

**THE  
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

**OFFICIAL REPORT**

**[VOLUME 6]**

**PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE NATIONAL  
ASSEMBLY OF THE SECOND PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA  
UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF GUYANA**

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**10<sup>th</sup> Sitting**

**2.00 p.m.**

**Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> December, 1972**

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**MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**Speaker**

His Honour the Speaker, Mr. Sase Narain, J.P.

**Members of the Government**

**People's National Congress**

**Elected Ministers**

The Hon. L.F.S. Burnham, S.C.,  
Prime Minister

Dr. The Hon. P.A. Reid,  
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National  
Development and Agriculture

**(Absent – on leave)**

The Hon. M. Kasim, A.A.,  
Minister of State of Agriculture

The Hon. H.D. Hoyte, S.C.,  
Minister of Works and Communications

The Hon. W.G. Carrington,  
Minister of Labour and Social Security

The Hon. Miss S.M. Field-Ridley,  
Minister of Information, Culture and Youth

The Hon. B. Ramsaroop,  
Minister without Portfolio and Leader of the House

**(Absent – on leave)**

The Hon. D.A. Singh,  
Minister of Health

The Hon. O.E. Clarke,  
Minister of Home Affairs

The Hon. C.V. Mingo,  
Minister of State for the Public Service

The Hon. W. Haynes,  
Minister of Co-operatives and Community Development

The Hon. A. Salim,  
Minister of Local Government

### **Appointed Ministers**

The Hon. S.S. Ramphal, S.C.,  
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Attorney-General

**(Absent)**

The Hon. H. Green,  
Minister of Public Affairs

The Hon. H.O. Jack,  
Minister of Mines and Forests

The Hon. Miss C.L. Baird,  
Minister of Education

The Hon. F.E. Hope,  
Minister of Finance and Trade

Dr. the Hon. K.F.S. King,  
Minister of Economic Development

The Hon. S.S. Naraine, A.A.,  
Minister of Housing and Reconstruction

### **Parliamentary Secretaries**

Mr. J.G. Joaquin, J.P.,  
Parliamentary Secretary, Minister of Finance  
and Trade

Mr. P. Duncan, J.P.,  
Parliamentary Secretary, Minister of Information,  
Culture and Youth

Mr. J.R. Thomas,  
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Information  
Culture and Youth

Mr. C.F. Wrights, J.P.,  
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Works and  
Communications

### **Other Members**

Mr. J.N. Aaron  
Miss M.M. Ackman, Government Whip  
Mr. K. Bancroft  
Mr. N.J. Bissember  
Mr. J. Budhoo, J.P.  
Mr. L.I. Chan-A-Sue  
Mr. E.F. Correia  
Mr. M. Corrica  
Mr. E.H.A. Fowler  
Mr. R.J. Jordan  
Mr. S.M. Saffee  
Mr. R.C. Van Sluytman  
Mr. M. Zaheeruddeen, J.P.  
Mrs. L.E. Willems

**(Absent)**

### **Members of the Opposition**

#### **People's Progressive Party**

Dr. C.B. Jagan, Leader of the Opposition  
Mr. RamKarran  
Mr. R. Chandisingh  
Dr. F.H.W. Ramsahoye, S.C.  
Mr. D.C. Jagan, J.P., Deputy Speaker  
Mr. E.M.G. Wilson  
Mr. A.M. Hamid, J.P., Opposition Whip  
Mr. G.H. Lall, J.P.  
Mr. M.Y. Ally  
Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud, J.P.  
Mr. E.M. Stoby, J.P.  
Mr. R. Ally  
Mr. Balchand Persaud  
Mr. Bholu Persaud  
Mr. I.R. Remington, J.P.  
Mr. L.A. Durant  
Mr. V. Teekah

(Absent – on leave)

(Absent – on leave)

#### **United Force**

Mr. M.F. Singh  
Mrs. E. DaSilva  
Mr. J.A. Sutton

(Absent – on leave)

#### **Independent**

Mr. R.E. Cheeks  
Mr. E.L. Ambrose  
Mrs. L.M. Branco

(Absent)

(Absent)

#### **Officers**

Clerk of the National Assembly – Mr. F.A. Narain

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

**The National Assembly met at 2 p.m.**

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

#### **Prayers**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER****Leave to Members**

**Mr. Speaker:** Leave has been granted to the hon. Member Mr. Sutton for today's sitting.

**PUBLIC BUSINESS****MOTION****APPROVAL OF ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE 1973****BUDGET DEBATE**

*Assembly resumed the debate on the Motion moved by the Minister of Finance on 7<sup>th</sup> December, 1973, for the approval of estimates of expenditure for the financial year 1973, totalling \$277,712,944.*

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. Member, Mr. Harry Lall.

**Mr. Lall:** Your Honour, I should like first to quote from the first paragraph on page 3 of the Budget Speech:

## Introduction

“Mr. Speaker, this is the ninth budget that this Government has been privileged to present to this House and to the Nation since it assumed office in 1964.”

It is magnificent to hear the hon. Minister of Finance state that this is the ninth budget to be introduced into this House since this Government took over the reins of office. But it is also

history-making that within eight years four Finance Ministers have presented nine budgets in this House. It is one's guess who will have the privilege to present next year's budget. This, in no uncertain terms, shows the confusion in which this Government is operating.

Then I should like to quote from the second paragraph on page 3:

“Today, the coastal areas of the country are well served by 470 miles of first-class roads all constructed since 1964; airstrips have been laid down in several parts of the hinterland which itself is now served by an expanded schedule of flights by our internal airline.”

If we examine the records minutely we will see that it is true that 470 miles of road were built but the burning question in this country is unemployment. After the road was built and the airstrip was built, what happened? Did the Government do anything to grapple with the unemployment situation of this country? Or are the 470 miles of road provided for the unemployed to walk upon as they look for jobs. Let them answer.

The Prime Minister at a meeting on Sunday night –

**Mr. Speaker:** Which Sunday night?

**Mr. Lall:** Last night, Your Honour. The Prime Minister indicated that people are going to him for jobs and so forth but it is clear from the financial policy of this Government, and from the way this Government is running its business, that there is no avenue for employment in this country.

When the Government members reply it is their duty to tell us where they are going to find employment for the unemployed and underemployed Guyanese and the 12,000 to 14,000 children who are coming out from school every year.

The situation in our country is really grave. It is true that the Government has presented one of the biggest budgets ever presented in this House, but figures on paper do not mean anything. Cash put into action to generate income so as to generate more employment in the country, that is what counts.

It is stated that we have to find – [Mr. Hoyte: “Stated where?”] if my hon. Friend did not read the Budget Speech, then I shall say that he is jealous because the Budget Speech was read by another Minister of Finance.

**2.20 p.m.**

The Budget Speech was read by another Minister of Finance and I have made the point that in eight years there were four Ministers of Finance. The first was the Minister of “economic dynamism”. The second was the Minister who will make the small man a real man. The third will feed, clothe and house the nation by 1976 but the present Minister of Finance maybe he has run out of slogans.

Your Honour, I should like to draw the attention of hon. Members to pages 17 and 18 of the Speech. Paragraph 2 states:

“The sugar industry started the year with good prospects. Output was projected at the beginning of the year at a record level of 390,000 tons. Market conditions were excellent, the negotiated price for sugar had been increased by nearly £17½ per ton; prices were rising on the Free Market where the price of sugar was recently quoted in excess of \$380 (G) per ton. Unseasonal rains, however, resulted in reduced harvesting and yield in the Spring Crop and the ground so lost would not be regained during the Autumn Crop which was itself affected by unfavourable weather conditions. The output projected for the year is not 315,000 tons – some 75,000 tons less than originally anticipated.”

I should like to deal with the comments on these two pages. You will see, sir, from this statement that sugar has been playing a great part in this country. It is playing a great part in this

country as far as the economy of Guyana is concerned. Sugar is responsible greatly for Guyana's balance of payment. Yet the real producers of sugar in this country have been kicked around like old rags. It is true to state that because of the inclement weather during the Spring Crop our grounds cannot be regained in producing the amount of sugar that we produced last year. But although we will export less sugar this year the income from sugar this year will be more than last year.

In 1971 the amount accrued from export sales of sugar was around \$85 million and from the figure stated by the Minister of Finance that the average production revealed 315,000 tons and when our local consumption is 25,000 tons are taken out then there will be an amount of 290,000 tons? We will get more than \$92 million. This is a for sugar alone, because in the United States market we are getting over \$41 per ton more than last year and in the United Kingdom market we are getting \$91 per ton more as from January this year. Therefore, sir, although the production is less to a very great extent, the income to the industry will be more. I am not talking about molasses and rum. If I speak about these then it will exceed \$100 million. I want to advise the Minister of Finance that the production figure for this year will not be 315,000 tons but it will exceed 325,000 tons.

**2.30 pm.**

Government says, "Hear! Hear!" We will have another Low-A-Chee Commission to see how the workers will share in the profit made by them, because less money was employed this year to produce sugar and, therefore, the profit of the industry will be more. We do hope that the sugar workers, the real producers of this country, share in this handsome profit, and I am warning the Government: don't you try to treat the goose that lays the golden egg like a foot rag, because you might not get here to lay the golden eggs so that you can boost the economy of your country.



Your Honour, what happened where employment of the sugar workers is concerned? Some of the factories ceased grinding from the 1<sup>st</sup> November. In 1971, they were grinding until the end of the year. Now most of the factories, eight out of the eleven grinding factories, have already ceased grinding which means that the sugar workers, the majority of sugar workers, are now unemployed. They have the festive season coming. The very sugar workers who worked hard to produce sugar are out of employment now. It is clear that the Ministers will heckle because they do not know what is poverty. It is only he who has been in poverty will know what is poverty.

I will ask the Government at this point, what will be sugar workers get from this exorbitant profit that will be made in the sugar industry from sugar produced? We are saying, (1) that the profit-sharing formula is not in the interest of sugar workers, more money should come to the workers. (2) We say that the minimum wage of sugar workers should be \$6 per day to cope with the present cost of living and with the rising profit of the industry. (3) We say that Government should legislate for a minimum take-home pay packet for sugar workers during the non-grinding period. It has been happening in other countries, for instance, Barbados. When the factory is not grinding, the workers are receiving take-home pay packets. Let us do something for the poor working class people of Guyana. We are here to serve them, not to laugh at them. (4) We demand severance pay laws for all workers. This was pending from 1963. This Government shelved it, it has forgotten it. (5) We demand security of employment laws in Guyana where by workers could be secure wherever they are employed, they can have peace of mind that they will not lose their employment. (6) We demand that Government should subsidise essential foodstuff that is used by the workers wherever it is possible. (7) We demand that subsidiary industries should be created by some of the profit made by the sugar industry in the areas adjacent to the sugar industry so that the younger generation will obtain some employment.

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Member, you have 2 minutes more.

**Mr. Lall:** Your Honour, I am the opening speaker in the debate and I am craving your indulgence to give me half an hour more.

**Mr. Speaker:** I will hold the scales evenly this time.

**Mr. Lall:** Your Honour, it is rather distressing that our democratic right to speak in this House is limited.

**Mr. Speaker:** The rules provide for 30 minutes. Do not make statements that are not correct. You have had 30 minutes according to the rules. Your democratic right is not limited.

**Mr. Lall:** yes, sir, but if the Government should vote for a Motion for extension, then it would be law and I could be allowed to speak.

**Mr. Ram Karran:** I move that the hon. Member be permitted to continue his speech for 15 minutes more.

**Miss Field-Ridley seconded.**

**2.40 p.m.**

**Mr. Lall:** Mr. Speaker, I should like now to refer to paragraph 2 on page 24, which deals with Prices. I quote what the hon. Minister of Finance said:

“Mr. Speaker, I would now like to make some remarks with respect to prices. One of the most serious problems that has faced this country in recent months and which would well persist in the coming year is the evident tendency for domestic prices to rise with unusual rapidity. During the first nine months of this year the Consumer Price Index rose by more than 4½ percent. This rapid increase in prices is partly the result of devaluation; but a much more important factor is the upward trend of world prices.”

Before I comment on this, I should like to read the third paragraph on page 25:

“It is clear that in this situation the Government must exercise the utmost vigilance to ensure that price increases are kept to a minimum and the consumer is protected from an unnecessary rise in the cost of living.”

The hon. Minister of Finance, Mr. Hope, gave the workers some hope that the cost of living will be kept down. Before I continue my comment I should like to read from paragraph 3 on page 26 and from paragraphs 1 and 2 on page 27. I quote:

“While the price of a number of locally manufactured goods and of imported items have been subject to Government control and restraint, producers of agricultural consumer goods have been taking the opportunity presented by increased demand for local products to charge higher and higher prices for their goods.

Each time that there is an increase in the Consumer Price Index, the analysis given by the Statistical Bureau points to the fact that the increases are due largely to prices of such commodities as beef, fish, ground vegetables, such as plantains and green vegetables, to name only a few.”

This Government would wish, Mr. Speaker, to urge farmers and those who distribute agricultural produce to restrain themselves to their urge to charge higher prices in the absence of control. Such a policy can only upset the Government's efforts to keep the cost of living down through the controls imposed on imported commodities and consumer goods of local manufacture. It is therefore timely for me to observe quite clearly that if agricultural prices continue to rise without justification the Government would be forced to consider the extension of price control to agricultural commodities.”

We think that there should be some measure of control so far as prices of consumer commodities are concerned but we should examine the factors that cause the prices of agricultural produce to increase in this country. I remember that in 1964 a cutlass could be bought for 60 cents, a file for 24 cents or 36 cents, a shovel for 96 cents or one dollar, a fork for three dollars. Now a file costs more than one dollar, a cutlass more than two dollars and the price of a shovel is over three dollars. An agricultural fork costs fourteen dollars.

The Government should first seek to control the prices of agricultural tools. Fertilisers have gone up in price by 100 percent. Let the members of the Government doubt this.

During the regime of the P.P.P. farmers were receiving incentives to plant. For one pound of plantain the consumers paid a penny, for two pounds of cassava three cents and one cent for each pound of eddoes.

Let us ask why farmers have had to raise the prices of their produce. The first Minister of Finance, the wizard, a Minister of economic dynamism, in the first phase of destroying the railway which transported people's goods very cheaply, raised the cost of transportation by rail. The fares for passengers, the vendors who transport their produce for sale, were raised by 60 to 70 percent.

These are factors that should be taken into consideration. Government should examine why and how the prices of produce have been raised. The members of the Government should not come here and say that they will control the prices. We are not saying that you must not protect the consumers, but you must examine how this action will affect the farmers. If it will affect farmers, then it is your duty to subsidise them for their produce.

**2.50 p.m.**

Your Honour, while I am talking about agricultural tools as far as the farmers are concerned I want to speak now about consumer duties. What affects the people in Georgetown affects the people in Berbice, affects the people in the Pomeroon, North West District and the Rupununi. For instance, they have to pay more for goods. But let me remind the hon. Minister although he might be old in experience as far as politics are concerned. Because he should have scrutinized the all-round problems facing the farmers before making such a statement.

**Mr. Speaker:** May I also remind you that you have three minutes more of the extended time?

**Mr. Lall:** I will finish, sir. There is a headlines: “Businessman castigates ETB” in the **Mirror** of Friday, 20<sup>th</sup> October, 1972, the newspaper of truth. Truth crushed to the ground shall rise again. The business man did not state his name because maybe he is afraid that his business might be closed. I will give the percentage increased after the setting up of the External Trade Bureau:

<b>Items</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Evaporated milk (Large)	48.1
Condensed milk	50.0
Powdered milk (5 lbs)	52.9
Cooking butter (1 lb)	71.1
Cooking butter (5 lb)	102.5
Cow and Girl (1 lb)	70.7
Ovaltine 16 oz.	35.7
Milo 16 oz.	42.0
Cheese	129.7
Split peas	21.1
Garlic	51.7
Onions	95.0
Potatoes	92.8
Channa	89.7
Red Rose Tea 4 oz.	45.8
Lassie Oats	22.2

*[Interruption by the Prime Minister]*

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Prime Minister please do not interrupt the hon. Member because he has already had 52.2 percent increase in time. [Laughter]

**Mr. Lall:** It is obvious that the farmers have to pay these prices and if their cost of living has gone up then it is obvious that they must charge a little more for their produce. But if the Government does not want the farmers to charge more and want to keep the cost of living down as far as agricultural produce is concerned then we are asking our colleagues in the Government to subsidise these agricultural commodities from profits that they will get from sugar and other sources. I thank you.

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Member Mrs. DaSilva

**Mr. DaSilva:** Mr. Speaker, as I was leaving the House last Thursday afternoon after listening to the Budget Speech delivered by the hon. Minister of Finance I met a man on the pavement by St. Andrew's Church, just outside the Public Building, and he was in a very bad mood. I will quote what he said: "All of them in deh no good, and we need foh change them. Look deh taxing we shrimp now. Is wha we gon eat?" That man obviously did not understand and what the hon. Minister of Finance had said in his Budget Speech, that is why it is necessary that the Opposition be given full opportunity to analyse and to point out the good from the bad, sieve the wheat from the chaff in the Budget Speech.

**3 p.m.**

**Mr. Speaker:** Are you inferring, hon. Member, that you are not given a full opportunity?

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Oh no, sir, I was not saying so. You just told the hon. Member Mr. Harry Lall that we had full opportunity.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Rule says 30 minutes.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Yes, sir, I will try to stick to 30 minutes. Before dealing with the tax proposals, because that is what concerns everybody, when it is time for the Budget Speech everybody immediately says, how are we going to suffer, what is the Government going to tax next? The hon. Minister gave us a report on the progress made in the country during the year just closing and we were told that the three main money earners, sugar, bauxite, and rice, should at least be not less favourable than they were this year. The price of sugar would be maintained at its present level, market conditions for rice are distinctly favourable, and for bauxite we are told, and I quote from page 24:

“... in the months ahead the company proposes to expand its calcining capacity, develop new lines of output and in fact gear its production programme to take account more fully of identified market possibilities.”

No wonder that the hon. Minister feels that he can say as he does on page 32: “Fore 1973 the prospects again appear promising.” I should like to caution the hon. Minister to be careful how he uses that word “again” because when it is time to present the Budget Speech at the end of 1973, he might be in the position where he would have to say that the projection was not what he anticipated it to be because of strikes, because of rainfall, because of the state of the world money market, and because of the demand falling off for bauxite.

I should like to deal with feeding clothing, and housing the nation. Feeding, clothing, housing the nation, this slogan has almost become an obsession with the members of the Government. They say it all the time without even bothering to think about it, whether it will ever really and truly become a reality, it just something they say. And talking about slogans, I should like to congratulate the Government for one slogan. I am very pleased that we no longer see stamped on our letters: “Efficiency Year”, “Advance Guyana”, “Year of Performance”, because they were just slogans. They meant nothing. We never had an efficiency year, I do not know much about the advancing, and year of performance, we are waiting for that, to see the

performance too, but I am very pleased to see they are putting worthwhile slogans on their letter now. This one says: "Polio kills and cripples, protect your child now." May I urge them to continue putting things like that that really mean something, that really send the message across and not slogans that do not mean a thing.

This business of talking of feeding, clothing, and housing ourselves by 1976, it is like the Budget coming early in December, as it always does, before proper time can be given to make preparation for the Budget, and it is so much a guesstimate, because comes the next year, we have so many financial supplementary papers to consider. The Budget comes too soon, before all the faces have been properly placed before the Minister, and to feed, clothe, and house the nation by 1976 is very much a pipe dream. It is not being realistic. Let us take for example, to feed the nation. On page 26 it states:

"While the price of a number of locally manufactured goods and of imported items have been subject to Government control and restraint, producers of agricultural consumer goods have been taking the opportunity presented by increased demand for local products to charge higher and higher prices for their goods."

And it goes on to page 27:

"Each time that there is an increase in the Consumer Price Index, the analysis given by the Statistical Bureau points to the fact that the increases are due largely to prices of such commodities as beef, fish, ground vegetables, such as plantains and green vegetables, to name only a few."

It is amazing that whilst the Government is trying to curry favour with one section of the community, the consumers, it completely ignores the problems of another section of the community, the farmer, the person who is really the person that feeds the nation. The farmers are small men by and large, they plant a couple rods of land – their greens and ground provisions and they will always be the ones who feed the nation. Even though very many people may have their little back yard kitchen gardens, plant their little bit of callaloo, Boulanger, what have you, there are still those who are poorly housed, who live in terrible conditions, overcrowded, with no



year space. They have to go to the market to buy their food so there will always be the need for the farmers. There are also those who are too lazy to be bothered to plant a few beds. I am fortunate I have a back yard, but I am talking of the people who, because of the poor housing conditions, are forced to go to the market to buy.

These people who are responsible for the feeding of the nation, it is time that the Government thought about looking into the conditions which cause the farmers to fix a high price on their goods and then it comes down to the market vendor who has to put on his little bit of profit, which would include his increased cost of living, and in the final analysis the high price is passed on to the consumer. But at the base of this is the farmer.

The Government has to consider subsidizing the farmer because these people, their prices of production are high, their drainage and irrigation problems are many, they have to pay high transport costs to get the greens and vegetables to the city, because there is no East Coast railway to help them. They have to pay taxes on the land they are leasing. Sir, you think of it. You rent a house and are you going to turn around and pay taxes? Why is it the people who lease the land have to pay taxes? Naturally, the farmers have to put the provisions at a high price to cover this, and this is passed on to the market vendor who puts on his little bit, and so onto the poor consumer who has to pay the highest price of all. It is high time the Government should consider subsidizing farmers and I should like to hear from the hon. Minister.

When I was talking earlier on about the deplorable conditions of houses, maybe the hon. Minister of Finance or the hon. Minister of Housing might tell us a little more about the proposed houses they are going to build this year. Will they be really low-income houses, no more than \$20 per month? How can a man with a wife and children afford to pay what they consider reasonable rental, they are giving them a mortgage, when the lowest-priced house is \$8,000?

It is amazing that whilst the Government is trying to curry favour with one section of the community, the consumers, it completely ignores the problems of another section of the community, the farmer, the person who is really the person that feeds the nation. The farmers are small men by and large, they plant a couple rods of land – their greens and ground provisions. It is amazing that whilst the Government is trying to curry favour with one section of the community, the consumers, it completely ignores the problems of another section of the community, the farmer, the person who is really the person that feeds the nation. The farmers are small men by and large, they plant a couple rods of land – their greens and ground provisions. This man's upkeep on the house will be about \$50 per month and he cannot afford to pay when his salary is \$100 a month, which for many people is a normal rate of income, and many earn less than that.

**3.10 p.m.**

We want cheaper houses, houses that will cost no more than \$20 per month. Perhaps the hon. Minister will tell us how many of those units will be built and how the Government proposes to go about it.

Feeding, Clothing and Housing the nation, as I think I said, has become an obsession with the Government almost to the point where the Government forgets its duty to the nation in regard to education, the problems of young people when they leave schools and the problem of health. Generally, it can generate a laugh when one talks about two in a bed at the Public Hospital, but I can assure you that it is no laughing matter and it is still happening.

Within the last two weeks I met a man who had been admitted to the hospital. Luckily he was not a stretcher case because he objected very strongly to sharing a bed with another man and he got up and walked out. This is the kind of thing that is happening and all we hear is the slogans, "Feed, Clothe and House the Nation". It is an unrealistic programme when we are not told how this will take place.

I do not think I mentioned clothing, but not much was given to “Clothing”. It was just mentioned as part of the proposal to be achieved by 1976. We would be interested to hear more of the plans, how we are going to clothe ourselves and how we are progressing. Is the cotton growing? Are the mills being put down, or will we have to change our habits of dress and dress like our Amerindian brothers and sisters? [Interruption] I cannot see that by 1976 we will have enough material to clothe ourselves in the manner to which we are accustomed. So let us know what progress is being made. [**The Prime Minister:** “You say you are for the Amerindians and you are talking down about them.”]

We are not talking down about Amerindians. I am merely stating a fact. We are accustomed to one type of dress; the Amerindians wear theirs and it is quite acceptable. I do not know whether it would be accepted in the House if hon. Members, especially the ladies, came dressed in the manner to which Amerindians are accustomed.

Let us deal with the tax proposals. At the first flush the tax proposals may not appear to be unreasonable because the hon. Minister was quite anxious to tell us that they are really helping the small men in this matter; the small man was not going to travel by air every two minutes; he was not going to buy a motor car for himself.

People who listened to this might put the cart before the horse. The statement of the small man not having to bear the brunt of taxation is a lot of nonsense, because we all know that taxation takes two forms. There is direct taxation and indirect taxation. If it is not directly stated in this Budget Speech as a new form of taxation, the small man must be concerned because eventually it is going to be passed on to him indirectly, as I pointed out earlier when speaking about foods and as I shall point out later when dealing with the tax proposals.

Recently there was the increased price on rum, which is certainly taxation on the small man. Why should not the small man, or any man, have his rum to drink at the end of a hard day’s work? It was not necessary to bring the proposal for an increase here. The tax was placed

on rum to subsidise the increase here. The tax was placed on rum to subsidise the increase cost of flour, and then the members of the Government had the temerity to tell us that the tax did not affect the cost of living, as if, when the man's husband drank in the spirit shop or in the liquor restaurant in the afternoon, it was something quite separate and apart from the overall salary the man earned each week. The man has so much to bring home each week and if he drinks it out, the housewife will have that much less to spend on food. If they do not understand about these things they ought to ask woman, especially housewives and mother, and they would let them know the facts.

Now we come to the shrimp tax. Again it is felt that this tax is for the rich shrimp companies and that the small man will not suffer because of the export tax on shrimps. But this could backfire and it could backfire and it could, in the long run, have an effect which would be that the small man would suffer. Guyana is the only country in the Caribbean imposing an export tax on shrimps. There is no tax in Trinidad, Barbados or Surinam which countries export shrimps.

If we tax these companies and they have to compete with other companies in the world market and if the prices of the other companies are lower, naturally the local companies will stand to lose and naturally buyers will go there where the price is lowest. It will mean that the shrimp companies in this country will have to close down and if this happens there will be more unemployed people apart from all the other whom we meet every day.

And what about the local fishermen? I notice that the shrimp trawlers are being asked to bring in 4 million pounds of fish every year. I had asked about this sometime ago. I asked why the trawling companies had been told to dump the fish caught. Why were they not allowed to bring in the fish to feed people in Guyana? Even if the fish could not be sold in order to protect the local fishermen, could it not be given to institutions such as The Palms, the hospitals or the orphanages? Why should the fish be thrown back into the sea? The answer given was "To protect the local fishermen."

What will happen to the local fishermen now? Who is protecting the local fishermen, because these people are going to bring in 4 million pounds of fish, it is estimated, every year, to sell to the Government at 12 cents a pound. The local fishermen cannot compete against that price. Is there going to be one price for fish bought from the trawler companies and another price for fish from the local fishermen?

The Government has promised to see that the prices of goods are kept down and that the effect of this – referring to the fish coming into the country at 12 cents a pound - will be a reduction in the cost of living. Promotion of the Government's objective of feeding the nation is self-evident. I would be interested to know what plans the Government has for protecting the local fishermen, the men who go out with their little boats, their seines or nets.

Next we come to the airline tickets. This tax is one that could backfire on the Government. We are the only nation in the Caribbean, I understand, that is charging his high percentage as purchase tax on airline tickets. I understand that the Jamaica Government had this in mind, that it wanted to charge 10 percent on tickets under \$100 (J) and 15 percent on tickets over \$100 (J). Representation was made to the Government on the matter and it was decided not to put forward that type of taxation but to do it like this. Tickets up to \$50 would carry a tax of \$5; tickets \$50 to \$100 would carry a tax of \$10 and tickets costing over \$100 would have a \$15 tax. [Interruption] Certain categories of travel are also exempted from the tax. If this type of taxation was brought into force, the tax would be spread out to a wider amount of people; it would be a fairer distribution. Taxes must always be fairly distributed. Do not try to get at one side to the detriment of the other.

**3.20 p.m.**

Why can't our Government do something like that Jamaican Government did? I am sure it is much better to all. Why is it trying to "curryfavour" with the small man, fooling the small man because they too want to be travel. Nowadays there are reasonably priced chartered flights and

they might want to go and see their relatives who have unfortunately left Guyana. They might want to go to Canada, the United States of America or the United Kingdom. They use the chartered flights and they would be subject to this type of taxation. It is no good fooling the small man because they are the ones who could least afford to pay. Maybe the people who have to travel for their firms, Bookers, and so on, their firms will pay the passages. But the small man has to find the \$900 or whatever it is. The small man will suffer from this airline tax.

Another thing too. I wonder if the Government has considered the matter that persons wanting to travel could get around the tax by getting their relatives overseas to purchase a ticket. You have an aunt or what have you say in Canada they could buy the ticket and the tax would not come to the Government. Or they go to the nearest point, buy the ticket, and again the Government does not benefit. What is the point of having a tax? It is better that we have it more evenly distributed.

This in turn would mean less business for the airlines. Airlines, like any other company in business hope to make a return and if you do not make a return you go out of business and this is exactly what is going to happen to the airlines. There will probably be fewer airlines coming in to serve Guyana. There will be less flights coming in each week, that means that the revenue will fall. The Government will lose revenue on the landing charges, they will lose revenue on the staff because of less flights coming in. these people pay tax on their income, and there will also be more unemployment.

Not to mention, sir, we are supposed to be getting closer to our Caribbean neighbours – an excellent idea. But if this tax is on, it will not encourage us to get closer to our Caribbean cousins. We must remember too, if the number of flights is reduced, the inconvenience it will cause to the businessmen who have to travel, or the letters coming into Guyana and last, but by no means least the people who come into Guyana even if it is for a few hours at the airport, the revenue that they bring into the country. All these points should be carefully considered and the

type of taxation for the airline be reconsidered maybe according to the lines as that done in Jamaica. In the end it might prove in the best interest of all.

The last tax proposal I wish to deal with is the small relief which is given to income tax. This is long overdue. Our country is one of the most heavily taxed in the world, and any small relief – and this is a small relief – is better than none. But the Minister should seriously consider seeing what should be done to relieve this high income tax rate that we Guyanese have to pay. There is one plea I should like to make to the hon. Minister and that is, the manner of combining the salaries earned by working married women who work. It is time that these women were assessed independently and not have their incomes combined with their husbands thus pushing the family income into a higher bracket. This is a suggestion we would like to put to the hon. Minister and we will be interested to hear what he has to say on this.

In closing I should like to quote what the hon. Minister said on page 53 of his **Speech**:

“... As incomes expand in 1973 it would be a matter of some urgency for consumption to be restrained and savings to be expanded.”

This could only be done if incomes really do expand and are not just a matter for the figment of imagination of the hon. Minister. If incomes really do expand, people want to save, it is a natural thing. So we are looking to see, as the Minister said, incomes will expand in 1973 and that this hopes will become a reality on the point of view of saving.

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Member Mr. Bancroft.

**Mr. Bancroft:** Your Honour, the 1973 Budget has been fittingly described as a Budget of hope, because for the first time in the history of Guyana, Government has put forward budgetary proposals which will ensure that the broad masses of the population look forward to a bright future. This is a record Budget because it has been greeted with almost unanimous support by all sections of the community – business and trade unions alike. I have the sneaking

suspicion that even our friends on the other side have also agree but it is their right to oppose they are paid to oppose.

Mr. Speaker, this Budget could not have been brought to this Parliament unless the Government had the wisdom and foresight to do some good groundwork in planning our economy and political strategy so that our people will enjoy the benefits and fruits of independence. Our trading pattern has changed with the result that today the people are now enjoying the fruits of a sound economic plan. If we turn to page 11 of the **Budget Speech** we find that the Minister was telling us of the solutions that were being sought to stabilise the Monetary Fund, he went on to say in paragraph 2:

“...developing Third World countries have been seeking to strengthen themselves through co-operation at both the political and the economic levels. I refer to the latest expression of this collaboration in the Meeting of Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned countries which took place in Georgetown a few months ago.”

3.30 p.m.

“Members should be aware, Mr. Speaker, of the fact that one of the most important achievements to have emerged from that conference, was the Action Programme for economic co-operation. That co-operation, Mr. Speaker, involves the significant expansion in trading relationships by developing countries among themselves, in order to promote their mutual economic development; the exchange of technical knowledge, the co-ordination of their policies as producers of primary products in order to avoid exploitation by industrialised countries, and collaboration in efforts by those developing countries to own and control their natural resources.

In this matter Guyana played a most significant role, in securing the articulation of this comprehensive action programme for economic co-operation. On the initiative of this Government, the Commonwealth Caribbean States have also endorsed this programme at the recent Heads of Government Conference.”

This was a definite action programme but I should like to quote from a booklet, *A Time to Stand Up and Be Counted*, and this was *A Report to the Nation* by the then Premier of British



Guiana, Dr. the Honourable Cheddi Jagan, on the Conference of Heads of Governments of the Commonwealth Caribbean Countries, in January of 1964. In this report to the nation on this Conference, he said and I quote from page 7,

“Broadly speaking, we discussed co-operation”,

the operational word, Mr. Speaker, is “discussed”,

“in economic, political and educational and cultural matters. If I may take the last named category first, we discussed such matters as the problems of West Indian migration ...”

and so and so forth, the Caribbean Examinations Council, among other things. But whilst he agreed that there was need for cultural expansion among the people of the Caribbean, it is this very party which lent its support to organizations which opposed this Government in the staging of the first Caribbean Festival of Arts in this part of the world.

I listened to the hon. Member Mr. Harry Lall speaking about confusion on the Government side but as I go on later in my address I will inform the hon. Member quoting by facts and he will see who is the most confused leader and party in this part of the world, and the inconsistency of his party. He spoke of a slowing down of the rates of growth of trade attributable in part to the decline in the rate of growth of production, a deterioration in the terms of trade, a rapid increase in the public debt and the annual debt charges, and a decline in the inflow of capital, an admission by the then Premier of British Guiana, that he had not the ability nor capacity to attract capital to Guyana.

Today, we witness that next year, this Government will be spending in capital expenditure, \$145 million. The point is that at this very conference in Jamaica, the then Premier of British Guiana was complaining that the commanding heights of the underdeveloped territory were in the hands of the developed territory, and he said on page 2 of this booklet, that the

developed countries have in their hands the commanding heights of our economy and the most profitable fields of production. “In my country, bauxite, sugar and manganese are mostly in foreign hands.” This was in January of 1964, the Premier of British Guiana complaining that the bauxite industry was in the hands of foreign owners.

In 1962, we had two statements on trade and industry in British Guiana. This is a statement by the Premier Dr. the honourable Cheddi Jagan when the Lord Rootes trade group and industrial mission was here, and he said among other things”

“On nationalization, no Government can tie its hands. The British Government has never done so. It is however not our intention to nationalize the bauxite and sugar industries.”

The then Minister of Trade and Industry Senator H.J.M. Hubbard on 28<sup>th</sup> March, 1962 at North Arrowcane mine, in commissioning a wheel excavator, he outlined the history of the bauxite industry in this country from 1920 to 1961, and he said among other things:

“From 1920 to the end of 1961, that company”,

that is, DEMBA,

“had exported 35½ million tons of ore out of a total of 38,341,189 tons exported by all producers.”

And he went on further to show the exploitation of this mineral resource by the then company:

“Side by side with this community at Mackenzie there developed the community of Arvida in Canada. An international link was forged in industry’s chain as British Guiana’s Bauxite was processed in the great smelters in Canada fashioned for the purpose.”

Here is an admission that the bauxite ore at Mackenzie was responsible for the creation of a community at Arvida in Canada. The then Minister of Trade and Industry like his leader, the

new Opposition Leader, was bemoaning the fact that this time was in the hands of foreign owners, but they had already given an undertaking to the bauxite owners and sugar that they will under no circumstances take the plunge to nationalize. The then Minister went on in his closing address in 1962 to say this,

“To these people who earn a living in the business of mining the red gold of bauxite, I say, go forward with your eyes on a confident future of rising expectations. To the company I say, go forward in the certainty that pledges given will be kept ...”

This was a pledge given by the leader of the Opposition to the company that under no circumstances will the Government of the People’s Progressive Party attempt to control the bauxite industry, and here today, the Opposition tries to tell this Government who to nationalise, what to nationalise and when to nationalise. As I was saying, because of the wisdom of this Government in nationalising the bauxite industry, for the first time this resource was able to make a meaningful contribution to the economy of this country. According to the Budget Speech of the hon. Minister, \$11.5 million was invested in Government bonds and securities, a direct contribution to the development of the economy of this country. This is not after tax, this amount was a profit which would have been used by Alcan to generate income and wealth in Canada if this Government had not the wisdom, the courage, and the foresight to go forward and to nationalise this industry. This was the dream of the Leader of the Opposition, a leader who was prepared to dream and had not the courage or the guts to take the necessary steps to transform his dream into a reality.

**3.40 p.m.**

Sometimes we tend to sympathise with the Leader of the Opposition because he may have realized that he has not the capacity, mentally or physically, to undertake a task of such great magnitude. It is a fact of life that the male of the human species when he undertakes to life a burden that is too great sometimes suffers from swelling of a part of the human organ. It may

be that the Leader of the Opposition had no inclination to lift this weight and therefore had to leave it until the mighty Sampson came along.

No one in his right senses would attempt to criticize a budget of this nature because we of the People's National Congress have been always consistent in what we have been saying. We have never deviated from the path which we undertook to travel, and the load we are always prepared to take because we have the size and the capacity to take the burden.

I am quoting now from *The New Road*, the Manifesto of the People's National Congress in 1964. On page 2, this is stated:

“This P.N.C. does not promise Utopia. It promises hard work and sacrifice if we are to build a nation and raise the general standards. We refuse to treat the electorate as if it was a group of children or illiterates. We know that our country's potential is great if not unlimited, but to make a potential a viable reality, requires intelligence, realism, hard work and planning.”

This has always been the strong point of the People's National Congress. It has always been able to rally around it some of the greatest brains in Guyana and this Budget is an indication of the brains we have within the Cabinet to undertake sound and economic planning for the advancement of Guyana.

In this Government wrong to embark on a programme of housing this nation by 1976 during the course of which time over 40,000 job opportunities will be made available to the unemployed in this country. Is this Government wrong to undertake a \$70 million electricity expansion scheme which will gain great momentum during 1973? Is this Government wrong in injecting into agriculture \$45 million next year, \$21 million of which will go to the livestock industry? Is this Government wrong in spending \$20 million on rehabilitation of the rice industry? Is the Government wrong in making sure that our farmers receive more for their produce?

The tune of the members of the Opposition has now changed. At one time they were saying that they were opposed to what the Government was doing. Now they are changing their tune and are telling the people that they made us nationalise the bauxite industry.

The facts are there for all the world to see. The members of the People's Progressive Party gave an undertaking in writing that under no circumstances would they nationalise this industry. They would like the public and the world to believe that they pushed this Government into nationalising the bauxite industry when they themselves gave an undertaking that under no circumstances they would nationalise it.

It is, indeed, a credit to this Government, it is, indeed, a credit to the nation that at this time in its history we have people with the intelligence, courage and foresight to undertake courageously development plans that are in the interest of the nation.

We said, in 1964, when we were in the Opposition that our trading patterns will not be conditioned by ideological considerations. We said, prior to 1964, that where trade is concerned ideological considerations are no criteria. We shall be neutral in everything except Guyana's advantage in the short and long run.

It is this enlightened approach, this desire by Government and this Government's pledge to the nation that we will sell our produce where we can get the best prices, which has resulted in the Government being able to produce a Budget of this nature.

The fact that we have been able to capture lucrative markets in the East and Far East, the fact that we have broken off and are now trading with all countries of the world with no strings attached, the fact that this Government has the courage – This party has always said, even when in the Opposition, that it will always take an independent course, that we will be pawns in nobody's game, we will be free, we will be the servants of no one. This Government, unlike our

friends on the opposite side, is committed to serving only one master. Our masters are the people whom we serve.

We have here the Manifesto of the People's Progressive Party (Founded 1950) for the General Election of December, 1964. In the first paragraph on page 13 of this Manifesto the People's Progressive Party again restated its stand on the question of nationalization. I quote:

“It is not the Party's policy to nationalise any industry, but if it becomes necessary in the national interest to do so, fair and adequate compensation will be paid. The P.P.P. reaffirms that it will not nationalise the sugar and bauxite industries;”

This was stated in the Election Manifesto of the P.P.P. as late as December, 1964. And they would like us and the world to believe that they are the ones who forced us into nationalising.

Our friends on the other side are concerned about unemployment. We sometimes hear them express concern for the rice industry but, sir, during the Heads of Government Conference in Jamaica, the then Premier of British Guiana was bemoaning the fact that the market for rice in the Caribbean was being limited. We can almost say with sincerity, conviction and truth that if the People's Progressive Party was still the Government of Guyana, the rice produced in Guyana would have had to be eaten by the people in Guyana because there would have been no market for rice anywhere at all.

Here was the Leader of the Opposition, who was then the Premier of British Guiana saying at this Conference in 1964:

“As regards trade, I pointed out that a few years ago, British Guiana began producing rice surplus to the requirements of the British Caribbean. We had to find markets outside. Incidentally, I complained about the encroachment in the Jamaican market of packaged rice from outside the area particularly from the United States. Trinidad and Jamaica were experiencing similar difficulties.”

I quote from page 9 of “A Time to Stand Up and Be Counted”.

The then Premier of British Guiana was complaining, a Government keeps complaining and discussing and takes no positive action whatsoever. All we hear was that they discussed it, but what was done to remedy the faults? Like a good surgeon they diagnosed the complaints but when it came to remedial action they were either afraid to act or they had not the competence and ability to undertake the necessary changes.

Sometimes the members of the Opposition try to tell us that we are not consistent. When we talk of co-operatives we say that co-operatives will be the basis for the development of this country. I shall now quote from the eighth paragraph on page 7 of The New Road:

**3.50 p.m.**

I quote:

“Co-operatives similarly have a most important role in an independent Guyana. Through these, the people can band themselves together to mobilise their individual savings for investment. Farmers’ co-operative societies can play a significant part in the purchase of materials and machinery for more productive farming, and in the education of farmers in modern techniques. Co-operative marketing societies can enable farmers and forest workers to pool their resources to provide for themselves adequate transport and marketing facilities. The Co-operative can, and under the P.N.C. will, be used as the agency for giving direct participation in industry to the small man on an equal footing of efficiency and economy with undertakings otherwise owned.”

This a commitment by the party even when it was the Opposition that when it is Government it will emphasise the role of the co-operative in the society, an undertaking which has been honoured. All through this manifesto one will see that the pledges given within this document has to a large extent been honoured.

On the question of nationalization, hear what this party had to say. I quote:

“Our Party has no interest in confiscation, and apart from its article of faith that all public utilities must be government-owned or controlled directly or through public corporations, is not doctrinaire on the question of nationalization. Even if in our judgment, nationalization of an existing industry is indicated, fair and adequate compensation will be paid.”

This is the difference between a throughbred and a donkey. This is the difference between people who know what they are doing and people who are guessing what they are doing. Because even in Opposition this party was not afraid to stand up and say that when it became the Government it was going to take certain steps to ensure that the ordinary man is given his rightful and honoured place around the table. He must have an equal share of the national cake. He must ensure that he will not like Lazarus sit beneath the table waiting for the crumbs to fall from the rich man’s table, but to sit around the table as equal partners enjoying the equal share of the national cake.

We have set about to do it in no uncertain terms. Despite the fact that our hon. Friends on the other side would like to think the contrary they too have realized and they have been convinced that this Government is doing what they could not have done in undertaking what they dreamt about and is becoming a reality what they hoped they could have done in the 60’s.

One of the most sensible hon. Members on the opposite side, not so long ago unlike his other colleagues, had the courage and conviction to stand up and say in this House that he is convinced that co-operatives in this country will succeed. We know that co-operatives will succeed because it is the instrument through which the ordinary man, the small man, will find his rightful place in society.

We heard our hon. Friend Mrs. DaSilva who has dispelled all doubts in anyone’s mind when not so very long ago we christened here and gave her the dunce cap. Today she has really qualified for it.



**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Member, I will not permit any disparaging remarks to be made on an hon. Member.

**Mr. Bancroft:** I am sorry, sir. Because it was most amusing when the hon. Member stood up here and said that a gentleman met her by St. Andrew's Church and complained about the increase in the price of shrimps. Maybe the hon. Member did not know that the tax on shrimp is really an export tax and had nothing to do with the ordinary man, and when the hon. Member further said that the Jamaican Government was charging 10 per cent on something she did not know \$5 is 10 per cent of \$50. It is amazing to me, Mr. Speaker, how the electorate of Guyana find themselves in such predicament to have persons of such a low caliber representing them in the highest forum of the land.

Sir, as I was saying this Government has its conviction and this Government has time and again restated its stand that it will be pawns in nobody's game and in our trading pattern we expect the best for our people. We are not interested in setting up any GIMPEX. What we are concerned about is to ensure that trade and the benefits of trade will be enjoyed by the broad masses of the people and not just a few selected people who have their own interest at heart. It is the welfare of the broad masses that we have at heart, it is the people in whom we are interested. We realize the problems of unemployment and we will continue to bring about and to plan programmes so that in the shortest possible time unemployment will be a thing of the past.

For instance, the Ministry of Mines has worked out a programme to assist miners in the hinterland. New areas have been discovered and the Government is assisting by way of food and machinery, and as the hon. Minister of Finance has said next year will see great things happening in Guyana. For it is a fact of life that in recovering the resources of our hinterland this industry alone, well organized and properly managed, can take off the unemployment in Guyana. To this we are committed to ensure that next year the miners and the people who are inclined to go into mining, through Government's assistance, will be able to go out and earn for themselves a decent livelihood. In addition to this, Government is expanding an enormous sum of money in

providing facilities to make the hinterland a better place for all of us. We are having airstrips, community centres, schools, improved medical facilities and better housing. All of this combined will enable the people who make their living and who have decided to settle in the hinterland it will make life for them a better place. We ask that the Opposition realizes the folly of opposing a truly progressive Government who imagination and foresight is making sure that the broad masses of the people for the first time has something to live and to hope for. We hope that they will cease taking political stances which mean nothing to the broad masses of this country. We hope that as dedicated patriotic and loyal Guyanese they will join forces with the Government and see the wisdom in what the Government is doing so that the people of this country, united under a People's National Congress Government, will grow from strength to strength. To this we are committed and we shall never, never swerve from the task which we have undertaken. *[Applause]*

**Mr. Speaker:** Perhaps this is a convenient time to suspend the sitting. The Sitting is suspended for thirty minutes.

*Sitting suspended at 4 p.m.*

4.30 p.m.

*On resumption --*

**Mr. R. Ally:** Mr. Speaker, this whole Budget is really an upside-down Budget. It is so if you look at this book. I would like someone to take it to you, and if you look at pages 5 to 20, you will see. This is my copy. I have seen according to this it proves clearly that the whole Budget is an upside-down Budget. [Budget Speech handed to the Speaker]

**Mr. Speaker:** Do you want me to have your copy?

**Mr. R. Ally:** Yes, sir.

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Member, maybe they want to confuse you.

**Mr. R. Ally:** They are confusing themselves, sir. This is just to confuse the nation and on the other hand they themselves are so confused, that the person who prepared this Budget Speech, he himself feels that the Budget is no Budget at all. According to the Budget Speech, which has been made by the hon. Minister of Finance, on pages 26 and 27, the hon. Minister made a statement that the prices of beef, plantains, ground vegetables, and green vegetables have been jacked up every now and again, but the hon. Minister failed to give us the figures, the amount of plantains produced during the years 1958 to 1964. He should have told us how many tons of plantains were produced then.

The farmers were producing then in abundance, reason why the price was down in the drain, 3 cents and 5 cents, the most one could have paid for a pound of plantains in those days, but it is this Government which is responsible for the high price of plantains today. For instance, on the bank of the Corentyne River, the people were producing plantains for years. One used to go by No. 78 koker, where the people usually come out with their boats, Mr. Salim knows this, to see the boats well filled with plantains. Today, when a boat gets there, just a bunch or two are seen. What is responsible for this?

The farmers on the bank of the Corentyne River took an Inspector, Mr. Crawford, who is stationed at Springlands Police Station, the Superintendent for the Rice Marketing Board, one P.N.C. top ranker called Hinds, and a few others, even the A.D.C., to prove what conditions they are working under at the moment, how animals are destroying all their crops. The Inspector, the A.D.C., and the Superintendent, Mr. Dundas, promised the people that they would make recommendations so that they would get a few shotguns in that area to protect their crops. The hon. Minister of State for Agriculture, he is asking the question: what they want? You cannot give them guns because if you give five shotguns the people would be overthrowing the

Government with the five shotguns. If this is the way this Government will behave, how will the farmers survive and produce in abundance so that the people will be able to eat?

Mara, East Bank Berbice, all the people have actually gone from there. This is an area where the people used to produce plantains in abundance. During 1961, 1962, 1963, on to 1964, when one went by the New Amsterdam market one could have seen heaps of plantains there. Today, no plantains are to be seen. They suddenly disappeared. This does not mean that the farmers are lazy.

At Brandwagt Sari, we had 64 settlers. Today, nobody is living there any longer. Farmers say they were forced out by this present Government. At Mara, we had 56 settlers, only 5 there today. At Ma Retraite, out of 56, only 7 remain. At Old MaRetraite, farmstead, 40 were there but all have disappeared. Schepmoed, 30 were living on the homestead where they were farming. They have gone and 15 on the farmstead where they were farming. They have gone and 15 on the farmstead are all gone. At Vydra, 30 were on the farmstead, none there today.

All these farmers had to leave the lands. This is where the people were producing a lot of plantains but they all left the lands and ran away because of maladministration and pressure which has been brought on these people by this present Government, which is saying the people are not producing and the little they produce they are jacking up their prices all the time and putting pressure on the consumers. They are not telling the nation the truth. What is really responsible for this? Why a fall in production? Let this Government answer why. They will not tell us. They only come here and “blah blah” all the time and tell us a heap of nonsense, and fool the nation that the P.P.P. is encouraging the people not to plant.

In the Mara district, drainage and irrigation trenches are in poor condition because the Government is not maintaining irrigation to a good standard. Mr. Minister Hoyte is saying, I cannot remember what Minister he is -- Mr. Speaker, I would like to say Germania is a village and Ma Retraite is a village.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you for enlightening me that Germania is a village.

**Mr. R. Ally:** There are many people living there in these two villages at the moment. These farmers are complaining that since the P.N.C. Government or the proxy government got into office, at the same time there was a disease, they do not know if it comes from the proxy itself or how it got there, but a disease they call the moca disease went up the river, and the moca disease is there from 1966 attacking all the suckers, plantains and bananas.

**4.40 p.m.**

They reported this matter to the Ministry of Agriculture and they are claiming that to this day nothing has been done to remedy the situation.

They are also complaining that if the wood they use to prop up bunches of plantains on the trees falls during the night, by next morning nothing is seen because pigs make off with them plantains. Wild pigs are all over the place.

The residents in these two villages are complaining that they now have to pay cents to transport one bunch of plantains from Mara to the New Amsterdam market, they have pay 3 cents per bunch to sell in the market and when they spread one empty rice bag on the ground they have to pay 10 cents for the bag space.

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Member Mr. Roshan Ally, we are not dealing with Estimates; we are dealing with the Budget Speech today.

**Mr. R. Ally:** That is exactly what I am dealing with. The farmers are also claiming that they cannot sell in the front part of the New Amsterdam market; they have to go right down by the fish market and when they get off the buses with their loads they have to pay \$1.50 for a cart to transport the foodstuff into the market.

They also claim that the cost of fertilisers has gone up very high. They say they are paying \$9 per cwt. of fertilizer today, \$8 for one pint of weedicide and \$3.50 for a pint of insecticide. They are claiming that they should not have to go out and purchase these items from private businessmen but that the Ministry of Agriculture should supply them. They claim that it is very costly when they have to buy these things at exorbitant prices.

The people on both banks of the Berbice River told me that when the hon. Prime Minister, Mr. L.F.S. Burnham, made his appeal and asked people to eat local and farmers to produce eddoes to take the place of Irish potatoes, they heeded his call and went all out to produce eddoes. The people at Germania showed me the acres of eddoes which they had cultivated at a great cost both in money and labour. But what happened? Wild pigs went into the farms and destroyed everything. Overnight everything went.

They are saying that they who need guns to protect crops which will feed the nation cannot get them, but other people have guns for games and they are further saying that terrorists are going around terrorizing people instead of terrorizing the wild pigs and animals in the forests.

The farmers who reside in these two villages, Germania and Ma Retraite, are appealing to this Government – they asked me to do this – that Government should to dig two deep trenches there and to put a koker in each trench. This would assist in drainage and irrigation.

They also complain that at the moment there is no nurse midwife in the area and this is causing a lot of suffering. Sometimes when an emergency case is involved a launch has to be taken. The launch leaves the area at 8 p.m. and does not reach New Amsterdam until 11 p.m. when it does reach New Amsterdam the patient will have to be on the street from 11 p.m. until 8 the next morning. The farmers are saying that this is making it very hard for them and they are appealing to the Government to provide either a launch or vehicle to be used for emergency cases.

People living along the banks of the Berbice River are producing eddoes, plantains and other vegetables. Those who are living in the villages from Ma Retraite down to Brothers Village are saying that if the dam from Ma Retraite to Canje Creek, which was started by the P.P.P., was completed then it could be used to prevent excess water from getting into their lands. Today they are unable to produce rice, eddoes, plantains or any other crop because when the rainfall is heavy the whole place is flooded. They are asking Government to complete the dam now.

These people claim that the Land Development Department – or the Drainage and Irrigation Board; they were not sure which was the authority – had sixteen 12-inch bore pumps and all have disappeared today. They told me that the pumps were used to assist them when there was flooding. They said that the pumps were given to them and they have tractors to operate them, but today the pumps are not there.

Where cattle are concerned, I wish to say that the farmers at Sisters met me and said that they heard the Budget Speech and the Minister's statement about the price of beef today. They said that they had 100 acres of land as a cattle pasture and 500 heads of cattle. The cattle cannot survive on 100 acres of land. [*Interruption*] This is the Sisters Land Co-operative Society. The members are claiming that there are vacant lands at the back of the area owned by the society. They are asking Government to enlarge their pasture.

At Black Bush Polder hundreds of acres of cabbages are dying because of the shortage of irrigation water. The people there made several requests for help but nothing has been done. I went there and saw that the cabbages, when they reached maturity, withered and the leaves did not fold. The people are asking that Government should give them water whenever it is needed.

There are other things like ground vegetables and green vegetables that suffer. Most of us know that the residents from Black Bush Polder bring most of their produce to the city and sell in the markets although they are not permitted to sell in the markets as it is felt that they

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should go to the Guyana Marketing Corporation. Farmers are claiming that they face a lot of hardships when they come to the city.

4.50 p.m.

Sir, at Black Bush Polder today there are 150 vacant plots of land. These lands are they lying idle when there are thousands of landless and land hungry people who need these lands. Nothing has been done on to this day. I should like to read this letter from the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of National Development and Agriculture:

“I attach for your information a copy of a memorandum dated 16<sup>th</sup> January, 1971 addressed to you on the abovementioned in order that steps may be taken to alienate all vacant plots.”

This means that there are vacant plots, I am not telling untruth. This is the attached:

“I have to refer to your memorandum dated 10<sup>th</sup> September, 1970 on the above subject together with a list showing surrender and abandoned plots at Black Bush Polder. However, the list is incomplete in that it does not show the dates of allocation of the plots, the length of time each as abandoned and the rent due.

It will also be necessary for you to indicate the cases in which rent can be recovered and those in which write-off should be sought.”

This is what is happening there. All these plots are there lying idle whereas farmers are anxious to get these lands especially those who are unemployed and landless. They want the lands; but nothing is being done to give them.

At Black Bush Polder the P.N.C. Group Chairman, Edward Ganga Persaud --

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Member Mr. Roshan Ally you have six minutes more.



**Mr. R. Ally:** I am reading now from the **New Nation**, Saturday, 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 1972:

“Message from Black Bush Polder

Dear Comrade Editor,

Please permit me space in your column to awaken Guyanese on the happenings at Black Bush Polder. I wish to draw your attention to the rice industry in the past and its present situation.

At one time Black Bush Polder gave five and ten bags of rice per acre; at present, through the hard work of our Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture on whose advice we have seen that the rice farmers are reaping as much as forty to fifty bags per acre.”

Mr. Speaker, the P.N.C. ought to be ashamed to put this in the newspapers because it is so false and they have also put the man's photograph in the newspapers which makes him look like a monkey. Everyone knows that this is impossible. This is a blatant lie to say that farmers at Black Bush Polder are producing forty to fifty bags per acre. What this P.N.C. Group Chairman has said is different from what the hon. Minister of Finance has said. He said in his Budget Speech that there is a drop in production of rice today. According to the agricultural census here it shows that in 1968 was exported \$27,632,591 worth of rice, and in 1970 \$18,048,535 worth of rice. This gives us the picture of what this man is saying is all false. Let us see what Mr. Mc Gowan did. He is Chairman of the Rice Action Committee and Chairman of a Local Authority. This top-ranking P.N.C. member planted a plot of land, 15 acre and harvested only 57 bags of padi. But what sort of bags were used? The Kenya bags, the very small bags; this is just equivalent to thirty bags of the Pakistan three-stripe bags. These people are taking advantage on the unemployed people in this country. A man like Mc Gowan should not have a plot in Black Bush Polder. This is another person: Corporal Cedric Joseph, Traffic Officer, Brickdam Police Station. These are people who are employed. How can you find jobs for those who already have? Cedric Joseph also planted a plot at No. 107 at Mibicuri North. All he reaped was 97 bags of padi. This is all false that the Chairman is saying. At Mibicuri South one man planted four plots of land at Nos. 57, 76, 78 and 111. When he was questioned how he got

four plots of land he said only one belonged to him and three belong to the hon. Minister of Local Government and a man name Cumberbatch.

5 p.m.

**The Speaker:** Hon. Member Mr. Salim

**The Minister of Local Government (Mr. Salim):** I would like to state that this is an untrue statement. I am not planting any rice at all, anywhere.

**Mr. R. Ally:** This is what I was told by the man who is planting the land, when he was questioned how he got at four plots of land. This was the answer given by the man to many others who were there.

**Mr. Salim** *rose* --

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Member Mr. Roshan Ally, will you please take your seat.

**Mr. Salim:** Mr. Speaker, I am not planting any rice, nor is anybody planting any rice for me. I would like this to be recorded.

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Member Mr. Roshan Ally, please continue.

**Mr. R. Ally:** Another hon. Member of this House, Mr. Jagnarine Budhoo --

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Member Mr. Roshan Ally, do you hear what the Minister said? You said that you were informed that he was planting rice. The hon. Minister got up in this House and said he was not planting any rice.

**Mr. Speaker:** You are so obsessed by what you are saying that you are not listening to what is being said. The hon. Minister said that he is not planting any rice and nobody is planting any rice for him. At any rate, it is time. Is it agreed that the hon. Member be given more time? [Hon. Members: (Government): “No”]

**Mr. Y. Ally:** Mr. Speaker, we are discussing this 1973 Budget and when we notice page 24, the Minister states:

“... Consumer Price Index rose by more than 4½ %. This rapid increase in prices is partly”,

there is a missing place, and then, it continues,

“the result of devaluation;”.

The missing word, I presume, could be “due to” devaluation, but not being surprised because over and over the P.P.P. has warned about the economics of devaluation which meant large companies which exported from Guyana gained a windfall while the majority of Guyanese taxpayers would suffer under the increased cost of goods imported. The P.P.P. advised over and over in the interest of Guyana, certain proposals, and that is, that part of these surplus gains collected should be directed as a subsidy towards the rise in cost of imported goods. But this advice, as we understand, fell on deaf ears. This definitely had it been accepted, would have cut down on the high cost of living for which this P.N.C. Government is responsible.

Let us look at the CARIFTA club. Whilst Guyana had to pay more for imports from Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad, this P.N.C. Government strangled our dollar to a lesser valuation on everything we sold to CARIFTA. This Government caused Trinidad and Barbados after having the advantages, to capitalize on our import position to make us a “packoo”, this means that they were buying from us cheap, and they were selling us dear. We read a statement on page 25 and I would like to quote:

“... the Government must exercise the utmost vigilance to ensure that price increases are kept to a minimum and the consumer is protected from an unnecessary rise in the Cost-of-Living.”

How could the Government justify this when the Government acquired the Guyana Gajraj Ltd. and over which it made big capital that this would bring down the cost of living? But what did we find? Instead of waging war against the high cost of living, this luxury business brought in more luxuries, and when I say luxuries, motor cars, Daimlers, Rovers, motor cycles, electric fans --

**Mr. Speaker:** Are Daimlers and Rovers not motor cars?

**Mr. Y. Ally:** I do not know how the Government interpreted it, but these are luxuries and I am making the point where they are luxuries, electric fans, hair dryers, shampooing machines, tape recorders, radios, radiograms, records etc. Imagine, a so-called socialist government feeding the people with luxuries instead of cheap food! But let us forget this Guyana Gajraj Ltd.

What about the \$½ million P.N.C. complex Regent Street? It was opened with big pomp and fanfare. It was said this would help the poor man to be the real man by destroying the business sharks. But what we found? The biggest stock in trade that they had there was soap powder, all the brands and the various labels, whatever soap powder one needs one can go and find it there. Even the agents cannot keep track of all these. And a big lot of staff. A proper government would have kept this \$½ million complex so as to assist the E.T.B. for wholesale only, and this is something that they should consider, especially when there is merit, and take this advice.

If they took this complex seriously they would be able to control the commanding heights of our economy when it comes to imports. What do we find? Sir, the whole talk about town today is, the E.T.B. means everything balled up. Apart from enjoying a monopoly, apart from

getting a bigger slice of the cake, which is 10 percent without an investment of one cent, without even turning a straw, but the P.N.C. is nowhere wiser today but we must realize that we cannot eat the cake and have it. We cannot want the fat profits from the merchants and still keep down the rising cost of living of the poor man.

The E.T.B. makes no effort to fulfill acute shortages of merchants' orders. If, let us say, the monthly requirement of milk is 100,000 cases, one imported would pay a 10 percent down and order 1,000 cases. A week or two after, another importer comes in and books 500 cases. Some days later, again you find another one coming and booking 2,000 cases, but the remaining amount, what the Guyanese public would consume, and really wants is not being ordered and this situation creates real shortages when these limited items arrive in the country. The E.T.B., realizing that the merchants are creating an artificial shortage, should try and use its influence and try and order the surplus shortage of the amount, bring it back, get the complex in Regent Street to wholesale it even at cost price, and break down the cost of living to the poor people of Guyana.

### 5.10 p.m.

The Government should then encourage competition among the retailers. This system is something which we expect a big complex costing half a million dollars should do, but we find that all it has succeed in doing is closing down the three Chinese groceries at the three corners and nothing more.

This game of jiggery-prokery will not solve our problems. It is no wonder that there is always a deliberate shortage of drugs, of milk, potatoes, onion, garlic, tomato paste and other essential foodstuff. When this happens the P.N.C. members cry out, "Jail the sharks!" but this will not solve the problem. This used to happen with cooking oil and we have clearly seen the effect after control was abolished and today, if anyone wanted to black market cooking oil, there would be nobody to buy it. This is what the P.N.C. should learn about business management.

If we can adjust ourselves, the cost of living will surely break down. Similarly, if this half a million dollar complex is used to centralize the wholesaling of goods only and to allow competition between the retailers, there will be no need for control, no need for black marketing, no need to jail the sharks. The Government would then be working in the interest of our nation.

But what do we find? I understand that the Mayor of Georgetown is encouraging another complex in Merriman's Mall. Some sort of aluminum complex is being made there.

The P.N.C. mentality is to fill round holes with square pegs. The members of the P.N.C. can only run "bob-shops"; also they can put business like a Dharm Sala. The people they put in these posts do not have brains and business acumen. Their loyalty is to Congress Place, only, but business must be business and not loyalty to Congress Place.

I shall read from the third paragraph on page 25:

"... the Government must exercise the utmost vigilance to ensure that price increases are kept to a minimum and the consumer is protected from an unnecessary rise in the cost of living."

As I said, when they talk it is only meaningless "Big Talk" to the already overburdened Guyanese people.

These are realities. The Government is not seriously tackling the rise in the cost of living. The Government is just throwing dust in the eyes of its people. The whole secret of trade is supply and demand and unless the Government is prepared to study the meaning of supply and demand it will not be able to solve business problems. Every good shopkeeper knows about this law. But the Government is putting the blame on the farmers and saying they must keep down the cost of living.

At one time it was possible to fool Guyanese people, but not today. Let us read from the second paragraph on page 27:

“It is therefore timely for me to observe quite clearly that if agricultural prices continue to rise without justification the Government would be forced to consider the extension of price control to agricultural commodities.”

I made the point that cooking oil at one time was price controlled. Today the price control has been removed but what happened? The position has improved beneficially and there is no need for black marketing in cooking oil. Had the Government continued with its policy as before there would have been a great deal of black marketing and shortages in respect of cooking oil. Yet Government is following a policy that is against the interest of the people.

What about milk shortages? What purpose will price control serve? Today there is a shortage of fresh milk on the market.

This P.N.C. Government must stop soaking the poor and should give a subsidy to encourage production. Unless farmers and people who are interested in this kind of production are encouraged by subsidies, the situation will, I believe, deteriorate further and further.

What about the prices of fish? If the Guyana Marketing Corporation is selling at high prices today, what is the purpose of control? Would price control bring any improvement to the market? Clearly the Government must think along these lines. What about greens? How would the price control help the cost of greens? How would price control assist in bringing more greens to the market?

Let me read the Daily Chronicle of Wednesday, November 8, 1972. There is an item on page 9 under the heading “VANDALS, THIEVES HIT RAILWAY LINE FARMERS”. I quote:

“Seventeen farmers occupying plots near the railway line from Kingston to Kitty, plan to seek protection against thieves and vandals, who are reaping and destroying their crops by night.”

It refers to Gocool, one of the farmers:

“Pointing to three fruitless banana trees, he said: ‘I should have reaped the bananas next week, but thieves out the bunches and left the trees standing.

Rajdai, a widow who contributes to her family income by trying to keep her dead husband’s farm going, lamented that she is the ‘eye pass’ of the thieves.

‘Almost every night I lose something’ The thieves formerly carried off some calaloo and a few other things, but now they meant to take all, ‘she said, pointing to a lettuce bed left half empty by raiders.’

Narine, a partly paralysed pensioner, who farms solely for home purposes said he was thinking about giving up his plot since he did not consider it worth-while planting any more.

‘I can’t see the benefit of planting and having the reward of your labour reaped by someone else.’ This is an experience which nearly all of us are going through right now.”

How can price control help to prevent the rising cost of milk, fish and greens? Clearly we must be constructive. What is needed is Government consultation with those in authority and with those who know about these things. The People’s Progressive Party is always willing to consult when it is a question of improving the lot of persons in this country.

During the regime of the People’s Progressive Party food was plentiful; food was cheap. The P.N.C. should try to consult with members of the P.P.P. to see how we can tackle this job together and bring down the cost of living.

In our opinion, the best way to do this is to subsidise the farmers, who are the persons hit the hardest. Unless the Government is prepared to subsidise the farmers and to let them make their contribution, we will be doomed to pay more for food.



Instead of spite, hatred and price control, let Guyanese have a feeling of oneness so that I can help you and you can help me. This is how we can all be proud to know that we are making our contribution to our country.

5.20 p.m.

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Co-operatives and Community Development.

**The Minister of Co-operatives and Community Development (Mr. Haynes):** Your Honour, I should like to take this opportunity to reaffirm to this House and to the nation Government's commitment to the philosophy of Co-operative Socialism. I have heard in this House the P.P.P. saying that they have long abandoned the idea of the co-operative as a means of bringing in socialism. Happily for us in this House we recognize that if we were to abandon the philosophy of Co-operative Socialism we would be going back on a promise which we made to the people, and indeed, we would be going contrary to our belief and our philosophy.

As we understand it, the co-operative is the means by which the majority of masses of the people whether in this country or in any other country have an opportunity to have a say in the decision-making machinery of any entity or industry in which they are involved. Perhaps it would have been good for us as far as the P.P.P. is concerned if we would abandon this quest for developing the co-operative sector and do like the leader of that party and have a big institution where we can operate our capitalist ideology masquerading as a socialist and having the greatest amount of the contribution from that industry to a small group of people rather than to a larger group.

I say this because we must, in discussing the Co-operative Socialism, discuss the two systems that exist in our country today. Those two systems, on the one hand the capitalist

system, and the other the socialist system. In the capitalist system you have the worker, the bread mass of people operating merely as a tool of production and no more, while at the same time enhancing the social and economic position of the people who own the entity. On the other hand, the socialist philosophy ensures that the worker is no longer a tool of production but that he has a say in the decision-making machinery of the entity in which he participates.

Co-operatives, Your Honour, is an economic institution aimed at getting the masses involved in the advancement of their economic and social pursuits. The hon. Minister of Finance and Trade in a very comprehensive Budget Speech set out very clearly what would be the role of the Government, the role that the Government institutions would play in 1973 and perhaps onwards. Therein he set out quite clearly the role of self-reliance which is endemic in the philosophy of Co-operative Socialism as well as in the philosophy of self-help where it has been envisaged that the co-operative sector will contribute side by side with Government institutions, large sums of money for the development of this country.

Mr. Speaker, over the past two years Credit Unions in this country have been able to a mass over \$8 million in capital; and the Credit Union movement will continue to expand. Indeed, Credit Unions in 1973 would be looking to the establishment of housing schemes for the many members within its fold. We have heard a lot about failures in co-operatives in this country. My thesis is that it is always easy to identify a failure, but the glowing successes have always been hidden by the opponents against a particular system to suit themselves. Here we have very successful credit unions, like the Transport Credit Union, the Lithographic Credit Union, the Weiting and Richter Workers Credit Union, to name a few, and we look towards the Corentyne perhaps for an agricultural Co-op, the Port Mourant Follow-Up Co-operative Society. It was this Government that gave the Follow-Up Co-operative Society the opportunity to be where it is today. Because while the hon. Members on the other side failed to have their then Commissioner provide the arrangements for the registration of such a society, and the P.P.P.

Government was unable to provide facilities for the people in that area, made them become frustrated. It was not until this P.N.C. Government went into office, despite this jibe, and despite the inconsistencies of this Opposition, that we only like and develop certain areas which are traditionally P.N.C., we went ahead and did great work for this Society, in so much so that at the last crop they reaped no less than 85,000 bags of paddy.

Your Honour, I want to make it very clear that this Government is not a Government interested in one set of people. This Government has a broad policy aimed at assisting the broad masses of the people to save them from exploitation, to save them from want, and to save them from poverty. We will continue in this vain to ensure the mass of people get the things they need.

Perhaps we must turn to the Government's programme of Feeding, Clothing and Housing this nation by 1976. We have heard the scoffers from various angles talk about the likely failure of this programme. Perhaps, it is not a coincidence that so many developing countries today have decided to adopt a course of feeding, clothing and housing the nation. Because, indeed, one of the first things a government has to do is to ensure that its people are properly fed, clothed and housed. It is only with the satisfaction of these three criteria that the broad mass of the people can become satisfied and be able to participate in larger programmes of national development. Therefore, sir, the co-operative will continue to play a forthright and dominant role in feeding the nation.

### **5.30 p.m.**

More co-operative societies, agricultural societies, will be organized in 1973 so as to be able to carry on the vital programme of feeding this nation.

We are going to re-organise more of the pig rearers' co-operative societies. We are going to be involved in co-operatives in setting down hatcheries to ensure that we get more chickens to

put on the market at a reduced price. We are going to use the cottage industry as a means of a backward and forward integration of agro-based products, that is, from the stage of the growing of the crop, to the processing of the crop, to the distribution of the crop, back into the society. We are going to ensure that the cottage industry sees that small groups of people who, hitherto, never had the opportunity, are organized in co-operative societies to produce jams, jellies and preserves, canning of fruit, canning of juice, so as to make sure that every individual at the rural level should be part and parcel of this thrust for development.

The hon. Member Mr. Maccie Hamid says we should say: “mariddle mariddle mare.” It is so often that we have been accustomed to his jokes in this House that we never ever take him very seriously because we know that the hon. Member himself is a capitalist. He talks about the Rice Marketing Board but he does not tell us why he does not turn his electrical business into a co-operative. The clear indication is that he does not want to share the profit with his people.

We have heard the hon. Member Mr. Yacoob Ally speak about the P.N.C. co-operative complex. I want to make it very clear that neither the P.N.C. nor the Government owns the co-operative wholesale society at the corner of Light and Regent Streets. The Co-operative Wholesale Society Ltd., the name speaks for itself, in that it is a registered co-operative entity, owned and controlled by co-operative societies and friendly societies, and Government merely provides technical advice as it does in all co-operative societies aimed at ensuring proper development of that society. But let us look at the whole society and perhaps discuss it so that some of the hon. Members on the other side of the House could get the picture straight.

This society was established by the various co-operative and friendly societies to ensure that it worked side by side with the External Trade Bureau to rationalize prices, consumer prices, in this country. The fact that it had come into competition with established capitalist entities put it at the very beginning at a disadvantage as against the others and so the co-operative wholesale society began in that climate and is continuing to establish itself in that climate and is continuing

to establish itself in that climate, in fact, it has so far since the 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 1972, established no less than eight retail outlets in this country and proposes to go on to one hundred outlets.

The main purpose of this society, as I said, is to rationalize the price of consumer goods but we must understand that the prices of consumer goods are not controlled by the people in this country, because the society has to import some of the goods which it has to sell and, therefore, inflation due to rise of cost of living and wages in countries outside must definitely affect in some way the measure of contribution it can make to people.

One of the important functions of the wholesale society is to make sure that it has the opportunity to market the farmers' goods, to get the end product of production, that is, from the time updates are sown or fruit is sown, to the time it is manufactured to bring it to the people. To give them an opportunity, (the farmers particularly) in the rural areas, to be able to purchase weedicides, fungicides, and fertilisers from that institution. Basically the co-operative wholesale society has been set up as an institution to prevent the capitalist market, as it is now, from creating artificial shortages and further bringing confusion and rising costs on the people.

We move now to clothing the nation and the co-operative's role has been very clear. We are going to go into the production of shirts, bedspreads, pillow cases, sheets, and the whole works, because we believe, (and, sir, for the edification of the hon. Member Mr. Hamid), we have said in this House time and time again, perhaps ad nauseam, that we propose to import the machinery and the yarn and to produce the goods which we need.

As I was saying, sir, before the interruption, the co-operatives are embarked on house building. Co-operative societies have already erected a number of buildings and institutions to the tune of over \$8 million in the last year and a half, and this is a positive contribution by the co-operative movement to the goal of housing this nation by 1976. Co-operative societies in future will contribute no less than 2,000 houses each year to the continuation of Government's programme of housing the nation by 1976.

In all this development it is necessary that we set up the institutions of learning along with the financial institutions that we have already set up. There is no doubt that the Guyana National Co-operative Bank has made its presence felt in the national economy of this country.

We have caused, through the Guyana National Co-operative Bank, the reduction of the harnessing of the funds of the small man in the foreign entities. In this process of miniaturizing the foreign banks, the Guyana National Co-operative Bank will continue to play its role of expansion and development.

As I was saying, side by side with the institutions of harnessing the money of the small man, we must set up the institutions of learning and so we have begun to reorganize the co-operative training institutes all over Guyana. We have reached the stage where we are now going to set up a co-operative college at Kuru Kuru on the Linden highway.

The co-operative college will provide both theoretical and practical training for all co-operators. It will supplement and improve the work done by some of the training institutes.

The other day I heard an hon. Member of this House say that building co-operatives have a lot of problems, but I would like the hon. Member to know that the co-operative movement, through the division of the Ministry of Co-operatives and Community Development, has already embarked on a programme of training small co-operative societies how to make out their quantities for buildings, how to get out their tenders in proper order and how to keep the financial books of their societies so that they can play an important part in the development of the building trade.

Co-operative societies will continue to manufacture clay bricks. This is a very important ingredient in the development of our housing schemes and our housing programme generally. And in 1973 we propose to spend nearly \$350,000 in re-organising and establishing more clay

bricks mills so that they can carry on the task of producing the raw material for the building programme in this country.

Now, sir, except for the slight digression to speak about buildings, I was saying that the co-operative college will provide managerial services for co-operators. It will give them an opportunity to learn both the theory and practice of day-to-day co-operating. It will be sited, as I said, at Kuru Kuru on the highway and will have over 700 acres of land.

We will have co-operators participating in agriculture, in livestock, in building, and we will set up there a community for living purposes. All the courses at the college will be residential and it is hoped that the majority of co-operative societies along the Linden Highway will make use of the service which the college will provide.

An advisory committee has already been established and will be meeting within the hour to decide on curriculum development and programming for the college. Perhaps it would be good for those hon. Members on the other side, who have now suffered a change of heart and say that they believe that the co-operatives can be of valuable assistance to this country, to take the opportunity to participate in this college.

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Minister, do you propose to be much longer?

**Mr. Haynes:** Yes, sir.

**Mr. Speaker:** In that event there is need for an extension of time.

**Miss Field-Ridley:** I beg to move that the hon. Minister be given another 15 minutes to continue his speech.

*Question put, and agreed to.*

**Mr. Haynes:** As I was saying, one of the principal units to be established in the college will be a documentation centre which will gather all the statistical data and information on co-operative societies, not only in Guyana but in the whole Caribbean.

In the words of Mr. Chris Lum-Jansen, who is I.L.O. adviser on co-operative matters in the Caribbean and who is stationed in Trinidad, the college will be unique in that it will be the first in the Caribbean and Latin America to provide the opportunity for students and co-operators alike to participate at both practical and theoretical levels on the farms and in the college.

I shall turn my attention now, sir, to community development and the process of self-reliance. This Government boasts a record of having been the only Government in the Caribbean and, indeed, in certain parts of the world to be able to motivate people to do self-help work.

I shall take the liberty to quote from a booklet called "Economic Development, Productivity and Talent" in which the Professor of Management at the New York University Graduate School of Business, Mr. Peter F. Drukker, made the following statement:

"The governments of poor countries must be effective and purposeful. But there is one thing governments can never provide: the individual's sense of achievement. Yet this is the essential element of development: the individual's conviction that there is opportunity, energy and purpose to his society rather than problems, inertia and hopelessness. Development is largely a matter of the dynamics of individuals and of a local community. These can be supplied only by generating local responsible initiative and multiplying human energies."

It in this context, sir, that we at Community Development have been continuing to carry a programme which the P.P.P. have failed dismally to perform in their time. Where in their time they were only able to provide, in three years, 37 self-help projects, this Government, under the leadership of the Prime Minister, Forbes Burnham, has been able to do 1,580 community development projects. It is noteworthy that in their time sought merely to relate the cost of a project to the cost of the self-help labour. *[Applause]*



That was if the people in an arch were only able to provide self-help labour to the tune of \$10,000 and they wanted a project of \$30,000, they (the people) were required to find the \$10,000 which they provided in labour, the \$10,000 was then provided by the Government and given in materials and \$10,000 in finance was provided by the people by collections. While on the other hand, we have been able to mobilise in this country over half a million people of all walks of life on community self-help projects to the tune of over \$50 million; that is to the end of October this year.

Community development and the other Ministries have provided \$800,000 for materials and equipment to self-help projects and at the same time provided food and technical services to those projects. We have built many community centres. We have rehabilitated our River and sea defences. We have rehabilitated trails and we have rehabilitated bridges so that the farmer can get his produce out from the land. These are but a few of what we have done. Despite the attempts by the hon. Members on the other side to get the people in the rural areas not to participate in self-help activities and efforts, the programme for self-help has been going on three-fold.

This Government will continue to carry on its commitment to the nation because we believe that once we provide the facilities for the people then the people themselves will come forward in large numbers to provide the amenities which they deserve. Because I believe that a community gets the service it deserves and if the people in a community recognize that there is a certain evil between themselves and the things which they deserve, then the people will remove that evil or they will not have the services which they deserve.

This Government is committed, as I said earlier in my speech, to the philosophy of Co-operative Socialism and endemic in that philosophy is the thesis of self-reliance and self-help. And perhaps it would be on this note that I would close. Community self-help has provided and will continue to provide more cottage hospitals in areas where we need them, river defences

where it is needed to prevent the water from taking over the land, drainage and irrigation so as to assist farmers to be able to produce more food and to be able to give him a better way of life.

It was at the Mayors Conference in October, 1971 that the hon. Prime Minister made this statement. I am quoting from a book called *The Challenge*, Page 35.

“There is one central theme to the P.N.C.’s philosophy and that may be described as self-reliance, that may be interpreted as self-help. As a nation today, we have learnt from our own experience and the experience of others that no nation can build itself by relying upon handouts largest and the generosity of others. Assistance, however is welcome but the task of development, the basic need to develop can only be satisfied by the efforts of the people, by their relying upon their own resources and the resources of their country combining and exploiting those to achieve the objectives and goals which they have set themselves.”

Thank you. *[Applause]*

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Member Mr. Jagan.

**Mr. Jagan:** Your Honour, in 1962 the Prime Minister in this House had moved a Motion under Urgent Public Importance in respect of picketing outside the Parliament Building. The Prime Minister in that Motion rightly said that picketing and peaceful demonstration should be permitted and that he himself had taken part in a number of demonstrations. I think the House on that occasion unanimously agreed with the views expressed by the hon. Prime Minister that persons should be permitted to have peaceful demonstrations and so on. That was in 1962. Despite that, when this Government came into power we recall that the Police Force used dogs to break up the strike at the Rice Marketing Board. The Prime Minister apparently and the Government had forgotten about what was said about peaceful demonstration. Again, when there was a strike at Sandbach Parker and we saw again the police using dogs against the strikers. There are many other strikes where the Police adopted the same method of terrorizing the workers and breaking strikes. Because of representation made the Prime Minister on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1971 in respect of peaceful demonstration said this in this House.

I am referring to a passage which was reported in the **Mirror** on Wednesday, November 20<sup>th</sup>. I was present and this is a passage which is being quoted from the speech made by the hon. Prime Minister. Peaceful demonstrations. The Prime Minister at the time was making a number of promises and then he came to the question of peaceful demonstrations.

“I am surprised at that. I am surprised to hear the suggestion that peaceful demonstrations are not permitted but this I say: administrative instructions will be given that peaceful demonstrations should be in no way impeded and as long as there are proper guarantees that there are applications for holding processions they should be granted. I who have led so many processions in my life do not want to rob any member of the public, especially the Opposition, of the exercise which I have enjoyed in the past. And I give an undertaking.”

Your Honour, during this year, despite the undertaking that was given by the hon. Prime Minister during this year, when the G.A.W.U. wanted to hold a May Day demonstration, two applications were made in respect of the holding of the demonstrations. One would have thought that having regard to what the hon. Prime Minister had said, that the police would not have used the guns and bayonets to terrorise the workers. Only during last month persons were again picketing outside of the Parliament Building when they were arrested on the flimsy charge of disorderly behavior and they were kept at the police station until 8 o’ clock in the evening.

This is nothing new. Not only with supporters of the P.P.P. that the Government misused its powers, but I see a document which was published by Ascria dated December 5<sup>th</sup>, 1972 which would show how the Government misuses its powers and puts up trump charges against people who may not support its policy. They refer to a Mr. Osafo of B.V. Ascria Compound. This is what it states:

“December 5, 1972”

under the heading of “Guyana”

“Osafo of B.V. Ascria Compound attended a M.A.O. meeting on October 27<sup>th</sup> after the shooting of a 15 year old child, Keith Caesar. Days after, B.V. police questioned him about a tape recorder. Osafo appeared before the court on December 1<sup>st</sup> to answer a charge of disorderly behavior.”

It seems that whenever the Government wants to harass people who do not support its policy it uses the police to terrorise these people, to arrest them. I think my hon. Friends on the other side know that the charge of disorderly behavior is one of the easiest charge for the police to prove. [Interruption]

**Mr. Speaker:** You used your excellent advocacy and got them off?

**Mr. Jagan:** Your Honour, that was due to a slip up of the police.

**Mr. Speaker:** Your acute mind came to their rescue.

**Mr. Jagan:** The police had forgotten to say that the person had spoken loudly. That is all. It is so easy to convict persons for disorderly behavior, that is why this person referred to in the bulletin by Ascria was also charged with behaving disorderly. I do not know why the Government is afraid. Persons should be permitted to express their views.

It was reported that the hon. Prime Minister only last evening said that peaceful demonstration, picketing outside of the Parliament Building would be permitted. The hon. Prime Minister only mentioned that picketing would be permitted outside of Parliament Building. I do not know whether his intention is that picketing at places other than outside the Public Building would be prohibited. We all know the hon. Prime Minister's brilliance and therefore one wonders why is it that the Government, that claims to have so many people whom it has won over, why is it that the Government is afraid of criticism.

My hon. Friend says I am criticizing. I am permitted to criticise the Government here. It is one of the privileges that a Member has. One wonders why is it the Government is so afraid. On the last occasion when we debated the Budget Speech, I remember that the Movement Against Oppression had also put out a leaflet in respect of the conditions of the prisons and although the conditions of the prisons were exposed in the document, it appears that the Government has done nothing to relieve the sufferings of the prisoners.

**6.10 p.m.**

That is why on a number of occasions persons who were brought to the Courts during this year complained to Judges about the conditions in the prisons. The hon. Minister of Home Affairs in his discussions recently with Prison Officers said that one has to expect prisoners to attack the conditions in the prisons, but that is not really the answer. One must look into the complaint to see whether it is justified or not. One must not brush it aside and say these are prisoners and they must not expect to have a bed of roses. [**Mr. Hoyte:** “The Chancellor said that he went himself.”]

The hon. Minister and the Government must carry out an investigation to see whether the conditions about which the prisoners complain are true or not. We do not know about the investigation made by the Chancellor or what was his report.

When I look at the Estimates I observe what appears to be a slight mistake on page 5 under Surplus/Deficit. Against Capital in the 1973 column there is the figure of \$16,883,289. I wonder whether that should be \$6 million and not \$16 because the total is \$6,443,650.

I have looked at the way in which the Government intends to raise money for the Development Programme and I shall revert to that page in a moment but at page 45 of the Budget Speech it is stated:

“In order to finance the rest of the programme for which another \$73 million would be needed, the Government expects to raise \$25 million from local savings compared with \$24.5 million raised in 1972, and \$1.3 million in miscellaneous capital receipts. The remaining \$40 million the Government hopes to derive mainly through suppliers’ credit and other off-shore loans raised through financial institutions overseas. In fact, Mr. Speaker, arrangements will soon be concluded for an \$8 million credit arranged with the Export/Import Bank of the United States and further credits are likely to be raised through the same bank as well as through banking systems of one of two other countries, using the facilities of the Export Credit Guarantee arrangements which exist in those countries.”

When one looks at the loans which the Government expects to receive as Capital Receipts, as referred to on pages 8 and 9 of the Estimates, one will see that the amount of money that the Government intends to raise as capital revenue of \$138,292,724 will fall very short of that. When one looks at the figures, it would seem that at least \$58 million will not be raised.

I say that for this reason. If hon. Members look at page 9 of the Estimates they will see that the Government expects to raise \$64,922,724 in external loans this year. Let us look at the figures for the previous years and see whether the Government should really budget for this amount of money.

If you look at the first item, United Kingdom (Development), you will see that in 1972 the Government estimated to receive approximately \$12.7 million from the United Kingdom. According to the Revised Estimates the amount received was \$3.5 million. In 1971 \$8.1 million was actually collected.

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Member, you are saying that their expectations will not be realized.

**Mr. Jagan:** I want to show why. In 1973 the Government estimates that it will collect \$17.4 million. Let us look at the years 1970, 1971 and 1972. In 1970 the amount actually received was \$7.3; in 1971 it was \$8.1 million and, as I said earlier, in 1972, according to the Revised Estimates, it was expected to be \$3.5 million.

Now, let us look at item 4, U.S.A.I.D., Code No. 853. The Government estimates that it will receive \$15.4 million this year. The sum of \$19.4 million appears under the Approved Estimates for 1972, but according to the Revised Estimates the amount was actually \$8.7 million. In 1971 it was only \$4 million and in 1970 it was \$2 million.

When one checks the totals for all items one sees that in 1970 the sum actually received was \$14.5 million; in 1971 it was \$14.7 million. The amount estimated for 1972 was \$45.5 but according to the Revised Estimates it was \$15.8 million. The average from 1970 to 1972 is about \$15 million.

There is another item relating to a loan from China of \$10 million. This is a new item. I do not know whether the Government believes that it will receive this sum of \$10 million. No doubt it does expect it, otherwise the amount would not appear here.

**6.20 p.m.**

The Chinese, from what I understand, do not give out loans so easily. The total sum the Government estimates to receive as external loans including the \$10 million from China is \$64.9 million. Even if one takes what was the average for the last three years and the Government would receive the full \$10 million from China, it means that the Government would only receive \$25 million.

**Mr. Speaker:** Does that follow, hon. Member? Suppose the Government wants to borrow what it projected for?

**Mr. Jagan:** It is already stated how much it would expend and how it expects to receive this money. What I am saying is that the amount of money that this Government really expects would not materialize therefore the Programme that it has set out is only a dream. I was just dealing with the head with respect to external loans to show that the average from 1970, 1971

and 1972 excluding the loan from China was only \$15 million. When one goes down further, external credit, on the same page, one sees two figure here, \$8 million and \$32 million. At page 45 of the Budget Speech the hon. Minister has referred to the Question of the \$8 million. The hon. Minister has explained how he intends to raise that \$8 million. So far as the other \$32 million to external credit is concerned when one looks at page 45 it seems that there is a hope that we will receive \$8 million. It shows that there is something in respect of the \$8 million. But as far as the rest is concerned I would say that there is only hope that this amount would be raised, the other amount of \$32 million. *[Interruption by Mr. Hoyte]*

My learned and hon. Friend is saying that this refers to credit which we have not tapped before. It is a hope that we will be able to raise this type of credit. My learned and hon. Friend is saying that this item which the Government is hoping that it will tap from other external credit. But it cannot be in respect of the \$8 million which the hon. Minister specifically referred to at page 45. He has shown us how he would obtain the \$8 million; therefore, for the sake of argument we will accept that \$8 million will be raised. It means that when one looks also at the previous page there is at page 8, under External Grants, for the first time we see the Government expects another \$2.5 million under the United Nations Agencies. Whereas previously in 1970 the Government only received \$8,083 in 1971 it received \$690,337, in 1972 the revised estimate is \$600,000, whereas for this year the Government has estimated a sum of \$3,072,000.

Even from those two items it would seem that at least there is another \$5 million in excess of what it was for the previous year and when one looks at the external loans and external credit, it means that when it is grand totalled the amount is about \$18 million which I would say the Government is really hoping against hope to raise. If for the last three years we could have only been receiving \$15 million each year, is it not hoping against hope that this year we will receive \$64 million? It would seem therefore, if I may revert to page 5 –

**Mr. Speaker:** Do you want to come back, hon. Member? It is agreed that we sit until half past six only today.



11.12.72

National Assembly

6.20 – 6.30 p.m.

**Mr. Jagan:** Very well

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Mr. Speaker:** The Sitting is adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m.

*Adjourned accordingly at 6.30 p.m.*

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