

Official Report

*PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST
SESSION (2012) OF THE TENTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA UNDER THE
CONSTITUTION OF THE CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA HELD IN THE
PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, BRICKDAM, GEORGETOWN*

22ND Sitting

Thursday, 14TH June, 2012

The Assembly convened at 3.38 p.m.

PRAYERS

[Speaker in the Chair]

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, please accept my profound apologies for the delay. I did have personal difficulties this afternoon and was in conference with some Members of the House.

Letter from Dr. Bheri Ramsaran

Mr. Speaker: I wish to announce that I have received a letter written on behalf of the Hon. Minister of Health, Dr. Bheri Ramsaran, asking to be excused from today's sitting as he is representing the Government at a conference overseas.

International day for blood donors

Mr. Speaker: I also wish to announce that today, though I may be wrong in terms of the correctness of my statement, is the "International Day for Blood Donors". I would like to encourage all Members and persons present to consider donating blood. I will be making

arrangements to do so tomorrow and I am prepared to do so here if other Members would join me in that but if not tomorrow I will go to the blood bank as I normally do. I make that appeal.

Proposed school visits

Mr. Speaker: As I said before, I would like to announce that we have, been receiving numerous visits from school children from throughout the country – all 10 Regions thus far – and I did give a promise to many of those children that we would like to return visits to them so, in conjunction with the Parliament Office Staff, we are putting together a programme of visits to schools, hopefully to start at the end of this month and go into July and we hope to start in Regions 5 and 6. I would really like to encourage all Members present to participate and to make suggestions in terms of schools in your own Region that one would like to be visited. We would like to invite Geographic MPs to be present and in a day or two I will be writing to the Chief Whips asking them to support the programme and to allow us to show to the children of Guyana that we do have their best interest at heart.

Those are my announcements for today. In terms of the last announcement about the school visits I look forward to your support, as said before.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS

- (i) The Audited Financial Statements of the Guyana Securities Council for the year ended 31st December, 2011.
- (ii) The Audited Financial Statements of the Guyana National Cooperative Bank Inc. for the year ended 31st December, 2007.
- (iii) The Audited Financial Statements of the National Communications Network Inc. for the year ended 31st December, 2007.
- (iv) The Audited Financial Statements of the National Communications Network Inc. for the year ended 31st December, 2008. [*Minister of Finance*]
- (i) The Adoption of Children Regulations 2012 – No. 3/2012.
- (ii) The Adoption of Children Rules 2012 – No. 1/2012.

- (iii) The Status of Children Regulations 2012 – No. 412012.
- (iv) The Custody, Contact, Guardianship and Maintenance Regulations 2012 – No. 5/2012.
[Minister of Human Services and Social Security]
- (i) The Minimum Wages (Employees at Petrol Filling Stations) (Amendment) Order 2012 - No. 22 of 2012.
- (ii) The Minimum Wages (Security Guards) (Amendment) Order 2012- No. 23 of 2012.
- (iii) The Labour (Conditions of Employment of Certain Workers) (Minimum Rate of Wages) (Amendment) Order 2012- No. 24 of 2012.
- (iv) The Minimum Wages (Mechanical Transport Employees) (Amendment) Order 2012 - No. 25 of 2012.
- (v) The Minimum Wages (Employees in Groceries) (Amendment) Order 2012- No. 26 of 2012.
- (vi) The Minimum Wages (Employees in Hardware Stores) (Amendment) Order 2012 – No: 27 of 2012.
- (vii) The Minimum Wages (Employees in Dry Goods Stores) (Amendment) Order 2012 – No. 28 of 2012.
- (viii) The Printing Trade Workers Wages Council Wages Regulations (Amendment) Order 2012 – No. 29 of 2012.
- (ix) The Aerated Water Factories Wages Council Wages Regulation (Amendment) Order 2012 – No. 30 of 2012.
- (x) The Sawmill Workers Wages Council Wages Regulation (Amendment) Order 2012 – No. 31 of 2012.
- (xi) The Timber Grant Workers Wages Council Wages Regulation (Amendment) Order 2012 – No.32 of 2012.
- (xii) The Minimum Wages (Cinema Employees) (Amendment) Order 2012 — No. 33 of 2012.

(xiii) The Minimum Wages (Employees in Drug Stores) (Amendment) Order 2012 — No. 34 of 2012. [*Minister of Labour*]

ORAL QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, I received a request from the Hon. Member, Mr. Joseph Harmon, to ask one question of the Hon. Minister of Public Works.

Lt Col (Ret'd) Harmon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Hon. Minister of Public Works state the date that the Vessels MV Sabanto and Kanawan will be put into operation for the service of the general public along the Parika to Supenaam Route and the reason for the continued delay in doing so?

Minister of Public Works [Mr. Benn]: Mr. Speaker, I am surprised that these questions are being posed without notice being given to me. My understanding is, before the Member enters the Chamber, as I have always understood it, we should be presented with the question. So, I am unhappy... Yesterday you did inform me, before I entered this Chamber, that I would be confronted with a question... [**Mrs. Baker:** Not confronted, asked.] ...confronted with a question and I did answer the question as best as I could at that time, which I would always like to do. Let me just, perhaps not to lead to further disagreement, say that with respect to the Kanawan and the Sabanto – the Kanawan class vessels – we have been working to have the roll-on roll-off facilities installed. There have been difficulties with respect to design changes, material supply, engineering and time management and those are the reasons... [**Interruption**] That is why one can present it as a written question. If one cannot digest or grasp as I speak... I repeat that we have had those difficulties. One particular difficulty with respect to the changes for the dolphins fore and aft of the vessels is the lengths of the pilings required for the depth of water and the design depth needed and we require greenheart piles of 75 feet in length. There has been some great difficulty in getting those piles and we have had delays. The current dates, based on our last discussion... In fact, let me say that the last date that we had would have been the first week in July. We are pushing that now to the end of July. As an outside date I would say that the first week in August we expect to be in operation. When the facilities would have been completed the run-ups, the crew training for the facilities would still have to be done and that always requires a week or so but we are trying to expedite that process.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. Hon. Minister, let me just say that the Standing Orders say that these are questions without notice and I heard you speak quite efficiently and effectively on this matter a few weeks ago, as reported in the press and I was confident that you would have the answer and I do not believe, in any way...

Mr. Benn: Mr. Speaker, you are suggesting that the Hon. Member should be reading the news papers and following...

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Benn, with respect, I have ruled and I allowed the question. Thank you very much.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS, INCLUDING POLICY STATEMENTS

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the Hon. Member Mr. Robert Persaud has requested leave of the House to make a statement as a Minister and I have given approval for that statement to be read, copies of which will be shared with the House momentarily.

GUYANA NATIONAL PROTECTED AREAS SYSTEM

Minister of Natural Resources and Environment [Mr. R. Persaud]: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Guyana is globally recognised for its wealth of natural resources, high levels of biodiversity and for having one of the lowest rates of deforestation in the developing world. The people and successive Governments of Guyana have had a long history of instituting mechanisms for effective management and conservation of these resources. More recently, with the development of the Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS), the Government made the unprecedented commitment to reorient the national economy onto a low carbon, “green” pathway which we will be showcasing at the upcoming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, commonly referred to as the Rio+20.

An effective national protected area system (NPAS) is a key component of the Government’s vision for Guyana’s development and will contribute significantly to the achievement of the principles outlined in the LCDS. Guyana’s protected area system will allow for the protection and maintenance of unique natural and cultural heritage whilst, at the same time facilitating sustainable social, environmental and economic development. It is in this context I wish to update the National Assembly on Guyana’s policy for Protected Areas Development.

In respect to the required legislation, the Protected Areas Act, 2011 (PA Act), was enacted on 7th July, 2011 and came into force by commencement order on 1st November, 2011. The Protected Areas Act provides the framework for the establishment and management of a national system of protected areas, including a mechanism for sustainable long-term financing, that is through a National Protected Areas Trust Fund and the establishment of a Protected Areas Commission. Under the Protected Areas Act, existing and new state-owned protected areas, Amerindian protected areas, privately managed protected areas and Urban Parks such as the Botanical Gardens and the Zoological Park will comprise the national protected areas system.

To enable this, an institutional framework has been developed and the Protected Areas Commission, established under the Protected Areas Act, is a body corporate governed by a Board of Directors. The Board was appointed by Cabinet in February, 2012, while the appointments of the Protected Areas Commission's Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner are to be made shortly. The Commission's functions include establishing, managing, maintaining, promoting and expanding the national protected areas system. This encompasses the monitoring and regulating of activities and the use of resources within protected areas; preparing, developing and effectively implementing management plans; providing support and advice to Amerindian Villages to enable them to develop Amerindian Protected Areas and promoting public involvement in the decision making processes.

The Board of Directors oversees the operations, namely: financial, technical and administration of the Commission, including approving applications which are made by the Commission to the Board of Trustees of the National Protected Areas Trust Fund for funding. The Protected Area Commission falls under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment.

Which are the areas that have been declared Protected Areas? In the latter half of 2011, the Government of Guyana declared Shell Beach and the Kanuku Mountains as protected areas, thereby, almost doubling the number of protected areas in Guyana. These two new protected areas which now join the Kaieteur National Park, the Iwokrama Rainforest Reserve and the Amerindian Protected Area of Konashen. These five protected areas collectively amount to almost 9% of the country's land mass. The delineation processes for Shell Beach and the Kanuku Mountains were completed under the German funded Guyana Protected Areas System,

commonly referred to as GPAS, using participatory approaches and a draft management plan for the Kanuku Mountains was also completed.

With respect to financing, the establishment of a National Protected Areas Trust Fund as a mechanism to provide financing for the National Protected Areas System is a requirement under the Protected Areas Act. The Government of Guyana will move to establish the Protected Areas Trust Fund before the last quarter of 2012.

In the interim, the Government has partnered with Conservation International Guyana to establish the Conservation Trust Fund. The Conservation Trust Fund and its Board of Trustees were established in December, 2011, with an Executive Director appointed on 1st May, 2012. So far the Conservation Trust Fund has secured commitments from the Government of Germany and Conservation International in the sums of €4 million and US\$3.5 million respectively.

To move the Protected Areas System forward we require partnership and support from a number of international agencies and in September, 2009, the Governments of Guyana and Germany, represented by the German Development Bank (KfW) signed a financing agreement for €5.1 million to support a second phase of the GPAS project. It builds on the outcomes of the initial phase which was concluded at an approximate cost of €2.4 million.

Approximately €1.1 million of the GPAS Phase II funds are earmarked for infrastructural measures for the Protected Areas Commission, the development of a management plan for the Shell Beach Protected Area and follow-up support for community livelihood projects under the GPAS Phase 1 project. The remaining €4 million will be used as an endowment to the Trust Fund to support a sustainable and long-term financing mechanism for the National Protected Areas System. Project activities under Tranche I commenced in March, 2012, and are expected to be completed by December next year.

The Government of Germany has since committed an additional €4.3 million for GPAS Phase III, which aims to support the effective management of the National Protected Areas System, improve livelihood and resource management capacities in local communities, as well as improve the capabilities of key Natural Resources Agencies; namely, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Guyana Forestry Commission. The project document has been

developed and is to be finalised. Implementation is likely to commence in 2014, following the conclusion of the GPAS II.

With respect to international commitments, as a signatory to the UN Convention on Biodiversity, Guyana has an obligation to protect at least 17% of its terrestrial and inland water areas and 10% of its marine waters by 2020. Over the last year, Guyana has significantly increased the area under protection with protected areas, as I pointed out earlier, accounting for almost 9% of the country's land mass.

Parties of the Convention are also required to develop a long-term action plan or update the existing plan for the implementation of the Programme of Works on Protected Areas, including detailed activities, timeline budgets and responsibilities with a view to contributing the implementation on the Convention and Biodiversity Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011 to 2020.

I wish to advise the National Assembly that Guyana has completed and submitted its Action Plan for implementation. The plan will form the basis of a report to the COP 11 by the Executive Secretary and will serve as a framework to access funds from the Global Environment Fund, as well as other financing sources for the establishment and management of protected areas.

In conclusion, and in moving forward with the National Protected Areas System, the Government of Guyana will build on the experiences of Guyana's established Protected Areas while bringing to bear decades of international experience in theory and practice of Protected Areas Administration. The National Protected Areas System will be based on a policy that Protected Areas must serve as tools for income generation, job creation for local communities, as well as conservation. The creation of a world-class National Protected Areas System will further solidify Guyana's position at the forefront of new and innovative approaches to conservation and sustainable development.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker. [*Applause*]

INTRODUCTION OF BILL AND FIRST READING

The following Bills were introduced and read for the first time:

**MOTOR VEHICLE AND ROAD TRAFFIC (AMENDMENT) BILL 2012 – BILL NO.
5/2012**

A Bill intituled:

“AN ACT to amend the Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic Act.”
[Minister of Home Affairs]

**SUMMARY JURISDICTION (PROCEDURE) (AMENDMENT) BILL 2012 – BILL NO.
6/2012**

A Bill intituled:

“AN ACT to amend the Summary Jurisdiction (Procedure) Act.”
[Minister of Home Affairs]

PUBLIC BUSINESS

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MOTIONS

FINANCIAL PAPER NO. 9 OF 2011

“BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly approves of the proposal set out in Financial Paper No. 9 of 2011 – Supplementary Estimates (Current and Capital) totalling \$79,619,478 – Advances made from the Contingencies Fund for the period 25th October, 2011 to 31st December, 2011.” *[Minister of Finance]*

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, we have before us the consideration of Financial Paper No. 9 of 2011 but before we go to that I wish to state that I did receive a letter on, I believe, the 21st May, if I am correct, from the Hon. Member Mr. Carl Greenidge, inviting me to rule this Financial Paper out of order as being offensive to the Standing Orders of the National Assembly. I did indicate to Mr. Greenidge, the Hon. Member that I would respond – I was out of the country and upon my return I would have done so. I have, as of last evening, been able to give fair and good consideration to his request and I have set my findings in a ruling which will be circulated and I

believe I should read that ruling with your leave. It is somewhat lengthy but I would like to read it because of the importance of the matter at hand.

On May 21st, 2012, the Hon. Member, Mr. Carl B. Greenidge, Member of Parliament, wrote to me to raise issues of concern about Financial Paper No. 9 which in essence, is a regurgitation of the matters previously raised in Financial Paper No. 7. Mr. Greenidge urged that the “document be deemed inadmissible to be placed on the Order Paper for the remainder of the session.” Standing Orders 26 (e) and 69 were used to advance the argument that a matter raised on a Bill or Motion, if defeated, cannot be reintroduced during the same session of the Parliament.

The Hon. Member’s arguments are compelling indeed and cannot be considered frivolous, vexatious or abusive of the processes and procedures of the National Assembly. They are worthy of my full consideration.

On March 15th, 2012, in a Ruling on the rectitude of the National Assembly’s disallowance of four (4) Heads in Financial Paper No. 7, I stated that “a decision to vote for or against a Supplementary Estimate or a Head or sub-Head thereof, cannot be reversed by the Speaker.” I went on to say, however, that “though I am of the opinion that the Hon. Minister of Finance, or his designate, may reintroduce them for consideration”.

The statement highlighted and referred to above now falls to be expanded upon and rationalised. The issue is whether or not the heads that were included in Financial Paper No. 7 can be considered a Motion or a Bill, and as such, cannot and should not be re-introduced.

Appropriation Bills concern Government appropriation, expenditure or taxation. These are the Bills that provide the Executive with the financial means to govern. The National Assembly’s explicit approval has to be given to raise taxes or to spend monies, and it is through the process of the Appropriation Bill that this process is regulated.

Our Constitution at article 217 states expressly:

“(1) No moneys shall be withdrawn from the Consolidated Fund except –

- (a) To meet expenditure that is charged upon the Fund by this Constitution or by any Act of Parliament; or

- (b) Where the issue of those moneys has been authorised by an Appropriation Act; or
- (c) Where the issue of those moneys has been authorised under article 219.”

Parliament in its wisdom, has created legislation in the Financial Management and Accountability Act No. 20 of 2003, to give effect to this Constitutional provision and by extension, the Parliamentary Standing Orders from numbers 71 to 79 (inclusive), which are subsidiary legislation, in a sense, that provides for the procedures that must be utilised by the Executive and the National Assembly to manage the business of raising taxes and spending moneys.

As indicated earlier, Standing Orders 26 (e) and 69 have been invoked by the Hon. Member, Mr. Carl Greenidge, to support his argument that the sums sought in Financial Paper No. 9 should be disallowed on the basis of his *in limine* application, as contained in his letter. At the outset, I respectfully wish to differ with his contentions; for the reasons being, that the Standing Orders that regulate entirely the business of request to draw on the Consolidated Fund are contained in Standing Orders 71 to 79. The Standing Orders referred to, those being 26 (e) and 69 are, in my considered opinion, meant to regulate generally, the business of the conduct of questions, motions and Private and Public Business. In other words, because of the special nature of Financial Bills and the presence of special procedures set out for them, the other Standing Orders do not automatically apply *mutatis mutandis*.

Section 24 of the Financial Management and Accountability Act establishes the manner in which the Minister may introduce a Supplementary Appropriation Bill and the Standing Orders 78 and 79 regulate the conduct of the presentation of those Bills. In fact, section 24 (5) of the Financial Management and Accountability Act (FM&AA) restricts the Minister to a maximum of five Supplementary Appropriation Bills but is silent on the content of those Bills. I do believe that if Parliament had intended to state what expenditures the Minister should request appropriations for it would have so stated and that this omission is not inadvertent but deliberate. Why? Because in my considered opinion, there is an inherent right of the Executive to seek approval to finance its budget but that right has checks and balances built in to correspondingly, authorise the National Assembly to scrutinise, approve or disapprove Government’s expenditure.

4.08 p.m.

In my view, there should be no fetter on the right of the National Assembly to approve or disapprove the request for authority to spend. These rights, taken as they are, are meant to be a check and balance on each other that we must hold as sacrosanct. These are sacrosanct. These must be recognised by all, including, and especially, Mr. Nandlall, the courts. We approve and you come...

Unless by an Act of Parliament, as was done with section 24 of the Financial Management and Accountability Act, the right of the executive to seek approval for expenditure cannot be circumscribed or interfered with by the National Assembly. We must recognise the strict delineations and separations of power between the legislature and the executive. (Please advise others who are also speaking publicly.)

There are definitely many lacunas in the legislative architecture for financial management and it is urged that the parliamentary parties seek consensus, as other countries have done, in fashioning constitutional and legislative amendments to better regulate the conduct of the procedure for government to receive permission for spending, whilst not unduly fettering the right of either to discharge its constitutional mandate to finance its budget and to approve such spending.

In the circumstances, and for the reasons set out above, I rule that Financial Paper No. 9 is properly before the National Assembly for its approval or disapproval because here is where it can either receive approval or be disapproved. I have referred to instances in both Australia and Sri Lanka where the refusal or approval of Appropriation Bills has been considered and constitutional amendments made.

Copies will be circulated momentarily. There are some typographical errors for which I apologise, beforehand.

The Assembly will now resolve itself into Committee of Supply to consider Financial Paper No. 9 of 2011.

Assembly in Committee of Supply

Minister of Finance [Dr. Singh]: Mr. Chairman, in accordance with article 171 (2) of the Constitution, I signify that Cabinet has recommended for consideration by the National Assembly the motion for the approval of the proposal set out in Financial Paper No. 9 of 2011 – Supplementary Provision on the Current and Capital Estimates for the period ended 25th October, 2011 to the 31st December, 2011 totalling \$79,619,478 and I now, Sir, with your permission, move the motion.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, the motion is proposed. We will consider the paper as usual, that is, the items will be taken from both capital and current estimates in order for which the Minister is responsible. So in that regard, Item 1 01-012 Office of the President – Presidential Advisory (Cabinet and Other Services)...Members, I think, there are four items and so what I would like to do is to put them *en bloc*.

CURRENT ESTIMATES

**Item 1 01-012 Office of the President – Presidential Advisory (Cabinet and Other Services)
- \$25,500,000**

Item 2 51-516 Ministry of Home Affairs – General Registrar Office - \$6,525,000

CAPITAL ESTIMATES

Item 1 01-11 Office of the President – Head Office Administration - \$18,494,478

Item 2 47-474 Ministry of Health – Regional and Clinical Services - \$29,100,000

Mr. Speaker: If there are no questions, comments, I will now put the motion which is that:

“The Committee of Supply approves of the proposals set in Financial Paper No. 9 of 2011 – Supplementary Estimate (Current and Capital) for the period ending 25th October, 2011 to 31st December, 2011, totalling \$79,619,478.”

Question put.

I believe the noes have it.

Ms. Teixeira: Division.

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Clerk, a division has been called. Could we have the bell?

Noes

Mr. T. Williams

Ms. Marcello

Dr. Ramayya

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe

Mrs. Hughes

Mr. Nagamootoo

Mr. Ramjattan

Ms. Ferguson

Mr. Morian

Mr. Allen

Mr. Jones

Mr. Adams

Mrs. Baveghems

Mr. Sharma

Mr. Bulkan

Mr. Bond

Ms. Kissoon

Mr. Trotman

Ms. Selman

Ayes

Mr. Jafarally

Mr. Damon

Dr. Persaud

Rev. Dr. Gilbert

Dr. Mahadeo

Mr. Seeraj

Mr. Neendkumar

Mr. Lumumba

Mr. Chand

Ms. Shadick

Mrs. Chandarpal

Mr. Nadir

Ms. Teixeira

Bishop Edghill

Mr. Whittaker

Mr. Baksh

Mrs. Sukhai

Ms. Webster

Mr. G. Persaud

Mr. Allicock

Mr. Benn

Ms. Wade

Mr. Ali

Mr. Felix

Dr. Westford

Ms. Hastings

Mr. R. Persaud

Mr. Scott

Dr. Singh

Mr. Harmon

Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett

Mr. Greenidge

Mr. Nandlall

Mrs. Backer

Dr. Ramsammy

Dr. Norton

Mr. Rohee

Mr. B. Williams

Mr. Hinds

Ms. Ally

Dr. Roopnarine

Brigadier (Ret'd) Granger

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the division having being requested and the Clerk having taken the vote the count reveals that twenty-nine Members voted for the motion and thirty-two Members voted against the motion. The motion is therefore defeated and it is not carried, and the National Assembly has carried out its constitutional function.

Assembly resumed.

Dr. Singh: Mr. Speaker, I beg to report that the Committee of Supply has not approved to the proposals set out in Financial Paper No. 9 of 2011 – Schedule of Supplementary Provision on the Current and Capital Estimates totalling \$79,619,478 – Advances made from Contingencies Fund, and I now move that the Assembly doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion carried.

SYMPATHY ON THE DEATH OF DR. MOTI LALL

“BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly records its deep regret at the death of Dr. Moti Lall on 10th January, 2012 and pays tribute to his dedicated service as a Member of Parliament from 24th November, 1992 to 15th February, 2001 and to the people of Guyana;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the National Assembly directs that an expression of its sympathy be conveyed to his sorrowing widow, children and relatives.” *[Prime Minister and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs]*

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, this afternoon, the House, as it is customary, from time to time, does assume a sombre mode to pay honour and respects to a fallen comrade and colleague. We have in our midst the relatives of the late esteemed and distinguished Dr. Moti Lall and we thank them for being here.

The House will now proceed to pay its respects to a husband, father and relative and express its collective sympathy on his passing.

Prime Minister and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs [Mr. Hinds]: Mr. Speaker, Hon. Members, I rise to move the motion standing in my name that we, the Tenth Parliament of Guyana, at this sitting of the Assembly, record our deep regret at the death of Dr. Moti Lall on 10th January, 2012, mere days away from his 70th birthday, and pay tribute to his dedicated service as a Member of Parliament and to the people of Guyana.

Dr. Moti Lall was a man who wore many caps: husband, father, friend, comrade, doctor and politician; and he excelled in all of those roles. He was a God-fearing man who lived by the teachings of Swami Dayanand and tenets of the Arya Samaj movement. He leaves to mourn not only this nation, hundreds of former patients and his party the People’s Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) but, more so, his family who quietly supported him in his bids to serve his country.

Born on 14th January, 1942 to Suraj and Betty Lall, Moti was the eldest of five siblings. He grew up in the village of Buxton, East Coast Demerara, with his family, and from a tender age developed a strong sense of our village life camaraderie and fraternity with little notice of race. He, like a number of us at that age - myself, the Leader of the Opposition and Hon. Member Dr. Rupert Roopnarine - spent his formative years at Queen's College, at a time when Mr. Vivian Joseph (VJ) Sanger-Davies, T.D., M.A., the last of the old British imperialist schoolmasters, as we used to describe him, held office there. He seemed to be fully committed to his students' welfare and in retrospect, we may say that he may have been clairvoyant, because he saw great potential in Moti and urged him to venture into a medical career.

Subsequent to completing his 'A' Levels at Queen's College, young Moti was the beneficiary of a scholarship to pursue medical studies in Havana, Cuba. At his request, in his fourth year of medical studies, he was allowed to transfer and complete his medical studies at the University of Rostock in Germany where he gained extensive understanding of tuberculosis, the treatment of which would have come to be one of his life's passions.

With the aid of the late Dr. Cheddi Jagan, upon whose recommendations a grant had been secured, Dr. Moti Lall, thereafter, completed postgraduate studies in Pulmonary Care at the very institution. Subsequent to completing his studies, Dr. Moti Lall returned to these shores in 1968, but was denied a job and may have been under surveillance because he had studied in what was then communist East Germany. He migrated to Canada where he spent several years before returning in 1974. By that time, he was a pulmonary disease specialist and assumed the post of Medical Superintendent at the West Demerara Regional Hospital (WDRH) where he served until attaining the age of retirement in 2001.

One of Dr. Moti Lall's legacies will forever be his invaluable contributions towards the development and sustenance of a proper tuberculosis programme in Guyana. He was a catalyst in the opening of the Chest Clinic and at the time of his death he was President of the Guyana Chest Society. Throughout his medical career, Dr. Moti Lall had, at a national level, led Guyana's fight to eradicate tuberculosis and other pulmonary ailments. He was also instrumental in the establishment and advancement of the Hansen's disease programme in Guyana, at the West Demerara Regional Hospital.

This great son of our soil, this messiah to those who suffered from the scourge of tuberculosis, was, in 1983, awarded the Silver Medal by the Ministry of Health for the indefatigable pursuits in the fight against tuberculosis and other pulmonary ailments. That was crowned by the subsequent bestowing upon him our country's third highest national award, the Cacique Crown of Honour (CCH), in 1998, for his long, indisputably selfless and dedicated service in the field of medicine.

Dr. Moti Lall's practice, over the span of his entire medical career, was always characterised by his care and compassion, his personable nature and his dedication to his art. Even after going into retirement, and even when ill health started to creep in, he unwaveringly continued in the selfless dispensation of his gift. During his retirement, he continued to serve his nation as a consultant with the Ministry of Health.

In addition to being a medical man, Dr. Moti Lall was a selfless politician who, as a member of the People's Progressive Party, actively fought, from the 1960s, alongside the late Dr. Cheddi Jagan, for a bright future for Guyana. He served as a Member of Parliament in the Sixth and Seventh Parliaments of Guyana, from 24th November, 1992 to 15th February, 2001 and then, again, in 2005, when a seat became vacant. He served his party without reservation, both as an ordinary member and, also, as a central committee member.

Dr. Moti Lall also served as Chairman of the Central Housing and Planning Authority (CH&PA) for a number of years. Upon hearing the sad news of his death, the Authority issued a statement, saluting his contributions to the development and regularisation of the housing sector in Guyana. Wherein it stated:

“During his tenure as Chairman, Dr. Lall's leadership was invaluable, as the Board played a significant role in making policy and planning decisions that impacted positively on the advancement of the housing and urban development sector of the country which, by extension, contributed to the success of the housing programme.”

As leader of this honourable House, I wish to sincerely express our heartfelt condolences to his widow, Sister Chitrekhya Lall, his son Moti Pravin Lall and his daughters Aruna and Renuka Lall.

On a more personal note, my wife and I publicly express our appreciation to Dr. Moti Lall's family for the welcome refuge presented to us as we travelled, under advice, to Georgetown from Linden, on elections' day, 1992, and went to the house of Dr. Moti Lall and stayed there for the next couple of unsettled and unsettling days.

I, herein, move that this Tenth Parliament of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, at this sitting, does approve this motion which stands in my name and I look for support from all sides of the House.

I thank you. [*Applause*]

Ms. Selman: I rise on behalf of A Partnership for National Unity (APNU) to support the motion standing in the name of the Hon. Prime Minister and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Mr. Samuel Hinds, under the caption, "Sympathy on the Death of Dr. Moti Lall".

I did not have the privilege of personally knowing Dr. Lall, a former Member of this National Assembly, who, after lifelong service to his country, Guyana, departed this earthly plane on 10th January, 2012. However, I spoke with some former Members of this House and others who knew him. Consequently, I feel comfortable in paying tribute to him and in conveying our deepest sympathy to his surviving family members.

Born on 14th January, 1942, Dr. Lall was the eldest of his siblings who all grew up in the village of Buxton, East Coast Demerara. He spent most of his sixty-nine years on this stage of life, in service to the people of Guyana in various and in varying capacities, including as a medical practitioner, President of the Guyana Chest Society, a member of the PPP Central Committee, Chairman of the Central Housing and Planning Authority of the Ministry of Housing and Water, member of the Lion's Club of Guyana and, indeed, as we all know, a Member of this honourable House, the National Assembly, from the period 1992 to 2001 and, again, in 2005.

The research that I have conducted reveals that Dr. Lall devoted his early years to acquiring the necessary education, training and skills to perform in his desired profession. He attended Queen's College, as the Prime Minister said, and was later awarded a scholarship to study medicine in Cuba, after which he pursued a career in the field of medicine.

Dr. Moti Lall was first registered by the Medical Board as a medical practitioner in the early 1970s, after completing his medical degree at the University of Rostock, German Democratic Republic, in 1968. He obtained a diploma in Pulmonary Care and tuberculosis in 1970 from the same university, and, on returning to Guyana, he commenced his long and continuous service in the field of pulmonary medicine and tuberculosis control. He was appointed Principal Tuberculosis Officer in 1982 and held that position until 1997 when he retired. He was then retained as a consultant with the Ministry of Health to oversee the tuberculosis programme, a position he held until 1999 when he was appointed as adviser on communicable diseases.

I am advised, and do believe, that Dr. Moti Lall worked tirelessly towards the eradication of tuberculosis in Guyana. I was also informed that following the conversion of the Best Sanatorium, in 1986, to the West Demerara Regional Hospital, he continued to serve the public through several chest clinics nationwide. At the time of his death, he was the President of the Guyana Chest Society – a society that has existed for almost one hundred years in Guyana.

In recognition of his efforts to help reduce the scourge of tuberculosis, he was awarded the Silver Medal by the Ministry of Health in 1983 and in 1998, the country's third highest award, the Cacique Crown of Honour, by the Government for his long and dedicated service in the field of medicine.

Dr. Lall is remembered, within the health sector, as an ardent advocate for better health care and was specifically instrumental in the establishment and the advancement of the Hansen's disease programme in Guyana at the West Demerara Regional Hospital.

Dr. Moti Lall was an active member of the PPP since in the early 1960s and served as a Member of Parliament from 24th November, 1992 to 15th February, 2001 and, again, in 2005. Dr. Lall was also a former Commonwealth Observer and the Chairman of the Central Housing and Planning Authority.

His Excellency President Donald Ramotar, in his eulogy, described Dr. Moti Lall as an independent fighter who was faithful to his wife and family and who stood his ground to the principle of loyalty, even in testing times. It is, therefore, quite obvious that he was highly thought of and respected by the members of the PPP.

It is also obvious that he was well recognised among his Hindu brothers and sisters as a devoted brother. This is illustrated in the words of Pandit Suresh Sugrim in his message to the family which stated:

“Your loving husband was one of those extraordinary people who will never be forgotten in a lifetime. His life was like a sunbeam that lit up the world around him, his family and friends. Now we can bask in the rainbow of his loving memories that we will nurture in the golden years ahead.”

As a person, as I stated earlier, I did not have the good fortune of knowing Dr. Moti Lall. But I have been told by Mr. Robert Corbin, the former Leader of the Opposition, who resides in Republic Park, that Dr. Moti Lall was highly respected in the community and was known for his decency, courtesy and upright living.

I wish, therefore, on behalf of A Partnership for National Unity to support the motion to convey deepest sympathy to his grieving widow Chitrekha, two children and other relatives.

May his soul rest in peace.

Thank you. [*Applause*]

4.38 p.m.

Mr. Nagamootoo: I rise in support of the motion in the name of the Hon. Prime Minister that we express sympathy to the wife, children and relatives of the late Dr. Moti Lall, former Member of this National Assembly.

In doing so, I am very conscious that, in an atmosphere of gloom which hangs over this country, Dr. Moti Lall will forever shine as one of those very distinguished sons of Guyana who had set an example in modesty and incorruptibility; some values that we would miss and some values that would allow us to be constantly reminded of the contributions of Dr. Moti Lall. Nikolai Ostrovsky, in his *How the Steel Was Tempered*, a novel that was well known to Dr. Moti Lall, had reminded us that man's dearest possession is life and, to paraphrase him, it must be so lived, not to be bothered by trivialities and regrets, but in dying we know that all our life, all of our

energies have been spent towards the greatest cause, that is, in the service of man. Dr. Moti Lall epitomised, in a reality, in those sixty-nine years of his life, dedication to the cause of the people.

I have known him for more than thirty-five years and my memory of him is as fresh as when I first met his mother Mrs. Lall, Aunty Betty, and his sister Radica at the *Mirror* newspaper company, around 1971 and 1972. She worked there, and the modesty which was shown through was that one day she said that her son was returning from Canada and he had wanted her to look for a *gal* to marry. It is a rare quality of a son who would vest the confidence in a mother to help him start his life. That is the modesty I remember Dr. Moti Lall showed throughout his life when I served with him and have been associated with him, not only in the People's Progressive Party leadership, as a member of the central committee, in excess of thirty years, but also in his pioneering role as the President of the Guyana/German Democratic (GDR) Republic Friendship Society, the Guyana/Cuba Friendship Society and in the Guyana Peace Council. Dr. Moti Lall had been a pioneer of promoting the friendships of people not in Guyana alone. His origin was from Buxton, as an East Indian, showed that he transcended the environment from which he came and he wanted to epitomise and represent the unity of all of our people which he showed in the associations he pioneered.

He was also, as the Prime Minister reminded us, totally dedicated to the practice of medicine. His expertise in the field of lung diseases would be something that we would miss, particularly among the Amerindian communities, which, at one point, were prone to be victims of tuberculosis and he would have treated, day in, day out, hundreds and thousands, both at the chest clinic and at, what we would have called, the Best Hospital, now the West Demerara Regional Hospital, and in private practice.

I have had the modesty of being attended to by this physician and it was through him, his instrumentality and his connections with the German Democratic Republic, that I was sent to a hospital for treatment and was successfully treated for a lung ailment. So I owe a personal debt of gratitude to him for his assistance. It could not have happened without Dr. Moti Lall having opened up that connection with the so-called, then Eastern Bloc, socialist countries. I want to record in the National Assembly that that was done to the benefit of all Guyanese, because hundreds of Guyanese followed him to study medicine in the so-called, former Union of Soviet Socialist Republic, socialist bloc countries.

Finally, our own Martin Carter reminded us: “Death must not find us thinking that we die.” I am confident that Dr. Moti Lall did not think about death. At the time of his death he knew and he was confident that he had left his footprints in the sand of our times. He knew that he had made a contribution for the democracy of this country - for human rights in Guyana. He knew that he had made his mark in the field of medicine and service to humanity. He had richly deserved the Cacique Crown of Honour. When Mrs. Jagan solicited support, when Dr. Moti Lall first fell ill in Canada, I believe, all of his colleagues enthusiastically supported her nomination - I would say the recommendation - that he be conferred with the Cacique Crown of Honour in recognition of his work in the field of medicine, and in other fields.

I know that as a tribute to his fine character, a tribute to his incorruptible character, he had become a close friend, ally and comrade of the late Dr. Cheddi Jagan, and that is what most people would aim to aspire for in one lifetime.

I join in expressing sympathy on this solemn occasion to Chitrekha, Renuka, Pravin and Aruna, and other members of the family, on the passing of Dr. Moti Lall. I am associated with the Alliance For Change in subscribing to this honour accorded him today. [*Applause*]

Minister of Housing and Water [Mr. Ali]: I rise to support this motion that gives recognition to an outstanding soul, and an outstanding Guyanese; one who would have contributed tremendously to the development and advancement of Guyana.

Honesty, integrity, committed, nationalist, servant of humanity, extraordinary and rare, and priceless can be less than adequate as a summation of Dr. Moti Lall. Gentle and kind, reliable and approachable, he was a people’s man - strong in character, full of ideas and re-energised with every new challenge or, more so, perception of any challenge. His life’s work can be classified in different compartments. Dr. Moti Lall, the politician, the doctor, the technician, the social worker, the activist and the humanitarian, all fused together under one common motto – service to humanity. He was a bare-footed and weaponless soldier, winning over every battle with the goodness of his heart and virtues of his work. He was a thinker, a strategist and moralist, a leader, a motivator, and a teacher. Remembering Dr. Moti Lall is giving recognition to an outstanding soul, an asset of Guyana. Even as we celebrate his life, the benefits of his work continue to help many Guyanese. It is written in the Holy Koran that perhaps one of the greatest

contributions any human being can give to the world is that of the service of a teacher. Dr. Moti Lall had given tremendous service in moulding and cultivating the minds of many young Guyanese.

As I stand here, I am proud to say that my own political career started with tremendous engagement with Dr. Moti Lall. In 1994, when the Progressive Youth Organisation (PYO) was preparing for its congress, regional secretariats were set up and Dr. Moti Lall was in charge of Region 3. We had tremendous debates. He was always very current in his thinking – very current in his thinking. For a matter of fact, on every occasion he would have stood up and spoken, not on medicine, but he would have spoken about the international situation - the world situation. He was always engrossed in learning, in reading and in understanding what was happening around him. So much so, that when I, myself, went to study in India and came back, at every meeting he would call upon me to give the comrades an update as to what was happening in Asia; that forced me to read every single piece of news that came out of Asia so that I, myself, would have remained current.

I remember too, as a very young person, that in 1997 it was Dr. Moti Lall who motivated me to contest to become a regional committee member of the PPP for Region 3. I was elected on that regional committee, and I can recall his constant guidance and motivation. He led me throughout the process. He was accommodating; he was open to change; he was open to understanding issues of replenishment and he was a man who believed strongly in development and advancement of young people. For that, I, as an individual, as a young politician, owe him a debt of gratitude.

Dr. Moti Lall played the key role in the housing sector, a dynamic role - a role that laid the foundation, a role that opened up opportunities, a role that paved the way for the development that the housing sector is undergoing now. In 1992, he became the Chairman of the CH&PA Board until his untimely passing in January, 2012. This alone showed the trust that the Government and his colleagues had in him, in keeping him in the leadership of this very important Board. It must not be forgotten that Dr. Moti Lall assumed the chairmanship of the CH&PA Board under an important era in the history of our country. It was an era of transition and it required special skills. It required good interpersonal skills, good human resource management skills, to oversee the smooth transition of that period. Dr. Moti Lall, no doubt,

provided those skills to the CH&PA. He provided that level of leadership to the Ministry of Housing and the CH&PA. His colleagues on that Board recalled his constant call for dialogue, his constant call for modernisation, organisational change and organisational culture shift - all aimed at improving efficiency and advancing a more reliable product to the Guyanese people. His colleagues recalled that he was a man who was practical in nature, full of ideas, and full of new vision, but he was very practical about those ideas and vision - practicality, understanding the context in which those ideas and vision were framed.

Dr. Moti Lall's contribution to the housing sector had been tremendous. I would say it had been revolutionary. It was with great regret that we learn of his passing, but his service and the work that he would have left behind, the results of his labour, would be everlasting. The results of his labour would be one that will continue to bring benefit to Guyana and Guyanese.

To his family, his loving wife and children and Dr. Moti Lall's family expands far beyond that because he treated every human being as a member of his family, he had a personal touch for everyone he came across. Let us find comfort in the fact that this legend had lived a life that was open, transparent and filled with service to humanity.

Thank you. [*Applause*]

Minister of Agriculture [Dr. Ramsammy]: On January 10, 2012, I received the shocking news of the passing of a colleague and friend, Dr. Moti Lall. I knew that Dr. Moti Lall had a medical problem which he managed for years, but I also knew he managed his medical condition well and took great care of himself. I had spoken to him only a few days before and he was his usual self, regaling me with suggestions about the tuberculosis programme. There was no inkling that he was unwell and so, when I heard the news, I was therefore very shocked. On that day I lost a friend and I lost a comrade, as did many of us.

We always, no matter what, started our conversation by finding out about each other's health. We shared the same medical condition, but he somehow treated me as if I have a worst problem than he did. He was always calling me to make sure I was taking good care of myself. But we bonded not because of that, we bonded because both of us had a passion for public health. Our last conversation indeed was about his passion to control and the elimination of tuberculosis as a public health problem in Guyana and around the world. I kept reminding him that I was not the

Minister of Health anymore, and that I was the Minister of Agriculture, but he kept reminding me of the work we did together here and around the world to bring better management and better understanding of tuberculosis.

As I join you, my colleagues and my comrades, to pay tribute to Dr Moti Lall, we must not think that we are merely paying tribute to a former Member of Parliament. Indeed, he was a Member of Parliament from 1992 to 2001, but he made contributions that were not ordinary, and in some respects were extraordinary. We, therefore, today must understand that we pay tribute to a Guyanese brother, a Guyanese comrade, who, through his work and contributions, made our country better. At least, as I stand to make my contribution to this motion, paying tribute to a fallen comrade, I do so with the conviction that I pay tribute to a friend whose death truly made us realise that it is possible to make a difference in the lives of our families, in the lives of our communities and our country. We pay tribute today to such a gentleman who lived among us.

He served the health sector as a doctor, a public health professional and as an administrator. Indeed, today, two of the Caribbean's leading professionals on tuberculosis control are the Chief Medical Officer of Guyana and the present Director of the tuberculosis programme in Guyana; they both benefited from the support and the teaching of Dr. Moti Lall. Dr. Moti Lall was, as you have heard, first registered by the Medical Board of Medical Practitioners in the early 1970s, after he returned home from studying in the German Democratic Republic. He graduated from the University of Rostock as a medical doctor in 1968 and he continued with postgraduate studies for a diploma in Pulmonary Medicine and tuberculosis control. On his return to Guyana he was immediately placed at the tuberculosis clinic. That was the assignment to the West Demerara Regional Hospital, that the Prime Minister mentioned, but it was then not the West Demerara Regional Hospital. It was actually the Best Sanatorium. He was appointed as the Principal Tuberculosis Officer in 1982. He held that position until 1997 when he retired.

Those were difficult days. There was virtually no project for tuberculosis control in Guyana in the 1980s. Guyana, as every other country in the region, had thought that tuberculosis was something of the past. While Guyana kept the tuberculosis clinic running, we virtually closed the tuberculosis programme. Other countries did the same. It was under those circumstances that a frustrated Dr. Moti Lall was trying to pursue his passion - control and elimination of tuberculosis. His frustration was not only that there was no resource for the fight against

tuberculosis then, there was also the prevailing view that the tuberculosis problem no longer existed. Things improved somewhat in the 1990s as Guyana began to recognise the tuberculosis was a serious public health problem and that Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) was a serious scourge that threatened our very existence, but the allocation of funds for the fight against tuberculosis remained woefully inadequate.

He later confided in me that he did not know at that time in the early 1970s, whilst he was in Germany, about Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). No one did. But once AIDS hit the world in the early 1980s many physicians and many public health officials began to realise that the signs of this new public health scourge were already visible in the early 1970s. They simply did not know then that the things they were dealing with in the 1970s came out of AIDS. He confided in me that as a young doctor, studying for his diploma in Germany, in the Pulmonary and Tuberculosis Department, they saw the re-emergence of tuberculosis, in Germany. They read about the re-emergence in other developed and developing countries, but tuberculosis was coming with other illnesses, with other viral attacks, and they could not understand why the tuberculosis patients were having so many problems. No one was aware then that those cases in the 1970s were the first wave, the first manifestation, of a new syndrome that we would later call AIDS.

When he began his practice, therefore, in Guyana, it was a time that Guyana and the Caribbean took a stance that tuberculosis was licked and that it was no longer a public health problem - no longer a public health concern. Guyana was not unique in virtually closing down the tuberculosis programme or in starving the programme of financial support. Other Caribbean countries did this, other countries in the world. It was a global norm. If anyone has read Laurie Garrett's *The Coming Plague: Newly Emerging Diseases in a World Out of Balance*, one would have seen that throughout Canada and the United States of America that they were closing down the tuberculosis clinics. Guyana was not unique. Guyana was simply doing what other countries did. It was in those circumstances that a young doctor, who thought that his country and the world was going down the wrong path, had to develop his own career.

He once took me to the West Demerara Regional Hospital - I did not understand why he was taking me at the back of the hospital - and he showed me something that I did not know. I did not know that there were graves at the back of the hospital. Those were graves of our sisters and

brothers, our grandparents, or our parents in some cases. There were graves of people who were sent in the 1950s and 1960s to the Best Sanatorium. People who had tuberculosis were sent without any family member because everyone understood that that was the death sentence. You went and you never came back. In those early days there were no medications. It was to simply send people there to die. This was a crucible in which Dr. Moti Lall had to begin his career. I relate this story because by the 1970s, in fact, medicines became available – that was when he was starting his career - and made tuberculosis a treatable disease and that people could be cured, but it was also a time when the tuberculosis programme was closing down. He begged for the authorities in Guyana and the Caribbean to recognise that the apparent elimination of tuberculosis in our countries was merely a quiet period and that he saw evidence in Europe during his training of the re-emergence of tuberculosis in a manner that could decimate our population. But no one listened in the 1970s.

There was another case of uncaring bosses and authorities. The professionals, as Dr. Moti Lall, knew something was happening and that tuberculosis was on the rise. What they did not know was that AIDS had emerged and was driving the tuberculosis re-emergence. It was that period when, as a professional, you knew something was wrong but you could not explain. When he became the Principal Tuberculosis Officer in Guyana, in 1982, he thought he had a chance to change Guyana's approach, at least, to tuberculosis. He told me that he could not even get that chance to discuss his views about tuberculosis with his bosses then. They snickered and said he was like, in his words a "Don Quixote, swatting at imaginary enemies". Indeed, the authorities were so convinced that tuberculosis was a public health problem from a previous era that they ended the life of the Best Sanatorium which was converted to the West Demerara Regional Hospital in 1986.

5.08 p.m.

Dr. Moti Lall commended the move to establish the West Demerara Regional Hospital, as he firmly believed that the hospital would improve the equity of access to health care. He was strong in his support for the move to establish the West Demerara Regional Hospital, but, as the Principal Tuberculosis Officer, he rejected the idea of closing the Best Sanatorium. He often expressed to me the biggest mistake we make in public health. He thought that it was a mistake then and he thought it was a mistake we are making today, whether in Guyana or anywhere else,

that because tuberculosis had become treatable – because we have the medicine to treat tuberculosis that is curable - it was still a mistake to discard the sanatorium concept. Later on the global front, I fought almost as a single voice for assistance for developing countries, as ours, to be supported in our efforts to maintain small size sanatorium.

This notion was consistently and continuously rejected by the major health organisations and public health professionals throughout the 1990s and up until 2006. But it was Dr. Moti Lall who had persuaded me and who was my strength in including the strategic imperative throughout those years. He would have always reminded me that it was a strategic imperative we must fight for.

The truth is that we have the tools today to control tuberculosis, but, even as we do, we see the emergence of Multidrug-Resistance *Tuberculosis* (MDRTB) and Extensively Drug-Resistance *Tuberculosis* (XDRTB). People with these conditions will have to be subjected to restrictions in the movements and a quarantine option must be available to public health. In those days, when Dr. Moti Lall made those arguments, he was treated as an anachronism by many international experts. People said to me that I was allowing myself to be clouded by my friendship with Dr. Moti Lall, as I took this message on our mission to have better control programmes for tuberculosis. He lived, indeed, to see that the international organisations and the public health experts realised that if we are to succeed we will need better diagnostic programmes, better medicines and we will continue to need facilities to restrict people's movement and to quarantine in some cases. This was highlighted early in 2011 when an American took a flight and exposed thousands to the deadly XDR strain of tuberculosis.

By the late 1980s everyone knew of AIDS and everyone knew tuberculosis had returned with a vengeance through the vehicle of AIDS. One of the early practitioners of AIDS management in Guyana was Dr. Moti Lall. When he retired, he said to me, as we sat quietly in the chest clinic, that he came back to Guyana and joined the programme, the tuberculosis programme, when there was no medicine to treat patients with tuberculosis. Then in 1997, when he was retiring as a public health professional, he was retiring as part of fighting a disease for which we in Guyana still had little access to medicine. That was his regret in 1997. As he prepared to retire, he pulled me aside, in fact, and smiled and said to me - now that we have money and help, now that we have the international community mobilised - that he wished he was young again.

But he continued after his retirement to serve. I do need to mention one thing, which was briefly mentioned, that he was the President of the Guyana Chest Society. This society was established in 1903 and formerly registered as a friendly society in 1919. It became dormant for a period and several persons, Dr. Moti Lall and Dr. Johnson, got together and resuscitated it. It took on a role as the lead advocate for tuberculosis control in Guyana and it became the lead advocate for the control of tobacco use in our country. It stands today as a leading *Non-Governmental Organization* (NGO) in promoting public health programmes to fight lung diseases. Tuberculosis remains as one of its primary interest, but it has also become the leading NGO in the Caribbean, fighting against tobacco.

As a Guyanese citizen, Mr. Speaker and colleagues, Dr. Moti Lall played many roles in his country. They were properly articulated by my colleagues before me, and I am sure after. Clearly, his death grieved many of us and, indeed, we have a right to feel diminished. But when we look at the tuberculosis programme in Guyana, when we look at the HIV programme in Guyana, when we look at the housing programme in Guyana, when we look at our Parliament, he answered the call and his death finds us not diminished as we carry on from strength to strength. Clearly, he had given us much to celebrate and he stood tall as a boy from an ordinary family, from an ordinary community, who rose to make his mark in Guyana and around the world. I join in saluting Dr. Moti Lall, my friend and my comrade.

Thank you. [*Applause*]

Mrs. Chandarpal: I rise to give support to the motion proposed by the Hon. Prime Minister and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs requesting the National Assembly to direct its expression of sympathy to the wife of the late Dr. Motil Lall - Chitrekha who is present with us today. I wish to acknowledge the presence of Renuka, Aruna and daughter-in-law Kameel. Unfortunately his son Pravin is unable to be with us because he is working as a pilot in *Abu Dhabi*, in the Middle East, and his son-in-law, Dr. Cheetanand Mahadeo was also unable to be part of this important tribute.

I probably would like to start out my presentation by quoting the second line of *Desiderata*

“As far as possible without surrender be on good terms with all persons.

Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even to the dull and the ignorant, they have their story.”

This was my first impression of Dr. Moti Lall, thirty-eight years ago. He had returned to Guyana in August, 1974, in response to an invitation from the Ministry of Health. When he came to Guyana, I recall him visiting Freedom House and I had the opportunity of being in the company of Cde. Ram (Boysie) Ramkarran, many of you would know of him.

I recalled that occasion when he spoke about what had happened to him when he returned to Guyana, after his study, and was unable to find a job. He subsequently left these shores and went overseas for five years, and then returned to Guyana.

In 1974, there also was a very important occasion for Dr. Moti Lall because, I think, that was when he met his wife Chitrekha. She was then a librarian at the National Library. I think it was in the year 1975 they decided to get married. On that occasion, many of you will recall that 1975 was International year for Women, the United Nations launched the decade for women, 1975 to 1985; and it was during the ceremony, he was reminded that the wife had to be allowed to take the lead because, as you know, that was the year for the women. I recall that event in which he was reminded about that story.

From 1974 until his death, I have seen him carrying out all his roles with the same humility and respect. As a comrade, he was committed to the party which he loved, and to his leaders, especially Cde. Janet and Cde. Cheddi Jagan. He loved his leaders. He was always very respectful. I try to recall, in my thirty-eight years of knowing Dr. Moti Lall, whether I have ever heard him raising his voice in anger - whether he ever talked down to anyone, whether he was ever disrespectful to anyone. I cannot recall an instance when I saw him acting these characteristics out. Never have I seen him in that way.

No task was too great for him and he undertook his responsibility without fanfare. Whatever assignment was given to him by the party, it was done very quietly and no one knew. He was always respectful to everyone - whether it was a young person, whether they were experienced, whether they were - some of the very young ones who I would say - very inexperienced or bashful. He never tried to put anyone down, always very respectful. I also recalled the debates within the party, at the various leadership levels. Whether he agreed with a position or not, I

cannot recall him being boisterous, being aggressive, talking down to anyone and making anyone feel angry. He spoke his position respectfully, never sought to malign anyone and always with decorum. Those are the qualities I always will remember of Dr. Moti Lall.

As a General Secretary of the party, and of the women section of the party, the Women Progressive Organisation, the women also in the party had long relationship with him. The same qualities he exemplified in all the entities, or all the bodies, which he functioned in - were the same characteristics that he exemplified in his relationship with the women of the party. I cannot recall him, on any occasion, disrespecting any of our women - ever bad-mouthing any of them or ever making anyone feel embarrassed. He was always attentive - listened to you, whether he believed in what you were saying or not, whether he agreed with you or not. Never did he display any antagonism towards you.

As a doctor - that is something I recall again in 1974, he was a doctor - we, the younger ones in the party, had the opportunity to interact with him. He never made us feel that he was above us. He always treated us equally. He, being a professional, did not deter him in any way in treating us younger folks in any different way. He always talked to us as if we were his equal. That is a quality, as you know, sometimes, you long for, that people can treat you as their equal, not, wanting to look down at you because of their academic or professional achievement. He treated everyone in the similar way.

As a doctor, as well, I recalled having had to take my children to see him, and many other comrades would have taken their children to see him. He always made us very comfortable. I cannot recall ever paying him, because he never wanted anyone to pay him, once that person was from the party. I also know of occasions in which people who were poor would have gone to him and he had never taken money. We often joked with him and said, "Well, if this is the way you are going to run your practice you will become a pauper, because you are always saying, '*No man, nah man*, never mind; do not worry with that thing' and never took a cent from us." That was the kind of person he was.

As a human being, to my mind, he personified all that was decent, humane and kind. He was lucky, indeed, to have found his match in his wife Chitrekha because she herself possesses those

fine qualities. According to Chitrekha - when we talked, from time to time, she would say that: “the same qualities he exhibit in the public are the same qualities he exhibit in private life”.

What was remarkable about Dr. Moti Lall was that he was very successful in balancing all the roles of being a politician on one hand, being in his profession, being a father, as well as all the other things that he was doing, whether it was in the friendly society, or whichever organisations they were. He always took on his assignment with seriousness and was committed to them. I know that even though he wore many hats, he always sought to successfully deliver on his commitments.

In terms of his role as a father, I am aware that his three children are very successful professionals who have done exceedingly well in their respective fields. I know also he had the joy of being a grandfather to his granddaughter Bina. My colleague, Mr. Manzoor Nadir, who sits next to me, I know, is always talking about his grandson, and sometimes I listen to the other grandparents around always talking about their grandchildren; so I assume that he also was proud of being a grandfather. Unfortunately, it was not possible for him to see his grandson who was born after his death and who was named after him, I understand, Moti Devendra.

I want to say to the family members who are present that I know it is a very sad occasion for you because we are reminiscing and we are opening up a lot of wounds. But I want you to know and be comforted in the fact that it is not all of us, as Guyanese, are lucky to have the National Assembly paying tribute to someone as Dr. Moti Lall, being a Member of the National Assembly.

You have listened to those colleagues who have spoken before about all the fine qualities and there will be more that will be said about him. He was indeed someone who we were all proud of. So we want you to be comforted knowing that he was a valuable son of the soil. He was loved by his party, his family, and friends as well.

His role in the National Assembly was one in which he displayed a lot of passion for and we heard Dr. Leslie Ramsammy talking about the work he did in the fight against tuberculosis. If you look at the *Hansard* - some of us would recall his stint in the National Assembly - when he made his presentations, how passionate he felt about what he was doing.

A lot of us, as I said before, who have children, were happy to have had him looking after our children, knowing that he was one of us. He loved us. He never made us feel any different and our children, in the process, also, were very attentive. They were very comfortable in his presence, as a doctor. We did not have to feel... Sometimes, you will take your children to the doctor and you will know how they will behave. Our children always looked forward to being there because of his presence. He had a very kind presence and was always very friendly.

In my estimation, I think Dr. Moti Lall is, indeed, someone who is worthy of emulation since he had the capacity to embrace all the roles he was required to play and he did it with honesty, integrity and humility.

As we live our lives, let us pause, from time to time, in asking the question: How do we want to be remembered when we are no longer around? I believe that Dr. Moti Lall's life is indeed worthy of that type of emulation.

I wish to endorse the sentiments of all the colleagues who have spoken before about this great human being and I know that his memory will continue to be with us in the National Assembly, in the party, as well as in the medical profession.

May his soul rest in peace.

I thank you. [*Applause*]

Mr. Neendkumar: I recognise Sister Chitrekha, Renuka and Aruna. I rise to support the motion moved by the Hon. Prime Minister.

Dr. Moti Lall was born on the 14th January, 1942 to parents Suraj and Betty Lall. He was the eldest of six siblings born in Buxton on the East Coast Demerara. Dr. Moti Lall did his primary education at the Buxton Primary School. Because of his outstanding performances, he attended Queen's College, the supreme secondary institution in Guyana, where he continued his eye-catching achievements which led him to a career in medicine. A Government of Guyana Scholarship took him to Havana, Cuba in 1960 where his illustrious career in medicine, his heart's desire, began. During the fourth year in Cuba, he requested, and was permitted, a transfer to complete and further his studies at the University of Rostock, East Germany.

Dr. Moti Lall considered Cuban's medicine as a revolutionary advance, with extraordinary living exemplary of selflessness and commitment to the poor and oppressed. He was probably one of the few medical practitioners in this country who, while in charge of a programme, undertook medical outreaches. While in Germany, he completed a postgraduate programme in Pulmonary Care and sub-specialty in tuberculosis.

Dr. Moti Lall returned to Guyana in 1968, qualified as a pulmonologist. He, however, migrated to Winnipeg, Canada and worked in several hospitals until 1974 when he returned to Guyana and took up the position of Medical Superintendent at the then Best Hospital, now known as the West Demerara Regional Hospital. After several years as a Government employee, this distinguished son of the soil established his private practice at Vreed-en-Hoop, an entity he operated until his passing on the 10th of January, 2012, at a tender age of sixty-nine years.

Dr. Moti Lall and Ms. Chitrekha Kumar won the heart of each other and became one in 1975. That togetherness bore them three children - Renuka, Pravin and Aruna. As a father, Dr. Moti Lall did not touch the lives of only his biological children. As a medical practitioner, he came into contact with thousands of patients, because of his nature. Those patients became his children. Many tales are told of his kindness, tenderness, patience, thoroughness and encouragement among other worthy attributes. He indeed fathered the babies, the young, the old, of all social strata, ethnic groups and religious persuasion. He did not only help people, he saved and changed their lives.

As a comrade, Dr. Moti Lall, with all he did, felt that he was not contributing enough to his fellow Guyanese and his country as a medical doctor. Dr. Moti Lall was a member of the PYO; he was a strong activist of the PPP; he was a member of the PPP's central committee and he was the founder member of the Vreed-en-Hoop's party district committee. He was the First Secretary of the Region 3 committee for more than two decades. He was popularly known for ending his annual reports by saying, "*¡Viva la Revolución!*" - Long live our party.

As a politician, he continued to give his all, his life, to his party and his country. He held several important positions in his party and he was in the position to continue his dream and desire which was to give humanitarian service to all. He held many prestigious offices during his time, just to mention a few: President of the Guyana Chest Society and Chairman of the Central

Housing and Planning Authority, President of the Guyana/Cuba Friendship Society and he was also an executive member of the Guyana Peace Council.

Dr. Moti Lall's invaluable contribution to his society must rank him among the best produced by Guyana and must be held in the highest respect and admiration. He was not only qualified as a medical doctor, father and comrade, but must move to be honoured as a hero in Guyana. Dr. Moti Lall said, with his conviction and pride, many years ago, and I quote: "It is always my desire not to take my skill somewhere else, but to serve, and continue, to my country and my people." Long live the legacy of Dr. Moti Lall.

Thank you. [*Applause*]

Dr. Mahadeo: I stand to support this motion moved by our Hon. Prime Minister, not only as a PPP/C Member of Parliament, but also as the President of the Guyana Central Arya Samaj to which Dr. Moti Lall had belonged. In fact, at the time of his passing, he was a trustee of the Guyana Central Arya Samaj.

In preparing this tribute, I spoke with the elders of the Guyana Central Arya Samaj and the communities that he served, his communities were all across Guyana, and what I say will be a summary of what they told me. In the Arya Samaj, he was a leader and he lived the life of a true Arya Samajee. The motto of the Arya Samaj, "Krinvanto Vishwam Aaryam", or, in English, it means "Make the universe noble", was a motto he lived by day after day, and we have heard the other speakers said the same thing, in other words. He was guided in life by the ten principles of the Arya Samaj, in particular - when I spoke to Bahen Chitrekha she reminded me - the fourth to the ninth principles.

- The fourth states, "One should always be ready to accept truth and to renounce untruth."
- The fifth, "All acts should be performed in accordance with Dharma that is, after deliberating what is right and wrong."
- The sixth, "The prime object of the Arya Samaj is to do good to the world, that is, to promote physical, spiritual and social good of everyone."
- The seventh, "Our conduct towards all should be guarded by love, righteousness and justice."
- The eighth, "We should dispel ignorance and promote knowledge."

- The ninth, “No one should be content with promoting his or her good only; on the contrary, one should look for his or her good in promoting the good of all.”

Dr. Moti Lall used his expertise and knowledge to help people. Starting from the early years when doctors were very few and when he was the lone pulmonologist in Guyana he arranged medical clinics along with other Arya Samaj colleagues, such as Dr. Sawh, in the depressed communities across the country. Before medical outreaches were common, and before those medical outreaches were supported by the Government, Dr. Moti Lall used his own resources and his family’s resources. He used help from his family overseas, from Bahen Chitrekha’s brother, and from Dr. Kumar; and, in cases where medications were left over, they were donated to the Government institutions in Guyana.

Dr. Moti Lall was himself a product of youth camps in the Guyana Arya Samaj, the Arya Vir Dal youth camp which was run by Dr. Usher Badariya in the late 1950s and 1960s.

5.38 p.m.

Later, to the thousands of youths in the youth arm of the Arya Samaj, he became a role model. In spite of being a doctor, he was always simple and humble and attended quite a few of the camps. He always had a word of advice or support for the youths. He was indeed a source of inspiration and help to many. He was not only the chest doctor, as he was known, but proved a very effective counsellor to individuals and families, especially those in Region 3, and he even helped to resolve issues in organisations. He gave of his time freely and willingly.

Dr. Moti Lall brought into his political life the same guiding principles that mattered most to him in his religious and spiritual life. It guided him and allowed him to be seen as a dedicated servant of his people in spite of ethnicity or religious beliefs. His standards remain high even in the world of politics.

In paying tribute to this great man, I must extend thanks to his wife and his children for supporting him in his work. I am sure it was at their great sacrifice too. He did not go to the places where he could have earned much more and have a better material life; instead, he stayed to develop his beloved Guyana and Guyanese. His is a life to be celebrated.

It is hard to define who Dr. Moti Lall really was in just a few words. In fact, it is impossible to do so. He was, to everyone, somebody, something positive, whether it be a doctor, a pulmonologist, a consultant, a team leader, a husband, a father, a brother, a friend, a politician, a teacher, a counsellor, a community leader, a role model or a true comrade - a real son of the soil and a truly great Guyanese! Thank you. [*Applause*]

Mr. Hinds (replying): Mr. Speaker, I want to extend appreciation to all those who spoke on all sides of this House. There is no doubt that the memory of Dr. Moti Lall will long be with us. I now move that the motion be put.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the motion has been moved, by the Hon. Prime Minister, to be put. Before I formally ask you to support it, let me just say that, as Speaker, I wish, on my own behalf and on behalf of the staff of the National Assembly, to be associated with all of the sentiments that were expressed this afternoon.

I heard, this afternoon, one Member say that never did she hear the Hon. Member raise his voice and if there is one thing I can remember, he never immersed himself into the fiery debates. He was always the gentleman Parliamentarian and professional doctor to the end. And so we remember that of him and I know that all of the staff of the Parliament Office also share the good sentiments and will honour his memory.

Motion carried.

[Mrs. Lall received a copy of the Resolution moved by the Hon. Prime Minister.]

Mr. Speaker: Please accept our deepest sympathy and our best wishes to you and the members of your family.

Hon. Members, I am most grateful to you all for your indulgence. We will take the suspension now and resume later to continue our business.

Sitting suspended at 5.43 p.m.

Sitting resumed at 7.03 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: Before we commence, I just want to make an announcement that many of us had been invited to an important event this evening, hosted by the British High Commissioner to honour the Queen's Jubilee. I believe that the absence of important people is unavoidable. However, I was wondering whether the Chief Whips may wish to, perhaps, meet to work out some system which some Members may – not to avoid the debate – be able to represent their parties if they so desire and be back in time for the vote. It is a matter you may wish to consider. If you do not, that is fine. It is just a thought.

COMPLIANCE WITH THE INTEGRITY COMMISSION ACT

WHEREAS the extant Integrity Commission Act was passed in this House in 1997 and made into law on September 24, 1997 as the Integrity Commission Act 1997, Chapter 19:12, Mt No. 20 of 1997;

AND WHEREAS the Commission and support staff were established shortly thereafter and all persons in public life listed in Schedule I being persons of high office are expected to be in compliance with this law;

AND WHEREAS Section 19 of the Act empowers the Commission and the President to publish the names of persons who are not in compliance with this Act in the Gazette and in a daily newspaper;

AND WHEREAS Section 22 addresses the offences and penalties for failure to comply which include fines and imprisonment;

AND WHEREAS all elected officials, and more so, Members of Parliament in particular, identified in Schedule I, are expected to be standard bearers of ethics in public office and uphold the Code of Conduct outlined in the Act and in Schedule 11,

“BE IT RESOLVED:

That this House recognizes the lawful and legal obligation of Members of Parliament to submit annual declarations and call on all Members of this National Assembly to submit their declarations in accordance with the law;

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED:

That this House declares that failure or refusal of Members of Parliament to submit declarations is a violation of the law and a gross indictment of those Members of Parliament and vicariously on the integrity of Parliament;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That this House conducts an annual voluntary monitoring exercise of compliance by Members of Parliament;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED;

That this House calls on the President to disclose to the Speaker annually the names of those Members of Parliament in default;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That persistent defaulters should be sanctioned by this House according to established norms of ethics and brought before the Committee of Privileges.” *[Prime Minister and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs]*

Mr. Hinds: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I rise to move the motion standing in my name, calling on us, the Members of this honourable House, to bring ourselves in compliance with the Integrity Commission Act and so serve as examples and real leaders in our country. And so, I encourage others to follow in our footsteps so that there could be prevailing across all Guyana, a greater readiness to conform to our laws.

I bring this motion with the words in my head from my young days at Sunday school about how human flesh is weak. I think all of us should recognise that we are weak and vulnerable to temptations. And in these days the temptations are great, maybe even greater than ever before with all the material things that the world now offers and all the possibilities for pleasure that the world now offers.

We who are in public office hold positions of authority and in these positions, temptations will come to us. There would be persons, too, from experience, who would come to us and put proposals for their benefit and for us to share in those benefits. We may be tempted not to act when we should act; we may be tempted to act when we should not. And also in all our offices

we have some amount of discretion and judgement which we can apply. So we face temptations and all of us have the possibilities of yielding to those temptations.

I think it is also that young societies like ours can take some time before the societies develop the ideas and acceptance of the integrity that is expected of all of us in society. I know that in many of the international publications on assessments of societies, developed and developing, quite often we, in the still developing countries, come out badly. But I recall from my history classes – a long time ago it was – we read, about even in England in the good old History books, that when new coins came out, at one time people shook them up and did things with them and also when the post office first came out and Members of Parliament were given the right to send mail without postage that a number of Members of Parliament in that most honourable West Minister House made arrangements with certain firms of the day to have their mails posted. So the tendency to yield to temptations is there in all places and amongst all people.

There are laws set out to discourage and to penalise those who may be found guilty of engaging in these generally termed “corrupt practices”, but we know also that quite often there may be difficulties in proving many cases in the courts. And so one answer is legislation such as the Integrity Commission Act which this Government introduced, in 1997, and which had been passed and soon after set up the Integrity Commission. It is not that the previous administration was not aware of such considerations. Indeed, it did speak about bringing legislation for setting up an Integrity Commission, but it did not get around to doing it. So this Administration, when it took office, set it up and got it done quite early in our mandate in 1997. Since then we have been calling on persons, particularly our Members of Parliament, to ensure that they conform to the law and it is my belief that most of us have been conforming to the law. And so this motion seeks to call on us here in this House to do what is right and to take positions that would encourage and require our Members to conform.

There are the WHEREAS clauses in my motion about the enactment of the law and about establishing it soon after in 1997. Further, we call on this House, in our BE IT RESOLVED clauses, that this House recognises the lawful and legal obligation of Members of Parliament to submit annual declarations and calls on all Members of this National Assembly to submit the declarations in accordance with the law.

It has been said that a number of Members in this House have not been submitting their declarations and, indeed, as we will get on to, it has been said that in their view the Integrity Commission has not been properly set up and therefore they would not submit to something that has not been properly set up. That has been said, but I am saying that whether properly set up or not, there is a law and I would want to encourage all Members of this House to conform to the law. If they have any doubts about the legality of the Commission, then there exists, in our society, the courts from which they can seek a ruling as to whether the Integrity Commission has been set up lawfully or not.

In our second BE IT RESOLVED clause, we are calling on us, the Members of this House, to declare that failure or refusal of Members to submit declarations is a violation of the law and a gross indictment of those Members of the Parliament and on the integrity of all of us here in Parliament. It holds Parliament in disrepute.

Our third BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED clause calls for this House to conduct an annual voluntary monitoring exercise of compliance by Members of Parliament. That is our third position and you will notice that we are recognising that calls for new ways of behaviour may take time but, first of all, we want to encourage people to come in line so on these first three RESOLVED clauses, we are encouraging that we, Members of Parliament, bring ourselves in line.

The next two clauses seek to put a bit of a squeeze on, I would admit. In our fourth clause, we call on the President to disclose to the Speaker, annually, the names of those Members of Parliament who are in default. I know that there are remedies in the law and we are not against the remedies in the law, but we thought that we should encourage ourselves to come in line. Therefore, we have no doubt that our Speaker, who we respect, with him knowing those Members who are in default and hopefully speaking to them and calling on them to put themselves in line, we are proposing here that the President discloses to him those who are in default and therefore encourage him to use his influence with us here, those who are in default, so that Members would bring themselves in line.

Finally, those who are persistent in their defaulting should be sanctioned by this House and brought before the Committee of Privileges.

This motion is a motion for us to encourage ourselves and each other to lead the way in conforming to the integrity law so that we could lead the way in all of Guyana's society, all our people bringing themselves into conformity with the law. This is not a draconian thing. We know that the law has in it great penalties. In this motion, we are not saying that the penalties shall not apply, but we are seeking to get the positive support of this House which we think will be very salutary to the nation as a whole and would encourage more conformity.

We, on this side, when we pass laws and introduce laws, do not do this with the intention of filling up the jails and convicting lots of our people. We do this with the hope that people will be warned and admonished and that they would desist from breaking the laws. We make these laws so as to turn our people on to better behaviour.

I have seen a number of amendments laid by an Hon. Member of this House, Mrs. Backer. I will take this opportunity, in my presentation, to speak to these amendments. Here there is a claim that the Integrity Commission has not been established in conformity with the requirements of section 3 of the Integrity Act 1997. I think we all have access to the Act and we can all read it. I would like to encourage our media and our people to read it. In my reading of it, I am very strong in the belief that the Integrity Commission has been properly established and so it is in conformity with the requirements of section 3 of the Integrity Commission Act 1997.

In the next amendment, it is said that WHEREAS corruption has reached an alarming level in Guyana with little or no effort to stem the tide. I would think that someone who feels this way would feel even more strongly to support this motion that I moved here today. I do not accept it in the spirit it seems to be presented here that corruption has reached an alarming level in Guyana with little or no effort to stem the tide. I would like to ask the Hon. Member what that Member has been doing to stem this tide of rampant corruption in Guyana. I would assume that being a Member of this House, she would have felt some sort of responsibility to do something about it, maybe holding up a placard outside of this House and at various places, drawing attention to this alarming tide of corruption. I would have thought that someone who has this sense, if that person were to be earnest about it, would be hurrying to give support to the motion that we have brought here today.

On the third amendment, we have no quarrel. It is what is in the law.

We have presented this, not in any way to run down anyone in this House or besmirch anyone in this House, but solely to call on us here to be true leaders in our country and to put ourselves in conformity with our integrity law. We know why we want to do this. It is because quite often it has been that when there are allegations of corruption that they have to be proven.

In the Integrity Act 1997, it starts out from the assumption that persons would have to justify the assets that they have and how they acquired those assets. I have been advised that in the West Minister Parliament, a Parliament which many of us refer to from time to time, are even stringent requirements that Members list all their assets from time to time. Certainly, these are directions we should learn more about. These are directions in which we should be prepared to go. But for this moment, our conformity with the Integrity Commission Act which we have laid before this House is, I think, an adequate first step which we should all support. I look to receiving support from all Members of this House.

I thank you. [*Applause*]

Deputy Speaker [Mrs. Backer]: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Earlier, we were educated on tuberculosis (TB). And later on the Hon. Prime Minister spoke about temptation and he went on, at great length, about the temptation that we all are exposed to and he spoke to human flesh being weak. I am wondering if there is a move to increase the number of “men of the cloth”, as Mr. Granger would say, on the Eastern side of the House. But Prime Minister please rest assured that if you become a “member of the cloth”, I would come to your church. Even if it is just to pass some time, I would come.

Mr. Prime Minister, you know we have always had a very cordial relationship. But I think you would agree with me when I say that your presentation on this motion was not your best in the sense that...one of the things I like about you is that you are always convinced. If you are wrong, you are convinced. If you are right you are convinced. That is an admirable trait. We learn that as lawyers, and the Attorney General (AG) would know that. He goes into court and has no case but is convinced. Sometimes he does not even have a client. The point is, Hon. Prime Minister that you are always convincing, but that was missing today.

Mr. Speaker, if I could, very briefly, it is not a difficult motion and I want to place on record, very unequivocally, that A Partnership for National Unity (APNU) has absolutely no trouble and

no problem with the principle of submitting its finances and income to a duly constituted integrity commission.

7.29 p.m.

I want to say that very slowly so that even my colleague Mr. Neendkumar can understand.

I want to go directly to what the Prime Minister's Motion proposes to do. As I said, we have no problem with submission to a duly constituted integrity commission. In the first Whereas clause there is absolutely no problem, that is a fact. Yes, we support that. "AND WHEREAS the Commission and support staff were established shortly thereafter", we find that unnecessary and in fact it is not true. The Hon. Prime Minister then goes on to speak about section 19 of the Act which empowers, according to the motion, the Commission and the President to publish the names of persons who are not in compliance. That is not true, worded as it is. Worded as it is, it is not very true, it is not accurate. As regards to persons in public life, it is the Commission and the Commission only who has the authority to publish names in the Gazette and in a daily newspaper. The President, Hon. Prime Minister, only has the right to publish the names of the Members of the Commission. That is the only thing His Excellency, the President, can do under the Act. To ask him to do anything else would be inviting the President to act outside of the law. I know, Hon. Prime Minister, you would not want to do that.

There are one or two other Whereas clauses I will come to. The gist of this whole motion, Hon. Prime Minister, and hence our proposed amendments is this, section 3 of the Integrity Commission Act of 1997, and just so that everyone in the House can understand, there was a 1991 Integrity Commission Act which was assented to by the then president Mr. Hugh Desmond Hoyte. If in fact, Prime Minister, you look at section 41 of the same 1997 Act you will see these words, and I quote, "The Integrity Commission Act of 1991 is hereby repealed." So, it was in existence and in fact it not very dissimilar to what we have here. This one of course would have gone to a Select Committee, and the 1991 Act was also referred to there.

Section 3(a) says, "there is hereby established a Commission to be known as the Integrity Commission which shall consist of a Chairman and not less than two or more than four other members." This gives the Integrity Commission potential for it to get life. You must have a Chairman, and under the Act, two or no more than four Commissioners. Our simple question to

the Hon. Prime Minister is whether he would be kind enough to share with the National Assembly and by extension the Guyanese public the names of the Chairman and the two, three or four Commissioners as is provided by section 3. You see, if there is no Commission then who are you asking the Hon. Members of this House to submit their declarations to? This is where the problem comes in. If it were anyone else on the other side I would try to ambush them, but I would not do that to you.

So, I would like to read a letter to you, but I would not want the other Members on your side to hear. It says this and it is addressed to the Hon. David A. Granger, M.S.S, M.P., Leader of the Opposition, et cetera, dated 30th May 2012:

“Dear Hon. Mr. Granger,

With respect to your letter dated 9th May, 2012, please note that the Commission’s Membership came to an end on the 20th May, 2012 and as such there is no Commissioner or Chairman.”

It is signed by Amanda Jaisingh, the Secretary of the Integrity Commission. A Secretary of the Integrity Commission is writing to the Hon. Member Mr. Granger on the 30th saying that there is no Chairman or there are no Commissioners. That is why under section 3 there is a proposed first Resolve clause there in the amendments. It is very clear, it says here in our proposal, the first RESOLVE clause, “BE IT RESOLVED that this National Assembly calls on the President to establish the Integrity Commission as provided for in Section 3 of the Integrity Commission Act of 1997.” It is his Excellency the President that has to set up this Commission having consulted with the Leader of the Opposition. There is a President and there is a Leader of the Opposition. What we do not have is an Integrity Commission.

Who are we submitting these things to? Prime Minister, be assured our assets are so minimal that in ten minutes we filled up our forms. Sir, there is a noise from the eastern side. If Mr. Granger, the Hon. Leader of the Opposition, is consulted properly and names are put, we could hand it in. That is what we would have thought that when you have your Cabinet Meeting with your little tête-à-têtes with His Excellency the President that those would have been the things you would have talked about.

Yesterday someone had the audacity to say that the Hon. Member, Mr. Greenidge's motion was a storm in a teacup. This is a teacup in a storm. Why I say this is because we have National Industrial and Commercial Investments Limited (NICIL) swirling around, we have National Communications Network (NCN). We have the airport of which the Hon. Speaker is so distraught that he says that this is national crisis. We have this storm and in this little teacup in all this storm, you put the Integrity Commission. All the President has to do is to write the Hon. Leader of the Opposition. You know the Hon. Leader of the Opposition is a military man. If you ask him to come at fifteen hundred hours he would be there at fourteen, I am not sure, but I am trying to say ten minutes to three. He would be there at least ten minutes before, because that is the nature of the man. He does not have to worry.

Basically, the only real Resolve clause here that is of any moment if for us to, through the motion, call on His Excellency the President to establish the Integrity Commission. Hon. Prime Minister if on reflection you feel that we do not really need this motion, and tomorrow when you see His Excellency you say, "Chief, we made a mistake here, but Mrs. Backer, the nuisance in the National Assembly, said that section 3 could save us". If you would want to withdraw it we would have no problem; I would withdraw my amendments also.

The other danger Hon. Prime Minister, in some of your Resolve clauses, is that you are trying to encourage His Excellency to step outside of the law. This is your fifth Resolve clause and it says, "That this House calls on the President to disclose to the Speaker annually the names of those Members of Parliament in default." How is the President going to know who is in default? This Act speaks about penalty for disclosure and under this Act only the Chairman and the Commissioner are supposed to know about us. Only they are supposed to know about us, so the Speaker cannot ask the Deputy Speaker if she submitted. He may ask, but the Deputy Speaker may say, "Sir, with the greatest respect I will answer to the Commission." The only persons that His Excellency has authority to deal with are the Chairman and the Commissioners themselves.

We have to remove this clause. If we do not, the next thing that will happen is that Mr. Nandall will bring an action against His Excellency the President. It sounds farfetched, but in the current matter before the Court the Minister of Finance is the third known defendant. He has brought an action against his own Minister. We do not know where else the Hon. Attorney General is going. We want to protect the President. I want to protect the President.

The Resolve clause before it, “That this House conducts an annually voluntary monitoring exercise of compliance...” how is this voluntary monitoring exercise going to proceed? How is this voluntary monitoring exercise that will be done annually going to proceed? If you can assist us with that, we may be prepared to look at it but, we do not see how it can. We have to submit to a duly constituted Commission, and APNU, and I would like to repeat it, APNU is ready and steady and we just want to hear “go”. We are ready and we are steady and we are waiting to hear “go” to submit our return, our income, our assets, our blind trust and all the things that they talked about to a duly... [Mr. Nandlall: Globe Trust.] ...even that. We are going to do it with NICIL. We are going to have a simultaneous something. [Mr. Ramajattan: Ill-conceived.]

Mr. Ramjattan is saying “ill-conceived”. You know, Prime Minister, I would have said that if it were not you, but I have a fondness for you. Sir, I think they misled you. I believe you were misled. I do not want to say that it was the Attorney General. You know how they say the usual suspects; I do not want to say the usual suspects. I hope it is not the religious advisers. I hope it is not the men of cloth, who because they are no longer in one Commission want to go on another Commission. [Dr. Norton: What about the political advisers?] No, do not let us worry with that. Let us leave Ms. Teixeira alone.

Sir, coming back to it, it is a simple administrative, almost, task that His Excellency has to carry out. We invite him to consult, as is provided in the Act, with the Leader of the Opposition, and submit the names. After that, once it is duly constituted, A Partnership for National Unity will be first in line with their declarations. Thank you very much. [Applause]

Dr. Persaud: Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the motion moved by the Hon. Leader of the House and Prime Minister, Mr. Samuel Hinds. Having just come from the altar of entertainment, just previously listening to the Hon. Member Mrs. Backer, and listening to her passionate and convincing message of the Opposition’s willingness to file their declaration makes my task very easy. All I was coming after the Prime Minister to do, and I hope that I am as convincing as he was and even more so, was to convince you and to convince us to do that. So, it makes my job very easy.

Integrity is defined as adherence to moral and ethical principles, soundness of moral character, and in one word, honesty. Today, we as Parliamentarians sit in the most august Assembly in this land with the confidence reposed in us by the electorate. Guyanese of all walks of life, from the length and breadth of this country. We have the responsibility to ensure that every transaction and everything we do in this House is done with transparency and accountability. The Integrity Commission Law was given priority by the PPP/Civic Government early upon its entry into the National Assembly.

The extant Integrity Commission Act was passed in this House and made into law in 1997, requiring all persons who hold public office or public life to declare their assets, or make financial declaration to the Integrity Commission. The Integrity Commission was established by Act No. 20 of 1997 and passed on the 24th September of the same year.

Yes, it is true that Commissioners are appointed by the President in consultation with the minority leader. I have no doubt, since the current Commission... [Mr. Bond: Majority] If you want to call it that but each party stands on its own. It is without doubt that the Commission and the Commissioners are appointed in consultation with the minority leader. That has been so in the past.

Mr. Speaker: Dr. Persaud, the official designation is Leader of the Opposition.

Dr. Persaud: The Leader of the Opposition, my apologies, Mr. Speaker. It is so that the last Commission was appointed and it is so that that Commission has come to an end in May as was said, rightly so. I am sure that much is being done to appoint the new Commission. I am very happy to hear from the Hon. Member that once that new Commission is appointed in accordance with the law, that everyone one of us will file, and that is good to hear.

In fact, when the Commission was appointed at its inception in 1997, there was no other person than Bishop Randolph George, an eminent personage, who headed that Commission. I think, having had someone with that personality and character, it is no doubt that a suitable person will be found to fill the chairmanship of the new Commission.

The Bill provides for the President, all Members of Parliament, Ministers, Permanent Secretaries, Civil Servants, and servants to file entries of income from whatever source. In fact, the Bill

brings people from various categories under the legislation and makes it mandatory for annual declarations to be filed on or before the 30th of June. That is the law. There were a number of amendments that were brought by the Hon. Member Mrs. Backer. I would just like to correct one thing. When she quoted from section 19, I would like to say that the Hon. Member, and it follows on, she is honourable and I am sure she knows that I think so, where a person who is required to do so, fails to file a declaration in accordance with this Act, or to furnish particulars under section 18, the Commission or the President, as the case may be, shall publish the fact in the Gazette or the daily newspaper. So, the President can.

Failure to file returns can lead to prosecution and severe penalties. In fact we can talk about imprisonment or fines. The People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C), as the initiator of this legislation, has not kept quiet, but is vocal and is still vocal to have its provision of the law honoured. When the Government cannot claim to have detailed information on those who may have violated this Act, the Government has intermittently called on all, and I am saying all on both sides of the House. I am not here to cast aspersions on anyone. Yes, Hon. Member Mr. Bond, I will never do that. Anyone who may have violated this Act, the Government intermittently calls on all who have an obligation to comply to have their declaration submitted to the Integrity Commission.

The motion presented today by the Hon. Prime Minister to leave the House in particular emphasises to Members of Parliament the necessity to uphold this law, which stands as a benchmark in the fabric of transparency we so onusly clamour for. It reminds us of the mantle of responsibility we personally assume as parliamentarians and by extension our duty to maintain the veracity of this Parliament and future Sittings in no uncertain terms. I believe this.

The PPP/Civic would like to congratulate all of those persons on both sides of the House who filed their declarations as required and wishes to appeal strongly to all those who have not complied to do so as soon as you can or immediately. By resolving to have annual voluntary monitoring, disclosure of the names of defaulters by the President to the Speaker, and taking the step of sanctions of those defaulters through the Committee of Privileges, we would boldly and fearlessly announce our intention to lead by walking the walk of honour and as we like to say, integrity by action, not by mere words.

In the pursuit of a policy of integrity this Parliament has to have the highest record of integrity and work tirelessly to have all of Guyana walk that road. We must now set the highest example of filling our own declarations to influence every Guyanese to do the same thing, to walk that road in this very great land of ours.

The integrity Commission is one component of Government which helps in the pursuit of honesty and transparency in the administration. This motion tells of this Government's commitment and resolve to have this Act fully enforced and implemented. I wish to support the Government's effort and appeal to Guyanese citizens, in particular every Member of Parliament who sits in this National Assembly and who are bound by the relevant laws to submit their annual income from every source with the concomitant declaration on any other item based on statute. I repeat, Members of Parliament are honoured bound to traverse the road of ethics and morals which we subscribe to as enshrined in our Prayer and also in Schedule 2 of the Integrity Act, under the code of conduct.

I was perusing the amendments and I took umbrage to the second amendment where there was a sweeping statement or a clause speaking of corruption. One can say all he/she wants, but to cast aspersion, to malign people in this wide-swept way I think many more of us should take umbrage. I am not corrupt. I have never been and I do not plan to be. So, I take umbrage to this.

I also want to remind the Hon. Member that when amending a motion, that should be an expansion of a thought that is already there. This is a new thought that you have introduced. I exhort you therefore, my colleagues and my fellow Members of Parliament in this National Assembly, that you must not only support the Prime Minister's effort today, but we, all of us who sit here, must continue to send the clarion call to the citizens of this country who are obliged to honour the Integrity Commission Act. We can do so with a clear conscience if we ourselves uphold the law of which we play an integral role in crafting. We must not be afraid to subject ourselves to the same scrutiny which we demand day after day in this Parliament vociferously of others.

I give the assurance that those of us on this side of the House will unhesitatingly submit our returns and declarations withstand scrutiny as required and submit ourselves to the parameters outlined in this motion.

I would like to leave you with a quote by Alan Simpson. The quote is: “If you have integrity nothing else matters. If you do not have integrity nothing else matters.” I hope you can understand that. Thank you very much. [*Applause*]

Mr. Nagamootoo: Mr. Speaker, I was very disturbed, not by what the nameless person with no surname is saying – I cannot find his surname – that this motion before the House is actually a toothless poodle. It is a dog without the teeth. From what the Hon. Prime Minister has said, trying to lecture Members of Parliament against temptation et cetera, that the bark is really misplaced. He should be barking in his own yard.

No one can deny that we have gone past the shadow of temptation in Guyana and no one can deny that every single child in this country can observe the ostentatious lifestyles of many in public office. We could see with dramatic effect and graphically so, the evidence of Pradovilles. People are asking the question everywhere of where have we lost the moral compass. That has been the cardinal principle that underlines the Integrity Commission legislation, it is to be able to find and define the moral compass so that we can guide our nation into that, what we all call, heaven of freedom where there is integrity in public life and those who hold office legitimises that office with honesty and avoids putting their finger into the cookie jar. That has been the background behind which the integrity legislation had become expedient and necessary.

Today we find, as we read the newspapers, of even minor and mini officials – I am looking around – are involved in double dipping and triple dipping. The doubling up as Members of Parliament and holding august offices with State entities, and they are dipping. Some people dip thrice in the State coffers. So that when we are talking here about Members of Parliament, we must address those who wear three or four hats and even the exhortation for Parliamentarians to declare would not address the issue of total declaration, it will avoid it. I know the reason why this motion was brought. It has been brought under the shadows of very spirited and grave debates and concern about public funds in institutions such as NICIL, the Lotto Funds and many other private purses where public funds are kept, the most recent is the immorality of having to ask Members of this House in good conscience to vote for \$130 million, taxpayers money, to fund an institution like NCN. Then you read about all type of malfeasances that ought to be investigated. It gives this parliament every justification for not having gone the way the

Government wanted us to go to deposit taxpayers' money into an institution that is so bad in public accountability.

7.59 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, I have here a letter from the Integrity Commission dated 2nd May, 2012 asking me to submit - as I usually do, and I have done in every single year that I was required to do so until now - my declaration for the year 2011 by the deadline 30th June, 2012 to bring me current with all the declarations. But that letter was from the Integrity Commission and stated at the bottom "securing the integrity of persons in public life". It did not say Members of Parliament but "persons in public life". Notwithstanding the letter sent to the Hon. Leader of the Opposition, the leader of the majority, Mr. David Granger, that there is no Commission as of 28th May, 2012 – there is no Commissioner or Chairman - I was being asked to make a declaration, as I would have done irrespective of whether there was a Commission or not. I thought it was my duty to do so. And I thought that Members, from the President down to all other functionaries of the state and in public life, ought to have done what I have done – to make their declaration. But now I realise there is no Commission; that this was an exercise in futility; that the Commission could not act on any of the declarations because it has no capacity on which to act. There is no tribunal that would investigate. There is not even a chairman with adequate staff and with technical people as required by the integrity legislation who could conduct the forensic of declarations of local and foreign accounts – accounts that involves assets here and abroad. Where is the mechanism? Where is the tribunal? Where is the technical team which ought to do the investigation? As good as this law is, the intention of it very lofty, I support it 150%. Just as one man told me once in India in the Palika Bazaar, that the cloth I wanted to buy was 150% cotton. I was happy that I was getting more than I was expecting. I would support that we have a mechanism that is operable.

But when one looks at what the legislation was intended to deal with I would say, as I said, I know the reason why this motion was brought. It is this House and Members of this House who have as part of their public duty the prosecution of glaring examples of malpractices, malfeasance and corruption by big institutions and big players, conflict of interest, and, as I said, double-dipping. What do we have here? Instead of kicking the ball of corruption the Hon. Prime Minister has brought a motion to kick the players, the political players who are now talking

about corruption and talking against corruption. As we saw the Hon. Attorney General, Mr. Nandlall, was aiming his volleys at me, just a small fish in the profession trying to earn an honest living with small fees. He was trying to target me because he said in Berbice on television, “I was bleeding NICIL”, and “how dare Nagamootoo, the man from the Bible, to question corruption in NICIL”. In other words they were trying a technique to turn the accusers into the villains. They wanted to shift public opinion on their side; these people are so unconscionable, they are milking the treasury and raising allegations of corruption. This is one of the most fascinating turn of events. The victims, who are some of us here, many of us here, facing the burden of our nation bleeding to death by corruption and corrupt practices, are now turned into the violators. But the nation will not be fooled on this occasion, not by this motion. I would have thought the best thing the Hon. Prime Minister would have done was to withdraw this motion. This motion - and the Hon. Member Deborah Backer did not say the word - was still born; this was dead on arrival; it can go nowhere because it was not intended to address the mischief. This motion was intended as a propaganda ploy, as a massive diversion from the debates taking place in this House against corruption.

I agree with the Hon. Member Deborah Backer on what she said about the 1991 Integrity Act which was repealed. As the predecessor there was some level of continuity in relation to some concerns about integrity in public life. I was on that side when the law was being hammered out. I am a strong advocate for it together with a code of conduct, how we ought to behave. The mischief this law tries to create is not simply a mischief of declaration of assets. The underlining basis for this law has been behaviour in public office which allows one to conclude there could be, not temptation, Mr. Prime Minister, but actual malfeasance, because in public life the law states very clearly what is intended to deal with such behaviour. If I may, I refer to it as influence peddling, using one's office to peddle influence for gains; using one's office to do insider trading; to anticipate contracts and to alert friends and brothers where to put in the bids; to see an advantage for themselves; people who own office to see a housing project and try to anticipate where to put up the next hotel, or where to put up the next recreational centre or resort. These are now glaring examples in our society that all is not well in the state of Denmark. The Aegean stable has to be cleansed. The instrument by which it can be cleansed is by way of enforcement of integrity in public life, and by way of observance of the code of conduct for those in public office.

There is also the misuse of state funds, the misuse of public property in facilitating the development of land and housing site for the fat cats... Sir, you said I should not use that... for the big ones. This is where the law places not only parliamentarians... I have no apologies whatsoever to say parliamentarians ought to set an example, ought to declare their assets. Parliamentarians cannot come here and beat their breasts and criticise malfeasance in public office without themselves observing laws. But we say here that you cannot be selective when a motion comes from the Prime Minister, the first Vice President of our Cooperative Republic, a Cabinet Member who acts as the Chief-of-Staff and the Commander-in-Chief in the absence of the President. When a motion comes from him he must address the issue that this is wider.

The schedule specifies that the President of Guyana shall declare. I did not hear the Prime Minister say so. He looks at the Members of Parliament, he looks at the sardines, and says, "okay, sardines..." Do you know Arévalo's book *'The Shark and The Sardines'*? Well, Speaker of the National Assembly, you are on the list, not a suspect, Sir, a distinguished list; Ministers of the Government who are also Members of this House, some are elected some are unelected or nonelected - so do not only look at the elected Members of Parliament; none is excluded; The Secretary to the Cabinet, by whatever name one may wish to designate the Secretary; Head or not Head of the Presidential Secretariat; Parliamentary Secretaries; Members of the National Congress – but they do not have that anymore - Members of local democratic organs; and the list goes on. The motion has all the people from the public office. There is a category also that it envisages of public officers, persons in the Regional Democratic Council, in the state own banks, in institutions such as NICIL where the controlling interest is vested in the state, or any agency on behalf of the state; Members of the Tender Board. So when one sets up oneself as a director and one does double-dipping... "director of a state entity that is controlled by the state..." one is also required to declare assets. Whether it is NICIL or any other state asset, if one places oneself as a member of that board one is required to declare, but not in the exact form that the Integrity Commission requires.

I want to say the fact that there is no Integrity Commission casts a very damning shadow on all of our efforts to bring about integrity in public life. That is what worries me here tonight as someone who laboured, as they say, in the vineyard of politics. I wish it could have been the honeycomb of politics. The bitterness of political life with no reward has been my fate. But for

labouring in that vineyard... [Mr. Neendkumar: You will remain bitter all the days of your life.] Not without a last name. I know my father. I have a surname. Sir, I feel very disappointed that we can do this to ourselves, try to turn this debate into a propaganda ploy.

I want to refer to the writer Susan Rose-Ackerman... [Mr. Neendkumar: How much money you collect last Saturday?] I will tell you when you tell me your surname. What is your name? Susan Rose-Ackerman is the Henry R. Luce Professor of Law and Political Science at Yale University and A Visiting Research Fellow at the World Bank. She is the author of a study, *The Political Economy of Corruption*. She wrote:

“The political economy of corruption causes and consequences...

The Prime Minister has given us a long lecture on the section of the amendment that talks about corrupt practices etcetera. This was not meant as a kind of witch hunt. I have no intention to witch hunt anyone from the state or anywhere else because we are dealing with an issue that is part of the life of this country. Therefore I wish to state what Susan Rose-Ackerman says:

“Corruption occurs at the interface of the public and private sectors. Sometimes officials simply steal state assets, but the more interesting and complex cases occur when a private individual organisation bribes a state official with power over the distribution of public benefits or costs. Many officials remain honest (and I believe this) in the face of considerable temptation and others accept payoffs that seem small relative to the benefits under their control. Others however, amass fortunes.”

Mr. Speaker, we have seen reports in the newspapers of mushrooming pools, mansions, and we are not opening our eyes as to where wealth is being amassed. We must turn our guns at those who defy public morality and try to feel as if everyone in this country is a fool and they could pull wool over the eyes of everyone.

Ms. Teixeira: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask that the Member be cautioned on the use of the word “guns”.

Mr. Speaker: “Guns”? I have been carefully monitoring the speaker with my Standing Orders before me and I believe the context in which the statement was made is quite appropriate and approved. The proverbial “guns”, like the proverbial “cats”... but, I believe, we have to see it in

the context in which it was said. What I am concerned about - and so far there has been no instance of it - is any reference to any Member of this House, which I will not permit. Thank you.

Mr. Nagamootoo: Mr. Speaker, I believe here again is an attempt at deflection. No one, at least no one in this House - and we are generous - has called anyone by name though we can name names and cite spots, and we can cite locations. We can do these things because we are no better than the ordinary citizens who know everything. And what is not known now when I study Marxist dialectics, is noble. It may be concept now, tomorrow it will be knowledge. Sometimes there is a concept in the country because we see the pattern of what is developing. I cannot say everybody over there is involved in that pattern. Not everyone in public life is involved in this pattern that breeds a concept that we could be corrupt. It is a concept that if we could become corrupt then maybe we would be corrupt. And so if we have even the slim possibility that public life can taint us then it is an obligation that we go after everyone in public life and not start selectively to portray that only some are corrupt or probably some do not want to come straight while others would want to. Let us have one cast net and let us catch the *houri*, the conger-fish together with the *caca-bellies* – everybody must come onshore. Let us sort them out. That is the approach Hon. Prime Minister.

Sir, I think a lot has been said, but I just want quote something from Susan Rose-Ackerman and I will end. It says:

“In the United States, for example, corruption has periodically surfaced in the public housing programmes.”

Does that tell us anything? I am talking about the United States of America not Guyana. I dare not talk about Guyana? How dare I speak about Guyana? If I start to talk we will have to have coffee here, Sir. Your honour, if I may, just once, I am tempted. I quote:

“Although privatizing state owned enterprises reduces opportunities for corruption (this is the privitisation czars I am dealing with now; not here, the oligarchs) the privitisation process itself could create corrupt incentives. A firm may pay to be included in the list of qualified bidders or to restrict their numbers. It may pay to obtain a local assessment of

the public property to be leased (I am sometimes in need of pharmaceutical, Sir) or sold off, or to be favoured in the selection process.”

This is not Guyana.

“Before reform to the process in Argentina for example privatizations allegedly favour those with inside information and connections.”

I have not spoken about Guyana as yet. I spoke about Argentina, the United States, some Eastern Bloc countries. But it sounds like Guyana, smells like Guyana, looks like Guyana and probably it is Guyana.

I believe that this motion could be improved with the amendments. I do not subscribe to the notion that we cannot declare our assets, but we should declare our assets in due form and to due authority, the Integrity Commission. To ask us to do otherwise is to try to do something that is full of mischief; one wants action without remedy. One wants people to do and act but there is no way to deal with the malfeasance if discovered because the intention is probably not to discover anything. We do not want that. We want this legislation to work. Even if we start from today we want all officials who have their hefty bank accounts overseas let us know how they got them, where they got it, and in whose name these things have been amassed. They have to declare. And we have to speak to our President because he is the moral conscience of our nation. He is our President and if he were to act within the law he has to act decisively because this country cannot wait longer for us to clean the image of what we are. We could be better than we are; we think we are better than we are, and we ought to be. Therefore, we must not make jokes about corruption. We must not come here and try to pass the buck. We have to be meaningful, and send a message to the Guyanese people that we could deal with this matter; we could save our nation; we could rescue it and place it into the safe hands of those who have integrity as the lone star of public life. I say this unapologetically, I am with the Government, or any institution 150%, even 1000%, if its efforts are aimed at making the institution work; form it, make it work. As regards whether the President can publish names or the Commission, this is how it works. The Commission declares to the President, so if any Commissioner is found in default the President publishes the name of the commissioner or commissioners, but if any member who ought to declare under the Act defaults the Commission publishes the name. So the role of the President is

not there as the schoolteacher with the whip. The President in this context is a creature of the law and the President has to make sure, first of all, in order to manage the commission there must have a commission or else what are you doing? It is a poppy show. Have the Commission composed, as the amendment seeks to do and when that is formed we can duly declare our assets. That is the right way to go. As I said, I would rather feel tonight that this is a new beginning. We will have a new resolve here tonight and not just want to turn this motion, this opportunity that is golden to unite us all, into another publicity stunt. I say no more.

Thank you. [*Applause*]

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Member Dr. Gopaul do you wish to rise on a point of clarification.

Minister of Labour [Dr. Gopaul]: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I am not in the habit of disturbing anyone on the floor.

Mr. Speaker: I have noticed that.

Dr. Gopaul: I know you have been listening keenly, hoping that Mr. Nagamootoo did not personalise as he was speaking. But he made statements during the course of his discourse about elected and non-elected Ministers. I am the only non-elected Minister. If it was intended to cast any doubt about the integrity of ...

Mr. Speaker: Rest assured, what the Hon. Member was saying was that this act applies to all of us starting with the Speaker, Ministers and elected Members so in no way was he casting... I was very careful about that. In other words he started with me as Speaker stating we all have a duty and responsibility and are all subject to controls of the act.

Dr. Gopaul: Because he mentioned non-elected Minister...

Mr. Speaker: Of course, you are the only one, but I will protect you.

Dr. Gopaul: ... and the obligation, I merely want to say that my returns are up to date.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you very much; we appreciate that.

Mr. Nagamootoo: I do not know if I should...

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Nagamootoo, no, no. I invite the Hon. Member Rev. Gilbert to address us now.

Rev. Dr. Gilbert: Mr. Speaker, I want to lend my support to the motion moved by the Hon. Prime Minister on the compliance with the Integrity Commission Act which we have been reminded was made into law since 1997. I believe the danger of one attempting to speak on issues of integrity can sometimes become a very ticklish one. It can appear that one is seeking to hold him or herself out or up as the personification of perfection or integrity. Sometimes people get a little edgy and we tend to find ourselves pointing fingers. But there is a scripture that talks about Jesus in a particular context. It said he that is without sin should cast the first stone. So in that sense when we have these discussions about integrity one always needs to ask oneself, am I guilty? Am I qualified to speak on this matter?

8.28 p.m.

The principle of this motion, I believe, is threefold. First, it seeks to constrain all elected officials, including Members of Parliament, to submit annual declarations to the Commission in accordance with the law. Secondly, it calls upon His Excellency the President to make disclosure to the Speaker annually the names of those Members of Parliament who are in default. Thirdly, it calls upon the Committee of Privileges to sanction such Members of this House according to the established norms of ethics.

One cannot ignore, and I think it would be dishonest of anyone to ignore, the implications of the letter, which the Hon. Member Mrs. Backer read, that indicates that there is not an existing Commission.

I want to point to the fact that I think the spirit of the motion is of greater importance than the letter of the motion. I will tell the Members why I say that. There is a military term – I think the Hon. Member Mr. Granger would be qualified... I do not think that he is the initiator of that principle; I have heard being said by a number of persons who have had military experience and, Sir, I do not believe that you in any way might be culpable or responsible, I have great regard for you - that I heard from persons in the military community, who have said that there is principle in the army, where a person complies now and complains later. I do not know if that is true, but I have heard of such - that a person complies now and complains later.

The issue of what we are dealing with here is that we are dealing with a law and it is a law that is given the veracity, or is given effect, by the existence of a Commission, but there seems to me to be an anomaly somewhere, where there is a requirement of a motion that seeks to compel law makers to abide by the law. That has to be an anomaly. The spirit of the Act itself, and not the motion, presupposes that persons in public life are naturally and willingly in compliance with the law. I think that is the spirit of that Act; that those who are in public life are naturally and willingly in compliance with the law. It also presupposes that persons who occupy high public offices are individuals who will exemplify the highest levels of integrity and lawfulness in both their public and private lives. In fact, I want to assume that it is for this reason public officials are accorded the same level, or just about the same level, of regard and reverence as Justices of the Peace, religious leaders, in affixing their signatures to sworn affidavits. Public officials in essence, therefore, are to be, in some regard, custodians or rather purveyors of truth, integrity, honesty and righteousness.

In fact, for those of us who read the Bible, if we read from the book of Romans, chapter 13, we would see that public officials are referred to – I suppose in this sense it also includes Members of Parliament – as Ministers of God. If one reads the Koran, in sura 6, section 165, it states: “He who hath made you his agents, inheritors of the earth, He had raised you up in rank, some above others, that he may try you in gifts that he had given you for the Lord is quick in punishment yet he is often forgiving and most merciful.” I think that the principle that is established there is that both the Bible and the Koran establish that public officials are recognised by God to be his agents, his ministers, in the earth. As Ministers of God there are certain moral responsibilities that are entrusted upon us. For example it states that we should not owe any man anything. Whether it is paying our debt or making a declaration, we should not owe anything. It goes on to talk about some of the other standards – should not commit adultery; should not kill; should not steal; should not bear false witness; should not be covetous. It speaks on a wider context. What we understand from that is that public officials are held to a very high standard by God, by the law and by the citizens of a nation.

It therefore becomes a grave anomaly when lawmakers dishonour the high esteem of their calling by violating the very laws that they themselves have created. The issue then, therefore, is what can we hold out as an acceptable credential or criterion upon which we have earned the right,

moral authority, to speak when we, by whatever technicality, find ourselves violating the very laws we make. We cannot say to our children “do as we say but do not do as we do” because we lead by our examples as public officials. We, in this House, must set the bar of moral and ethical uprightness, not just for our children, but for all of Guyana, and abiding by the laws we create is setting a standard of ethical uprightness.

It cannot be, therefore, that, as parliamentarians, we are dragged unwillingly to a table of compliance by a parliamentary resolution executed by the President or the Committee of Privileges. It must be that we recognise our moral and civic obligation to be guided by the laws that we make in this House and by our own sense of national responsibility. It must be noted that in section 19 of the Act empowers the Commissioner and the President to publish names, which has not been enforced. I rather suspect that what is desired is not forced compliance, but rather voluntary submission to the process of public accountability. I do suspect that if it were a case of just seeking to vilify, publicly humiliate, that section of the Act would have already been enforced, but there has not been an enforcement of that Act. I rather believe that the intent is not really to attack people and expose anybody. I believe that any nation in which attempts are made to bring change to a national culture, particularly if that culture has not been one where people have been willing to put their own lives under public scrutiny, there is going to be all kinds of resistance preventing some of those things from becoming a manifest or a reality.

I have confidence that even as we have entered into this new era – we hear a lot about this new era – in which public officials, specifically, Members of Parliament, are willing... I am encouraged to have heard all of the speakers on the Opposition side, who have spoken so far, said that in principle they have no issue with public officials being brought under scrutiny, and that, for me, would suggest that they too recognise that public officials must be held accountable by the people, who we serve, for how we conduct our lives, both in private and in public. With this, I want to simply encourage that we all give support to this motion.

Thank you very much Sir. [*Applause*]

Mr. Speaker: Minded for us not to necessarily have a break, but it is to invite Members to take a snack. I believe a ten-minute stretch may be good for everyone. As to be able to come back,

resume and complete in time, I suggest that we take a ten-minute suspension. There are snacks available. The House is suspended.

Sitting suspended at 8.38 p.m.

Sitting resumed at 8.57 p.m.

Ms. Teixeira: This motion before us is a rather simple one on the compliance with The Integrity Commission Act. I think this event and discussion here today is an example of how politicians can get it wrong of what is intended. The intent of this motion, the objective of this motion, has somehow got lost.

I take full responsibility for this motion coming before this House. I see that there have been barbs at my Prime Minister who signed it, but I take full responsibility, because I am the one, after the Commonwealth Parliamentary Workshop and the simulations we had about trying to find common space and common issues that we could agree in this House to indicate to the people in this country and the electorate that we were bigger than our individual parts, that we could come together as a body of lawmakers in the highest forum of the land, in law making, and be able to set a standard that was high, that people would respect and would set a tone for the rest of the country, ... It is out of those simulations, I believe, Mr. Trotman, Mr. Speaker, that on 22nd May, when some of us sat together in groups, arbitrarily chosen, that I felt, and I believed, that there was room in the political space for us to talk and to agree on a number of key issues. Having heard one of the workshop's presentations on the issue of corruption, at that same forum, – you were there Mr. Speaker – I believe that the one thing that we could agree on, as lawmakers, is that we would be able to be in compliance with the Integrity Commission Act that sets the standard and the framework for integrity in public life. We are only one component of the group of about a hundred or so positions that are listed in the Schedule of the Act, I believe, pages 26 to 28, but we are the highest forum of law making. The barbs, quips, jokes, laughs and the insinuations are really shameful, as far as I am concerned.

As I said, I take full responsibility. I am the one who raised it in the Cabinet that we could bring this back and I was sure, coming out of that workshop - that we, as a group of three parties, could agree on one thing since we all agreed that we were ready to fight corruption. If we set the standard we should allow the society to know that this House, made up of PPP/C, APNU and

AFC, could agree on one thing alone. It was one thing alone since this Parliament has begun. It is not going to happen because... [Ms. Ally: You did not even hear Mrs. Deborah Backer.] I have heard Mrs. Deborah Backer, the Hon. Deputy Speaker, well. I heard every single word she said. I heard every word that the Hon. Member Mr. Moses Nagamootoo said. I am still waiting for Ms. Amna Ally, but any way that would be a long wait. I have heard a lot in this House. Good intentions sometimes fall flat on their faces.

Let me just say that what drove me to do this, and I was proud that the Cabinet supported me on this, was that I sat with young Members from the other side - Mr. James Bond, Ms. Annette Ferguson, Ms. Africo Selman, Mr. Desmond Trotman and Mr. Damon, on my side - ... [Mr. Nadir: Mr. Desmond Trotman is not that young.] Well he is not so young. He is a young Member but he is not “young.” There is a difference between being a young Member of Parliament and a “young” Member of Parliament. When I sat with this group of young people and young Members it dawned on me that in this House – it came out of the workshop – there were twenty-three new Members of Parliament, in total, and therefore it would be a good signal to the society and the young Members, both old and young, that we were setting a tone that was good, despite all of our disagreements. That is what drove me; a belief that the younger Members of this House, on both sides, were deserving of the kind of programme that we at least could agree on one or two things. We came up with a number of other notions, which you, yourself, Mr. Speaker, referred to in a recent meeting. I think it was on Wednesday.

Let me say a few things. First of all, let us go to the Act. The Act provides for the President and the Leader of the Opposition to carry out a number of functions in relation to it. This Act does not require the Leader of the Opposition and the President to have meaningful consultation, but to have consultation. The Act also states that the two gentlemen, after consultation, would also discuss emoluments and salaries, and so on. It also goes further to say that in the case where there is an investigation and a tribunal has to be set up, that the Leader of the Opposition and the President will have to consult. It is in the Act. The clauses, which I am referring to, are section 3(4), section 4(1), section 21, and so on. This is an Act that requires a level of collaboration, even if it is not cooperation.

I have heard here in the House that a letter was referred to which was written to a secretary of the Commission and the date, I believe, was 30th May. It has been quoted in this House along with

the secretary's name. I am bewildered because there is no one on that side of the House who is not aware that the names of the persons are submitted to the President and that the President appoints those persons and the secretary and the staff of the Commission will be so informed. A secretary cannot indicate to a high office, such as the Leader of the Opposition, whether the names have been submitted or not. *[Interruption from the Opposition Members.]* Be quiet! Would you? You had your turn, all of you. Be quiet for goodness sake. Mr. Speaker, please protect me from this babble.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, allow Ms. Teixeira to complete her presentation, please.

Ms. Teixeira: Some people talk about dogs. I talk about *yard fowls*. **[Mrs. Backer:** Do not call yourself that, Ms. Teixeira.] I am a better looking *yard fowl* than you are.

Mr. Speaker: Okay, Ms. Teixeira.

Mr. Ramjattan: It is unparliamentary language.

Ms. Teixeira: I am not aware that "*yard fowl*" is a bad name.

The Commission came to an end on 28th May and on the same day, the same Monday, we met with Mr. Granger and the APNU delegation to discuss issues. The President had received, by then, all of the three nominations of the bodies he had consulted. I was reminded, and I said it during the budget debate and I actually read a letter that was sent to the Leader of the Opposition on 22nd February about the constitutional appointments, including the Integrity Commission, and also referred, on that day, that the President had shared with the Leader of the Opposition a name of a person... **[Mrs. Backer:** For what?] It is for Chairperson of the Integrity Commission. You were not there, Mrs. Backer. You were not there. Whether it is the word of the Leader of the Opposition versus the President, you and I can debate that in the corridors.

A name was presented that had to be considered. I am not aware, as of now, nor am I advised, as of now, that there has been a response, but the President is in receipt, as of Monday, of three names who will comprise the Commission and if the Leader of the Opposition does not wish to respond, does not like the person, he is free to express his views.

The issue of the Commission not being duly constituted is not correct in the sense that it came to an end on 28th May; today is 14th June. There has to be a process where people submit names; the names have been received, and by the time this motion is passed – I assume it will be – it will be constituted. Assuming that the Leader of the Opposition is able to indicate his consent, or non-consent, or whatever... Whether he consents or not we are proceeding because the law does not require us to..., and I am sure that as a lawyer the Member would recognise that.

The contradiction is this: When the first Commission was set up the Chairperson was Bishop George. We seem to have a problem with some Bishops on the other side. The Bishop George was the Chairman of the Integrity Commission for many years. In 2004 the Commission did what is required under the Act, for the first time, that is section 19, and, it put an advertisement in the newspapers as to the names of the persons who had not complied with the Act. Regrettably the names on that list, in 2004, were all Members of the PNCR-1G, including some Regional Chairmen, and so on. After Bishop George came out of the Integrity Commission, the President invited the then Leader of the Opposition to discuss names. One of the names – I think it was around 2009 – was Dr. James Rose. His name was publicly rejected by the Leader of the Opposition. In addition to that, the persons who were selected were all criticised. I remember reading the papers, and it was said in this House, by no less than the Leader of the Opposition, that why there were religious people on these things. It was stated that the Opposition at the time, PNCR-1G, would not be in compliance with the Act, would not make declarations. It was publicly stated here and the records can be found. Therefore it is saying, in not declaring, that when there is no Chairperson there is no Commission...

Mrs. Backer: Mr. Speaker, on a Point of Order, unless the Hon. Member could refer to... I am rising on a Point of Order but I see Ms. Teixeira is still standing.

Mr. Speaker: Ms. Teixeira, please yield to allow the Point of Order.

Ms. Teixeira: Well, I have to be asked to yield or I decide to yield. It is not automatic. Check the Standing Orders.

Mrs. Backer: Women's power, Sir. I hope you are not struck down by it.

Mr. Speaker: Or it is awestruck. Under Standing Order 38, there is Point of Order, 38 (1) and 38 (2). Standing Order 38 (2), for where there is clarification being sought, the Member has to agree to yield, but if it is a Point of Order the Member shall yield to allow it to proceed.

Mrs. Backer: It is not a clarification. My Point of Order is that if the Hon. Member cannot provide the *Hansard*, which as we have all heard in previous motions that they are available, with the Leader of the Opposition stating that no one from PNCR-1G...whatever she said. Unless that can be substantiated, I ask that she withdraw it until it could be substantiated.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you for that observation. What I will do, as I have done in your case, Hon. Deputy Speaker, is to ask Ms. Teixeira to proceed, not to withdraw it. I am now asking the Clerk to ensure that the researchers do the checks tomorrow. I do believe that, at least when I was in the House, there was a statement made on the issue of the Integrity Commission and its Commissioner and I believe it would be useful for all of us to receive a copy of that statement. As to whether it should be withdrawn, I will not ask her to withdraw it at this point in time, but I will, at a later occasion, indicate what the position is on that.

Ms. Teixeira: The point I am making is that when there was a Commissioner, and there was a Commission, and there was a Chairman, under Bishop George, there appeared to be non-compliance. When there was a Commission and no Chairperson, again, there appeared to be non-compliance. We have gone around and around this issue over and over again. Was it the chicken or the egg? Do you need a Commission first or a Chairman? The law is clear. The law requires that, as public elected officials, we submit. [Mrs. Backer: Submit to whom?] Submit to the Commission. [Mrs. Backer: Who is the Commission?] The Commission is the staff and the Commissioners.

The fact that there has been a Commission in existence for the last two years, regrettably the Leader of the Opposition did not agree to the names, it existed with a quorum of three and functioned and had come to an end on 28th May. I remember - that is why I say it is in the *Hansard* somewhere - Mr. Ramjattan getting on the floor and declaring that the AFC Members were in compliance. [Mr. Ramjattan: We were.] I am supporting you, Comrade. Yes, you said it.

The issue here, despite all that has been said – all the things about “toothless poodle” and “dog without teeth”, and all of the talk about a new dispensation that you all really meant new dispensation – that it meant that the rapidity with which request for names or discussion on the appointment of key people in appointments, according to the constitutional law, would be able to move expeditiously. Six months have gone by and there has been nothing.

The issue here is: Is it that we, as Members of this House, are willing to set a standard? One can go to any part of the world that one wants to. In the UN Convention Against Corruption countries are now being asked not to declare who the defaulters are. They are being asked to declare the assets publicly of all elected officials. I am totally, and a hundred per cent, in support of it. That means all elected officials - whether in the Parliament, the Regions and the National Democratic Councils. It means all. This Commission... it must, in order to act, have the information.

9.18 p.m.

For those of us who report annually, we are asked about our bank accounts, the branch of bank that our banks accounts are in, the numbers of our bank accounts, the amount of money in our bank accounts at a particular point, June the 30th. We are asked to put in if our names are on wills, if we have mortgages, if we have titles and if we get a gift valued over \$50.

[Mr. Ramjattan: We are well aware of this.] I am saying this, Mr. Ramjattan, because some friends on the other side may not be aware of this. Please, I know that you are well aware of this. I trust you get theirs in.

But, the Commission must be able to have the documents and the declarations, and be able, as it has done, to ask questions if they are not clear. It must be able to publicly declare those who are in default, as it did in 2004. It must do it again, but it must have the imprimatur of this House which states that this is not a partisan issue. When the National Assembly is in support of this issue, it is not a partisan issue. **[Mrs. Backer:** You said that. What is wrong with you?]

The Deputy Speaker always has this habit of having a problem when other people speak. She likes to hear herself speak but she does not like to hear other people speak, particularly when they upbraid her. **[Mrs. Backer:** You upbraided me.] You are lucky that that is all I did.

[Mrs. Backer: Is that an indirect reference to guns?] I am not a violent person in that way.

I think Mr. Commissioner of Police knows my views on strategies, as well. It is the former Commissioner of Police. By the way, this is the first former Commissioner of Police who is a Member of Parliament and has taken a partisan position, and a former Brigadier of the Guyana Defence Force (GDF) who is a Member of Parliament, after forty years of membership while he was in the GDF. Interesting times, I must say. [Mr. Nandlall: New dispensation.] It is a new dispensation. Thank you, Mr. Nandlall.

Mr. Speaker, I have heard all sorts of comments about “stillborn.” Only a man could talk about “stillborn”. Only a man could use the word “stillborn”. No woman would use the word “stillborn”. It is if you understand what I mean, but you cannot, because you are a man. No woman ever uses the word “stillborn”, unless it is a medical fact. To describe this motion as stillborn shows that the Opposition Members have not read it, nor do they appreciate it, nor understand it.

The 1991 Integrity Act did not have enough clout; it was ambiguous. The 1997 Act tried to be stronger and it tried to put the onus on the individuals who have to report. Whilst we are trading with each other, there are many other people on the list who are not reporting, I believe. There are some who feel they take their cues from the Opposition side and that they should not report, and therefore do not report.

If we are talking about integrity in public life, we are the ones who must set the standard; we who are sitting in this House. If it is just the one issue of being in compliance with the Integrity Act, and compliance with the Code of Conduct,...The Code of Conduct does not only talk about influence peddling or offences of a rights nature, it also talks about sexual conduct and sexual harassment – all sorts of things. It is not just about the financial temptations, as my Prime Minister talked about.

In the motion much ado was made about the second “BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED” clause which states “the President to disclose” the names to the Speaker. Obviously, Mr. Speaker, this is an error and it is human to err. [Mrs. Backer: Yes...*inaudible*] Stop babbling for goodness sake and listen. Jeez! I do not know how your husband deals with you. How does your husband deal with you? [Mrs. Backer: Do not ask me nonsense. I should ask what your husband is doing with you.] I do not have one. Thank God.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, I do not like the way this debate is degenerating, where we start to hurl insults about people's spouses. It is most unbecoming for us to enter into the realm of people's personal relationships. I ask that you lift the standard, please, and refrain from doing that.

Ms. Teixeira: As I was saying, the second "BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED" clause that states "the President..." It is an error. It should have said Commission. Therefore I am proposing at the appropriated time, or I am proposing now, that that word be corrected – that the word "President" be removed and the word "Commission" to be placed.

What I thought we would have been discussing in this House, which is why I began by talking about misreading, is that in other Parliaments they have developed registrars. In Parliament, from the time a Member swears in, that Member goes to a Commissioner within the Parliament, who is designated, who collects the Member's declaration of assets. That is updated from time to time. There is actually a Committee in Parliament which reviews it and if there are any incongruities or contradictions, it can summon the Member to provide additional details. That is how the issue with the former Prime Minister Mr. Blair and his brother-in-law, and the housekeeping money of £10,000, being used to clean the house, was exposed.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Member Ms. Teixeira, one second. You have about three minutes left. I am telling you this because I am not too sure that the House will be granting too many extensions tonight and I do not want you to find yourself on the wrong side, in the sense that you are made to end abruptly.

Ms. Teixeira: I am not sure which is the wrong side. I am on the right side. I am on the left side of the House. It is always going to be the better side.

Mr. Speaker: That is, of not getting the extension. Thank you.

Ms. Teixeira: Mr. Speaker, I am on the East, I am on the left - what better position it is to be in. The clause that I am talking about, I believe, can be amended and that will resolve some of the concerns of the Members of the Opposition.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the issue of the appointment of the Commission... I look to Mr. Granger as the new Leader of the Opposition to take seriously the mandate which the Act

provides for him and that he, whether he agrees or disagrees with the name, would be able to conclude this matter with the President so that we can have the Commission appointed within a short period of time, and that this House will be the standard bearer in relation to the motion on the Compliance With The Integrity Act, and that this House, and all of the Members on both sides, would be able and would be big enough so that if it is brought to our attention that we are in arrears or not in compliance, we would not see it as a personal affront but we would just get ourselves in order.

I do not know about how other parties are run. I will just say this in concluding: the People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) has a code of conduct for elected officials. The PPP's General Secretary reminds all of us, as elected Members, that we have to comply with the Integrity Act. The President of the Cabinet also ensures...After 30th June of every year, when the forms are sent out by the Integrity Commission, it is put on the Cabinet agenda to remind us that we must be in compliance and submit our reports.

Therefore, all of us and our parties have a responsibility to check to make sure that all elected officials are in compliance.

The amendments that were made are problematic and confusing because I have difficulty figuring out what order is what. [Mrs. Backer: What order is what?] You switched paragraphs and the ordering of things.

This motion, whether it goes through as original, it goes through as amended, the main issue is that this House, on this night, should be able to agree that we want to set a standard of integrity in public life and that we are willing to step out of the partisan mode and do what is righteous and correct in our lives, and in our political lives.

Thank you very much. [*Applause*]

Minister in the Ministry of Finance [Bishop Edghill]: I stand to lend support to the motion as moved by the Hon. Prime Minister. I have listened to the presentations of Members of both sides of the House and it has been quite an informing discourse.

I would like to posit that once we are going to be talking about integrity, the last thing that we should be talking about is coercive mechanisms for compliance because integrity should be a

personal decision and choice. I say this to say my own experience as a young man, I think I was just over eleven years of age, when I entered into secondary school, I had an English teacher who was a Presbyterian Minister and his name was Mr. Sawh. Following the convention of giving teachers nicknames, one afternoon, after school, Mr. Sawh was going home and we troubled him, including myself, by calling him “hammer.” If his name was “Sawh”, we had to find a nickname and the nickname was “hammer”. The next morning Mr. Sawh, I guess, paid some extra interest in my well-being as a youth, called me to the office and asked a question. He said, “Young Edghill, were you calling me names yesterday afternoon?” My first response was “no Sir”, because I feared the detention, I feared the lashes and I feared the sending for my parents. Mr. Sawh, who was more than just an English teacher, took the time to lecture me... *[Laughter from Members of the Opposition.]*

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, could you compose yourselves, please. It is beyond *[inaudible]* of a normal House.

Bishop Edghill: ...on the issue of integrity and I grew up with that understanding. Your truthfulness, your honesty, your impeccable character and the way you offer yourself to the public must not be based upon the punishments that could be meted out if you do not comply. They must be based upon personal choices and personal decisions. I believe that every Member of this honourable House who has offered himself or herself to be elected as a public official, when asked the people of Guyana to make him or her their representatives to lead this nation, to make laws and make decisions that we will live by and we expect them to live by, was holding himself or herself up to a very high standard.

I would be happy to leave this House tonight, having listened to the presentations coming from the various ones about the correctness or incorrectness of the wordings of specific clauses, that, at least, one thing we agree on: that as public officials, we will offer ourselves to the people of Guyana with the highest level of honesty and integrity, upholding probity in public life. I would think that that is the intent of this motion and I would hope that we all will go in that direction.

Many things could be said, but I want to say two things. I have conferred with a very devout Muslim, who sits on this side of the House, concerning the similarities in Christianity, and many of us in this House practise that religion. We pay tithes. The pastor or the officials of the church

do not calculate a person tithes. That person does that himself or herself in the fear of God. In Islam, Muslims pay zakat. The Imam, the Haji or the head of the organisation does not make a demand of what it should be. Persons make that calculation in all honesty as it relates to their income and they declare and give.

It talks about operating from a high ground of individual responsibility, voluntary compliance and moral suasion. I would think that the people of Guyana expect no less from the honourable men and women who sit in this august House.

I read the motion and I have read the amendments. I have listened, and my training, as well, has thought me to hear what is not said. I listened with zeal and enthusiasm to Members of the other side of the House demanding that public officials live lives that should stand scrutiny and that we should be free from corruption. May I suggest that this motion is designed to achieve that and to encourage that kind of behaviour. I would expect that all of us will support that.

For eight years I held a constitutional office. That Commission is not listed on the Schedule as a Commission to make declarations, but I have made declarations. The Hon. Prime Minister, who was the subject Minister of a corporation that I chaired, ...We discussed from what level of managers should be making declarations. In as much as the Schedule asks for the General Managers, Chief Executive Officers (CEOs), the Hon. Prime Minister and I developed, in that corporation, from what level of managers..., even beyond what the Schedule required, they were making declarations.

I think there is a realisation in the nation that once there are people who are occupying public office and they are in the positions that they can influence and benefit from those decisions that they make they should offer themselves and declare - "I have done my job, based upon my oath, without fear and without favour, and I have done so without ill-gotten gain." This motion seeks to encourage that kind of behaviour.

I do not think that we want to sit in this House to point fingers at individuals in this House or individuals outside of this House to determine who is corrupt and who is not. I think that if we get into that kind of a discourse we will be treading on very dangerous grounds. One of the things that we will be doing is casting judgement before knowing the facts. I think that as a nation we have done that. What the Integrity Commission Act puts on the spotlight is that if a

public official is challenged, he or she could come under scrutiny, based on the declarations that he or she would have made, to examine if it was accurate, truthful, or not. No amount of excuses could justify not making such a declaration.

A man who gets off in court because of a technicality of a procedure, or process, or by the skilful arguments of a good defence attorney, does not remove his personal guilt. Even if he is acquitted by a jury, he walks out of that courtroom a free man but bound by his own guilt.

While some of us could be able to make the argument about why we should and why we should not, as individuals we must be able to face the public in any community, at any time and answer any question with a straight face, speaking, as my English teacher, Mr. Sawh, taught us, from integrity, telling the truth.

I want to ask of us that since we would have heard from the various ones, including my colleague, the Hon. Member Ms. Gail Teixeira, about even some errors in the wording, what we should be seeking to do is to ensure that the intent is preserved in this motion and that we all commit ourselves to walk in the light. We must walk in the light. The light is what is very important because there must be no dark and grey areas.

I would want to also ask of us that we recognise that the makers of the law must also be keepers of the law. We must live by the standards that we ourselves expect others to live by. I remember in the sacred scriptures, Jesus spoke to a group of people and he was saying to them that they are demanding of people to carry weights and burdens that they of their own selves are not prepared to carry. He likened that category of persons, who made demands of people to carry weights and burdens that they of themselves are not prepared to carry, as whitened sepulchres with dead men bones or beautifully painted graves but inside are filled with the stench of rotten bones.

The people of Guyana want to ensure that when we speak about the managers, the customs officer, the police officer and the public official that they also hear this National Assembly says that the men and women of this honourable House are prepared to live by the law which they expect them to live by. That is the intent of this motion.

Once one comes into public life, one's life becomes an open book. People are able to read every page. There is no way that one can be in public life and hide. The fact that we are going to be

open books where people are going to read every page, I think it is our responsibility to ensure that when people read they are going to be able to see and to experience that we are people who are walking in the light.

I am simply asking us, Mr. Speaker and Hon. Members of this House, that there must be no ambivalence and *sand dancing* on this particular matter. This goes to the crux of what the people of Guyana expect. We cannot be selective in wanting investigations in certain places; we want certain individuals to be investigated and we are not prepared to subject ourselves, in the first instance, to public scrutiny.

I was particularly concerned because I remember, as Chairman of the Guyana Council of Churches, when the then President wrote and asked for a nominee to be on the Integrity Commission. The Rev. Nigel Hazel was nominated to be a member of that Commission and he has served that Commission with distinction. I recall, apart from Bishop George being named the Chairman by the President, that the Central Islamic Organisation of Guyana (CIOG) was asked to name a representative and the distinguished Member Haji Faizal Ferouz was that member. I also recall that the Guyana Hindu Dharmic Sabha was asked to name a representative and the honourable Pandit Rabindranauth Persaud served as a Commissioner.

When I read the Act and recognised that the President could appoint people from the fields of law, accountancy and it also states from any other discipline, I think that there was an acknowledgment, by the President, and I would say, by extension, the people of Guyana, that our religious leaders are supposed to be torch-bearers. As a result of that, it sought to bring to bear that some of our religious leaders of the highest order would be the first set of Commissioners who would deal with this whole issue of who would deal with the issue of ensuring probity in public life.

9.48 p.m.

It was very disheartening to hear the comments and some of the suggestions that were being made. While most of us come from various communities where we uphold certain morals and ethical values, which are based upon our culture as well as our religion, it is that we would be offering questions as it relates to the composition of the very Commission. This seems to be an

ongoing trend that is quite disheartening and could almost send the wrong signal that once we do not agree with a name, the next language we hear is that it is not duly constituted.

I think when I read the amendments to the motion, which is being offered by the Hon. Member Mrs. Deborah Backer, where there must be the inclusion of a duly constituted Commission, I started asking questions because, as far as I know, the Integrity Commission was a duly constituted Commission where the Commissioners were properly in place, and while there was a duly constituted Commission, with Commissioners in place, Members did not comply with the law. The issue here is that I am saying that we should not look for technicalities because I do not think that the people of Guyana would forgive us by saying we did not file or make our declarations, because it was not duly constituted. A duly constituted body is a body that is put in place in keeping with the law or the necessary legislation.

As I close, I would want to ask of us that, first of all, the intent of this motion be upheld, and I think the Hon. Member Rev. Gilbert spoke to the spirit and I heard people made light of that, because it would appear that levity is becoming the order of the day, but seriousness must not be lost. The intent of this motion is that all of us must agree that maintaining probity in public life is an essential and that we must all sign on to it. I am asking for that signing on, despite of the disagreement that we may have, that the intent be kept.

The second thing is that if there is need for amendments, I have absolutely no problem with the amendments, the spirit and intent must not be lost.

Thirdly, even if there is no penalties..., because the motion, basically, asks for naming and shaming and to push people into compliance, because the whole thing of printing in the *Official Gazette* or the newspaper has to do with naming and shaming, hoping that people will bring things in to the public realm and we would all comply.

I would think that all of us should seriously consider lending our support to a motion that leads this House in a form of a resolution that all of us would be signing on, in public view, saying to the people who elected us that, as we sit in this House and as we hold our various responsibilities, and as we make decisions, we are going to be free from undue influence. We will not subject ourselves to the lobbyist who may offer the opportunity for ill-gotten wealth because we know it does not last. **[Mrs. Backer: How do you know that?]** It is

because wealth got without labour shall soon diminish. We must offer ourselves as people who would ensure that the special interest groups must think several times. Mr. Speaker, permit me to say this: It is my belief that before someone can offer an inducement to a public official there must be a reason at the back of that person's head that person might accept it.

Mr. Speaker: That is my belief too.

Bishop Edghill: It is my belief that with us supporting this motion and agreeing unanimously in this House, we will be sending the signal to the entire lobbyists, the special interest groups and all the others that they are coming at the wrong door because we are people who want to walk in the light and we will uphold the highest level of probity in public life.

I thank you very much Mr. Speaker. [*Applause*]

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, it is now approximately six minutes to ten o'clock. Before I invite the Hon. Leader of the Opposition to address us, I would ask the Hon. Prime Minister to move the requisite motion for us to continue to complete our business for today.

Mr. Hinds: I would like to propose the motion that this House continues so as to conclude the debate on this motion tonight.

Mr. Speaker: I take it that there is no one against, therefore we will proceed to conclude the business. Hon. Leader of the Opposition you may now address the House.

Leader of the Opposition [Brigadier (Ret'd) Granger]: Colleagues, fellow Members of this House, it should be a great disappointment to all of us that twenty-one years after the first Integrity Act was passed we should be in this state. Has there been a lack of sincerity? Has there been a lack of seriousness? Has there been a lack of a sense of urgency and a sense of duty to our people? If so, this Tenth Parliament must turn the corner and leave, for the Guyanese people, a working, a functional Integrity Commission and a valid Integrity Commission Act. Over the years, particularly over the last fifteen years, the debate over the Integrity Act has been punctuated by threats, sometimes by bluster and sometimes by coercion. I do not know if it is because of the rainy season, but it has come again and, I think, the Prime Minister has played this role before.

I am sure that the Hon. Prime Minister would remember that a few years ago he introduced a similar motion in this House. I am sure he would remember too that threats were made for the publication of declarations and even for the police to be brought in against Members of this honourable House who failed to comply. In fact, the leader of one of the opposition parties at that time, three years ago, said the words, and I quote, this is, of course, in response to the person who threatened prosecution to Members of this noble House, “Nowhere in the free world could the head of the executive branch issue ultimatums, threaten and initiate criminal actions against Members of the legislature”. I see it brought a smile to your lips, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Those were my words.

Brigadier (Ret'd) Granger: Those were your words. You said it, those were your words. Here we are, again, in this annual cycle. As my learned colleague Mrs. Deborah Backer mentioned, it started with the letter from Mrs. Amanda Jaisingh, on the 2nd May, demanding compliance with the declarations of assets to a non-existent entity. The Hon. Prime Minister’s motion, and many of the speeches this evening, focus on the publication of names; focus on the punishments and focus on declarations. I would like to follow the line taken by my learned friend from the Alliance For Change, Mr. Moses Nagamootoo, because I do not believe that the fault lies within this House, in the legislative branch. If we are looking for corruption, we must look at the mother of all scandals; we must look in the executive branch. How much corruption could these poor people on the western side of the House be capable of? When we speak of corruption we speak of corruption on the industrial scale, as my colleague tends to call it – industrial scale corruption. We have to look not at the legislative branch. That is the wrong place, calling on Members Parliament to declare their assets.

The goal of the Integrity Commission should be to enhance public confidence in the public institutions and in the integrity of public officials. When we are looking for corruption we must look for people who are involved in the massive bogus procurement of pharmaceuticals, awarding phoney contracts; we must look at Government Ministries which, soon before they are audited, are burnt, destroying official records, burning evidence.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Leader of the Opposition, I do believe that is conjectural. Unless there has been an actual finding of arson and a direct link between an investigation and a fire, I think it would be unwise for us to go there.

Brigadier (Ret'd) Granger: It would be unwise if indeed there is no evidence, but I am prepared to provide that evidence, that at the time that a certain Ministry was about to be audited there was fire, and fires have contributed to the damage and the destruction of records in other Ministries over the years. I can provide evidence of the damage done to public records by arson over the years.

When we speak of corruption let us look not at the declarations of the Members of Parliament, but let us look at the Code of Conduct in Schedule II of the Integrity Act. There are ten clauses here, like the Ten Commandments. Let us look at the possibilities for bribery, the possibilities of embezzlement and the possibilities for the large-scale diversions of equipment to empower private farms. Let us look at the concept for ministerial responsibility, where massive breaches of the law cannot be covered up; let us look at discrimination and employment; let us look at the misuse of documents, the misuse of ministerial letter heads for the ordering of strange equipment; let us look at the misuse of state property; let us look at conflict of interest, and let us look at aiding and abetting in procuring the commission of crimes, all of these things are mentioned in the Code of Conduct.

This is where our attention must focus. Much of the debate is about declarations from Member of Parliament number one or Member of Parliament number two. But, let us look at the industrial-scale corruption which takes place within the executive branch, not here in this House.

I call on this honourable House to call on the executive branch to establish a fully-fledged Commission, a properly constituted Commission. I call on this House to call on the executive branch to provide such a Commission with the investigative capability. We do not want secretaries writing to us, again, asking for declarations. We want to know that, when this Act is fully implemented and ordinary citizens make complaints, the Commission will investigate those complaints and take their charges to the Director Public Prosecutions (DPP). This is not a threat to publish their names in the *Gazette*. This is serious business. The economy of this country is being undermined by corruption. We want to see, apart from the noises heard, the enforcement of

a Code of Conduct and it is here, but people are not speaking about it. All they are speaking about is the declarations. We want the Commission to bring this annual ritual to an end.

For twenty-one years we have come here and talked, but nobody is doing the walk. Nobody is enforcing the mandate of the Commission, as it should be enforced, because it is not properly staffed; it is not funded; it is not properly equipped, and we must bring this to an end. Tonight should be the last night that we debate whether we should have an Integrity Commission. That is why I support the amendment proposed by my colleague Mrs. Deborah Backer; I support the line of argument taken by my colleague Mr. Moses Nagamootoo, and we must bring this annual ritual to an end.

Thank you. [*Applause*]

Mr. Hinds (replying): We have had a rather long debate, but I do believe that we have ventured far from what this motion calls for. This motion calls for us Members of Parliament to lead in the Compliance With The Integrity Commission Act. It essentially calls on us to bind ourselves in certain ways so that we give each other the right that certain steps are taken; that we be exposed, but exposed within the confines of this House. It does not seek to replace the procedures and the penalties in the Integrity Commission Act. It seeks only to urge us to be compliant. From my way of thinking, I would say that all the Members, who spoke, made a case for this motion.

On the question of there not being an Integrity Commission, at this time, I think that this is certainly one of the instances of a mountain being made out of something that is quite small. The Commission, which has been constituted, came to an end, I think, someone said, on the 20th May, 2012. Today we are at the 14th of June. As far as I am aware, our President has already initiated a consultation with the Leader of the Opposition. As far as I am aware the religious bodies have already made their nominations to the President, and I would think that within a week the President could constitute the Commission. I think all that we have put on the issue of the Commission not being in place would soon be washed away. The Commission would soon be in place.

I think also that, particularly, the Leader of the Opposition, just now, just called for matters to be investigated and for the DPP to lead and make cases against persons for which there are good enough evidence, or that we do not contest or seek to change in this motion, but I think we are

forgetting a very important point here. Even before the Integrity Commission, or without an Integrity Commission, allegations or appearances of wrongdoings can be pursued, are being pursued and will be pursued. The Integrity Commission Act introduces the feature that ..., and this is the reason why it is important that there be the reporting of assets. It is because the Integrity Commission Act introduces this feature that Members of Parliament assets are declared and if they did not declare all their assets they would have committed a crime. Secondly, having declared their assets, if they cannot explain how they would have acquired those assets, lawfully, then they would have committed a crime. This is important because in all other circumstances, or most other circumstances, there is no obligation to justify oneself but, here, the situation is reversed and there is an obligation to justify the assets which they have. I think all that my friend, the Hon. Member, Leader of the Opposition, has been saying has little force because there is no restriction on the [inaudible] of persons who, in which it appears, may be guilty of crimes.

The important thing is declaration. If there is no declaration then the possibilities of bringing persons in guilty is greatly reduced. Declaration is the basis, and if the Members do not make an accurate declaration, it is a crime. That is what the Integrity Commission states – you must make an accurate declaration and you must be able to justify the property that you have.

A lot of what the Opposition Members have been saying here has been misguided and they have purposely, it appears, misrepresented this motion. This motion says let us hold hands together; let us bind ourselves together; let us make a packed that all of us would make our submissions to the Integrity Commission and if any of us does not make the submission we would call, on, the Commission – we would make a change there - to inform our Speaker, and our Speaker would use his good office to encourage us to make our submission. It is not *ultra vires* and it is in no way seeking to constrain the Commission from taking the action that it could and that it ought to. It only encourages us to make ourselves compliant. That is all that we have been seeking to do here.

I would therefore call on us all to rethink the position, as expressed by Members of the Opposition, and for to them give their support to this motion.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, we have come to the end of a very long, enlightening and, I believe, worthwhile debate, because, no matter what can be said, the whole issue of integrity of

persons who hold public office, in particularly those of us who are in this House, has been brought under the spotlight. I believe that if that was the intention and objective on both sides, that has been achieved. I thank all the Members for participating in the debate and for elucidating on the points that have been elucidated.

I would like to, now, formally put the motion that is before us. Before I do so there is a bevy of amendments totalling nine, in number, and I would wish to put them all *en bloc* as they are. They were circulated before and I believe... Yes, Prime Minister.

Mr. Hinds: There are certain amendments that we can support and there are certain amendments that we cannot support.

Mr. Speaker: Very well.

Ms. Teixeira: I would like to ask if there is a seconder for the motion of amendments. The circulated version has no seconder.

Mr. Ramjattan: I wish to second the motion.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you Mr. Ramjattan. Hon. Members I would put the amendments one at a time.

First Amendment

Delete the first AND WHEREAS clause of the motion and replace it with the following and I quote:

“AND WHEREAS THE Integrity Commission has not been established in conformity with the requirements of section 3 of the Integrity Act 1997”.

Amendment put and agreed to.

Amendment carried.

Second Amendment

Insert as the new second AND WHEREAS clause:

“AND WHEREAS corruption has reached an alarming level in Guyana with little or no effort to stem the tide”.

Amendment put and agreed to.

Amendment carried.

Third Amendment

Delete the second AND WHEREAS clause of the motion and replace it with the following as the new third AND WHEREAS clause:

“AND WHEREAS section 19 of the Integrity Act empowers the Commission to publish the names of persons who are not in compliance with this Act in the Gazette and in a daily newspaper and the President to publish the names of members of the Commission who are not in compliance with this Act in the Gazette and a daily newspaper.”

10.18 p.m.

Mrs. Backer: Mr. Speaker, if I could. That third amendment, all it seeks to do is to disaggregate what the President can do and what the Commission can do, because the original one, I do not think with any sinister motive, lumps the Commission and the President together. That is the one - “AND WHEREAS Section 19 of the Act empowers the Commission and the President to publish the names...”

So what that amendment sought to do was to bring it in compliance with section 19, which is that the Commission publishes the names of the other persons and the President publishes the name of the Commissioners. I do not know, because the Prime Minister did say he would not have a problem. I do not think that they should have a problem with that particular one.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Prime Minister did indicate that there may be some amendments that the Government wishes to support, but I can only know that if I put it formally. So I now put the amendment as stated in the third amendment, of that of Mrs. Backer, dealing with section 19.

“AND WHEREAS Section 19 of the Integrity Act empowers the Commission to publish the names of persons who are not in compliance with this Act in the Gazette and in a

daily newspaper and the President to publish the names of the members of the Commission who are not in compliance with this Act in the Gazette and a daily newspaper.”

Amendment put and agreed to.

Amendment carried.

Fourth Amendment

“Make the 3rd WHEREAS clause of the Motion the new forth AND WHEREAS clause:”

Amendment put and agreed to.

Amendment carried.

Fifth Amendment

Delete the fourth AND WHEREAS clause of the Motion and replace it with the following as the new fifth AND WHEREAS clause:

“AND WHEREAS all persons occupying offices specified in Schedule 1 include Ministers of the Government and Members of Parliament are expected to uphold the Code of Conduct outlined in the Act and in Schedule 11.”

Amendment put and agreed to.

Amendment carried.

Sixth Amendment

Insert as the first Resolve Clause:

“BE IT RESOLVED that this National Assembly calls on the President to establish the Integrity Commission as provided for in Section 3 of the Integrity Commission Act of 1997.”

Amendment put and agreed to.

Amendment carried.

Seventh Amendment

“Amend the first BE IT RESOLVED clause of the Motion (which will become the second Resolved clause) by inserting the words “to a duly constituted Integrity Commission” immediately after the word declaration where it first appears.”

Amendment put and agreed to.

Amendment carried.

Eight Amendment

“Amend the second BE IT RESOLVED clause of the Motion (which will become the third be it Resolve clause) by inserting the words “to a duly constituted Integrity Commission” immediately after the word “declaration” and delete the word “vicariously” and replace it with the words “by extension”.

Amendment put and agreed to.

Amendment carried.

Ninth Amendment

Delete the Third, Fourth and Fifth Resolve Clauses of the Motion.

Amendment put and agreed to.

Amendment carried.

Ms. Teixeira: Mr. Speaker, it has been very difficult following this because there are some clauses that are not omitted, not replaced and there is no vote on those clauses. It has been difficult for us to follow because the numbering has changed with the amendments, but there is a clause that was not amended, it appears, I could be wrong, that we have not voted on. It was not deleted, it is not amended and it remains there. I am asking that because we were moving on and that is the fourth “AND WHEREAS” clause.

Mr. Speaker: Is on elected officials...?

Ms. Teixeira: It states:

“AND WHEREAS all elected officials, and more so, Members of Parliament in particular, identified in Schedule 1 are expected to standard bearers of ethics in public office and uphold the Code of Conduct outlined in the Act and Schedule 11.”

It has been difficult with the numbering in the shift to know and, even for me, try to follow. Some have been removed completely and replaced; some have been shifted up in order but also amended, and then there are some in which there is nothing on. I am giving this as an example. It is the same thing with the “BE IT RESOLVED” clause. One of the BE IT RESOLVED clause has been changed and then obviously the others have been removed. In “Amendment to Motions”, Standing Order 37 (3), “An amendment shall not be moved which has merely the effect of a negative vote.” In other words, the original motion has been completely changed paragraph by paragraph on the floor, every single one, except this clause which I read. That, I think, hurts the intention, but so be it.

Mr. Speaker: It has been in the practice in the past, Ms. Teixeira, that amendments brought by the Opposition, or motions, have been completely gutted and changed and we had accepted that then. I do believe that the spirit of this motion has not been lost; there has been some changed. As I said, in the initial stages, the spotlight is cast upon all Members of Parliament, and I believe that the Hon. Member Bishop Edghill was trying to make that point quite well, that we all have a duty, moral and statutory, perhaps even constitutional, to abide by it.

I will ask the Clerk tomorrow go through these amendments carefully and to ensure that they have not done an injustice to the original motion and that we can follow it as is accustomed.

Ms. Teixeira: ...voted on.

Mr. Speaker: Well I have noticed Mrs. Backer’s amendment states that:

“WHEREAS all persons occupying offices specified in Schedule 1 including Ministers of the Government...”

That is the second paragraph on the second page. It is included in the reworded or amended motion. Maybe, it is not in the spot where it was originally, but it remains.

Motion, as amended, put and carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the Hon. Prime Minister for bringing the motion and Members for participating, as I said before. Hon. Members, the motion which granted us the extension was for the extension to complete the motion we were considering, the extant motion. Before I ask the Hon. Prime Minister to move the motion for the adjournment, I wish only to take the opportunity to wish all fathers a happy Father's Day on Sunday coming. I see Hon. Member, Mr. Felix, with a satisfied smile on his face. I do not know whether he is counting... [Ms. Selman: Grandfather.] It is being a grandfather. We heard of Mr. Nadir's grandchild earlier. I would like to wish all fathers in the House, and those who are present elsewhere, publicly, a happy Father's Day. We are not often remembered. I would like to wish us all a good Father's Day and if any other Member wishes to join...

Also to give notice that the staff of the National Assembly will be holding a staff appreciation day on Sunday the 1st of July at the Banks DIH Sports Club. Members will be notified of that event. It is the staff's appreciation day and I believe they expect to challenge members of staff to some gruelling games of cricket and some draughts and rounders, Mr. Nandlall and others, I am told, will be included.

Lastly, Members will notice, with some consternation, I did recirculate the ruling because, as I said, there were some mistakes and some omissions which I thought it best to take care of today, because, as of tomorrow, I may be considered as *functus officio*. In the haste, today, with the day of the computer glitches, I was unable to do a proper job, and I thought that I better get it done. I thank the staff for completing it tonight. Thank you very much.

Mr. Hinds: Mr. Speaker, Hon. Members, I understand that we have agreement to meet on next Wednesday the 27th of June but it should be known also that when we varied the arrangement, the identification of Wednesday, as being Members' day, we put in place every fourth meeting being Members' day. It is just to say that we will meet on Wednesday 27th but not with the old

previous tradition of Wednesdays being a Members' day. It will be a day for normal Government business.

Mr. Speaker: We do have some unfinished business Hon. Prime Minister. Hon. Members, the House stand adjourned until the 27th of June, 2012. Enjoy your days ahead. Thank you.

Adjourned accordingly at 10.28 p.m.