

T H E
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

OFFICIAL REPORT

[VOLUME 1].

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

1st Sitting

Thursday, 5th October, 1961

SENATE

The Honourable Senate met at 2 p.m., pursuant to the proclamation of His Excellency the Governor dated 28th September, 1961.

The Clerk: The hour being two o'clock, I will commence the proceedings by reading the Governor's Proclamation appointing the date and hour of the first session of this Senate.

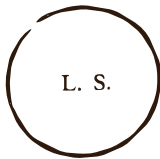
BRITISH GUIANA

PROCLAMATION

By His Excellency SIR RALPH FRANCIS ALNWICK GREY, Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Knight Commander in the Royal Victorian Order, Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Colony of British Guiana, Vice-Admiral of the same,

etc., etc., etc.

R. F. A. GREY,
GOVERNOR.



WHEREAS it is provided by sub section (2) of section 10 of the British Guiana (Constitution) Order in Council, 1961, that the first session of the Senate and the Legislative Assembly shall begin within three months after the appointed date;

AND WHEREAS such date was proclaimed to be the 18th day of July, 1961;

AND WHEREAS it is provided by paragraph (1) of article 78 of the Constitution of British Guiana that, subject to the provisions of the said Constitution, the sessions of the chambers of the Legislature shall be held in such places and shall commence at such times as the Governor may appoint by proclamation published in the Gazette, but that the sessions of the two chambers shall commence on the same date:

NOW THEREFORE, in pursuance of the said provisions, I do hereby proclaim that a session of the Legislative Assembly shall be held in the Legislative Chamber at the Public Buildings, Georgetown, and shall commence at 9 o'clock in the forenoon, on Thursday, the fifth day of October, 1961, and that a session of the Senate shall be held in the Legislative Chamber at the Public Buildings, Georgetown, and shall commence at 2 o'clock in the afternoon on Thursday, the fifth day of October, 1961.

Given under my Hand and the Public Seal of the Colony at Government House, British Guiana, this 28th day of September, 1961, and in the tenth year of Her Majesty's Reign.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.

By His Excellency's Command,

A. A. ABRAHAM,
Secretary to the Office of the Governor.

ROLL OF MEMBERS

The Clerk : I will now call the roll of persons elected at the General Elections. This will be done in the order in which the endorsed Writs were returned under Section 44 (1) of the Representation of the People Ordinance, 1957. Will Members please respond as their names are called.

PRESENT

People's Progressive Party.
Ministers

Dr. the Hon. C. B. Jagan	— <i>Premier and Minister of Development and Planning (Member for Corentyne—East)</i>
Hon. B. H. Benn	— <i>Minister of Natural Resources (Member for Demerara Coast—West)</i>
Hon. Ram Karran	— <i>Minister of Works and Hydraulics (Member for Mahaica)</i>
Hon. B. S. Rai	— <i>Minister of Home Affairs (Member for Demerara Coast—East)</i>

ELECTION OF PRESIDENT

The Clerk: Senators, your first duty at this sitting is to elect your President in terms of Article 52 of the Constitution and Standing Order No. 2 which sets out the method for such election. I will therefore read the relevant Article of the Constitution and Standing Order No. 2.:

"Article 52.(1) When the Senate first meets after any general election and before it proceeds to the despatch of any other business, it shall elect a Senator to be President of the Senate; and, if the office of President falls vacant at any time before the next dissolution of the Legislature, the Senate shall, as soon as practicable, elect another Senator to that office."

"Standing Order No. 2.(1) Whenever it is necessary for the Senate to elect a Senator to be President, the procedure for the election shall be as provided in this Order.

(2) Any Senator, having first ascertained that the Senator to be proposed is willing to serve if elected, may, addressing himself to the Clerk, propose any other Senator (not being a Minister or a Parliamentary Secretary) to the Senate as President. The proposal shall require to be seconded but no debate shall be allowed.

(3) If only one Senator is so proposed, he shall be declared by the Clerk to have been elected.

(4) If more than one Senator is so proposed, the Senate shall proceed to elect a President by ballot."

May I draw your attention particularly to the provision that Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries are not eligible for election to the office of President.

I will now call for nominations for the office of President.

Senator Hubbard (Minister of Trade and Industry) nominated Senator Ashton Chase for the office of President.

Senator Moneer Khan seconded.

There being no other nominations, the Clerk declared Senator Ashton Chase

the duly elected President of the Senate, and requested the Mover and Seconder of the nomination to escort the President to the Chair.

[**The President** in the Chair]

PRESIDENT'S REPLY

The President (Senator the hon. Ashton Chase): Honourable Senators, I wish to take this opportunity to thank you for having elected me to be your first President. I shall endeavour to carry out the duties of this office to the best of my ability. I look forward to your co-operation and good will. May the spirit, no less than the letter, of our Constitution be our guide.

I look forward also to lively and interesting debates in this Senate. I am assured that the Government will welcome constructive criticism at all times. There are tremendous tasks ahead of this country which is plagued with grave, social and economic problems. Efficiency, application and the co-operation of all Guianese for the general good of this country as a whole are essential, if we are to make reasonably good headway in the years that lie ahead.

I pray that commonsense and unity in the interest of the public good will prevail. Please accept my sincerest thanks for this honour which you have conferred upon me, the responsibilities of which I am deeply sensitive. [*Applause.*]

ELECTION OF VICE-PRESIDENT

The President: Honourable Senators, the Ministers of the Government and Parliamentary Secretaries are not eligible for nomination as Vice-President. I now invite nominations for the office of Vice-President.

Senator C. Christian: I beg to nominate Senator C. V. Too-Chung.

Senator C. Ramjattan seconded.

The President: As there are no other nominations, I hereby declare Senator C. V. Too-Chung the duly elected

Vice-President of the Senate. [*Applause.*] I extend to Senator Too-Chung my warmest congratulations. I hope you will have a fruitful and successful term of office.

VICE-PRESIDENT'S REPLY

Senator Too-Chung (Vice-President): Mr President, hon. Senators, I thank you for the honour conferred upon me. It is, indeed, a surprise. I do trust that your confidence would not be misplaced. [*Applause.*]

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

The President and Vice-President then made and subscribed the Oath, followed by the remaining Senators.

PRAYERS

Prayers were read by the Clerk.

LAYING OF STANDING ORDERS

The President then laid on the Table the Standing Orders made by the Governor under section 11 of the British Guiana (Constitution) Order in Council, 1961.

APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE OF SELECTION

The President next called for nominations of members of the Committee of Selection which, under Standing Order 61, shall be appointed by the Senate at the beginning of every session and consist of the President as Chairman and four Senators nominated by the Senate.

Senator Nunes (Minister of Education and Social Development): Mr. President, I beg to nominate Senator the hon. H. J. M. Hubbard, Senator Ramjattan, Senator Anne Jardim and Senator C. V. Too-Chung as members of the Committee of Selection.

Senator Christian seconded. [*Pause.*]

The President: I declare the following Senators to be members of the Committee of Selection:— Senator the hon. H. J. M. Hubbard, Senator Ramjattan, Senator Anne Jardim and Senator C. V. Too-Chung.

ADJOURNMENT

Resolved, "That this Senate do now adjourn". — [Senator Hubbard]

Adjourned accordingly at 2.28 p.m.