1 is 50 cents. Is the Government collecting revenue on \$1? Or is it collecting revenue on \$1.20? It is a very interesting matter. I have noted that the hon. Minister is not here; maybe somebody will tell her. These are the kinds of things we try to bring to your attention and then you scoff and say “Do you believe?”

[Mrs. DaSilva continued]

We have also been told in the course of this Budget Speech about the subsidies that the Government is retaining, that it is hoping to give in order to keep the cost of living down. Of course, we heard about the flour subsidy. I am sorry the Minister concerned for that is not here also. I wonder if somebody would care to tell us what is the system used for the allocation of flour. How is it arrived at? As far as I am aware, when price control was started the shopkeepers, and those to whom flour was sold, were supposed to have taken into the Ministry their bills for flour they purchased over the past year in order to be able to prove that this was the amount of flour they sold. Again I am going to be asked whether I checked this statement and if it is true. We do know that there has been a great deal of tightening up on black marketing but we also know that it still exists and that, obviously, we cannot quarrel with it. We understand the position quite well but the situation has certainly improved because of the tightening up.

But what is happening with this flour? I know that one particular area a party activist has been given a licence for flour. I believe this man had a shop in the past, but everybody knows he does not have one now, but he has the distribution of flour in his power and consequently this is where your minions use their power. People, because they are not members of the P.N.C., are deprived from getting flour. Maybe somebody would tell the hon. Minister Mr. George King about that and maybe he will be good enough, or some of his people will be good enough, to investigate how these things are done. If this man is allowed to have flour, fair enough; if he is entitled, fair enough, but he must sell to everyone, he must not impose conditions of sale, he must not say because you do not belong to the P.N.C. you cannot have flour.

I again, refer to the subsidies. We were told we have the subsidy on poultry feed and stockfeed. It is a true saying: "When one door closes another door opens." As soon as the Government thinks of one way of clamping down, some smart Alec comes up with another way of getting around it. We have chicken under price control and it is a blessing to the housewives because it is one of the cheapest forms of meat. Beef and pork are very often not within the reach of the average housewife; maybe occasionally she could afford to buy beef and

occasionally she could afford to buy pork. Chicken is reasonable, it is controlled and so she is able to buy that more often. But what has happened now is that eggs have gone skyrocketing up and we have very few sources of protein in our diet. We have ground provisions, all very full of carbohydrates. As any nutritionist will tell you, you must have a balanced diet and protein is very important in a balanced diet. You cannot get decent cheese; you get cheese that tastes like soap. I do not know why they do not import proper cheese instead of bringing processed cheese that tastes like soap. All we want is a decent piece of cheese, not a cake of soap; you do not get it and it is expensive. Milk you cannot get because the Milk pasteurization Plant is now producing orange juice.

Another good source of protein is eggs, but at \$2.40 per dozen how is the average housewife going to be able to pay 20 cents for one egg? These are things that must be gone into. You have to see all angles when you start controlling. For goodness sake do something about the eggs because once the price goes up it will never be reduced. To be required to pay \$2.40 for one dozen eggs for \$2.40 is ridiculous.

3 p.m.

I quote from page 14 of the Budget Speech when, in talking about subsidies, the Minister said:

“In addition, Mr. Speaker, it has already been decided that in 1975 the Government would subsidise consumers of electricity by absorbing an increase in electricity rates that the Guyana Electricity Corporation must impose in order to maintain its viability in the face of soaring costs of fuel and other inputs. A provision of some \$3.5 million has been made in the 1975 estimates for this purpose.”

I wonder if the hon. Minister in his reply to me would care to tell me this subsidy on electricity is going to affect the average consumer? This is for the information of the Press, not for my

[Mrs. DaSilva continued]

information. I will hear his reply but the public does not always know what questions we have asked. I hope the hon. Minister will reply and that the Press will make a note. Right now, as hon. Members know, light bills have increased by 25 per cent for certain consumers and as high as 96 per cent for others. Of course, the Government has said: "It is all right. The people who pay 96 per cent are the ones who can afford toasters, mixers, electric fans and percolaters. They can afford those things. They can afford the 96 per cent increase."

The majority of Guyanese who, may have one electric light and one electric iron, only pay an increase 25 per cent. But 25 percent – a quarter of his light bill – to a person who only has one light and one electric iron is a lot of money. So Guyanese are interested to know in real, factual, meaningful terms, what this subsidy to the Electricity Corporation will mean to them when they get their light bills in January. We will appreciate an explanation on that.

I now turn to something to which we have referred before and which this Government has repeated in these Estimates. We have spoken over and over again about block votes, about money that is hidden in the block votes, about money that is wasted, money that is squandered. The small man appreciates that money has to be spent. He appreciates that he has to make sacrifices in order that our country might progress. We all appreciate this. But, we do not appreciate when money is spent and no meaningful explanation is given to the citizens as to how this money is spent.

In his Budget Speech, the hon. Minister talks about giving a true picture of Guyana but we are asked to spend \$11 million on National Service. National Service is something that this Government does not like us to talk about. It is like rigged elections, National Development, Co-operatives and all the other things not forgetting the heading "Miscellaneous" where one can hide money and waste money and there is no means of finding out. One hon. Minister of Finance asked me last year whether I proposed to do away with the heading of "Miscellaneous", a well established and well accepted term in accountancy. Not at all. Nobody proposes to do

away with the head “Miscellaneous” but “Miscellaneous” must be in proportion and not just a big, vast sum of money running in many instances into hundreds of thousands of dollars.

So, as I said, the small man is willing to make a sacrifice, but he wants to know about this National Service. We voted \$1 million at the beginning of last year; we voted \$6 million in the last supplementary provisions; we are now asked to vote \$11 million in the capital expenditure. What is happening in the National Service? What are we getting from the National Service? Who is benefiting from the National Service? It is a total of \$18 million to be expended and there is nothing to show for it.

Where is the Director-General of National Service right now? He has gone to buy cotton mills. He and two of his officers are off to the U.K. on a cotton mill seeking expedition. After that, I understand they are going to Tanzania and to Zambia. They are certainly touring the world looking for the cotton mills and other things for National Service. Can we afford this? Is it necessary? It must have cost the Government quite a pretty penny to send three of its members on a world tour looking into cotton mills.

From time to time, we have big propaganda splashes about the National Service. We have bus-loads of children coming down to march around the place. Would the Minister tell the citizens of Guyana how their children benefit, because there are still those people who do not want their children to do National Service?

I will come to freedom of movement in a moment. Some of them are even sending their children out of Guyana so that they would not do National Service. I believe some of the children of some of the Ministers of this House have gone out of Guyana – to study, of course! But this is the issue: How are these children, members of the National Service, benefiting?

What has happened to the Youth Corps? A couple of years ago, in answer to any questions in this House on the Youth Corps, we were always given the same reply. “The United

Force does not want the Youth Corps. It does not want to see the young people of Guyana get on.” Suddenly, we are not hearing a word about the Youth Corps. What happened to all the money we spent on the Youth Corps? What are they doing with it? What is happening to the children who were in the Youth Corps? Where are they now? Are they in the National Service? Would the hon. Minister tell us?

I see that members of the Young Brigade are joining National Service. I pass some very often. But I would like to quote from this Paper about the Young Brigade. [**Hon. Member:** “Do you want a job with the Young Brigade?”] That is all right. I haven’t reached 62 as yet. I understand that you have a 62 year old member of the National Service. It will be quite a while before I can apply for that job.

It is stated here about the children of the Young Brigade – you will pardon me if I read it to refresh your memory. I read from page 8 of this State Paper which states:

“Children between the ages of eight and fourteen within primary schools: These children will go through the formal school system, but National Service will ensure that the agricultural and co-operative training received at school is fully understood as being relevant to day-to-day life, and will complement the school experience by practical exercises at weekends and during the long holidays in a series of in-the-field training activities. National Service, at this level will be voluntary and will emphasise the values of the schools system – Unity, Self-determination, Collective Work and Responsibility, Co-operative Economics, Purpose, Creativity and Faith, as well as those of discipline, efficiency and productivity.”

Would the hon. Minister tell us how this is being implemented so far as these people in the Young Brigade are concerned? All I see the Young Brigade doing is marching. We are almost getting like Nazi Germany when we have our children marching all over the place. They are

marching for rallies; they are practicing to march; they are marching for practice; they are always marching. What else are they doing besides marching? The Young Brigade children that I see are marching every day. Have they had any time to learn what they ought to be doing? Tell us these things.

The Government tells us that the National Service is doing very, very well, far exceeding the Government's anticipation. The Government said it anticipated two thousand children in the first year and we hear that there are about five thousand applicants. Would the hon. Minister tell us how many members there are and how they are progressing because there are still many parents who do not want their children to do National Service for one reason or another and this is one of the things – [**Interruption**]

The Speaker: Hon. Members, please allow the member to speak.

Mrs. DaSilva: For one reason or another, parents do not wish their children to do National Service will have to do it. Surely, it will be a good thing for the Minister to say: "Well, it is so popular, we have so many children, so many applicants that we cannot cope at the moment. We cannot take any more." People would like to know. Tell them and reassure them that it will not be compulsory because there are some who do not want their children to do National Service. After all, we are beginning to live in a country where our freedoms are being curtailed more and more every day. We have had freedom of the Press which is now fast disappearing. It is no longer a thing and now the Government has acquired the Graphic. We know the old story: "He who pays the Piper, calls the tune."

3.10 p.m.

The Government now owns the **Graphic**; it has that very important section under control, and the press will print what the Government wants. G.B.S. will broadcast what the Government

[Mrs. DaSilva contd.]

wants. Even Radio Demerara has to be careful to broadcast what the Government would like. Freedom of the press is being curtailed, freedom of speech is being curtailed.

Freedom of movement is now curtailed. One cannot even go out of Guyana because the allowance for the purpose is only \$15. We know the answer! The fuel crisis. We know we are conserving foreign exchange for our balance of payments.

Freedom of choice as to the way in which a person wants to spend his hours of recreation, whether he would like to spend a dollar betting on his favourite horse – after all, we cannot all afford to go to Ascot and Kentucky for the horse racing, some of us can only afford to go and put our little dollar at the betting shop. That freedom is now going to be curtailed because all the betting shops are going to go out of existence as they will have pay this Government a tax of \$250,000. This is freedom of choice. Whether a person wants to gamble or not, no Government has the right to tell him how to spend his spare time. That is his business. More and more, our freedoms are being curtailed, and this Government sits here and pats itself on the back and says: “What a wonderful Government this is. What a wonderful job we are doing!”

We have money being spend on our National Development and Co-operatives. Again, we ask about this. These two important aspects of life in Guyana surely deserve more details than just block votes of money. No explanation is ever given in this House. No report is ever laid in this House. Later on, my leader will be dealing with the auditor’s report that we have not had ever since 1968, if I remember correctly. I wonder if the Government has remembered those missing vouchers – it was either \$13½ million or \$19½ million that was missing; there were no vouchers to support the expenditure. Is that the reason why the Government is not bringing the report before this House? Is it ashamed or embarrassed for it to come out again?

I am a little surprised at the hon. Minister of Finance. He rather likes to misconstrue what I say and he twists my statements as he did earlier on. I shall not mention my copy of the

Budget Speech but I want to make it quite clear that I am not against our Director of Audit. The gentleman is a Guyanese of the finest ability and integrity. He does his job. But what is wrong with the Cabinet that it does not bring his report here? I am sure there must be a report to come before this House after all these years. I know that all Government Departments are behind in the presentation of their figures, but the last Audit Report was in 1968 and it is now 1974. If an ordinary individual, a private citizen, returned his 1968 income tax in 1974, I do not know what the hon. Minister would do. He would lock him up, my Leader says. I wonder if we could try that, and pay the telephone bill and the light bill for 1973 in 1975. I wonder how the ordinary citizen would get away with that. Is it because it is the Government that it can do that and there and smugly and very complacently say, "What a wonderful Government we are?"

Now we come to the Capital Expenditure and how the Government has established its priorities. We have been told that the Government established its priorities and is allocating the money very carefully. Let us look at the Capital Expenditure. We make no quarrel for the Ministries of Finance, Works and Housing, and Education and Social Development, of they receive the biggest allocations under the Capital Expenditure, but what we are saying is, that the Minister of Health is allocated \$4.7 million for Capital Expenditure while \$11 million is allocated for National Service.

Not so very long ago, when Venezuela and Surinam were hot on us, we heard about the padding in the G.D.F.. When the members of Government did not want people to know what they were doing with the money, they put in the G.D.F., and if we ever dared to open our mouths – and, of course, we are not afraid, we did open them – and question why the G.D.F. was having all this expenditure, we were told that we were disloyal Guyanese; the G.D.F. was here to defend us against the wicked Venezuelans and Surinamers, and how could we dare to come to this House and question it? Now the G.D.F. is pushed in the background as are the members of the Youth Corps. The favourite child at the moment, the blue-eyed boy, is the National Service. All the G.D.F. is getting under Capital Expenditure is \$2.5 million; National Service, \$11 million.

Recently we have had much talk about the upsurge in the crime rate in the country. We have had Commissions. The Archbishop of the West Indies was speaking about it a few days ago. One Commission has come out with what we have always been saying in this House. What we need to help keep down the crime rate is an ordinary policeman on the beat. I am very pleased to see that the Commission has come out with the conclusion that the cops must go on the beat. But what are they being allocated? They are to receive \$50,000 on Capital Expenditure for equine study and, also, they are going to get some money for the mounted section of the police, \$56,000; about \$106,000 under Capital Expenditure for the section for the horses. They are improving the stock and they are putting more horses out. We do not need more horses. What we need is less policemen in cars driving around on the pretext of teaching the lady police members how to drive a car, and more ordinary policemen should be on the beat. [Hon. Member: “Shame”] Whether they are genuinely floating around or not, we need more policemen on the beat. I have been supported in this by no less than the Commission who made this recommendation.

Also, bear in mind too the words of the Archbishop on this question of driving visiting dignitaries at top speed in our country. I remember a couple of years ago, my leader and I were both involved in an accident when we went with visiting Parliamentarians to Linden and we sped down the road at top speed. One lady Parliamentarian, who is not here now, wanted a drink of water. She stopped the first car suddenly, and all the others cars piled up. Nobody was seriously injured but it is time for this speed to stop because one day there is going to be a serious accident. And, as we are talking about horses, it will be too late to close the stable door after the horse has gone.

3.20 p.m.

We are to vote \$25,000 to print the Development Plan. Somebody told me that in order to save money the last Development Plan was cyclostyled and not printed. This is what we are supposed to be doing – saving money. \$25,000 may sound a small amount, because we are

(Mrs. DaSilva continued)

talking about millions, but nevertheless every bit of money saved can go towards helping another Ministry that made money. But you squander it in one place and then you cut expenditure under other Ministries. Even the Ministry of Health is cut down to nothing. The Government gives practically little or nothing to the G.D.F. on the pretext that the others need it more. This sum of \$25,000 for the printing of the Development Plan could easily be reduced.

The sum of \$184,000, capital expenditure, is being spent on the study for Development of Domestic Air Transport. This Government worries so much about studies for development. Various sums of money are being spent on studies. I am not saying that we should not study and do our best to get all available knowledge, but we have a certain amount of studies to go on. I must remind this Government that we are living in critical times where money is short and, therefore, you cannot afford to just fritter the money away. This Government has to be more careful and we can save money by cutting the corners, not by just taking large blocks of money for certain special and favoured things and cutting the others down. What we need is a couple more planes to get into the interior rather than a study on the Development of Air Services in the interior.

Expenditure on equipment for Health Services amounts to services amounts to \$1 million. What can \$1 million buy when it is for the Health Services throughout the country? Let us bear in mind the cost of equipment and the fact that we do not manufacture such equipment in Guyana. The cost is going to be heavier because freight rates are higher.

We are putting in a study on various pieces of Guyanese wood to find out how they could be used. This will cost \$356,500. Is that really necessary? Again, I will ask: "Don't we have to establish our priorities and put first things first? The National Development is allocating \$600,000 for Development Works. Okay, tell us where these works are and what they are all about. Do not just put down \$500,000 and leave it there.

I see that \$292,000 is going to be spent on prison improvement. Fair enough. But are we improving the prison in 12 Camp Street which is so small and is not adequate to cope with the prisoners? I thought we were going to move it and take it into another area. Besides, it is highly unsuitable to have a prison right in the centre of a city. If this applies to 12 Camp Street could the Minister please tell us why the Government is going to waste \$292,000 improving facilities? If it does not apply, what do you propose to do with the prison at 12 Camp Street? Are you moving it and if so, where are you putting it? These are just a few of the items under Capital Expenditure which I picked out as being a special interest. This is not necessarily miscellaneous expenditure, but some could include miscellaneous expenditure.

The sum of \$300,000 is to be voted for Regional Councils. Regional Ministers must live up to the state to which they are accustomed. Our Cultural Centre, that white elephant at the top of the road, is getting an additional sum of \$1.1 million. When it is going to be opened. I hope it will show us some return for all the money we are spending on it. Right now it looks like a white elephant.

On the question of miscellaneous expenditure: I said, some time ago, that block votes are hidden in this miscellaneous expenditure. I understand that we were asked to vote money to be spent during the time of the Reynolds bauxite levy. There is a gentleman in this country who has come back to head Reynolds (Guyana) Limited when it is nationalised very shortly and a house has been found for him in a top-bracket residential area of Georgetown. The house is furnished down to the last teaspoon. We understand that the sum of sum of \$20,000 was spent on furnishing this house. Is it not about time that the Government stopped playing with the money belonging to the citizens of Guyana? Is it not about time that they stopped keeping citizens down in every way as they are doing by curtailing their freedom, half-starving them, banning food and this kind of thing? And I am not talking about luxury items. Is it not time that members of the Government stopped being hypocritical about the betting shops and their concern for the homes and the wives of the men who spend a few cents on recreation? They

must be concerned about the matters that I mentioned and investigate them. It is time they did this and then it will show that they really do have the interest of the citizens of Guyana at heart.

We are told that the outlook for 1975 is good. We are told that the gross domestic product will go up. Let us hope it goes up as a result of a little bit coming to many people and not a lot to a few people. It is based on the over-all figure. We do not want a few people at the top with large incomes and the little men at the bottom do not get anything much. It all adds up in the end. Let us hope that there will be more employment for the citizens, which is what they want.

When the Minister talked about giving a true picture of Guyana he did, in talking about the Corporations, give a reasonably true picture of them as they exist. If the Minister can see the necessity for doing this in one area of Guyana life, why cannot he see the necessity for giving correct information on areas that concern them – National Development and Co-operatives, in particular. We do not know how they are going. We heard about the Corporations, National Development, National Service, Community Development. We want the true picture of how they are going and what is really happening. That is the sort of thing that we want to hear. We do not just want nice flowing sentences.

I think that I have dealt with the various aspects in this Budget Speech that I planned to cover this afternoon. Tomorrow afternoon my Leader will continue to debate on the Budget, fill in what I have left out and add his comments. Incidentally, I understand that the pages which, unfortunately we could not get because of the printers' error dealt with the projected hope of getting \$156, 000 million on the Sugar Levy. The estimate for this year was \$91 million, next year it is, projected to be \$156,000 million. I did not have a chance to look at my copy to verify this.

I want to ask the hon. Minister about these projections. I hope that he will reply because this is for Guyana and our concern is first and foremost for Guyana. We want good weather in

12.12.74

National Assembly

3.20 – 3.30 p.m.

order to have a good rice crop; we want to have the best sugar prices. I hope the Minister is not being unrealistic in this projection of \$156 million. Is he so sure that the world market will be buying Guyanese sugar at a higher rate?

3.30 p.m.

In Britain, as we know, the sugar price will come up for review in February 1975 and I think the British people are determined, if the price is unrealistic and unreasonable, to use whatever best sugar they get, whatever sugar they can get from the EEC. As the **Daily Telegraph** stated they would use, if necessary, saccharine to sweeten their coffee, tea or their food and not pay the high price. But, as I say, I hope for the sake of Guyana that we will get the projected figure of \$156,000 million.

To end my contribution this afternoon I should like to quote four lines from the Edward Fitz Gerald's translation of the **Rubaiyat** of Omar Khayyam:

“The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all their Piety nor
Wit Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line
Nor all thy Tears wash o out a Word of
it.”

This can apply to the Budget Speech of the Minister of Finance, because we know by the facts of life as they exist in Guyana, whatever we on this side of the House say, if the Government says so it says so. However, we maintain our right to make our contribution and to state our case. We hope that some of it will, during the course of next year, bear fruit and that the members of the Government will listen to our pleas and petitions for the citizens of Guyana even though we know that this Budget will go through and the Estimates will go through without amendment. We look forward to the realisation of the hopes of the small man that indeed he will become, as the Government likes to tell us, a real man.

The Speaker: Hon. Minister of Economic Development.

The Minister of Economic Development (Mr. Hoyte): Mr. Speaker, hon. Members, in January this year our Leader and Prime Minister, Comrade Burnham, broadcast to the nation. He spoke about the crisis which threatened to engulf this country, a crisis not of our own making but resulting from a number of upheavals in the world system, which were affecting all countries in the world and, in particular, developing countries.

He announced a number of tough defensive measures to protect our economy. At that time many people worried – they were resilient enough to overcome the serious problems which were about to beset us. Now as we come to the end of the year, we can look back with pride upon a year of achievement, for we have not only survived, we have emerged with an economy which is stronger than ever.

The fact that we have survived has not been due to accident or magic, or any fortuitous circumstance. It is a direct result of the policies practiced and implemented by the People's National Congress over the period of the last ten years. **[Applause]** Those policies, may I remind hon. Members, are based upon, first of all, the hegemony of the Guyanese people in the economic life of this country. They are based upon the principle of national self-reliance and they are based, too, upon the ideal of national unity.

Throughout the years we have moved progressively towards the attainment of these objectives. We have moved successfully towards their attainment because of the political leadership given by Comrade Burnham and the People's National Congress: I contend that there is no such thing as economic policies simpliciter. Economic policy must be informed by a political content and it is the politics of the People's National Congress which has mobilised the people, which has inspired them, and which has made them perform so magnificently in this year of crisis.

What has been happening is that our policies were being tested during 1974. They have been tested, and they have not been found wanting. As we listened to the hon. Minister of Finance, Comrade Hope, deliver his Budget Statement on Monday last we realised how successful our policies have been and how right and how valid they are.

I do not propose to traverse the ground covered so admirably and so clearly by the Comrade Minister of Finance. I would content myself, first of all, with reviewing the performance of the economy during the past ten years when the People's National Congress Government was responsible for the administration of this country; secondly; with looking at the performance of the economy from 1972, that is, the beginning of the current development plan year to 1974; thirdly, with looking at our Capital Budget for 1975; and, finally, examining what is required of all of us in Guyana if we are to achieve success in 1975.

In December 1964, when the People's National Congress Government acceded to office, the economy of this country was shattered, the people were demoralized and it appeared as if this country was doomed. After ten years of the People's National Congress Government the people are united, they are confident, the economy is strong and resilient.

I should like to look at some of the indicators of the growth and development which we see all around us today. In 1964 the gross national product of Guyana was \$271.5 million. In 1975 it has risen to \$775 million, an increase of 185.5 per cent, which represents an annual growth rate of 11 per cent. [Applause] I appreciate that one may argue that such figures may be meaningless since they make no allowance for inflationary effect. But even if we were to make such an allowance and consider the figures not at current factor cost, as I have considered them before, but at constant prices, the annual growth rate would still be in the vicinity of 6 per cent. That, judged by any standard would be a very admirable performance.

12.12.74

National Assembly

3.40 – 3.50 p.m.

[Mr. Hoyte continued]

3.40 p.m.

A country such as Guyana can only progress on the basis of the commitment of the Guyanese people to development and on their understanding that development is, first of all, a matter for them; that the resources for development must first be garnered and generated by them before they can start looking for assistance from abroad.

But to generate savings internally there must be a climate which inspires people with confidence and with hope. It is such a climate which the People's National Congress Government was able to induce in this country so that over the years from 1964 to 1974 domestic savings in this country have risen dramatically from \$65.6 million in 1964 to \$185 million in 1974, reflecting an increase of 182 per cent or an annual growth rate of 11 per cent. It will be seen that the growth rate of domestic savings has kept abreast of the growth rate of the gross national product.

But savings have no value in themselves unless they are used for investment, unless they are put into the productive sectors to cause the economy to grow, to create job opportunities and to provide a better life for people. When we look at what happened in the field of domestic investments over the ten years of People's National Congress Government, we see that in 1964 domestic investment amounted to \$63.6 million and that that sum rose to \$190 million in 1974 which shows an increase of 254.4 per cent or an annual growth rate of 13.5 per cent. Or if we look at the domestic investment as a ratio of the gross national product, we see that, prior to the advent of the People's National Congress Government, the level of domestic investment was well below 20 per cent and that level has now risen to 25 per cent in ten years even though in 1974, the year for which the last figure was given, there was a cutback in our capital programme, a cut-back which restricted the outlay of funds and resulted in rather reduced expenditure.

These, Sir, are the indicators of an economy which has responded to certain political direction and influence, an economy which is producing the goods and services which are

necessary for the providing of those amenities which one may describe as “social” and which are vital for the welfare of people.

The Government has been playing a most important role in the whole process of development. Government’s investment, Government’s outlays, must derive to a large extent from public revenue and it is in this field that one needs to look carefully to see how the revenues have grown in response to the measures taken by the Government and in response to the recognition by the Guyanese people that they need to make their contribution if they are going to benefit from developments in this country.

That is why I found it difficult to understand the point which the hon. Member Mrs. DaSilva was making about National Service. National Service is one of the ways in which the Guyanese people are equipping themselves intellectually, physically and in terms of skills to make a contribution to the development of this country by first of all developing themselves.

In 1964 our current revenue stood at \$67.2 million; in 1974 revenues rose to \$300 million representing a percentage increase of 346.4. But this increase has been due, largely, to two main factors: first of all, increased efficiency in the collection of revenues, though there is still a great deal to be done and too many people still avoid, or evade, their obligation to make their rightful contribution; and, secondly, the greater yields which have accrued to the public coffers from foreign owned sectors, for example, sugar.

The performance of the economy can be judged by the goods we produce not only for internal use but export. When we look at the performance of the export sector during the past ten years, we find that merchandise export was at a level of \$95.8 million in 1964; but in 1974 that modest value of our trade rose to \$580 million, representing an increase of 505 per cent, or an annual growth rate of 18 per cent throughout the period.

We have, ever this period, sought to identify many institutions as being necessary, given our historical development, for the attainment of the economic and social objectives we have set ourselves. The hon. Member Mrs. DaSilva referred to one of these institutions, namely, the co-operative. Her concern was about the performance of co-operatives; how were they doing? I would like to take the opportunity in a general way because I feel that her question would be more properly raised during the committee stage when the Minister responsible for co-operatives will be defending his Ministry but I would like, in a general way, to point to the growth of the co-operative sector during the past ten years and particularly since 1971 when we positively identified the co-operatives as one of the principal instruments for transforming our economy.

In 1964 there were 567 co-operative societies in this country; in 1974 there were 1,306 co-operative societies, showing an increase in the number of societies of 150 per cent.

3.50 p.m.

Membership of societies in 1964 amounted to 42,551. In 1974, that number has risen to 110,000 showing an increase in membership in percentage terms of 158.5. Share capital over that period has risen from \$2.4 million to \$10 million, showing an upsurge in percentage terms of 316.6.

It is interesting to note that, whereas in 1964 the volume of goods traded among co-operators per annum amounted to only \$124,000, in 1974, the volume of goods traded per annum was valued at \$5 million, representing an increase of nearly 4,000 per cent in that aspect of co-operative endeavour.

We have been laying surely the foundation for a modern viable State.

In the field of infrastructure, there can be no doubt of the remarkable progress made in providing an adequate road network for his country. That cannot be denied because the work is

[Mr. Hoyte contd.]

visible. We have taken this country from a position in 1964 when there was a total of less than 100 miles of modern first-class roadway and have today built 500 miles of first-class highways, in addition to over 200 miles of trails, access roads, and farm-to-market roads – a road-building programme, within the context of our development plan, designed to facilitate the rapid movement of goods and people, designed to facilitate the rapid movement of goods and people designed to make accessible our rich resources of timber, agricultural lands, minerals, and hydro-power resources, and also, to help our farmers and settlers who are doing such a magnificent job in developing this country.

Parallel with that development has been the development in the field of telecommunication. In 1964, it was a most difficult thing even to make contact by telephone with subscribers even within the limits of Georgetown. Today, thanks to our telecommunication expansion programme, from Charity on the Essequibo Coast southward to Bartica and Linden, and from Kwakwani and Kimbia on to the Corentyne is served by Direct Distance Dialling, so that every community along the coast where people live in large numbers has access to a modern telecommunication system. Even as I speak, the technicians of the Telecommunication Corporation are making the necessary arrangements to carry the D.D.D. system to Matthews Ridge.

Postal services have been improved tremendously. There is not a single part of this country which our post offices do not serve. Whether it be at Apaiqua in the Mazaruni, whether it be at Dadanawa in the Rupununi, whether it be on Kaieteur Top, there are postal services available. However, our land, water, and air transportation services have been improved over the years to serve the interest of the people and to promote the interest of development.

We have also over the years diversified our trade. Today our trading links are no longer only with traditional partners in North America and the United Kingdom, but have been forged with the People's Republic of China, with Cuba, with the German Democratic Republic, and

with countries as far afield in the Middle East as Iraq. Those are only a few of the countries to whom we sell our goods and from whom we receive commodities in return.

During this period, there has been a steady growth of employment as all the sectors expand and become vibrant. There has been a progressive absorption of labour so that today I make bold to say that no Guyanese who has a skill can honestly say he cannot find work.

What we need to do is what we have been doing in the field of education, that is, making our education relevant to the needs of this country. We have produced too many people who are quite learned, who have all kinds of fancy certificates, but who can do nothing useful. That is what National Service, for example, is all about; to turn out people who have the skills which can make them earn a decent livelihood in this country of ours.

I should like to turn now to the performance of the development plan during the years 1972, 1973, and 1974. I should observe, first of all, that a development plan is not a static document. It gives certain broad objectives, but it does not follow that every particular project will necessarily be done at the time projected by the plan, or in a manner projected by the plan, or, indeed, at all.

I should like to advise hon. Members that the current Development Plan is now being revised and up-dated to take account of the shift in priorities and the changes which have been made either deliberately or as a result of circumstances over which we have no control. As I said, this plan is not like “the laws of Medes and Persians which altereth not.” It is a living document and it is only in this way it can make sense and fulfil the purposes for which it was designed. But I should like to observe that the revision does not mean any change in what the economists call the macro-aspects of the plan. Changes will affect only particular projects and particular projects and particular items in the plan, it must also be understood that the revision does not necessarily mean a curtailment or a deferment.

For example, in the Plan as printed, hon. Members will see that the hydro-power project at Upper Mazaruni was really identified as a project for the next plan period, and the only provision made in the current plan was for the start of feasibility studies. One of the things we have done is to have changed the priority for the Upper Mazaruni hydro-power project; it has been advanced, and now becomes one of our urgent priorities. Hon. Members will see under the Ministry of Works and Housing that a very ample provision of \$25 million has been made for hinterland roads, but of that \$25 million, the sum million, the sum of \$10 million is related to the hydro-power road which we must build to the site of the proposed facility.

4 p.m.

In like manner, just as how some projects have been advanced, other projects have taken a lower position in the scale of priorities. For example some of our other roads have not been abandoned but have been phased to take a longer period and will be rolled over to the next plan period.

The Speaker: Hon. Minister it is now 4 p.m. I do not know if it is the wish of the other members that you proceed to the conclusion of your contribution. Is it agreed that we proceed to the finality of the Minister's contribution?

Hon. Members indicated in the affirmation.

The Speaker: Hon. Minister, please proceed.

Mr. Hoyte: In discussing the performance of the various sectors in the Development Plan for the period 1972-1973, it is important that we remind ourselves of the objectives of the Plan so that we can better understand how the particular performance relates to those over-all objectives. The objectives are: The creation of employment opportunities for all Guyanese; the attainment of an equitable distribution of economic activities and the establishment of the

foundation for the attainment of self-sustained economic growth. Against that background of objectives, I would like to look at certain selected areas to see how these areas have responded to Government's policies over the past three years. I shall deal first of all with the financial performance and, secondly, with the physical performance.

The Development Plan called for the expenditure of \$1.1 billion over the planned period and the programming of spending was as follows: 1972 - \$127 million; 1973 - \$205 million; 1974 - \$252 million; 1975 - \$254 million; 1976 - \$254 million. 127 million; 1973 - \$205 million; 1974 - \$252 million; 1975 - \$254 million; 1976 - \$254 million. 127 million; 1973 - \$205 million; 1974 - \$252 million; 1975 - \$254 million; 1976 - \$254 million: For the year 1972 we achieved a 95 per cent performance and for the years 1973 and 1974 For the year 1972 we achieved a 95 per cent performance and for the years 1973 and 1974 we achieved a 77 and 75 per cent performance respectively.

Judged by any standard, that performance has been admirable. However, we would have done even better had it not been for the problems identified by the Comrade Minister of Finance when he delivered his Budget Presentation. The Comrade Minister of Finance when he delivered his Budget Presentation identified the adverse weather conditions in 1973, and in 1973 and 1974 inance when he delivered his Budget Presentation identified the adverse weather conditions in 1973, and in 1973 and 1974 the problems with cement, for example, and with certain capital and intermediate goods, and also problems resulting from instability in some of the countries from which we imported those as factors goods having the effect of postponing or delaying the delivery of capital goods ordered.

But apart from those problems, there has been another reason for our failure to do even better than we have done and that has to do with private sector investment. Private sector investment did not respond as fully as was projected in the Development Plan. If we separate the private sector investment from public sector investment we will find that the public sector, over the period, invested \$585 million or 84 per cent of its planned allocation over the entire plan

period. When we hear in mind that our Capital Estimates for 1975 indicate that the public sector will spend another \$300 million, it is quite clear that the public sector will exceed the allocations made for it in the Development Plan.

When I talk about the failure of the private sector to respond I do not make the remark by way of criticism but merely to be factual. I am happy to note in the Press today that the businessmen have said that the investment climate is propitious and that they are about to bestir themselves to take advantage of opportunities which are undoubtedly there.

It is not sufficient to talk about attaining financial targets because the money must be spent to produce certain physical results and it is the physical targets which we need to look at to see really what has been the performance of the economy.

In the Plan it is projected that agriculture should contribute at the rate of 8.5 per cent annum to G.D.P. growth. Agriculture has been doing just that and, indeed, been doing much better than that as I would hope to show from looking at the performance of certain crops.

During the period, we have implemented a variety of infrastructure work. Moreover, we have given incentives and encouragement to farmers over a very wide range and the farmers themselves have responded to Government's policies and have been increasing not only their production but also their productivity. The result is seen in the figures. Between 1972 and 1974, the volume of ground provisions produced in this country increased by 15 per cent from 62 million lbs. to 70 million lbs. [Interruption] – (You want the farmers to work for nothing? That is a tradition which this Government is about to reverse. The farmer, like everybody else, must get the reward of his labour and must be paid proper prices.) Plantains increased from 52 million lbs. in 1972 to 60 million lbs. also showing an increase of 15 per cent. Bananas moved from 15 million lbs. to 20 million lbs., an increase of 33 per cent and corn, pineapples, tomatoes, citrus fruit increased by 67 per cent, 60 per cent, 33 per cent and 17 per cent respectively.

We all know the story of rice which increased from 94,000 tons to 168,000 tons in 1974, reflecting an increase of 76 per cent. These are the results of careful policies designed to help the people.

In addition, the Plan called for the cultivation of new crops and those new crops are being cultivated – crops such as soya beans, ginger, turmeric, cotton, oil palm and peanuts. I may pause for a moment, Mr. Speaker, to inform the hon. Member, Mrs. DaSilva, who has shown such a great interest in the activities of the National Service, that next year the National Service will increase the acreage it has under cotton cultivation to 5,000 acres. [**Applause**]

4.10 p.m.

That is where the \$11 million is going. When I come to deal with the Capital Budget for 1975 I will indicate to you that the money has been put in productive sectors so that whether it is in National Service, or co-operatives, or agriculture, or where have you, the bulk of that money next year will go into sectors which are productive and which will add significantly to the stock of goods in this country.

Fishery has shown commendable improvement under the stimulus of Government investment. It was projected that over the Plan period \$27 million would be spent in providing on-shore and off-shore facilities, in providing new vessels and on research. Guyana Marine Foods Limited, for example, has increased the number of its trawlers from five to thirty over the past three years and has consequently increased significantly its catch of shrimp and fish.

In New Amsterdam, the Fish Plant has been renovated and, as a result of the measures taken by the Government and Government agencies to improve the catch of fish off of our shores, we have been bringing to the people of this country large and continual quantities of fish at a cheap price.

[Mr. Hoyte contd.]

We are determined to step up this aspect of fish production and fish distribution. We have made provision in the Capital Estimates for a number of storage and other facilities to enable the Government to fulfil this commitment which it has made to the Guyanese people.

But we are doing more. We are building at McDoom, even now, facilities for shrimp storage and processing. Those facilities will be completed in 1975. Immediately north of those facilities we are acquiring the land to put up fish processing and storage and distribution facilities. We have not only acquired the land. The studies have been completed, the drawings are being done, and construction will start in 1975 to enable us to have the facilities, not only to shore, but to distribute fish to the people of this country in large quantities and at a cheap price. That is the progress which is being made. Sometimes progress cannot be seen; but there are times when it can be seen and measured, and I have no doubt that in the area of fishery this progress is visible to anyone who has eyes to see.

I should like to say a few words about forestry. My predecessor, Dr. Kenneth King, once remarked that the forest industry showed remarkable signs of lethargy. It is a sector which can contribute significantly to employment absorption and to the G.D.P. of this country. Unfortunately, the major investment is still being made by the Government. Although there are very many private owners they have not bestirred themselves as vigorously as they ought to have done to improve, rehabilitate and renovate their equipment.

Even though there has been an increase in production in this sector from 6 million cubic feet to 7.5 million cubic feet, the sector is still performing too sluggishly. The internal and external demands are great. The industry has not been able to satisfy our internal demands for building material and it has not been able to satisfy the large orders which this Government has negotiated with the Governments of Cuba, China and Iraq for the benefit of people in the forest industry in this country. We hope that during next year the private entrepreneurs will recognize

the bonanza conditions which exist and will make the necessary capital inputs to enable them to produce more and reap a greater reward from their efforts.

On the Government side, the Government will spend \$4 million next year; it has already spent \$6 million in improving Guyana Timbers Limited and the Forest Industries Corporation. This investment has been a good one considers the production which has come from G.T.L. and the contribution which the F.I.C. is making.

On the manufacturing side, a great deal of activity is going on. It is going on at the level of small and medium-sized enterprises and it is precisely there, I think, where we need the action to be. We need to get as many people as possible involved in small and medium-sized manufacturing enterprises. Many people are in it; we need more.

We already, during the period, have been processing fish, fruit and vegetables. We have been manufacturing garments, hats, footwear, handbags, leather products, buttons, ornaments, handicraft, greeting cards. Recently we have started to manufacture freezers and refrigerators. Next year, I am told, we will be manufacturing air-conditioners. In addition, we are manufacturing detergents, broom handles and wooden toys. These are significant activities which we need to help along, which we need to stimulate, and which we need to encourage.

There have been, during the period, new industries coming on stream, such as the manufacture of jewellery and other ornaments from materials such as jasper and agate and semi-precious stones. We have established, too, in this country, facilities for diamond cutting and polishing. But there is great scope still for people in the private sector, and the opportunity which is there to be grasped ought to be grasped at this time when the business people themselves are acknowledging that the climate is good.

I want to say a word about housing. We had projected in the Development Plan the expenditure of \$250 million over the Plan period. To date, the sum of \$101 million has been

expended and the achievement has been a creditable one – 13,500 new units and extensions and an additional 4,500 units reconstructed or rehabilitated.

I concede that this achievement, although creditable, is not as high as we would have wanted it to be. But there have been the problems which I have referred to and which the hon. Minister of Finance has referred to in terms of weather at one time and inputs necessary for housing building at another time.

I do not wish to recapitulate what is well known – our achievements in the field of transport and communication, our achievement in education where out of a projected \$50 million for the Plan Period we have outlaid \$28 million providing 14,000 new school places, fourteen new schools and reconstructing and rehabilitating fifteen others. Those facts are well known to the people whose children have benefited from our activities in the field of education.

But I want to say something about the institutional and administrative framework, because we have made it clear in the Development Plan that this Plan could not make progress unless we establish certain institutions and provide a certain relevant framework. Very often while people talk about the Development Plan, they forget this very important aspect of it.

4.20 p.m.

The list of things which we have done as part of the Development Plan is impressive and I think hon. Members need to remind themselves of what we have achieved in this field because all the institutions which we have established were projected in the Development Plan as being necessary for its success.

During the year we have established the National Export Council; we have established the Co-operative College at Kuru Kuru; we have established the system of Regional Government and Regional Development Offices; we have established the Guyana Agricultural Co-operative

(Mr. Hoyte continued)

Development Bank; we have established the Guyana Co-operative Mortgage Finance Bank; we have established the Farm Institute in the North-West District; we have established the Forest Industries Corporation; we have established the Timber Export Board; we have established the Department of Management Studies at the University of Guyana; we have established a Transport Planning Unit in the Ministry of Economic Development; we have established an Advisory Board on Technical Education; we have established a new Primary School Teachers' College; we have established a College of Education for Secondary School Teachers; we have established a National Institute of Dancing; we have established a National Trust.

In addition, also as part of this whole business of development and as part of the established the Department of Management Studies at the University of Guyana; we have established a Transport Planning Unit in the Ministry of Economic Development; we have established an Advisory Board on Technical Education; we have established a new Primary School Teachers' College; we have established a College of Education for Secondary School Teachers; we have established a National Institute of Dancing; we have established a National Trust.

In addition, also as part of this whole business of development and as part of the institutional framework necessary for making a success of our development programme, we have instituted National Service, we have established the Agricultural Products Corporation, and also the Housing Corporation. These are important achievements because they are the institutions which are necessary if we are going to administer our development programme properly, give the proper motivation, monitor our achievement and give stimulus and encouragement to the people.

I said that I would like to look at the capital programme for 1975. That capital programme is projected at a level of \$227 million. The allocations have been made in a way consistent with the objectives of the Development Plan with the emphasis on the productive

sectors and particularly those sectors which give a high return in a reasonably short time. I would like therefore to look at a breakdown of the sectors in terms of the money we have outlayed, or we propose to outlay, and in terms of the percentage of that outlay to the whole amount of the Capital Budget.

We will be putting 60 per cent of the total Capital Budget in the productive sector. I want to say that many sums also appear in sectors that one may describe as “administrative” but those sums are also directly related to production. I have already referred to the fact that we have about \$5 million in the allocation for National Service which is directly related to the agricultural activities of National Service – the planting of cotton, the planting of corn, the planting of other crops such as black-eye peas.

Since I have mentioned National Service again, it might be apposite to remark that the National Service people have acquired a fishing trawler, are catching fish and are servicing the Berbice riverain areas with this cheap and important source of protein. With 60 per cent going into the productive sector, we have 16 per cent in the social sector and 24 per cent in the administrative sector, bearing in mind, as I said, that hidden away in the administrative sector are sums which are directly related to production.

We have also made large allocations for the implementation of projects which are vital to the continued development of this country. We have sums allocated for the Clay Brick Factory at Wales. This is not a dream. The factory is being built now – a factory which will have an output of 10 million solid brick per annum. There are also sums allocated for the textile mill, the site of which has already been selected and the water supply facilities for which are already installed.

I would like to advise the House that the Embassy of the People’s Republic of China delivered to me, a short time ago, the copies of the engineering drawings for the textile factory. The ball is now in our court. We need to move rapidly to have the factory set up and to have it

serving the needs of this country. Also, sir, the hydro-power road, to which I have already referred is vital to the establishment of the hydro-power facility in the Upper Mazaruni River, a hydro-power facility which, as hon. Members know, will have a capacity of some three thousand megawatts which will make it one of the largest hydro-power facilities in the world. [Mr. Singh: “If it is ever built.”] We are not afraid to think big. It is not a question, as the hon. Leader of the Opposition has said, of “if it is ever built.” It will be built. It will be built in the same way as we have done so many other projects in this country which the timid and faint-hearted said could not be done. It will be built because we have already started to build. It will be built because we have started with our own resources to build the road to the site. And it will be built because it is a project conceived and being implemented by the People’s National Congress. [Applause]

Given that emphasis in our capital programme, next year, we have to ensure that we get the results which we hope for. We need to do many things in this country and in the economy if we are to get those results. In 1974, we were successful because of the skilful management of the economy by the Government, because of the significant, and indeed, magnificent performance of the workers of this country and because, too, of the over-all economic and political policies which this Government has been pursuing. We need, therefore, to approach 1975 with a certain caution and a certain humility.

4.30 p.m.

There are, as I have said, several things that we need to do. In the first place, we must contain inflation. If we allow inflation to run rampant in our economy, we will not be able to do the things we have set out to do. In containing inflation, Government must pursue a vigorous policy of restraining prices of every kind of commodity. Government must ensure that our resources are not frittered away and dissipated on conspicuous consumption. Therefore, we, the Guyanese people, have a vested interest in avoiding, as far as possible, foreign consumer goods, and in buying and using local goods. Government will continue, as it has done in the past, to subsidize a wide range of goods and services to protect the people from the full impact of

(Mr. Hoyte contd.)

inflationary effects, most of which we import from abroad. Next year, as projected in the Budget, Government will be spending \$40 million to subsidize goods and services for the people.

The hon. Member Mrs. DaSilva wanted to know what would be the effect of Government's subsidy of electricity rates for the people. That question is answered simply. The effect will be that the people will not have to pay increased rates. The rates will remain pegged; but if it were not for that subsidy, because of the continued rapid escalation of the cost of inputs, such as fuel and the cost of capital and other equipment, the price of electricity was bound to go up. **[Interruption]**

The hon. Members says it has not gone up "all that much." Does the hon. Member know that the cost of fuel has escalated over 100 per cent in one year? Does she know that the price of capital equipment has escalated, in some cases, over 150 per cent? Does she know that the cost of electricity supplied to this country has a large and extraordinary element of imported inputs and, therefore, the Guyana Electricity Corporation cannot control the cost of those inputs? That is why we are making a determined bid to develop our hydro-power resources, that is why we must do it, for unless we do it we shall continue to be at the mercy of the inflation which is bedeviling the economies of all the developed countries with which we deal.

I said that we must contain inflation. It is not a matter for the Government alone. It is a matter for everybody – the Government, the trade unions, the ordinary housewife, the man in the street given an understanding of what is happening in the world and what could be the adverse effect upon the lives of Guyanese, the Guyanese people, I am sure, will respond intelligently to this plea I make.

We need, too, to restrain current expenditure. During the Budget presentation, the Comrade Minister of Finance was able to announce a large surplus on the current account. It was the kind of objective we had been dreaming about for many years. Now that we have

achieved it, we must never allow ourselves to revert to a situation where either we had a deficit on the current side or we had a surplus which was so derisive that it could do nothing to help our capital programme.

We need, therefore, to generate these surpluses for development. Implicit in what I am saying is that we cannot allow, for example, the administrative sector of Government to expand unduly. We cannot allow Personal Emoluments and Other Charges to escalate in such a way that the surpluses are wiped out because, if we did that, we are back in the inflationary spiral which we cannot control.

What we need to do is not to multiply the dollars which the worker or the housewife receives, but to stretch those dollars, to make those dollars buy more. That is precisely what Government's policies have been aimed at. We need, too, to increase production, to improve on the magnificent performance of the economy this year, and to improve not only production but productivity.

Above all, we need industrial peace. We have had a relatively good year. I believe that the response of the workers to Government's call for increased production and productivity in 1974 was a recognition by them of the way in which these policies have been beneficial to them. There has been a good rapport between this Government and the trade unions. There has been understanding; there has been sympathy. I believe that, given the same goodwill, we can have another year, 1975, of relative industrial peace, a year dedicated to the development of this country.

We need, also – and this part of what I said before – a total national effort. We cannot allow our time and our energies to be wasted on irrelevant things. We need to be concentrating all of our efforts on producing things, on developing this country, and on achieving the physical targets we have set ourselves in the capital programme.

I have referred to our investment over the years and I have tried to say something about the returns. I believe that for the relatively high level of investment we have made over the years, the returns, although creditable, are not as high as they could be. This is because of many constraints.

First of all, I think we had in the early years to spend an excessive amount on infrastructure, which did not produce noticeable yields immediately, and which sometimes takes a long time to have the necessary impact. But another reason has been the fact that as Government gets more and more into production, we need to emphasize to our public officers that they must be more production-oriented.

Public officers have grown up in a tradition which has made them expenditure-oriented. They spend money. But they have not had the training which requires them to look at the other end of the spectrum, to look at the production which that money expended has achieved. We, therefore, hope to correct this attitude in a number of ways, by explaining to public officers who are charged with responsibility for production, by giving them the necessary training, by setting up the necessary controls, and ensuring the necessary monitoring and reports of projects.

4.40 p.m.

I think, too, another factor which has resulted in our not achieving as high yield as we could have achieved has been that our planning has been inadequate. It has been inadequate because of the shortage of manpower and because, also, we have been getting more and more into new areas where people who have had to cope with the problems of those areas have not had adequate training. These are inevitable consequences. I do not make these remarks to criticize anybody. Indeed I am not criticizing anybody. I am identifying a problem because we intend next year to correct it and one of the ways in which we will be correcting it will be by strengthening our whole planning administration in the public sector.

12.12.74

National Assembly

4.40 – 4.43 p.m.

(Mr. Hoyte continued)

We have come a long way since 1964. We emerged from the Jaganite terror and mismanagement, confused, irresolute and beaten people. Under the People's National Congress Government we have grown strong and we have prospered. We have gained that self-confidence which is the hallmark's National Congress calls every Guyanese of goodwill, for under the leadership of our Comrade Leader, Comrade Burnham, and under the aegis of the People's National Congress we shall, in our life time, transform.

ADJOURNMENT

Resolved, "That this Assembly do now adjourn to Friday, 13th December, 1974 at 2 p.m.

[The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Leader of the House]

Adjourned accordingly at 4.42 p.m.
