

THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

OFFICIAL REPORT

[VOLUME 1]

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE
FIRST PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA UNDER THE
CONSTITUTION OF GUYANA.

2nd Sitting

Tuesday, 21st June, 1966

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

Present:

His Honour the Speaker, Mr. A. P. Alleyne

Members of the Government

Ministers

The Honourable L. F. S. Burnham, Q.C.	- Prime Minister
The Honourable R. E. Cheeks	- Minister of Local Government
The Honourable E. F. Correia	- Minister of Communications
The Honourable Mrs. W. Gaskin	- Minister of Education and Race Relations
The Honourable L. John	- Minister of Agriculture
The Honourable R. J. Jordan	- Minister of Forests, Lands and Mines
The Honourable M. Kasin	- Minister of Works and Hydraulics
Honourable W. O. R. Kendall, C.B.E.	- Minister of Trade, Shipping and Civil Aviation
The Honourable D. Mahraj	- Minister of Health
The Honourable C. A. Merriman	- Minister of Labour
The Honourable S. S. Ramphal, C.M.G., Q.C.	- Attorney-General and Minister of State

Parliamentary Secretaries

Mr. D. B. deGroot

Mr. O. E. Clarke

Mr. J. G. Joaquin, O.B.E., J.P.

Mr. C. V. Too-Chung

*Parliamentary Secretary,
Prime Minister's Office*

*Parliamentary Secretary,
Ministry of Education
and Race Relations*

*Parliamentary Secretary,
Ministry of Works and
Hydraulics*

*Parliamentary Secretary,
Ministry of Finance*

Other Members

Mr. W. A. Blair

Mr. J. Budhoo

Mr. P. Duncan

Mr. R. G. B. Field-Ridley

Mr. H. Prashad

Dr. J. K. M. Richmond

Mr. T. A. Sancho

Mr. R. Tello, Deputy Speaker

Rev. A. B. Trotman

Mr. H. M. S. Wharton, J.P.

Members of the Opposition

Mr. B. H. Benn

Mr. Ram Karran

Mr. R. Chandisingh

Mr. H. J. M. Hubbard

Dr. Charles Jacob, Jr.

Dr. F. H. W. Ransahoye

Mr. E. M. G. Wilson

Mr. J. R. S. Luck

Mr. D. C. Jagan

Mr. H. Lall

Mr. Mooneer Khan, J.P.

Mr. Y. Ally

Mr. R. D. Persaud

Dr. S. A. Ramjohn

Mr. E. M. Stoby

Mr. M. Bhagwan

Mr. G. Bowman

Clerk of the National Assembly (Acting) - Mr. E. V. Viapree

Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly (Acting) - Mr. F. A. Narain.

Absent:

Dr. the Honourable P. A. Reid,
Minister of Home Affairs - on leave

The Honourable P. S. d'Aguiar,
Minister of Finance - on leave

The Honourable N. J. Bissember,
Minister of Housing and Reconstruction
(Leader of the House) - on leave

The Honourable J. H. Thomas,
Minister of Economic Development on leave

Mr. C. F. Chan-A-Sue on leave

Dr. C. B. Jagan, Leader of the Opposition

Mr. A. Chase

Mr. C. V. Nunes - on leave

Mr. M. Hamid, J.P. - on leave

Mr. L. Linde

Mr. M. Ponnai

Mr. S. M. Saffee.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

CONGRATULATORY CABLES

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, I received cables extending congratulations and good wishes from the following persons:

- (i) The Chairman of the General Council of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in the United Kingdom;
- (ii) The Speaker of the House of Representatives in Kenya;
- (iii) The Presiding Elder of the A.M.E. Church in Trinidad;
- (iv) Ex-Legislator, Mr. Daniel Debidin, now in the United Kingdom.

LETTERS OF THANKS

Mr. Speaker: I have received letters expressing thanks for messages of condolence sent to the Parliament of Nigeria on the occasion of the death of Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and from Mrs. P.G. Lloyd-Still, daughter of the late Sir Eustace Woolford.

2.10 p.m.

LEAVE TO MEMBERS

Leave has been granted to the hon. Minister of Home Affairs (Dr. Reid), the hon. Minister of Finance (Mr. d'Aguiar), the hon. Minister of Housing and Reconstruction (Mr. Bissember), the hon. Minister of Labour (Mr. Merriman), the hon. Minister of Economic Development (Mr.

Thomas), the hon. Member Mr. Chan-A-Sue and the hon. Member Mr. Hamid.

WELCOME TO MEMBER

I want to say how glad we are to see the hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran back in his seat. I hope he has fully recovered from his illness.

PRESENTATION
OF PAPERS AND REPORTS

The following Papers were laid:

- (i) Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police for the year 1965. **[The Prime Minister on behalf of the Minister of Home Affairs.]**
- (ii) Public and Judicial Officers (Remuneration) Order, 1966 (No. 25) made under section 5 of the Public and Judicial Officers (Remuneration) Ordinance, 1962, on the 4th of May, 1966 and published in the Gazette on the 7th of May, 1966. **[The Minister of Communications on behalf of the Minister of Finance.]**
- (iii) Report of the Geological Survey Department for the year 1963. **[The Minister of Forests, Lands and Mines.]**
- (iv) Report of the Director of Audit on the Accounts of the Georgetown Mariners' Club for the years ended 31st

December, 1962, 31st December, 1963 and 31st December, 1964. [The Minister of Trade, Shipping and Civil Aviation.]

Minimum Wages (Quarry Workers) Order, 1966 (No. 32), made under section 8 of the Labour Ordinance, Chapter 103, on the 17th of May, 1966, and published in the Gazette on the 21st of May, 1966.

(vi) Report on a Survey of Manpower Requirements and the Labour Force, British Guiana - 1965:

Volume I - Private Establishments, Ministries, Government Departments, Public Corporations, Statutory Bodies, Local Authorities, etc.

Volume II - Human Resources in Guiana.

Volume III - An Inventory of occupations in Private Establishments with descriptions.

Volume V - The volume and variety of Qualified and Trained Personnel in the Public Sector. [The Minister of Labour.]

(vii) Guyana Industrial Development Corporation

(Amendment) Order, 1966, (No. 41), made under section 34 of the Public Corporations Ordinance, 1962, on the 20th of May, 1966 and published in the Gazette on the 4th of June, 1966. [The Prime Minister on behalf of the Minister of Economic Development.]

MOTIONS RELATING TO THE
BUSINESS OR SITTINGS OF THE
ASSEMBLY AND MOVED BY A
MINISTER

The Prime Minister (Mr. Burnham): I beg to move that the Motion standing in the name of the hon. Member Mr. Budhoo be exempted this day of sitting from the provisions of Standing Order 9(2), the implication of which that you do not, at nine o'clock, bring the business to an end.

Question put, and agreed to.

Standing Order suspended.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

COPYRIGHT (REPEAL) BILL

The Prime Minister: I beg to give notice of the introduction and First Reading of a Bill intitled: "An Act to repeal the Copyright Ordinance."

Bill read the First time.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

MOTION

THANKS

FOR THRONE SPEECH

"Be it resolved that this National Assembly direct that an expression of its sincere appreciation and thanks be conveyed to His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent, G.C.V.O., for the Gracious Speech addressed to this Assembly on the occasion of the State Opening of the First Session of the First Parliament of Guyana on Thursday, the 26th of May, 1966." [Mr. Budhoo.]

• **Mr. Budhoo:** I beg to move the suspension of Standing Order 23(3) to enable me to move the Motion standing in my name.

Mr. Blair seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Standing Order suspended.

Mr. Budhoo: I rise to move the Motion standing in my name. In keeping with the tradition of Legislative Assemblies patterned after the Westminster parliamentary system, there ought to be a Throne Speech at each opening of Parliament. The Throne Speech is a statement prepared by the Government of the day, in which the Government outlines the legislation it plans to introduce before the House is prorogued. The Throne Speech is read by the Head of State and it is traditional that the Members of Par-

liament thank the Head of State for reading the Throne Speech. The Motion before the House is in line with tradition.

However, in asking hon. Members to support the Motion, I shall ask them to consider carefully the broad policies which the statement indicates it is Government's intention to implement. On the 26th May, our dear land of Guyana became a fully independent sovereign State and on that day, and in this historic Assembly, the Duke of Kent, on behalf of Queen Elizabeth II, handed over to our Prime Minister letters patent conferring upon us the dignity of independent statehood. As a result, Guyana is now a sovereign state with full and absolute responsibility.

The Ministers in the Government, and indeed, all of us on the Government side - I should like to say all of us in this National Assembly but experience warns me to be cautious - are guided by the spirit of the Constitution which is based on the principle of democracy. I should like to make a few comments with regard to the question of consultative democracy and noncooperation of the Opposition. For the sake of national unity, it is the duty of every individual, whether he is in the Opposition or the Government, to co-operate. For the sake of the development of Guyana we should all pull equal weight.

2.20 p.m.

Consultative democracy does not mean that you must do what the Opposition says. It means that you must see to it that things go on according to princi-

[MR. BUDHOO]

ples laid down by the previous Government, and the Government in power. Nonco-operation of the Opposition is a very serious matter at times. I agree that whenever the Government decides to do things which are contrary to democracy, perhaps it is the duty of the Opposition to oppose. But not in frivolous matters.

For instance, an hon. Member just said, "Release the detainees first." We would be happy to release the detainees. Why should we detain a man? [Mr. Luck: "You can't answer that question!"] I am here to answer, but I am not going to waste my time. There are many types of detainees, at least I know two, political detainees and terrorist detainees. What is a political detainee? In 1953 there was a suspensor of the Constitution. Some of the political heads who broke the restrictions of Her Majesty's Government were in prison. I quite agree that those detainees were political detainees. The present detainees at Sibley Hall are contending that they should have been tried.

Mr. Speaker, from my personal experience, I know it is difficult to get witnesses. A man attacked me with a cutlass in the presence of over 40 people. We could not get one witness to prove it! That can be seen from the police record. On many occasions people have been pelting at my house. I am ashamed to see that these things are going on. It appears as if human dignity is at stake. There is proof of what I have said in the Black Bush Polder area. You cannot imagine how those poor, unfortunate people in the Black Bush

Polder area have to live. I must lay blame on the previous Government. I am not accusing any individual.

When you play cricket there are rules. There is the umpire. He might say to the batsman, "You are out." The bowler might say, "How is that?" Or he might say that he is not playing any more. That is childishness. I am not insulting anyone, but the members of the Opposition act like small children at times. I remember when I was in the fourth standard we used to play cricket. When we were about to win, the other side pushed the money in their pockets and ran away. [Mr. Benn: "That is gambling."] Why? Because they were scared they were going to lose. That reminds me of the present Opposition. It wants to be in the Government forever. It should be more sportsmanlike if nothing else.

In 1961, when members of this very Opposition won the Election they had no time to tell anyone "Howdy". What did the members do? They motorcaded from Skeldon to Charity with a set of hooligans, who, I must say, were trained for dancing, jumping, loosening their clothes, terrorising and abusing the people who were then in the Opposition. That was wrong. Of course, they do not believe in God. According to them there is no God. Their duty was to administer the affairs of the Government. They tried, but we must be the judges of how they administered the affairs of the Government. In short, for the past seven years that they were in office, Guyana was marking time, one step forward, three steps backward.

I am sorry that I must say something — [Mr. Jagan: "Yes, you must say something."] I am going to say something of vital importance. It is about when trade unionism started in the sugar industry sometime around 1938.

2.30 p.m.

I happened to be a member and District Secretary of the M.P.C.A. in 1942. Since then we have been working very hard to build up trade unionism in the sugar belt. [Interruption.] I am speaking for the people in the sugar belt and for nobody else. I gained a lot of experience from then onwards. From then to this day, I am sorry to say, the poor sugar workers are still being fooled and dominated by political people.

However, I believe that with regional co-operation things will improve in this country. Regional co-operation is always good, and if we co-operate with our neighbours we will achieve many, many good things. If we can establish good regional co-operation throughout the West Indies, then our goods will be more easily sold. Take for example the Agreement made between Barbados, Antigua and Guyana. Quite recently we were told that Jamaica has agreed to purchase \$4 million worth of rice from Guyana. Who will benefit from the purchase of this rice? Guyana will benefit from it. As a rice farmer, I am very happy to find that we are able to sell five times more rice to Jamaica than the previous Government has ever sold. This is one instance of co-operation with our neigh-

bours. [Mr. Luck: Try and co-operate with the people who are throwing stones at your house."] I am sure that our neighbours have started to see eye to eye with us. I know that Guyana will be fortunate and happy if this act of co-operation continues.

I will now refer to roads. The Leader of the Opposition said on several occasions that the Government in power is wasting its time and money in building roads, and it has not given enough employment to the people of Guyana. It is rather unfortunate that he has uttered such words, because roads are very important. Two years ago the road from Rosignol to Georgetown was very bad. If one had been compelled to travel on that road with a sick, delicate, patient, I am sure the patient would have died. I had to push a vehicle for as much as two miles one day on that road. My brother M.P., sitting beside me here, left Georgetown in a car at six o'clock in the morning and never reached Rosignol until two o'clock in the afternoon. [Interruption.]

Mr. Speaker: Quiet, please! I am prepared to permit a little bit of cross-talk but not too much. This is the first meeting of Parliament; we are no longer an Assembly. We are a House of Parliament, and I believe we should endeavour to elevate our standard of debate somewhat. Please do not overdo this cross-talk.

Mr. Budhoo: Formerly it took one about three to four hours to travel from Rosignol to Georgetown, and while travelling one was likely to get a blow-out,

[MR. BUDHOO]

broken springs, and so on. Today one can travel in a car from Georgetown to Rosignol in two hours without having a puncture - for the last 18 months I have had few punctures. You can travel on that road nowadays with even a half-dead person in a car.

Mr. Speaker: Please direct your attention to the Motion before the House.

Mr. Budhoo: This is a matter which concerns the development of this country, and roads form part of the development of this country. When one takes two hours instead of four hours to travel from Rosignol to Georgetown, one can do a lot with the time saved. On the other hand, tyres do not wear out as fast on that road nowadays.

I said something earlier about rice. Now certain members of the Opposition are contending that the people at Black Bush have lost their rice crop because the Government did not supply them with water. When this Government took over the reins of office in the latter part of 1964, the Springlands Bond alone had over 50,000 bags of rice since 1963 rotting on the stelling. Thousands of bags of rice were also stored at Stanley Town, New Amsterdam, as well as in Georgetown. The members of the Opposition are also contending that this Government cannot find markets for the sale of Guyana's rice. What happened to the 1963 rice crop? Why did not the previous Government sell it? The members of the Opposition know full well that there is very serious competition in the world markets so far as the sale of

rice is concerned. If they feel that this Government cannot sell the rice, then there is no objection or nothing wrong in their trying to sell it.

The majority of rice farmers are members of the P.P.P. If the members of the Opposition like their supporters, why do they not make an effort to sell the rice? Why cannot GIMPEX sell the rice? This Government says that it will pay anybody who sells the rice. The members of the P.P.P. know that it is difficult to find markets in which to sell our rice, but they are going around the country fooling the people.

The people at Black Bush were told to diversify their crops. I told them in September, 1965, that we could not take off the 1963 rice crop much less the 1964 crop, and yet they wanted to plant a second crop. I told them not to risk it. They said they had a lot of rice at the mills.

2.40 p. m.

Members of the Opposition told them not to plant rice in an effort to kill the Government of Mr. Burnham, but instead they are killing the nation. They are killing the Guyanese people, not Mr. Burnham. Then the members of the P.P.P. told them to plant a second crop even though the Government had advised them not to do so. These people were forced to plant and throughout the drought there was a scarcity of water even on the sugar plantations. Even some part of the first crops was lost.

I do not wish to take up much more of the time of the House.

There should be no controversial argument on the Throne Speech. I do not want to prolong the debate on such a simple matter. The good intentions of the Government no one can successfully question. I am very happy therefore, Mr. Speaker, to move the Motion standing in my name. [Applause.]

Dr. Richmond: I rise to second the Motion. May I first, however, say thanks to you, Mr. Speaker, for the very kind words of welcome extended to me on the occasion of my taking my seat here at the opening of Parliament.

It is a great honour to be here, but there is to me a degree of sadness that I should be here because of the death of our dear friend and indomitable colleague, Mr. Stephen Campbell. I take his seat but I cannot take his place. He was a noble gentleman. I should like to think that he would have approved that I sit here on the Government side to give some voice to the opinions of my party, and I believe that he would have been happy to know that in my doing so there might come to be added new dimensions to the structure of consultative democracy. Consultative democracy is, I believe, a very desirable and worthwhile objective anywhere. In the circumstances of our country it is doubly desirable. Perhaps I should say "trebly desirable".

I do not believe that I need to spend as much time as a certain Member did in seconding the Motion on the opening day, because the things which this speech presents are things which men of goodwill everywhere must

want. This Throne Speech says no more than that we propose to live in this way with our neighbours and in that way with our fellow citizens. It proposes that this country should play its role in the world community. It should begin to do this by joining the United Nations, and having pledged itself to carry out the functions of the United Nations it would of necessity be most friendly and most attentive to those people who carry out the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.

The Throne Speech does not offer the sterile concept of standing aloof in what is called neutralism. It sets out that we will belong not only to the large family of nations but to the smaller, more compact and friendly group, the Commonwealth, in which we were a junior partner and now become an equal one.

To come still closer home, the Throne Speech states that we realise that we have a responsibility to our historic relatives in the Caribbean. After all we share with them a cultural and economic heritage. It would be foolish, indeed, if we turned aside from them to make friends with some people across the globe with whom we have virtually nothing in common save our common humanity.

In effect, as I came here today and thought of the efforts of our Government to build up the Caribbean Free Trade Area and to use this as a stepping stone to the formation of a Caribbean society in a meaningful way, I could not help but wonder, as I listened to the news from Lords,

[DR. RICHMOND]

whether this might not inspire even those who seem to regard Caribbean unity as impossible to take a fresh look to see what can be done if people who have things in common would work together. It seems common sense to work with those we know and then perhaps later work with those we do not know.

The Speech from the Throne having dealt with our friends and the problems of our foreign relations turned to the solving of problems in our country. It is obviously true that though we are better off than many comparable countries there is much that is to be done and that must be done. To strive for equality we must not drag everyone down to the lowest level, as some people believe it right to do, but must seek to elevate the less fortunate so that each person in our community receives a greater share. As a step to achieve this our Government has proposed a Development Programme, which has already been laid before you.

The most outstanding requirement which has been laid down in this Throne Speech is the requirement that all citizens co-operate if we are to move forward. I might say that I do believe that it would have been a worthwhile and inspiring thing if at the moment our nation began at midnight - or was it five minutes after midnight? - all of our people could have taken part, and if at that moment all the leaders who had been invited to London

had all been there taking part in this most significant event. I cannot but feel that this might have been inspiring, that it might have kindled the feeling of nationalism which in large measure is absent.

It is obviously true that there were things yesterday which were distressing and there might well be things tomorrow which might distress us, but no true nationalist at that moment should have been looking backward or forward. He should have been looking upward as our flag was raised. I cannot believe that any person worthy to be called leader could have held himself aloof and could have forced other people to be aloof from so significant a moment in our country's history. I realise very fully that boycotts and nonco-operation have become part of our way of life.

2.50 p.m.

It would seem to me that grave danger lies in this. If boycott and nonco-operation become the way of life for any section of our population, the time will surely come when the rest of the population will take it for granted that the boycotters are no longer part of our community. This would be a grave and tragic loss to all sections of our country and I cannot too strongly recommend to those poor people who are being misled to think again and be wiser than their leaders so that they will very

quickly once more take their proper and honourable places in our society.

As part of the local programme, there remains to be set up plans for local self-government. I know, as well as you do, that the implementation of these plans has been delayed largely because of the vast quantity of legislation which is necessary to bring them into operation. I should like to express the hope that this necessary delay has been made use of by way of educating the people into their new responsibility.

The statement in the Speech from the Throne, on the Amerindian question, is one which draws great pride to the members of our party since this has been something for which we have striven for a long time. It would seem to us that no reasonable person could fail to understand that it was not enough to say that each person here should have the same rights, and be unaware of the fact that there were special deprivations from which our Amerindians had suffered over the years. It seems incredible to us that we should have any argument about this. We are, nonetheless, happy that it has now been recognised as the policy of Government that the Amerindians should have their special rights and privileges, and have the rights to their lands enshrined in law.

It was with satisfaction that I noted that the Throne Speech

promised to get on with the business of rehabilitation of the displaced persons. Obviously, the Throne Speech can be no more than a pledge, it can be no more than a blue-print for what the Government proposes to do. It is true that performance is apt to be the stepchild of promise. It should, however, be the function and duty of all members of the Government to dedicate themselves to seeing that these promises are carried out. Consequently, I have great pleasure in seconding the Motion. [*Applause.*]

Mr. Chandisingh: The Motion before us serves a dual purpose: first, to express thanks formally to His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent, for having been here to read the Speech from the Throne, and secondly - and more important I think - to give Members of Parliament an opportunity to discuss, debate, criticise and support the policy of the Government for the ensuing period.

I expected a bit more - to put it mildly - from the Speech from the Throne. I noted that the Speech itself was rather empty in many respects - from the point of view of what was left unsaid and from the point of view also of what was said. I do not wish to quarrel about the length of the Speech. If one wishes, I think one can get quite a great deal into a short speech or report. What I want to make issue on is the content of the Speech.

I expected that the hon. Mover of the Motion would have

[MR. CHANDISINGH]

filled in the gaps, the omissions in the Speech itself, and that he would have followed his own opening remarks when he said that the Speech from the Throne is a document in which the Government outlines the legislation it intends to introduce for the coming session. Instead of doing this, he concentrated on a series of attacks on the previous Government's policy and on the actions of the Opposition. He also diverted us into the realms of motor-cars and spare parts, and, judging from what he said, I can only come to the conclusion that perhaps we ought to recommend that the hon. Member secures a good motor-car, a Simca, from GIMPEX and this would solve some of his problems with respect to motor-cars.

The seconder of the Motion, the hon. Member Dr. Richmond, in his first speech, was very restrained in his remarks. I gathered from his remarks that he was making an attempt to be quite serious, to be sincere, but here again I am afraid that unless I missed much of what he said - I tried to listen very carefully - there was very little that one can grasp and hold on to in order to debate.

The question that arises in my mind is what, in effect, is the Government's policy for the coming period. I remember that, on previous occasions when the former Government outlined its policies in the House, it received great criticisms from hon. Members who now sit on the other

side of the House. They complained about the length of the speech when, in fact, the length was not relevant. They complained that the previous Government did not have a detailed outline of every little thing that was to be done. I must submit that what we have been treated to here is a gross injustice.

I do not know how Members on this side are expected to surmise or guess what the Government intends to do. Even the few points that were made are not specific. They do not show clearly what the Government intends to do. With the exception of one or two references - like the introduction of universal adult suffrage for Local Government elections - the whole thing seems to be riddled with vagueness, seems to be vacuous and merely littered with platitude.

3 p.m.

On the other hand we hear fulsome remarks, sentences and phrases which give the impression that the Government is upholding justice, that it is pursuing a policy designed to show respect for the rule of law, that it is pursuing an intelligent policy in international affairs overseas, dividing the social product fairly, abolishing exploitation, etc. But when all is said and done, and when one tries to come to grips with what the Government really intends to do, one finds oneself at a loss to get down to brass tacks. Generally speaking, it seems to me that the Speech was like the attempt of a Public

Relations man to produce a glossy document which says everything and at the same time nothing.

While Government states its intention of pursuing an independent policy, we know for a fact that it is pursuing a policy of dependence, of servility to American and British imperialism. While it says it wishes to pursue a policy which will divide the shares equally, or words to that effect, while it says that it wishes to abolish exploitation, we know that it is, in fact, pursuing a policy of giving the juicy plums to the big businesses and foreign interests, while it is offering the working class of this country mere carrots. While it says it is pursuing a policy designed to preserve and protect the rule of law, we know that it is doing exactly the opposite.

Having said that much, I should like now to deal more specifically with the reference in the Speech which encompasses the development of a strong and economically sound Guyana where want, poverty and unemployment will be abolished, and which goes on to state that the productivity of our nation will have to increase considerably, and the fruits of this productivity fairly divided. There will be place neither for exploitation nor sloth. This is the section which I should like to touch on in my main remarks.

First of all, let us consider what is the policy for abolishing unemployment. We know, by the

various estimates, that unemployment stands at something like 50,000 at the moment. The Government has been in office for over a year and a half. So far what have we seen? We have heard about Manpower Surveys, four bulky volumes were presented to this House. Well, I daresay this may be a very useful exercise because statistics are necessary. Figures and facts are necessary to analyse various trends. But what else have we seen the Government doing to eliminate unemployment which is, incidentally, increasing rapidly? I know of the recurrent exodus from the schools which takes place at the rate of approximately 8,000 or maybe more per year. This is adding every year to the already existing unemployment figures, and the Government should have presented us with a well worked out programme to show that it is really tackling this problem in a serious way. All it has done was to refer to the seven-year Development Programme which, we are expected to conclude, will solve this problem, or will make a big inroad in the problem.

I do not wish to refer again to the Development Programme which has been thoroughly debated and discussed in this House on a previous occasion. I must remark that the Development Programme is not an adequate solution to the problems of unemployment and exploitation of the working class, in fact it does just the opposite. It makes it simpler particularly for foreign exploiters to continue to bleed the Guyanese working class white.

What is Government doing with respect to retrenchments that are

[MR. CHANDISINGH]

now taking place on a wide scale in private industries? What about the sugar industry, the stores, Sandbach Parker, and many other firms? If the Government does not have a policy for that, then what is it doing with respect to employment in the departments under direct Government control? Why is it that the Government is retrenching so many people? Lately, we have seen retrenchment taking place at the Transport and Harbours Department - something like 183 persons were retrenched - and previously retrenchment has been going on in other departments. While the Government has done nothing about this, it seems as if, like the gallant knights of the type of Don Quixote who tackled the windmill, it is merely using catch phrases in order to befuddle people into believing that this problem is really being solved.

3.10 p.m.

We have been told about the number of jobs provided for certain people. The figure given some time ago was 10,000 jobs, but when one boils this down and rehashes it, one finds that the jobs were merely given to certain people for two days, three days, or one week. If you multiply all of the cases in which people have been given such jobs, you can naturally get a figure approaching 10,000. Many of the jobs that we are told were provided were, undoubtedly, jobs for a selected band of people. A small number have replaced others who have been retrenched. Many people, we understand, have been dismissed from their jobs - dismissed not to make place for

others on the basis of a rotation system, but in order to make way for the employment of a selected few.

In the circumstances, the Government's employment policy can be said to be mainly concerned with providing jobs - not jobs for the boys necessarily, but jobs for a few of the boys. Some of the boys are getting jobs. Obviously all of those people who have supported the Government and voted for the P.N.C. are not getting the jobs, but it is known that a small number of people who have served in certain capacities faithfully and diligently - people who have served the major party in the Coalition Government - are the persons who are being pushed into the jobs where others have been displaced. Therefore there must be grave dissatisfaction over the employment policy of this Coalition Government.

Another point to which I wish to refer on the same question is the shocking reports, which have become public, that in order to qualify to fill a vacancy one has to prove one's loyalty to a particular party. This is not an isolated question, because several people have made reports about this matter. This is a widespread practice, and the Government should do something about it if it wishes really to seek the co-operation of the members of the Opposition as well as the support of the people in this country. This is a despicable practice.

I remember that when the members on this side of the House were sitting over there, the

present Minister of Labour made allegations of such practices during the life of the previous Government. It is quite clear that quite often one makes accusations and one accuses others because one has the intention of carrying out such practices when one has an opportunity to do so. I submit that the hon. Minister of Labour should, if he disclaims knowledge of this despicable practice, assure this House that the strictest investigation will be made of this practice in order to stop it.

The next point on which I would like to touch, while on the question of unemployment, is to be critical of the way in which the Government has handled this question of immigration. I wish to say quite clearly at the outset that I do not begrudge any one who comes to this country who may be needed here and who, at the same time, may need the sustenance which this country and its resources can provide. I do not begrudge any outsider who finds it possible to live here; therefore, I want it to be quite clear from the outset that I am not condemning the fact that some people have come here to seek employment.

However, what I wish to criticise is the way in which the Government has gone about the question of immigration. Why are the Prime Minister and other members of the Government making it known abroad at conferences and so on that this country is a land of milk and honey? Why are they creating the impression that jobs are here for everybody, when we know that there are thousands of Guyanese here who have no jobs?

Thousands of Guyanese expect this Government to do something to provide them with employment. Why is this Government carrying out this senseless policy? I must regard such an irresponsible attitude as not in keeping with the feeling of Guyanese workers, the question of Guyanese unemployment, or in the interest of those people who, mistakenly, come here expecting to find jobs waiting for them.

A boat-load of immigrants came here the other day, we read in the Press, and they had to obtain accommodation at the Salvation Army. Under what conditions have they come here? Is this the Government's attitude regarding immigration at a time when grave unemployment exists in Guyana? The Government should treat the Guyanese workers and the potential migrant workers from the Caribbean with a greater sense of respect and responsibility. On this question we hear nothing, and we have read nothing about it in the Speech from the Throne. We have not had the courtesy of an explanation from the hon. Mover of the Motion.

Next, I wish to move on to the second idea contained in the paragraph, to which I have referred, where it is stated that the productivity of our nation will have to be increased considerably and the fruits of this productivity fairly divided. I do not think that any one will disagree that productivity in any country is necessary as a factor making for the improvement of conditions of life. Productivity is necessary, but productivity in whose interest? That is the question the people have to ask

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whenever they listen to learned dissertations from economists or politicians about the need for productivity. Productivity for whom and in whose interest?

3.20 p.m.

The Prime Minister has become famous in Guyana, perhaps he has become world-famous, for his celebrated advice to the working-people of Guyana that they should eat less, sleep less and work more. I can have no quarrel with that if it means that by eating less, by sleeping less and by working harder, the masses of the toiling Guyanese public would create conditions to allow them or their children to live better in the future. But when the working-people and the under-employed are seeing that their increased labour and their increased productivity result not in their own standards rising but in greater taxes being put on them, on foodstuff, on railway fares, with reduced steamer services, how can they be blamed for concluding that this productivity that they are being asked to raise is in the interest not of themselves but in the interest of a privileged section of the community, which is living on their labour?

This advice to the workers, accompanied by threats, is not in the interest of the working people. Therefore I cannot lend support to the appeals to the Guyanese working people to produce more, to eat less and so on. The only way in which the working people of Guyana can subscribe to this principle is on condition that the results of their productivity go back to them, and on condition that they

see that they are improving their standards by way of higher wages, improved conditions of life and so on.

Why should they produce more to put in the pockets of a small privileged class that lives in Guyana, but, in larger measure, in the pockets of a small class of privileged people most of whom have never seen Guyana and who do not know where Guyana is but draw their dividends every six months or every year as the case may be?

This is wicked and it is doubly wicked when a Government that is supposed to be put there to represent the workers casts aside its mandate and decides that it will serve in the interests not of the working people but in the interest of the exploiters. What else can we conclude from the exhortations to avoid strikes and to co-operate with management? We are told that trade unions, the working people, must co-operate with management to create harmony and conditions of social peace. "If you go on strike too often," certain of the Ministers have said, "be careful. We will not tolerate this much longer. We stand for socialism all right. We want you to co-operate with the bosses so that they can make more profits out of your labour". This is telling them that the Government no longer stands for socialism.

That is why I say that this is doubly wicked and I will come in a moment or two to the second part of this sentence to show why this is so. On the question of productivity I should like to express the hope that the Govern-

ment is not intending to introduce anything like an Incomes Policy. I have heard the Minister make public statements to the effect that an Incomes Policy might be a good thing for Guyana.

An Incomes Policy, as we know, is a measure designed to help the bosses to make more profits and to freeze the wages of the workers. If I may just, by way of analogy, draw an example from the United Kingdom on the question of Incomes Policy, I would refer to the fact that in the United Kingdom a Labour Government has introduced a National Incomes Policy. In practice, however, we find that this policy means that the incomes of workers remain the same or do not rise by very much, their incomes are kept down, while the profits of the big monopolists are allowed to skyrocket. There is no brake, there is no freeze, on profits, but there is a freeze on wages.

The Government in this country tells the workers and tells the trade unions, "Don't rush the brush; don't press it too hard; don't press for 10 per cent wage increases, keep it at 4 per cent so that we can have stability" and in this way attempts to solve economic difficulties by putting the burdens on the shoulders of the working-class.

I think this Government is showing a certain inclination towards this trend both with respect to pronouncements about consideration of an Incomes Policy and also with respect to the threats about anti-strike legislation.

Mr. Speaker: I am afraid you have exhausted your time.

Mr. Ram Karran: I beg to move that the hon. Member be granted an extension of 15 minutes to continue his speech.

Mr. Ally seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. Chandisingh: We have been very much disturbed by the hints and threats of the members of the Government that they will introduce anti-strike legislation. We have not seen this in the programme for the year but I make reference to this because undoubtedly this Throne Speech can never be the full programme for the year. If this is the programme in its entirety well then, perhaps the Government should retire for nine months and come to life for the last three months when it will be able to complete its business.

I should like the Minister of Labour, particularly if he speaks in the course of this debate, to give us a clear indication as to whether the Government intends to introduce, directly or indirectly, legislation which may be deemed to be restrictive of the right to strike on the part of the workers. During a previous debate I did urge the Minister to get up and tell us this. Let me assume that on that occasion he was, perhaps, not able to get up or, perhaps, he had not consulted his colleagues. I am certain that if this is his intention he would have this position clear by now and, particularly at this time when we are discussing a major question of policy, the

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Minister should be able to tell us something about it.

3.30 p.m.

We have heard that the T.U.C. itself has expressed its views on this matter on the occasion of May 1st when it was stated that the T.U.C. hopes that the Government will not introduce any such legislation. We know that the working people of this country - and of all countries where they have won such rights - have the right to strike, and they have had to fight and struggle for these rights. They have not received them on a platter as a gift from their employers or from the Government of the day. They have had to go on strike and wage terrific struggles.

Therefore, I would wish to have a clear statement from the Minister, without any attempt at varication, as to whether he intends to introduce anti-strike legislation. By this I mean that he should tell this House whether he intends to introduce legislation to the effect that workers are not, in so many words, banned from striking, or prohibited, by law, from striking, but where workers in several categories, in order to go on strike, have to undergo a cooling-off period - a few months, I believe - before they can go on strike.

During this period, all the machinations of the employers and the Government - in other words, all the agencies opposed to the working people - will carry out their behind-the-scenes negotiations, threats, pressures and so on in order to play up to the leaders of the working class,

the trade unions, to intimidate them and, wherever possible, to bribe them in order that they will not go ahead with their strikes and they will stop making serious demands for better conditions. This is what I regard as anti-strike legislation, so I hope that when the Minister speaks he will not attempt to beat around the bush and he will give us a clear undertaking that his Government will never, under any circumstances whatsoever, introduce such legislation.

I go on to the other questions to which I should like the Government to give clear answers. Does the Government intend, and if so how soon, to introduce the \$4 per day minimum wage to all workers in Guyana? When does the Government hope to do this? When will the Government pass the necessary legislation which has been called for by the trade unions of this country? When can we expect this so-called working-class Government to start fighting in the interest of the working class? When? When can we expect it to introduce severance pay legislation so that workers who are dismissed from employment, for any reason whatsoever, can get severance pay? This has been hanging fire for a long time. The P.P.P. Government had set the ball rolling, and up to now this legislation has not been brought up. The Minister has always been critical of the P.P.P. Government. Here is an opportunity for the members of this Government to show what they can do. But we are still waiting. I hope that the working-class people will not have to wait too long.

I wish to be rather critical of this ambiguous statement here which states:

"The productivity of our nation will have to be increased considerably and the fruits of this productivity fairly divided."

"Fairly divided", what does this term mean? This is a term which has been used by all sorts of people. At their conferences, those who exploit the working people talk about fair shares and dividing the product fairly. This is not good enough for a Government that claims that it is serving the interest of the people.

We want to know how are the working people going to get fair shares. By what manner? By what system of Government? By what arrangement? How are the working people going to get fair shares? If the workers get 4 per cent increase in their wages and the big monopoly concerns which dominate the country get 10 per cent increase in their profits, I cannot see how this is a fair share. I cannot see how this is a fair division of the product. Neither can I see with the Prime Minister when he talks about a fair day's pay for a fair day's work.

These hon. Gentlemen have long regaled - not us, because we know that they are not socialists, they do not have a socialist policy - the masses of the people, the working-class people, that they stand for socialism, but let the Government be categorical about this. Can it be?

I submit that it cannot because it is not pursuing a socialist policy and it does not have any intention of doing so in the future. This is the only way in which it can be said that the working people will get a fair day's pay for a fair day's work. They cannot get it under the system of imperialism, of big monopoly domination of our economy. There can be no fair shares under such circumstances.

For example, let us assume that the workers at Mackenzie are now getting \$10 per day. Let us take that as the figure. Is the Government telling us - this so-called "socialist" P.N.C. particularly - that if the workers are getting \$10 per day it means that they are getting a fair day's pay for a fair day's work? Of course not! To the socialist, the only way in which a worker can get a fair day's pay for a fair day's work is when he knows that the full value of what he has produced by his labour, his toil, is given back to him either directly or indirectly. So long as the big monopoly concerns in this country continue to make and amass terrific amounts of profits which are taken away from this country, so long will the workers be exploited.

Do not tell us that there will be place neither for exploitation nor sloth - "sloth", I take it, means laziness. Only a system of socialism can put an end to exploitation and sloth - sloth not of the working people, because they are the people who create the values in the society. The only people against whom one

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can use the derogatory application of the word "sloth" would be those who do not work but who live off the labour of those who do the work.

I think it is rather unfair - to put it mildly - to the working-class people of this country to imply that they will get better wages, fairer conditions, if they are less lazy. This is an insult to the working people.

3.40 p.m.

As I said before, as long as certain privileged sections of the community continue to live off the fat produced by the masses, so long will there be exploitation. All that this paper seeks to do is to throw dust in the eyes of the working people, to pull wool over their faces. They are telling the people that there will be no exploitation, there will be fair shares for all, products will be divided fairly, but they must work harder. When they work harder who are the people who will get the cream? Naturally, not the working class but the boys at the top, the privileged section which will continue to get more and more of the cream.

In my opinion, this is a dishonest policy. Why not go out and tell the people of Guyana that you are pursuing a programme of subservience to imperialism, a capitalist programme, and that you have no intention of transforming the economy of this country in the interest of the

working class, that is, to a state of socialism? These are some of the criticisms that I would wish to make specifically on this question of employment, productivity and exploitation. With that, sir, I would urge the Government to be clear and fair to the people, to be less ambiguous because no matter how ambiguous it tries to be, the working-class people will find it out. As a matter of fact, they are finding out the type of Government we have, not on the basis of what is said, perhaps not even on the basis of what we say in this House - the fine speeches and remarks made - but because they know where the shoe pinches. The economic and social shoe is pinching the working people every day harder and harder, and sooner or later the working people will get wise to this Government.

In conclusion I must say that the Speech from the Throne is far from adequate because of what it does not state, because of the programme which it does not present, and also because it tries, by using very vague and sweeping generalities to disguise the real state of affairs which is not consultative democracy, or a movement to eliminate unemployment or exploitation. It is, in fact, a programme cleverly designed to lead the people by their noses to serve the big businesses and the foreign imperialists in our country.

Mr. Hubbard: I wish, like my hon. Friend, the new Member, to commence by offering you my congratulations. I think you de-

serve to be specially congratulated, sir, for the efforts you make always, and for the special efforts you make from time to time to give this Assembly which is now two things in one - a Parliament and a National Assembly - some appearance of a body which is bent on doing the correct things in the interest of the people as a whole. I think, however, and for this I lay no blame at your door, that it was a tragic mistake that on the most important occasion in the history of this Legislature, the day when we assembled to receive the Constitutional Instruments which were the written facts of our existence as an independent society, those responsible for the organisation of events connected with this ceremony should have overlooked the realities of our life to such an extent that only Christian prayers were found to be appropriate for that occasion when we are a multireligious community. For the benefit of all, I took this question of the rights of others so seriously that I did not participate in those prayers.

This is a very simple Motion behind which there are many important things. I am to make a speech on a Motion which asks me to concur, and which asks those I represent to concur with an act performed by Royalty here on 26th May, when the Duke of Kent read a Speech which purported to be a statement of the Government's legislative policy for the parliamentary year. We learned out of the incoherencies of the hon. Mr. Budhoo, that the Government

of the day, in its postures at least, hopes to make itself look like the Parliament of Westminster, and I am particularly concerned with the last sentence which appears in this trifling document:

"My Government will pursue with determination a policy aimed at the preservation of law, the establishment of true equality and the enshrinement of justice."

It is felicitous that this afternoon we have with us in this House, a returned exile in the person of the hon. Attorney-General, who is a gentleman learned in the law. So far as I know, he possesses a degree which makes him a Master of Law, and he has been favoured by Her Majesty in that she has made him one of her Counsel.

3.50 p.m.

Bearing in mind the determination expressed in this document regarding the preservation of law, I am disappointed, I am unhappy, I am deeply disturbed at the prospect for our future when a man, learned in law as the hon. Attorney-General is, will bring himself to sign an Order committing to prison a man who has appeared before a court and, according to the rules of law, has been acquitted.

Your Honour, institutions are no better than the persons who administer them, and layman as I am - layman as you are, you know the cardinal principles upon

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which the rules of law and the enshrinement of justice rest. You know the cardinal principles upon which these things rest. These instruments which permit living together in peace and harmony rest upon the cardinal principle that when a man has been put before a court of law and has been acquitted, he is free.

I am prepared to concede an extenuation of the hon. Attorney-General's grave judicial lapse, for he was the servant of two masters at the time: he was the servant of those elements elected by the people of this country who had limited responsibility for determining the affairs of Government, and he was also the servant of expatriate interests, represented here by a South African citizen who is responsible for the so-called "residual powers" and who has overriding authority in certain matters. But we are now beyond that, and we have severed the umbilical cord with our "mother". The Royal personage came here and performed the last little clipping for us, and I hope that the hon. Attorney-General will attempt to rehabilitate himself and his conscience among decent people by doing now what he should have done when it was proposed to him that he should sign an Order that debased all of the principles which he had been taught to respect.

I begin at the end of the Royal Speech, because at the end is mentioned the very foundations

of our society. We know that some Members of this House, particularly Members on the other side, are blind to certain things. The honourable new Member Dr. Richmond spoke about co-operation, yet he was blind and could not see that on the most important day in this House large sections of our religious community were pushed aside and relegated to obscure places. That is one part of the matter.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member is making a very serious statement. I feel that the hon. Member is impugning the honour of this House.

Mr. Hubbard: Your Honour, I am not impugning the honour of this House. I withdraw the remark. I, in my opening remarks, referred to this responsibility. The House had nothing to do with it. The House was merely put through the motions.

I refer now to another remark that the honourable new Member made about the Independence Celebrations. He referred to participation at the symbolic moment of our Independence, the Flag-raising Ceremony. It was my privilege on that evening to walk, not drive, to the National Park where this ceremony took place, and there I observed that the masses of our people were not permitted to participate in this celebration, because they were kept behind metal barriers. Many of them slipped down into the drain - they were kept away. That ties in with what my hon. Friend Mr. Chandisingh said

earlier. The Government's activities are for the few and the privileged, but the masses must be kept at arm's length. The masses must be refused participation; the big things are for the big boys, and the crumbs are for the little boys.

Mr. Speaker: This sitting is suspended until 4.30 p.m.

Sitting suspended at 4 p.m.

4.30 p.m.

On resumption :-

Mr. Hubbard: There is something else of vital importance which I do not find in this document. I do not find any declaration of the policy on trade. The previous Government had a truly neutral policy with regard to trade and in relation to imports. Merchants and industrialists were permitted to purchase whatever they wanted wherever they wanted and this was of immense benefit to the working people as can be shown by the extent to which the cost of living index remained constant during the period of that Government.

Today the present Government is refusing permission to importers to buy goods from certain sources. We have had no statement from the Government on its policy in this respect. We have heard the Prime Minister guessing at his Press Conference as usual and we have had the Minister of Trade, Shipping and Civil Avia-

tion ineffectually trying to offer some explanation in this House. I am disturbed at reports that the Government intends to introduce again a system of quotas for the importation of goods from certain countries. Once we get upon this road we give monopolies to certain persons and the ordinary man suffers.

It is competition on the widest possible basis that keeps prices down and I fear that the Government is embarking upon a new policy of helping its friends, the big business people in Water Street. We are to have quotas again.

It is important that questions of trade should be mentioned in the Throne Speech, and I think the omission is strange when there has been controversy even among Water Street merchants on the question of Government's policy in regard to trade. Where are we going? Are we returning to the days when only the big merchants in Water Street could import goods and the little shopkeepers had to go to them and pay through their noses to get something. My friend, the hon. Member Mr. Hari Prashad, knows about those days; he suffered, too, and I am surprised to find him supporting such a policy from this Government.

There is also the very important question of finance. What is the attitude of the Government in regard to finance? It is not stated in this Throne

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Speech what is the Government's policy with regard to the many nations of the world, but it is implied that the Government intends to treat all members of the United Nations alike. That is the impression I draw from the Speech, but one can draw almost any impression he likes from what is written here because nothing is precise out much is suggested.

The Government at present operates a monetary policy which is highly discriminatory. Its policy of Exchange Control penalises non-sterling currencies in favour of sterling. Anyone coming into possession of foreign currencies must by law of this land deposit those foreign currencies into a local bank. If they are earned from export a time limit is given and while the earner of foreign currencies may convert them freely into sterling, there is no requirement about the depositing of sterling and its free exchange into foreign currencies.

The Government boasts about its American friends. The President of the United States even gave the Prime Minister a saddle. Why are the members of the Government doing this against their friends? Every American dollar earned must be converted into pounds sterling. Surely the last splurge of "Sirs" and "C.M.G.s" marked the end of the period of this imperialism. It is not our business to sustain sterling.

I must give a warning to the public at large that all the assets of the Bank of Guyana which support our currency are either in British Treasury Bills or in British Guiana assets. If, as may well happen, the pound sterling is devalued tomorrow our losses will be colossal.

We must use monetary policies which are of advantage to us. In all conscience the British have had enough out of us. Let us get away from that. Let us look after our own interest rather than promote the interest of the British.

4.40 p.m.

This may be an oversight on the part of the hon. Minister of Finance and his subordinates. If it is, I would urge them to do all that is necessary, and do it quickly, because no one knows how long sterling will remain at its present value on the world market. Quite recently, the central banks of several countries met and put up credits to sustain the pound, but there is internal strife in Britain which may well lead to a situation where British exports are held up and devaluation of the pound becomes necessary.

I should like to suggest that it would look well abroad if we can say that our monetary policy favours no one. It would look well abroad if we can say that our trade policy favours no one and, above everything else, I object very strenuously to the

risk we are running by tying our currency, as we have done, to the British Treasury. I object to sustaining the British for one moment longer than is necessary, and that moment has passed.

The hon. Member Mr. Budhoo had some remarks to make about rice. The Chairman of the Rice Marketing Board had announced that the R.M.B. obtained, from Jamaica, a \$4 million contract for rice. It is a great achievement for the R.M.B. to sell a large quantity of packaged rice. But what he did not tell the public was that, in consequence of this increase in the sale of packaged rice to Jamaica, there is to be a decrease in the sale of bulk rice to Jamaica.

Bulk rice is rice put into bags, weighed and sent abroad. The pricing of rice is based on that and the price for bulk rice is highly advantageous to our country. To sell this packaged rice the R.M.B. has had to borrow money at a high interest rate to invest in a packaging plant. It will have to send the Supervisor of Packaging abroad for six months to be trained in the operation and use of this plant. It will have to invest in new packaging material and it will have to undertake a very costly advertising programme in Jamaica.

I understand that in spite of the fact that a captain of commerce is now in charge of the R.M.B., he has not yet worked out

the relation between the promotional costs and the benefit, if any, that will be derived from converting into the sale of packaged rice from the sale of bulk rice to Jamaica. This is the quality of administration that we hear our hon. Member Mr. Budhoo extol to the skies.

If I may, I should like to remind the hon. Member that the R.M.B. was offered the services of GIMPEX to sell rice abroad. The R.M.B. could not accept those services because it is tied by a contract to selling its rice through an expatriate firm, an American firm, which is itself a dealer in rice. This firm buys our rice, the highest quality of rice that one can get on the world market, at the lowest world price. The rice has to be shipped in bags marked with the firm's name, then it is converted into packages and distributed in the lucrative fields. I understand that, quite recently, a ship arrived to take some rice but it had to be diverted because the quality of rice was not available.

The hon. Member, I assume, has not got the curious kind of mind that leads to the grasp of facts. He takes things for granted when he knows that he should inquire. I should like to remind him - his hair is a little greyer than mine, and he may be younger - that he should never take things for granted. Inquire into all that is put before you, as I did during the debate on the Estimates when I pointed out to

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hon. Members that, in terms of the Order that was presented along with the Budget Speech, it was not correct to say that salt fish was not taxed. When the hon. Minister came to pass his Order, he had to amend it in order to make certain that it did what he said he wanted it to do.

Mr. Speaker: Time!

Mr. Luck: I beg to move that the hon. Member be given an extension of 15 minutes to continue his speech.

Mr. Lall seconded.

Question put, and negatived.

Mr. Bowman: I have been listening to the contributions made on this Paper which is before the House. I must say that what appeals to me is the brevity of this Throne Speech. I have said in this House, time and time again, that I have the feeling that we spend too much time, in this country, arguing and, at the same time, not looking squarely at the problems which the country faces.

When this Speech was read I was in another place. I did not have the opportunity of taking part in the Independence celebrations and I was not present when the Speech was read.

4.50 p.m.

We have been trying to become masters in our own House for a long time, and I feel that the

time has come when there must be a change in the whole tempo, particularly in this House. We must now start to act far more responsibly, and we must decide in our minds what we should do to move forward steadily. The document before us has merely three pages and I am not going to take a lot of time this afternoon to elaborate on it. I wish to read from paragraph 6 which states:

"At home, a seven year development programme has been drafted, and approved by the Legislature. This programme which promises the expenditure in the public sector alone of approximately \$300 million is aimed at increasing rapidly and significantly the gross national product and national income per capita and laying the foundations of a strong and economically sound Guyana where want, poverty and unemployment will be abolished."

The last two lines are very significant and I wish to quote them:

"The productivity of our nation will have to be increased considerably and the fruits of this productivity fairly divided."

This is the burning question of the day in this and many other newly independent countries throughout the world, the question of the increase of productivity. But in our own case we can only hope to increase our

productivity if we take a fresh look at our problems, and there must also come about a change of attitude generally, attitude towards work, attitude towards each other, and most important, a change of attitude towards development.

We know for a fact that in this country the people have been accustomed to go at a certain pace. We have heard criticisms time and again in this House as regards, for example, the attitude of workers who are engaged on the Road Programme. We know that for some time now there has been quite a lot of disagreement in the trade union movement, and the general attitude has not been one conducive to rapid development. All these things will have to be looked into. A new viewpoint will have to be arrived at, and with this in mind we will be able to move forward.

We are now a free people. What we must look forward to is a period of economic take-off. This should be our primary objective. I am saying this because only a little while before our Independence Celebrations, I had the privilege of being in the island of Trinidad, along with other Members and the Clerk of this House; it was a delegation representing this country. We were taken to various industrial plants from day to day. We were shown everything of importance. One of the points which I noted was that, because there has been a great degree of objectivity exercised by the people in

office in that island and by the politicians generally, and also because there has been in that country a long period of tranquillity, they were able to progress. I made certain inquiries and I became almost ashamed when I took into account the fact that, in a country as big as ours where so much can be done, we will still have quite a lot to do - and I emphasise "quite a lot" - in order to catch up with Trinidad.

On the first day of our tour, we were taken to an industrial plant where automobiles, buses, lorries, etc. are assembled. We were told all that is being done in the plant, the number of persons employed, the wages paid, and so on. As a very old hand at this sort of thing I made quite a lot of inquiries on the side. But the significant point came when we were about to leave the plant. We were told that the bus in which we had arrived that morning was assembled at that very plant. We were surprised because we travelled in that big bus and we did not know that it was assembled in Trinidad.

Then we visited a firm which was called Metal Boxes. This firm manufactures containers such as cardboard boxes and tin cans. We saw the names of some prominent Guyanese business firms on some of these cans, boxes, and so on. We were taken on a tour of the plant and we saw a huge store-room, and when I asked what was the marketing situation, we were told, "Look we do not do

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very much business with Jamaica. We are not so fortunate as to be able to monopolise that section, but believe me, you people in B.G. are the biggest buyers."

When it came to the question of the empty grape-fruit gallon cans, we were told that British Guiana, a country in which -- [The Prime Minister: "Guyana."] We were told that Guyana, a country in which we can grow all the citrus necessary to carry on our own canning, is again the biggest buyer. This left me very uneasy because I am one of those who feel that if we all put our shoulders to the wheel, quite a lot can be accomplished. This paragraph 6 will mean very little if we do not start to take a very objective view of the whole situation.

Now, we come to a very vexed question. At the Conference I made reference to the fact, in the presence of the other West Indian delegates, that Guyana is very big. Somebody got the idea that we were extending an invitation to West Indians, and the next day, we saw in the Trinidad Press, a report to the effect that I said that they should all come to Guyana, that this country is very big and we have plenty of room.

5 p.m.

Last week a few West Indians arrived here, and for many days we were regaled in the Press with the pros and cons of the matter. As I have said on former occasions, and I want to stress again

on this occasion, we are not going to solve our problems merely by sitting down, or by going to conferences and boasting about the size of our country, or teaching our children in the schools that Guyana is a land of many waters, that it is a big country, regaling them with the size of the country and what can be done in it, and telling them about this country's potential mineral wealth and so on. We must get down to doing something constructive regarding the development of this country. At least if we cannot do anything significant about actual development in terms of capital and high technical skill, then we must start seriously to do something about the settlement of people in the various areas in the interior.

It is true that we have a number of problems to face. One hon. Member who spoke before me referred to the number of children leaving school every year and the number of unemployed people in this country. All of this is true, but we are not going to solve these problems by merely talking about them from year to year, or by criticising any Government which happens to be in power. We know that the Government has inaugurated a scheme to stimulate industrial development here and there so that people may be employed.

We are at a stage where, perhaps, the United States found itself a few years ago. We have a big country, but we lack the necessary pioneering spirit par-

ticularly among the native Guyanese. Let me give you an example of what I mean. Let us take the question of our border. I am sure that there are many who will agree with me that not one inch of our land should be given to anybody. Whenever the question of the border claim comes up you will find 99 per cent of the Guyanese people putting their hands up in favour of not giving away an inch of our land, but you will not find many thousands of Guyanese who have even a smattering knowledge of this vast country of which we often speak. Many of us have never seen the entire country and yet we talk about it. The time has come when we must stop talking about it and do something to enable persons to see the country, because until this is done Guyanese will be unable to appreciate what is worth fighting for.

There are a number of Government employees who, when they are sent to do a few days field work, or are transferred to an outstation in the interior, make a lot of fuss and some refuse to go there. Certain people feel that they have absolutely no business in the interior. I feel that the Government must be very objective in dealing with this matter. When the Government has prepared Scheme A or Scheme B and has invited Guyanese to go into such-and-such an area under conditions clearly set out, it must see to it that these schemes are properly advertised. The Government must also see to it that everything possible is done to en-

courage people - especially the young people - if possible by way of pre-education to go into these areas and establish themselves. When all of this is done and the response remains as it is today, then the Government must go ahead with a plan for its immigration scheme. The Government must be bold enough to state the reasons for its pursuing an immigration scheme.

Let me talk for a moment about our frontier with Brazil. You will find on the border on the Brazilian side of the river a number of villages - villages populated by Brazilians. On the Venezuelan side of our border, you will also find a number of villages populated by Venezuelans. However, on the Guyana side of the border, you will find very few persons, if any at all, living there. That does not mean to say that large numbers of Guyanese do not trek to those areas. They go to the areas, but they take a different attitude from the Brazilians and the Venezuelans. There is a big difference between the attitude of a Brazilian miner and a Guyanese miner, and between the Guyanese miner and a Venezuelan miner. The Brazilian miner and the Venezuelan miner will take their families with them to these areas and settle there. On the other hand, the Guyanese miners go into the interior with the aim of "making a few quarters". A Guyanese miner may spend three months or a year in the interior, but the day he gets a substantial amount of money he leaves the

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area and he may not return there for another four or five years.

When the Brazilian miners and the Venezuelan miners take their families to these areas, you will find villages springing up and they will remain in existence for countless years. I know of villages on the Brazilian side of the border where I have lived. Some of these villages were in existence since 1950, and the people who live there come all the way to Georgetown to buy things and return. When Guyanese merely go in for a short time and come out without settling there, then it means that we will never be able to populate and settle people in those areas. The result is that some of the people on the other side are getting the benefit of the best land on our side. Those who know the areas well will tell you that we have the best grazing land on our side of the river. Very often you find the Brazilians using our land for grazing purposes. The Venezuelans also use our land for the same purpose.

All of these debates in this House will get us nowhere unless we are prepared to do something constructive. A lot of us can talk because we have the privilege to speak in this House. We know about world problems and we can regale the House with our knowledge of them. We can offer advice and say the other chap is not bright and so on. All of this politicking is taking place over an area 270 miles long by about 50 miles wide on the

coastal strip of Guyana, while the whole of the country remains unpopulated and unattended and we call ourselves a people in possession of a great country. We fool ourselves that we are doing a wonderful job.

5.10 p.m.

This country will only be developed when we decide to get up and get. If we decide not to get up and get, then others must be allowed to come in and do so. We have to be objective; we have to be brutally frank at times but this is the situation. Others must be allowed to come in and develop the country. It is not good enough to have a vast country and to boast about it all the time and do absolutely nothing with regard to moving away from this entanglement, this suffocation on the coast, this overcrowding, when this country is large enough for each man to make a living.

Our country is not unique with this problem. The Brazilians had this problem for a number of years. When the Portuguese occupation of that country ended, the inhabitants tended to crowd the coastlands and so the Brazilian Government, after many years of debate, decided to site the capital of that country in the Amazon. The capital city, Brasilia, was built. At first there were problems because there was a reluctance such as we have, particularly among the bigger people, politicians, civil servants and what not, to live and

serve in Brazilia, even though it was a city constructed along ultra-modern lines. Certain big Government officials were content to use army jet planes to fly from Rio de Janeiro to Brazilia, put in eight hours' work and fly back in the afternoon. After a while the Government clamped down on this and many of them are now residing in Brazilia.

The idea behind the construction of Brazilia was to encourage the people of Brazil to move inland. This must also be our primary objective, to get people to see this country and to know what it holds for them, to get them to fall in love with it. There are many Guyanese who can speak of the wonders of Trafalgar Square. They can tell you about Soho and about the wonders of Switzerland. Many of them spend a year in England and when they speak you will think that they are cockneys, born and bred in London. Many Guyanese can speak about the Alps but they have never seen Kaieteur Falls, they have never been to Orinduik, they have never been to Lethem. I am reminded that the Minister of Labour has just returned from Geneva. So there it is.

We have to be serious. I think that rather than some of the plans we have been hearing about - though not officially - the Government should start out with a primary objective, that is, to prepare a programme for internal tourism to get Guyanese acquainted with Guyana. This

should be done rather than embarking on a grandiose programme for attracting foreign tourists. The latter is good but we must start with our own people and when we have children from the high schools and colleges going into the interior to see the country and, as I said, falling in love with it, then we will be able to hope that in the future we will have a generation of people who know the country and who are particularly interested in it.

Again I say that this will take some planning. It will have to be started in our schools and this has something to do with our educational system. The educational authorities will have to devise ways and means of imbuing such a spirit in the children that boys and girls will not develop a bias so that each would say, "When I leave school the best thing for me will be a collar-and-tie job, some sort of white-collar employment". They must be taught to feel that as technicians, engineers, farmers, surveyors, they can make just as lasting and valuable a contribution to the building of this country as any white-collar worker.

The youth clubs must also do their part. The youth organisations, particularly those affiliated to political parties, must do their share. I have been speaking about this for years, because I have noticed that while the youth clubs and organisations promote games and while the

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Y.M.C.A. in particular goes in for camping occasionally, not one of these groups has so far established a farm on which the members of the club are encouraged to work and to produce.

This is where the youth clubs can come in. Youth organisations, particularly, as I said, those affiliated to political parties must play a part. In fact, they must be the pioneers in this direction because more often than not they are composed of young adults. The clubs must furnish the young men who will become the settlers in these places.

We have at the moment two schemes in this country. I speak only of two, one on the Berbice River and another further up the Berbice River at Ebini. I am told that those two schemes are practically closed because of the reluctance, of which I speak, of young people to go into these areas. It is because of this reluctance that these schemes are nearly defunct.

Mr. Speaker: Time!

Mr. Bhagwan: I beg to move that the hon. Member be given an extension of 15 minutes to continue his speech.

Mr. de Groot: I beg to second it.

Question put, and agreed to.

5.20 p.m.

The Government must make a very bold effort to get these

schemes going. The Government must seek out young people, particularly in the country districts, who would be willing to go into these places and reside. If and when this is done, and it is found that this reluctance still prevails, then perhaps we can use one of these schools as an immigrant school.

This whole question of not wanting to hear about immigrants into the country is so much "rot" as far as I am concerned because we are not going to move one step forward unless we realise that we cannot remain, from year to year, merely talking about what we have. We must get up and make use of what we have. If we still refuse to make use of what we have, then persons must be invited to come in, in the interest of progress and development, and be allowed to use up some of these vacant areas.

I was amazed to see the great use being made of lands which are normally rejected in this country. In fact, I took many soil samples during my two-day tour of some of the areas in the Caroni plain and other parts of Trinidad. I am quite certain, with my smattering knowledge of soils, that those soils are some of the best. Trinidad maintains these very soils, which are normally rejected in this country, for agricultural purposes but the trouble is that we have so much to choose from that we can afford to differentiate and condemn, while the people in the islands have to use what they have.

There are no trenches, no huge reservoirs; they have to depend on rainfall.

Yet, in this country, we have no tomato industry comparable to the tomato industry in Trinidad. We do not grow as many water-melons as Trinidad, nor do we produce as many cabbages, and the lands upon which these things are produced in Trinidad, as I said before, are lands which would normally be rejected for agricultural purposes by Guyanese farmers. In this country, unless the land is of a dark and loamy nature, we refuse to grow anything on it.

We have to look very objectively at this question of regional co-operation with other islands in the West Indies. Guyana is now highly esteemed in the West Indies, not so much because of political changes but because of the fact that the people in the West Indies are, more or less, looking for a way out of their problems. The Federation has been broken up and they see absolutely no hope for any sort of political union among themselves for a long time to come. They have very grave problems. There is the problem of space in which to live and space in which to work. We have plenty of space and yet we are refusing to work.

If paragraph 6 of the Throne Speech is to mean anything at all, then we must all take another look at this whole question of settlement and development. We must look at it very

objectively. If this is done, then we will be able to find a solution to this very pressing problem.

Mr. Benn: I am sure that all the Members of this House are happy that we are today discussing matters of a national character in a Parliament which is supposed to have the final authority to make decisions for the country. For a long time we had been sitting in this Chamber - those of us who sat in later years and those of us who sat during the past century - debating and arguing at length, but when all was said and done, we knew that there was power at Government House or in London to decide that what we decided here was not law.

The most recent incident of that nature was the attempt, by the previous Government, to pass into law an Army Bill. That Bill was passed after a great deal of debate and, on that occasion, I believe that the Leader of the Opposition and the members of his party did not oppose the Army Bill outright. They did not oppose the Army Bill but yet the power resided at Government House or at Whitehall in London to say "no" to all the efforts that were put in. In that respect, we were second-class persons - I would not say second-class citizens - as far as the imperialists were concerned.

Today we speak in an independent House and we have the responsibility to so conduct our affairs that we do not give some of our independence to any for-

MR. BENN

sign power. We have the task of carrying on until the last vestige of colonialism is removed from this country. Unhappily, the pronouncement of the Government as set out in the Throne Speech, statements made by the hon. Prime Minister subsequently, and other acts of the Government before and after 26th May, do not give us hope that this effort to remove the last vestige of colonialism will be successful.

5.30 p.m.

If we examine the Speech, we are confronted with the following statement on page 2:

"At home, a seven year development programme has been drafted, and approved by the Legislature. This programme which promises the expenditure in the public sector alone of approximately \$300 million is aimed at increasing rapidly and significantly the gross national product and national income per capita and laying the foundations of a strong and economically sound Guyana where want, poverty and unemployment will be abolished. The productivity of our nation will have to be increased considerably and the fruits of this productivity fairly divided. There will be place neither for exploitation nor sloth.

The successful execution of this programme is dependent upon the enthusiastic and intelligent co-operation of all sections of the nation and community."

In these sentences which I have read there lies a great deal of contradiction.

If one examines the Development Programme which was approved a few weeks ago, and the subsequent actions of the Government, one will note that in spite of statements about socialism on the part of the Government, the acts of the Government cannot bring forth any development that will lead to socialism, or if the Government prefers a less harsh word, "socialisation". We were told that this Development Programme would raise the per capita income and lay the foundations for a strong and economically sound Guyana. We know also that recently in the *Official Gazette* it was published that the Guyana Development Corporation will have the responsibility not of initiating but of promoting industrial projects. In other words, it is very clear from the attitude and the statements of the Government that the policy to be followed is a policy in which the means of production - land and so on - will remain in the hands of a few people in this country, in spite of all the talk about socialism, and this means a great deal to the people.

On the one hand you say that want, poverty and unemployment will be abolished. But it is not possible to abolish want, poverty and unemployment if your policy is a policy in which the means of production, all the lands, all the factories, all the banks - everything that brings in large

amounts of money - are in the hands of a few people. Therefore, it is no use telling people that want, poverty and unemployment will be abolished. Want, poverty and unemployment cannot be abolished under capitalism. Let the people understand that clearly.

There has been no capitalist country in the world where want, poverty and unemployment have been abolished. Therefore, you cannot tell the people that you will remove from the Government, control of everything that brings in profit so that there will be an equitable distribution of what goes out, and at the same time tell them that they are going to have the abolition of unemployment, poverty, and so on. It is no use telling the people you are socialist because it is more acceptable if you say that.

According to the Constitution which was drafted for this country, all the lands held by the sugar companies which were held During Her Majesty's Pleasure will be regarded now as if they are private property. For instance, if the Government wanted to resume any part of those lands tomorrow, it would have to compensate the sugar companies as if those lands were their private property. In other words, with one stroke of the pen the Government has proved that it is against socialist ideas and principles because it has given to the sugar companies which have dominated this country throughout the years, all the lands which form one of the most important

assets in this country. We are faced with these contradictions in this document which, according to what we were told by some on the Government Benches, is an excellent Speech, and that it sets out Government's policies.

The Government has set out its policies very clearly. First, it has decided not to intervene in any industrial or trading projects of any serious nature. Secondly, by the stroke of the pen it has given to the sugar companies all the lands that they held During Her Majesty's Pleasure, and it will compensate them if it has to resume the lands.

If one examines the Government's policy in the field of agriculture and land, one will discover that over the past fourteen months there has been a serious retrogression. The only thing in this country that the people control is the rice industry, and this industry has suffered severely. This has happened because, as I have said before, for one reason or another the Government went in with a misunderstanding of what was going on in the rice industry, and it made a great deal of errors. But apart from that, what is happening in other sectors of agriculture? Over the past fourteen months there has been no significant advancement in any direction in the agricultural front. Are you going to blame it on the weather? How are you going to establish a policy, if you cannot

[MR. BENA]

give land to the people to improve their agricultural production?

5.40 p.m.

The hon. Minister of Economic Development said that for a long time agriculture will be the basis for development in this country. He said what we were saying for years. I want to say very clearly that, in order to gain political positions, those who now sit on the seats of Government had to make it appear that the previous administration was not giving all sections of the people a fair deal, because they were concentrating on agriculture. I am yet to see, in the field of agriculture, how this Government has changed the emphasis from one section to another, if there was any emphasis on one section. Fourteen months have gone by and I have not seen any change.

In addition to that, I tabled a Question regarding the amount of land distributed over the last 14 months, and I am yet to receive a reply from the Government Benches. Perhaps there are no statistics available, but it is necessary for us to understand all of the problems in this matter. Those people who have been fooled into believing that milk and honey would flow on the assumption to office of this administration must understand that the policies, agricultural and otherwise, of the administration will not lead to economic betterment for the people of this country.

It was said that the previous Government was helping only one section of the population; so this Government is out to help all sections of the population, and, in its effort to help all sections of the population, it is embarking on the road to capitalism. On the road to capitalism, the masses of the people in this country will remain toilers, while the rich will get richer from the energies of the toilers. In the next six or seven years the position in this country will be worse, because the system this Government is going to follow will not help to improve the lot of the ordinary man.

Go out of this House today and ask any small man whether he can get credit. The small man cannot get enough credit, and he has to continue buying things dear. He has to continue working for the big man. If there is to be any change; if there is to be the abolition of unemployment and poverty, our policy must be such as to put within the reach of the ordinary man the facilities for obtaining credit. There must be a socialist policy.

I am sure that in the next five or six years the same ordinary man will say that the policy on which the Government has embarked and the reasons for which he supported the Government are not the same reasons why certain things have not taken place. Look at these words:

"There will be place neither for exploitation nor sloth."

I would say that there is so much contradiction in this paragraph that we are certain that exploitation will continue, and because the people will have to escape from exploitation there will be sloth in spite of the hon. Prime Minister's talk about eat less, sleep less, and walk through the rain.

The economic position of this country, based on the Government's policy, will be very serious in the future because with the increase in population, with the large amount of children leaving schools, with the amount of technological unemployment as a result of machines taking the place of men, with retrogression in the agricultural industry and the refusal, failure, or unwillingness of certain sections of the population to go largely into agriculture, the people will find themselves in a serious position in this country very soon. One band of people in this country in the next four or five years will continue to own the means of production and will enrich themselves, and those people who felt at the assumption to office that the new Government would bring them milk and honey will have to shake their heads and wonder at what has taken place. They will not have to wait too long to find out what is taking place.

We understand that there is going to be the building of roads and that roads are being built. A university is going to be built, and these things will provide work for several people. It is true that people will be em-

ployed on these projects, but building the university and the roads must come to an end at some time. This Government is giving certain people an opportunity to make use of whatever oil resources there are in this country. The major resources we are supposed to have will be farmed out to foreigners. Today large numbers of people do not get work because machines are doing most of the work. Therefore a large number of people will continue to be hewers of wood and drawers of water for a small elite.

What is going to happen in this country in the next three or four years is that we will have a small band of local capitalists; below them a large Civil Service elite, and below them the masses will be struggling to get up there. This has been the case in many developing countries. You will have a large section of the population finding difficulty in obtaining jobs in industry, in commerce, and in the Civil Service, and the people who have not been fortunate in obtaining higher education will remain at the bottom and struggle in the hope that God in his own time will put things right.

According to this Throne Speech, the Government will do everything that is right. There will be no exploitation, no poverty, no unemployment, and nobody will want for anything. We hope that, in keeping with this statement, the Government will be willing to promulgate laws providing for the unemployed until it is able to abolish unemploy-

[MR. BENN]

ment. If the Government is unable to abolish unemployment, then it should give some sort of relief to the people until it can find jobs for them, since it intends to abolish unemployment.

The next paragraph of the Throne Speech states:

"The successful execution of this programme is dependent upon the enthusiastic and intelligent co-operation of all sections of the nation and community."

So you want the exploited to co-operate with the exploiters in order to continue with their exploitation. That is what the Government proposes here. All sections of the community must work towards this end, which is inevitable, according to the programme which the Government has set out. You are asking the people who will be exploited to co-operate with the exploitation in the hope that at some future date everything will be fairly divided in this country.

5.50 p.m.

Apart from this basic contradiction that the exploited cannot co-operate with the exploiters, there is the other problem which has to be overcome, the problem of national integration. When I spoke on the occasion of the Motion for the approval of the Report of the Independence Conference I said that

it was necessary for the Government to speed up social integration in this multiracial society.

Social integration in a multiracial society cannot be speeded up under a capitalist system. The seeds of division have already been sown. One section of the population has been made to feel that another section of the population is getting rich. One section of the population feels that the Government is now helping another section of the population. This is the situation today. How is social integration going to be speeded up? Are members of the Government going to use capitalism as their tool for the speeding up of social integration? Capitalism does not build the ordinary masses of the people. It destroys them. It cannot bring social integration.

The Government therefore will have to grapple with the economic problems of this country with a great deal of earnestness if it is sincere in what it says it hopes to achieve. The earnestness with which it has to grapple with this problem has to be an earnestness that does not lead it down the old beaten track, the old capitalist road which it has inherited.

Although we have our own flag, although we have a Coat of Arms and a National Anthem and although the photograph of the Prime Minister is in this Chamber - it could not have been here before, but now that we are Inde-

pendent it can be here - although we have all these things which are symbols of our nationhood, we can have our own flag, we can put our pictures where we want because they are ours, yet there is one problem that will continue to face us. We will not be Independent as long as we cannot grapple fully with the economy and as long as our economy continues to be dominated by foreign interests.

Colonialism has gone, but we have a new stage of colonialism. We have decided that we are going to continue to hitch our wagon to the capitalist star, which is pitching. We have decided to take certain action, giving more to those who have, like the sugar producers. We have really decided by governmental action that, having got rid of the British flag, we are going to have a flag, but economically we are going to remain a dependent territory.

As I said before, it is necessary for the Government to approach this problem with earnestness. The Prime Minister is reported to have laid down a challenge to the Leader of the Opposition quite recently and I would like to read from a Release from the Office of the Prime Minister dated 4th June, 1966:

"I am sure most of us would like to see an end to the strife, contention and ill-feeling in our midst."

Everybody would wish to see this, but one can only see an end to

strife, contention and ill-feeling in our midst if two things happened, namely, on the one hand if there is a real effort to grapple with the social and racial problems in the country, and secondly if there is an effort to grapple with the problem of economic control in the field of production in this country.

There will always be strife, contention and ill-feeling in our midst as long as the means of production, the land, factories and such things, are in the hands of a few. There will always be strife, contention and ill-feeling in our midst as long also as a large number of the people feel that they are rejected and have no stake in the future of their country.

Apart from the economic problem, as I have already said, the Government has not been able to point a way that will give us hope, or that will give the intelligent hope that we will abolish unemployment, poverty and want in spite of these attainments. There is also the other problem which has to be tied up with the economic problem. There is no doubt that the United States Government has its hand very deep in the affairs of this country. This deep interest can be proven in many ways. There is the action of the Government in foreign affairs. I believe that was referred to before, but there is also the more recent tie-up in economic aid and the policy of so-called "neutralism".

[MR. BENN]

I am not saying - indeed, I would be the last to say - that the Government should refuse to try to secure aid from any country if the aid suits it, but what is happening is that this aid is being tied up skilfully, and unobtrusively sometimes, with a form of military assistance, which I spoke of some time ago, and which I want to mention again.

When some years ago the President of the United States of America, President Kennedy, spoke in a message to Congress on assistance to Latin America, he said this - I am quoting from *International Affairs* of November, 1964, page 26 and the message was in March:

"Military assistance will in the future more heavily emphasise the internal security, civil works and economic growth of the nations aided."

6.00 p.m.

Let me read it more carefully:

"Military assistance will in the future more heavily emphasise the internal security, civil works and economic growth to the nations aided."

President Kennedy was here laying down the law that when the United States set out to aid any country, it has to protect its aid, and the protection for this aid is a certain amount and a certain form of military insurance. Now this military

insurance for Guyana is taking place.

Mr. Speaker: Time!

Mr. Khan: I beg to move that the hon. Member be given an extension of 15 minutes to continue his speech.

Mr. Wilson seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. Benn: We know that the hon. Minister of Home Affairs (Dr. Reid) is not only staying home to receive the military aid but he is going to the United States to get it.

When I spoke on one occasion, I pointed out that a policeman was sent to West Germany and that the United States had been aiding our Police Force materially and technically. I mentioned, on another occasion, that there was no doubt in my mind that some of the 300 American specialists who are training military men in counter-insurgency operations at Fort Bragg, are also training some of our men. When you get aid from the United States it means that there has to be a certain amount of military insurance from their point of view, and this is - [Mr. Cheeks: "What about the rocket bases?"] - from the words of the President himself.

What does this mean to the people? Does it mean that a certain set of people will not be interfered with? Of course not! This is like rain; it will fall

on the just and the unjust. When it started in Vietnam several years ago the United States was giving aid and there were many military specialists. Indeed, up to about a year or so ago, the people whom they were supposed to be fighting in Vietnam, to prevent that country from falling into the terrible claws of communism, were technicians, they were not soldiers. Today it has blossomed out that there are nearly 275,000 American soldiers in Vietnam, and this started with aid and military insurance.

When the trouble started in Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic merely a year or so ago, President Johnson said that he was not going to sit down in his rocking-chair and allow the so-called "communists" - the people called themselves "constitution-alists" - to take over. The President said that he had despatched those soldiers to protect the American technicians he had in the country. We will find in Guyana that if any section of the Georgetown workers started to go on a long strike, as they did in 1963, and things became hot, then the United States Government will have to send soldiers to protect American technicians in Guyana. This is the logical conclusion of what is happening.

These are the highlights of this programme and I would suggest that the people of this country read this Speech carefully. They should not read it in isolation from the events in Santo Domingo, Vietnam and, in-

deed, the whole world. Let them read this Speech in conjunction with international events and they will see it bodes a great deal of ill for the people of this country. Perhaps the members of this Government do not intentionally wish to bring ill upon the people of this country but then someone else must point things out to them. If they are deluded, then those who can see should point these things out to them. Now they know.

I hope that the people of this country will persist in their efforts, irrespective of what the Government does, and will fight to overcome the last vestiges of colonialism. I hope that the people of this country will direct their efforts to establishing a society which, in the words of the Speech from the Throne, will abolish want, poverty and unemployment. That society cannot be a society based on the policies of the Government, it has to be a society based on socialism. I hope that the people will unite their efforts and so overcome the problems of integration, the economic problems and all the other problems that this country has to face.

[Pause.]

Mr. Speaker: If there is no other speaker, I will call on the hon. Member Mr. Budhoo to reply.

6.10 p.m.

Mr. Wilson: Mr. Speaker, I had not the privilege of hearing the Throne Speech because that

[MR. WILSON]

was a Thursday, and I was engaged in a very important matter concerning freedom. To me, freedom will always be more important than Independence because Independence should bring freedom to people, but what sort of Independence is it which does not bring freedom to all the people of the territory? On that day, I thought it a more important duty to spend some time with a colleague, a Member of Parliament, who has been incarcerated for over a year now. I went to the hospital where I knew his room was, and I stood there in vigil at the time when the National Assembly met for the first time.

Independence, as I said, should bring more freedom to all the people. I would not have believed that we would have gone into Independence with emergency and detention. I would not have believed it! One would agree that under capitalism, a system under which a few have to exploit many, there is necessity for such measures because, as we all know, no group of people will forever accept exploitation peacefully, quietly and humbly. One should, therefore, expect such measures as emergency and detention under colonialism, even in times of peace, calm and harmony.

This Government has been talking about peace, calm, harmony and stability - all these are the adjectives it used - in the country, while on the other hand it found it necessary to have an emergency, and fear of

detention now hangs over the heads of one set of people. It wants people to live in fear of the mighty power which the Prime Minister boasts that he will use. What kind of Independence is this? I am sure that His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent must have suffered great pangs of conscience as he read this Speech. As I subsequently heard the Speech over the air, I could not help but detect a sort of gurgling in his throat, which occurred because he knew that he had to say something that was not true.

Now, these Ministers should first decolonise their minds if they really want to say that they are Ministers to constitute the Government of a truly Independent Guyana. Other speakers have referred to neocolonialism so I shall not dwell too long on that, except to say I have as one of my slogans, "Yes, we have Independence, but without freedom". I do hope that the day is not far off when we shall have real freedom in Guyana, when one set of people would not have to live in fear of police persecution, when their homes will not be searched, and members of their families will not be taken to the police station for questioning the day after they have attended a P.P.P. meeting.

We see here in this Speech:

"In assuming their new responsibility, my Ministers propose to be guided at all times by the spirit of the Guyana Constitution, ..."

What is the spirit of the Constitution? Spitefulness? Discrimination against one set of people? Is that the spirit of the Constitution? We also see reference to a Constitution which is based on consultative democracy. Consultative democracy my eye! You called the Opposition for consultation on appointments and yet the consultation was on whatever you had in your mind. The Prime Minister went with his mind well made up. There was no room for discussion because whatever he had in his mind, that is what was carried out. No suggestion from the Opposition was accepted. There is proof of that. There was no true consultation because not even one appointment that the Opposition recommended was made. Yet it is stated in the Constitution that for certain appointments, the Opposition is to be consulted. The Opposition is just called to be told what is going to happen. That was not the spirit of consultation that this Government called His Royal Highness to speak about.

It is also stated in the Speech that:

"The successful execution of this programme is dependent upon the enthusiastic and intelligent co-operation of all sections of the nation and community."

Fine words, but they are only words! How do you expect one set of people to be enthusiastic, to co-operate, when all power is used against them to suppress them, to victimise them, and to

keep them in fear of detention, in fear of police persecution? What happened when Her Majesty was visiting this country? Myself and nine others were thrown into detention. Why? Because Her Imperial Majesty was coming here! These people are talking about being independent and wanting to decolonise! They ought to have their minds decolonised!

I wish to quote again from this Speech:

"It is proposed by my Government to re-organise the entire system of local government basing it on universal adult suffrage, ..."

6.20 p.m.

I challenge the Minister to put into execution his time-table for the Marshall Districts in August. I understand that this will take place some time in October, but I know that nothing will be done about this matter in 1966. Anyway, I want to speak mainly on the penultimate paragraph of the Throne Speech, which I will read before I make my comments. It states:

"In pursuance of its intention to bind up the wounds which have been inflicted by recent difficulties in our society, the Government will pursue urgently the rehabilitation of displaced persons . . ."

I want to draw attention to the word "urgently". [Laughter.] What does the Government mean by

[MR. WILSON]

the word "urgently"? These people have been running the Government for the last 16 months and nothing has been done to assist displaced persons.

Let me pose these questions to the Government. I hope that the Minister concerned will be good enough to give me the necessary answers. Is it a fact that it is stated in the Report of the National Rehabilitation Committee headed by Sir Stanley Gomes that -

- (1) A great number of persons have suffered and are still suffering, and many of them have lost what they possessed?
- (2) There are large numbers of displaced persons who are yet to find employment?
- (3) The Committee understands that a circular was issued to all Departments of Government asking officers in authority to provide employment, where possible, to persons displaced in order to effect speedy rehabilitation?

If these statements in the Report are true, then the question which arises is whether this circular has been withdrawn. I would like the hon. Minister concerned to answer this question. The fact remains that no special effort

has been made to provide unemployed displaced persons with jobs. If this circular has not been countermanded, then I would like to know how many displaced persons have been provided with jobs since this Government usurped office?

This Government placed a terminological inexactitude into the mouth of His Royal Highness when he said that the Government will pursue urgently the rehabilitation of displaced persons. We would like to see a White Paper on this question in order to find out what are the Government's intentions regarding employment for displaced persons.

There are some splendid recommendations in this Report, but up to now it remains a scrap of paper so far as the displaced persons are concerned. Is it true that this Government is secretly channelling aid to certain displaced persons who are supporters of the two parties? ASCRIA is the channel or agency for channelling aid for rehabilitation to certain displaced persons, whilst the rest of the displaced persons are left to suffer. The areas on which several people were squatting have been flooded, but nobody is doing anything to help take off the water from those areas. No pump has been sent there. This Government does not appear to see the plight and misery of some of these displaced persons. I cannot agree with this statement:

"the Government will pursue urgently the re-

habilitation of displaced persons".

There is no sincerity in these words; there is nothing but hypocrisy in this statement.

Of course, one does not expect anything better from a Government that has got into power by violence against the people who won power constitutionally through the ballot-box. One cannot agree with usurpers or puppets of imperialism. We hope that this Government will do

something tangible for the displaced persons in order to relieve them of the misery they are undergoing.

ADJOURNMENT

Resolved, "That this Assembly do now adjourn until Wednesday, 22nd June, 1966, at 2 p.m."
[Mr. Merriman.]

Adjourned accordingly at 6.30 p.m.