

THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

OFFICIAL REPORTS

/Volume 10/

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE THIRD SESSION (1983) OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FOURTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA

8th Sitting 14:00 hrs Thursday, 1983-02-24

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (74)

Speaker (1)

*Cde. Sase Narain, O.R., J.P., M.P.,

Speaker of the National Assembly

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

Prime Minister (1)

Cde. Dr. P.A. Reid, O.E., M.P.,

(Absent - on leave)

Prime Minister

Other Vice-Presidents (4)

Cde. S.S. Naraine, A.A., M.P.,

Vice-President, Works, Transport and Housing

Cde. H.D. Hoyte, S.C., M.P.,

Vice-President, Economic Planning and Finance

Cde. H. Green, M.P.,

Vice-President, Agriculture

Cde. B. Ramsaroop, M.P.,

Vice-President, Party and State Matters

Senior Ministers (7)

Cde. R. Chandisingh, M.P.,

Minister of Education

Cde. R.H.O. Corbin, M.P.,

(Absent)

Minister of National and

Regional Development

*Non-elected Member

*Cde. F.E. Hope, M.P.,

Minister of Internal Trade and
Consumer Protection

*Cde. H.O. Jack, M.P.,

(Absent-on leave)

Minister of Energy and Mines

*Cde. Dr M. Shahabuddeen, O.R., S.C., M.P.,

(Absent)

Attorney General and Minister of Justice

*Cde. R.E. Jackson, M.P.,

(Absent)

Minister of Foreign Affairs

*Cde. J.R. Thomas, M.P.,

(Absent-on leave)

Minister of Home Affairs

Ministers (6)

Cde. U. E. Johnson, M.P.,

Minister of Co-operatives

Cde. Sallahuddin, M.P.

Minister, Finance, in the Ministry of
Economic Planning and Finance

*Cde. Y.V. Harewood-Benn, M.P.,

Minister, in the Office of the Prime
Minister

*Cde. H. Rashid, M.P.,

(Absent)

Minister, in the Office of the President

*Cde. R.A. Van West-Charles, M.P.,

(Absent - on leave)

Minister of Health

*Cde. K.W.E. Denny, M.P.,

Minister of Labour, Manufacturing
and Industrial Development

Ministers of State (2)

Cde. M. Corrica, M.P.,

(Absent - on leave)

Minister of State in the Ministry of
Internal Trade and Consumer Protection

*Non-elected Member

Cde. R.C. Fredericks, A.A., M.P.,

Minister of State for Youth Sports,

in the Ministry of Education

Parliamentary Secretaries (3)

Cde. A.W. Bend-Kirton-Holder, M.P.,

Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of

Works, Transport and Housing

Cde. D.A.N. Ainsworth, M.P.,

Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of

Education.

Cde. B. Bhaggan, M.P.,

Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of

Foreign Affairs

Other Members (26)

Cde. M. Ally, M.P. (Absent)

Cde. M. Armogan, M.S., J.P., M.P.

Cde. B. Beniprashad, M.P.

Cde. J.B. Caldeira, M.P.

Cde. A.A. Chin, M.P.

Cde. J.P. Chowritmootoo, J.P., M.P.

Cde. O.E. Clarke, M.P.

Cde. E. B. Davidson, M.P.

Cde. H. Doobay, M.P. (Absent – on leave)

Cde. A.B. Felix, M.P.

Cde. E.H.A. Fowler, M.P.

Cde. P. Fredericks, M.P. (Absent – on leave)

Cde. E.F. Gilbert, M.P.

Cde. J. Gill-Mingo, M.P.

Cde. A. McRae, M.P.

Cde. J.M. Munroe, J.P., M.P.

Cde. S. Prashad, M.P.

Cde. R.N. Primo, M.P.

Cde. P.A. Rayman, M.P.

Cde. C.G. Sharma, J.P., M.P. (Absent)

Cde. H.L.B. Singh, M.S., M.P.

Cde. S.H. Sukhu, M.S., M.P.

Cde. B. Tiwari, M.P.

Cde. C. Vandenburg, M.P.

Cde. H.B. Walcott-Nascimento, J.P., M.P.

Government Chief Whip

Cde. R.E. Williams, M.P.

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

Cde. R. Bishop, M.S., M.P.

Cde. B. Latchminarayan, M.P.

Members from the Regional Democratic Councils (10)

Cde. K.N. Jones, M.P. (Region No. 1 – Barima/Waini)

Cde. K.V. Jairam, M.P. (Region No. 2 – Pomeroun/Supenaam)

Cde. C.A. Singh, M.P. (Region No. 3 – Essequibo Islands/West Demerara)

Cde. W. Bipat, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Cde. H.I. London, M.S., M.P. (Region No. 5 – Mahaica/Berbice)

Cde. I. Chowritmootoo, M.P. (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne)

Cde. N.R. Charles, M.P. (Region No. 7 – Cuyuni/Mazaruni)

Cde. D. Abraham, M.P. (Region No. 8 – Potaro/Siparuni)

Cde. A. Dorrack, M.P. (Region No. 9 – Upper Takutu/Upper Essequibo) (Absent)

Cde. D. Hinds, M.P. (Region No. 10 – Upper Demerara/Berbice)

Members of the Minority (12)

(i) People's Progressive Party (10)

Minority Leader (1)

Cde. Dr. C. Jagan, M.P., (Absent)
Minority Leader

Deputy Speaker (1)

Cde. Ram Karran, M.P.,
Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly

Other Members (8)

Cde. J. Jagan, M.P. (Absent)

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud, J.P., M.P.,
Minority Chief Whip.

Cde. N. Persaud, M.P.

Cde. C.C. Collymore, M.P. (Absent)

Cde. S.F. Mohamed, M.P. (Absent)

Cde. I. Basir, M.P.

Cde. C.C. Belgrave, M.P. (Absent)

Cde. Dalchand, J.P., M.P. (Absent – on leave)

(ii) United Force (2)

Mr. M.F. Singh, C.C.H., J.P., M.P. (Absent – on leave)

Mr. M.A. Abraham, M.P. (Absent)

OFFICERS

Clerk of the National Assembly - Cde. F.A. Narain, A.A.

Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly – Cde. M.B. Henry

PRAYERS

1983-02-24

14:00 – 14:10 hrs

National Assembly

14:00 hrs

Announcements by the Speaker

Leave to Members

The Speaker: Leave has been granted to Cdes. Dr. Reid, Jack, Thomas, Van West-Charles and P. Fredericks for that day's sitting, and Mr. M.F. Singh for two months from 1983-02-21.

Congratulations to Members Honoured on 13th Anniversary of the Republic

The Speaker: I would also like to state that on the occasion of the 13th Anniversary of the Republic, two Members of Parliament has been among those persons who were honoured. Cde. Milton Armogan received the award of the Medal of Service for long service with exceptional dedication over the past years in the field of politics, and Cde. Harold Lall Bahadur Singh received the award of the Medal of Service for long service with exceptional dedication in the field of politics and public service. Both Members are now entitled to use the abbreviation "M.S." after their names. [Applause.] On behalf of the Members of the Assembly and myself, I wish to extend heartiest congratulations to Comrades Armogan and Singh.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Presentation and First Reading

- (1) The Guyana Management Institute Bill 1983 – Bill No. 8/1983. [The Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister on behalf of the Prime Minister.]
- (2) Appropriation Bill 1983 – Bill No. 7/1983 published 1983-02-24. [The Vice-President, Economic Planning and Finance, on behalf of the Government.]

PUBLIC BUSINESS

Bills – Second and Third Readings

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION AND AUDIT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983 –
BILL No. 1/1983

A Bill intituled:

“An Act to amend the Financial Administration and Audit Act.”

[The Vice- President, Economic Planning and Finance.]

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14:00 – 14:10 hrs

The Speaker: Cde. Hoyte.

The Vice-President, Economic Planning and Finance (Cde. Hoyte): Cde. Speaker, the Bill before this Assembly, the Financial Administration and Audit (Amendment) Bill 1983 seeks to extend the powers of the Auditor General to enable him not only to audit, the limited range of Public Corporations and Public entities which is permitted him under the Act, but also to take in a larger number of public Authorities having regard to that fact such authorities have multiplied over the years. Article 223 of the Constitution of Guyana established the Office of the Auditor General and defines his functions. It empowers him to audit the Public Accounts of Guyana and authorities of the Government of Guyana. The Financial Administrative and Audit Act which was passed in 1966 formed part of the set of legislation which was part of the Independence package. This Act spells out the way in which the Auditor General should exercise his functions and limits the range of entities and authorities which he is permitted to audit.

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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

14:10 hrs

Cde. Hoyte: The Act does not specifically give to him the power to audit corporations or any corporate bodies in which the controlling interest is vested in the State. Now since the Financial Administration Audit Act was passed in 1966 it is common knowledge that the number of corporation bodies which the Government controls absolutely or in which the Government has a controlling interest has increased enormously and it is therefore desirable that those corporations and authorities should be brought within the net, so to speak, of the Auditor General. So this Bill therefore seeks to enlarge his power to enable him, under the direction of the Minister, to audit such bodies and to submit reports to him and to the National Assembly. This is just one of the points I would like to bring to attention. It is provided in the 1966 Act that in order to expand the power of the Auditor General, it was necessary to have a resolution of this House. In the opinion of the Government this is cumbersome procedure and has no merit in it. In as much as one is seeking to bring under the authority of the Auditor General entities and bodies which hitherto have escaped his purview, the opportunity is taken in this Bill to vest that power in the Minister, so that it is the Minister who will give the direction to the Auditor General to expand, so to speak, his range of activities.

With those requirements, I wish to present this Bill to the House.

Question proposed.

The Speaker: I do not know if I should listen to you, Cde. Persaud. Suppose I do not want to listen to you.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: I will exercise my right.

The Speaker: Everywhere people have a right to expression but you do not behave so uncouth.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: Cde. Speaker, I wish to state that the P.P.P., those of us who have been elected under the P.P.P. have advocated a long time ago that the area of auditing of the Auditor General be extended. In principle then we are in favour of the Bill. In fact you will recall that we have said long ago that we feel that the Auditor General should be the person auditing public corporations, and public bodies and more so generally audit those entities in which the State has interests. We are glad that Government has finally come around to this view and has taken steps to present the Bill before the House to extend the power of the Auditor General. Of course I make the point that we are all aware of the shortage of staff in the Auditor General's office to cope with its current volume of work and assignments. One would expect that with additional duty that the staffing of the Auditor General's office will be improved. In fact I

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have looked at the Financial Administration Act and in this Act it is stated that the Assembly normally vote on the number of staff for the Auditor General's office. It shows that kind of importance that the Parliament attaches to this office because the Auditor General like those of us who sit at the Public Accounts Committee are probably the watchdog for the people, if I may use a popular phrase.

I want, in supporting the principle of this Bill to refer to Section 33 which is affected by the Amendment and to say that I see it slightly different from the Cde. Minister, who presented the Bill, that Section 33 gives a right to the Assembly. I wish to quote Section 33(1) "If the National Assembly by resolution so directs, the accounts of any statutory body, being a public authority or other body administering public funds shall, notwithstanding anything to contrary contained in any other Act, be audited by the Director of Audit", which in effect would mean that long before now, since the 1966 Act came into being the Parliament had the power by way of resolution to call upon the Auditor General to audit any state enterprise, any state institution. I think the point is well taken that it can appear cumbersome and I wish to propose, though I have not moved an amendment, that that right which hitherto will come to him when the Bill is effected, that Parliament will no longer enjoy the power by way of resolution to call upon the Auditor General to audit any institution. I would like as a Member of Parliament to protect that right. Let us assume and I am not thinking of the current incumbent in office at any given stage of our own history, that the public wishes a particular enterprise which is government or in which Government has interest that the Auditor General should audit the finances of that institution and the Minister was not so disposed.

I would like to argue very strongly that the right should not be taken away from the House to exercise by way of resolution the opportunity to direct the Auditor General to carry out such audit exercises. I would wish to propose to the Minister, if he is so disposed that the wording remain as they are with the slight change. "If the National Assembly by resolution so directs or at the instance of the Minister" I am no draftsman nor legally qualified but it looks reasonable, subject to the examination of the technical men. "If the National Assembly by resolution so directs or at the instance of the Minister", which will remove the cumbersome procedure, if the Minister so wishes to direct the Auditor General to audit any state enterprise. I would like on behalf of those of us who sit on this side of the House to say that right should not be taken away from the Assembly at any stage to call upon the director of Audit to audit any account.

Cde. Hoyte: Cde. Speaker, it is refreshing to be able to find a point of agreement with my friend, Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud. But we on this side of the House have no difficulty on the amendment which he is proposing because the whole purpose of the Bill...

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The Speaker: He is not proposing an amendment. He is suggesting a probable amendment would come from your side.

Cde. Hoyte: I thought he wanted the kudos of having put the amendment. I said the purpose of this Bill was to strengthen the authority of the Auditor General and not dilute it in any way. The proposal that the National Assembly should retain a power to give direction to the Auditor General as to area to be audited is therefore something we would not wish to oppose. So I would move the amendment subject to the form of words being put together.

The Speaker: Would you like to develop that to a later time?

Cde. Hoyte: I think we have to do that because we have the draftsmen here.

14:20 hrsCOMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983

A Bill intituled:

"An Act to amend the Companies Act." / The Vice President, Economic Planning and Finance.

Cde. Hoyte: Cde. Speaker, the Companies (Amendment) Bill 1983 is also intended to extend and enlarge the powers of the Auditor General. When the Financial Administration and Audit Act came into force in 1966 it was not then envisaged, at least by those people who drafted the Act, that the Government would intervene so very actively in the economic life of the country and own business entities which are registered under the Companies Act and whose accounts are required to be audited in terms of the provisions of the Companies Act. What this Bill seeks to do is to confer upon the Auditor General the power to audit Companies which are registered under the Companies Act and which are owned by the state or in which the state has a controlling interest. I therefore, with those words, move the Second Reading of the Bill.

Question proposed, put and agreed to.Bill read a Second time.Assembly in Committee.Bill considered and approved.Assembly resumed.Bill reported to the Assembly, read the Third time, and passed.PRAEDIAL LARCENY (ENHANCEMENT OF PUNISHMENT) BILL 1983

A Bill intituled:

"An Act to provide for enhanced punishment for praedial larceny." / The Vice President, Agriculture

The Vice President, Agriculture (Cde. Green): Cde. Speaker, I beg to move that the Praedial Larceny (Enhancement of Punishment) Bill, No. 3 of 1983, be read a Second time. Cde. Speaker, every bit of legislation and law that we have must be related to the current situation. The Bill before us today is a straightforward one. I believe you have no controversy.

It is intended to enhance the punishment, praedial larceny. It is merely one further step proposed by the Government to deal with the agricultural thrust and to offer some kind of protection and insurance to our hardworking farmers in the country. The proposals before us are straightforward and instead of leaving the Magistracy the right to not impose a fine exceeding \$500 or six months imprisonment,

we identified that quantity and that imprisonment as the minimum. We trust that this will have the desired effect on those who wish to reap what they do not sow and to return some degree of confidence to our farmers, many of whom have had some very harrowing and distressing experiences over the past few years.

We feel this step is a useful one. In addition to the fact that in the regions some areas are setting up surveillance committees to deal with this problem, we propose to look at this amendment. If within the next six months or similar period the situation does not show improvement, then we will have to propose drastic, if not draconian measures to deal with this question of praedial larceny. I therefore, Cde. Speaker, commend this Bill to the Assembly.

Question proposed.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: Cde. Speaker, too many people have been for years reaping what they have not planted. The situation has not changed. It is not simply current, but it has been with us for a long time. There could be no doubt that the farmers in this country welcome measures and actions, legislative and otherwise, which can give them an opportunity to enjoy their sweat and blood they have put into the land in the process of providing this nation with food.

The Vice President will not deny, I am sure, that this piece of legislation proposed by him - which we do not oppose and which we support, for we have always been an objective opposition - can only be effective when those who have been involved and engaged for years, and continuously, in stealing wantonly the farmers crops and produce are apprehended and brought before the courts. So penalty becomes effective only when the Magistrate finds a person guilty. I think the Minister has to take a new initiative - and I hope that he will accept my suggestion - in summoning a meeting of the law enforcing body which would imply the Commissioner of Police and probably officers who are in charge of all the divisions throughout the country, to prove to them how serious he is and how this Assembly and every Member feel about the sufferings and hardships of farmers, to get them to put into motion action that will lead ultimately to the apprehension, charge and prosecution of those who have been engaged in this disgraceful activity.

Farmers on the West Coast Barbice only last Sunday have been complaining to me. I did not bring the figure, but I recall one farmer telling me what he normally picks in terms of coconuts per year. His figure showed that over 60 per cent was stolen, and so there is decrease, continuously, in the farmer's income. Nevertheless, they are compelled to put in the necessary technical, physical and financial income

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to produce. We need then, and I really want to strongly support this measure, any other measure and action which the Minister would be inclined to initiate so that positively we can call a speedy, if not an almost immediate, halt to the stealing of farmers' crops throughout this country.

(Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud continues):

I want to add also Mr. Speaker, that farmers have been saying and I can only report to this House, what they have reported to me - is that when they report and even when they identify the Police is not swift - - -

The Speaker: We are dealing with the increased penalty.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: I was simply making the point that the intention of penalty - if you will allow me, I am elected to this House to represent the people's view. For this penalty to have effect, for us to succeed in protecting the farmers all the necessary agencies that are concomitant to the effecting of this legislation has to be brought into cohesion for this to have any meaning and that is logical.

The Deputy Speaker (Cde. Ram Karran): I want to support what my good friend said on this bill Your Honour but I also want to take note and to ask the Minister that in presenting a measure for him to take the principle enunciated here where he is going to by law fix the minimum penalty on offences - would be lightening this to recent legislation in this House where his colleague the former Minister of Trade had insisted in legislation that for certain offences Magistrates had no option but to commit people to prison in the same way. While I am not opposed to the principle of the bill and in fact refer to the fact that legislation of this nature was first enacted during the war years when in order to protect people who were producing at a time when we needed all the production. The Government at that time had to enact legislation on praedial larceny, but for the Minister to take out draconian methods in this Chamber and for him to limit the penalty. The minimum of the penalty would be to tie the hands of those people who have to punish offences and to make legislation appear to be as he promised some time in the future to be draconian.

I want to say this Sir and I want to say it very forcibly that the reason why you have so much praedial larceny and I live right in front of it where I have often spoken to my friend the Prime Minister - valuable property, cattle owned by Bookers was slaughtered night after night at the time when milk was so much in demand. In fact, they forced the people to dispose of all the cattle, to carry them up the Berbice River, thereby bringing a situation in Georgetown where the milk is most needed completely empty and I want to tell

the honourable Minister and the Government that the reason for this is the massive unemployment, the retrenchment and all that is taking place and if people have employment then naturally production in these areas will not be stifled by praedial larceny.

I live in an area Cde. Chairman, where a great deal of hustling is taking place and the Minister and the Government must see that the people who contribute to this - my friend Mr. Dalchand was telling this House some time ago of the massive theft that is taking place in cattle in the West Demerara and the bridge is being used. Policemen are there - large number of policemen who have nothing to do instead of doing police duty. They seem to be standing up at attention waiting for the big wigs to pass, rather than to check the vehicles that the laymen know are suspicious ones. All on the East Coast not very far from Enterprise, thieves were caught in day time, the vehicles was left there with the knowledge of the Police and yet nothing was done. At least we have not heard. These are the things that should be given exemplary punishment, not so much the thief men who are forced to steal because of the situation, but people who are in receipt of salaries and wages who are working with them. You find out how many tons of meat is distributed to the Police Stations all the way from Weldaad coming down to Georgetown, that is where we want and I hope that the law relating to praedial larceny as it is will also be meted out to co-operating policemen of these people who operate the vehicles and across the road. I, as I said your honour have no strong objection to the legislation but I am fearful of the language in which it is caused when the hon. Minister talks about draconian methods in the future and when he refers to limiting Magistrate's discretion. You know the case your honour - the man was charged with having a goose, he said look I had this since it was a gosling. Well if there is doubt in the Magistrates' mind, he must allow the man to go - whether the suspicious circumstances are not, but I agree with the Magistrate when he gives the fullest penalty to the chap who says he had the gun since it was a pistol.

The Speaker: Yes Cde. Green.

Cde. Green: Cde. Speaker, just to say that I must be careful not to be drawn into the argument by my good friend Cde. Ram Karran about unemployment. That would be a separate debate, except to say that people who want to find employment for themselves - there is a lot of land and facilities that the Government has

offered and we must not come to this honourable House and introduce vulgarities in a serious debate.

In terms of the observations made by Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud, I wish to assure him that I take his observations very seriously and in fact we have already and I believe I made this announcement in this House when we were debating the presentation by the Cde. President to the Supreme Congress of the People that we have already had discussions with the commissioner and all his divisional commanders on this question and I believe we have sensitised the divisional commanders to the importance of these matters and we look forward Cde. Speaker, to the Opposition or whatever is left of it giving their full cooperation on the ground.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a Second time.

Assembly in Committee.

Bill considered and approved.

Assembly resumed.

Bill reported without Amendment, read the Third time and passed.

TRADE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983

A Bill intituled: "An Act to amend the Trade Act."

[The Minister of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection.]

The Speaker: Cde. Hope.

The Minister of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection (Cde. Hope): Cde. Speaker

in moving the Second Reading of the Trade (Amendment) Bill 1983 I wish to explain that the purpose of the Bill is really to increase the penalties that are to be applied by the Magistrate where persons are proved guilty of selling above the regulated prices of controlled goods. It is quite clear that the practice of black marketing of goods is prevalent and I think we in this House as well as the nation at large recognise that this is a practice which needs to be stopped because associated with this black-marketing is the question that once black-marketing persists it is virtually impossible to maintain an equitable system of distribution because the goodly black-marketeer inevitably takes measures to ensure that he corners the goods, creates an artificial shortage in many cases and therefore creates a condition under which he can charge fantastic prices for his goods.

It is a practice which is not confined to the pavement trader. It pervades the whole distribution system because we have had instances where distributors, persons who have received goods to distribute to smaller shopkeepers would refuse, in fact, to take those goods particularly into the regions to distribute to the shopkeepers and, having received them in Georgetown, they sell much above the retail price thereby creating a situation where the retailer would have to sell much above the regulated price.

It is this practice which the Bill is seeking to stamp out by increasing the penalties. For instance, it will be observed that the maximum penalty on second conviction would move from a mandatory 12 months to 36 months and in terms of the fines the maximum of \$1000 to a maximum of \$5000 for the second offence. The same thing applies in ratio to the first offence. The magnitude of these fines is an indication of the Government's commitment to do whatever is possible to stamp out the nefarious practice of black-marketing and it is with that in view that I formally move the Second Reading of the Bill.

Question proposed.

Cde. Narbada Persaud: Cde. Speaker, the People's Progressive Party obviously has had, and would have, no quarrel with the Government in its attempt to stamp out black-marketing in this country. The Cde. Minister introducing the Bill stated that

it merely seeks to increase the penalty for selling price controlled articles in excess of the controlled prices and he further stated that so long as black-marketing exists it would be difficult to have an equitable system of distribution. Now, as I said, while we would not be in opposition to the principle of the Bill what the Minister has just said comes into conflict with what we believe. The question of an equitable system of distribution was there long before and quite long before. One knows that the black-marketing that he is talking about and all of us are talking about came about since the Government's policy of import restriction and the banning of certain items. It is from then that this black-marketing came about to the extent that the Government is now attempting to move to curb it. Now, as I said, we are against black-marketing. We are against people, poor people in particular, being fleeced by the very high prices that are being charged today for not only items but essential items and we want to feel that mere legislation alone cannot solve the problem, particularly in view of what I said namely, that black-marketing existed long before. It is a clear case of supply and demand. This is the case here in this country. Obviously, if an item that is being black-marketed in the shops or at the street corners or by the traders today were in adequate supply in this country, then the question of black-marketing would not have arisen. It is a clear case of supply and demand. It is because of the Government's inability to have adequate supplies of these very items that are being black-marketed that the system has been allowed to reach such proportions. This is clear. Therefore, if the Government really wants to ease the people, that is, by removing black-marketing, the question should be that the Government should have some means of bringing adequate supplies to the people of this country. It would mean that the Government would have to start to look at its whole political policy, the policy in relation to confidence of the people in the Government whereby production will increase, whereby foreign exchange would be available, whereby from that foreign exchange we would be able to have adequate supplies in the country. That is the crux of the matter.

The crux of the matter is that we must have free and fair elections in this country so that the people's confidence would be restored in the Government. As a result, production would continue to increase and exports would also increase.

We know for a fact what black-marketing is doing to the poor people in this country, particularly at this time when wages are frozen. As I said, our point of view is that while we are against poor people being fleeced, we are against black-marketing in this country, our position is that mere laws, legislation alone, will not solve the problem and therefore we call on the Government this afternoon to do something more tangible in order to have adequate supplies in the country so that black-marketing can be removed.

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14:40 – 14:50 hrs

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: Cde. Speaker, there is an important principle inherent in this Bill which I think requires legislative pronouncement and that is the administering of the Act itself when it is passed, the penalty section which is attached to this Bill. We know that the President has reported – and it is happening – on the grave disparity in penalties. An individual commits an offence, he appears before the Court; he is treated one way. Another person commits the same the same offence and he is treated another way. Another person commits the same offence and he is treated another way. The draftsmen obviously, or the Government in advising them, had that in mind and it is for that reason that in this Bill the words are included that if a magistrate is to exercise his discretion, that discretion must be exercised in such a way that the reasons for giving a lesser penalty are put in writing. That principle did not exist hitherto but it is recorded in this Bill.

We on this side of the Assembly Strongly believe that justice must not only be done, it must appear to be done. We have a serious challenge and battle before us and we have been struggling against all kinds of odds, but hat must not in any way thwart us in our fight to ensure that whatever legislation Parliament approves is administered impartially keeping foremost in mind the well-known maxim "Justice must not only be done, but must appear to be done."

(Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud continues)

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National Assembly

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That being so, I would like to say that the Parliament will be watching the courts, the country will be watching the courts. We are in a new era and if there are laws those laws must be administered and justice dispensed impartially and fairly to all the people of this country. I would not expect, and I am sure it is not the intention of this Assembly that that discretion which had been imposed and I am not opposed to the concept of discretion, because there might be extraneous circumstances, there might be circumstances which would necessarily lead to a Magistrate to ask for a probation report in dealing with an offence no matter how serious the offence is. But I say that one should expect that those discretion are exercised fairly and impartially and in all conditions and circumstances when those discretion ought to be exercised, but not conveniently because we are not without evidence in our courts that even the integrity of the Magistracy is now in question.

The Chairman: Cde. Hepe, would you wish to say anything on that now?

Cde. Hepe: I wish to say, Cde. Speaker, I do not wish to be drawn into any debate on shortages or the inavailability of statute because these have been fully debated last week in this Assembly. All I need to say is that on the question of black-marketing, we are dealing with goods for which there are regulated or controlled prices and wherever these things are in supply, that is why people can organize them and sell them at another price. So in fact, these things are normally the price controlled items, and we are talking about price controlled items and not —

Bill read a Second time.

Assembly in Committee.

Bill considered and approved.

Assembly resumed.

Bill reported without Amendment, read the Third time and passed.

Resumption of the Consideration of the Financial Administration and Audit

(Amendment) Bill 1983

The Speaker: Cde. Hoyte, this might be a convenient time to revert to the provisions of the Financial and Audit Act. You will move the amendment in respect of the clause.

Cde. Hoyte: When we reach in the Committee Stage I will give notice of it. Now Cde. Speaker, I was saying that the Government benches have no difficulty with the Amendments suggested by Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud and I would be prepared when the Assembly resolves itself into Committee to move a suitable amendment which would preserve the right of the National Assembly to give direction to the Auditor General. I would like to take this opportunity to reply to a point made by Cde. Persaud about the need to strengthen the Auditor General's staff.

We have in fact been doing this not merely by looking at numbers, but also by looking at the quality of staff. We have been professionalizing the Auditor General's department. We have improved the pay scales so that they accord with the professional scales and, as a result, we have been able to attract very many people with professional skills. In fact, over the past two years we have appointed 91 persons with accounting and auditing qualifications and there are at this moment with the Public Service Commission submission for the filling of 62 new posts, 11 of them being professional post. We do look forward to increased activity and increased quality of work and surveillance from the Auditor General and his staff. In fact, I would like to report on the way in which the Auditor of the Public Accounts has been proceeding. Comrades will remember that, from time to time, I have reported on this matter to the Assembly. The Public Accounts for the years 1971 to 1975 have been completed and are now being printed, and the accounts for 1978 to 1980 are in draft and have now been finalized for submission to the Minister a prelude to their being printed and laid in the Assembly. Similarly, the Public Accounts for 1981 and 1982 are in the course of preparation. The Auditor General has assured me that he intends to have the finished report by the end of this year, so come the end of this year, the Auditor General would have brought the Public Accounts up to date.

Members will recall how very much concerned we all were over the fact that these accounts had been in arrears, so to speak, not through any fault of the Auditor General and his staff, but through the problems in other parts of the system. We hope that we will never revert to that sorry state in which the Public Accounts were in arrears for such a long time. I, therefore, have the pleasure Cde. Speaker, in moving the second reading.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a Second time.

Assembly in Committee.

Clause 1 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clause 2

Cde. Hoyte: I would wish to propose an amendment to clause 2 by deleting all the words in the last two lines of the clause and substituting the following: insertion of the words "or the Minister" after the words "National Assembly by resolution." So that the clause would now read, Section 33:1 of the Principal Act is hereby amended by the insertion of the words "or the Minister" after the words "the National Assembly by resolution."

Amendment –

That the following words be substituted for all the words in the last two lines of the clause:

"Insertion of the words 'or the Minister' after the words 'the National Assembly by resolution.'"

put and agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Bill.

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Clause 3, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Assembly resumed.

Bill reported with Amendment; as amended, considered; read the Third time and passed.

Second Reading

GUYANA EXPORT PROMOTION COUNCIL BILL 1983

A Bill intituled:

"An Act to establish the Guyana Export Promotion Council to promote export trade in Guyana."

Cde. Hoyte: Cde. Speaker, for many years now, attempts have been made to establish an Export Promotion Council. I think that all persons concerned with the development of this country would agree on the importance of developing the export sector with a view, not only to stimulating internal economic activities, but also earning foreign exchange. Previous efforts, for one reason or another, did not meet with success. But I believe our current economic development must have stimulated people to action and to serious effort. As a result there was renewed interest in all sectors of economic activity in this country in the establishment of some entity charged with responsibility for developing the export trade. There was, during last year, very constructive and valuable dialogue between the Government and the representatives of private and public sectors, the private sector being represented by the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Guyana Manufacturers Association. These discussions which also include individuals, manufacturers and exporters led to a meeting on 1982-08-16 at which the various sectors and individuals interested in manufacturing and exports were represented.

At that meeting a decision was taken to establish an Export Promotion Council on an informal basis. That Council comprised 23 persons who represented both private and public sectors. These twenty-three persons elected a management committee which was charged with the responsibility for putting together ideas and proposals which would serve as the basis for the drafting of legislation and the establishment of the Council.

I would like to pay tribute to Cde. Francis Gobin, who served as Chairman of that informal Council and to Cde. Bernard Fernandes, popularly known as Bunny Fernandes, who served as Vice-Chairman, and also all the persons who participated with such enthusiasm in the work of the Committee and the informal council. Much valuable work was done and finally certain submissions were made to the Government. These submissions served as a base for the

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legislation which is now before this House and also for the proposed structure of the Council. In brief, Cde. Speaker, the Bill seeks to establish an Export Promotion Council on a legal basis and it defines its functions and powers. In terms of the schedule to the Bill the Council will consist of no less than nine and no more than fifteen persons drawn from the public and private sector. These persons are expected to have knowledge of manufacturing and export; to have a lot of experience in these fields and to have an interest in promoting the work of the Council. The function of the Council shall be to advise the Minister on national export policies and practical measures which may be necessary to stimulate the export trade and promote the orderly and structured development of the export sector.

For this purpose, the Council has been given very wide powers. It is empowered to do all things necessary to enable it to discharge its functions. Thus, it is expected that the Council will engage itself in the work of training, in the consultancy and advisory services, in the identification of markets, in the establishing of standards, in helping people to organise their production and manufacture; in fact, in doing everything which is likely to help the manufacturer to manufacture the kind of commodity which can penetrate external market and also in doing the things which will facilitate the export of commodities to external markets. The Minister as is usually done when this kind of entity is set up, has the power to give general or special policy directions to the Council. But subject to these general or special policy directions the Council will organise its work as it deems fit. The Council, because of the nature of the work it is expected to do, will be exempt from the payment of all customs duties, income taxes and all taxes what-so-ever, because the work of the Council is promotional and very important to the kind of economic development which we are striving after.

It is expected, Cde. Speaker, that this Council will give a great fillip to our export trade and will also provide a forum for the participation in a very active and substantive way of non-government people and agencies in the work of economic development. Therefore, I beg to move the second reading of the Bill.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a Second time.

Assembly in Committee.

15:10 hrs

Bill considered and approved.

Question put, and agreed to.

Assembly resumed.

Bill reported to the Assembly, read the Third time, and passed.

TAX (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983

A Bill intituled:

"An Act to amend the Tax Act." The Vice President, Economic Planning and Finance/

Cde. Hoyte: Cde. Speaker, I beg to move the Tax (Amendment) Bill 1983 and ask that it be read a Third time. This Bill becomes necessary as a result of the fiscal measures proposed in the 1983 Budget which called for a substantial increase in the excise duty levied on certain alcoholic beverages, In this particular case, beer, which definition includes ale and stout.

The proposal is to move the excise duty on locally manufactured beer from \$8.40 per liquid gallon to \$18.00 per liquid gallon. The excise duty collected in 1982 from this impost amounted to \$23.7 million and it is expected that as a result of the proposed measure the duty would be raised to \$43.8 million. As a result of these imposts, the price of beer is expected to move from \$1.30 to \$1.90 per bottle.

I ask that the Bill be read a Second time.

Question proposed.

Cde. N. Persaud: Cde. Speaker, as regards the taxation enunciated in the 1983 Budget, we have already had our share of say during the general debate. But I think this increase, and from the figures given by the Cde. Vice President alone as far as money is concerned, expresses clearly that they are going to collect over 100 per cent increase in duty. I said when we debated the last time that beers have already gone up from \$1.50 to \$2.25 on the market, which is a 50 per cent increase. Maybe at the Discotheque and the other bars it may be more. But what has the small man in this country to do? A little drink here and there - of course they have not increased anything on rum. But all of us do not drink rum and if it was causing us some problems because of the very high cost of living in the country to drink a bottle of beer at \$1.50, now it has gone to \$2.25.. I think the amount they have put on is very exorbitant. Surely, the Government is in such a predicament that they are moving from pillar to post to find ways and

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means to increase taxation. Here it is, the small man is going to be affected and I do not think the increase is really justified, over 100 percent.

The Speaker: Cde. Hoyte.

Cde. Hoyte: Cde. Speaker, in this field of taxation it is well known that, first of all, alcoholic beverages always offer themselves as prime candidates for taxation, not merely as a source of revenue but also because taxes in this particular area are meant to be a tool of social policy. In this particular case, I think it is widely known that, notwithstanding what one may call the official price of beer, which was \$1.30, people were buying it in the nightclubs and restaurants for as much as \$3 a bottle. Therefore, the indication is that the demand is not all that inelastic and that this area of taxation is open to the Government for further action.

I think also that a comparison of prices in the region will show that these retail prices are still very low, if one compares them with prices which are being paid in neighbouring countries and in the region as a whole.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a Second time.

Assembly in Committee.

Bill considered and approved.

Assembly resumed.

Bill reported to the Assembly, read the Third time and passed.

15:20 hrs.MOTIONSCONFIRMATION OF THE CUSTOMS DUTIES (AMENDMENT) ORDER (No.7)

"Be it resolved that this National Assembly, in accordance with section 9 of the Customs Act, Chapter 82:01; confirm the Customs Duties (Amendment) Order 1983 (No. 7), which was made on 14th February, 1983, and published in the Gazette on 15th February, 1983. [The Vice-President, Economic Planning and Finance].

Cde. Hoyte: Cde. Speaker, I beg to move the Customs Duties Amendment Order 1983 No. 7 and ask that it be confirmed by the House. This is more a precautionary order than anything else in that it relates to imported beer and it seeks to increase the duty on imported beer from \$8.40 per liquid gallon to \$18.00. This however, as I said is precautionary since we do not import beer and have not imported beer for some time.

Question put and agreed to.

Motion carried.

The Speaker: Cde. Hoyte.

CONFIRMATION OF THE CONSUMPTION TAX (AMENDMENT) ORDER 1983 (No. 8)

"Be it resolved that this National Assembly, in accordance with section 5 of the Consumption Tax Act, Chapter 90:02, confirm the Consumption Tax (Amendment) Order 1983 (No. 8), which was made on 14th February, 1983, and published in the Gazette on 15th February, 1983. [The Vice-President, Economic Planning and Finance].

Cde. Hoyte: Cde. Speaker, I beg to move the Consumption Tax Amendment Order No. 8. This order is also related to the fiscal measures proposed in the 1983 Budget which sought to increase consumption tax payable on aerated beverages, vodka, gin and cigarettes.

The rate of tax proposed on aerated beverages Cde. Speaker, will be 10¢ per bottle, being a 6¢ increase per bottle and the selling price therefore for aerated drinks, that is the large bottle will move from 37¢ to 43¢ and the small bottle from 34¢ to 40¢.

Similarly the order seeks to increase the consumption tax payable on gin from \$16.10 per proof gallon to \$24.15. This item is not controlled. The price of the item is not controlled, but if one assumes that circumstances will remain static the price for a large bottle of gin, that is the 26ozs bottle will move from \$10.30 to \$11.57. The tax proposed on vodka is at the rate of \$24.15 moving from \$16.10 per proof gallon. Again it is expected that the price for a 26 ozs bottle of vodka will increase from \$13.00 to \$14.07.

The order also seeks to increase the consumption tax on cigarettes, to increase the consumption tax from \$36.37 per kilo to \$67.00 per kilo. Cigarettes are controlled items and therefore the increases or the new prices would be controlled and in fact the Cde. Minister responsible for these matters, the Minister of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection has issued a consequential order. The prices will move as follows:

Alaska brand, king size containing 20 cigarettes, I am told will move from \$2.05 to \$2.69. Bristol King size 20 cigarette pack will move similarly from \$2.05 to \$2.69 and Broadway 20 pack regular size will move from \$1.25 to \$1.75. Bristol regular 20 pack will move from \$1.30 to \$1.80^{and} Players No. 10 from 80¢ to \$1.07. Now these are controlled prices but again I think it is perhaps useful to draw to the attention of members of the House that people have been paying exorbitant prices for the cigarettes, well above the controlled prices.

Question put and agreed to.

Motion carried.

The Speaker: Cde. Hoyte.

CONFIRMATION OF THE TRAVEL VOUCHER TAX (AMENDMENT) ORDER 1983 (No.9)

"Be it resolved that this National Assembly, in accordance with section 4 of the Travel Voucher Tax Act, Chapter 80:09, confirm the Travel Voucher (Amendment) Order 1983 (No.9), which was published in the Gazette on 15th February, 1983. [The Vice President, Economic Planning and Finance].

Cde. Hoyte: Cde. Speaker, I beg to move the Travel Voucher Tax Amendment Order 1983 No. 9. Again this is related to the fiscal measures proposed in the 1983 Budget and seeks to raise the travel voucher tax from 30% of the cost of the fare to 50% thereby generating a yield of some thirteen million dollars over and above the 1982 figures.

Cde. Speaker, I think that I should use this opportunity to draw the attention of this House to a number of irregularities which have been committed and

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which are being committed by travel agencies since the time of the budget statement on the 15th of this month when it was announced that the travel voucher tax would be increased. Acting upon reports we had received, the Commissioner of Inland Revenue caused a number of audits to be carried out into the operations of various travel agencies and he has discovered that some of them have been conspiring with others to evade the increase taxation. They have been back dating tickets in the vain hope that this would cause the tax to be evaded. They have been arranging for people who travel to buy tickets to a destination which is not the intended destination, for example, the traveler would buy a ticket to Trinidad, pay the travel voucher tax on the cost of the fare between Georgetown and Port-of-Spain and then when in Trinidad buy a ticket for the rest of the journey.

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I would wish to point out that the law makes provision for this kind of evasion and the Commissioner of Inland Revenue has power, notwithstanding the device of buying a ticket to a destination other than the one the traveller is going to, to really collect the full taxes due. He has power to call upon travellers to produce passports and all necessary documentation.

Apart from this, there are several other irregularities which are coming to light, such as the failure on the part of these agencies to make returns to the Commissioner of Inland Revenue on the due dates, their failure to make payments of the travel voucher tax which they have collected from travellers on the due dates, the failure to charge or levy the tax at the prescribed date and, most serious of all, arranging, or causing to be arranged, transportation for people who have not produced their current tax certificate as required by law. These are all very serious matters which I think I should bring to the attention of this honourable Assembly. I wish to indicate that, within the course of the next week, the Commissioner of Inland Revenue will be launching a series of charges against those persons who have been found indulging in these practices and that the Government is prepared to invoke the harshest possible measures against these defaulters. I think I would like to give public notice of this and to caution these people to desist from these irregular practices. The powers open to the Government are not necessarily legal. They are administrative and, if it becomes necessary, the Government will shut down some of these operations where people believe that they can indulge in revenue evasion with impunity.

Question proposed.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: Cde. Speaker, we do not support anyone indulging in the kind of rascality which the Vice-President has complained about. I think it is public knowledge that many of the agencies that deal with travelling are today Government controlled. There are many of them. I know there are private ones too. Probably the Vice-President will want, when he is replying, to tell us whether ^{this will apply to} those that come under Government control when they are found doing the kind of rascality which he has complained about, so that the Assembly will not get the wrong impression that only those who have private travel agencies do this kind of thing.

I remember that when the Bill was debated the Vice-President made the point that there was provision in the Bill that if someone bought a ticket for one destination and then extended that destination, when he returned he would have to pay. Obviously it is a breach of the law as well.

The Speaker: I think he said four days.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: I do not remember it clearly but I know there is something. What I am more concerned with – we are not in favour of rascality within those agencies which are under the Government's immediate control or in private travel agencies, but we are deeply concerned about the increase in taxes for travel. We have been hearing talk about Communication Order. The world is growing smaller. You can be in Georgetown in the morning and probably before night you can be in India or some other part of the world. We do not oppose tax measures that would not affect the people so severely. It is public knowledge that every Guyanese has somebody living out of Guyana today. There are thousands who still have their parents in this country. We have been listening to death announcements.

The Speaker: It does not affect you.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: I am coming to it. There are thousands who have their parents in this country. Some of those parents would like to go and see their children and therefore, if they are going to see their children, the increased tax will affect them because, under the law, they will have to buy their tickets here and pay the necessary taxes. Those taxes are only removed, I suppose, if the tickets are purchased outside and good cause can probably be advanced. I think that rarely happens.

I feel that this tax is too severe. It will impede social intercourse between blood relations. It will prevent the kind of movements which we are accustomed to now between Guyana and other parts of the world because we must not confine travel to people coming in and buying their tickets outside. They will be in a far better position because I understand if you pay \$500 (U.S.) you can come to Guyana, but if you have to buy a ticket from here to the United States of America that is the story. It has been increased fantastically. There are still a number of people in this country who would like to travel and, that being so, I do not think that the Government should have imposed such severe increases in taxes.

I have shared the view, rightly or wrongly, that while the Constitution makes provision to allow freedom of movement, freedom to travel and so on, a popular Guyanese phrase is that there are many ways in which you can choke a dog's neck. I think this is one way, that while you are entitled to travel and no one will stop you from travelling, when one comes face to face with the cost of travelling undoubtedly many will be compelled during this year, and in subsequent years, to cancel their plans to travel to other parts of the world to meet their own kith and kin.

Travelling is no longer a luxury exercise. It has become part of life and I would like to believe – and I was listening to the President – that no matter what status you may reach in life it is vitally necessary to retain the humanity. I think that is an important point and I would want to say that this increase on the already high travel tax, which is now 30 percent of the amount

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charged, to take it to 50 percent is one which must be strongly opposed and strongly condemned. In fact, I must indicate now that we will vote against it for what it is worth because we want to register strongly our opposition to this measure and in registering that opposition we know that we are speaking with the voice of the majority of the people in this country. We know that we are speaking with the voice of many of those who comprise this Parliament.

The Speaker: Would you like to pay tax, any tax?

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: That intervention supports the thought I am expressing.

The Speaker: If they do not pay tax how is the Government going to collect revenues?

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: While there may be merit in the thought that people generally would want to pay, one has to take into account whether people now have the means to pay. I am saying No. This is not one of the measures we can say will not affect the small man. The smallest person in this country will be affected by this measure. If you walk in any part of this country, rural or urban, in markets or in offices, you will not find one person speaking favourably of this imposition. It is not a question of opposing tax, a tax per se. People already felt that the 30 percent tax was too high. Nobody anticipated this increase. Probably it was only those who are involved in the travel agencies, whether inside of the Government or outside of the Government, who had some indication that this would happen. The Vice-President was telling us what they have done to evade it. That again is support for what I am saying. The people who have been charged with the responsibility of administering the law as it is have been trying and have been saying "This thing is too high. Let us beat it before and let us indulge in actions that are obviously contrary to the spirit and letter of the law."

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Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: If Parliament was what it was years ago this was one occasion when I would have strongly advocate for and on behalf of the party and the people of this country that this motion be adjourned and that it be sent to a select Committee and that it be examined objectively with the kind of human input which we have been advocating, so that the Government can look for some other avenue where it can raise the revenue it wants. I feel very strongly about this matter and I thought I should strongly persuade the Minister to deal with the matter.

The Chairman: Cde. Hoyte do you wish to reply?

Cde Hoyte: I wish to assure the Member that the Commissioner of Inland Revenue is auditing all travel agencies and there is only one Government Travel Agency, that is G.A.C. There are about nine other travel agencies, but they all have sub-agencies and they all sell tickets for and on behalf of one another. Nobody is being excused or spared in this exercise. Whenever the Commissioner of Inland Revenue turns up any irregularity, no matter where, he is going to act very promptly and bring the full weight of the law to bear upon the defaulter. One can argue at great length about the incidence of taxation, whether it falls here or there, upon which section of the community, which sector of the economy and so on. In the final analysis, one has to make a judgement. The purpose of taxation is not in any way to prevent travel. It is an interesting fact that most of the small people whom the member referred who have relatives abroad are recipients of tickets from abroad. They do not put their hands in their pockets to pay for the ticket – the small people we are talking about.

Now, I also want to say that notwithstanding the incidence of the travel voucher tax, last year for example this tax yielded about \$20 million. I think that tells us two things. It tells us about the elasticity of the demand to travel, and it tells us also something about the willingness of people to travel now, notwithstanding the cost. Therefore, I think that people will grumble about any taxation. Very few people are like the American jurist Oliver Wendell Holmes, who is reputed to have said "I like to pay taxes because with them I buy civilization." Very few people will look at it that way. So I hope that my reply satisfies Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion carried.

The Speaker: Cde. Hoyte.

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Cde. Hoyte: Cde Speaker, the Travel Voucher Tax Amendment Order 1983 (No. 10) contained a paragraph which really is superfluous in that it purports to deal with a matter which in fact is dealt with by the Principal Legislation. The Amending Order No. 2, therefore, seeks to remove that superfluous paragraph in order to prevent any overlapping between an order made by a subsidiary legislation and provisions of the Principle Act.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion carried.

BILLS – Second and Third Readings

APPROPRIATION BILL 1983 – BILL No. 7/1983

A bill intituled:

"An Act to provide for the issue from the Consolidated Fund of the sum necessary to meet the expenditure (not otherwise lawfully charged on the Consolidated Fund) of Guyana for the Financial year ending 31st December, 1983 estimates whereof have been approved by the National Assembly, and for the appropriation of that sum for specified purposes, in conformity with the Constitution." [Vice-President, Economic Planning and Finance.]

Cde. Hoyte: Cde. Speaker, I beg to move the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill 1983 – Bill No. 7/1983 and published on 1983-02-24.

Bill read a Second time.

Assembly in Committee.

Bill considered and approved.

Assembly resumed.

Bill reported without Amendment, read the Third time and passed.

The Speaker: Comrades, all Members who are members of the Executive Committee, there will be a meeting at 16:00 hrs in my Chambers. It is a Committee of this House.

Adjournment

Resolved, "That this Assembly do now adjourn to a date to be fixed." [Vice-President, Party and State Matters.]

Adjourned accordingly at 15:47 hrs.