

THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
OFFICIAL REPORT

(VOLUME I)

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE
FIRST LEGISLATURE CONSTITUTED UNDER THE
BRITISH GUIANA (CONSTITUTION)
ORDER IN COUNCIL, 1961

15th Sitting

Thursday, 1st March, 1962

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

[**Mr. Speaker in the Chair**]

Present:

His Honour the Speaker, Mr. R. B. Gajraj.

*Members of the Government
People's Progressive Party
Ministers*

Dr. the Honourable C. B. Jagan	<i>—Premier and Minister of Development and Planning (Member for Corentyne—East)</i>
The Honourable B. H. Benn	<i>—Minister of Natural Resources (Member for Demerara Coast—West)</i>
The Honourable Ram Karran	<i>—Minister of Works and Hydraulics (Member for Mahaica)</i>
The Honourable B. S. Rai	<i>—Minister of Home Affairs (Member for Demerara Coast—East)</i>
The Honourable R. Chandisingh	<i>—Minister of Labour, Health and Housing (Member for Lower Demerara River)</i>

Dr. the Honourable Charles Jacob, Jr. — *Minister of Finance (Member for Vreed-en-Hoop)*

Dr. the Honourable F. H. W. Ramsahoye—*Attorney-General (Member for Canals Polder)*

The Honourable E. M. G. Wilson — *Minister of Communications (Member for Boerasirie)*

Parliamentary Secretaries

Mr. G. Bowman — *Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Natural Resources (Member for Corentyne Central)*

Mr. L. E. M. Mann — *Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Works and Hydraulics (Member for Mahaicony)*

Other Members

Mr. S. M. Saffee — *(Member for Berbice—West)*

Mr. G. L. Robertson — *(Member for Leonora)*

Mr. M. Bhagwan — *(Member for Essequibo Islands)*

Mr. J. B. Caldeira — *(Member for Pomeroy)*

Mr. V. Downer — *(Member for Berbice—East)*

Mr. M. Hamid — *(Member for Demerara—Central)*

Mr. D. C. Jagan — *(Member for Suddie)*

Mr. H. Lall — *(Member for Corentyne—West)*

Mr. M. Shakoor — *(Member for Corentyne River)*

Members Constituting the Minority

(i) *People's National Congress*

Mr. L. F. S. Burnham, Q.C. — *(Member for Ruimveldt)*

Mr. W. O. R. Kendall, Deputy Speaker—*(Member for New Amsterdam)*

Mr. J. Carter — *(Member for Werk-en-Rust)*

Mr. E. F. Correia — *(Member for Mazaruni-Potaro)*

Mr. N. J. Bissember — *(Member for Campbellville)*

Mr. W. A. Blair — *(Member for Berbice River)*

Mr. R. S. S. Hugh — *(Member for Georgetown—South)*

Mr. J. G. Joaquim — *(Member for Kitty)*

Mr. R. J. Jordan — *(Member for Upper Demerara River)*

Mr. C. A. Merriman — *(Member for La Penitence-Lodge)*

Mr. H. M. S. Wharton — *(Member for Abary)*

(ii) *United Force*

Mr. P. S. d'Aguiar — *(Member for Georgetown—Central)*

Mr. S. Campbell — *(Member for North West)*

Mr. R. E. Cheeks — *(Member for Georgetown—North)*

Mr. E. E. Melville — *(Member for Rupununi).*

Mr. I. Crum Ewing—*Clerk of the Legislature*

Mr. E. V. Viapree—*Assistant Clerk of the Legislature.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE
SPEAKER

NUCLEAR TESTS

Mr. Speaker: I have received a copy of a letter from Mr. Iaudling, Secretary of State for the Colonies, addressed to the Governor, Sir Ralph Grey, and dated the 13th February, 1962, which reads as follows:

"Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your despatch No. 27 dated the 18th January, 1962 forwarding the Resolution on nuclear tests passed by the Legislative Assembly of British Guiana on the 20th December, 1961, the contents of which have been noted."

**PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND
REPORTS, ETC.**

The following Papers were laid:

Report of the Lands and Mines Department for the year 1960.—[Minister of Natural Resources.]

Report of the Commission to Review Wages, Salaries and Conditions of Service in the Public Service, British Guiana, 1961.

Payment of Revised Rates of Salaries in the Public Service.—Sessional Paper No. 3/1962.—[Minister of Finance.]

Report of the Director of Audit, British Guiana, on the Accounts of the Transport and Harbours Department for the year 1960.—[Minister of Communications.]

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS
**APPOINTMENT OF COMMISSION
OF INQUIRY**

The Premier and Minister of Development and Planning (Dr. Jagan): Honourable Members are aware of the tragic events occurring in Georgetown during the period which commenced with the announcement of Government's Budget proposals and which ended on the 16th February, 1962, with the loss of life, personal injury and wanton destruction of property by persons who showed no regard for law and order.

The Government wishes to extend its deep sympathy to the relatives of those who died during the disturbances, and to those who suffered injury to person and property at the hands of their fellow men. The Government also wishes to appeal to all Guianese to work as hard as is possible to recover the lost ground, and to assure all those who are engaged in the work of recovery that they have the fullest support and encouragement of the Government. The Government wishes to express its sincere gratitude to those members of the Police Force, the Fire Brigade and Her Majesty's Forces who worked to restore the public peace, and to all those who gave help to persons who were injured or forced to evacuate their homes.

It is proposed to advise the Governor to appoint a Commission of Inquiry to investigate the events which resulted in death, robbery, arson, malicious damage to property and other offences, and the severe economic loss which the country has suffered. The Commission will be appointed forthwith with the object of making a full report on matters which will include the extent of the injury, loss and damage suffered and the responsibility therefor so far as this can be ascertained upon the evidence adduced.

The findings of the Commission will be made public.

REQUESTS FOR LEAVE TO MOVE
THE ADJOURNMENT OF THE ASSEMBLY
ON MATTERS OF URGENT
PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

**GOVERNMENT'S HANDLING OF
CRISIS**

Mr. Burnham (Ruimveldt): Mr. Speaker, I ask leave, under Standing Order No. 11, to move the adjournment of the Assembly for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent, public importance, to wit, the Government's incompetent handling of the crisis and of the situation which arose after 31st January,

[Mr. BURNHAM]

1962; the Government's inability to maintain law and order, and the unnecessary use of emergency legislation.

Under Standing Order No. 11 (2), Mr. Speaker, I have handed to you a notification of the matter which I ask leave to discuss on the motion for the adjournment. As Your Honour is aware, it is a matter for your ruling whether you are satisfied that the matter is definite, urgent and of public importance.

2.15 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, I have been given the necessary notice by the hon. Member for Ruimveldt by letter which reached me this morning. He claims that the matter is a definite matter of urgent public importance and I have been giving his claim my careful attention. I feel that he is right that the matter is a definite one because he has indicated it. It is of public importance because it is something which has occurred in Georgetown and it is of great interest to everyone who lives here; everyone in British Guiana for that matter. The only question which is left to exercise my mind is whether it is urgent.

Now, the riot and the assemblies, whether legal or illegal, the results of those assemblies and the rioting have passed, so that in so far as those are concerned, the matter ceases, in my opinion, to be urgent. But the hon. Member has included in his definition of the matter the question of the unnecessary use of emergency legislation. Emergency legislation still is in force. Therefore, it is present with us at this stage and in such a circumstance I would consider that urgency is proved.

I do not agree with the hon. Member for Ruimveldt that what he has proposed here in his second paragraph, which he has read out, is the way in which I would care for the matter to be placed before this Assembly. He starts off by saying:

"The Government's incompetent and ineffective handling of the crisis situation after the 31st January, 1962..."

It is a matter of opinion whether it was incompetent or ineffective. The hon. Member would be quite within his right to refer to the Government's handling of the crisis and in the course of whatever he may wish to say in this Assembly, he may describe his own views or his Party's views on that question. I would think that I should put before the Assembly "that the Government's handling of the crisis situation after the 31st January, 1962, its failure to maintain law and order" — that, again, is a matter of opinion — "and the unnecessary use of emergency legislation" are all proper matters for consideration under the particular head which the hon. Member quoted.

I shall, therefore, in accordance with Standing Order 11 (3), which says:

"If the Speaker is so satisfied and either

- (a) leave of the Assembly is given, or
- (b) if it is not given, at least twelve Members rise in their places to support the request,

the motion shall stand over until 4.30 o'clock on the same day, and at that hour any proceeding on which the Assembly is engaged shall be postponed until the motion for the adjournment is disposed of or until 9 o'clock, whichever is the earlier. At 9 o'clock the motion for the adjournment, if not previously disposed of, shall lapse and the proceedings which have been postponed shall be resumed and dealt with in accordance with the next paragraph of this Order."

put to the Assembly the Question as amended by me for the adjournment of the Assembly.

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the question has been resolved in the affirmative, and the matter may be raised at the appropriate time.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

MOTION:

PAYMENT OF SALARIES TO PUBLIC SERVANTS FOR 1961

"Be it resolved:

That this Legislative Assembly approves of the payment of salaries to Public Servants with effect from 1st January, 1961, at the rates set out in the Report of the Commission to Review Wages, Salaries and Conditions of Service in the Public Service, British Guiana, 1961, as modified by the Government in Sessional Paper No. 3 of 1962 pending final consideration in the light of the decisions arising from discussion in Whitley Council;

Be it further resolved:

That in terms of section 18 of the Financial Administration and Audit Ordinance, 1961 (No. 39), this Legislative Assembly authorises the expenditure of \$2,600,000 required to meet the payment of arrears of salaries on the aforementioned basis in respect of the year 1961."

[The Minister of Finance]

The Minister of Finance (Dr. Jacob):

In accordance with Standing Order 21 of the Standing Orders of this House, I signify that the Governor has recommended the first Motion on the Order Paper for consideration by this House.

The Sessional Paper No. 3 of 1962, with the Appendices I to III, sets out the Government's proposals on the recommendations of the Commission to review Wages, Salaries and Conditions of Service in the Public Service of British Guiana. This Commission consisted of Mr. Claude Guillebaud, an Economist well known in the United Kingdom, Mr. C. M. Bernard, a member of the business community in this country, and two ex-civil servants, Messrs. C. L. Kranenburg and W. A. Macme. This Commission submitted its report in 1961, and since that time the Report has been carefully examined by the Government and the recommendations or decisions of the Government are based on the representations made by various Staff Associations and Heads of De-

partments in the Public Service. These recommendations of the Government for the revision of salaries are embodied in the Sessional Paper which has been circulated.

The Paper is concerned primarily with the salaries paid to Public Servants. A separate Paper will be presented at a later date and this will be a more comprehensive paper and will deal with the recommendations on conditions of service. This Paper will take into account the decisions arrived at in Whitley Council where these conditions of service will be discussed.

I do not propose, at this stage, to go into the history of this whole affair, and I am sure that hon. Members are just as anxious as the Government is to settle this long outstanding matter with regard to the salaries of Public Servants. As hon. Members are aware, the rates of pay of daily employees and certain monthly paid employees, that is, those on the "B" and "C" scales, were increased in two stages. Today, however, the Government is asking for the approval of the Legislature to pay Public Servants whose salaries have not been increased over the past seven years. The Government appreciates the value of the Public Servant and because of this, it is the Government's wish that the Public Servant should be a contented person. I wish to assure Public Servants that their welfare is the concern of this Government and, in giving this assurance, I appeal, in turn, to all Public Servants to give devoted service to the public, to maintain high standards of efficiency and to act always as a disciplined body with a deep sense of duty and responsibility.

The Government is very anxious, as I am sure all hon. Members are, that civil servants should receive their pay and to enable this to be done very quickly, I would recommend to the House that the approval for the payments sought be given with as little delay as possible. I would also remind Members that at a later date,

[DR. JACOB]

2.30 p.m.

when this more comprehensive paper is presented covering all the recommendations of the Guillebaud Commission, and in the light of the discussions which will take place in Whitley Council, they will be given the fullest opportunity of debating the entire matter. I therefore now formally beg to move the Motion.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the Motion is before the House for discussion.

Mr. Merriman (La Penitence-Lodge): We have in our hands, the Guillebaud Report. At the bottom of it, the 29th July, 1961, stands out as the date when the final consideration was given to this question. It is also noted in the Sessional Paper that this Report was submitted to the Governor in August, 1961 — a period of not more than a month; probably less. It is now March, 1962, when this Report is laid before this Honourable House for consideration.

What precipitated the urgency for this Report to be considered today is still unpleasant in our memories, and I am not prepared to go over it at this stage or at this time, but suffice it to say that we are discussing it now because of definite reasons. As with both reports, the first observation that will be made is on the terms of reference, and I note from the Sessional Paper that they were:

“to review wages, salaries and conditions of service in the Public Service and those of teachers in Government and aided Primary Schools and to advise the Governor in Council thereon, making recommendations for regrading where necessary.”

But is it not rather significant that the first condition in the terms of reference has been saliently omitted on this occasion when the report is laid before this honourable House?

The hon. Minister who presented this report, intimated that there will be another Sessional Paper on the decisions of Whitley Council which primarily will deal with conditions of service. I listened to hear whether wages will come into the picture eventually, but up to the time of his taking his seat the consideration of wages was completely absent. Paragraph 3 of Sessional Paper No. 3/1962, states:

“The Commission recommended improvements in salaries and conditions of employment which it is estimated would cost \$2.5 million annually (including the Primary Schools and the Transport and Harbours Department). Subsequent checks by the Ministry of Finance suggest that this is an under-estimate and that the cost of the recommendations is in the neighbourhood of \$2.7 million.”

As I have said before, the Commission's terms of reference were to review wages, salaries and conditions of service. We have before us proposals with respect to salaries, and we have had an assurance that conditions of service will be dealt with by Whitley Council, but Government's proposals with respect to wages are significantly absent from the report submitted to this House today. Paragraph 4 of the Commission's report states:

“The Government is not satisfied that the Commission took adequate account of ‘the revenue and expenditure of Government, including the financing of the Development Programme and the means available to the Government of increasing its revenue’ or ‘the growth of the Government's responsibilities and the appropriate size of the Public Service in relation thereto’. The Government has nevertheless decided, after discussion with the Staff Associations concerned, to implement the recommendations of the Commission as detailed on pages 53—82 of the Report, with the modifications shown in Appendices I to III, on the understanding that there will be further discussions in Whitley Council.”

The Minister of Finance has assured us that Government has not taken this recommendation lightly. In fact there has been fullness of time to consider the Commis-

sion's report, and after very careful consideration Government has intentionally omitted any proposals for the improvement of wages. Let it be realized that this Government, the People's Progressive Party in power, which blatantly says at every street-corner that it represents the wage-earners, the working class, has in this hand-out to its salaried employees, significantly omitted the working-class people. When it is further realized that this alleged "People's Government", which is seeking Independence for this colonial territory, and what colonialism stands for, it is rather significant that an improvement of the remuneration of the working-class people has been omitted on this occasion.

I wonder what can be the excuse for a "People's Government," a workers' Government, to exclude the majority of its workers from this revision of salaries and wages. I know that at the Municipal level there is a one to five proportion of salaried workers to wage-earners. I have no doubt that no less a proportion obtains in the central Government. In fact I believe it should not be less than one to seven, and when Government seeks to satisfy, and justifiably satisfy, its salaried workers, let us assume that there are 100 of such workers being satisfied while there are about 700 wage-earners who will be dissatisfied when the Guillebaud Report, as modified by Government, is implemented. If I may use the words of another Minister, it is hypocritical to say that Government is giving satisfaction to 100 of its employees and leaving 700 wage-earners dissatisfied. I know that they are dissatisfied, and the Guillebaud Report says that there is a great deal of dissatisfaction in the Public Service, amongst the salaried employees, or the white collar workers, as we call them.

In the election campaigning days one heard in areas predominantly rice-farming, that people who were doing nothing wanted more money, but "we are not going to give them one cent more". During the

1959 strike of Municipal workers when the Mayor was Mr. L. F. S. Burnham, I recall being told by the leader of the People's Progressive Party "They are claiming \$5 per day, let Burnham give them." We were then only two members of the People's National Congress on the Town Council. We know what influenced the increase of the minimum wage of \$2.75 per day to \$3.04, but look at the consequences. There have been statements by Ministers of the Government calculated to set one class of workers against another, and I would say that improvement of the remuneration of wage-earners in Government employment has been maliciously withheld when it is realised where the majority of wage-earners in the Government service come from. In the Budget Statement one sees that taxation proposals are directed against the wage-earners and the salaried employees, while those engaged in agricultural activities are excluded from such taxation. It clearly shows a deliberate intention of this supposed People's Government, a workers' Government, to deny them rates of pay to which they are justly entitled.

I think the whole point is that 1954 cannot be accepted as the stage of satisfaction to the worker or wage-earner, because that period was just only one step from colonial days. We are marching forward towards Independence, but this is an absolute denial of better wages to the wage-earners. When it is realized that the daily wage rate is the basis upon which all other rates of pay are calculated, one can see how dangerous it is when Government says "Not a cent more" to the wage-earner. The Guillebaud Report is in our hands. Why this denial; why this injustice, why this discrimination by the People's Progressive Party which is in power?

2.45 p.m.

I notice at paragraph 16 of the Sessional Paper—

"The Commission concluded that since the rates had already been revised and now bear a reasonable relationship

[MR. MERRIMAN]

with rates prevailing outside the Public Service and no other members of the Public Service (except on lower "B" and "C" scales) have had any increase since 1954, there was no justification with the limited financial resources available, for increasing rates beyond the level to which they have been recently raised . . ."

The Government speaks of the limited financial resources available, and in the same context I would say that the procrastination on the part of the Government from August last to February this year was conditioned by the same reason or suggestion. Guillebaud used it, and the Government has decided to make concessions for obvious reasons—unpalatable reasons. Probably the belligerent attitude of the wage-earner, who has suffered so many injustices and so much discrimination, is forcing the supposed People's Government, the P.P.P., to make certain concessions today.

Mr. d'Aguiar (Georgetown-Central): Your Honour, I would like to draw attention to a meeting of the Legislature which occurred on the 4th February, 1949, and to quote therefrom the words of a Member of the Legislative Council from the *Hansard* record at columns 306—7. The hon. Member said:

"The question that faces me is whether by paying these small wages we are not sowing the seeds of crime and delinquency, which in turn result in the filling of our prisons . . ."

Those are true words, and I will agree with them. The Member went on to say—

Mr. Speaker: If you are quoting from the *Hansard*, you must identify the Member.

Mr. d'Aguiar: I will do so in a moment. The Member said:

" . . . we must endeavour to raise the standard of living in this country, and Government should set the example. I have already described as inadequate the recent increases granted by Government to unskilled workers . . ."

The Member also said:

" . . . I can see clearly the connection between inadequate wages and crime and delinquency."

The Member who was then speaking in the Legislative Council is now the hon. Premier today.

If I may continue, on the 17th February, 1949, on the debate on the Supplementary Estimates — Extraordinary Expenditure—Retrospective Relief Pay—the same hon. Member said, and I quote from columns 334—5:

" . . . I objected to this expenditure, not so much because of the way in which it has been distributed "

Then he continued:

" . . . In a matter such as this I should have thought that the recommendations of the Civil Service Association would have carried great weight. Certainly the people of the lower income group need more relief but, instead of that, look what has happened? The money was given to those at the top, while those at the bottom were left to live on credit and to steal."

I have quoted very sensible and sound remarks made by the hon. Premier of this Government. His record from 1948-57 is one of agitation, picketing and everything that could have been done towards gaining better wages and a lower cost of living for the people at the bottom. At every possible stage, from 1948-57, he pressured Government in every means that was possible to raise the wages of the working-class people and to keep down taxes on the goods they had to buy in order to keep down the cost of living. So far as this is concerned, his record was good. But how different has been his record in Government today?

After 1957, when the hon. Premier first became Leader of the Majority Party, there has been a great deal of disappointment, frustration and resentment among the people who must have followed his record in the Opposition and, ulti-

mately, hoped that, as a result of his being the Leader of the Government, they could safely look forward to better opportunities of work, to better wages and to a lower cost of living. But what has transpired since 1957 to this day? There has been a steady increase in unemployment, a mean determination to keep wages down, and, coupled with that the pressure of taxation to raise the cost of living.

It is only natural, Your Honour, that very many people must be filled with bitter resentment and frustration at what has happened. It is only natural, looking back at the past, that the situation gets more and more explosive. Indeed, we are bound to admit that, only because of its explosiveness, we are here today to vote upon a Motion to implement the greater part of the Guillebaud Report which was published more than seven months ago.

Since 1954 there have been many reports on wages and salaries of Government employees. In 1961 we had the Guillebaud Report; in 1959 we had the Gorsuch Report, and in 1954 we had the Hands Report. I remember in 1957 when the Hands Report was first published, the Governor, Sir Alfred Savage, formed a Select Committee to advise him on it. I had the privilege of being on that Committee, and what I said then applies equally now. I said that anyone attempting to revise the conditions of wages and salaries for Government employees from the lowest level of the unclassified worker to the highest level of the superscale officer, is faced with a dilemma; and unless he understands the nature of the dilemma he cannot produce a satisfactory report.

The nature of that dilemma is this: outside pressures tend to force the level of salaries at the top scale to a level which is comparable to what officers in modern, advanced countries would get for doing similar jobs, but there is no such attempt or pressure to raise the level of what unskilled workers get to what they would get in more advanced countries. This gap

between the lowest paid worker and the highest paid official tends to spread open and widen, and the unclassified worker tends to get left below.

It is quite clear, to all Commissioners who have been here, that it becomes necessary to raise the level of salaries paid to fully qualified officers occupying very responsible positions. In order to attract a qualified officer, and, in some instances, in order to import an expatriate with the necessary qualifications, the salary must be made attractive. If you will look at the Guillebaud Report, you will see that this is clearly understood because at page 7 they quote the following from the Public Accounts Committee:

“With regard to the shortage of experienced technical and administrative officers, it is evident that Government will have to offer better salaries in order to secure the services of the calibre needed.”

But no one has ever yet suggested that, in order to fill the need for greater skills in the ordinary labour force, better wages should be paid with a view to raising standards. That is the nature of the dilemma—attempting to equate the higher scales with comparable scales paid to overseas holders of similar posts. No attempt has been made to raise the lower wage levels.

3 *v.m.*

To take an instance, a Chief Engineer of the Public Works Department must be paid a scale of salary which will be comparable with what he may receive in an advanced country like the United Kingdom; but no carpenter or joiner or mason or electrician here can get a wage which is anything like comparable with that which will be paid to his counterpart in a more advanced country like the United Kingdom. So, what happens is this. When these Commissioners come, they cannot resist the pressure to raise the salaries and while that pressure forces up salaries at the top levels the unclassified, unskilled workers get squeezed out and are left there.

[MR. d'AGUIAR]

It is true that Mr. Hands did understand to some extent the nature of the problem, and he proposed two solutions which are outlined on page 4 of his report. One of the solutions that he suggested was to abandon completely the principle of trying to equate the local salary scales with the equivalent salary scales for comparable jobs overseas, and he suggested that to attract the right type of qualified personnel which will become necessary they should be paid an additional allowance over and above the local salary scales. Then he went on in paragraph 28, quoting what he said:

"I had hoped that this procedure might find favour in British Guiana and that patriotism might override nationalism in this case. It has, however, been impressed upon me very forcibly from every side that this principle is unacceptable. I have therefore with the utmost reluctance, rejected this solution."

Then he goes on to propose another solution and this is what he states here. I quote:

"Another solution to this problem would be for Her Majesty's Government to supplement the salaries paid locally by allowances payable to members of Her Majesty's Overseas Service."

Mr. Hands understood at least one side of the dilemma, but although he gave some regard to it, he then passed it over.

When it comes to the Guillebaud Report, the Commission ignored the dilemma completely. The members endeavoured to equate salary scales locally with the equivalent salary scales in overseas territories so as to attract here the type of personnel who are accustomed to those rates. This Guillebaud Report is probably a compromise, and I would say, under the circumstances, that it remains the best sort of compromise possible. It is necessary—you must face the fact—to have a Civil Service at the top of which are loyal officers, adequately paid and paid on a basis which will be comparable with what officers of similar qualifications would receive in other territories.

It is, therefore, a little surprising to me that the level of superscale salaries is reduced in the Sessional Paper. I will remember that the Minister of Finance himself spoke with some credit of the qualifications of the members of the Guillebaud Commission. I, therefore, find it difficult to understand why it should become necessary to take just one section of these recommendations and to reduce it. I would like to see, if we are to accept the Guillebaud Report, that we accept it without revision. I would also like to find out whether Government would make it possible for any officer who feels that his personal position is an anomalous one, that he might not have been treated as well as others, to be given an opportunity to present his case to an impartial council which should have the authority to adjust it, if it is justified.

But it is when the Guillebaud Report comes to the question of wages the question of salaries I accept without reservation—that I disagree categorically with the recommendations of the Guillebaud Commission. I have already said that the dilemma which faces anyone attempting to revise wages and salaries is simply that at the top level a revisionary officer cannot resist the pressures to raise the salaries to a level comparable with what prevails in more advanced countries; but the ordinary worker does not have anyone to put the pressure for him so that his wages would compare with similar wages in other countries. He tends to get left out.

I do not think Mr. Guillebaud understood the nature of the dilemma or ever attempted to understand it. The reasons he gave for not raising the level of wages for the unclassified staff were two, and both of them false and unjust. The first reason he gave is what he calls "the principle of fair relativity", and on page 5, paragraph 18, he describes what he means by fair relativity. He says:

"This principle of "fair relativity", or as it is sometimes called "fair comparison with outside the Service" though simple

in appearance, is far from simple when it comes to its practical implementation . . .”

and he goes on to say that he has concluded there is no need to raise the wages of unskilled, unclassified Government workers. In other words, he claims that the present minimum of \$3.04 bears reasonable relationships with prevailing rates outside the Service. With this view, no reasonable person can agree. I, personally, agree with what the hon. the Premier said when he was in the Opposition. He said Government must set the example of better wages for unskilled workers.

When you take the present rate of \$3.04 a day and apply the principle of fair relativity, the first thing you must do is to compare the rates paid by other employers of mass labour; and, obviously, the next biggest employers of labour to Government are sugar and bauxite, both of whom set a better example. The present rate for sugar workers, including bonuses, amounts to \$3.30 per day and the sugar worker has certain other benefits which the Government worker does not enjoy. The sugar worker gets free land and he gets a loan, free of interest, to build his home. He also gets free medical service which Government workers do not get, and his rate of \$3.30 is above the Government rate. The next biggest employers, the bauxite companies, pay a minimum of \$7.20 a day and the workers also enjoy many benefits which Government workers do not.

The principle of fair relativity, if it were applied, means not to base the comparison at the lowest level, but to take a fair relationship between different levels in other words, come out with a fair average. The rate of \$3.04 is not a fair average, but the minimum. In any case I would submit that in British Guiana the principle of fair relativity, which was copied from a statement made by the Royal Commission on investigation into the Public Service in Great Britain, does not apply for the simple reason that the Government's minimum wage is itself the standard measure which is used to

measure the minimum wage of others. The fact is that others measure their rates against the Government's standard and if you are to apply the argument of fair relativity, it would simply mean this—that, in as much as the Government's minimum sets the standard, if you are to wait on the Government to raise there can be no possible opportunity for a raise ever to take place.

I think, indeed, it is a great credit to the sugar industry, to the bauxite industry and to many other industrial employers that they pay a higher rate than the Government standard. But the Guillebaud Commission must have realized that the Government's minimum is the yardstick which, for many, measures the rate that they are going to pay. I think we all realize that there are far too many employers who will pay the minimum they can get away with, and that minimum is undoubtedly based upon whatever minimum the Government pays.

3.15 p.m.

So when the Government keeps its minimum down it tends to generally depress wages not only of Government workers but for others who follow the Government's rate and use it as their yardstick.

The other argument used by the Guillebaud Commission for not increasing the wages of the unclassified staff of Government employees was that since 1954 the unclassified staff got two increases. In 1954 the minimum wage was \$2.52 per day, and after considerable agitation, even strikes, in 1959 it was raised to \$2.75, and then in 1960 it was raised to \$3.04 after further agitation. The Commission points out that the increase from \$2.52 to \$3.04 represents a percentage rise of 20½ per cent. It sounds quite a bit, but look at it dollar-wise; it is an increase from \$13.86 per week to \$16.72 per week, or \$148.72 per annum. Now take the Head of the Department for which these unclassified workers toil. Take, for instance, the Heads of the Audit, Education, Post and

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Telecommunications Departments, the increase recommended for each one of those officers by the Guillebaud Commission is \$2,640 per annum. Can you honestly use that argument to prevent a man who has only had an increase of \$143 per annum when his boss is getting an increase of \$2,640, and not one of his bosses is getting less than \$1,500 increase? Is it fair to use that argument?

Mr. Speaker: Time!

Mr. Cheeks (Georgetown North): I move that the hon. Member be allowed an extension of 15 minutes to continue his speech.

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. d'Aguiar: I said that both arguments were used by the Guillebaud Commission—the argument of fair relativity and the argument that because the unclassified staff got an increase between 1954 and 1961 they should not be given an increase now. Both arguments are totally unfair. I refer again to what the hon. Premier said with which I so much agree,—

“The question that faces me is whether by paying these small wages we are not sowing the seeds of crime and delinquency.

The working man is worthy of his hire but, apparently, not so when he puts his faith in a Government which poses as a working-class Government.

In recent debates and in every public release we have heard much about the need for equalization of wealth, and I would say that in the Western democracies there has been a genuine achievement in that direction—a genuine step by step closing of the gap between the wages paid to the lowest unskilled worker and the salaries paid to those at the top. Take, for instance, the U.S.A. The minimum scale for unskilled workers, what is referred to as G.S.L., is \$3,185 per annum, and the maximum scale for the Head of a

Department, referred to as G.S. 18, is \$18,500, a differential of 1 in 6. In other words, an unskilled worker in the U.S. Public Service earns one-sixth of what the Head of his Department earns. Put the other way, the Head of a Department earns six times as much as what the man at the lowest level earns. In the United Kingdom the average minimum scale in the Public Service is about £500, and the average maximum is about £5,000 per annum. Therefore, the average Head of a Department gets ten times as much as what the worker at the lowest level gets. The spread is 1 in 10.

Let us look at the situation here in British Guiana. Here an unclassified worker getting \$3.04 per day in a full year would earn \$869.44. If the Guillebaud Report is implemented, as I believe it should be, those at the top, a Head of a Department, like let us say the Director of Public Works, would get \$11,280, and that would be a spread of 1 in 13. It is interesting perhaps, in the context of the ideology of our Government, to consider the conditions of the workers in the Soviet Union. There a man who sweeps the street may earn 250 rubles a month, whereas the big boss at the great electricity works, or a scientist, or a great artist would receive as much as 10,000 rubles—in other words, 40 times as much. The spread has reached so great a gap. Here, within the framework of our free democracy, it is our duty to try to narrow this gap down, and if, for example, we raise the level of wages for unskilled workers, unclassified workers in Government, from \$3.04 to \$3.64 per day, that would bring them up to \$1,040 per annum, and the spread would be reduced to 1 in 11, which would be in keeping with true democratic ideals.

In the Western democracies there has been achieved already a certain dignity of labour. The average labourer can earn enough to purchase and enjoy all the wonderful things which modern industrial techniques produce on such a lavish scale. Mass production for the consump-

tion of the masses is the basic principle of economics in a modern free democracy. The average worker should be able to own his own home, his own piece of land, radio, television, washing machine and a small car. We have not reached that stage here, but we ought to reach the stage where the average worker can earn enough to keep body and soul together for himself and his small family. It should be the first concern of the Government to see to that before any other consideration is given to anyone else, but, apparently, this Government does not concern itself with the legitimate ideals of democracy, and there is no excuse.

The Paro Report on "A Survey of Family Expenditure" published in 1956, a survey undertaken in co-operation with the International Labour Office, gives any reasonable person who wishes to do what is right for the working classes, all the data he needs, and if you study that report you will find that on the basic actual facts and data it becomes almost impossible for a working-class man to keep body and soul reasonably together on less than \$5 per day. The Trade Unions, and especially the F.U.G.E., have made exhaustive analyses, and having regard to the financial situation in this country they have made very reasonable demands. They suggested, for instance, that the minimum wage should be reduced to \$4.50 per day, and they further suggested, in order not to embarrass the Government too much, that instead of making an immediate increase to \$4.50 per day it should be carried out in easy stages over a period of three years. In the first year the increase should be to \$3.35, the second year \$3.95, and the third year \$4.50. Those claims are fair, proper and reasonable, and again to use the words of the hon. Premier himself when he was in the Opposition:

"In a matter such as this I should have thought that the recommendations of the Civil Service Association would have carried great weight."

How true, he said, the recommendations of the Civil Service Association should have carried great weight, and to continue again his exact words:

"Certainly the people of the lower income group need more relief, but instead of that, what has happened? — the money was given to those at the top while those at the bottom were left to live on credit and to steal."

3.30 *p.m.*

I was informed by an official of the Finance Secretariat that out of 14,500 Government employees 11,000 are unclassified. Government cannot ignore the rightful aspirations of those unclassified workers. With the movement towards self-government and independence, with a wholly elected Legislature since 1957, they have been expecting a new deal, a better deal, a fairer deal, and they have not got it. They have, indeed, become frustrated through promises made and not kept; they have become resentful. They have been promised better wages, a lower cost of living and more employment. It is natural that, as the frustration and resentment increased to a stage where the situation has become explosive, it was necessary to bring this Motion before this House today.

I would say, Your Honour, that the unclassified civil servants deserve fairer consideration. If I may recapitulate four of the points I have made: First, the argument of fair relativity should be applied as a basis for an increase for the simple reason that the next biggest employers of labour, sugar and bauxite, pay more than the Government's minimum to their workers. Secondly, the Government's minimum is itself the standard which is used by others and, therefore, it becomes imperative for Government to raise its minimum and set the example in keeping with what the hon. Premier used to say when he was on the Opposition but no longer says today. Thirdly, in this ideal of true democracy the movement must be towards the narrowing of the gap between what the unskilled, un-

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classified worker earns per annum and what the head of the department in which he works earns—the gap which is now 1 in 12 should be reduced. Fourthly, a Royal Commission in the United Kingdom, in dealing with this same subject, pointed out that Government is under a categorical obligation to pay its employees fairly. In that context 'fairly' means: at least sufficient for a man to keep a small family body and soul together.

The Government's minimum wage must bear some reasonable relationship to the cost of living. The Government cannot claim that it does not have the facts and figures of the International Labour Office. I am sure it has received them from the respective trade unions, and one would assume that Government would pay a reasonable wage.

Mr. Speaker: Your time is up, and, if you expect to be very much longer, it will be necessary to have a Motion moved to permit you to continue.

Mr. Checks: I beg to move that the hon. Member for Georgetown Central be given 15 minutes more.

Mr. Campbell (North West) seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. d'Aguiar: Having regard to everything including financial consideration, I believe that the minimum reasonable wage for unclassified workers employed by Government should be \$3.64 per day. We have been asked to approve the payment of \$2.6m. for approximately 3,500 individuals, but we are not asked to vote a single cent for 11,000 other individuals who earn their living through Government. An increase from \$3.04 to \$3.64 will, I assume, cost not more than the sum of \$2.6m., but it will be spread among 11,000 people. It

would be in the interest of peace, goodwill, and human decency. We cannot avoid our obligations to the unclassified workers of the Government.

I, therefore, propose to move an amendment to the substantive Motion to read as follows:

"Be it further resolved that the minimum basic daily wage for unclassified Government workers be increased from \$3.04 per day to \$3.64 per day with corresponding increases for all unclassified Government workers.

Be it further resolved that the recommendations of the Guillebaud Committee be implemented without revision."

Mr. Checks: Mr. Speaker, I rise to second the Amendment to the Motion, and I would like to reserve my right to speak at a later stage.

Mr. Speaker: The Amendment which has been moved has been seen by me and the Clerk for the first time. It will have to be gone into to see whether, in all respects, it can be considered a proper Amendment to the Motion before the House. I shall be able to speak on it a little later. Does any other hon. Member wish to speak?

3.40 p.m.

Mr. Jordan (Upper Demerara River): What is indeed disappointing about this Motion is that it has come so late and that it has not gone far enough. It is very disappointing to find people who have, time and again, called themselves the "vanguard of the proletariat", having a Motion at this stage to take care of the people whom they like to call the *bourgeoisie*. It is even more disappointing to find that they had these recommendations in their hands for such a long time and, no doubt, they have been sitting on them to hatch them. What they have hatched is now history.

It would appear that this Government had no intention whatsoever of implementing any part whatsoever of this Report, and it is indeed regrettable to find

that it had to be wrenched out of the Government's hands. This Government should hang its head in shame in a country like this where it has walked up and down and talked about how keen it was about workers' interest; and when it has its first opportunity—a real one—to show its interest in the workers, it sets about to oppress them. It has moved from being the vanguard to being the rearguard, and it looks as if in the rearguard it is carrying bayonets. It is not leading the workers forward; it is seeking to drive them forward. But, as has been said before, this Government has eaten so many of its bitter words that, perhaps, now it is time for it to be breathing fire.

What cannot help coming to our attention is this: that the Government, inside and outside, wants efficiency and production but it overlooks very clearly what its Commission tells it, and I will quote from page 4, paragraph 15 of the Guillebaud Report which says:

“A Development Programme does not carry itself out, it has to be properly administered; and if Staff of the required numbers and calibre is not available because salaries are not adequate to attract and retain them, it is certain that the greatest sufferer will be the Development Programme itself.”

If this Government had any regard for that; if it took to heart what was told it there, it could not act in this manner. To go a step further, if the people at the top alone were satisfied and the people below were not, it must follow then that the Development Programme would at once be off to a very bad start. But this Government will not pay the salaries and wages which the people of this country are entitled to. I am wondering if it is going to pay for the troops and how much it is going to pay for them, because I cannot help believing that when that bill is totalled up it is going to be plenty more than the people of Guiana, whom this Government so pretends to love, would have received as wages earned.

This is a very sad state of affairs and yet these people will get around and say how much they love the workers. What hypocrisy! But, perhaps, the people to whom they make these remarks do not always, or for the most part, understand what is told to them; but one of these days a worm will turn and while you can fool some of the people some of the time and all of the people some of the time, this Government can rest assured that it cannot fool all the people all the time.

I know the Government has been saying, here and there, that it has not got the money to pay. Very true. A government such as this is will never have the money to pay because if you cannot keep what you have, how do you expect to get more? Did not this Government, some few weeks ago, place an embargo on money going out of this country? Perhaps, it was the proper thing to do, but why had the Government to do that? Because perhaps the people of this country—I understand or I think I had heard the people described as hypocrites, and rightly so—who have put into power a Government that they can no longer trust had decided to get their money to safe quarters. If this is so, then perhaps the Government is right not to attempt to implement the Guillebaud Report, because this gentleman had hoped that there would be an increase in revenue. But if the money that is resident in this country is running out of it, how can this Government rightly hope for an increase in revenue? If Guianese do not have faith in Guiana's Government, would it be fair for us to expect foreigners, or expatriates as they like to say, to have any faith?

With this Government's introducing this Motion here today, while we will support it, it is so sad to see that when it had its grandest opportunity to come out and give workers increases where they have not had them for seven years, the Government ran away and it is only when the workers went on strike — but, perhaps, workers should not strike against a working class Government, and that is where practice is running contrary to

[MR. JORDAN]

theory — that the Government has had to do something, even though what it has done has not been enough. This callous disregard for a particular section of worker cannot help but be noticed by everyone. This Government has deliberately set out to withdraw from increasing the wages of a section of the community which it feels does not support it, and this is nothing short of wicked, callous and hypocritical.

3.50 p.m.

It is unfortunate that in this country the Government, which is evilly disposed towards a section of the community, can reach out its hand to hurt it so easily. What this Government has done today by not paying additional wages but seeking only as a stop-gap to meet the demands of some of its employees, is nothing short of a callous disregard of the needs of a section of this community, and this Government stands indicted and condemned of sectionalism. I say it without apology, because Government has said to some people "Well, you did not vote for us". If this Government is to do any good for this country it has to be prepared to get out of its evil ways. When people ask for fish they must not be given a scorpion, and when they ask for bread they must not be given a stone. But perhaps tied as it is and bound in meshes in which it has placed itself, and perhaps from which it cannot easily escape, this Government has to act in this disreputable manner, seeking the excuse "No money". There can be no money because the Government is as it is, and unless and until this Government changes its ways — it has changed its voice in one regard, but until it changes its ways it cannot hope to have money to satisfy the workers of this country.

It is bad when a Government gives only when it is forced to do so, and then to offer its workers a mere sop. This Government needs to re-think its position and to consider its responsi-

bilities in the context of Guiana as it is today. If it is capable of re-thinking its position, when it has done so and it has come up with the answer, which must not be as it was in Ghana or India, but must be as it needs to be in Guiana, the answer is not to let workers go six or seven years without increases of pay when their cost of living is climbing day after day, and when the Government is doing everything in its power to increase the cost of living, even if, as it says, by one per cent., when in truth it would be closer to 15 per cent. When this Government seeks to increase the cost of living and will not increase the wages of its workers, what does it expect the workers to do? Does it expect them to sit meekly, work harder and ask for no more money because the Government says it is a working-class Government? That, in my opinion, is what we call neo-colonialism. That is certainly what the people of Guiana want to get away from.

This is a new evil which those who sit on the Government benches would seek to inflict upon the people of Guiana, but it is said that the people in heaven never seem to know what those in hell are feeling. This Government no longer has the sympathies of the people, nor has it any sympathy for the people whom it subtly seeks to enslave, because when one looks at what it lists as luxuries, when one considers how it restricts freedoms, when one looks at its overall action, the only advice we can offer the Government when it seeks to please just 3/11 of its labour force, is that it needs to re-think its position very carefully if it is to have peace in this country. If it is to ensure that the working-man gets his due, if the labourer is to be worthy of his hire, this Government must go a step further than it is attempting to go today. It must not only consider its salaried employees but its wage-earners also, and it must not hand them something with one hand and with both hands seek to take away what it has handed them.

This Motion does not go far enough. More people should be happy tomorrow, and they should not only be happy tomorrow but should have been happy several months ago. Government has wilfully delayed to do anything in this matter until now that it has been forced to do so. If Government gets any praise from its employees when it makes this hand-over I am sure they will not be as grateful as if it had come willingly from a Government which is supposed to have the interests of its workers at heart. Now that Government has had some sense knocked into its head, we hope that very shortly it will settle down to do better, and Members on this side of the Table will be able to congratulate it for doing something not only for a small section of its workers, but for all, so that Government servants in every section, classified, unclassified and temporary can settle down to do an honest day's work for their pay because they are satisfied that Government is doing its best for them by paying them what they rightly deserve.

Mr. Speaker: It is now four o'clock and time to suspend the sitting. The hon. Member may resume his speech on the resumption. The sitting is suspended for half an hour.

4.30 p.m.

On resumption —

REQUEST FOR LEAVE TO MOVE
THE ADJOURNMENT OF THE
ASSEMBLY ON MATTERS OF
URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

**GOVERNMENT'S HANDLING OF
CRISIS**

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members will recall that the Assembly gave permission to the hon. Member for Ruimveldt to move, at this stage, a Motion for the adjournment of the House on a definite matter of urgent public importance. The hon. Member for Ruimveldt may now make his statement on the Govern-

ment's handling of the crisis situation after the 31st January, 1962, including the maintenance of law and order and the use of the emergency legislation.

Mr. Burnham: Mr. Speaker, I am aware of the fact that, since the hon. the Premier has informed this House that a Commission of Inquiry will be appointed to inquire into the incidents which occurred on Friday, 16th February, it would not be advisable in this discussion, which the House has given me leave to initiate, to attempt to apportion any blame as to who was responsible for the incidents; for instance, Who shot Superintendent McLeod and so on? I wish to assure you that if, perchance, I stray beyond the bounds of propriety, I will look to the Chair for the necessary guidance, assistance and, perhaps, control.

It was, I believe, on Wednesday, 31st January this year that we heard the hon. Minister of Finance reading his Budget. Today I note with interest, though not with sympathy, that his tones were very much more subdued than his tones on Wednesday, 31st January. But it seems to me that the crisis which arose in our dear country over the past two weeks can be, to a great extent, traced to the Budget. I do not propose to go into the details and proposals of the Budget, for my latest piece of information is that these are no more and that there is another United Nations specialist here to advise on a new Budget.

But the fact that emerges is this: a large section of the population of this country, more especially the workers, found these proposals in the Budget unbearable and, in the case of the workers particularly, these proposals were interpreted as an attempt on the part of the Government to further lower their al-

[MR. BURNHAM]

ready low standards by the imposition of heavy taxation on commodities which workers have to consume.

I remember some years ago, when the Financial Secretary Mr. (as he then was) Frank McDavid presented the Budget, the hon. the Premier used to observe that the Government at that time taxed items because they were in wide use and, because they were in wide use by the workers, those Budgets used to be anti-working class Budgets. There are others who would like to make us believe that the Budget which was adumbrated on the 31st January was a working class Budget, but the objective fact is that a large section of the working class — the majority — felt that the Budget was anti-working class. There was a great deal of opposition to it — which, of course, is the democratic right of persons who do not agree with Government's proposals.

It seems to me that the Government, for no intelligible reason, took fright and then completely mishandled the situation. There was, for instance, the debate in this House on the 9th February on the question of the appointment of a Select Committee to draft a Constitution for British Guiana. Of course, as has become normal since the opposition days of the Premier, there was a demonstration outside the Legislature. The Premier seemed to have got himself all mixed up, and in fact panicked apart from an allegation which he made against a leading member of the People's National Congress. I shall not dilate on that matter because it is likely to attract the attention of another tribunal. He alleged that there was too much rowdyism; there was an alleged assault on him and/or his car; and over the radio he alleged that threats had been made to the lives of himself and his Ministers. These allegations about threats to the lives of Ministers might

have been based upon evidence. If they were based upon evidence, then this Government ought not to have done as the Savage Government did in 1953 or the British Government over the same period merely repeating the allegations. The allegations ought to have been investigated and charges laid against the people responsible.

4.45 p.m.

So far as I am aware, a plot to assassinate or kill any person is still a criminal offence punishable under Chapter 10 of the Laws of British Guiana. It seems to me that the repetition of those allegations was intended to gather sympathy from some whose loyalty to and support of the majority party was waning. Whether that was the intention or not, and it seems to me it was, it was certainly calculated to exacerbate feelings as was the false allegation during the election campaign about violence at Mahaicony to the hon. the Premier, as he then was not.

It is in this context that we have to view the statements and the invitation made and issued at a meeting at Windsor Forest on the Monday prior to the 9th February, when the Premier told a number of his supporters in that rural area that a big demonstration was being planned against the Government and that they should come down to Georgetown to defend their Government. Certainly, one who is head of the Government ought to realize the impact of such an invitation and the inevitable result, that there must be increased tension and further ill-will and bad feelings between one section and another section in the community. It is my feeling, or conviction, that those were deliberate acts to excite the populace. But even if my conviction proves to be wrong, certainly the conclusion is right that it did increase tension and excite the populace.

But the most alarming act from this Government came on Wednesday, the 14th February. This is the Government which prides itself on being working class; this is the Government that has taken on itself the description of "vanguard of the proletariat"; this is the Government whose leader over the years has been the leader of demonstrations. I remember in 1952 that soft drinks tax demonstration, inspired and helped on by the leader of this Government, when I was deputed by him to represent those who might have been arrested. This is the Government that has said, through the mouths of its leaders in the past, that in this revolutionary era the Legislature is not the only forum for agitation and anti-Government activity; this is the Government, headed by the hon. the Premier, who, in 1953, objected to the crowd's not being allowed in the Chamber, this is the same Government today that on Wednesday, 14th, issued a Proclamation making certain areas prohibited for the purpose of gatherings, meetings, etc.

To my mind — and, I understand, to the mind of certain of his Ministers, but since they are bound by the Official Secrets Acts, they cannot disclose whether my information is correct — that Proclamation was unnecessary and provocative. It was an attempt by a so-called working class Government to intimidate the workers, to intimidate the people in this town and to prevent them from demonstrating and showing what they felt about various measures. If that Proclamation was not unnecessary, why is it there was no incident on Thursday, 15th, when there was a demonstration in breach of that Proclamation?

Certainly, those who thought about that Proclamation ought to have realized how stupid they looked and ought to have recognized that they had brought the administration of law to its very nadir. The Proclamation was not only

stupid, but also wicked. It was viewed as wicked by several thousands of persons, and members of the working class. It disclosed that this Government was prepared to use force, to use the legislative machinery, to use delegated legislation to suppress any who dared to oppose it and vocally show their opposition to the measures of the Government.

There was, on the 11th February, a demonstration by the Unions representing the employees of Government — a peaceful demonstration, where there was great show of solidarity between the white collar workers and the manual workers; and then again on the 13th there was arranged a mass demonstration of all workers. Both of these demonstrations were extremely peaceful. There was absolutely no incident whatsoever, but yet my information is that prior, at least, to the demonstration of the 13th, if not to the demonstration of the 11th, this Government had asked His Excellency the Governor to make available British troops to preserve law and order.

Apart from the fact that it must represent the lowest depth to which this Government can sink — and it is indeed the lowest depth when those who had cried in 1952 and 1953, "limeys go home" are asking the same "limeys" to come here to preserve law and order — that request to the Governor to bring British troops here is of twofold significance. Number one, it represented an admission by this Government that either it was incapable of preserving law and order in peaceful times, or it did not have confidence in the forces of law and order at that time existing in this country. And a Government which has not got the confidence of those who must enforce the law is no Government.

It is all right to come out after, as a rat from a hole, and to start squeaking, but those are the facts. You have

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the Police Force here. You have the Volunteer Force here and, in fact, in spite of the smiles from the Minister of Communications and Works —

Mr. Speaker: We haven't got such a Minister in the House.

Mr. Burnham : You will forgive me, Mr. Speaker, they change so frequently. It is to be observed that on Wednesday, the 14th, this Government had also issued a Proclamation giving certain powers to the Commanding Officer of the British Guiana Volunteer Force. So it was not *per incuriam* that they did not know of the existence of the Volunteer Force. They knew that it existed. They knew that the Police existed, but yet, these people who talk about Independence, who open their big mouths in an attempt to convince the world that they are the greatest nationalists out, fell back on the imperialist troops.

The second point of significance in that request which was made prior, I state categorically, to the 11th and 13th of February, is that it was obviously an attempt by this Government to further intimidate those who were opposed to its measures and who, up to that time, had been showing their opposition in the usual democratic fashion. Maybe, for those of the older school, it was an unusual fashion but it is a fashion to which we have become accustomed in this country since the entry into the political field of the hon. the Premier. And then — it is not that I want to make heavy weather of this, but it is difficult to erase from my mind the impression that it was not a mere coincidence that the British troops arrived on the same Friday, on the same day, that the disturbances took place.

During the period prior to Friday, 16th, and after, there was a strike of Government and other workers. It

seems to me that the Government showed gross incompetence and misjudged the situation at this point also. It was little short of pitiful to hear the leader of the People's Progressive Party warning workers about their being in breach of the law. Obviously, that was a very thinly veiled reference to the Ordinance which has replaced the Essential Services Ordinance of 1942, an Ordinance, the provisions of which it was the main plank in the P.P.P. platform in 1953 to have removed.

The question of the differences between its employees and the Government is one that went back some years. Certainly, we remember the famous, not last words, but just words that the Premier uttered in November, 1959, when the members of the Unions affiliated to the Federation of Unions of Government Employees asked for increased wages. He said, "Not a cent more." After a strike in 1959, there was an increase from \$2.52 to \$3.04, but there were several outstanding differences between those Unions and the Government which this Government took absolutely no steps to have settled. In fact, in October, 1961, there was a request made to the Government to send to Whitley Council certain differences then existing between the Unions representing Government employees and the Government, and up to the time of the strike which started on Tuesday, 13th February, there had been no reply from the Government to that request.

5 p.m.

That is the situation; where Government had obviously ignored the demands of the workers and had slyly refused to enter into discussions with the representatives of the workers by means provided by Whitley Council. Then add to that the anti-working class Budget; add to that the threat to take stern measures, as the hon. Premier said over the radio; add to that the unnecessary Proclamations; add to that

the invitation to foreign troops to come here "to preserve law and order" when there was no breach or no threatened breach.

I promised not to deal with the events of Friday, 16th February, in great detail, but it is the view of many that the situation on Friday, 16th February, was clumsily handled, and there were provocative acts for which there could have been no justification, but as to who was responsible or was not responsible I leave it to the Commission to decide. But one thing is clear, that whoever may have been the individuals responsible for the distinct instances and events, the Government by its blundering had certainly created an atmosphere in which anything was likely to happen. Indeed I remember now the words of the Premier uttered some months ago "That there is going to be an explosion in British Guiana", and indeed the Government was the body that was responsible for that explosion on Friday, 16th February.

Now, what do we have? We have a Proclamation of Part 11 of the Emergency Order of 1939. He who had justly complained against the declaration of Part 11 of the Emergency Order of 1939 in 1953, is now using the same instrument, the same legislative instrument, and the same instrument in the form of the Governor. What is the necessity for emergency legislation at this time? — to allow people's privacy to be imposed upon; to allow officers to search premises without warrant, and to allow people to be arrested without warrant; to allow people to be detained without any proper cause being given, and to ban publications if, in the opinion of "His Eminence the Dictator" those publications are not conducive to law and order, or "good order", as is actually stated in the enactment? It is true that the Emergency Order was invoked in the name of the Governor, but clearly

the Emergency Order is the child of the Premier and his Ministers. What more disgraceful act than that could there have been? If he had all that guts why didn't he do it before the British troops came? If he had all that gumption, if he really thought it was necessary, why didn't he, the Premier, rely upon his Police and Volunteer Forces to have the Emergency Order effective and effectual? And I must say this *en passant*, that the Police have shown, from my observation, the greatest loyalty to this present Government in spite of the unfortunate and ill-advised utterance by Mr. Kelshall at a Press conference.

Why the Government could not use the Police I do not know and never will be able to understand. Why the Government had to rely upon foreign armies is past understanding. Was it because the Government knew that it had treated policemen, who are workers, very badly, and that the rice farmer, to quote the Premier in a speech at Windsor Forest in 1959, was more entitled to assistance than employees of the Government, which would include the Police? Whatever may have been the reason, it was certainly most disgraceful for a popularly elected Government to seek, first of all, to pre-judge the Police, and to use foreign troops as an instrument for browbeating and intimidating.

But that is not all. Here we have another bit of clumsiness on the part of the Government. The Premier gets on the radio on the night of Friday, 16th February, and talks of "visiting the full severity of the law on those apprehended or proved guilty." What utter nonsense, and how significant it is! Here we have clearly an attempt at intrusion into the judicial system by the Premier. [*Interruption.*] Idiots will giggle and hyenas will grin, but others like the hon. the Attorney-General and the Minister of Home Affairs will appreci-

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ate that no Member of the Executive has any right to talk about visiting upon people the full severity of the law when there are Courts of Justice and people are going to be tried for offences already known to the law. That is an indication of exactly where this Government is or was tending.

Now that we have an Emergency we also have a further irritation of the situation. The hon. Premier has threatened to introduce Press censorship. That is in keeping with the Proclamation of Wednesday, 14th February. The Proclamation was intended to prevent demonstrations against the Government. This threat of Press censorship is an attempt to silence those who are against the Government. I see absolutely no justification for any Press censorship of any kind. I cannot possibly hold any brief for the daily newspapers. In fact I have as much reason, both as a man and as the leader of a Party, to complain against the type of thing we have found in these daily newspapers over the years. In the majority of instances they are against the popular movement, and they always keep up the tradition of supporting a losing cause at every election.

But a Government that says it will visit the full severity of the law on people when there are Courts of Justice, a Government whose Leader has said he wants a Judiciary of the same political persuasion as the governing Party, is not a Government that will stop at suppressing or censoring scurrilous articles. It is a Government that will not stop until it has silenced every form of opposition. Today it is the *Daily Chronicle* (perhaps I should not say whether or not it is a good thing for this country that it should continue to exist, tomorrow it may be the *Evening Post*, the

next day perhaps the *Guiana Graphic*, and then we will find the P.N.C.'s *New Nation*, and then we will go on until the only publication will be *Thunder*.

That particular pronouncement by the Premier is again not only provocative but also indicative of what he has in mind. He is the publisher, or used to be the publisher of *Thunder*. It could not be a question of mere inaccuracies, because *Thunder* is as replete with inaccuracies as any one of the daily newspapers. It could not be a question of libel, because *Thunder* had to settle an action for libel the other day with Mr. Sugrim Singh. It is obviously an attempt to silence opposition completely in British Guiana. But whatever may be their intention they certainly will not be able to achieve it, or achieve it without a serious situation arising. For what the People's Progressive Party must understand in the first place is that the results of the last election did not show that they commanded a majority of popular support, and any attempt by them to suppress the rights of the majority to oppose the Government by democratic means — by the Press, by demonstrations, etc., — is going to be met, shall I say, very firmly.

Whither are we drifting in the circumstances? The events of Friday, the 16th of February were unfortunate, but if the Premier means anything by the first part of his plea on that historic night; if he means anything by that joint plea made by the three leaders of the three political parties on Saturday, 17th and Sunday, 18th February, the situation, at least from that stage, should have been differently handled. You do not cool tempers by threats, especially when you yourself have admitted virtually that you are incompetent to preserve law and order without your masters' soldiers. You do not encourage people to return to serenity, sobriety and calmness by declaring a state of emergency, and by having before their very eyes every-

day the symbol of their subjugation and the symbol of your derogation from what you promised before, and what you have already set yourself as.

It was the Premier who went before the United Nations Committee and said that had it not been for the armed might of Britain the people of Guiana would have declared their independence already. It is the same Premier who has these foreign soldiers on our native soil. Does he expect anyone to trust him or to believe in his *bona fides* when he declares a state of emergency? But let him be warned. Let his Government be warned. You can arrest me if you want; you can arrest anyone if you want, but we are not going to take it either.

5.15 p.m.

You (The Premier) come back from the U.S.A. and say that you believe in the democratic freedoms, but, in the first difficulty in which you find yourself, you resort to repression — and that in the context of a pauperized country. These poor people, who had to go on strike in order to make Government give them their due, will now have to pay for the upkeep of foreign troops in this country. You say you are paying them \$2.6M and we will agree to it. I suppose you will come back here for a few more millions to pay for the upkeep of the foreign troops you have brought into this country.

Sir, is this the attitude of a working class Government? It seems to me that if this Government had been true to its mouthings and statements about being honest—*[Interruption from the Government Benches]*. Answer not a fool according to the multitude of his folly. As I was saying, Mr. Speaker, if this Government were interested in the working class, it would have, in the first place, considered favourably and sympathetically the demands of the workers.

Mr. Speaker : Time!

Mr. Correia (Mazaruni-Potaro) : I beg to move that the hon. Member for Ruimveldt be given another 15 minutes.

Mr. Carter (Werk-en-Rust) seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. Burnham: It would not have waited for a strike before it decided to give backpay from the 1st January, 1961. It would not have waited for a strike before sending to the Whitley Council those points of difference which existed between itself and its employees. Further, it would not have panicked at the first sign of simple opposition and agitation. If this Government continues in the way it has started since the beginning of February, this country is going to be ruined from the point of view of increased tensions, and the majority of its population will be drawn into one camp or another where the prime concern will be how to destroy each other rather than how to build the country and repair what damage was done on Friday 16. Indeed, if the present trends and traits continue, it will mean that we shall be completely burdened with a terrific debt to the British Government for sending imperialist soldiers here.

I am opposed to the P.P.P., and that goes without saying. But after all I am a Guianese, and my heart must bleed when I see so much incompetence in such high places; and when I recognize that, as the history of the last few weeks has proved, this Government's policy is tending to the ruin of this country. We will not make a great noise about the Premier's saying he will not resign. It is the right of a politician to assume the air of bravado in circumstances of difficulty and fear. That is past now, but I must observe

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that the attitude of bravado did not express itself prior to the end of the strike. I would observe for myself and the P.N.C. that it must take a great deal of "brass face" and lack of self-respect to talk about not resigning and underscoring that when he has had to withdraw the Budget on which any Government stands or falls.

Mr. Speaker, never have I heard of a Government withdrawing the important phases of its Budget under pressure, and then saying to the Foreign Press: "I will not resign — underscore that." But that is not all. It was stated in the *Thunder* that the T.U.C. did not get much because what the T.U.C. got on Sunday night had already been conceded on Wednesday night. That may have been so, but the concessions were as the result of the workers' demonstration. This is not the time for bravado; this is not the time for irritating people by talking of not resigning. If you do not want to resign, the people will know that you are not decent enough to do so when your Government has collapsed. This is the time for sending back the British troops and assuming the reins of Government — do not depend on an expatriate Governor to issue Part II of the Emergency Order. If you do not resign now or mend your ways, when you get your Independence you will be presiding over a graveyard.

Mr. Speaker : Hon. Members, it would seem that we must now resume consideration of the business on our Order Paper. The statement has been made; the Motion for the Adjournment has been moved to enable the statement to be made, but it has not been seconded. No other Member has indicated his wish to speak—

Mr. Kendall (New Amsterdam) seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

The Premier: Sir, we have heard a great deal of words, but when the history of the events of the last two weeks is written we will see that no amount of words will absolve the responsibility of certain people for what has taken place. We have heard that the Opposition will not be silenced, and that the Government has brought foreign troops into this country. The Opposition will not be silenced, and it is not the intention of the Government to silence the Opposition. But in the same way that the Opposition will not be silenced, the Government will not be silenced by nonsense, threats, intimidation or by force. Whether one has a Government which is dominated by capitalists as in some so-called democracies, whether it is dominated by Fascists, as in some countries, or whether it is dominated by Socialists or Communists, there must be law-enforcing agencies which will maintain law and order.

It is all well and good for the hon. Member to talk about foreign troops, but it was he who got up at Lancaster House and said that British Guiana should not have Independence. [**Mr. Burnham:** "That is a lie; the report is there."]

Mr. Speaker: Order!

The Premier: He qualified it very nicely by saying: "Yes, we will have Independence, but through the West Indies Federation." It is a known fact that when Independence is conceded to a country—indeed before it is conceded—certain prior arrangements are made to see that there is adequate force in the country, both for internal security and defence. This country is not yet Independent and, therefore, the responsibility, ultimately, for maintaining internal peace and defences rests with Her Majesty's Government. What does the speaker (Mr. Burnham) who has just sat down want to happen? Is he suggesting that the people should be allow-

ed to intimidate Ministers of the Government?—[**Mr. Burnham:** “Prosecute them.”]—And let the rowdy bands beat up Ministers!

The hon. Member says that I have done these things to elicit sympathy. Look at what happened at Mahaicony! Look at the record of the events which took place at the gates of the Public Buildings! Public Officers will testify that — [**Mr. Burnham:** “Take them to court.”]—Take them to court and let the mob bring down a legally elected Government by force and intimidation? That is the democracy which they talk about! [*Interruption.*]

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members must not speak across the House.

5.30 p.m.

The Premier: Take them to court while hon. Members of this Legislature deliberately break laws which are made by the Government to secure peace and order? A Member of this Assembly stormed the electricity undertaking so that the whole place would be in darkness, and further opportunities would be taken to terrorise people and, if necessary to do other unlawful acts. The Waterworks, an essential service, where were those who were responsible for its operation? When someone tried to see that an essential service such as the Waterworks, on which the sewer system depends, on which the Electricity Works depend, continued to operate he was molested, hounded. That was the work of these democrats, and they howl because the Government brought forces so that law and order might be maintained. I do not want to say too much, but I would say this: that these so-called democrats believe that they will topple the Government by intimidation, threats and violence. Having lost three successive elections [*Applause*] and seeing no hope of winning any future elections,

they behave in this way, and we will see at the coming elections—[**Mr. Burnham:** “Make them soon.”]—who will be returned again.

I reiterate — the hon. Member for Ruimveldt has come up here and followed the Leader of the United Force and said that this Government, the P.P.P., is dedicated to wiping out the opposition. But let them say specifically what steps we have taken to do so. Indeed when all this has been properly investigated and the record is put straight, then we will see. A great deal has been said in the previous debate and some of the lies were repeated a few moments ago. I shall have my opportunity to speak on the wages and salaries question in a moment. I would like, however, to conclude by saying this: that the fascist elements in our country were determined to use the working class to fight their battles. As someone said, “We will fight to the last P.N.C. member.” [*Laughter.*] That is what the plotters said.

I would like to say emphatically that this is not a question of bravado. This is a question of democracy. This Government will sit here and govern democratically and we will show to the world what so-called democrats talk about and what they practise. They underestimated the force of democratic opinion in the world. [**An hon. Member:** “Troops”] They thought that the troops would come, not to support — to use the exact words — “the civil power,” but to support the fascists. These people fail to understand that 1962 is not 1953. [**Mr. Burnham:** “Same troops, but performing a different function, my boy.”] [*Laughter.*] They came then to protect the propertied class, what the Leader of the P.N.C. was opposed to then. [**Mr. Burnham:** “I still am opposed. They are protecting you now.”] They are protecting your house right now.

Mr. Speaker: Please!

The Premier: The plotters miscalculated because they failed to understand that the world has moved on, that the working class movement is immeasurably strengthened today, and they cannot get away with posing to fight for the workers. They cannot succeed, by using force and intimidation, in overthrowing an elected Government.

The hon. Member who spoke tried to shift responsibility, but history will tell. Not only history will tell, but Guianese who have eyes to see and who have brains to judge already know where to put responsibility, and no amount of verbiage and talk is going to change the situation or the correct understanding of the present situation. As I have said, the Government will shortly have a full-scale investigation of this matter, and I will invite the hon. Member to give evidence. [**Mr. Burnham:** "You are the judge now? You see, the same thing I said."] [*Interruption from the Public Gallery.*]

Mr. Speaker: Order in the Public Gallery. You must understand you are here at the invitation, as it were, of the Legislature. This is a meeting of Members, not a meeting of the public. Sit there and listen; judge for yourself, but do not interrupt. Mr. Merriman, please proceed.

Mr. Merriman: I had no intention of speaking on this issue but I was drawn into it, peculiarly enough, by the hon. the Premier. You win an Election to govern, and when you win an Election it is on the support of the people in a country. Government is almost a delegated authority. It has to govern to satisfy and to provide for the wants of the people. If you want to please someone, invariably you have to please him his way, not your way or rule him your way. Democracy has been easily thrown about this place for Election and for sitting in a position that, perhaps, is not desired by the people

themselves. But it is the institutions of democracy that make democracy; it is maintaining those institutions; it is the establishment of those institutions, that make democracy.

Where were they at the Waterworks? [**An hon. Member:** "Where was the Mayor?"] I have heard the Premier refer — [*Interruption.*] I have had that distinction which none on your side can claim of occupying the chair of the Mayor of Georgetown. We have had several differences with our workers and we have settled them. The democracy of trade unionism is to bargain with the unions and settle the situation of difficulty. There was no difficulty at the Waterworks. It was a workers' strike. Because of the democracy of trade unionism, there was T.U.C. support. With the democracy in England of which we talk, if there is a trade union dispute, there is the machinery for that. That is how you govern. You anticipate an atmosphere or a situation, and if you are going to govern properly and efficiently and effectively, you establish those institutions which mark democracy. We all know that in English democracy, the moment you have a crisis, where is the machinery to deal with it.

What has this Government done? The Ministers themselves go into the established works, as they did at the Waterworks, to break the strike, not to settle their differences; to bring scabs from Corentyne, unskilled men, to handle the works and to destroy them, to destroy the relationship. These are the hallmarks of democracy. It is the institution, the machinery which go with it that you call democracy.

Here is a workers' strike. Rather than being able to claim what is their just desert from a workers' Government, the workers are intimidated, every legal machinery being used. Here is a workers' strike. Where were the Ministers and the others? They talk about where

was the Mayor at the time to look after the Waterworks. That was a very small moment of the whole situation. Some of them were on High Street when the fire was going on — that is well known; it is no secret — clapping each other's backs and laughing at the smoke that was enveloping the City and reducing it to a graveyard. Because of their incompetence, they were not able to deal with the situation effectively.

If you talk of democracy, you must follow the pattern and institutions which control democracy. They talk of ruling. Ruling how? As dictators? That is the situation that we find ourselves in today. The worker, according to the hon. the Premier, strikes when his pay packet is affected. That is the time when he strikes, and that is the situation because of the threat of a Budget, because of the absence of consideration for the wage earner; and the wage earner is demanding consideration now. But what do you get on the opposite side?

5.45 p.m.

Foreign troops have been brought here. One wonders what will happen tomorrow — what kind of troops will be invited into British Guiana by a Government which maintains its incompetence after winning three elections, instead of governing the people and bringing development and prosperity to this country of ours.

That is the position as it stands today. I had absolutely no intention to say a word, but this I will say, that while those who precipitated this situation were jubilant in High Street or taking shelter in their bedrooms surrounded by a number of individuals from the Corentyne armed with cutlasses and other weapons, the situation was handled by other people who made every endeavour to protect the citizens of Georgetown, because whatever they may say about the P.N.C., we have the support of the people in Georgetown. Why, then, should we destroy them in a situation of

this nature? They are more our charge than the Government's, and if the Government is so negligent of those who supported it, how much less would it be interested in the people of Georgetown and the Greater Georgetown area? It is sheer incompetence that created the situation in Georgetown and provoked it, resulting in the mass of debris in the City which we all look upon with shame and disgrace.

Mr. Cheeks (Georgetown North): It was not my intention to speak, but having heard the hon. Premier's reply to the remarks by the hon. Member for Ruimveldt (Mr. Burnham) I think I should make a small contribution to this debate. I gather that there will be a Commission of Inquiry into the recent disturbance, and I took it for granted that no Member of this House would have tried to apportion blame, but in his speech the Premier made a direct attempt to fix blame on some hon. Member or hon. Members of this House. I think he said "Members of this Assembly stormed the Electricity Corporation Works." Now if that allegation is made by the Premier then we have no need for a Commission of Inquiry. If "His Eminence the Dictator" decides who is guilty there is no need for an inquiry, therefore he should proceed to instruct the Police to make the necessary arrests. There is no need for Courts of Law when we have that sort of thing being done here.

Within the last few days we have seen a very strange thing happening here. We have the paradox of the British Government sending troops here to bolster, or to keep in office and protect this Government.

Mr. Speaker: I must stop you there. I think we have all read, if we did not hear, the Governor's statement on the presence and purpose of British troops in British Guiana. Further than that, over the British Broadcasting Cor-

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poration's news items on several occasions on that evening, the Prime Minister of Great Britain was credited with having said something similar to what our Governor said. In the circumstances it would seem to me very wrong for any Member of this House to cover himself with the privileges of this House to make a statement which is definitely untrue and wrong. I trust that the hon. Member will correct himself.

Mr. Cheeks: Thank you. Your Honour. What I should say is that this Government invited or asked for the help of the British troops for its protection. In any case the troops came at the invitation of this Government to help it. The position is that the troops are here protecting a Government which is, at least, pro-communist.

Mr. Speaker : You are making the same mistake. The troops are here to assist the civil authorities in maintaining law and order. I think those were the words used by the Prime Minister of Great Britain and the Governor of British Guiana. It has been stated very clearly that the troops are not here to bolster the Government or to see that any political pressure is put upon the people. Therefore, do not let us say things like that.

Mr. Cheeks: They have come here for the purpose of maintaining the Queen's peace, but what I was suggesting is that the indirect effect of their presence here is to keep in power a Government which is pro-communist. The Premier also stated that it was not the intention of the Government that the Opposition should be silenced. I am not doubting him, but I remember well that when he returned from his world tour during the latter part of last year, he told us in his report about his visit to Tanganyika, and he seemed to be in very high appreciation of the fact that

there was no Opposition in Tanganyika, or that the Opposition was working along with the Government. He said he did not see why it was necessary to have an Opposition. I think those words indicate clearly what the Premier regards as ideal. In his mind the existence of an Opposition is not the proper thing, but we know that an Opposition is one of the essential parts of democracy. Is the Premier really in favour of democracy? I am not certain of that.

To turn to the recent crisis I would say that it was precipitated probably by the Budget which seemed to touch everybody, a Budget for which one of the greatest economists of our time was responsible. Mr. Nicholas Kaldor prepared a Budget which was rejected in India; in Ceylon it caused the Minister of Finance to be chased out of that country. It caused widespread revolution and revolt in Ghana where it was only enforced by the Police and the Army gaoling all the Opposition leaders. We are told — and I am not sure that the Premier was quite pleased — that Mr. Kaldor made the statement that he always warned Governments of the possibility of popular uprising against his Budgets. If the Premier was warned of the possible consequences of this Budget, then in his mind he was taking a calculated risk. As it turned out, the consequences of the Kaldor Budget were not much different in British Guiana from what they were in Ghana and other countries.

I am not trying in any way to apportion blame anywhere, because we are to have a Commission of Inquiry, and that Commission will fix blame where it belongs. But the Premier must have known what the consequences would be. I understand that at the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce a motion was moved rejecting the Budget, and it was seconded by one Joseph Jardim who is a very strong supporter of the People's Progressive Party.

[**An hon. Member:** "That is the wrong Jardim."] That seems to me to be somewhat of a contradiction if a very strong supporter of the P.P.P. who was seen displaying guns from "Freedom House" a few days ago, one of the inside men of the Party, seconding a motion in the Chamber of Commerce rejecting the Budget. There again we have another paradox.

The Premier has been attacking the Chamber of Commerce and the T.U.C. leaders, saying that there were stooges of big business, and he has been attacking the entire political Opposition and attempting to apportion blame all the time, declaring that they are stooges of imperialists and capitalists, foreign and local, and that they are all fascists. I am sorry the Premier cannot speak again, for I would like to ask him what a fascist is, because if I could get a definition of fascist I would be getting indirectly a definition for the antithesis of "fascist".

6 p.m.

One thing more, Your Honour. I notice that we are complaining about the Government's handling of the crisis after January 31. I want to refer to the lot of the small businessmen who have suffered in the looting on Friday. I am not speaking of the big businessmen who can take care of themselves. I understand that several small businessmen approached the Minister of Trade and Industry a few days ago, and he advised them to make representations to the Fire Insurance Companies before returning to him. I cannot understand why he has advised people, who have suffered from looting only and not burning to make representations to the Fire Insurance Companies. It seems to me as though he is merely pushing them around. I feel that something should be done to help the small men, so that the losses which they have suffered would be borne by the entire community.

The Minister of Communications (Mr. Wilson): Your Honour, I have just heard a hypocritical pleading on behalf of the small businessman. How did this come about? It came from a marriage between the P.N.C. and the U.F.—the marriage took place on Friday 16—[**Mr. Kendall:** "What about the marriage before the Election? Your votes put them in!"] — I understand that the dowry in that marriage was the waiving of the total cost of the Election Petitions.

With regard to the presence of the British troops in British Guiana, this matter is being confused by the Members on the other side of the Table. This Party was accepted by way of the ballot; this is something which is sacred and inviolable, not something to be destroyed as it was destroyed by the British troops in 1953. It is something to be protected by force wherever it comes, as is now being done by the British troops in 1962. It is indeed sad to think that a party, which calls itself the representative of the workers, could sink so low as to go hugging with Fascists for the purpose of destroying their own city.

I heard the hon. Member for La Penitence-Lodge, the Mayor of Georgetown, saying how much he felt for the the citizens during the crisis, but I know that when people came from the country to assist in providing water for the city—water for carrying on his own business — he did everything in his power to obstruct them.

Mr. Speaker: Do not refer to a Member's trade. Please speak in general terms.

Mr. Wilson: I do not wish to speak further on this matter. I merely want to emphasize that the ballot is inviolable, sacred and must be defended by all means by troops from anywhere—even from Italy.

The Minister of Home Affairs (Mr. Rai): Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Ruimveldt in moving his Motion said, among other things, that the Government

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was incompetent and by bringing British troops into the country it was an admission that it was unable to preserve law and order, and/or it did not have the confidence in itself to enforce the law. Those are his inferences. As Minister of Home Affairs, the responsibility for the Uniform Forces of the Government falls under my portfolio — the Police, Prisons and Fire Services. I wish to say that this seems to be an attempt to promote dissatisfaction among the Uniform Forces and, more particularly, among the Police Force in this country.

The Premier has already said that the Government has full confidence in the Police Force in this country. I, as their Minister, join in expressing the confidence of the Government in the working of the Police Force in this country. As I see it, this is a subtle attempt on the part of the hon. Member to promote dissatisfaction among the ranks of the Police Force and thereby weaken the power of enforcing law and order.

Sir, the hon. Members said that the Government was incapable of preserving law and order in peaceful times. In this very Chamber we have hon. Members who have flouted the laws of the country, apart from breaches of the Proclamation. Before the Proclamation was issued, some hon. Members in this Chamber held unlawful meetings, spoke at unlawful meetings; held illegal demonstrations defying the lawful constituted Government of this country as well as the law. Ministers were being assaulted in their ministries; their secretaries and other officers were being intimidated, and officers who tried to work at the Public Buildings were being intimidated. What was the Government to do? What was any one, who had the primary responsibility for maintaining law and order, to do in the circumstances?

Sir, the members of the Police Force were called out and they acted faithfully and well all through that distressing sit-

uation. A Proclamation was issued with a view to securing the safe egress and ingress of Ministers, officers and others working in the Public Buildings and to protect key-points in the city such as the Radio Stations, the Magistrates' Courts, the Victoria Law Courts, Brickdam Police Stations, etc., because of the massive demonstrations which were being called and led by Members of this House.

As I said in a Press release which I issued when the Proclamation was published, it was advisable, desirable and necessary that a certain area including the Public Buildings, the seat of the Legislature as well as the Government in this country, should be protected from free gatherings, demonstrations and processions.

6.10 p.m.

I said in my release that there was no intention on the part of the Government to prevent people from holding demonstration marches, protest marches or meetings, and I am sure that the President of the T.U.C., who is no friend of the Party in power, and his colleagues will bear me out. At the conference only the day before, I reiterated this to him and I was able to persuade him — because they were determined to converge on the Public Buildings to hold their demonstration — that on account of the possibility of rival factions, on account of the possibility of foreign elements in his own demonstration over whom he might not have any control, he ought not to invite the members of his union to converge on the Public Buildings, but rather to meet elsewhere. He ultimately accepted my advice and met at the Loyal Tribute site.

The demonstrations were being called all over the City. Crowds and lawless elements had taken over Water Street, and businessmen had to close their stores on intimidation. The streets in this area around the Public Buildings, Water Street and the Market Square were taken over by lawless elements in

the City, led by respectable people in the community and hon. Members in this House. Those were the circumstances which led me and the Government to advise His Excellency that a Proclamation should be issued relating to gatherings, meetings and demonstrations around this limited area.

The T.U.C. were told and, indeed, everyone knew that anyone who wanted to protest against the Government, anyone who wanted to hold a meeting, had Bourda Green, the traditional meeting place, at his disposal. He had the Parade Ground and the rest of the City to march and tramp. Why did they insist on marching and tramping in front of the Legislature and the seat of Government to intimidate Ministers of the Government when they were coming in on their lawful business? Why was this necessary except to intimidate the Government, a Government which won 20 out of 35 seats at the polls? [An hon. Member: "42%"] The Government did not contest the Election on a proportional representational or percentage basis. If the Party which is in power today, through its superior strategy, decided to stay to fight in only a selected number of constituencies and thereby secured a maximum number of seats, no one should now complain. Having accepted the rules and having lost, you must not now seek to change the rules of the game.

I wish to make the point very clear and to emphasize and to repeat that the rest of the City was open and free. I said so to the T.U.C. and I think it was also brought out in my release that permission will always be granted to hold protest demonstrations and marches. Permission will always be granted. Yet, when the Proclamation was issued in these circumstances there was a defiant throng of people, among whom were Members of this House. Committing offences, apart from breaches of the

Proclamation, holding demonstrations and illegal meetings, inciting the people and putting mischief afoot are responsible for the looting, arson, larceny and loss of life in this country.

Mr. Correia: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I thought you made a ruling that no mention should be made of anything which happened on Friday, 16th February.

Mr. Speaker: I made no such ruling. As a matter of fact, the rules for this debate were set by the hon. Member for Ruimveldt himself; I have set no rules. If it is something which comes within the ambit of the subject under discussion, any hon. Member is quite within his right to mention it.

Mr. Rai: If learned and responsible elements in the community defy the law, what would the mobs do, either in the country or in the City, if this is the example which is being set by responsible people?

It is within their knowledge that if they themselves had not deliberately encouraged people to set fire, murder, looting and loss of life would not have taken place in this country. I have not heard one word from any Member on the opposite side condemning the looting, the larceny or the arsonists. No one condemns the acts of these people. One could very well ask the question whether they were acting on their advice, or is this now the new standard to be set in the community where murder and looting are heroic acts? People are looting brassieres, panties, shirts, radios and radiograms and are putting more work on the Police and the military; and we have people brass-faced enough to say that Government is responsible for this state of affairs.

I think my friend, the hon. Member for Ruimveldt, has some French saying about he who accuses— [Mr. Burnham:

[MR. RAI]

"*Qui s'excuse, s'accuse* — he who excuses himself, accuses himself."] — he who excuses himself, accuses himself. This is the position. We have apologists for looters in the country; apologists for murderers; apologists for rioters in this honourable House. This is the position that we have come to today.

Sir, because law and order have been restored in this country; because anarchy and chaos have been avoided; because those who plotted against the Government have been defeated politically and are demoralized; and because they know that decent citizens in the City and in the country, both here and overseas, are against them for this disreputable conduct, they want to say that the Government is responsible for what happened. They have been defeated politically. They had been defeated when they planned physical violence with the aid of people, poor, unfortunate people who are not sufficiently sensible to see that they are being used for the personal aggrandizement of some and for the continuation of a society which profits on poverty and ignorance.

Those who should be with us have been misled by a few cents and by a few drinks to put their hands against their benefactors. This Party is the benefactor of the working class people of this country. Yet, the working class people turned against it. But this state of affairs will not last for very long. It will not last for very long at all because the masses of the people in the City, as well as in the country, will see that they had not only been misled but had been badly led. And those whom their leaders were cursing were seen on Friday, arm in arm, in fond and tender embrace—in tender embrace with those whom they called fascists, rum bottlers. They were comrades in arms to break the law and incite people to violence.

6.10 p.m.

Once mischief is afoot, once fire is set, no one can control it, and while on fires, it has been reported to me by the Fire Chief — these are his words—that there was deliberate incendiarism in the City at specific points. While it may have been the intention of those who set the fires to have only particular premises burnt down, some premises of their own friends also suffered in the disaster.

Those who incited the people have caused the whole country to be in a state of unrest, civil commotion and disturbance. People are spending sleepless nights, and Ministers of the Government are working overtime, possibly 20 hours a day. They get telephone messages like "I understand that my house is going to be burnt down tonight. Will you send me some soldiers". We received reports that gasoline stations and tanks, bridges on the East Coast road were going to be attacked. From Wismar comes a telephone message "We are going to be attacked", and a similar message from the North West District. While the Fire Brigade were fighting fires in Georgetown there were people who tried to divert them by giving false alarms of fires in Campbellville and other places.

There was a deliberate plan to divert the Fire Brigade and Police Services, but Government succeeded in having the essential services running. I invited the Chairman of the Georgetown Sewerage and Water Commissioners to my Ministry and he kindly responded with the other members. We had a very pleasant discussion as to what should be done to restore the water and sewerage services. My Friend, the hon. Member for Ruimveldt (Mr. Burnham) was also present, but what emerged was that prior to my calling them together the Commissioners did not think it fit to convene a meeting of their own in the City where water and sewerage services were cut off, and whereby the health of everyone in the

City would be affected. That is the sort of leadership the masses in the City were given recently.

The Constitution which was virtually imposed by H.M. Government on this country, is one which is termed an internal self-government Constitution. Section 22 of the Order in Council states very clearly:

22. Her Majesty hereby reserves to Herself power, with the advice of Her Privy Council, to revoke, add to, suspend or amend this Order and to make laws for the peace, order and good government of British Guiana".

Those who thought that British troops would never come here did not read the Constitution, or if they read it, did not understand what they read. The British Government is not only morally bound but constitutionally bound by its own Instrument to preserve law and order among Her Majesty's subjects in this country, to preserve decent people, law abiding people, from the hooligans, from the lawless elements, whoever they are, and it is for this purpose and with this in view that Her Majesty's forces are today in this country. They are performing a thankless task because many of those who are afforded protection by them are today speaking ill against them, and some of them are in this very Chamber. British soldiers are protecting Members of the Opposition sitting around this Table. I repeat, Members of the Opposition.

Mr. Burnham: I pay the same taxes as the Premier.

Mr. Rai: Why be annoyed with the British troops who have come to protect decent citizens, to protect life and property in this country? The only alternative was for the lawfully elected Government, duly elected less than six months ago, to give way to "mobocracy", Instead of democracy they are fostering "mobocracy" in this country. That is why British troops have come here in pursuance of the obligation of the British Government to the people of this

country, and to protect life and property and decent people from looters and hooligans.

My friend, the hon. Member for Ruimveldt (Mr. Burnham) asked why we did not use the Police, there again inferring that we did not use the Police. The Police have been working very hard for the whole year, and they had to work extremely long hours over the past four weeks. The British troops arrived in the City of Georgetown not only at the request of the professional Commander of the Police Force, the Commissioner of Police, who said that it was essential, if law and order were to be maintained, that a sizeable number of troops was necessary for the protection of life and property. So that when it is asked "Why weren't the Police used, and why were British troops brought here?" I would say that the Police were used to the fullest extent and are still being used and over-worked, protecting Members of this House too, and that British troops came here not only at the request of Ministers but also on the advice and at the request of the Commissioner of Police.

My hon. Friend would like to have greater details, although he said that we should not apportion blame here, but it is competent for all decent people to see on whom the blame rests for the looting and arson that took place. He wants to know why the request was made. When the inquiry is held I am prepared to give evidence and show that this Government and I did our utmost to preserve law and order in this country, and to say if our advice had been carried out nothing like what took place might have taken place.

Mr. d'Aguiar rose—

Mr. Speaker: I think it is time for us to adjourn at this stage.

The Assembly adjourned at 6.30 p.m. until 8 p.m.

8. p.m.

On resumption—

Mr. Speaker: When we adjourned we were still dealing with the Motion for the adjournment of the House, and the hon. Member for Georgetown Central had indicated his desire to speak at that stage. He may now proceed.

Mr. d'Aguiar: Your Honour, on February 16 last, there was a riot. This afternoon the brains of the hon. Ministers of the Government seem to have run a riot. In December, 1952, there was a meeting at the Town Hall, Georgetown, and that meeting was called to voice opposition to the Budget of the hon. Mr. Frank McDavid. It was called by the trade unions and the hon. Premier attended that meeting as an executive member of the Sawmill Workers' Union. He addressed the crowd. There was a large crowd in the Town Hall—so large that it overflowed into the yard—and the hon. Premier (he was then a Member of the Opposition in the Legislature) exhorted and appealed to the crowd to come to the compound of the Legislature when the Budget was to be debated and to voice as well as demonstrate their opposition to it. That Budget had introduced a modest increase in consumer

The crowd took his advice and people demonstrated outside the Public Buildings. A picket line was formed and led by Mrs. Janet Jagan. When the President of the Legislative Council, the Governor, arrived he was booed, and so was the hon. Financial Secretary, Mr. McDavid, on his arrival. The police, too, were a bit worried about the situation and the possibility of violence, but they adopted different methods than from those adopted here recently. They did not prevent crowds from gathering around the Public Buildings. They did warn leaders of the picket line that, if the crowd got out of hand, they might be held personally re-

sponsible. When the meeting concluded, the President of the Legislative Council, the Governor, left the precincts of this compound by the front entrance and so did the hon. Financial Secretary. In passing through the crowd they took a solid barrage of boos, and I would say that they took everything with good face—so did Your Honour.

But what happened here on February 9 last? When the meeting had concluded and the Opposition had walked out, there was a group gathered in the precincts outside the Legislative Chamber. The hon. Premier, closely followed by the shadow at his back, Jack Kelshall, walked out by way of the back entrance. I understand that some of the people referred to him as the "backdoor Premier". If the hon. Premier had courageously walked out by the front entrance, as did the Governor and the hon. Financial Secretary in 1952, the crowd might have booed him, but the people would have appreciated his courage and would have held him in greater esteem. From that moment the office of the Premier of our country sunk to an extremely low level, and it has continued thereafter at a very low level.

The hon. Premier was in and out of Radio Demerara and Radio B.G.B.S. like clockwork, and, almost every hour on the hour, he spouted Government and Party propaganda. He was using the Public Broadcasting System not to broadcast the news or the truth, but to broadcast slanted, malicious, propaganda and to make libellous as well as defamatory statements regarding citizens and authorized organizations in this country. He has done that to such a large extent that it is quite possible, as the hon. Member for Ruimveldt has suggested, he has opened himself to charges of libel.

I remember that, just after the the Elections, there was a television film prepared by the Canadian Broadcasting Company. This film has been seen in

British Guiana, and it was televised for public viewing in Canada. The caption of the film was "Don't Label Me". In that film the hon. Premier was asked: "Are you or are you not a Communist?" He evaded the answer. He said, "Do not label me; I do not want to be labelled with any of those clichés". So it was enlightening this afternoon to hear the hon. Premier. He does not want to be labelled. However, those who oppose him, irrespective of whether they are members of the U.F., the P.N.C. or another party, or even the people who are no longer members of the P.P.P., are now labelled Fascists. One hon. Member rightly asked what is a Fascist. I suppose that a Fascist is a person who likes to adopt dictatorial methods, and I think the description most aptly fits the hon. the Premier. [*Laughter.*]

8.15 p.m.

Much has been said by those who have allowed their brains to run riot this evening about the illegal processions into the proclaimed area. They made a lot of this being against the law of the land, but what is the law of the land and from where does it emanate? What is the foundation of the law? The foundation of the law of our country is this august Legislative Assembly. I do not know of any law prohibiting the gathering of groups in the vicinity of the Public Buildings which has emanated from this Legislative Assembly. I know of some sort of star chamber methods being adopted to promulgate such a law. When these methods are adopted, can you blame the people if they resent them and resist them?

Every country has certain areas which by custom and tradition have become the stamping ground of people voicing their feelings about the Government in the country. In England, you have Hyde Park and Trafalgar Square and here, since time immemorial, groups have gathered at Bourda Green and in the precincts of these legislative build-

ings either to voice their disapproval of Government or to shout their approval. In all the history of British colonialism in this country, and it is a long one, I do not know of any attempt having been made to prevent a crowd from gathering outside these Public Buildings for the purpose of voicing either their approval of the Government or their disapproval.

These customs and traditions in a democratic country cannot be easily or lightly removed without terrible and bitter resentment by the people, and the correct procedures, the correct democratic procedures, have not been adopted, as they are not being adopted in many instances in regard to what the hon. Ministers of the Government are doing. Just take for instance, the gross insult to this House of Assembly that was recently perpetrated by the hon. Minister of Education.

Speaking in Jamaica, he took it upon himself to declare, without any formal approval or knowledge of this Assembly, that his Government acting on its own, was going to remove the grant by British Guiana to the University College of the West Indies. The correct parliamentary procedure, which the Members of the Government do not care a hoot about, was for the hon. Minister of Education if he thought fit to make a statement before this House first, before making a public declaration. This House must be the fountain and origin of the laws of this country.

Again, take this Budget and the Order in Council which has remitted some of the provisional taxes which became lawful on January 31 last when the hon. Minister of Finance first spoke and introduced his Budget. There, again, the correct procedure was to call this House together and to declare to Members that in view of the opposition to the Budget proposals by the trade unions and others, it was intended to publish an Order remitting some of the taxes.

[MR. d'AGUIAR]

In regard to this question of the Proclamation made by what I have no hesitation in the present context in referring to as the star chamber, the proper procedure — and there was plenty of time for it; the Premier himself has admitted that he had time to act. He could and should have called a meeting of this Assembly and declared at that meeting that he intended to make a Proclamation stating that crowds would be forbidden to gather in the precincts of these buildings. Had he done so—he could have, of course, enforced his wish — we would have had the benefit of, perhaps, the saner advice of the Members of the Opposition and that unfortunate Proclamation might never have been issued.

When Government adopts what it must accept on its own shoulders as fascist methods, it must realize that those who have lived in a democracy, even under colonial domination, will always resist dictatorial attempts to rule by star chamber methods. The hon. Member for Ruimsigtdt rightly said that in regard to this vexed question of who is to blame for these riots, for the arson and for the looting, the answer must rest with the judicial commission which will be appointed for the special task of making that investigation. However, hon. Members of the Government, suffering, perhaps, from what must be a guilt complex, have tried very loudly to exonerate themselves and to put the blame on others.

But let us, for a moment, try to understand dispassionately the background to this unfortunate situation. There are two backgrounds to this situation which, I think, are important. Firstly, the ideological background and, secondly, the economic background; and to understand the situation it is necessary to look at both the ideological and the economic backgrounds.

From the ideological point of view, you find that the hon. the Premier has made such remarks as "Castro is the greatest liberator of our time." We find that the hon. the deputy Premier has made such remarks as "you can as well stop tomorrow as stop communism", and he has made other famous remarks such as "heads will roll." You find that just two days before the riot, the wife of the hon. the Premier returned from Cuba, and in Cuba she had openly declared the complete solidarity of her husband's Government with the Cuban revolution and their total opposition to the Organization of American States. Again, not so long ago, you had an Economist speaking at Freedom House and declaring to the approbation of its members that British Guiana should follow the pattern of Cuba.

That background creates an atmosphere of fear. This has rightly been called the year of fear, and it is a year of fear because of the natural fears of people that if there is Independence within the framework of this present Government it will lead us into a state of affairs like Cuba where dictatorship becomes the rule and all freedoms are destroyed.

Now, from the economic point of view. The economic background is one in which from 1948 to 1957 the hon. the Premier was leading a Party which filled the minds of many people with hope that he would fulfil the promises which he made, and those promises were to raise the standard of living and wages of the working classes. As I said this morning, it is the Government that sets the example and those promises were to restrain taxation from consumer goods. In the history of his opposition to Budgets, the hon. the Premier opposed, without exception, every little tax that was ever introduced by any Financial Secretary on consumer goods. When one cent was put on cigarettes, he opposed it bitterly. He said that any such tax

was putting burdens on poor people's backs — poor people that have to pay. Those were the words he used.

When he was elected as leader of the majority party in 1957 the people who had seen his past efforts in the Opposition to keep taxes on consumer goods down and to raise wages, naturally felt that things were going to improve now with a fully elected Government of which he, champion of the people, was the leader and would result in better wages, more opportunity to find jobs and a lower cost of living. But what happened? The results have been exactly opposite. Since 1957, and up to this day, unemployment has risen year after year until it has reached the phenomenal figure of 25 per cent. Wages have been kept down, and the only improvement in wages has resulted from strikes and agitation against a leader who claimed that he would see to it that Government set an example. So, from the economic point of view people have built up resentment, and from the ideological point of view people have built up fear, and into this explosive situation the Premier projected a Budget with enormous taxes, 90 per cent. of which fell squarely upon the backs of the working class people.

In the framework of that situation violence was to be expected. People cannot take this year after year, building up fear and resentment and not reacting. They are human after all, and when you take such measures as proclaiming, not through proper democratic procedure but through star chamber methods, the stamping ground where these people used to release their energies, either supporting or opposing the Government of the day, you add a fuse to the explosive material. When you add to this the mouthings of the leader, to whom violence has become an everyday word— I well remember the attacks made on Sir Hugh Hallet after he had produced his electoral boundaries report. There was a meeting at Canje, Berbice, at which

the Premier spoke, and he said, if this newspaper report is accepted, "We have to get guns; we have to fight, we have to start a revolution in this country."

The Premier: To a point of order! Is this relevant?

Mr. Speaker: The Premier has risen to a point of order. The statement you have quoted does not concern the Motion for Adjournment. I think he is perfectly right, because the Motion deals with the handling of things after the 31st of January, 1962. The particular incident to which the hon. Member is referring must have occurred before that date.

Mr. d'Aguiar: I am laying the background into which violence could be expected.

Mr. Speaker: It is time now.

Mr. Cheeks: I move that the hon. Member be allowed another 15 minutes to continue his speech.

Mr. Melville seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. d'Aguiar: Violence is not a spontaneous reaction; it is a reaction built up by a train of circumstances. I am trying to lay a foundation for that train, where it started and whither it led. I wish to refer to a lecture given at Port Mourant in May last year by an internationally famous Indian economist, Professor Shenoy. Professor Shenoy spoke in the Town Hall in Georgetown where he was accorded a courteous hearing. He simply analyzed the various systems of economy, socialism, free enterprise and communism. At Port Mourant, when he criticized the communist system, he was brutally handled, so much so that when he returned to India the newspapers wrote very derogatory articles about, it and pointed out that when the Premier

[MR. d'AGUIAR]

visted India he was accorded all courtesy, and they felt that the same courtesy should have been extended to a very learned and defenceless gentleman.

There is the background which leads towards violence, the background of a political leader who, time and time again, in the United Nations, for instance, said what meant this: "If it were not for our subjugation by the imperialist forces in the United Kingdom we would rise up ourselves by force and declare our independence." Into this background of violence, which is the byword of the speakers of the People's Progressive Party; into this background of fear which is put into the minds of all these people who do not like the thought of a communist take-over in this country; into the background of economic repression when those who had hoped that a fully elected Government and self-government would bring better wages and conditions of employment for them; into this background the Budget was projected which put an immense burden on the backs of the working classes. It was an explosive situation and I do not think it is possible for us to lay the blame here on anyone. All we can do is to lay the blame on those who, by their past actions, have led up to making a situation like this possible, and even inevitable.

We can all deplore the violence, the arson and the looting, and we must condemn it all. We can see no future in this conflict between races in Guiana unless the ideological fear is moved away. It would be a great help, for instance, if the Premier would definitely declare to this Assembly and to the people of this country that he is not a communist, and that he does not intend that British Guiana should ever follow the pattern of Cuba, or that of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Unless that is done our country will suffer again the tragedies of February 16, or worse.

The Attorney-General : (Dr. Ram-sahoye): The hon. Member for George-

town Central (Mr. d'Aguiar) spoke as though he had drunk a cup of Catiline. Your Honour will remember the Great Conspiracy when the cup of blood was passed around. The hon. Member for Georgetown Central has come out with a tirade of abuse against the Premier. The Premier may have produced the Budget, but he cannot say that the Premier is responsible for making bombs to set fire to people's homes, or is responsible for stones and bottles being thrown; that he is responsible for the shooting and for rumours that children had been killed, and other things which caused the tragedies of the 16th February, which Members on this side of the House began.

Whatever may be the strange relationship between the hon. Member for Georgetown Central and the hon. Member for Ruimveldt (Mr. Burnham) I think it would be safe to say that the hon. Member for Georgetown Central is completely divorced from the truth. He speaks of star chamber methods. It is not because I have been personally affected that I say these things, but the hon. Member for Georgetown Central does not know what to star chamber was. The hon. Member has flouted the law of this country. He has given Government notice that he does not intend to abide by the rule of law. Disgruntled businessmen and their misguided followers, all of whom were paid, I suggest, feel that they can by a show of violence overthrow the constitutionally elected Government. But those businessmen should learn now, if they did not know it before, that a legally elected Government cannot be overthrown by force. It will never happen and cannot happen, and if it is felt that fascist methods must be adopted to overthrow the Government, then those who at present feel that the fears of women and children, the devastation of property, the loss of life and injury to persons is the method by which Governments can be overthrown, they must realize that they are sadly mistaken.

8.45 p.m.

I make no attempt to lay individual blame, but it is cheeky for anyone to think that the Government could have been able to sit with arms folded while the demonstrations, allegedly peaceful, were fast developing into rioting and into mob violence. What else could the Government do, when Ministers could not go into the precincts of the Chamber without being harassed; when they could not leave the Chamber without being harassed? Surely, the time had come when some positive effort had to be made to preserve the rule of law.

Some people speak of free elections, but they do not believe in free elections because they cannot win any. Their only hope is to overthrow the Government and seize power by way of violence. Some people realize that their backs are to the wall, and their only hope of seizing political power is by unconstitutional methods and by indulging in violence. But those persons are well known to the Guianese people. They have already been tried and convicted of the plot to assassinate Ministers, to demolish property and to throw this country into general confusion.

There is no question that the Proclamation was properly made. It was properly made under legislation which has been promulgated in this country since 1955. Since 1955 legislation was here to meet the very type of case which arose after the events of February 9. The Proclamation was properly made, and it was violated by Members of this very House. Ill-advisedly, if for no other reason, some people in this country do not want to abide by the law. Some people are encouraging others to violate the law. It is not a question of ideologies. What can a man believe, when we are told that Communists believe in violence, murder, looting, arson, and today we see the people who were vociferously opposed to such things supporting the very things which they so strongly condemn? What can we believe?

I do not propose to say much more because the events which are under discussion are to be the subject of an inquiry by a Commission, where people will be heard, the facts sifted and, if possible, responsibility will be placed where it should lie. But I say that hon. Members of the Opposition Bench cannot possibly defend the decision which was taken by their supporters following February 9, 1962.

A genuine fear had been aroused—fear because people misguided and misled thought that, by attacking property belonging to certain persons, they were likely to do damage to those persons alone. Some people also felt that the sanctity of human life no longer existed, and that men were to be thrown to the whims and caprices of mob violence merely because mobs wanted it to be so. Those were tragic days; they will long be remembered in this country, because they were symbolic of a situation worse than anything this country has ever known. This is the first time people have had to evacuate their homes; the first time people have had to live in constant fear; it is the first time that troops had to come here and that there was shooting in the streets. Those were serious occurrences.

If we try to live in peace, we can avoid a recurrence of what has taken place. But if there are people who still think that violence is the solution to British Guiana's problems, let them remember that it is not beyond the bounds of probability that those who inflict violence and injury on others may themselves be made to drink of the bitter cup.

Mr. Campbell : Mr. Speaker, like other speakers, who began their speeches by saying that they did not intend to speak on this matter, I, too, did not intend to speak. But, as I have received a challenge from the Minister of Home Affairs, I will have to speak. The hon. Minister of Home Affairs said that the

[MR. CAMPBELL]

Opposition were apologists for looters, burners of property and many other iniquities. I am now going to lament publicly, and to condemn all of the burners who burnt the town. I am going to condemn the looters, thieves, vagabonds and others who have taken part in destroying the town. I am also going to condemn the basic causes that brought about those things.

About two years ago, I sat in this honourable House when the Motion for Independence was being discussed. My stand all along was that there should be no Independence for us at the moment, and I gave my reasons for adopting such an attitude. I said that Independence now would mean confusion and bloodshed. Mr. Speaker, my words have come true. We have had bloodshed and all manner of miseries in the capital of British Guiana. As I see it, the base is set for terrible things ahead.

Somebody must carry the blame for what happened in this town on the 16th February. The Members of this House are acting like schoolboys, trying to put the blame on each other for what has happened during the past two weeks. I want to be told the meaning of the word "Fascists". I understand that Fascists are supposed to be the burners, looters and so on. [*Interruption.*]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. Member has a right to be heard.

Mr. Campbell: The word Fascists seems to be in the mouths of the Ministers. This is the time for name-calling. We are calling each other all manner of names. It is the time for blaming the other fellow, and nobody seems to be right or wrong. As a result of the mis-handling of the heavy problems of this wonderful country, certain politicians have brought it to ruin.

I reiterate the words of the hon. Member on my right (Mr. d'Aguiar) who said that the background to our troubles is the question of ideology as well as

economic. This is supposed to be a year of freedom. Some people call it "Freedom Year", but I call it a fearful year. Perhaps this is the beginning of more fears to come.

The hon. Minister of Home Affairs mentioned something about the police in the North West sending an S.O.S. to town. I have just arrived from the North West District, and I know that they are also filled with fear. The North West District is a territory cut off from Central Georgetown. Hardly anybody in the North West realizes what has been happening in Georgetown. We get our news on the radio, but the static prevents us from hearing clearly sometimes what is taking place in Georgetown. The only thing the people in the North West District are complaining about is the price of coffee. They want this Government to give some sort of relief to the coffee-grower.

All this talk about sucking the rich and giving the poor is a farce. Every poor man in British Guiana will feel the effect of the rising cost of living. The Government says it is 1 per cent., but I believe it is around 30 per cent. When it comes to the index in the cost of living, that is also a farce and it has no relation to the way of life. It is only a matter of book-keeping. The farmer's produce has not been taxed but, automatically, the price of certain produce has gone up by 25 per cent. to 30 per cent. in this town. The price of plantains has gone up, and housewives are hard put to prepare breakfast with the money at their disposal. We find that, when Government taxes imported items, the price of local items automatically goes up. Naturally, there will be a general uprising.

9. p.m.

Mr. Speaker : Hon. Members, it is now nine o'clock and, in accordance with Standing Order 11 under which the Motion for the adjournment was permitted in order to allow Members an

opportunity of stating their points of view on the Government's handling of the crisis situation after 31st January, 1962, including the maintenance of law and order and the use of emergency legislation, we have now reached nine o'clock without the matter being concluded. Under the Standing Order, the matter lapses and we return to our Order Paper and resume consideration of Motion No. 1 under Public Business. The hon. Member for Upper Demerara River (Mr. Jordan) was speaking at the time of the adjournment.

Mr. Jordan: Mr. Speaker, to return to where I was forced to leave off when I was saying that it is——

Mr. Speaker : You were not forced, hon. Member.

Mr. Jordan: By the clock, sir. [*Laughter.*] It is sadly disappointing to find that this Government did nothing when it had its most glorious opportunity to do something for the workers by, instead of partly implementing the Guillebaud Report, going several steps further. It is indeed very disappointing that the Government that should give the lead to industry talks of things like "bitter sugar." When its Ministers and their minions visit industrial areas, the only things they can see are, not the welfare of the areas, but dust and noise and that kind of thing. And when this Government, this hypocritical Government that so professes to love the workers, has an opportunity to do something it gives to some and refuses to give the rest.

I was saying this Motion has not gone far enough, and when the Amendment was moved it occurred to me even before then that it should go further. At this stage, I want to move a further Amendment to the Amendment that was moved. I want to move that the sum of \$4.00 be substituted for \$3.64. I hope this Government which, in the past, has had such an evil record for saying "not a cent more" will give the workers a few

cents more; and I hope it will not seek to take away the increase by clamping down taxes on people who earn more than \$750 a year. Also, at the same time, I would expect the Government to make it quite clear that once these increases have been given, at no stage will it try to take back this 10% as it promised to do if it did not raise the revenue.

If the Government is right, if things are going well, if the public has confidence in the Government, if the outside world has confidence in the Government, the revenue will be more than raised. And if bankruptcy or if its ideology has numbed it that it cannot see what is going on around it and in this country, the Government should not punish the workers but should itself get out of the way rather than try to take away wages which it is only giving in small measure to the people who so earnestly deserve them.

Because of that, because of this Amendment to increase the sum of \$3.64 to \$4.00 per day to the second Resolve Clause, I would like to move an Amendment that the full stop be replaced by a comma, as additional funds will certainly be necessary. Therefore, instead of \$2.6 million being moved, I would like added "and such additional funds as may be necessary." If this Government is, as it so often claims it is—and, I believe, falsely—the vanguard of the proletariat, if it has the interest of the workers so closely at heart, if it wants to see its Development Programme bear fruit and Guiana be, indeed, the Magnificent Province, I can see no reason why it should not approve the proposed Amendment from \$3.64 to \$4.00 and the Amendment to the Second Resolve Clause, "and such additional funds as may be necessary."

Mr. Jagan (Suddie): It is my view that neither of the Amendments can be entertained under the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly. I refer to Standing Order 31 which deals with Amendments to Motions. Under paragraph (1), an amendment is allowed to a Motion, but the Amendment that was

[MR JAGAN]

moved by the hon. Member for Georgetown Central was supposed to have been moved under paragraph (3) which reads as follows:

"An amendment to a motion..."

Mr. Speaker: What is the number of the Standing Order, please?

Mr. Jagan: 31. We are only dealing for the purpose of my objection with the first part of that paragraph which reads as follows:

"An amendment to a motion may be moved and seconded at any time after the question upon the motion has been proposed by the Speaker..."

I am now referring to paragraph (6) of the same Standing Order which reads as follows:

"Any amendment, whether in the Assembly or in Committee of the whole Assembly, shall be put into writing by the mover and delivered to the Clerk before the question is proposed thereon."

It is my contention, therefore, that first of all the mover, under paragraph (6) must put his proposed amendment into writing and deliver it to the Clerk before the question is proposed. After the question is proposed then he should move the Amendment under paragraph (3). Neither the hon. Member for Georgetown Central nor the hon. Member for Upper Demerara River has complied with Standing Order 31, paragraph (6). [*Pause.*]

Mr. Speaker: Apparently, no other hon. Member wishes to speak at this stage. I thought that perhaps other members of the legal profession would have made other proposals to the Chair in so far as interpretation of the Standing Orders goes because, of course, the Chair does like to give consideration to different points of view. If any hon. Member of the House who has not spoken yet would like to deal with the question raised by the hon. Member for Suddie, I should be glad to listen to him. If not, may I say

this. The hon. Member has referred to Standing Order 31, paragraph (3) in part and then paragraph (6).

In so far as paragraph (3) is concerned which reads thus:

"An amendment to a motion may be moved and seconded at any time after the question upon the motion has been proposed by the Speaker..."

let me say categorically that this has been observed because upon the Motion having been moved, the Chair had declared that it had been properly moved and seconded and therefore open to the House. In regard to paragraph (6), it reads:

"Any amendment, whether in the Assembly or in Committee of the whole Assembly, shall be put into writing by the mover and delivered to the Clerk before the question is proposed thereon."

In both cases, the technicalities have been observed in the sense that the hon. Member for Georgetown Central did read what his amendments would be. The written and signed intention to move the Amendments was presented to me.

Hon. Members will recall hearing me say that I had read the words of the Amendments; that I would have considered them in the light of Standing Order 31 and in relation to the Motion moved and that I would declare later in the evening whether the Amendments could be taken as they were proposed. In the case of the Amendments by the hon. Member for Upper Demerara River—there were, in fact, two: one proposing to amend the original Motion in the second Resolve Clause and the other proposing to amend the Amendment moved—again, I have the written proposal here. So I do not agree with the points raised by the hon. Member for Suddie. I am sorry for that because it is the first time we have heard him speak in the House and I would have preferred, as I am sure would all hon. Members, to have heard him under more favourable circumstances.

9.15 p.m.

Indeed, the wording of the Amendment moved by the hon. Member for Upper Demerara River (Mr. Jordan) is

quite in order, and will be put by me in due course. The Amendment which has been proposed by the hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Aguiar) has had to be re-written somewhat in order to conform with the Rules of the House, and it will be put in the following form at the proper time. The first part of his Amendment will be for the deletion in the first resolve clause of the words: "as modified by the Government in Sessional Paper No. 3 of 1962."

And may I point this out to hon. Members, because there are a number of hon. Members who are still somewhat new to the procedures and the rights of the House, that a Motion for the payment of funds by Government cannot be entertained if it is moved by any other Member than a Member of the Government bench. But if Members of the House who are not Members of the Government desire to have their ideas of payment considered, then it should be put in the form of a recommendation, that so and so be paid. That is why I have had the wording of the hon. Member's Amendment suitably altered. In doing so I feel sure that all hon. Members will agree that we should not, because of a slight difference in wording, prevent an Amendment by any hon. Member from reaching the floor of the House for voting. Whether the Amendment succeeds or not I think it is right in a Legislative Assembly like this, as long as an hon. Member wishes to test the feeling of the House, that every opportunity should be given to such an hon. Member.

Mr. Jagan: I do not know if I was misunderstood, but what I said earlier was that under paragraph (6) of Standing Order 31 it is stated that an Amendment must be put in writing before the Question is proposed. The Question was proposed earlier this afternoon and the Amendment was given to the Clerk after it was proposed. It is my contention, therefore, that the Amendment in writing was delivered after the Question was proposed. I agree that under para-

graph (3) the Question was proposed, and there was an Amendment which was seconded, but what was done under paragraph (6) was done after the Question was proposed. Therefore, it is my contention that the hon. Member for Georgetown Central did not deliver to the Clerk his Amendment in writing before the Question was proposed.

Mr. Bissember: (Campbellville): I do not wish to speak, but Your Honour having given your ruling, with which I wish to express my entire disapproval as a lawyer, I wish to second the Amendment moved by the hon. Member for Upper Demerara River (Mr. Jordan).

Mr. Speaker : Did you say you expressed disapproval of my ruling?

Mr. Bissember: No, sir, my approval. [*Laughter.*]

Mr. Speaker : I can appreciate the argument of the hon. Member for Suddie because, of course, the final decision rests upon the tradition and practice, to some extent, of the House. Who proposes the Question to the House? A Member may move a Motion and an Amendment, and a Member may second both Motion and Amendment, but it is the Chair that proposes the Question of the Amendment to the House. Therefore, if that is accepted, and that is my ruling, then of course there is no question whatever as to the validity of both of the Amendments which have been moved. Does any other Member wish to speak ?

Mr. Checks: As I look at the Motion and the Amendments I am impressed that Government did indeed have in mind the bettering of the lot of Government servants and others who are in the higher income bracket, but when I consider how Government has treated its lower paid workers I am reminded of a remark I made on a previous occasion, that the Members of the Government were deeply religious men. When I think of how Government proposes to

[MR. CHEEKS]

treat its workers. I am reminded of a quotation from the Bible which, apparently, it is putting into practice—"He that hath to him shall be given, and he who hath not even the very little that he seemeth to have shall be taken away." I am also reminded of another Biblical incident when the children of Israel, after ending a sojourn in the desert for 40 years receiving manna from Heaven, complained "Lord, we are tired of this dry bread." The next day they got a shower of scorpions.

Taking into account what this Motion proposes to implement, the lowest paid workers having asked for bread, they are getting a shower of scorpions; because not only are they refused any increase at all in wages, but there is an increase in their cost of living which will severely hurt their home budgets. It is indeed a case of giving them scorpions when they ask for bread. And this is being perpetrated in the name of champions of the working classes. That is the way in which this Government tries to fool the people but, fortunately, there are some people who are interpreting its actions and its words, so that it has to be very careful in what it says and does. If Government is indeed the champion of the working classes it must give to the working classes what they deserve.

I am certain that what Government is doing is being wilfully done, because on page 5 of the Guillebaud Report, paragraph 17, says:

...As a result of this (dissatisfaction) we have reached the conclusion that during the last two years there has been a wide-spread decline in the morale of the Service, particularly in its lower and middle sections."

It is precisely stated here, therefore when the Minister of Finance moved his Motion he must have had before him either the Commission's Report or Government's modifications of the Report. In spite of that Government does not find it possible

to increase the minimum wage of the lowest paid workers. Government's action is therefore deliberate.

I turn now to page 39 of the Guillebaud Report, paragraph 157, which, referring to the lower grade of the Unclassified Service, says:

"They stagnate in the ranges of lower salaries, are not entitled to pensions, and not unnaturally feel that they are being unfairly treated."

So that the Guillebaud Report underlines the position of need of the lowest paid workers, yet this Government does not find it possible to raise their minimum wage by a penny. In paragraph 16 of Sessional Paper No. 3 of 1962, it is stated:

"...there was no justification with the limited financial resources available, for increasing wage rates beyond the level to which they have been recently raised—20½% at the bottom of the wages scale falling to 12½% at the top above the 1954 level."

9.30 p.m.

The financial resources of this Government are not merely limited, they are in a state of chaos, and they will remain so for a long time. Until Government learns its lesson, it will not get capital from abroad. How can we have a viable and healthy economy, how can we improve our general economic conditions? We must get money from abroad. Government will not get one cent of private capital coming in so long as it maintains its communist policies. It may get small Government-to-Government loans, but it will not get private capital from abroad or investment of local capital. Even those who supported the P.P.P. are hiding their money.

They are not subscribing to measures which their Government is putting into operation. This Government cannot get money and, therefore, it will always be in stringent financial circumstances. There will be more unemployment, more frustra-

tion and more misery. The poor will become poorer and the Members of the Government will be making promises which they cannot fulfil. They will have to say the same thing year after year. In the circumstances, I think the Government should resign.

We were told by the hon. Premier and asked to underline the words: "This Government will not resign. We were elected to govern, and govern we shall." Govern, but not misgovern. After long months of waiting, the Government has decided to pay out the money which should have been paid out ever since. It will now be paid out as backpay from the 1st January, 1961, and it is being paid only because the workers in a body rose against the Government and went on strike. I must warn the workers that they must guard the privilege which they now possess—the privilege of being able to strike and compel the Government to give them what is their due.

If this Government had its way—and the workers and the Opposition must keep their eyes on the Government in order to see that it does not get its way—it would follow what is being done in the countries, which it admires, where strikes are impossible. The workers must be determined to remain in a position where they can lay down their tools and refuse to pick them up until they get their due from Government. They must remember that this is one of the greatest privileges of democracy, and resist with all their strength any attempt to reduce them to the condition of impotence, like the workers in communist countries.

Was it the Private Secretary, or the Public Relations Adviser to the Premier who, in a statement issued a couple of months ago, said: "We propose to build a Socialist economy in this country after the pattern of the Soviet Union?" That is one of the countries where strikes are impossible. Of course the excuse they will give is that it is not necessary, Govern-

ment being the repository of all wisdom. No worker would ever think of striking against the Government in Hungary.

Your Honour, our workers have managed, as a result of the strike weapon, to force the Government to give them what is theirs. Hon. Members will recall how the hon. Minister of Finance stood in this House and looked at the Opposition in an attitude of contemptuous superiority while he told us of Government's decision. He was like "Sir Oracle", but he had underestimated the power of the workers; he thought he could grind them to the earth with impunity. The workers of British Guiana must bear in mind that they must preserve the right which democracy has given them to compel a Government, whether Left, Right, or like the Communist one now in power, to give them what is theirs.

Mr. Speaker: I take it that no other Member wishes to speak to the question. Does the hon. Minister of Finance wish to exercise his right of reply?

Dr. Jacob: Yes.

9.40 p.m.

The Premier: I should like to speak before the hon. Minister of Finance replies. We have heard, during the course of the debate, many allegations which have been levelled at the Government in the context that it had no intention of implementing the Guillebaud Report. I would like, first of all, to categorically deny those allegations. Indeed, some Members said that it was the crisis which forced Government to come forward with this Motion today. But one will note that the major pronouncements of the Government were put to the Civil Service Association by the Minister sometime in January. Indeed, I spoke to the Staff Associations in this very Chamber on the 24th January, outlining to them all the economic factors involved; pointing out why Government

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made certain modifications. So it is certainly not true to say that the Government has rushed in with this Motion today merely because of the crisis. Indeed, the financial recommendations as were originally put forward in the first pronouncement were basically the same recommendations which were ultimately accepted by the Staff Associations with certain very minor amendments. I would like to take this opportunity to put the matter in perspective because, unfortunately, some of the Members of this House have not got the foggiest idea of the financial position or the economic position of the country today.

First of all, I would like to deal with the Guillebaud proposals. The terms of reference of this Commission are set out on the first page of its report, and they include the following:

"In making its review the Commission is to take account of :—

"(a) the revenue and expenditure of the Government, including the financing of the Development Programme, and the means available to the Government of increasing its revenues;"

At another stage in point (d) it says:

"(d) other matters—such as the possibility of increasing efficiency by reorganisation of the Public Service, the growth of the Government's responsibilities and the appropriate size of the Public Service in relation thereto, etc.—that are relevant to the Commission's general task."

Why do I mention these two terms of reference particularly? I mention them because this Commission was appointed primarily because the Staff Associations had rejected the Gorsuch Commission's findings; because the Staff Associations had rejected the decision of the Government in 1960 to pay out nearly \$800,000. The Government said it could not afford to pay any more; that the financing of the Development Programme would not permit it to pay any greater sums than

were recommended either by the Gorsuch Commission or by the Government in 1960. The Government took the view that as long as an objective, realistic approach is made to the problems confronting the country—unemployment, etc.—it would not recommend salaries and wages which the country could not afford.

Let me go back to Gorsuch. The Gorsuch Commission came in 1958 and recommended that superscale salaries should be increased to a very high figure, but that the middle brackets in the Civil Service should receive no increases whatsoever. Indeed, their leave and leave passages were to be cut. The Commission also recommended that for the lowest grades—unskilled and semi-skilled—the increase should be from \$2.52 to \$2.70 per day.

What did the Government do? The Government implemented the recommendations so far as the unskilled, the lowest paid workers, were concerned and also the "B" and "C" scales which went above the figure recommended by Gorsuch. Gorsuch recommended an increase from \$2.52 to \$2.70 per day, an increase which was enough to accommodate the cost of living increase from 1954 to 1958. At that time, it was supposed to be a 7-point increase in the cost of living. The Government decided to increase this, not to \$2.70, but to \$2.75. [Mr. Bissember: "After a long strike!"] There was no strike. This is the kind of information which is pedalled at the street corners. That was the first decision of the Government.

Indeed, I can tell the hon. Member that when I attended a conference at Cambridge dealing with economic development, Mr. Berrill, who teaches at Cambridge University, was somewhat alarmed at the findings of Gorsuch and also at the fact that the Government was prepared to pay \$2.75. Why? Because his \$110 million Plan which the Government implemented, which we had to

implement even though we felt that it was not adequate, was based on a minimum wage of \$2.52 per day. **Mr. Burnham:** "You didn't know that?" I knew that. Not only did Mr. Berrill say that we must have a \$110 million Development Plan, but he also said that in 1962 there should be a review of the Programme for a possible expansion to include the East Coast highway—the "Kendall" highway—on which the Interim Government had spent over \$1½ million for a survey; to include the hospital on which, again, the Interim Government spent nearly \$30,000 to have an architect draw up the plan.

9.50 p.m.

These things were kept out of the 1960-1964 Programme, the \$110 million Programme, because Mr. Berrill argued that we could not afford them. It was on this basis, and for this reason, that the Government in 1958, when it implemented the recommendations of the Gorsuch Report, indeed went beyond it by increasing it by another 5 cents, stating that it appreciated the difficulties of the working classes. But having the responsibility for the larger numbers of unemployed people, it had to keep in mind the Development Programme which would provide employment for the country as a whole.

The minimum wage was eventually raised to \$3.04 per day. It was not only because of pressure. Let me say here and now that it was because we knew that certain of the capitalists were using the Government minimum wage as their maximum, that we decided ultimately to agree to a minimum wage of \$3.04. One hon. Member referred to the sugar industry but he did not give all the facts. He does not know or does not want to know, but the fact is that in the sugar industry the bulk of the workers in casual employment do not work on fixed time wage but on piece rates which vary from day to day. Some employers do not believe in trade unionism and have never allowed

trade unions to be organized in their enterprises. And where there are trade unions they see to it that they are well under the control of the employers.

To come back to the major points. Gorsuch recommended a minimum wage of \$2.70 for the bottom; we raised it to \$3.04. Gorsuch said that the cost of living had increased by 7 points and \$2.70 would have accommodated that increase. The increase to \$3.04 represented a 22 per cent. increase in wages as against 7 per cent. up to 1958. From 1958 to the present time another 3 points in the cost of living index made it 10, and an additional point through higher taxation included in the Budget would have meant an 11-point increase in the cost of living index from 1954 to the present time, including the original taxation proposals, as compared with a 22 per cent. increase in the basic minimum wage from 1954.

Mr. d'Aguiar: It is 20½ per cent., not 22 per cent.

The Premier: Whether it is 20½ per cent. or 22 per cent. that should not becloud the issue of the major point I am making, which is that wages had increased in this period by almost double the increase in the cost of living. The hon. Member said he sat on the Committee to review the Hands Report which recommended a minimum wage of \$2.52 per day, but why did he not fight to have that rate increased?

Mr. d'Aguiar: I did.

The Premier: Why didn't he get the Trade Union Movement to demonstrate—some of the same trade unions whom he dined, wine and got drunk?

Mr. Burnham : You may be sued for libel.

The Premier: Mr. Jackson himself said so. The point is clear that as regards the working classes the Government has done more than others would have done

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in similar circumstances. The Gorsuch Report was rejected by the Civil Service Association. Why? Not on the principles laid down by Mr. Gorsuch but because the Staff Associations had not been consulted and did not agree with the composition of the Commission. What were the principles laid down by Gorsuch? That in the case of the middle brackets their salaries were comparable with those outside, and that their salaries could accommodate the 7 per cent. increase in the then cost of living index figure.

But, as I said, the Staff Associations rejected the Gorsuch Report. To implement the Gorsuch Report would have cost \$1.2 million for the Service. We said that we could not increase the superscales and leave out entirely those in the middle brackets. We looked at the financial position at the end of 1960 and we were prepared to give an increase in salaries ranging from 3 per cent. to those at the top, to about 7 or 8 per cent. to those below. This was also rejected. It was then, or a little later, that the Staff Associations said they wanted a new Salaries Commission. Government agreed, but took the same line it took with the representatives of the Federation of Unions of Government Employees. We said: "Bring your own economist and show how the Government will be able to pay more. indeed, F.U.G.E., supported, I believe, by the T.U.C., brought an economist from England, a trade unionist, but his report has been "ducked". We have not yet seen it, because his report agreed with the views of the Government on the economic and financial situation of the country.

10 p.m.

That is why, when the Chairman of this Commission was to be selected, Government decided that it did not want a politician but an economist, and so it was that Mr. Guillebaud was appointed as Chairman of the Commission.

What were the findings of the Commission? No principles were laid down. Gorsuch was acting on principles of comparability of salaries and so forth. Mr. Guillebaud recommended at least two increments for the middle brackets and in some cases, for example, policemen, many more increments—in some cases 4 to 5 increments. In other words, for the middle brackets where Gorsuch had recommended nothing, Guillebaud recommended an increase amounting to 5 increments ranging from 10 per cent. to 22 per cent. increase on existing salaries. That is what the Government has accepted, even though one can argue that there were no real grounds for justifying it. In other words, the Guillebaud Commission was contradicting the principles laid down by Gorsuch.

As regards superscale salaries Guillebaud recommended more or less what Gorsuch had suggested. These superscale salaries were very carefully gone into, and certain modifications were made. The Guillebaud Commission said that the full implementation of its recommendations would cost \$2.5M. However, when the figures were totalled the amount was \$2.7M. instead of \$2.5M. With the modifications which were made in the superscales, the figure was reduced to \$2.6M.

Now, sir, hon. Members say that Government must pay the superscale salaries as recommended by the Guillebaud Commission. This will mean not \$2.6M. but \$2.7M., and with certain anomalies which will have to be adjusted from time to time a greater sum may be required. Later I shall show hon. Members the financial implications. Hon. Members are not only interested in restoring the superscale salaries to their heights, but they say that we must bring up the people at the bottom from \$3.04 to \$4.00 per day. I am not sure whether they are aware that for every increase of 25c. one will have to find about \$1M. more. It does not matter how many people will be brought up; what matters is what the sum

total will be. [Mr. Burnham: "Give them the entertainment allowance as a start."] Hon. Members were demonstrating in the streets every day against the Budget, so they say.

Sir, the Guillebaud Commission recommended no increase in taxes. They said, however, that the \$10M. will be found as follows—I am referring to para. 65, page 18:

"Anticipated Revenue during 1961—1964, in excess of the Revenue as estimated in Table I (Paragraph 35)		\$
Higher Customs Revenue	4,000,000	
Higher Revenue from Posts, Telegraphs	380,000	
Higher Revenue from Transport Services	420,000."	

This is unlikely to happen, not because of violence only, but because traitors in our country have been sending money out of the country.

Mr. Burnham : The P.P.P. supporters have done that.

The Premier: I will continue—

"Increased Revenue from higher charges for the carriage of Goods & Parcels during the years 1962/64		\$ 700,000."
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If Government implemented this, it would mean the increase in freight rates. We would have heard that Government had done it in order to penalize the working class. That is \$700,000 which will not be found because Government does not want to increase these rates.

"Saving during the years 1962—1964 by reducing the Provision in Table I for normal expansion of the Public Service from 5% annually to 4% annually during the years 1962—1964		\$ 3,000,000."
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This means that for the normal increment in Government's expenditure each year the figure will be not 5%, which is the average, but 4%. The annual increment

this year has jumped to a fantastic figure. Holding down the annual increase in the Recurrent Budget to 4% this year will prove impossible. The United Nations Advisers, Financial Secretariat, have said that it cannot be held down. Indeed one only has to look at the Budget this year to see the sharp increases which have been made in expenditure. If we do not hold down expenditure, it seems to me that even the \$2.5M. per year will not be found to pay these salaries. That is the reason why the Government took from August, after the Elections to January, before finally making up its mind on the Report.

It was not, as hon. Members have been saying, that the Government is vindictive, that it does not want to pay workers, and it is shelving its responsibility. Government is in a serious financial predicament through having to pay out \$2.5M. The Finance Minister has the figures and, as I have said, the amount, after certain modifications to superscale salaries, is \$2.6M. Having to pay out this money will mean a cut in the Development Programme. Hon. Members, probably, are not aware of this.

Sir, the existing items in the Development Programme were originally estimated to cost \$110M. The estimate has been revised to cost \$135M.—\$25M. more than the original estimate. In other words, if the Government goes on spending at this rate without any extra taxation, without the expectation of revenue being realized, then it means that the Development Programme must be cut by about 23% to 25%. [Mr. Burnham: "You do not spend the money".] The hon. Member says that Government does not spend the money.

In 1960, Government was seriously criticized for not spending the money allocated. \$16M. was spent, but some people do not seem to understand simple arithmetic. \$110M. divided by 6 gives only \$22M. a year. Last year Government spent \$21M., but it could have spent

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more. In June the Financial Secretary informed the Executive Council that we were likely to run into serious financial difficulties, if we did not reduce the rate of our spending.

10.15 p.m.

Indeed, on my last trip to London, I had to ask the United Kingdom Government to advance \$1m. from this year's Exchequer Loan to pay for last year's expenditure on the Development Programme. We are all concerned about the grave unemployment problems in this country. It is all well and good for the hon. Member to refer to what I have said in 1948 and 1949. The country was not richer then, but we were not faced with the same unemployment problem which we have now. D.D.T. was introduced in the post-war period 1946, 1947 and 1948. We are now feeling the effects of the population increases started then. We did not have the grave unemployment problems then as we have now. We did not have the economic position then — 5,000 sugar workers thrown out of employment over the last five or six years; waterfront workers in Georgetown being displaced by a bulk loading plant. We did not have, also a Government then which was interested in the working classes and was prepared to tax the rich.

I remember that the hon. Members also spoke about what I recommended in those days for taxing the rich and which was not done. In 1948, I recommended that there should be variations in the system of taxation as regards the bauxite industry—export duties. Perhaps, hon. Members should look up what was done and when it was done.

In the early periods when this Government and this Party were not ruling, how did they seek to raise revenues? By levying a 3% bill of entry tax on every

conceivable item imported into the country. Anyone will tell you that if you want to raise large sums of money, then put the tax on the items which the masses consume in large quantities. [An hon. Member: "You learnt that well!"] If the Government had followed the example of the 3% bill of entry tax the incidence on the working class would have been far greater because items, like flour, which are consumed in large quantities would have been squarely affected.

But the Opposition is blind when it comes to analysing the ramifications of the struggle and the representations which I made when I was in the Opposition. It is all well and good to talk about the minimum wage. I have already referred to those who were in the Interim Government, who now sit in the Opposition Benches, who fought and lost in 1953, who gave support to the Interim Government and the troops who came here, who transported them in Pepsi Cola trucks—[Mr. d'Aguiar: "That's a lie. It is a wonder you didn't ask me to lend them this time."] [Laughter.]

Mr. Speaker: Order in the Public Gallery.

The Premier: There is a vast difference between then and now. Why didn't they fight for the working class then? Where were they? They were living at the expense of the working class. Those days are coming to an end. Why have they agitated the working class on this occasion? Because of capital gains tax; because of property tax; because of company tax; because of a higher income tax. But the fascists will fight to the last P.N.C. member. That is what they say. I would have liked to see all of them strutting around over there come and pay \$5 a day and \$10 a day and carry out a Development Programme at the same time.

As I said, paying these salaries now—this \$2.6 million—will mean almost a 25% reduction in the existing Develop-

ment Programme. That is what it will mean. Projects which have been analysed, which have been gone into very carefully and which have been accepted by the Colonial Office will have to be dropped. But this is an unfortunate fact which everyone will have to face, whether you are in the Opposition or on the Government Benches—you cannot conjure up money out of the skies.

If we are to implement the Amendment recommended by the hon. Member for Georgetown Central then we will have to find $2\frac{1}{2}$ million more. If we are to do what is proposed by the hon. Member for Upper Demerara River—to raise the minimum to \$4.00 per day, I understand that is the amendment which he has moved—it will mean approximately \$4 million more per annum. [**Mr. Burnham:** “Working class.”] Working class. This means that the Budget will have to go into deficit. We must have no taxes. Even if the incidence will mean a 1% increase in the cost of living, we must have no taxes. [**An hon. Member:** “A progressive Government will.”] A progressive Government will conjure a surplus in the Recurrent Budget. It will go for a grant-in-aid.

Clearly, what the Opposition is suggesting at the moment is unrealistic, and it is merely an attempt to play to the Gallery and is a complete divorce from the problems which are facing the country at the present time. Were we to do this, it would lead to even graver unemployment than we have at the moment. I therefore would like to suggest that at this very critical juncture of our country's history we receive from hon. Members proposals drawn up objectively, realistically, which can be implemented by the Government.

We have had public discussions on the Budget. These will be debated at a later stage. I brought these proposals into this discussion merely to give hon. Members a picture of the present situa-

tion. I will, therefore, urge Members not to be unrealistic to our present problems. The fire which has been caused in the City of Georgetown will result in even greater sacrifices on the part of the people of this country than were proposed originally in the Budget. Whereas, before, the Government was seeking to get about \$10 million, we have to find about \$40 million to repair the damage which has been done by the people who want to seize power, to fool the working class people and to lead them astray as regards their best interests.

I therefore would like to propose the following Amendment to the Amendment which was proposed. I would like to delete the full stop after the last word “workers”, add a comma and the following words “subject to funds being available.” [*Interruption.*] Perhaps we should increase company tax by another 10%; perhaps we should accept Nicholas's report—Nicholas who came here sometime ago, a taxation expert whose report was not implemented; perhaps we should put on a 70% personal income tax rate. We will look into this and then we will see whether we can do some of the things which Members of the Opposition want.

Mr. Speaker: Am I to understand that you wound up the debate on behalf of the Government?

The Premier: Yes.

Mr. Burnham : On a point of order, sir.

Mr. Speaker : State your point.

Mr. Burnham : I submit that the Premier could not do so because he did not intimate that he was winding up, and the parliamentary procedure is that if a person other than the mover winds up a debate he must so intimate to the House.

Mr. Speaker: I agree with the hon. Member. That is why I was asking the Premier if he was winding up. He may

[THE SPEAKER]

have overlooked it but if the House does not wish to consider his contribution as having wound up on behalf of the Government—at this point may I remind hon. Members that, in accordance with the Standing Orders, the time which was spent in debating the Motion for the adjournment must be added to the time available to the House for carrying out its business. If we utilize the three hours which were spent on the Motion for the

adjournment, then we can go on until one o'clock tomorrow morning. I would suggest that we now adjourn until tomorrow and bear in mind that we have additional time which, if necessary, we add to tomorrow's sitting. If you agree may I then ask you to rise.

ADJOURNMENT

This Legislative Assembly is now adjourned to two o'clock tomorrow afternoon.

Adjourned accordingly at 10.30 p.m.