NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

OF THE 49TH SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST SESSION (1986 – 1987) OF THE FIFTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD

AT 2.00 P.M.

ON MONDAY, 21ST DECEMBER, 1987

IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER. PUBLIC BUILDINGS. GEORGETOWN

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (73)

Speaker (1)

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

Members of the Government - People's National Congress (61)

Ministers in the Cabinet (10)

Prime Minister (1)

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

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

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

Other Vice-Presidents and Deputy Prime Ministers (2)

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

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

Other Deputy Prime Ministers (2)

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

Cde. R.H.O. Corbin, M.P., Deputy Prime Minister, Public (Absent) Utilities

Senior Ministers (4)

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

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

Cde. S. Prashad, M.P., Minister of Labour

Cde. W.S. Murray, C.C.H., M.P., Minister of Trade and Tourism

Other Ministers (13)

Senior Ministers (6)

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

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

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

*Cde. D.M.A. Bernard, M.P., Minister in the Ministry of Education

*Cde. J.R. Kranenburg, M.P., Minister of Communications and Works

*Cde. Dr. N.E. Blackman, M.P., Minister in the Ministry of Health

*Non-elected Member

Ministers (5)

- Cde, Urmia E.H. Johnson, M.F., Minister in the Ministry of National Mobilisation (Absent)
- Cde. C.G. Sharma, A.A., J.P., M.P., Minister in the Office of the President (Absent on leave)
- Cde. D. Sawh, M.P., Minister of Forestry
- Cde. V.V. Parvatan, M.P., Minister in the Ministry of Agriculture
- Cde. J.T. Kissoon, M.P., Minister in the Ministry of Medical Education, Environment and Food Policy (Absent)

Ministers of State (2)

- Cde. Dr. Faith A. Harding, M.P., Minister of State in the Ministry of Planning and Development
- Cde. Stella Odie-Ali, M.P., Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs

Parliamentary Secretaries (2)

Cde. Jean M.G. Persico, A.A., M.P., Parliamentary Secretary. Education *Cde. L.E. Scotland, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister

Government Chief Whip (1)

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

Other Members (23)

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

^{*}Non-elected Member

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

Cde. Rose I. Semple, M.P.

Cde. P. Singh, J.P., M.P.

Members from the Regional Democratic Councils (10)

Cde. Nellie R. Charles, M.P. (Region No. 7 - Cuyuni/Mazaruni)

Cde. R. Bishop, M.S., M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)

Cde. Y. Khan, M.P. (Region No. 2 - Pomercon/Supenaam)

Cde. Enid E. Abrahams, M.S., J.P., M.P. (Region No. 3 -Essequibo Islands/West Demerara)

Cde. I. Ally, M.P. (Region No. 6 - East Berbice/Corentyne)

Cde. B.L. Domingo, M.P. (Region No. 1 - Barima/Waini)

Cde. S.I. McGarrell, M.P. (Region No. 8 - Potaro/Siparuni (Absent)

Cde. M. Stephens, M.P. (Region No. 9 - Upper Takutu/Upper Essequibo (Absent)

Cde. Joycelyn Thom-Lindie, M.P. (Region No. 10 - Upper Demerara/Berbice) (Absent)

Cde. M. Ajoodhia, J.P., M.P. (Region No. 5 - Mahaica/Berbice (Absent)

Members of the Minority (11)

(i) People's Progressive Party (8)

Minority Leader (1)

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

Deputy Speaker (1)

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

Other Members (6)

Cde. Janet Jagan, M.P.

Cde. C.C. Collymore, M.P.

Cde. S.F. Mohamed, M.P., Minority Chief Whip

Cde. H. Nokta, M.P. (Absent - on leave) Cde. I. Basir, M.P.

Cde. C.C. Belgrave, M.P.

United Force (2) (ii)

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

(iii)Working People's Alliance (1)

Mr. E. Kwayana, M.P.

OFFICERS

Cde. F.A. Narain, A.A., Clerk of the National Assembly Cde. G.E.F. Moses, Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly

Announcements by the Speaker

Leave

The Speaker: Leave has been granted to Edes, Sawh, Shahabuddeen, Gill-Mingo, Amna Ally and Cde. Deen up to the end of the year.

Public Business

Assembly in Committee

The Speaker: Cde. Greenidge.

Cde. Greenidge (The Minister of Finance): Cde. Chairman in accordance with article 171, paragraph 2 of the Constitution, I signify that Cabinet has recommended for consideration by the Assembly approval for the proposals set out in Financial Paper No.3 of 1987, Supplementary Estimates, Current and Capital totalling \$47,000.

Motion proposed.

The Speaker: Financial Paper NO. 3, Mr. Kwayana.

Mr. Kwayana: Mr. Chairman, I would just like to ask why the charges were made under sub head 312, and if it was for merit awards?

<u>Cde. Greenidge:</u> Cde. Chairman the reason for this request is as indicated in the notes. That is to meet the payment of merit awards for 1986. The sub head as you can see from its title is associated with subsidies as well as contributions among other local organisations.

The Chairman: This completes consideration of all the items. I will now put the motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion carried.

The Chairman: I will now propose Financial Paper No. 4 and we will consider it page by page.

Cde. Collymore: Cde, Chairman, Item 6, Police vehicle spares and services. The legend says to meet maintenance cost of patrol boats to the sum of \$37,000. I would like to ask the Minister if this is not a small sum. I would also like to ask the Minister if she can say where these boats are located which are to be maintained under this head. I would also like to inform the Minister that it seems as though the police on the Demerara River, are at a great disadvantage. According to my information they have no boats at the moment and they are reduced to borrowing boats or getting farmers to go into riverain areas to answer calls.

1987-12-21 14:00-14:10 hrs

I would like to ask the Minister also if it is not time for the Police at Timheri to have a patrol boat of their own?

Cde. Basir: Cde. Chairman, Items9, Head 28. I would like to have this statement here on this paper clarified. It says here under head crops and livestock division and then it says subsidies and other contributions to local organisations. It ends up by saying to meet expenses of the new Guyana Marketing Co-operation. These headings seem to be inconsistent and I would like to be told in this house what is really the intention of the \$500,000 now being voted.

TAKE 14:10 – 14:30 HRS MISSING

14:30 hrs

Cde. Greenidge: As to whether it is a potential disaster, I do not know Cde. Chairman. These were the main aspects of the bridge.

In relation to the question on Item 24, I think perhaps some confusion arises as to these notes. The annual Budget sets out an amount associated with an approved programme. The supplementary shows if it does not have a more elaborate information, the additional cost associated with the approved programme. Some aspects of that programme may have a cost that was not anticipated. That is all that was stated there. But the programme that was associated in the 1987 Budget cost \$99,000 more than was planned. In fact it cost \$99,000 more.

The question would arise if an additional element arises in the programme as a or result of an emergency/as a result of some urgent change in the programme, but unless there is such an explanation given these notes indicate simply that these expense was beyond that which was anticipated for a specific set of tasks.

Now in relation to the Ministry of Manpower, Item 23, what they would normally do is make an estimate based upon the experience in the past of what proportion of those appeals are usually valid. It may well be that at the end of the day the appeals turn out to have a larger proportion than normal which are worthy of payment. Those will have to be dealt with in another supplementary or in the 1988 Budget.

may I start off by saying that if the distinguished Leader of the Minority had looked at, if you like I and I and come up with 12, in this particular case you will recall that during the course of 1987 Budget presentation the exchange rate of the dollar was changed. It was announced in the Budget Speech. Now it follows automatically that if such a change occurs the Guyana dollar cost for any U.S. dollar expenditure increases. So if the amount that was budget to be expended in 1987 were \$5 and at that time the equivalent was \$20 G. Dollars.

The change in the rate itself would automatically increase the Guyana dollar automatic equivalent. There is no nexus between the increase in the Guyana dollar showed here and an increase in the number of journeys and visits made abroad or an increase in the number of conferences.

1987-12-21 14:40 hrs

The Minister of Health (Cde. Blackman): Mr. Kwayana referred to the cost of fuel and lubricants. During the year there were financial increase in activities and programmes and as such there was increased cost as far as maintenance was concerned. In relation to our stock of vehicles, and by wehicles I would expect that that refers to boats also. If a list is required at this point in time I would say that our vehicles are adequate to carry out the necessary activities to the programme.

Janet Jagan: Cde. Chairman, on Item 24, in view of the last meeting of the Assembly we discussed housing and I made the point that in 1986 Ministry of

Housing Report it was stated quite clearly that not one single house was built.

I hope that it was built this year because \$99,000 was spent and they just gave a wague answer. I want a little more information so that we could know what the money was spent for.

The Speaker: Page 4, Items 29 to 39.

Mr. Kwayana: Mr. Chairman, I would like to remark that the only tourist we seem to attract are Heads of State and Government. On Item 23, Ministry of trade and tourism, vehicle spare parts and services. I assume that these vehicles are used to carry out some of the responsibility of the Ministry of Trade and one of the responsibility I think will be keeping an eye on weights and measures handed down to consumers. It is a very serious problem almost throughout the country in which weights and measures are short. Overpricing is one thing but people generally look you in the face, this is a general complaint by consumers, and give you a six for a nine. I am also told that, it is probably a question outside of this that very often American measures and measurements are used without a statement being made and the prices being adjusted.

TAKE 14:40 – 16:17 HRS (ADJOURNMENT) MISSING