

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**

50th Sitting

2 p.m.

Friday, 13th 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 (Absent)
- 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
- *Dr. the Hon. O.M.R. Harper,
Minister of Health (Absent)

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)

*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 **(Absent)**

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

13.12.74
2.25 p.m.

National Assembly

2.25 – 2.35 p.m.

PRAYERS
ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

**Tenth Anniversary of the Government of Guyana under the
People's National Congress**

The Speaker: As I am sure hon. Members know, the ruling party, the People's National Congress, will shortly be inviting our nation to participate in the celebrations of the anniversary of its ten years of rule, first as the major party in a coalition and then for the last six years as the Government itself. In terms of the parliamentary tradition which we inherit and practice, the holder of my office does not ordinarily intervene in the deliberations of this body. However, I consider that the achievements of the ruling party and of its leader, our Prime Minister, transcend the limits of party politics and are truly national in their scope.

First and foremost must rank the achievement in restoring harmony to our society and the removal of tension. Without such a basis none of the institutions which we cherish could work. It is sometimes forgotten that a pre-condition for justice is the establishment of order. The restoration of order after the difficult years which preceded the accession to office of the ruling party must clearly be considered as one of its main achievements.

Next, I would identify the restoration of the self-confidence of our people. In this the main instruments utilised by the party and the Government were the co-operative and the community self-help movement. Not only have these social and economic forms provided our people, in towns and villages, with urgently needed development works, they have also nurtured amongst us the spirit of self-reliance. It is a far cry from a self-help project to the nationalization of the assets of a multi-national corporation, but I venture to think that the confidence generated in the field of self-help has inspired our people to tackle successfully the management of major industries hitherto reserved as the province of our former masters.

Closely associated with the restoration of self-confidence was the recovery of that sense of dignity which has been eroded by the colonial years. The ruling party has given to all of us a sense of the worthwhileness of our traditional heritage. Each religion has been accorded a place of respect and honour in the national life and our national festivals now portray the richness our mixed heritage. Already there has begun to emerge from these several traditions an art and a way of life which is truly and distinctly Guyanese.

In a wider context, the Prime Minister and his party have led the way in giving meaning and content to independence. The change to a republican form of Government was symbolic of our new awareness of ourselves as a nation State. There are indications that others in the region will follow the same path. Similarly, it was this Government which first sought to assert the permanent sovereignty of our people over our natural resources, to ensure that the vital decisions which determine our economic development are made in Guyana and not elsewhere, and that our wealth is mobilized through indigenous, financial institutions and set to work for the benefit of all our people rather than be left to fructify in the pockets of the people of the rich States.

Of equal importance in the working out of the processes of independence was the successful campaign of the government in the areas of dress, of food and in the realm of ideas to liberate ourselves from the overseas attitudes and cast of mind into which we had been moulded over the generations.

But remarkable as has been the achievements on the domestic front, they have at least been equaled by the achievements overseas. There can be but little doubt that without the leadership role of our Prime Minister the Caribbean would not have achieved the measure of economic integration and of political unity which characterizes it today. It is only his patient statesmanship and practical wisdom which has ensured the steady progress from a small free trade area to one which eventually comprised the region and which has now been deepened into community.

Looking beyond our sub-region to Latin America, we must note the cordial and, indeed, mutually fruitful relations which now exist with our neighbours and the respect with which Guyana is held in the councils of Latin America, so much so that our small State was recently accorded the distinction of being unanimously and successfully nominated by the region to a seat in the Security Council.

At the level of global politics, the evidence of the respect with which Guyana is held is manifold. Some of the most distinguished leaders of the world, personages whose names are household words, such as Mrs. Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, president Kaunda of Zambia, President Nyerere of Tanzania and most recently president Tolbert have graced our land with their presence. It is symbolic, however, of the ruling Party's concern with human dignity that the almost unknown leaders of the liberation movements have also come to this land to have their confidence renewed and in the certainty of receiving material and moral support.

Looking to the third World, the name of Forbes Burnham has come to be mentioned with the same accents of veneration and respect as its other most distinguished leaders. The role of Guyana in giving a new dynamism to the non-Aligned Movement has been acknowledged in the holding in our capital city, just over two years ago, of the Conference of Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries, to date the most important political conference ever held in this continent. Our Prime Minister was accorded the position of a Vice-President at the Algiers Summit Conference of that Movement by virtue of which Guyana now plays an important part in the Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Our achievements at the United Nations are well known. Few small States in so short a time have done so much in advancing the objectives of peace and economic development for all mankind.

Such achievements, of which I have touches on only a few, redound to the credit and glory of all our people. We can all hold our heads high because of them. And it is fitting and

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proper that we should take time on this tenth anniversary of the P.N.C.'s accession to power to acknowledge its role under the wise and dynamic leadership of the Prime Minister, Linden Forbes Sampson Burnham, in creating out of chaos and disorder which it inherited, one people, one nation with one distinguished destiny. [Applause]

PUBLIC BUSINESS

MOTIONS

APPROVAL OF ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE FOR 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. Leader of the Opposition.

The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Singh): Mr. Speaker, first of all I would like to shed some further light on this matter yesterday of an incorrect copy of the Budget Speech having been circulated to us to study within the two days allocated for studying it. My hon. Colleague, Mrs. DaSilva, quite rightly pointed out yesterday that she knew that there was something left out from having heard the hon. Minister of Finance make, in his speech, certain statements which she did not find in her copy of the Budget Speech. The hon. Minister tried to impute that she was suggesting that there was some sinister motive in leaving these statements out. There could not have been because, as she did say, she had heard him say them.

We all understood that one part was left out so that, having studied my Budget Speech during the two days allocated and having been under the impression that it was only one part that was left out, I did not make any comparison. I presumed that it was only the section dealing with Financing the Programme, Current and Capital, that was left out and all the work I did before, a comparative analysis which I prepared, was based on the other figures because I did not think there was any reason to make any comparison between the new and the old.

2.35 p.m.

Unfortunately, I seem to be at a disadvantage because half an hour before I came here my hon. colleague telephoned and told me that she had discovered some inaccuracies other than that part dealing with Financing the Programme, Current and Capital, which she understood was left out. For example, on page 15, at the end of the third paragraph it is stated:

“The end result was a Revised Current Expenditure Estimate of \$261 Mn. for 1974.”

The first copy had “\$260 mn.” not “\$261 mn.” I have not been able to incorporate these in the figures when preparing my contribution to the Budget Debate. I point this out because if my figures are wrong it is on the basis of what I have been given to study for two days. At the end of page 15, it is stated:

“The total Government expenditure on capital and current account is now projected at \$368 Mn.”

The first copy had \$367Mn. I am not sure what kind of Printer’s errors these are but there it is. Then on page 16, the second paragraph where it is stated:

“... It now appears that the Current Revenue would attain a total of about \$300 Mn. where only \$221.9 Mn. was anticipated ...”

That figure was \$203 million in the first copy; and further down “... the Bank of Guyana and Guybau \$16 Mn ...” that was \$15 million in the first copy. At the end of the fourth paragraph the sum of \$26 Mn. is stated; the first copy had \$23 Mn. I am doing this because my figures might well be incorrect as a result of what I have been given to study. On page 22, the fourth paragraph where it is stated:

“... National Service which is directing much of its efforts into productive activities; \$40 Mn. have been earmarked for co-operative development and \$266 Mn. for Community Development projects.”

In the first copy it was \$2 Mn. instead of \$2.6 Mn. On page 23 a whole paragraph was omitted and we thought it was the only error, but when we go to page 25 to the section headed “Reorganisation for Increasing Production” we find that another small paragraph was left out. This reads:

“It is Government’s intention to ensure that the Agricultural Products Corporation works in close co-operation with the National Service in the production of cotton, corn, and black eye peas at Kimbia and Papaya. The National Service itself is proposing to put another 5,000 acres of land under cotton and 1,000 acres under corn.”

That is not so significant, but the fact of the matter is that the figures were not in the first copy. I am sorry but I seemed to have been misled into not checking properly. I only knew about these changes shortly before I came to Parliament and when I read comparative figures you will have to bear that in mind.

The 1975 Budget Speech was almost entirely predictable as has been its predecessors also. After so many successive years of onerously imposing budgets I suppose it is natural to feel a sense of relief at a Budget which lacks the extreme hardships imposed by previous budgets. But it would certainly be extremely erroneous to keep referring to this Budget as an almost tax-free Budget.

The fact of the matter is that we have reached saturation point in taxation. Since we have already reached the highwater-mark in the rates of our taxes it would certainly not be in the best interest in the economy of this country to continue to denude the resources of the private sector. Indeed, I submit it would be tragic for any Government to stifle to death the goose that lays the golden egg even though, for some time now, that poor goose has been gasping for breath. But I will deal more specifically with the private sector when I come to deal with the hon. Minister's budget proposals.

At the very beginning of the Speech, and indeed throughout the Budget Speech, the government "modestly" – and for those who are writing the word "modestly" I would advise them to put it in inverted commas; as I said, it is tantamount to saying "I love me" – takes credit for our moving from a situation in January 1974 where external reserves were under devastating pressures to one nearly a year later where considerable breathing space has been realised.

The hon. Minister would have us believe that the restrictive fiscal measures are aimed this year with much more candour than previously, and the hon. Minister would have the business community and the middle-class believe that this resulted in an almost complete turn about from the bleak outlook of last January.

Although the Budget Speech makes passing reference to prices as a factor in the improvement, it focuses principally on the role of this Government. That permeated the Speech. But the stark fact of the matter is that the world sugar price has jumped by 300 to 400 per cent and the price of rice has increased comparably during the same period. Incidentally, both of

these products are referred to ironically in the United States of America and in the United Kingdom as “white gold”.

We are fortunate that these are by far our two most important agricultural commodities. Therefore, any country in analogous situation was obviously bound to enjoy an unprecedented turnabout during this period in question. Indeed, one might strongly argue that the Government’s fiscal policies proved to be of no utility at all in permitting us to improve our position. However, there can be no question at all about the fact that what it did do was to serve to harass some of our most creative and most enterprising citizens.

Let us be frank, and let us recognize, for example, that the imposition of some of these stringent exchange control restrictions only served to force people who did not have a thought of trying to get their money out of this country, to think of ways and means whereby they could ship their money out of Guyana. It scared them into doing this.

It is a well-known fact that huge sums of money which normally come in from the Western countries to relatives and other dependents in Guyana are traded either overseas or in Guyana for Guyanese dollars and the foreign money is banked overseas. It does not remain in Guyana as it used to in the days when there were not such stringent restrictions.

While I am on this point, perhaps I could mention that the Budget Speech mentions that availability of foreign exchange for migrants’ transfer was temporarily suspended. I know that at first nothing at all was allowed for those people who were migrating. The position now is that those people who are migrating – and there are a lot of them, scared away from Guyana by the present policies of the Government – are allowed the paltry sum of \$100 (G).

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[Mr. Singh continued]

2.45 p.m.

The Constitution provides that there should be freedom of movement in and out of Guyana. It has that entrenched in the fundamental rights. These people are entitled to leave Guyana. But, even though they are going as migrants, the Government is allowing them only the equivalent of \$100 (G). They are forced to leave the remainder of their money here in Guyana. How do they survive in the foreign country? Well, some of us may well interpret that as one of the means whereby the fundamental provisions of the Constitution are being circumvented.

I wonder whether the hon. Minister who will reply will tell us when the Government is going to put an end to this “temporary measure” and give the people migrating from this country something realistic – I would not like to say a little more generous – for them to go away with. It is their money after all.

Reverting to the Budget Speech proper, I deal specifically with the Government’s attempt to use the oil crisis to cover up its extravagance and its inefficiency. We must recognize that our over-all consumption of fuel is very modest indeed, when compared with the vast majority of the developing countries. While the cost of petroleum products has escalated here, as elsewhere, our sales of sugar and rice have more than compensated for the increase in the cost of fuel. In other words, the character of world economic factors has played a far larger role in our present situation than the Government spokesmen would have us believe. Indeed our revenues from sales abroad have helped to gloss over mismanagement, failure and sometimes corruption existing in Guyana.

The Government notwithstanding the so-called “record budgets” it has been passing out from year to year – and these I must say have been honoured more in the breach than in the observance – has continued to maintain a conspicuous trend of mismanagement from year to year. As I said before, were it not for the unexpected and unprecedented increase in sugar prices

which permitted the imposition of the special sugar levy, the government's budgeting policy would have landed it in stormy seas indeed.

We certainly cannot refer to the Budget even as it is a tax-free Budget, leaving aside, of course, the betting-shop levy, because when we think of it a special levy was introduced on sugar during this year and it will be maintained in 1975 and as a tax the Government took away from the sugar industry and the sugar workers \$91 million in addition to the normal budgeted taxes. What was imposed was not an excess profit tax; it was a special levy and therefore sugar workers must necessarily suffer a reduction in the amount of bonus which they would otherwise have been entitled to as sugar workers.

It is argued by the apologists for the Government that in circumstances such as those being enjoyed by sugar, the entire country must benefit. Even if we accept this, surely sugar workers are entitled to something more than they are getting at the present time. And what about the pensions paid to former sugar workers who gave the best years of their lives in the sugar industry which is doing so well at the present moment? These people get no Government or N.I.S. pension. I understand that they receive from the sugar barons between \$2 and \$4 per week. Can this Government say that that is adequate for reasonable survival in these days when the cost of living is escalating? Government pensioners have recently been granted increases. What about these former sugar workers?

I understand that the hon. Prime Minister while he was canvassing shortly before the last "selection" to Parliament which was made last year July, promised sugar estate pensioners that they would get something more. We would like the hon. Prime Minister to keep that promise to them.

The Minister of Finance speaks of a resulting surplus of \$29 million for 1974 but the overspending in the current expenditure beyond the budgeted amount which continues year after year, clearly exposes the incompetence of the government in managing public funds. Budgets

have been prepared for some years now, merely it would seem to conform to convention. Standards set by these budgets have never been achieved. The large variants of actual performance from the budgetary standards set show the sumptuousness, the recklessness, the extravagance of Government's recurrent expenditure. On the other hand, from year to year for the past six years at least, budgeted capital expenditure intending to achieve even modest levels of capital formation was never spent.

The effect of overspending, overconsumption, overspending of recurrent expenditure and underspending on capital projects, having regard, of course, to the Government's predetermined standards, is to eat into capital after, of course, consuming all the income. The capital consumed as such is extravagant spending and it is not replaced. Let us look at the actual figures. I am dealing with the recurrent expenditure.

Year	Amount Budgeted	Actual Spent	Over-spent
1968	\$ 96m	\$ 98m	\$ 2m
1969	\$105m	\$107m	\$ 2m
1970	\$116m	\$122m	\$ 7m
1971	\$131m	\$138m	\$ 7m
1972	\$146m	\$153m	\$ 7m
1973	\$171m	\$211m	\$37m
1974	\$222m	\$260m	\$38m

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[Mr. Singh contd.]

2.55 p.m.

Over the same period, the total budgeted amount for current expenditure was \$990 million, the actual spent was \$1,000 million; the total amount overspent was \$100 million. Now we are budgeting \$304 million for 1975 recurrent expenditure. Let us make a comparison with the Capital Expenditure.

For 1968, Capital Expenditure budgeted was \$45 million. The actual amount spent was \$40 million. The amount underspent was \$5 million. Let us bear in mind that we have been given a lot of fancy reasons why the 1974 capital budget was so underspent. We must bear in mind that having been given all those reasons for 1974, surely, there must have been reasons for the other years, if there was underspending. And there was consistent underspending in the Capital Expenditure. This is what is eating into capital, as one says.

In 1969, \$62 million was budgeted, \$45 million was actually spent; \$17 million underspent. In 1970, budgeted amount, \$79 million, actual spent \$44 million; underspent \$35 million. In 1971, budgeted amount, \$75 million, actual spent \$58 million; underspent \$17 million. In 1972, budgeted amount, \$79 million, actual spent \$63 million; underspent \$16 million. For 1973, that is, last year, we have not been given any reasons. For 1973, budgeted amount, \$138 million, a very impressive amount. The actual amount spent was \$83 million, so the amount underspent was \$55 million.

For this year, the year for which we have been given all these reasons, the budgeted amount was \$173 million, the actual amount spent was \$107 million, an underspending of \$66 million. We have got all the reasons for \$66 million underspent this year. What are the reasons for last year, \$55 million underspent, or the previous years? Indeed, for this seven-year period, the figures are as follows. Budgeted \$651 million, actual spent \$440 million, \$211 million was underspent on the capital estimate which this Government brings here to Parliament every year and make us debate. It puts out fancy figures of what it will spend on capital during a period.

I have the figures here for the recurrent revenue. There was a surplus in recurrent revenue because, during the period 1968 to 1974, we had a net surplus of \$75 million. I give the total in the recurrent revenue: budgeted, \$1,018 million, actual \$1,093. The difference, \$75 million, was left over as surplus. We must bear in mind that whenever we overspend recurrent, we are eating into the amount of money that is left available to spend on capital. That is the point we want to make. In spite of all the fancy figures here, capital achievement has never materialised.

The hon. Minister tells us on page 7 that the Government

“has taken the deliberate decision that Current Expenditures must be kept within limits low enough to ensure that current revenues, through a surplus, contribute significantly to the financing of the capital budget.”

But what a contradiction in the face of the actual figures which I have quoted, where the Recurrent Expenditure is so much more than what was budgeted. In fact, expenditure in almost all the recurrent heads skyrocketed while the Capital Expenditure was reduced except, of course, for national security which still remains under Capital Expenditure. National Security went from \$1 million to \$6.15 million.

There were some reductions in recurrent expenditure and it is significant to not in what areas the reductions were. The reductions were in: Magistrates, reduced by \$43,000; Parliament Office – the P.P.P. is not here and perhaps we should congratulate the Clerk for the reduction of \$120,000. And this used to be the highest forum in the land; it has not been that within recent times. Significant decisions are announced at party rallies, at Congress Place and so on, so Parliament takes second place. Maybe that is reflected in the reduction in the amount for Parliament Office. In the Audit Department, the recurrent expenditure has been reduced by \$58 million; the Public Service, \$103 million; the reduction in the expenditure for Police is \$800,000. Maybe that is why we have so many perpetrators of choke-and-rob attacks not being caught. For

example, in the Ministry of Information, expenditure on propaganda went up by \$404,000; Ministry of Co-operatives, that went up by \$5 million; the G.D.P., not the Police, went up by \$1.5 million; Office of the Prime Minister went up by \$494,000. And we say we are economizing. Obviously we are economizing in the wrong direction.

What about Regional Ministers and their staffs when we are talking about economizing? They are absolutely a waste of money. I have said that before. The Minister infers that we are now putting a greater accent on them so that there can be regional government representation. I submit that all they amount to is maintaining a top level P.N.C. presence in the area. It is merely using the taxpayers' money to subsidize the P.N.C. existence in the various areas.

May I deal with something else. What was the purpose of the subdivision of the Ministry of Economic Development recently, except to permit further unjustified proliferation of the Government's bureaucracy? We now have a Ministry of National Development with \$2½ million in Other Charges expenses in the Estimates for 1975. Not a word of detail in these Estimates as to how this money will be spent. Just a block amount like that! One wonders how much of this money will be used to further finance the P.N.C. with taxpayers' money.

We bear in mind what a former Minister of Information once said, that there is no difference between the Government and the P.N.C. party. It seems certainly to have come to that stage. Even in Parliament yesterday, my learned Friend the hon. Minister Mr. Desmond Hoyte kept, referring to the hon. Minister of Finance as "Comrade." I have never heard that application being allowed in respect of Members of Parliament but the hon. Minister deliberately and consistently said that.

3.05 p.m.

I can remember distinctly that the hon. Prime Minister once called a Member of Parliament "comrade" and he apologized to you, sir, because he recognized this as language

(Mr. Singh continued)

which should not be used in Parliament. I always thought that Members of Parliament were referred to as “the hon. Member”, or “the hon. Minister.” Maybe it has come to the stage where the party has taken over Parliament also ...” I know that it has taken over Parliament in respect of numbers, I know it has taken over the Public buildings because there are decorations for the anniversary round and about the Public Buildings, but if it has taken over Parliament as a party affair exclusively then, perhaps, it should tell us that. If it is now “comrade” in Parliament tell us so. Let them make a statement about it. We have been talking about the freedom of the Press in Guyana very recently. I notice in the Chronicle now --

The Speaker: Hon. Leader of the Opposition, I wish to refer you to Standing Order 35, paragraph (5). It clearly states, so far as this honourable House is concerned, “A Member shall be referred to in the Assembly as the Honourable Member Mr. ...” As far as I am concerned this is what it says.

Mr. M. F. Singh: Thank you very much, sir, for having ruled on that point. Perhaps the hon. Members of this House will bear that in mind in future. But I looked on page 3 in the **Chronicle** of the 13th December, 1974 and even the **Chronicle** is now indulging in the word “comrade”. It stated:

“Ideal lands will be utilised for development ... This information was contained in the Budget Speech delivered to the National Assembly on Monday last by Finance Minister, Cde. Frank Hope.”

I am not sure who is responsible for that but when you talk about freedom of the Press and you read this which follows the pattern set by the **New Nation** then we are left to wonder. It is not only the **Chronicle**. The **Guyana Graphic** also did it a few days before. I do not have the issue here but it was done in one of the small articles. A Minister was referred to as “comrade”.

When we talk about freedom of the Press in Guyana, we must realise that more and more we are being taken into the iron grip of the P.N.C. We are being controlled to such an extent that the reporters feel constrained to write in the papers in the same way as the party newspaper writes. They feel that they have to do that. I am not sure what their ideology may be but certainly, in the interest of securing their jobs, they seem to be thinking that they must follow the pattern set by the **New Nation**. That is the danger; that is the thing that we have been talking about. The Government may not say “You must not do this and you must not do that”, but the reporters themselves feel that they have to do something. They feel they must not do anything at all which the Government does not like; they must write entirely in accordance with what they feel would please the Government. It is not only the Press, it is what they try to do in Parliament. And I am glad that you, sir, have read the Standing Order.

What is happening at Sophia now? Have they taken over Sophia? That is the question I would like to ask. We note that they have established their P.N.C. shop there which will be the exclusive agent for Chinese goods. But what else have we noticed? We notice that for several days now Government vehicles and Government equipment are being used there in a feverish effort to prepare the site for their rally and Congress or what have you. Have they taken over the Government vehicles also? Are the words of the former Minister of Information so true, namely, that what is the Government’s is automatically the Party’s? Have we come to that stage now? [Dr. Reid: “Which comrade has said so?”] McDavid. The one that you put in the National Service. Mr. Speaker, my voice does not permit me to engage in cross-talk.

Actually, I remember an incident three days ago. I was in the office of a certain professional gentleman and two activists of the P.N.C. – my strong suspicion is that they are being paid from the Community Development vote – actually had the temerity to go into the office of this gentleman and tell him that he must come to the rally on Sunday night to hear the Prime Minister. This is a party affair. He, of course, told them that he could not come, he was not a party member and he had other commitments in any case. But this seems to be the pattern. They are going around actually coercing people to go to their rally so that they can have

significant numbers there. Do they have to beg the people to go there? I would have thought that their achievements would have made it a foregone conclusion that the place would have been packed. Are they afraid that their “achievements” are not so much appreciated by the people as they seem to want us to believe here in Parliament? Is that why they have to coerce people and school children?

They have gone to a certain school where a friend of mine is a teacher and actually told him that he must make sure that at least two hundred people attend the rally. I do not know how many they will be bringing down in trucks and buses from the East Coast as they have done before for President Tolbert’s visit. These are things that worry us. When the rights of Guyanese individuals are being so eroded, when taxpayers’ money is being used for party purpose, one must speak about it. This is what we are doing here, we are dealing with taxpayers’ money.

Dealing with domestic transport and development of the interior, the hon. Minister speaks about the need to build roads into the interior and \$23.5 million has been programmed to that end. We are told that the bulk of this money will be spent on an access road leading to the proposed Upper Mazaruni hydro-power site, a project, according to the hon. Minister, on which Government “intends to complete investigations.” In other words, the project remains a gleam in our eyes but we are going ahead allocating a substantial sum of money to build a road to it.

I well remember in 1965, from the balcony of these buildings, the hon. Prime Minister said we will have hydro-electric power, we will have current flowing in every home in a short while. That was 1965. Since then we have had several investigations and several reports published and even now concurrently there are two studies going on; two sets of investigations are being done by two different and independent sets of people.

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3.15 – 3.25 p.m.

(Mr. Singh continued)

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What we are doing is allocating a huge sum of money to build this road leading to the hydro-power site. If the hydro-power site proves to be unrealistic – and this is always possible from an engineering point of view – could the road serve the purpose of opening up that area? Possibly.

However, let us remember that other Government projects for growing foodstuffs in the Interior have proved to be extremely, if not prohibitively, costly. Will such produce trucked or flown to Georgetown be as expensive as the golden potatoes – they are “golden” as far as Guyanese are concerned – from Kate or the produce from Matthews Ridge?

Does the Government calculate the cost of the aeroplane fuel and the maintenance of the aircraft to bring this produce down here? Let us remember that fuel and maintenance of aeroplanes involve a very high percentage of foreign exchange. Does the Government take that foreign cost into consideration? How realistic, in terms of economy, is it to ferry the produce by plane – I know that there is a great amount of spoilage – from Rupununi or any of those hinterland areas to Georgetown? One suspects that many of the P.N.C. Government projects are really designed as showpieces, appearance being considered to be more significant than the actual reality.

Let us also cast our minds back to the self-help road. People were brought from all over the place at a fantastic cost in air passage. They were taken up to the road project, housed, fed and perhaps clothed on this prestigious project of the Mahdia road, the road to Brazil. That was the showpiece of the time, the talk in all the Caribbean territories: “Let us go to Guyana to work on the self-help road; we will have a glorious, wonderful holiday.” They went, developed a small corn on their hand from holding a cutlass, and spent the rest of the time with the doctor in attendance having been certified as not fit enough to hold a cutlass again. It was a glorious holiday! People from all over the world enjoyed it. What was the cost? We have been

clamouring time and time again in this honourable House for the Government to tell us the cost of that fiasco. Up to now not a word has been heard.

It lost its significance, and we moved on to obeah; we had all the great statements and all the emotionalism about obeah. Obeah has come and gone; we have not had the legislation as yet; and how we have moved on to National Service.

National Service is the thing now. The sum of \$6.15 million is to be spent this year, \$11 million next year. When are we going to put an end to these showpieces?

The point here is, as usual, that this is a piecemeal Budget showing almost no relationship or apparent understanding of how logistics relate to costs. A connected question is: How much will a brick produced under the watchful eyes of our Chinese friends cost the house builder in Georgetown or anywhere else along the coast? After our Chinese friends are involved fully, will it cost 30 cents a brick, 30 cents a brick or 50 cents a brick? We do not know. Perhaps somebody would enlighten us as to how much it is likely to cost; we have heard so very much about it.

National Service: Aside from the aspect of compulsion in National Service – it has not yet been enacted but what does National Service do? Among other things it succeeds in duplicating just about every function of one Ministry or another, of one public enterprise or another. If we have a cotton project under the Ministry of Agriculture, why must we have another one scheduled to involve 5,000 acres under National Service. As any resident in Georgetown will tell any of us, the business in National Service uniform seems to be very brisk indeed within recent times. Every day there are more and more persons in uniforms walking the streets of Georgetown and we must assume that they are all National Service staff because it is only the staff who would be regularly in Georgetown. If my recent head count is correct the staff has already become the tail that wags the dog.

What does all this cost the taxpayers? The Budget, of course, does not respond to such graceless questions as this. Our study suggests that if we spent a fraction of this sum we could refurbish the Georgetown Hospital – and I am sorry that the hon. Minister of Health is not here because this is something he is very worried about – we could maintain a series of public health clinics around the country and have them properly staffed. Indeed we could do the same to achieve the goals of other Ministries besides the Ministry of Health.

3.25 p.m.

I heard one person refer to these National Service people as “green parrots”, perhaps because of the propensity of the parrot to merely repeat any clap-trap that it may be taught. My information is that these “green parrots” are in fact being very badly trained. I am told that the response to the advertisements for instructors was very poor indeed and, in addition, that the fallout was very high. As a result, standards were lowered and the people finally selected to train these “green parrots” are, in fact, people with very little discipline and not a very significant amount of training.

What will they teach the National Service people? Will there be P.N.C. indoctrination? Will they be taught to choke-and-rob? According to the **New Nation** of 8th December, 1974, page 19 there is a plan to deal with choke-and-rob. The headlines were: “Govt. plan to solve choke and rob menace” and the article states:

“. . . In reply to comments by the Association’s president” – that is, the Police Association, “Sergeant Michael Gordon, who had expressed his concern about the choke and rob menace, the Cde. Leader stressed that choke and rob should not be looked at in isolation but that it should be viewed as a problem of the society.

(Mr. Singh continued)

He pointed out that Government was making efforts to solve the choke and rob menace and referred to the National Service as part of the plan to bring to an end, the choke and rob menace . . .”

So, perhaps that is one of the aspects of the National Service. What else will they be taught? Military training? The art of guerilla warfare? If that is so, then when they come out of National Service what will they do? They have been taught; they have been trained; they know how to handle a gun; they know how to involve in warfare. Will they fit easily back into society? Will they have a rebellious spirit? Will they be the private army of the P.N.C. after they come out of National Service? We are worried as to what are the answers to these questions. These people are not being treated as individuals. They are being treated as a mass and, as I said before, control is in the wrong hands.

What about the Youth Corps? At one time that was the fad. At different stages we have different “red herrings” to put before the people. The Youth Corps, we all know, was a dismal failure. Where are the members now? Perhaps they have been absorbed into the National Service, but certainly not one word has been said about this much vaunted Youth Corps of previous times.

I wish to make another comment. It has been noted previously in parades that the Police seem to have been relegated to the last place. The order is: National Service, G.D.F. and Police last. Perhaps this is the problem. The Police have realised that more accent is being placed on others and maybe their morale has suffered as a result of this. But, certainly, it is significant to note that the Police are coming up last in these parades.

I repeat again, if only the money that we are spending on National Service could be channeled into creating jobs for the high percentage of unemployed in the country today, I am

sure that it would be more productive, that it would be less costly than the National Service which the P.N.C. is putting so much accent on at the present time.

Turning now to housing, and our 1976 goals: The hon. Minister predicts that we will build over 3,000 houses in 1975. If we do so, it will mean an increase of some 700 to 800 per cent over previous years. The reality is much less impressive. Not only will we not shelter ourselves by 1976 – and bear in mind 1976 is only a little more than a year away – but I say that with the population increase, we will be even further removed from the goal than ever.

For that matter nowhere does the Budget address the realities of housing and food.

Perhaps, I could ask the hon. Minister where he got the round figure of 10 per cent to express the net increase in the gross domestic product. The problem is that figures are rattled out and handed to us for consumption without any authoritative backing. They are merely fed to us like so much propaganda.

My information from Government circles does not tally with this figure and, depending on what criteria are used, describes the increase as between 5 and 6 per cent at the most. [Hon. Member: “You don’t know what you’re speaking about.”] Mr. Speaker, that is the usual answer. We make comments here and we are merely told we do not know what we are talking about. That is the answer to the constructive criticism which we make. But, that will not suffice the Guyanese people all the time. The Guyanese people are becoming more and more educated and that is why they have to be coerced into going to the National Park on Sunday night. That is the whole problem. You cannot fool all the people all the time.

With respect to corporations, we note that the numbers of these corporations have been growing rapidly within recent times. First, we had the Housing Corporation, then the Small Industries Corporation. Now, we are told that we will have the Post Office Corporation and the Guyana Agricultural Products Corporation. The members of the Government spoke about

“holding expenditure.” They spoke about not increasing expenditure. We are increasing the bureaucracy. This is exactly what we are doing. More than that, it seems that more and more Government business is being channeled into Corporations.

Taxpayers’ money is involved but these Corporations are not being audited by the government Auditor. They are all audited by a firm of private accountants. What we are doing is this: we are taking the inspection of accounts entirely out of the control and supervision of the Director of Audit. He is the “watch dog” of the people’s money. He had a constitutional post which is not to be interfered with; he is independent. He is subject only to Parliament and not to any one individual – neither the President nor the Prime Minister, nor anyone else. He has to answer to Parliament and to nobody else. But, control of finances are being taken completely out of his hands and channeled into the corporations to be audited by a firm of private accountants.

The Government, apparently, is satisfied with the audit of these accounts by the firm of private accountants but it seems that when it comes to the audit of company accounts by these same outside auditors, it is a different matter because in the Budget Speech we are being told that now the audit of company accounts will take place on company premises by staff and personnel of the Inland Revenue Department, so there is one standard for Government Corporations but another standard for companies, an entirely different standard by the same people. These people are accountants. In a Schedule under the Companies’ Ordinance, companies are audited by people who, under the law, are approved by the Government as auditors. The Inland Revenue Department will now be undertaking audit on the premises. The Director of Audit will have no jurisdiction to inquire into the accounts of these corporations.

3.35 p.m.

Turning now to the budgetary proposals, we note that sugar, rice, bauxite, and timber, will yield tremendous increases in revenue in 1975 yet only a drop in the ocean has been given by way of income tax relief to the individual taxpayers. It is certainly not commensurate with

(Mr. Singh contd.)

the increased productivity, particularly taking into consideration the increased cost of living which, in any case, is not compensated by any increase in wages and salaries.

It may be that some taxpayers may be able to demand and receive increases in wages to meet the spiraling cost of living, but what about the self-employed people? Every taxpayer has got tax relief. The wage earner may be able to clamour and, with the militant trade unions that we have, will be able to secure increases of wages. What about the self-employed person? Whom can he go to for an increase in wages? Surely the budget proposals should have taken account of that.

P.N.C. supporters in the markets, the vendors are small self-employed people. They are involved also. When we talk of self-employed people, we do not only mean the professionals, lawyers, doctors, we also think in terms of the market people, the people with stalls who have to strive for a living in these days when the Government seems to be so bent on putting the private sector out of existence.

What about companies? Have the companies been given any relief? The Government has raised a hue and cry about the effects of the oil crisis and the international situation. Companies are also affected. They have to purchase equipment, machinery and spare parts. They have to pay higher prices. They have increased their productivity in order to compete. What have they been given? Absolutely no concession at all. Has anything at all been given to encourage investment by the private sector? Instead, the Government seems to be bent on taking away from them as evidenced by the establishment of the P.N.C. shop at Sophia – not a Government agency – and the increased restrictions being placed on the private sector.

Let us understand that that P.N.C. shop at Sophia has been guaranteed by the Minister the exclusive right to handle Chinese goods coming into the country initially. Just as how the party uses its power to put decorations on Government buildings, in the same way it will use its power

and influence to make sure that the P.N.C. shop get priority and preferential treatment. That is the position and that is why I make reference to it.

To make matters even worse for these companies, even the relief that was promised to the companies has been denied them. Let us refer to the hon. Minister's Budget Speech for 1974. On page 40 it states:

“Property Tax:-

The limitation of debts to 20% and 50% on assets in the case of companies and individuals, respectively, for the purpose of determining net property subject to property tax, will be removed.”

It has not been removed and we are at the end of the financial year. The hon. Minister promised it in his Budget Speech in this honourable House and nothing at all has been done to implement this. This is highly immoral. Accounts and auditors made up their accounts for 1974 on the basis of what the hon. Minister promised for 1974, thinking, expecting, presuming that they could rely on what the hon. Minister said in his Budget Speech. But what is the position? No law has been passed. The position remains the same and the companies will have to remake their returns because companies will have to continue to suffer the iniquity of paying property tax on property which they do not own.

If they are limited to 20 per cent only on liabilities and they have 40 per cent mortgage on the property, they are paying on property that they do not own. The hon. Minister must have realised that, and that is why he promised this relief in his Budget Speech in 1974. But nothing has been done to make it a reality. I hope that Budget Speeches are not made to be broken. I hope they are solemn promises made in this House.

I am not concerned about what is going on behind the scenes. As far as those people are concerned, what was promised them in 1974 has not materialized and they are suffering,

whereas, this would have given them a certain amount of relief. If this was not intended, if it was that these people are rich and they should not have had the relief, then I would have thought that the hon. Minister would have been honest enough not to put it here in this document, which was presented to this House.

What about the 5 per cent surtax? This was introduced as a temporary measure to assist in a difficult situation. Now that things are so much better, why are we still keeping this 5 per cent National Development Surtax? Why is it being retained? And for how long will it be retained? Let us realize the significance of this. It means that for those people who are experts and professionals in their fields, people whom Guyana needs to develop this country, because we have to compete with the rest of the world, their earnings would normally be in the high bracket. It means they would be paying to the Government, 75 cents in every taxable dollar income and will retain 25 cents. And the allowances are limited. So we expect that those people will, in fact, remain in Guyana when they have opportunities overseas?

3.45 p.m.

That is why Guyana is suffering from a brain drain at the present moment. That is why we cannot have doctors to staff our hospitals. That is why we have to import so many Filipino doctors. That is why the medical service is in such disarray at the present moment in Guyana. We cannot keep our trained people, our experts, because taxation is far too high. Let the hon. Minister give consideration to removing this National Development Surtax now that the situation, in his own words, has improved to such an extent.

We note that one of the proposals is to insist on an acceptable standard of record-keeping by persons engaged in trade, business, etc. Of course, records have to be kept. Of course, the professionals, the educated people, must keep proper records and, if they do not, there are provisions in the law to deal with them. But I must make a plea for those ordinary people in ordinary trades like market vendors, tall-keepers and things like that. Let us realise that some of

(Mr. Singh continued)

these traders and other self-employed people are very simple people. They do not possess the expertise nor can they afford to pay book-keepers to keep their books. I would plead with the hon. Minister to let the Inland Revenue Department devise a simple method suitable for these traders, these small self-employed people. They must not be subjected to preparing any set of elaborate records.

The proposals speak of the application of more stringent procedures in respect of income tax. The fact of the matter is that the provisions of Income Tax Laws and the powers of the Commissioner of Inland Revenue are very wide indeed already. The appeal provisions are very stringent themselves. In fact, I am aware that the constitutionality of the legislation to compel the individual to pay the full tax including any disputed amount before he can go to the Court, or two-thirds before he can go to the Board of Review, is being questioned at the present moment. I would not like to say any more on that, but the fact is that the burden of proof is already on the taxpayer. I am not sure what the hon. Minister proposes in respect of the shifting of the burden of proof, but the Commissioner of Inland Revenue at the present moment can arbitrarily assess, to the best of his judgment, what he thinks the taxpayer should pay if he is in disagreement with any return and it is then left to the taxpayer to object.

But who hears the objections in the first instance? The Commissioner himself hears the taxpayer's objection. He is judge in his own cause and then the taxpayer, if unsuccessful, as he invariably is, has to go to the Board of Review and before doing that he has to pay two-thirds of the tax. This Board of Review was supposed to be an expeditious and inexpensive way of dealing with appeals from the Commissioner.

What is the position now? From my information, they sit and hear evidence lawyers argue and then decisions are produced such as this document here – a Decision of the Board of Review, a 13 page document.

And what is this all about? It is a case where a Company paid its striking employees during the 80 day strike, when its employees were on strike and did not go out to work. The Company, having regard to the realities of the situation and wanting to maintain its work force when the strike came to an end, paid its employees out of its generosity. The Board of Review has ruled that that is not a legitimate expense. That is what the Board of Review ruled here. The Board of Review that was set up as an expeditious and inexpensive way of determining appeals.

It is a costly matter to go before the Board of Review at the present time. I agree with the hon. Minister in his proposal that the Board of Review needs reviewing itself. It needs restructuring and what we can do is follow the pattern in our neighbouring country, Trinidad and Tobago, where there is a permanent Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue. With this Chairman there are impartial members of the Board chosen from a wide cross-section of the community. They are the people who hear the first objections. The Inland Revenue makes the assessment but the first objections. The Inland Revenue makes the assessment but the first objection which, at the present moment, is heard by the Commissioner, goes to this Board and it is dealt with very expeditiously. Perhaps, the hon. Minister can think in terms of sending some of his officers to Trinidad and Tobago to see how it is done because, as I understand it, the system is working very well indeed in Trinidad.

We need also to recognize that the entire Inland Revenue Department needs re-organising. We all know the tremendous difficulties experienced by the taxpayers in their dealings with the Inland Revenue Department. Many people have come to me and complained bitterly of the discourteous way in which they have been treated by the employees of the Inland Revenue Department. They say they were treated worse than beggars. We know also that returns are submitted and no assessments are made for years. In some cases, just before the seven-year limitation period expires an assessment is made, objection is made and the thing is kept alive for them to go back some time later and do the work that should have been done in the very first place.

I understand that there is a new habit which has developed in the department whereby letters of assessment are sent out to people out of the blue stating that they are assessed such and such an amount and must pay by a certain date. Of course, there is a time limit for objecting but the fact of the matter is that invariably these letters of assessment come to the taxpayer weeks after the date which is on the assessment. Fortunately, some of them have been in the habit of keeping their envelopes so that they can prove when they received it. If they do not keep their envelopes the burden of proof is on them. They then have to go to the Post Office and get the evidence to prove when they received it. That is one of the problems. When this assessment comes out of the blue for the taxpayer he, of course, would probably want to object. If the time is passed, because he has received it late, he is put to a lot of trouble to try and get his objection in and to justify the fact that his objection is made outside of the time stipulated on the letter of assessment.

More than that: this is contrary to the system which obtained before. It is, I submit, contrary to the spirit of the legislation. The practice before had been that when information is received by the Inland Revenue Department that somebody is not paying what he should rightly pay under the law, the Commissioner would write to him in words to this effect: "We understand that you should be paying Income Tax. You have not been doing so. Please send me a Return by such and such a time."

3.55 p.m.

If the Commissioner does not hear from that person, or if a Return is submitted and he is not satisfied with it, he then makes an arbitrary assessment and the man can proceed from there. But that is not the system now. The man is not given any prior notification at all of any assessment coming to him. Out of the blue an assessment is landed in his lap. This is why we say that the operations in the Inland Revenue Department should be streamlined. It may be that some people are deliberately not paying their taxes, it may be that the information can be proved

(Mr. Singh continued)

not to be correct, the person may or may not be liable to pay taxes. Surely the correct thing would be to call upon the man for a Return before arbitrarily sending him an assessment. That is an aspect that I would like the hon. Minister to look into, because a lot of poor people are being affected by this, particularly within recent times.

The Government, as I said before, proposes to audit companies on the premises. Let us bear in mind that a number of these companies have submitted their Returns year after year and assessments, from my information, have not been done for years now in respect of companies. Yet now, we are further deploying the staff of the Inland Revenue Department to take on additional duties of auditing on premises.

We know that normally companies and their audit queries to their auditors to deal with. I wonder whether we would we would now have a system where the companies' auditors, which they are required to have under the law, and the Inland Revenue Department personnel would be on the Companies premises and one wonders what sort of situation there would be, whether this may not interfere with the smooth running of the operations of the companies particularly when we realise that the Inland Revenue Department has been used as an instrument of penalizing people and victimizing people. When we bear this in mind one is always very concerned about greater powers being given to the Inland Revenue Department.

One last point in respect of the Budget proposals deals with that of betting shops. It is stated in the Budget Speech:

“Government had decided that at least for the present it will not place a prohibition on this particular activity.”

I humbly submit that if the Government is really honest in what it says here, namely, that it will not place a prohibition on this particular activity, then it should not have in the very next

sentence gone ahead and placed the prohibition. Because the licence fee of \$¼ million a year is a prohibition. Let us have it straight. If you want to close them down go ahead and close them but do not make pious statements that you will not place a prohibition on this particular activity at the present moment and then immediately go on to impose a prohibition. What are you doing? Instead of shooting the man you are starving him. He will die in any case. Why be so hypocritical and do this?

If the Government really means what is stated here then, I submit to the hon. Minister, that he must revise this figure of \$¼ million so that there would not be a prohibition. If the Government decides that it will place a prohibition then let it do it. But if it says now “no prohibition” then it shall not put on a licence that is in fact a prohibition. It is dishonest to do that.

There are a few questions I should like to ask about the Summary of Estimates of Revenue, as shown on Page 6 of the Estimates. We do not normally deal with revenue in committee stage therefore this is the only time I can ask these questions. Net Property Tax was estimated in 1974 at \$2.22 million, the Revised Estimate for 1974 is \$2.6 million. One would have thought that there would be a reduction, but it has, in fact, gone up. Obviously because the Government realises that it did not implement the proposals in the Budget. We hope that something will be done in 1975 for these people.

Head III, subhead 3, Incorporation of Companies. We note that the Estimate for 1975 is only \$200. Perhaps the Government would tell us whether it is a fact that it anticipates that very few companies will be formed by the private sector in 1975. There is a drop in the revenue from Passports but we will deal with that when we come to deal with the Estimates. This is the usual problem of holding back and not issuing passports.

Page 7, Head V, subhead 20, District Commissioners Fees: There is something which needs an explanation here. The Approved Estimate for 1974 has \$2,600 listed but the Revised

Estimate has \$25,000. I am not sure whether I will ever get an answer to this, but this is something which is worrying us. If the Approved Estimate for District Commissioners Fees was \$2,600 – that is the amount the Government expected it would get – but the Revised Estimate is \$25,000 then there may have been windfall. We would like to know what accounted for the increase from \$2,600 to \$25,000 in District Commissioners Fees.

On page 7, Head V, subhead 51, Tolls, Corentyne Highway: We note that nothing had been proposed before, but it is now expected that tolls from the Corentyne Highway will yield \$600,000. There is nothing at all in the Budget Speech about this. We have always objected to this toll for the Corentyne Highway and the reasons are well known. We completely rebuilt the East Coast Road and the East Coast Road, like the Corentyne Highway has no alternative. In fact at that time the East Coast Road was in a better position as the railway was an alternative means of travel. The Corentyne road was always there. It was rebuilt like the East Coast Road but the East Coast Road has no toll station and now drivers will have to pay a toll on the Corentyne Highway.

It is because it is an area which traditionally has been known for its support of the P.P.P.? I do not agree with that kind of victimization. If the East Coast Road can be without a toll then the Corentyne Highway should also be without a toll.

I should like the hon. Minister to enlighten us on Head VI, subhead 5, Loans – Public Corporations and Boards. This comes under the heading, “Interest”. It was expected that the interest repayment on loans during 1974 would be \$220,000. In respect of Loans – Co-operative Societies it was anticipated that it would be \$1,000. In respect of other Loans and Advances \$280,000 was estimated.

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4.05 – 4.15 p.m.

Apart from Other Loans and Advances, nothing has been put in the Revised Estimates for 1974 and nothing for 1975. Is this transferred to one of the banks? It may be that that is the explanation, but I do not know. If we had anticipated interest payments in the 1974 Approved Estimates, why is it that we have revised nothing at all and why is it that we have revised nothing at all and why is it that in respect of Other Loans and Advances we have revised the amount from \$280,000 to \$50,000 in 1974 and \$40,000 for 1975?

It may be that some other agency has taken it over, perhaps a corporation. Will the hon. Minister please tell us? The same sort of thing applies, more or less, in respect of page 8, Head VII, subhead 27 – Government Housing Estimates. The Approved Estimates was \$180,000. The Revised Estimate for 1974 is \$60,000 and the 1975 estimate is also \$60,000. The fact that the amount dropped from \$180,000 to \$60,000 and that \$60,000 is estimated for next year, shows that something must be wrong somewhere.

If we go to Head VIII – Land Development Schemes, Rents, we note that it has been anticipated as shown in the Approved Estimates, that Black Bush Polder would yield to the Government in rents \$1½ million. This has been revised to \$400,000, that is, \$1.1 million less and the 1975 estimate is \$450,000. There must be some reason why we have come down from \$1.5 million to \$400,000. Will the hon. Minister please tell us why?

The same question applies with respect to Anna Regina, subhead 4. We have come down from \$250,000 to \$100,000 for Anna Regina. With respect to Vergenoegen, we anticipate \$200,000 to be collected. We have come down in the 1974 revised estimate to \$22,000 only and for next year it is again \$22,000. It is that we have made a deliberate decision not to press these people for rents, to give them some sort of grace period or something like that? Surely the hon. Minister should tell us so that we can know what additional benefits this Government may be

giving to these Land Development Schemes. Or, is it that the Government's collection machinery has gone hay-wire? We are entitled to know. If we go down the page --

The Speaker: Hon. Leader of the Opposition, it is ten minutes after four.

Mr. M.F. Singh: Yes, sir. I shall be winding up in two minutes.

If we go down the page to Head X, subhead 7, we see that according to the Approved Estimate for 1974 it was anticipated that Public Corporations would yield to the Government \$9.7 million. The 1974 revised estimate, however, is \$200,000 and nothing at all is estimated for 1975. Why is it that we think at the beginning of 1974 that \$9.7 million would be received from Public Corporations then revise that amount to \$200,000 and show nothing for next year. We cannot leave it at that, it needs an explanation.

On page 9, under Revenue from Property and Enterprise, Head XI, subhead 11, Other, that is, other Revenue from property and enterprise. In the approved Estimate for 1974, it was anticipated that \$7.8 million would be yielded under this subhead. There is nothing in the Revised Estimates column and nothing at all is projected for 1975. Surely, we are entitled to a reason. We are not saying there is anything wrong but at least the hon. Minister should tell us the reason why there is no revised provision where there was such a significant figure as \$7.8 million used in this House as part of the revenue which was expected when we were projecting the 1974 figures. We talked at some length on the basis of these figures at the end of last year when we were discussing the Estimates, so there must be some explanation.

The last comment is on page 9, Head XVII. We were expecting to get \$3 million from China, according to the Approved Estimates. We got nothing in 1974; we do hope that we will get this \$3 million in 1975. We see it has been put down here.

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National Assembly

4.05 – 4.15 p.m.

This 1975 Budget Speech was read on the 9th December. Over the past ten years this country has been laboring under very trying conditions. Our countrymen have drawn in their belts so tightly that they are experiencing a feeling of suffocation. Today, on their behalf, it is my solemn duty to them all to plead that it should be necessary to draw the belt any tighter.

I am fully aware that no matter what we say, this Budget will be passed. All I am asking is that some of the suggestions which we have made yesterday and today in this honourable House should be considered and perhaps implemented by the Government. Let us all here and now resolve for the common good of Guyana to do everything possible to ensure that justice is not denied to anyone and let us be ever watchful of the continuing growth of the monster of State ownership and Party domination.

The Speaker: The Sitting of the House is suspended for 30 minutes.

Sitting suspended at 4.13 p.m.

4.35 p.m.

On resumption - -

The Speaker: Hon. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Development.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Development (Dr. Reid) (replying): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the hon. prime Minister, who always winds up this debate, I have been given the opportunity to make the last intervention in the general debate. I would wish to say at the very beginning that I will certainly treat this as a general debate and matters pertaining to the Estimates will probably be dealt with the Committee Stage.

If I were on the Opposition side as my good friend the hon. Member Mr. Feilden Singh is, I, certainly, like him would have been at a loss to find out what to say about this Budget and probably I would have done just as he did, searching all around for something to say, because in this kind of system given to us by our past masters, whether what we say is meaningful, whether what we say will help people to develop, does not really matter as long as we say something.

I hope that in my lifetime, in this same House, people will only speak when what they say would have some way of inspiring the nation to proceed with the business of development so that poverty and want would be no more, so that ignorance and disease would be evils of the past.

I wish to quote from page 4 of the Budget Speech so well thought out and ably presented by my colleague – I do not want to say, “Comrade” – the hon. Minister of Finance.

“These developments, Mr. Speaker, suggest that not only must the Government continue to give positive direction to the way in which the economy develops, but it must also with the Co-operative Sector actively participate to an increasing extent, in that development. It also means that development must be seen as having as its primary function to upliftment of the levels of living of the people through provision of acceptable standards of housing for all, adequate availability of domestically produced foods at moderate prices, relevant education and training for all, and reasonable facilities for the maintenance of good health.”

Mr. Speaker, I would wish to reserve comments on the National Service for the last, but it has been said that it is due to the increase in the prices of sugar and rice solely that such a Budget has been presented. I would wish to remind my hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Feilden Singh that the increases in prices of these said commodities have not happened only for Guyana. These increases have been worldwide and it would be a good thing if he could give thought to this Question: Why is it that all countries caught up in the doldrums of this economic crisis have not been able to save themselves with sugar and rice? There must be something more

fundamental than the mere increases of prices. That fundamental something is that Guyana has been able through the direction of this Government to produce in sufficient quantities sugar and rice not only to meet our own need but to have surpluses for export.

It is this kind of inspiration that people experience that can cause things to happen, not the mere increases of prices. Indeed that was a time when even if prices were increased in the rice industry there would not have been enough production for substantial export, when farmers were reaping five bags per acre, six bags per acre, and ten bags per acre – at one time our national average was as low as nine bags per acre – we would not have had excess commodities to export. It is good to note at this time that of the developing countries all over the world Guyana is one of the few that can claim to be an exporter of a grain commodity. I think that these things have happened because of the policy and programme of the Government.

As regards sugar, it is very interesting that in some countries that have also produced sugar they have not really benefited from the high prices. Everybody knows that here in Guyana, part of the Commonwealth, there is a Commonwealth Sugar Agreement, commonly known as the C.S.A.; then there is the Negotiated price Quota, known as the N.P.Q. There is an agreement with the United Kingdom and that price was substantially low and is still very low. As a matter of fact, when the price rose, the price for sugar through the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement was £60 per ton.

It is also of interest to note that the foreign-owned sugar companies had agreed to continue to sell sugar at that price, and when the United Kingdom has indicated a slight rise to £80 per ton, they were over-anxious to dispose of their sugar. It took a leadership of courage, integrity and vision to interfere with the marketing of sugar and – instead of sending all that sugar to the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement Market – to dispose of it against the will of this foreign-owned company so that the people of this country could benefit, so that we the people of this country could enjoy a better living from the sale of our commodity.

(Dr. Reid continued)

4.45 p.m.

It is only that kind of leadership that gives the results that today we talk about. It is not merely increases in prices; it is the inspiration of people to produce; it is the kind of leadership that will take hold of the produce, notwithstanding who has produced it, to make sure that this economy benefits. Today we see that benefit.

My friend says in one breath that we are responsible for that and then in the other he says we are responsible for the people to carry their money away. If we are to develop, then the Government must make sure that we have a policy that will prevent any gains that we make from seeping away, for if we had an open-end exercise where money can come in and flow out easily without any restriction of any kind, and money earned in Guyana could flow out, then we would not have been in this position today, we would not have been talking about surplus. All the money would have gone.

I want also to remind my friend that when people talk of not being able to take out their money he must be in a position to explain the truth to them. It is not their money that they wish to take out. It is the State's money that they want to buy. They are trying to buy the State's hard currency with the local money and the State is refusing to sell this hard currency to them. That is all that is happening because if a man has \$50,000 in any of the banks here, I am certain that with due notice to the bank he can draw that money out. What he wishes to do with that is to buy the State's money. The State must keep that reserve currency so that the needs of all the people of this country can be met, so that we can have the respectable type of balance of payment that my friend and colleague, the Minister of Finance, talked about, so that our economy will be expected.

We have travelled hard along this difficult road and we have reached this stage where this economy is highly respected because we are not just allowing people to do as they like, to satisfy their individual selfish and greedy needs. We are working for the development of all the people

of Guyana so that we can build the schools and the roads that he talks about; so that we can improve the hospital that he talks about; so that we can improve the transportation services and all those things so that all the people of this country can benefit.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition has mentioned about all the gains made from sugar and rice; he said that the fuel we consume is not even significant. That has really surprised me. As a matter of fact, I am gravely concerned that a Member of this House should express such a view in this House because the additional cost of fuel in this country is some \$100 million for 1974, and the gains from sugar, which he referred to, amount to only \$91 million. Therefore, something else must have been happening to make this economy so vibrant.

I cannot concede to him that this is not a tax-free Budget. Probably he is so disturbed that he has not been thinking aright. Probably the change in licence fee for the betting shops has made him a little confused. But this is, indeed, a tax-free Budget except for the betting shops. And as you know there have been significant reliefs from income tax. The allowance of \$800 for an individual has moved to \$1,000. The change is significant; it can move a man to a very low tax bracket so that he gains from all corners. He is so fruitful that he can pick fruits from all the trees around by this kind of measure. I do not think the significance of this has really hit him. When he comes to make up the returns he will see that he falls from sixty per cent to probably forty per cent and you get down lower to six per cent and if you were in six per cent then nothing. Then he will be rally aware of what the Minister of Finance has really done to bring relief to people.

The pensioners in the sugar industry have also benefited because for some time now this Government, with its courage in dealing with big business – I know it annoys my friend to his heart that, unlike many other Governments, we have taken a stand not really against big business, but a firm stand to help big business to see their commitments to people, to see their obligations to this country and its people. That is all we are trying to do and if they cannot do this of their own volition then any Government interested in people must ensure that we have such measures

and strategy that will make them do their duty for, in their own self-interest, they ought to do this themselves.

So the sugar industry that has three special funds, Price Stabilisation Fund, price Rehabilitation Fund and the Sugar Industry and Labour Welfare Fund has been using them anyhow. They have mixed up the funds as capitalists will do. We have, therefore, made sure that they are not allowed to do that kind of shuffling. We have asked them – and it has now been agreed and put into effect – that any movement of funds from the Prime Stabilisation Fund must go to the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund to help the pensioners so that every time there is an increase and you move the funds across properly then the pensioners should benefit. Moreover, in other areas of pension for old age people, the people, the sugar workers also benefit.

This Budget is to deal with development and we have heard from my good friend, the Leader of the Opposition, that we have spent more than we budgeted for on the current side. I wonder if he hopes that we will apologise for that. If we are here to help people to improve their standard of living then we must not be slaves to a Budget that is presented in this House. If we are slaves to that Budget then very little may happen. We have to be able, with the mandate the people of this country have given us, to see during the year, what modification, what amendments are necessary and once these are brought to the House I think it is just and fair to make the changes. If those changes tend to carry the expenditure upwards then there is no apology for that.

On the capital side we have said that the expenditure has not been as put forward to the House. That is very interesting because it may not be commonly known that when you come to the Capital Budget you have a series of constraints and we have to face reality in planning that Budget. There are several projects that must be financed with capital inflow. At the time of planning the Budget you cannot just cut them out. After the tentative arrangements have been made for that capital inflow you go ahead and include them in the Budget. But there is no person

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at home here who can control that capital, who can control the inflow of capital goods. As a matter of fact, all sorts of things happen in the interim to prevent us from being able to achieve fully our capital expenditure. But when you look at the level of capital expenditure over the years that this Government has been in office, it is magnificent.

4.55 p.m.

You remember that just a little over ten years, capital expenditure in this country was not more than \$12 million. That was the amount spent on capital expenditure. The hon. Leader of the Opposition has himself named the figures of \$58 million and sums in that order. A tremendous improvement has taken place over the years and a tremendous amount of capital work has been done in this country. I think even if you are blind you have an opportunity to see those capital works. They are beneficial to the people of this country. Think of the people on the Corentyne, for instance, where once upon a time red dust stifled them in their homes. They now have a good road. Think of the people on the East Coast, even though their road has not come up to the standard we want. Think of the people on the West Coast even though the road has not come to the standard we want. Think of the people of Linden and beyond that part of the Demerara river who a few years ago their lives to and from the capital City of Georgetown. Think of them and you will begin to see the massive amount of work that has been done in this country over these years.

Over these years we have gained considerable experience in the management of the affairs of this country and the management of Government and that is why in the Budget this year we have what we describe as block votes, not giving detailed information of how we are going to spend every dollars. [Interruption] There is reason for that, because if you are dealing with people, with the development of people, it is different from mathematics. You cannot always say 6 and 4 will be 10 when you are dealing with people because you really do not know how they will react. You do not know, during the year, what kind of pressures will fall upon

(Dr. Reid continued)

them and how relief should come. In the system left to us by our past masters sometimes while we wait to go through the usual procedure, people perish and development stagnates.

This Government must have the flexibility so that if something is to be done promptly the Estimates are so organized that that something can so be done. We will continue to do that because we have seen results in that.

There was a time in the rice industry when there would have been stagnation if the money had not come from the industry itself, if we had waited on the usual routine way of doing it. I hope that in time my hon. Friend would agree that some of these systems and constraints ought to be removed. I hope that when that time comes he will join with us hand in hand to ensure that we remove these constraints. [Applause]

I do not know why he talked about the hydro-power. It is probably something too big for him even to talk about. I do not think he dreams of the day when we will have hydro-power in this country. But we on this side believe that we will establish hydro-power in this country.

What is happening probably needs a little explanation. Because of the several waterways in this country – Guyana is a land of waters –there are so many proposals for hydro-power development that people who have observed our water potential have decided that it would be a good thing if we can analyse the whole field, all the areas where we have possibilities of establishing hydro-power. That assessment is going on.

We do not have one or two waterfalls; we probably have hundreds of waterfalls and as you begin to assess and analyse this resource, more and more waterfalls are being discovered. What people did not find for over a hundred years they are finding now. They are doing that kind of work so that we will have what you might call a “bank” of hydro-power potential, a little register of the potential so that as we develop this country, probably in the next 1500 years,

people will turn to that “bank” and say, “If we move so far up the Rupununi this is the waterfall we must use for hydro-power.” They would not have to do that work again. This is very far-preaching work and only people with clear vision would be able to plan so well for the future.

In the meanwhile we must do more detailed investigations. We have already done some studies on our own using men like Ramsahoye and other water specialists. They are doing a little more detailed work so that we can put our water resource to use in a short time; so that we can harness the waters of one of the smaller falls; so that we can get hydro-power more quickly. We cannot wait until we can use a large waterfall; we can probably use a smaller one now so that Guyanese can see it in operation before the 80s. Ten miles from Bartica there is a waterfall that can give hydro-power to supply a number of places; the cable will not have to go as far as Kaieteur. In time we will move on to those places.

I have taken all my time to explain this to my hon. Friend so that he could have the necessary information. When he wants to talk in future he will know. If he is not too sure, then we can arrange a visit for him so that he can see some of these places. Sometimes you cannot really understand unless you see. I should like him to visit some of these places, not only to look at Sophia. We have given him an opportunity to look at Sophia. There was a time when he could not have reached near to Sophia. There was so much forest and bush there. Now he can drive along to Sophia.

My hon. Friend mentioned about expensive potato development. I should like him to go back and study the development of some our crops. Let him study the development of sugar in its early days even though there was slave labour at the time. Let him study the development of rice in the early days. Let him learn what used to happen to nurture these crops so that they could grow big and provide wealth for this country. Unless we do this initial work then we will never develop at all.

The hon. Member mentioned that potatoes were brought from the hinterland as if the potato is the only agricultural commodity that comes to the coastland by air. I do not know if he has forgotten that we have brought cabbages from the hinterland by air. There is no other way to bring them. We bring peas and beans by air; we bring tomatoes by air; we bring beef by air. I am sure he would always like to get beef by air.

I do not know why he is worried if we now bring potatoes by air. Is it that he does not want the potatoes to come by air or does not want us to develop a new agricultural commodity in large quantity? I wonder what it is. This is what we are going to do and will continue to do.

Some of those potatoes will not come to Georgetown because a lot of people in the hinterland are using them. He must not forget that we are building roads into hinterland. By the time those roads are completed the crops would have blown up so the speak so that we will be able to transport potatoes, not only to meet our needs on the coastland but to export, as we do with rice today, to hungry people in other parts of the world. I am certain, now that he has a glimpse of that, he will agree that the development of potato is a good programme in this country.

I have no intention of going over this whole Speech. I would have thought that this is the kind of Budget that the Opposition would stand up and say, “Well done, Government of the day, well done,” and sit down.

5.05 p.m.

Our past masters have given us this type of education. We take on this talking business as if this is production. They talk about the P.N.C. shop. This P.N.C. shop is there to give warning to the people around that if they are in business they must be fair and just to the consumer. That is all. Let them be fair and just to the consumers and we will not have to establish such businesses.

(Dr. Reid continued)

But, if we bring steel from China at a low price and people are determined – regardless of what the Government does – to sell it at high prices, if they are going to sell it at black market price, even when it is controlled, then we must demonstrate to them that this is not a feeble Government. We must show them that we have ways and means of counteracting on such occasions and Sophia stands out as a warning.

I hope that before this week-end is done, Sophia will become a part of our history and in the next few years people will look back at Sophia with great admiration and pride because I hope that during this week-end a lot of things will come out of Sophia and we will not just talk of Sophia and the P.N.C. shop.

I do not want to go into the details that the Leader of the Opposition went into but I thought he gave the answers, namely, that we wanted to give relief to some of our settlers in land development schemes. Sometimes, in times past, we indicated in the Budget a large sum of money. Some of it used to be arrears. As we progress, we want to demonstrate to people that this Government is not a shopkeeper Government. This Government is going to use whatever wealth is generated in this country for the benefit of the people.

When the Government came into power there schemes were all in arrears. Millions of dollars were in arrears at Black Bush. We are trying to get rid of those arrears so that the people would have fresh hope, so that they would not be burdened with arrears. We have hope in the people that once we give them the necessary services their production will increase and they will not fail to do their part. I think this year Black Bush has really set a record as far as payment of rents on leases is concerned. The settlers have set a record which I hope will be brought out very clearly some day before this Budget Debate is over to show how the people have responded, notwithstanding the fact that people went in and told them all sorts of foolish things. The people have seen the service of this Government and they have reacted as human beings would. From time to time, more fruits will go to people once this country can generate its wealth.

I said a while ago that we are interested in the development of people. I read in my colleague's speech that we need to deal with people. The primary function is the upliftment of the levels of living of people. If we are to do this successfully, then we must not only mobilize people at election time – and I think that we have become well versed in mobilising the nation at election time – but we must do more than that. That is why we have mobilized people into National Service. That is why we have mobilized them into the Youth Corps. We will continue to mobilize people, not only for election but for proper education and that is why National Service is so important.

What has happened over the last few weeks, I thought, would have given my friend on the other side enough evidence that National Service is worthy of the support of all the people in this country. The children with young, active, living minds have taken to National Service. I think this really hurts some people and the fight now is not whether it is compulsory or not, whether it is voluntary or not. There is a kind of in-fighting: father against son; mother against daughter. That is the kind of fighting that is going on because the children want to be in this good thing. I hope our children will have the mind to resist these old drags on their lives so that they can live better lives in this country, so that they can have better opportunities in this country. That is what the young people are seeing. They have their whole lives to live. They have fifty, sixty and seventy years to live and they must be prepared for this kind of life and living. Many of their parents will realise this in due course.

I want to quote, for my friend's guidance, something from the National Service plan which has been done by the Education Officer and the Cultural Officer. I will read from section 2, page 3, of this plan and I hope that he will be interested enough to get a copy from the Ministry of Education. I quote:

“Specific objectives of National Policy Education: To improve the general education and the intellectual level of the Pioneers and to equip them with clear, purposeful and effective expression of all their ideas.”

I hope that the hon. Leader of the Opposition will look at that booklet, read it and study it. It has all that is happening at National Service. As a matter of fact, if he gets it in time and he wants us to take him to Kimbia, he can read this on the plane. When he gets there he will be face to face with a new enlightenment which will be good for him.

I think as Leader of the Opposition, he should begin to make the arrangement and if he speaks to me on that score very quickly and names the day when he would like to take the entire Opposition, **[Laughter]** – I would be very happy to do that. If he wants to spend a week or a fortnight up there he can do so. He can share and participate in what the young people are doing. I am sure that when he returns to Georgetown, he will be enlivened; he will have a new life.

National Service is giving young people who probably never had the opportunity or could not pay to go to High School, and even those who have been to High School and have dropped out because of the methodology in education, a chance to go into a new atmosphere where there is a modern methodology in teaching; where they would not look at one another as dunces, where they will get an opportunity to live and learn, and work and play together and thus they have a chance to know one another. Too often in this country we do not know one another and that is why it is so easy for conflicts to be created. I think, if people in this country see that alone as a objective of National Service. They will realise that \$11 million expended on such a scheme is a very small amount when we think of the benefits that can accrue from National Service.

I hope that the hon. Leader of the Opposition will begin to see that this will cause an upsurge of cultural consciousness and will give inspiration and new hope to our young people. National Service will train them how to work and teach them that work is a necessity in life and how to do it with joy and enthusiasm. These are some of the things they are learning at Kimbia and Sophia, and I hope the hon. Member will find himself there.

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5.15 – 5.20 p.m.

(Dr. Reid continued)

5.15 p.m.

As the hon. Member said, there is a merger at Tumatumari, where the Youth corps used to be. The Youth Corps was the forerunner, such as John the Baptist was. It gave the indication of coming events. That was the Youth Corps, and now we have the National Service, and we are receiving more applications than we can take care of. I think that this year the Opposition should tell us on this side to make an even bolder step; instead of talking of \$11 million, since we cannot take in everybody, double the amount so that we can take in double the number or three times the number of people we are now dealing with.

We ought not to blame some of the people for choke and rob. The leader himself has told the police that it is something deeper than that, and this society must take the blame for some of the evils in the society. We, the adults, must take the blame for some of that. Think of the bright boy at school, think of the teacher telling him how bright he is, think of that boy leaving school and searching for a job and not finding any. Must we continue in this capitalist system so that we can never find jobs for them? And that is why we need to change the capitalist system. That is why we need to look at those who are doing private industry, so that there can be jobs for all.

This is how it is going to be done and this is one way of doing it, so that there would not be that break in their lives when there is nothing productive to do. We are working feverishly towards that and I hope, Mr. Speaker, that one of these days we will see idleness eliminated from this country and there will be work for all. People have done it in other countries. In the capitalist system, it has never been done, and I think nobody in the capitalist system hopes to do that.

We are emphasising at Sophia this week-end: “Socialism for People’s Development”, and that is why I say, from Sophia will come a new direction. I hope the hon. Member will get near enough to Sophia to catch the spirit and if he does not get near enough to Sophia, I give him an

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open invitation now. I will take him from the highway and conduct him right into the National Park at the People's Congress so that he can get this message of "Socialism for People's Development."

This is not the kind of Budget where we should spend the time just talking. There is so much to do with the people out there; I think my friends were hard put to find something real to criticise in this Budget. Fortunately for them, not in the presentation itself, but in the distribution of the Budget booklet, a few pages and paragraphs were missing. I think they debated their full on the missing pages; that gave them cause for speaking, and I must congratulate them for using so often and so well, the pint about those paragraphs and pages that were inadvertently let out.

I want finally again to congratulate my colleague the Minister of Finance, and the workers of this country, that this country could have presented such a Budget, a Budget of hope, great hope. [**Applause**]

ADJOURNMENT

Resolved, "That this Assembly do now adjourn until Monday, 16th December, 1974 at 2 p.m. [**The Minister of Economic Development**]"

Adjourned accordingly at 5.20 p.m.
