

**THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

OFFICIAL REPORT

[VOLUME 5]

**PROCEEDING AND DEBATES OF THE THIRD SESSION OF THE NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY OF THE SECOND PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA UNDER THE
CONSTITUTION OF GUYANA**

37th Sitting

2.00 p.m.

Thursday, 16th December, 1971

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Speaker

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

Members of the Government – People's National Congress

Elected Ministers

Prime Minister (1)

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

Deputy Prime Minister (1)

Dr. the Hon. P. A. Reid,
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture

Senior Ministers (9)

The Hon. M. Kasim, A.A.
Minister of Communications

The Hon. H.D. Hoyte, S.C.
Minister of Finance

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

The Hon. Miss. S.M. Field – Ridley, (Absent -on Leave)
Minister of Health

The Hon. B. Ramsaroop,
Minister of Housing and Reconstruction (Leader of the House)

The Hon. D.A. Singh
Minister of Trade

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

The Hon. C. V. Mingo
Minister of Local Government

The Hon. W. Haynes (Absent - on Leave)
Minister of State for Co- operative and Community Development

Appointed Ministers (5)

The Hon. S.S. Ramphal, S. C. (Absent)
Attorney – General and Minister of State

The Hon. H. Green, (Absent)
Minister of Works, Hydraulics and Supply

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

The Hon. E. B. Mc David,
Minister of Information and Culture

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

Parliamentary Secretaries (5)

Mr. J. C. Joaquin, J. P.,
Parliamentary Secretaries, Ministry of Finance

Mr. F. Duncan, J. P.,
Parliamentary Secretaries, Ministry of Agriculture

Mr. Salim,
Parliamentary Secretaries, Ministry of Agriculture

Mr. J. R. Thomas,
Parliamentary Secretaries, Office of the Prime Minister

Mr. C. E. Wright, J. P.
Parliamentary Secretaries, Ministry of Works, Hydraulic and Supply

Other Members (14)

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

Members of the Opposition

People's Progressive Party (18)

Dr. C. E. Jagan,
Leader of the Opposition
Mr. Ram Karran
Mr. R. Chandisingh
Dr. F. H. W. Ramsahoye, S.C.

Mr. D. C. Jagan, J. P., Deputy Speaker
Mr. E. M. G. Wilson
Me. A. M. Hamid, J. P., Opposition Whip (Absent – on Leave)
Mr. G. H. Lall, J. P.
Mr. N. Y. Ally
Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud, J. P.
Mr. E. M. Stoby, J. P. (Absent)
Mr. R. Ally
Mr. E. L. Ambrose
Mr. L. M. Branco
Mr. Balchand Persaud
Mr. Bhola Persaud (Absent - on Leave)
Mr. I. R. Remington, J. P. (Absent)
Mr. L. A. Durant (Absent)
Mr. V. Teekah

United Force (3)

Mrs. E. DaSilva
Mr. M.P. Singh
Mr. J. A. Sutton (Absent)

Independent (1)

Mr. R. E. Cheeks (Absent)

OFFICERS

Clerk of the National Assembly – Mr. F. A. Narain
Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly- Mr. M. B. Henry

The National Assembly met at 2 p.m.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

Prayer

POINT OF ORDER – QUORUM

Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud: To a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The Assembly was not properly constituted because a quorum was not present when prayers were read. This was a violation of the Standing Orders.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Member, if you wish to have the time of the Assembly spent on minor matters like this, it does not matter to me one way or the other.

Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud: Under the Standing Order it is the duty of any member to bring this to your attention.

Mr. Speaker: I thought you would have done so earlier.

Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud: I could not, sir.

QUESTIONS TO MINISTERS**MEDICAL SERVICES IN NORTH WEST DISTRICT**

Mr. Ram Karren: On behalf of the hon. Member Mr. R. Chandisingh I beg to ask Question No. 20 standing in his name on the Order Paper.

(i) Is the Minister aware that medical services in the Mabaruma and riverain areas of the North West District have seriously deteriorated since the doctor who was previously stationed at the Mabaruma Hospital was transferred to Mathews Ridge?

(ii) Is the Minister of the view that one doctor is able to serve adequately both the Matthews Ridge and Mabaruma Hospitals and also to serve regularly the people living along the numerous and extensive rivers of the North West District?

(iii) Is the Minister aware that for several months the doctor made no visits to the river areas of the North West District, or that since March there has been no visit by the river dispenser

(iv) In view of the urgent medical needs of the people of the North West District, would the Minister agree at least to restore the service to its previous level as a first step to needed improvements of these areas?

(v) If the answer to (iv) is in the affirmative, how soon can the people expect to have a resident doctor at Mabaruma Hospital and regular service of the rivers by the doctor and dispenser?

The Minister of Housing and Reconstruction (Leader of the House) (Mr. Ramsaroop):

Your Honour, I ask your leave to submit the following reply on behalf of the hon. Minister of Health, who is unavoidably absent:

(i) Due to the acute shortage of Government Medical Officers at the time it was expedient to have the Doctor stationed at Pakera Hospital, Matthews Ridge, run the Mabaruma Hospital. Now that the staffing position has improved, a Doctor has been assigned to the Mabaruma Hospital. He assumed duty on 28th October, 1971.

(ii) Two speed boats "Doc Talbot" and the launch "New Guyana" now serve the people in the river of the North West District.

(iii) Yes – but a dispenser for the Mobile Dispensary Unit assumed duty on the 13th December, 1971.

(iv) The same is now improved.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

MOTION

APPROVAL OF ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE 1972

BUDGET DEBATE

Assembly resumed debate on the Motion moved by the Minister of Finance on 7th December, 1971, for the approval of estimates of expenditure for the financial year 1972.

Mr. Speaker: When the Adjournment was taken yesterday, the hon. Member Mr. Teekah was speaking on the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 1972. Will the hon. Member please continue?

Mr. Teekah: Last evening, when the Adjournment was taken, I was discussing the performance of students at the G.C.E. last year. I have just disclosed to the House that only 27.8 per cent passes were recorded in art subjects and in Languages and Mathematics, only 48.7 per cent passes were recorded.

I want to point out that it is usually states that private students are the ones who cause a drop in the percentage of passes. Last year, in Languages and Mathematics, private students were responsible for 50.1 per cent of passes and the percentage of passes among private students was higher than that among students in Government and Government - aided secondary schools.

In science subjects, only 20.8 per cent passes were recorded and in Languages at the Advanced level 41.7 per cent passes were recorded; in science and technical subjects, 41.2 per cent passes were recorded: in Mathematics, 28.5 per cent and in arts, 22.2 per cent.

This shows that on no occasion were the passes at the G.C.E., whether it was “O” Level or A Level, up to 50 per cent. The percentage was always below 50, 20.8 per cent being the lowest.

2.10 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, since I have just a few minutes more I wish to deal with the Teacher Certificate Examination. It is very alarming to note the very poor performance of student –

teachers of this examination, In 1965 two hundred and sixty teachers wrote the examination, only five passed, in 1966 two hundred wrote the examination, only eighteen passed, in 1967 twenty out of one hundred and sixty three passed, in 1968 ninety – six wrote only nineteen passed. It means therefore that out of a total of 709 entrants there were fifty – seven passes. It is a percentage of 8 which means that 92 per cents of all those who wrote the examination failed. This is a very poor performance in the field of education.

There are several reasons for such poor performance in the various examinations. The teaching material recruited to a large extent is very poor because there is too much discrimination. The best qualified persons are not recruited. Bribery and corruption, discrimination, political and otherwise, are the things responsible for preventing the best persons from being recruited to the teaching profession. Another point is that teachers' salaries have not been revised since the Guillibaud recommendations. The Prime Minister earlier this year promised the Teachers Association that he would revise the teachers' salaries. I know for a fact that the Guyana Teachers Association has sent a memorandum to the Education Minister and up to now it has not heard anything from the Minister. Another reason is that the Government has closed down most of the Teachers Training Centres which the PPP Government had set up during their term of office. If I had time I would have mentioned to this House which centres have been closed down. Another reason is that a very small percentage of the total education budget is given to teacher training. For example, in 1968 only 1.9 per cent of the education Budget was given to teacher training, in 1969 only 1.5 per cent, 1.3 per cent should go for teacher training. Hence you must have poor results at the various examinations.

One word about the University. It must be noted that when the PPP Government set up the University of Guyana in 1963 many snide remark were made about "Jagan's night school" and "Nunes' night school," but that was in the colonial days. It took the PPP two years after internal self – Government to provide this country with a University with very limited funds and accommodation at Queen's College. Nevertheless, the PPP started the University. The PNC has transform "Jagan night school" to a day school.

Mr. Speaker, it is very clear that what is needed is a new white Paper on Education to discuss the situation as it exists. There are so many things wrong with the present education system. I urge the Government to have a critical examination carried out and bring its proposals to this House in the form of a new White Paper on education so that we can have a full debate. This is a challenge to the hon. Minister.

Finally, I want to say that the Ministry of Education has some very good material. There are very hardworking teachers, Headmasters, Education Officers and civil servants in the Ministry of Education. The Opposition PPP recognises the hard work being done by some of the officers and teachers in this field. But there are many who are not pulling their weight. We want to publicly commend three most outstanding gentlemen in the Ministry of Education for their hard work: The Permanent Secretary, Mr. Agard; the Chief Education Officer, Mr. Fox; and the Planning Officer, Mr. Critchlow. What is needed is an outstanding Minister also. Since Cedric Vernon Nunes was removed from the Ministry of Education no one who held the education portfolio was able to fill. We had Mrs. Gaskin, we had Miss Field – Ridley and now we have Miss Baird.

Mr. Speaker: Time. The hon. Minister of Education.

Mr. Teekah: Can I just finish off with one sentence?

Mr. Speaker: No. I warned you.

The Minister of Education (Miss Baird): Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity to correct gross misconceptions on the educational programme planned by this Government. It is true that the right of the individual to educate is enshrined in our Constitution. It is also true that responsibility for determining the roles of education has fallen, fortunately for the citizens of this country, to the Government of the day. I want to assure this House that the course that education

will take is not left to chance. Education is determined in terms of the social and political context of this country.

Mr. Speaker, the attainment of political independence and status as a Co operative Republic set new goals for Guyana. We all know that in the pre – independent era our educational system was geared to produce men and women who went into certain kinds of jobs. It also meant that our educational system concentrated primarily of producing academic skills.

2.20 p.m.

With the advent of Independence and status as a Co-operative Republic, Guyana has got new goals. These goals are goals for economic independence, and those goals concern the fostering of behaviour patterns that will support the strategies for economic development. This means that Guyana now has to harness the country's resources and provide those skills that are now in short supply. It also means that we have to develop the attitudes that make the strategies for progress acceptable to our people. Government relies on education to provide these human skills which we need. We see education as a tool through which we will satisfy our manpower needs, and through which we will modify the people's aspirations preferences and choices so that we will be in a position to effect the changes appropriate to our future needs.

The strategies I refer to, include a modification of curricula. This means that the curricula on which our schools work will be modified so that our children will be educated on content that is within the experience of the people of this country. It also means that the content will be presented in ways that will make our children relate the academic skills they get in schools to the vocational skills they will have to use in later life. This bring us to a point where we have to consider teacher education, the production of text books, and change in the kind of examinations we have.

With respect to curriculum development, I want to tell this House that curriculum reform is a reality. Hon. Members are free to visit the curriculum development unit in the Queen's College compound to see that it is a hive of activity producing material which will be in our schools by January, 1972. The curriculum development unit for primary schools, as organised, is providing supplementary material for children 9 years old, who are in the primary schools. By supplementary material I mean, that the unit is providing the kind of content that will go into our curriculum and enlarge the kind of material that we have. It does not mean at the moment that Guyana is producing text books because this is a highly technical field for which we will have to prepare.

In January, 1972, this material will be fed into six pilot schools in this country. At present, the unit is organised to go into schools to prepare the teachers and the children to use these text books. I want to assure this House that the community is involved in this project, because parents go at appointed times to witness the procedures adopted in the schools. It is our intention in September, 1972, to go into the interior districts to launch this project. At the moment, the Government has organised its education officers to collect material that is relevant to the interior districts of this country so that in September, 1972, when the teams goes, they will be able to use materials that is relevant to the needs of those districts.

The second factor in the development programme in education will be the establishment of multilateral schools. There seems to be a lot of confusion about multilateral schools. Multilateral schools will provide secondary education that caters for a range of abilities in the same school. The multilateral schools will cater for those people who proceed from the common entrance examinations to these schools. Three multilateral schools will be provided in the first phase. In the multilateral schools, it is intended to diversify education so that not only academic content will be taught, but children in those schools will be expose to vocational skills and skills that pertain to the industrial arts.

With respect to the other innovation in education, that is to say, the innovation that refers to the kind of evaluation we will undertake, since we are changing the curriculum, it means that we have to provide for evaluation of our content. The Ministry of Education has established a test construction unit, which will evaluate the kind of courses that we teach in schools. It also proposes to evaluate the standards of attainment of our children in schools, the standards of attainment in subject fields, the aptitudes of our children, so that we will be able to select the kind of persons that are suitable to the kind of jobs that will be available in this country.

The hon. Member Mr. Vincent Teekah attempted to use statistics to interpret his position on the educational programme in this country. I want to say that the hon. Member's use of statistics is deplorable to say the least. The hon. Member should appreciate that the total budget varies year by year, and that the percentage allocated to education also varies. I have to educate him to appreciate that the statistics are not related to a constant, therefore comparisons between allocations from year to year are meaningless.

With respect to primary schools, there were a lot of misleading statements on the primary schools in Guyana. The hon. Member asked this House to believe that all schools in Guyana are overcrowded. I can name at the moment two schools that are not overcrowded, St. George's and Lodge Government, and there are other schools in other parts of the country that are not overcrowded. We do admit however that some schools are overcrowded.

Since 1965, this Government has provided 15,000 primary school places. This number has never before been produced in this country within a comparable period. The Government has provided more school places than was envisaged in the Development Programme 1966 to 1972. By 1975, we will need about 190,000 places in primary schools.

2.30 p.m.

If this building programme progresses at this rate we will solve the problem of overcrowding.

I want to point out, with respect to aided self – help, that this is the main factor in the building programme and the provision of school places. As a matter of fact, the success of self help activities make it difficult to meet the demands of the building programme and extending schools. This Government claims success in motivating people to help themselves despite the fact that certain activists in the Opposition strive unceasingly to discourage co –operation of communities.

The hon. Member, Mr. Vincent Teekah, alleges that the P.P.P. Government left, or took over, 25 Government schools. This is an inaccurate statement. The hon. Member obviously included 14 aided secondary schools in his total of 25. The true position is that Government, in 1964, had 13 Government secondary schools and gave aid to 14 secondary schools, which made a total of 27 in the system. Today, we have 44 secondary schools in the system, of which 13 are aided. This leaves a total of 31 Government secondary schools. *[Applauses]*

The hon. Member told this House that this Government only built 4 secondary schools. The true state of affairs is that Government did, in fact, provide 16 secondary schools since 1965, which is four times the number quoted by the hon. Member Mr. Teekah. It is interesting to note that 5 of these are in the country of Berbice. A total of 5,200 school places have been provided altogether.

Perhaps it will be interesting to read the list of Government aided schools in Berbice: Skeldon Lutheran High, Tagore Memorial, Corentyne High, Berbice Educational, Skeldon Corentyne, No. 63, Rose Hall, New Amsterdam. Those are Government – aided secondary schools and the Government schools are Skeldon Lime Path, Central Corentyne, Manchester, Lower Corentyne, Berbice High, Overwining, Rosignol and Bush Lot.

The hon. Member Mr. Teekah has asked this House to believe that 140,000 children are not accounted for in secondary schools. He described the phenomenon as a “fall – out”, a term

which has come up in the field of nuclear physics while the hon. Member, the shadow Minister of Education, was talking about education.

The true position is that children over 12 are in secondary schools. The hon. Member. Mr. Vincent Teekah, is obviously ignorant of the fact that secondary education for children over the age of 12 is provided at the top level of primary schools.

A lot has been said about kindergarten education, but any educationist knows that even developed countries cannot afford to accept full responsibility for education of the pre – school child. However Government has not abdicated its responsibility for the provision of education to the pre – school child in Guyana. Government continues to give grants to nursery schools at albouystown and Anna Regina, despite the fact that the P.P.P. Government withdraw grants to nursery schools at Port Mourant and Uitvlugt in 1963.

The Government of the day is providing training for teachers of nursery schools. I am sorry to call them nursery schools and kindergarten schools. The training of these nursery school teachers began on an ad hoc basis, but it has now been institutionalised. Government also provides supervision and guidance of nursery schools and Ministry of Education has allocated an Education Officer qualified for this purpose.

Local authorities are free to request one qualified teacher to be paid by Government for one year. Linden has two nursery schools and Georgetown has just established one. Other areas are in the process of establishing schools, namely, Rose Hall, Corriverton, Central Mahaicony and a lot of others. We see nursery school education and local authorities are free to obtain information from the Ministry of Education to guide them in the launching of these schools.

We heard in this House, that 37.2 per cent of primary school teachers were trained and that 28 percent of the teacher in secondary schools were trained when in fact, 44 per cent of the teachers in secondary schools are trained.

Our pupil/teacher ratio in this country is worthy of mention. We have in this country 1.35, while in a very few developing countries the ratio reads 1.40. Although the number of trained teacher in the system of Guyana has risen, the proportion of trained teacher to the total number in the system has remained constant.

The hon. Member established a relationship between unqualified teachers and examination results. If the hon. Member's statement is valid, it must be borne in mind that it was when the P.P.P. Government was in office that the entry requirement for teaching was lowered to the extent that it became possible for persons to become teaching was lowered to the extent that it become possible for persons to become teachers who had not completed primary education.

Another contributory factor could well be That the decision taken by the P.P.P. Government to remove invigilation of the College of preceptors examination from the official supervision of the Ministry could have contributed to the inferior quality of some of the teachers in the schools at the present time.

The upshot of the decision to remove invigilation from the official staff of the Ministry was that the C.P. authorities discovered and reported on the obvious mismanagement of the examination by referring to the fact that in many cases children made identical errors or knew, in advance the answer to examination question.

After the supervision of the examination returned to the Ministry of Education, the percentage of passes dropped to the level at which it was before the change in the arrangement for invigilation. Many of the persons who entered teaching as a result of these arrangements might be those who contribute to some of the problem indicated by the hon. Member.

Also, I should like to point out that these circumstances account for the slower pace of training. We admit that the pace of training is slower than it should be, because Government has

to spend lots of time running up – grading courses for these teachers to make them eligible for entry into the Government Training College.

2.40 p.m.

We must remember that with the expansion of secondary education there tends to be a reduction of academic abilities in primary school. The primary school is left with academic abilities that will be for lower than those in the secondary schools. Those who remain in primary schools will be children whose abilities cannot properly be evaluated by the kind of examinations which we now have. As a consequence, the Ministry of Education has started to organise its examination and it has done so at least with one examination. This is the kind of role this unit for Test contraction will play in the evaluation of the abilities of the children in this country. It will provide the kind of examinations that will be suitable for the children of lower abilities in primary schools.

We do not restrict candidates as some other Caribbean countries do to the G.C.E. Examination, we allow private candidates to take the G.C.E. Examination. We must admit that in many cases, the private people are not properly prepared for these examinations. We have to inform you that the results are good as compared with the Commonwealth Caribbean. English language, for example, Barbados got 17.3 per cent of passes, Guyana 16.4 per cent, Jamaica, 14.5, Trinidad and Tobago 14.6 per cent.

We recognise the need to revise the educational legislation. This has been stated in the White Paper of 1968. There are in the Ministry drafts of revised Ordinances and regulation which are awaiting Government's legislative programme.

With respect to the Digest of Educational Statistics, copies are available and the hon. Member Mr. Teekah used this very frequently yesterday. I have no objection tabling them. On the whole, the Ministry of Education is attempting, and has started to contribute to the

improvement of the quality of education all round. In the multi – lateral schools, and even in our programme, we have set out to improve and extend the facilities for home economic, vocational and industrial arts, and in our Estimates we have put the sum of \$151,000 to complete the New Amsterdam Technical Institute.

The Government of this country is committed to educate every Guyanese, and in this respect the Ministry of Education has arranged to improve education in the Handicapped school. The moment the Handicapped school is being serviced by providing qualified staff and providing courses for them. I want to assure this House that it is the intention of the Government at all times to pay attention to the education of the Government at all times to pay attention to the education of its people in such a way that it will coincide with its plan for economic development. I want to assure this House also that Government will not be railroaded into haphazard decisions about education and a White Paper and statements of policy do not help. Education: is an on – going process; the arrangements for education have to be flexible, and the Ministry of Education has taken up the challenge and will release its plan for education from time to time as the Ministry sees fit. We are not concerned with bringing to the House or with bringing to the public any programme that has not been well thought out. There is a lot going on in schools and all I can say, at the moment is that the Ministry of Education is pleased to recommend that any Member of the House may visit, again I repeat, the Unit of Curriculum Development so that they will see that their accusations that the Ministry of Education is incapable of planning and incapable of organising, are inaccurate and out of place.

Mr. Speaker, there is one more point I should like to call attention to. The hon. Member Mr. Teekah is attributing the fact that the University of Guyana has not gone into day classes. The University of Guyana is an autonomous body, and the arrangements for its classes will entirely depend upon the organisation within the University. The Ministry of Education is enjoying at the moment, I have said this in this House before, harmonious relationships with the University of Guyana and the Ministry has no intention of undermining those relationship.

Mr. Speaker, I have tried to present very briefly, the kind of arrangement that the Government is providing for education in this country. If we follow the sequence, we will see that it is a logical one. The provision to change the educational content, the provision to change the way in which the Government presents the educational content, the provision for evaluating what we have been doing indicates that it is not haphazard. We have attempted to present this to the school and to the teacher institution, and it will be in the interest of this country if the hon. Member of the Opposition join with other members of the community to participate in the kind of educational programme that we have planned.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member Mr. M.F. Singh.

Mr. M.F. Singh: Mr. Speaker, I am sure you will recall from your schoolboy days the story of Tantalus. His father was angered by his insolence so he was put in a pool of water up to his chin and as he bent over to drink, the water receded. You will also remember that over his head hung the most luscious fruits and as he reached to grasp them the wind moved them away. As I look at this Budget Speech I am reminded of Tantalus paying for the anger of the gods. Have we like Tantalus offended the gods over there on the Government Benches? What we like done really that when we ask for help they merely tantalise us, because that is the derivation of the word tantalise. This is in fact a tantalising Budget. It is a tantalising of the taxpayers and a mockery of mercy. We have asked for bread and they have not given us a stone. Let us examine the figures, let us examine this Budget, we would not go into expenditure; expenditure will be for the Committee of Supply. Let us examine the sloppy way in which this document has been prepared and let us see whether in fact this is the general policy of the Government and a general reflection of the Government's operation.

2.50 p.m.

I am particularly glad that the hon. Minister of Finance is here because I want to point out to him the inaccuracies in his Estimates. If we may turn first to the beginning of page 5, it

states: "There has been a surplus in the current account of the Government throughout the period 1968 to 1971. The balance of the current account increased from \$13,208,300 at the end of 1968 to \$364,452,187 at the end of 1971". That obviously is wrong. Instead of \$364 million it should be \$36 million. The figures are here and the Minister, when he asks his financial advisers, will be told that an error was made and it should be \$36 million. The figures are here. [Interruption] How can it possibly move from \$36 million to \$364 million? The hon. Deputy Prime Minister knows that this is an error. It is a reflection of the sloppy way in which the Government is doing its work.

Similarly, page 5 states: "As a surplus of \$2,427,214 is projected for 1971," that should be 1972; 1971 has been dealt with already. Again mistakes. It goes on: "the balance of the Consolidated Fund (Current Account) at the end of 1971", it should be 1972. That is what it should be. Let the hon. Minister check with his advisers. And goes on further in paragraph 10: "With the anticipated deficit \$1,935,000 for 1971," we have already dealt with 1971 last year. This should be 1972.

Mr. Speaker: You are quite right hon. Member Mr. Feilden Singh.

Mr. M. F. Singh: I am glad at least you, Mr. Speaker, have recognised the mistakes, whereas the hon. Minister says glibly I am out of my depth. We move on to page 6. There is an omission and then a very significant mistake. If we read on page 6 under the caption, "Public Debt", paragraph 13, we find the first sentence very incomplete. "At 31st December, 1971 the Public Debt stood at \$228.4 million, of which \$156.8 million has been derived from external borrowing and \$71.6 million", full stop, nothing more. A whole sentence and the beginning of another sentence have been left out. It should read on thus: "from internal borrowing," and the next sentence begins, "the Estimates envisage borrowing to the extent of \$72.0 million." That figure is reflected on page 4. If one compares this with the 1971 Estimates, one will see that that should have been inserted there.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Minister very conveniently says they are convenient errors.

Mr. M.F.Singh: Why does he not say so instead of saying I am out of my depth. The next one, I want to know whether this is in fact a printer's error. [Interruption] He is incompetent. He should resign as Minister.

Mr. Speaker: If there is going to be this type of behaviour, I will suspend the Sitting of the House. I have said so before and I say so again. The hon. Member Mr. Feilden Singh is allocated 60 minutes. If he feels to use the time in this way, this his entitlement and his right.

Mr. M. F. Singh: Mr. Speaker, I am dealing with this because I would not be able to deal with it in Committee of Supply. We will be able to deal only with expenditure. I would like an explanation from the hon. Minister of what appears to be a discrepancy. Paragraph 13 states: "At 31st December, 1971 the Public Debt stood at \$228.4 million." That figure of \$228.4 million I find difficult to understand, in view of what has been reflected in the 1971 Estimates and what has in fact been stated in these Estimates.

If the hon. Minister would bear with me, I see that he does not have his stick today, I would like him to go through this particularly with me. On page 6 of the 1971 Estimates, it states: "At the 31st December - - [Interruption] How could one properly get an explanation of what appears to be an obvious error here? I would appeal to the hon. Deputy Prime Minister if he could bear with me and look at the figures. [Interruption] Does one have to perpetuate this farce? On page 6 of the Estimates for 1971, it says that at the 31st December, 1970, the Public Debt stood at \$233.6 million. The Revised Estimates of 1971 show loans at \$42.8 million. That is reflected on page 11 of the Estimates for 1972, so that makes a total of \$276.4 million the Revised Estimates of repayments in 1971, which is reflected on page 170 of the 1972 Estimates. Revised Estimates are \$4.9 million which leaves you with a balance of \$271.5 million at the end of 1971, but these Estimates on page 6 say that the balance at the end of 1971 is \$228.4 million.

This is a discrepancy of \$43.1 million. I would like the hon. Minister to offer an explanation of this.

If we work back from the 1971 Estimates, reading from page 6, paragraph 13, “At 31st December, 1970 the Public Debt stood at \$233.6 mn. of which \$159.4 mn. had been derived from external borrowing and \$74.2 mn. from internal borrowing. The estimates envisaged borrowing to the extent of \$58.9 million.” In fact that revised figure is not \$58.9 million but \$42.8 million.

3 p.m.

That is \$16.1 million less. And then it continues:

“As Debt repayments in 1971 are estimated to be \$4.5 mn. . . . The revised figure is \$4.9 million, so that you have paid back \$4 million more, and there is an overall debt of \$16.5 million. The public debt at the end of the year should therefore be \$288.0 million. If \$16.5 million is subtracted from \$288 million, you will get the exact figure that I have here, namely, \$271.5 million, but the estimates for 1972 put this as \$228.4 million.”

There is a discrepancy in the public debt of \$43.1 million. What is the explanation? This is what I should like the hon. Minister to tell us. There may be an explanation which escapes me. I have asked a financial expert to look at this and he agree with me that there is a discrepancy. [Mr. Aaron: “Somebody did your homework for you.”] That is what advisers are for; that is why the Prime Minister has advisers and that is why the Opposition has advisers to advise us on matters of this nature.

If you turn to page 8 of the 1972 Estimates, you will find that all the dates are wrong. These may well be printing errors, but this document should be properly checked before it comes to this Assembly. The heading on page 8 reads:

“Abstracts of Estimated of Revenue for the Year 1971 showing also the Estimated Revenue for the Year 1970 and the Actual Revenue for the Years 1963 and 1968.”

Instead of 1971, it should be 1972: 1970 should be 1971 and 1969 and 1968 should read “1970 and 1969.” It is hoped that these mistakes do not reflect the way in which the Ministry of Finance is being run.

In closing his 1972 Budget Speech, the hon. Minister of Finance appeals philosophically to the nation. I shall read it:

“As we march forward, let us do so with confidence and in unity. There is no time for fear, doubts and unprofitable recrimination. We have a nation to build. Our young people are impatient for a better life. We cannot afford to defer their dreams. Whatever our differences, let us find common ground in the need to advance Guyana.”

This is a most stirring appeal, which I am sure must strike at the hearts of all patriots. Who is there among us who could stand up against this? But, with a growing public debt attaining proportions of more than half of the gross national product, with an average annual savings of only \$3 million to finance development projects, with excruciating taxation with a policy which spurns external financing and which miniaturises private enterprise, and with little effort to provide adequate and regular gainful employment, who, but robots, could move forward and march forward without fear and doubt, with confidence in the future and in unity? What about those persons who are picketing outside this building? They need work. Can they move forward, except as robots? Who can really move forward?

After the hon. Minister had made his Budget Speech, I went home to mail my Christmas cards and to send out letters. As I placed the additional postage of 30 or 40 cents on those letters, I was struck by the skill show by the Government when it presented what is, on paper, a budget with a few new taxes.

The fact of the matter is that the Government does not tax directly, but it levies more and more taxes each day in an indirect and largely hidden way. What is the increase in the postal rate except an increase in taxation? It is an increase in the postal rates, which most other Governments have been able to keep at a low level.

The charge of the External Trade Bureau are now added to the cost of many of our imports. What is this but a tax which increase every day as prices increase. The 3 per cent G.D.F. Levy increase as the price of imports go up. Three per cent on #1 is one thing, but 3 per cent on \$3 is something else. Taxation, therefore, increases when we have we such levies.

On page 9 of the Estimates, it is estimated that the sum of \$550,000 will be collected from tolls on the Corentyne Highway. What is this, but an increase in the cost of living? This is most indirect taxation. We were told that the tolls would not be introduced until there was an efficient bus service in that district, but the estimate of \$550,000 is the same as the estimate for Linden Highway and it is anticipated that the Corentyne Highway will yields \$550,000 from tolls in 1972.

It is stated that there is “No new taxation,” but there are more ways than one of skinning a cat and, indeed, there is more ways of trying to pacify the righteous indignation that these misrepresentations arouse.

Hon. Member will remember the story of the sop that was thrown to Cerberus, the many headed dog that guarded the entrance to the nether world.

The masses of common men have been called the many – headed monster and this is one of frightening contempt, contempt mixed with fear. It seem that our Olympic ruler on that side of the House regard the Guyanese people in the same way and throw a sop to distract of the guardian, Cerberus.

The sop in this budget is very tiny indeed. It is so tiny that any self – respecting dog would turn its back on it. What is the sop? The allowance for medical expenses! It will, in practice, result in a reduction of the tax paid by individual taxpayers by only a few dollars, if any at all, because it will depend on the level of his allowances.

Is this, in fact, a subtle way for the Government to give the taxpayer a substitute for the medical services and the hospital accommodation, for which the taxpayer is already paying and which he is certainly not receiving? Such a subterfuge would, indeed, be in keeping with the trends in the Government, that is to place health low down in its order of priorities.

There is another very important aspect of this. This sop is, in fact, discriminatory. Why did it not for – employed persons, the vast majority of whom are small men with annual incomes of less than \$7,200 or \$4,800, the figures mentioned in the hon. Minister's Budget Speech.

Self – employed persons include farmers, shopkeepers, market vendors and ordinary small people. What have they received? Nothing! The attitude of the Government is to vacate the front benches and to vacate part of the back benches during debates. This is a callous attitude. People are outside demonstrating. They want work. This is the attitude of the Government to the problem that faces the community today.

3.10 p.m.

A lot of these self – employed people work all hours more industriously and more conscientiously than the wage earners. It means that a clerk in an office working for approximately \$600 per month will be able to claim allowances for medical expenses, but the ordinary rice farmer who works for, perhaps \$3,000 per year he has no benefits to get. Income tax concessions granted in 1970 had applied only to the wage earners. The rice farmer has no benefit to get from it.

What can we say about those measures which the hon. Minister described as corrective. In fact, I trust that he had in mind a correction of error on the part of his Ministry, an error of judgment. He did not use the words in its totalitarian sense meaning the imposing of corrective measures on anybody who does not see eye to eye with the Government.

Mr. Speaker, it would have been of great benefit to this House if the Minister had explained to us how a 30 per cent tax on betting winnings of the poor man will assist in collecting the taxes from the rich who are said to be using supposed gambling games. You and I know the wide power of the Commissioner of Inland Revenue. Do you think he will allow anybody coming along and saying “Look this is what I got from gambling games.” He will ask for supporting documents. He has so much power, almost absolute power that he will never allow it; He will not be fit to hold that job. Is this being used as a scapegoat merely to put on another tax? The commissioner of Inland Revenue has much wide power that I cannot possibly see that he will allow any taxpayer to get away with using this excuse in respect of winnings.

Mr. Speaker, we read in the newspapers an alleged clarification made by the hon. Minister, but I am not concerned about alleged clarification he must say so in this House. I am concerned with what he said in his Budget Speech on page 32. He talked about wealthy and well – to – do persons. But he went on:

“. . . The Government proposes from the year of assessment 1972 to treat gambling gains as income, . . . “

There is no qualification. But further down there is one qualification:

“I should make it abundantly clear that it is not proposed that this legislation should apply to authorised bingos and lotteries.”

I would have thought that if there was any qualification this sentence would have gone on to say “authorised bingos and lotteries or to the small man’s winnings”.

From this Budget Speech one can only come to the conclusion that it includes the small man's winnings also. The fact of the matter is that if the rich are sufficiently evil – minded they will find another way of avoiding taxation. In any case as I said before, the Commissioner of Inland Revenue will not allow it. But it seems to me that the poor man's windfall which perhaps would make a difference between an ordinary life to him in what appears to be a hopeless world and a little bit of comfort from getting something for monies that he may have been investing all time, could the Minister tell us if the small man is to be taxed. Would he get credit for his losses? I am not an advocate of gambling – the nervous tension, it leads to quarrels, the money that should go to the children and the home being spent in the betting shop and the occasional win going into the rum shop instead of going to the family. I know these things but I still say do not tax the small man, tax the rich, tax them out of existence if you want.

The Minister has not made any qualification and my hon. Friends on the Government side cannot presume that there is a qualification. The fact of the matter is, all that is necessary to prevent this supposed tax dodging by punters is that each claim for allowance should be accompanied by a certified statement from the bookmaker. Taxes on winnings are irrelevant to this question of tax dodging. It seems to us that the Government is intent on making the small man not a real man but rubbing his nose in the dust all the time.

I turn now to the question of foreign policy. Differences of views on our foreign policy seem to occupy sometime of leading Members on both sides of the House. Inside this hon. Body the differences have given rise to a remarkable spate of rhetoric. We have treated in the Press to attacks by one side one apologies from the other. But i think we are putting last things first. A state with an internal position as deplorable as ours should worry a lot less about window dressing for people elsewhere and spend a lot less on it. Do we have to solve the world's problems before we can solve our own problem? Have we got to spend money on Embassies and trips here and there when we can use that money for the workers and build houses for the slum dwellers, to provide employment for those picketing outside who are out of jobs right now as a result o the closing down of businesses around and about the country.

Let us look at the Government's pronouncements on bauxite. We have recently had much praise about production of GUYBAU. All the powers the Government's propaganda machinery have been that we are increasing our production output on calcined bauxite and alumina, but nobody seems to be saying anything about overall production as compared with DEMBA. Has it gone up or down. Why are you telling us some? Let us have the figures. What is happening in respect of overall production? I wish to deal now with the Government's pronouncements in respect of agriculture. I am sorry the hon. Minister of Agriculture is not here. But I must say that we admire his personal, physical effort being put into the agriculture campaign. I am sure he walks miles and miles around the country, but the fact remains that we are not reaching sugar potential.

3.20 p.m.

We are falling down on our rice production, and crops generally for local consumption are in chaotic supply or are expensive. The fact of the matter is the Government's effort to get the people back to the land is a failure. It is not even keeping the people, who were there formerly, on the land, because the Government is not giving them real incentive either through prices for their crops or through real encouragement to become permanent settlers.

There is only one true effective way to do this. This is the method the United Force has been preaching from time to time and that is the provision of freehold and for the people. This Government has advocated co-operatives and has organised co-operatives with varying degrees of success and failure. In the field of agriculture, there is a place for co-operatives but not as land owner because a man will not really work hard unless he knows that land is his, and he can pass it on to his children, and the children can pass it on to their children, and the children can pass it on to their children. The Government is talking about the land it has. Give the land to the people, but on a freehold basis. Let us have a new slogan for agriculture. Land power to the people. Land power to the real man! Land power to the small man! Land power to the Amerindians, to the indigenous people of Guyana! Land power, and then perhaps we will be going somewhere.

Let us consider this whole Amerindian question. When is this Government going to carry out its promise, given at the Independence Conference in 1965, to give the Amerindians their land? Will the Government do it shortly before the next elections or is it going to say: 'Look Amerindians, if you vote for us, we will give you the land after elections, but if you do not vote for us, we will not give you.' One wonders at the apparent deliberate delay of the Government since the undertaking was given at the 1965 Constitutional Conference, to give the Amerindians their lands.

The Government is doing a lot of other things in Amerindian areas, like at Mabaruma and at Moruca. As the hon. Member Mr. Stoby said, Government officers organised the Amerindian Captains Elections to ensure the required results. One former Captain did not know that there was going to be Elections of Captains until the afternoon before, when the notice was posted up. This is the pattern throughout the country. There is even a more deplorable state of affairs. Mabaruma was recently named a local authority, but there are Amerindian settlements where there are Captains in a local government area. A ridiculous state of affairs! In that area, Bumbury Hill is now a local government area. In these areas particularly with Bumbury Hill, the Amerindians do not own lands. All the Amerindian has is a trash house or hut, but now the local authority in that Amerindian settlement is calling on them to pay rates. People do not have money to buy food. They do their little hunting and their subsistence farming. From where are they going to get the money to pay rates? There is nobody there to choke and rob. This is a terrible state of affairs.

I have a notice of assessment for one of those residents, for rates for the year 1971, the lot number is scratched out, it states: "building, Bumbury Hill, due and payable yearly, quarterly, half yearly, or in full, valuation #50, 2.5 per cent levy, current rates \$1.25" and it is signed by G, Perfeira, Collector of Rates, Moruca – Hosororo, Morawhanna Village District. Taxing the Amerindian in his little hut, in an Amerindian settlement: Is it fair? What is the Government giving them? Absolutely nothing: they are entitled to their lands and they cannot get their lands,

and instead of giving those their lands the Government is making them pay money. What an indictment on the Government?

Turning to the question of defence, it is an interesting sidelight of Government's conception of priorities that more money by far is to be spent this year on the upkeep of the G.D.F. than on the Ministry of Agriculture. I am sure that all ranks of the G.D.F. would fight gallantly to defend this country, but it is hard to see an enemy within warring distance small enough for our G.D.F. to handle. Why, then is this level of spending? Surely not to clean trenches or even to work on the Madhiaroad. There are cheaper and more effective means of doing of these two things. What we need is not an army. An army is something we cannot afford. What we need is a more efficient police force, a police capable of protecting you, Mr. Speaker, protecting our wives, our children in our homes and also on the streets. That is where the priorities should be. The people who make up the nation - - *[Interruption]* It makes my task so difficult when the fundamental that each individual makes up the nation is not appreciated by the Government's Bank Bench. We want the police to be more effective, they seem to be powerless to keep the streets clear of criminals.

3.30 p.m.

Not a day passes without a report in newspapers about some incident of stabbing, shooting, murder, robbery or choke and rob. Mr, Amrit Geer from Kitty was hauled out of his car and brutally murdered. The Police seem incapable of giving us adequate protection. The sum of \$7 million should be properly spent for making our Police Force more efficient. Already the Police Force is costing the nation more than \$9 million annually and we get precious little in return.

Perhaps we ought to have a complete re – organisation of the Police Force, a re – organisation of the security forces. Perhaps, what we need is an emphasis on a national gendarmerie, a tiny nucleus of the G.D.F. and a citizen's army on the Swiss model. Such a step,

to my mind, would lead to the integration of all ethnic groups in national defence and in police work and this would do much to heal the present ills in our society and to end the divisions that presently exist among our people.

At least, we would get rid of the belief, which is very widespread at the moment, namely, that the G.D.F. and the Police Force are racially imbalanced because this is the policy of the government. The popular belief is that this imbalance is the Government's policy. If we change the system in the manner I have suggested, we would, at least, get rid of that belief. The same system could be used in relation to the Youth Corps, which is commonly known among the general populace as "the P.N.C.'s private army."

Turning to the question of electoral reform: In the speeches made in the past by the Government representatives, there has been much apparent goodwill but little, if any, sign of practical development along the lines of electoral reform. Once again we are being asked to spend half a million dollars on national registration, which was called the election list after it had been produced by the national registration centre. Half a million dollars are to be spent for the maintenance of this farce. This is almost equivalent to what is to be spent on the technical Institute during one year.

If the Government truly wishes to unite the people; if it wishes to unite the country, it should involve all the people in the process. Let the people understand and appreciate that we must have electoral reform in this country. Give the people an opportunity to realise that they at least will have a chance of voting for a Government of their choice.

The first step towards this goal, to my mind, would be to set up an impartial Elections Commission to take full charge and control of the election from the registration of voters to the announcement of the winners. Let there be a cancellation of overseas voting and let there be a cancellation of all types of proxy voting, because past experience has shown that if there is a loophole for proxy voting it will be prostituted by the P.N.C. agreement with the principle, but

we do not agree that unity can be achieved by piecemeal efforts. Unity can come only if the great powers if I may call them that – in the Caribbean agree among themselves. For Guyana to take a few weaklings under its wing is not the answer, unless you call it an achievement to add to our already over – burdened people another burden. It seems to my party that the policy, which the Budget represents in financial form, is singularly lacking in direction and in cohesion.

A claim has been made that this is a tax – free Budget. At best, that is a misnomer for a Budget that has a few taxes. At the worst, one could perhaps call it a tax less budget for a purposeless policy, and one would have an excuse for calling it that.

What is the policy presented by this Budget? What is the policy which is to be an excuse for asking us to pay for a tremendous Budget. This is a very substantial budget that is presented here; it is a record Budget. We have to pay hard cash for it, in one way or another.

This Budget consists almost entirely of promises for the future. We are told that there will be a fantastic number of jobs in a year or two. We are told that there will be houses in a year or two from now, but nothing is said about the jobless, the 20 or the 30 per cent in our community who want work, who want an opportunity to earn a decent living. What are they to do in the meantime? What comfort is it, on a rainy night, for those people lying down on the pavements in Lombard Street, when they are told that they will get houses in a few years' time?

We are given the assurance that in a few years from now we will be able to clothe and feed ourselves. Ask our poverty – stricken thousands whether they want promises or the assurance of a hot meal now. All of them would opt for a hot meal now, rather than the airy fairy promises which the Government keep making year after year.

Mr. Speaker, one may say that these are the extreme cases, but let us turn to the average, the platitudes of the hon. Minister of Finance about “Advancing Guyana” and about marching forward in confidence and unity. These platitudes would not raise an appetising odour if they

were fired for breakfast in the morning. They cannot be fried and getting something to fry for breakfast is a prerequisite for the small man, for the wage – earner. I am sure that the small man would be quite happy to leave the Minister to advance as long as he could bring down the rapidly spiralling cost of living. All the small man needs is for the cost of living to be brought down. You cannot eat platitudes. You cannot pay your rent with promises.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Member, Mr. Feilden Singh, I do not wish to interrupt but merely to remind you that you have about six minutes more.

Mr.M.F.Singh: We talk about the remarkable growth of the gross national product. Little is said about the fact that businesses are being driven to the wall without any means of survival and yet the private sector is called upon to make the massive contribution of \$70 million to revenue during 1972, that is \$18 million more than shown in the revised estimates 1971.

The Government has shown great optimism about the ability of the private sector by budgeting for this increase of nearly \$18 million in its collection. How can the Government be so optimistic when, only a few weeks ago, by a P.N.C. majority, it passed that iniquitous Capital Issues (Control) Bill, which aims at controlling, miniaturising and stagnating the private sector? No new companies can now be found without the permission of the Minister.

3.40 p.m.

There are no new industries that can be formed without the permission of the Minister of Finance. Where will you collect these revenues from? There are no new companies coming in. The Minister has suddenly assumed the position of a God in the private sector. This permission is required for almost everything. If time permitted I would have read a whole list of things that affect the Guyanese companies and shareholders showing they cannot do without the special permission of the Minister. How then are you going to collect \$18 million more when you are killing the private sector and giving them no incentive at all?

Although the Government by its Capital Issues Control Act, restricts aliens from investing in Guyana notwithstanding its own policy about external financing, it now seek to call on foreign loans in these Estimates of Revenue to the tune of \$45.5 million in 1972 as opposed to \$28 million in 1971. It hopes to secure local loans also to the tune of \$26.5 in 1972 as opposed to \$14.5 million in 1971. One does not need to be quite brilliant to perceive the hypocrisy of this Government in this matter. It talks about foreigners coming and investing money here and it is budgeting for \$45.5 million coming in as foreign aid in this country, you are scaring away these things.

The only industry in this country seems to be the choke and rob industry that is the flourishing these days. For every person that the Government brings back from abroad at a price by no means clear a hundred seek refuge overseas. Yet the Government faces up to this steady worsening position with a complacency of Nehru fiddling while Rome burns. As there was a day of reckoning for Nehru so there is a reckoning for our - - - emperors over there.

Mr. Speaker, there is a limited to which you can tantalise the people, and Guyana is nearing this limit. I warn the Government it cannot continue this policy indefinitely. I warn the Government to take heed and change its policies otherwise it would have to stand the consequences.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member Mr. Jagan.

Mr. Jagan: Mr. Speaker, we have heard quite a bit from Members of the Government and other party members saying that people of this country have the right to say what they like and to criticise the Government. But we have seen many people who criticised the Government were victimised and those cannot be victimised are prevented from demonstrating or picketing the Government. Only a few weeks ago the Brazilian Foreign Minister was here and on instructions from the Commissioner of Police placards were seized from people outside Freedom House who wanted to picket against him. This was done also outside the City Hall.

This was done despite the undertaking given by the hon. Prime Minister earlier this year when replying to the debate on the nationalisation of the Demerara Bauxite Company. He gave an undertaking that peaceful picketing and demonstration will be permitted. What the Prime Minister said then was only echoing a Motion which was passed in this House, at the instance of the Prime Minister, that peaceful picketing and demonstration should be permitted. Your Honour, in fact many Members on the Government Benches said the PPP Government used to run the Parliament the way it wanted to and never gave the Opposition the fight to speak.

But what took place here would show how liberal the PPP was when in the Government. On the 28th March, 1963 at 4.45 p.m. after the tea Adjournment the Prime Minister Mr. Burnham as he then was Leader of the Opposition moved a Motion for the suspension of the House on a matter of great public importance although that should have been moved earlier in the days. The Motion he wanted to move was that members from the public were not permitted to picket outside the Public Buildings, and the Prime Minister said then that that was a matter of great importance. The Speaker quite rightly drew to the attention of the House that Mr. Burnham, Leader of the Opposition should be permitted to move the Motion. In the course of moving the Motion at the very beginning this is what Mr. Burnham had to say:

“For some time it has become tradition in this country which, as far as I recollect, dates right back into the 40’s, for persons or groups to put forward their points of view, or to show their dissatisfaction with one situation or another, or their disapproval of one situation or another, by peaceful demonstration and the carrying of placards of pickets.”

Mr. Burnham wanted to know whether the democratic rights of the citizens of this country should be curtailed from carrying on picketing exercises. The then Premier who is now Leader of the Opposition, in reply to Mr. Burnham, said that the Government agreed that peaceful picketing and demonstrations should be permitted. The procedure adopted here also seems quite strange because after Mr. Burnham had moved the motion and Dr. Jagan has replied, Mr. Burnham was given the right to reply to the speech made by him and then other Members were also permitted to speak. But I should just like to cite one other passage from what Mr.

Burnham had said then about peaceful picketing whether it should be permitted, and which this Government is now preventing people from doing.

3.50 p.m.

“I am sure also that the hon. The Premier will agree with me that if the principle of peaceful picketing is accepted, the presence of a large number of policemen, the riot squad, is sure to be an irritant. That is the spark, sir. At this moment I am not discussing whether or not what is carried by the pickets is justifiable or correct. I am merely saying this: let this house go down on record as being not opposed to, but in favour of peaceful picketing, and, in those circumstances, let the police understand that if people are picketing peacefully outside of this House no action should be taken and the irritant of the presence of a large number of police should be removed.”

Although the debate was with respect to picketing outside of this House, Member on that occasion spoke on the right to picket generally, and the Speaker of the House summed up the debate as follows:

“Sitting here in the Chair, I seem to have gathered that there is agreement all around on this question of the granting of permission for peaceful picketing. In spite of the extraneous matters being introduced in the course of the debate, hon. Member on both sides have time and again said they do not object to people picketing peacefully. That will go down on record as the views of the House.”

We recall what the hon. Prime Minister had earlier said during this year about the rights of people to carry out demonstrations and picketing exercise and I was quoting what he himself had said on a Motion, since 1963. Therefore we can see no reason why the police should intimidate people who are carrying out peaceful picketing. In fact, I feel that the services of those policemen, who, at times in my view waste their energy in trying to prevent people from picketing, can be utilised more favourably in preventing the large number of crimes in this country. One has only to look at the Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police. Year after year since 1964 there is increase of crime and that will continue unless the Government changes its attitude.

I would say that the main cause of crime in this country is that people are unemployed, they cannot find work to do. But many persons who are out of prison cannot find employment because they are not properly trained, and even when they are trained, they cannot find employment because they are ex – prisoners, Apart from that, year after year the Commissioner of Police has been in his Report making complaints as to the conditions under which policemen have to work. For instance, if I may just refer to the actual Report of 1970, dealing with communications, paragraph 7 states:

“Improvements of our telephone communications, particularly at Brick dam and Police Headquarters have not been carried out and this has been a problem affecting seriously the efficiency of the Force and its Police / Public relations.”

Not only communications but also housing. The commissioner had been complaining about housing. The Commissioner had been complaining about housing year after year.

Going through this Report of 1970, I notice that during 1970 more passports were issued to persons than in 1969. In fact, paragraph 200 at page 42 dealing with passports states:

“22,597 passports were issued during the year, as compared with 18,364 in the previous year.”

Your Honour, on the following page dealing with revenue, looking at paragraph 200 where it states that more passports were issued in 1970, one would have expected that the revenue in 1970 would also have been more because, as you know, the revenue collected on a passport is \$10 so that if 22,597. Instead, when one looks at the following page dealing with the revenue from passports, one sees that what is stated there is \$167,470. I would wish the Government to give an explanation because it would seem that there is a shortage here of \$58,500. On the face of this, it would call for an immediate investigation by the Government. It is not a question of \$1,000 either side, but the difference is \$58,500. I do not know if there can be a mistake because the same figure cited for the revenue of 1970, \$167,470, is stated on a previous page although the figures for 1968 and 1969 seem to be correct.

Mr. Speaker: They did say the passports were now passports.

Mr. Jagan: This is dealing with new passports. This Report deals with renewals also but there were no renewals during that year. On the face of it there is a deficit of \$58,500. Your honour, the total sum – passport, visa, travel document, renewal – for 1969 is \$194,388. For 1970, when over 4,000 more passports were issued, the total figure given is \$178,855. There seems to be some confusion, maybe in my mind, but when one looks at page 8 of the Estimates of Expenditure for 1972 dealing with revenue from passports, for 1969, although the Report states \$194,388, the revenue as stated here is \$200,000. Dealing with 1970, because 1970 is the year with which I am concerned, because this is a difference of only \$16,000 in 1970, it seems on the face of all that is stated here that the amount for issuing passports should have been \$225,970 whereas the figure that they gave us as revenue for passports is \$167,470; but the total cost given dealing with passports, is \$178,835 whereas in the Estimates for 1970 we have the amount stated here as \$216,000. I cannot see how the Commissioner of Police can say in his Report that the actual revenue is \$178,835 whereas in the Estimates it says \$216,000.

4 p.m.

According to my calculation, the total sum collected on passports should have been \$225,970 for 1970, but the estimates show only \$216,000. This calls for an immediate investigation by the Government to see where the mistake was made, and why different figures are recorded in these reports.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Member Mr. Jagan, I think that this may be a convenient time to take the suspension.

Sittings suspended at 4 p.m.

On resumption - -

Mr. Speaker: When the sitting was suspended, the hon. Member Mr. Jagan had spoken for 15 minutes. Will the hon. Member please continue.

Mr. Jagan: When the suspension was taken, I was dealing with what appeared to be error in respect of the amount collected for passports.

In the same Annual Report of the Guyana Police Force for the year 1970, the sum given in paragraph 42 as having been collected for passports in 1968 corresponds with what is stated in paragraph 211 of the same Report, that is, \$160,558.92. Also, what is given in paragraph 42 under the year 1969 corresponds with the total sum shown in paragraph 211, but for the year 1970 something seems to me to be wrong. The sum in paragraph 42 for 1970 is \$167,470, whereas the total sum given in paragraph 211 is \$178,835.40.

I hope that the hon. Minister will be able to give us an explanation for the discrepancy to which I have referred, namely, the difference of \$58,500 between this sum of \$167,470 and the sum of \$225,970, which should have been collected.

The revenue from the item next to passports seems to have been over – estimated in the Estimates. The sum of \$4,500 is put down as revenue from Oaths of Admission Barristers and Solicitors, which is the item under Passports. Under the last Tax (Amendment) Bill that was moved in this Assembly, professionals are required to pay a fee of \$200. I think in the same Act or in an amendment, it was provided that they would no longer to required to pay for admission.

During his last Press Conference, my hon. And learned Friend, the Prime Minister, cited an example of a person who was in prison and apparently learnt about pig rearing during his time

there. The Prime Minister said that since he has been out of prison he has been a very successful person in respect of the rearing of pigs. I wonder what encouragement the Government is giving to persons who are in prison for long periods.

Some time ago, I advocated that the Government should give some incentives to prisoners so that when they are released they would not only have a trade but would have some money with which to start a trade successfully. We know that a person who is released from prison finds it very difficult to obtain employment if employers are aware that he has been in prison. I have suggested to the Government that persons in prison could be given more work to do so that when they come out they would have a certain sum of money with which they could set themselves up or enter into some partnership or co-operative to start a business, as in the example the Prime Minister gave.

We have heard from the hon. Minister of Trade and also from the hon. Prime Minister that the Chinese intend to buy sugar from this Government. There was some talk as to whether we would be able to supply them, having regard to our commitment. On the last occasion when we had a debate dealing with the retrenchment of workers from the Sand beach Parker, the hon. Prime Minister, in his reply to the debate, said the Government could not nationalise the sugar industry. I am not too clear as to whether he was saying this because of the difficulty of finding markets and so on. He said that we might find ourselves taking the land and having nothing else to do.

We would like to find out from the Government what is its intention with regard to the sugar industry. In 1963, when the hon. Prime Minister was in the Opposition, he attacked the Government on a number of occasions on the question of what should be done with the sugar industry. In a debate in this House on the 3rd January, 1963, the Prime Minister, who was then a member of the Opposition said:

“I hear a lot of talk about nationalism and changing of the economy, but not a word about what the Government is going to do about sugar. Sugar has dominated the economy of this country. She has not been a queen but the “Madam Pompadour” of our economy. Sugar is passing out now. What is this Government thinking of doing? Nothing at all. On the last occasion we heard about the emphasis which was to be placed upon peasant cane – farming. This time we hear nothing about sugar. Until this Government tackles the problem of sugar it is making fun. Sugar has not only been the economic dictator of this country in the past, and by a strange concubinage wants to persist in dictating to this country, but also socially, sugar has exercised a detrimental influence upon the people of this country. When sugar sought to adjust itself to suit the times you tamed sugar, you say, and Dr. Jagan is tamed too. It reminds us so much of a man who runs behind a woman until she catches up with him.”

I am quoting from column 381.

4.45 p.m.

He continues at column 382:

“Sugar has also exercised an evil influence, even socially, for it either terminated its employees and those who lived within its surroundings, or it adopted a patronizing attitude towards the people. That we have to get rid of because the result has been that the average Guyanese does not think in terms of what ‘Mr. So and So’ can do. Let us face that fact, and until sugar is brought to book, until the Government makes a serious attempt to find agricultural replacement for sugar, which in any case is going out, it is making fun.”

The Prime Minister then dealt with the question of bauxite and said that bauxite should also be tackled having regard to the fact that the Companies here with the parent company in Canada could so manipulate its account that the revenue will suffer as a result. We have nationalised the Demerara Bauxite Company but I wonder what is the Government doing with respect to Reynolds Metals Company? I gathered from the debate that the Government intends to nationalise the whole of the bauxite industry which will include Reynolds Metals Company. But until that is done I wonder whether the Government cannot do something so as to have more

revenue from this company. I would therefore invite the Government to adopt what the hon. Prime Minister said in 1963.

Your Honour, other hon. Member have spoken of ten high cost of living, the unemployment situation, and so on. This, no doubt, is due to the inability of the Government to run the country successfully. In fact, there are not many things that the Prime Minister forecast which normally come out as truth. But in 1963, in the same debate from which I have just quoted, the Prime Minister not only admitted but, forecast and said that the PNC alone cannot successfully run the Government. That is one of the prophecy I think which has borne fruit so far as the Prime Minister is concerned. No one can deny it, because of the inability of the Government to run the country successfully that is the reason why we have so much suffering and unemployment etc., in this country.

In the few minutes that I have remaining I should be grateful if the hon. Minister of Home Affairs can explain to us the question I had raised earlier that the Commissioner of Police has been complaining about so often. In closing I should just like to cite one passage of the *Report of the Commissioner of Police*.

“If the service is to perform with greater efficiency its need must be adequate and the problem must be overcome. New stations and married quarters should be considered of importance of very high priority and the telephonecommunication system should be quickly improved.”

If one looks at the Commissioner's Report one will see that it is the same plea he has been making year after year. I hope the Government will see to it that these facilities can be provided and these matters can be rectified which, in my view, would assist the police in combating the high crime rate.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member Mr. Fowler.

Mr. Fowler: Mr. Speaker, the Government's policy is one aimed at uplifting the work – class people; whatever this Government does points to the working – class people. As I go on I will show this House by giving examples of what this Government has done for the working – class people. When the PPP Government was in office it loaned to Bookers and Demerara Company Limited the sum of approximately \$12 million for the purpose of building a bulk form. Bookers owned 80 per cent and Demerara Company Limited 20 per cent. But what was the repercussion of this loan? The repercussion of this loan took away 70 per cent of the job opportunities for water front workers.

Mr. Speaker, I sat here and I heard the hon. Member Mr. Harry Lall speaking about retrenchment on the waterfront. That is untrue. There is no such thing as retrenchment on the waterfront. This Government listened carefully to the problems of the workers to see the advantage that was being taken through the loan given to Bookers and Demerara Company and its Chairmanship of Dr. Denbow.

4.55 p.m.

I have before me a Report to show to this honourable House where the allegation about where the allegation about retrenchment on the waterfront made by the hon. Member Mr. Harry Lall is untrue. In 1943, the first port Labour Registration Scheme was inaugurated in Port Georgetown. Appendix "G" of the Report of the Waterfront Enquiry Commission, paragraph 5, states:

"That the employer signatories here to (who shall be known as registered employers') shall not employ in any half shift any unregistered waterfront worker unless sufficient registered workers do not present themselves at or before the recognised 'calling on' time at a 'calling on' place."

Appendix "C" page 158, paragraph 3 also states, and I quote:

“The register of waterfront workers shall include the number of workers sufficient in the opinion of the Committee to perform all the work which is carried out in the Port in normal times.”

Paragraph 11 on the said page states:

“Registered employers shall not engage any unregistered workers to work in any half shift if at the particular ‘calling on’ time there are available any registered waterfront workers.”

In 1943, those who had to do with the Port Register were always speaking of registered waterfront workers and until this present day. Earlier I made reference to a loan which the P.P.P. Government made to Bookers and Demerara Company, \$12 million for the erection of the bulk storage plant. This created hardships on the workers, the pay packet was so small that the workers could hardly live, pay a rent, pay fees, and keep their children as they should, to attend school and to have a fairly good education. This Government without making any noise, without speaking about discrimination saw the wisdom of setting up a Commission of Enquiry under Dr. Denbow to investigate. Since that investigation, in accordance with a recommendation, a sum of about \$300,000 has already been paid out to waterfront workers, and there is a further recommendation for the payment of 30 per cent of the earnings of the workers, to be calculated on the basis of earnings five years before the bulk plant came into operation. This would show where this Government is aiming at the upliftment of the small man.

Mr. Speaker, if the time was not so short, I would have been in a position today to tell this honourable House what was the sum of money the waterfront workers would have received arising out of the decision of this Government to set up the commission in relation to compensation for the erection of the bulk storage plant.

Let us have a look at the External trade Bureau. The E.T.B. came through the wisdom of this Government to release the small man from the sharks. Before the E.T.B. came into being, as a waterfront worker, I have seen the merchants import hundreds of tons of potatoes and onions

and they would leave them lying on the wharf, for some reason or the other. I can only assume that the reason is to keep them at the prices at which they were before the E.T.B. came into being. The prices which we pay for potatoes and onions today were not the prices we used to pay before the E.T.B. came into being. Tons upon tons of potatoes, approximately two weeks after a boat arrived here, used to be taken to the furnace and burnt. Today it is not so because the E.T.B. has the business so well streamlined that whatever was going on within the framework of the sharks, to keep the commodities mentioned at the prices that they used to be, is no longer the case.

I sat here and heard a speaker on the opposition side talk about Lactogen. Mr. Speaker, as a father of children, in many cases, I have had to go to drug stores to buy the commodity mentioned. I would go to one drug store, they would give me one price. I would go to another drug store, the same Lactogen, another price; and another drug store, another price.

5.05 p.m.

With the E.T.B. in operation today, every tin of milk is sold at a fixed price; everywhere you go, the milk is sold at one price. We must give credit to the External Trade Bureau which was established during the regime of this Government.

It was a blessed day when the P.N.C. Government decided to guard the working class people from the sharks of the day. Have a look round and see how many supermarkets are closing down. Why? Because they do not have the range of working – class customers which they had previous to the setting up of E.T.B.

I like to bring to this honourable House the solidarity of the workers behind this P.N.C. – led Government. Let us have a look at GUYBAU, which, previously, was the Demerara Bauxite Company Limited. No new workers are working at GUYBAU today. The same workers who worked with the Demerara Bauxite Company are working there. These workers have

demonstrated their solidarity behind this Government and today they are producing more than they produced in the time of the Demerara Bauxite Company limited. This is the solidarity that the workers are demonstrating.

I sat here and listened to a remark made by the hon. Member Mr. Feilden Singh yesterday evening, namely, that some of the backbenchers of the P.N.C. are unable to speak and he does not know when they will be able to speak. I can tell Mr. Feilden Singh this: this is a Government worked by a plan. This Government does not come here to make a noise, but to give its contribution to the nation and to work within the best interest of the nation. Everyone who sits here, however small he may be or may look to Mr. Feilden Singh, gives a contribution to the nation. But the United Force, as a Conservative Party, thinks that small men like us should never be in a position to give a contribution to the nation.

The contribution of the small men, as we are being termed, will develop the system so that we will surprise those who think that they are gods almighty in Guyana. We have demonstrated our contribution to this nation and we will keep on demonstrating our contribution to this nation. We are satisfied that the nation is satisfied with the demonstration which we have made. We know for a fact that they stand firm behind the P.N.C. – led Government. *[Applause]*

I was listening to the hon. Members on the other side when they were speaking about a toll on the highway. I listened to them carefully. What I have to say is that they are fortunate that this Government is not a discriminatory Government. This Government thought it best to give them what they have received – one of the most modern roads in this country.

As long as this Government demonstrates to the Guyanese nation that there is no discrimination, despite who says that there is, the nation will be satisfied that there is no discrimination within the P.N.C. – led Government.

I will say this to my friends on the other side. It is easy to find a fault, but it is hard to find the remedy. We on this side are always available to give them reasonable knowledge and to consult on any matter which they would like to know. They must not come into this House to mislead and to misguide the nation for the sake of publicity.

I would ask the hon. Member on the opposite side to let us as Guyanese. Think the way Guyanese should think. If we do that we would think as responsible leader of Guyanese; we would work as one people, one nation and one destiny. *[Applause]*

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member, Mr. E.M.G. Wilson.

Mr. Wilson: Mr. Speaker, the concluding section of the budget Speech is entitled “Advancing Guyana”. There is a lot said these days about “Advance Guyana”. One also hears it mentioned over the air. It is a good idea to advance Guyana but, as is usually said, courage must be proved by deeds and not by words.

This Government is advancing Guyana by slogans. Indeed, we find that rather than advancing Guyana, just the opposite is taking place and that Guyana is being downgraded by the deeds of this Government.

5.15 p.m.

People are starving to a large extent because of the rising cost of living and lack of employment. Can anyone say that is a way in which Guyana should be advanced when 30 per cent of the Guyanese people cannot find a square meal? As you go through the streets and villages you find young men “liming”, to use local parlance. Why? Is that the way Guyanese is advancing? Then you meet with big men, able – bodied men, going along the pave and asking for aid, for 25 cents, 10 cents and the like. All these are indications that the situation with regard to the small man in

Guyana is becoming desperate and can hardly be worse. Surely this cannot be said to be the way in which Guyana should be advanced. There is unemployment all around.

My contribution would be brief. I should like to speak on this aspect of the Budget about advancing Guyana to show that just the opposite is taking place. The hon. Minister of Finance in his Budget Speech claims to be affording some measure of relief to the small man, to the worker class, but I would say that is like throwing crumbs to the dogs. *[Interruption by the hon. Mr. Hoyte]* This is how the Government thinks about the small man, that they are fit for crumbs. If you are familiar with the Bible you will know that when it speaks about crumbs, it tells you that crumbs go to the dogs; and since the small people are only getting crumbs they are therefore being regarded as dogs by the Government. *[Interruption]* the small man in Guyana is like a beast of burden, he has to carry the load of the rest of the society, but this Government thinks it can throw dust in the eyes of the people, I would say that it is like adding insult to injury when the Government come forward with this Budget and claims to be giving relief to the small man. It is an insult to the intelligence of the small man. In fact Members of the Government think so, but let them go about the streets and hear the comments of the small man, they do not regard the tax proposals as any relief.

May I refer to particular cases where it is a fact that the country is not advancing. I want to deal with the Ministry of Communications. The steamers are in a deplorable state; they cannot be worse. The North West Steamer is hardly fit for anything more than cattle to travel in. The condition is sickening. People are huddled together with cargo; the waves wash in on them; when it rains they get wet. The Berbice steamer too is no better. This Government ought to have more feeling for the small people who that long tiresome service and do something to give more relief. Chairs should be provided so that they can rest. All this indicates lack of planning and purpose and sincerity on the part of the Government to serve the interest of the small man. The Government has curtailed a large section of the train service in keeping with modern trends that road should replace rail particularly where the two routes are paralleled one should take

precedence. There is more elasticity to travel by road but then what is happening to the portions that remain? The track is out of order; the trains have to go at snail's pace because of this, no attention is being given to the railway track, attention that is necessary if travelling by train should be safe.

Telephones. Ever since the Government went into office we were hearing that next year we will have a full and improved telephone service. We have changed numbers, and what you have now is confusion, when you dial you are getting engaged tone all the time. When I went to live at Beterverwagting I was told that I cannot get a telephone because there are no lines. The Government has been making promises too long about expanding and improving the telephone service. I think that there is need for a White paper with regard to communications generally and particularly with regard to water transport. An expert came down here some time ago during the time I was a Minister and submitted a report, and I have been looking forward to see whether any of his recommendations were being implemented particularly with regard to tugs and barges. But nothing is being done.

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Steamers are overcrowded; they are adding pontoons to relieve the transportation of cars and even that is inadequate because persons have to wait a long time.

There are roads, as one tries to move from one part to the country to another, there is a bottleneck when one arrives at the ferries. As regards air services, we find that air services have been reduced, particularly in the Pomeroon. During the P.P.P. regime, there was a regular air service to the Pomeroon but now that has been discontinued. Even the service to the North West District, which has been run by this Government, is now inadequate. As a matter of fact, I have been told that persons prefer to travel by the steamer service because the cost is prohibitive; there is no intention on the part of the Government to help the poor people in getting about their business.

There are a few points I should like to raise here concerning local government. At every meeting of the Union of Local Authorities, at every G.A.L.A. conference, there is one theme. Pay up your rates, pay up your arrears of rates. What about the services of the rates? The hon.Minster of Local Government could tell anyone what is the deplorable condition of the main road at Beterverwagting. Last night, I had to leave my car at a friend's home. We built thousands of miles of pipelines to supply remote areas, whereas, in the past the only person who were accustomed to pipe supply were those in New Amsterdam and Georgetown. It was the P.P.P. Government which gave piped supply in the villages and estates.

Speaker about rates, I though the Government would have come forward with some paper scheme for the making of grants. Under what terms the grants would be given. During the 1969 campaign the Prime Minister went around and told the people if they put up P.N.C. – controlled authorities, grants would be made. Instead, areas that were not accustomed to paying rates now have to pay rates. No.5, West Coast Berbice, and other depressed areas, these people have to pay for no service at all [*Interruption*] I went there only recently and I talked with them.

Then, there is the question of the S.I.L.W.F. I think the Government should come forward, frankly, with a policy statement with regard to the manner in which this S.I.L.W.F. is going to be used and applied to the coffers of local authorities. This fund, in our view, is deferred wages of sugar workers, and a substantial portion should be used to help sugar workers in the extra nuclear, housing areas to offset rates, but we are not hearing anything about that fund. I heard Government found it necessary to make some use of it and that is why roads and water supply in the extra nuclear areas are not being maintained as they should be.

We would like the Government to come forward and say something about this fund and what use should be made of it, how it is going to used, to show fair play to the sugar workers to whom it belong.

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National Assembly

5.25 – 5.35 p.m.

In conclusion I should like to speak on the question of democracy, not in the widest sense but in two particular areas to show that the Government does not believe in what it says. The Rice Producers' Association is an elected body of small rice planters. It was through their efforts that the Rice Marketing Board has got all the funds, yet, as soon as this Government went into office, it stopped the grant which the Board used to give to the Rice Producers' Association to enable this Association to carry on its work in the interest of the rice farmers, and instead of that, the Government set up a Rice Action Committee. This elected body is being side tracked. If it believed in democracy, it would have that the elected body, the Rice Producers' Association should be the vehicle through which any assistance to rice farmers should be given because they are in touch with the farmers. The appointed body would act in a bureaucratic manner and would not serve the interest of the rice farmers.

There is another elected body, the Guyana Cane Farmers Association, which is being treated in the same way. The Government has put up a parallel body, the regard to democracy. The rice farmers and the cane farmers, they are to be elected bodies, the Government should show the recognition to them and let them serve. The Government talks about co-operation, but where is the co-operation?

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It seem that in the Government's view, co-operation is a one-way street. We call upon the members of the Government to show there bona fides with regard to democracy, to give grants once again to the Rice Producers Association and to give due recognition to the Cane Farmers Association.

Mr. Speaker: The hon Member Mr. Duncan.

Mr. Duncan: Mr. Speaker, there is a great temptation to reply to all the criticisms levelled at us in this House, but at the moment I shall only take up two of them: first, I should

say that the hon. Member, Mr. Stoby, who should have been here, has treated this House with usual discourtesy. On the last occasion when we had to reply to him again he was not in the House.

The hon. Member (Mr. Stoby) made a point about the election of Amerindian captains in October last. For his information in section 14 (1) of the Amerindian ordinance, Chapter 58, authority is given to the Commissioner of the Interior, who is now the Chief Interior Development Officer, to appoint suitable persons as leaders.

This year however, we gave Amerindians their rights to select their own leader, and therefore they had elections. We could have appointed the persons we wanted, but we gave the people a chance to select their leaders, by means of nominations, and eventually to elect the most suitable persons. I should point out that these leaders are paid and we cannot have leaders who are idling in village affairs.

The second point that I wish to pick up is the one made by the so – called “lawyer” who sits in the United Force section. *[Interruption]*

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Member, I would not wish you to make any disparaging remarks about hon. Member.

Mr. Duncan: I should like to withdraw that remark, Mr. Speaker. The point is that the leader of the United Force is a lawyer. He should know that under section 119 of the Local Government Ordinance, Chapter 150, proprietors who are living in poverty can be exempted from paying rates. Amerindians can apply to the Board for such exemption.

In 1970, when we were debating the 1970 Budget Speech I stated that we were doing everything possible to help Amerindians and, indeed, Mr. Speaker, it is not a good thing to continue to call them “Amerindian”.

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With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I should like to quote from the speech I made on the 7th January, 1970. I quote:

“The Government believe that the framework within which Amerindians and their village councils achieve full participation requires (1) that the legislative and constitutional bases of discrimination be removed. I refer to the old regulation to which I shall not now go into detail; (2) that there be positive recognition by everyone of the unique contribution of Amerindians culture to Guyanese life; (3) that service to Amerindians must come through the same channels and from the same Government agencies for all Guyanese; (4) that those who are furthest behind be helped most. This is one of the principle of co-operation and (5) that lawful obligations be recognised by all.”

I stated further:

“This new policy looks to a better future not only for Amerindians but all Guyanese, wherever they may live, the Government seeks co-operation from all Guyanese to make a success of this move towards rapid integration of Amerindians. While this Budget cannot guarantee the completion of our developmental programmes, with respect to Amerindians and the Interior, it is obvious that with the increased expenditure provided in this budget some changes will take place immediately and others will take longer to materialise.”

That is what I said at the time, that is, nearly two year ago. Later I will show this Assembly that what I said then did materialise during my life – time and during the life of this Government.

In his Budget Speech for 19672, the hon. Minister of Finance referred to the real situation in the world today, I quote from page 6 of the new publication of the Budget Speech where the hon. Minister said:

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“Mr. Speaker, the world of international economics and politics is one of harsh reality. In that world, charity is not a recognised virtue and its practice is

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rigorously eschewed; and ‘aid’ is a euphemism for bargain – driving. It is a realisation of this fact which has underscored and motivated the Government’s policy of economic self reliance.”

He went on further and I quote him again:

“No informed Government today expects miracles from foreign aid.”

I can cite other section of his Budget Speech to show that what he has said has been realised by the people of Guyana. This means we must not expect miracles coming from foreign grants.

I wish to state without any fear of contradiction that the PNC Government is dedicated to the genuine development of Guyana under the accepted socialism of today. It means that this Government is not like the PPP who would like to be copying from Moscow and perhaps from Cuba [**Mr. Wilson:** “What about China?”] Perhaps from China.

Before I go orbiting like the members of the Opposition into the unknown space I want to deal with Interior and expenditure development for which we generally need additional expenditures. As far as we are concerned the present budget proposal point to (1) special incentive for new industries in the hinterland (2) greater employment opportunities in these areas and (3) the acceleration of the Government’s policy of integrating Amerindians. I should like to say that I have taken the trouble to compile a list of the things that this Government has done for the Amerindians for others who inhabit the Interior areas.

Government, in its Development Programme for Guyana recognising the need for the hinterland development, established the Interior Development Department. It is now functioning under the Ministry of Agriculture to which Ministry I am attached. The programme which is being implemented by this Department has a two – fold objective: one is for the development of existing communities, and two, the establishment of new settlements since it must be accepted that in Guyana today it is imperative that measures to adopted to relieve unemployment, to ease

land hunger among the people, to promote import substitution with a view to improving the balance of payment situation and to ensure national security and integrity. With these objectives in mind the process inevitably includes an improvement in the existing social services in the hinterland as well as the provision for new and necessary services. This, however, demands further the co –operation and co – ordination of all the existing agencies involved in the advancement of hinterland development. The role of the Department, apart from promoting its own programme in respect of Amerindian development, is also the sole co-ordinating agency for all existing services as well as for the promotion of new governmental services and as the executing agency in respect of physical development, that is, the service provided by various other Ministries.

Before 1965 there was no formal approach by any Government towards settlement, and apart from the Amerindians who are living and working in the traditional manner in their own environment, the communities lacked many of the basic amenities which existed on the Coast. Our present approach in keeping with the needs of an independent country is based on social as well as international consideration and Interior Development Department has embarked upon a programme geared to satisfy these needs. Because of the acceptance of Government's policy on self – help, a considerable amount of money has been saved on infrastructural works in the Interior.

In the implementation of our programme for hinterland development which of necessity at the moment is mainly based on agriculture, timber exploration and mining, I wish to state that as far as agriculture is concerned, incentives in the form of agricultural credit, technical assistance, supervision and marketing, with arrangements for prompt payment to farmers, are provided. Because of the provisions of these facilities significant advantage have been achieved in the transition from subsistence agriculture to commercial agriculture, as well as growing of new crops which would assist the nation's programme of import substitution.

The result of our efforts have already been emphasised in the improvement of the economic position of non – Amerindians as well as Amerindians who farm in the Upper Mazaruni, Rupununi including Paramakatoi, Monkey Mountain, Waipa, Cato, Kurukabaru, Itapac, Kamana, Kanapang. Baramita in the North West District where the sale of large quantities of Cabbages, blackeye peas, peanuts, etc, weighing 402,000 lbs has realised well over \$120,000.

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There are several other areas where farmers are now engaged in commercial agriculture. The result will be seen in the coming year, that is, 1972. To support this I should like to quote figures so far available for this year and perhaps to look back to 1968 in order to show the economic growth of our people who inhabit these areas.

For the year 1968, I have the following figures, as total weight of produce, that is, covering the whole of the interior, 103,595 pounds. The total value received by farmers was \$31,078.50 for the year 1969, total weight available for that year was 103,422 pounds, total value received by farmers was \$31,026.60.

For 1970, total weight of produce was 216,341 pounds; total value received was \$62,522.63. For this year – these figures are available and would not include today's or tomorrow's shipments to date – we have 402,000 pounds of produce and total value received was \$120,000. The weights and values presented however do not include those weights that had sold to other private sources.

The products included black eye peas, cabbages, peanuts, red beans, onions, tomatoes, ginger, pigeon peas and limes. I have already tried to name those places where we got these products but perhaps it may be helpful for me to mention other areas in the Upper Mazaruni District like Paruima, Waramadong, Kamarang, Jawalla, Pipilipai and other areas in the North

West District. When I spoke of the Pakaraima Mountains I did not include the South and Central Rupununi areas. The places there like Konashen, Keraudarneu, Aishalton, Sand Creek, Moco Moco, Nappi, Yupukari, Annai. Have also produced these agricultural products. In certain areas we have been able to encourage farmers to set up their own funds.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Member Mr. Duncan, the time allocated to you is 30 minutes. I think you have had 25 minutes already.

Mr. Duncan: Your Honour, I have quite a lot to report on interior development in terms of self – help and co – operative established in the interior and perhaps before I am robbed of the time, let me speak of the development that is going on in the New River Settlement, which was activated in August, 1971, under the administration of the interior Development Department.

Thirty-six persons, most of whom were young couples, were sent to work on a community farm. Five days each week they work to develop the infrastructure of the village and to clean and plant the community farm. On Saturdays and Sundays and during their spare time, they work on the home – stead allotted to them. A project officer, who is an agricultural field assistant, and a machine operator were commenced on the clearing of the area set aside for the construction of thirteen houses and administrative buildings. A piggery and chicken farm are already completed. A small trade store was established to cater for the basic foodstuff for sale to the residents at cost price in Georgetown plus a mark – up of 10 per cent to cover incidentals. One of the settlers was put to assist in serving in the store.

Road building and agricultural machines, water and lighting plants, were installed under the supervision of the mechanical superintendent attached to the Interior Development Department. An electrician – plumber from the Interior Development Department was next sent to the area so houses and street lighting are already installed as well as 2,000 feet of pipeline. Water from the river was then channelled into standpipes along the roads of the village and to most of the houses occupied by settlers.

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Now that the settlers were partly housed and supplied with the amenities, work on clearing and ploughing the community farm began. To date approximately 150 acres of land have been prepared and planted with red beans, black – eye peas, pigeon peas, corn, and onions, the settlers also commenced planting their house lots with kitchen crops. Three fish ponds one – tenth of an acre each have been established and an experiment is being carried out near the fish farms with three – acre plots of rice.

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More houses are needed to accommodate these settlers as they move out of the communal buildings. With this in view, contracts have been made with two shingle makers to make shingles at the settlement. Arrangements are being made for a circular saw to be installed to provide the building materials that are required.

In order to supplement the protein diet of pork and chicken, a boat and engine have been provided for persons hunting and fishing in the area.

Strict discipline is maintained and if a settler misbehaves or shirks his normal share of the work, he or she is removed after being given a chance to correct the situation. Despite the fact that each flight made by the Guyana Airways Corporation to the area costs us \$1,400, and that there is a fair amount of infrastructural work to be done, it is anticipated that the scheme will prove to be an economic venture. This, added to the security value of the project, will be a tremendous achievement. This has been our record and it is now part of history in favour of the P.N.C. Government.

Earlier, during this debate on the Budget Speech, someone said that self – help and co – operatives will not help the unemployment situation in this country. I am sure that that statement was not well thought out because persons in the interior are finding employment in activities such as farming by self-help and co-operatively.

Reference was made to the question of Amerindian land ownership. Time and again we have stated that in this country, as in other developing countries, there is a brain drain. We do not have surveyors to complete the survey of lands for the Amerindians expeditiously. However, I am happy to report that in the Upper Mazaruni district, areas have already been surveyed and the surveyors will have to move to new areas. The leaders of the Amerindians from all over the interior know the situation and are satisfied.

I think that the member of the United Force, who said that they were speaking for Amerindians, would be serving a useful purpose if they vacated their seats, because they sit there by Amerindian votes. Those four seats should be allocated to the Amerindian population. The United Force members should resign. It is an insult to the intelligence of the Amerindian populations for them to be sitting there. *[Interruption]*

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Member, Mr. Duncan, please proceed.

Mr. Duncan: They said that Amerindians are not qualified to sit in this honourable House, but that is an insult. They talk about integration, but integration of Amerindians does not mean that you have to bring Amerindian and marry them to persons of different races.

The qualification to sit in this House should be the ability to understand and analyse certain situation and Amerindians are capable of doing this, I am saying that integration of Amerindians does not mean that you have to bring them down and mix them physically; they are doing that by themselves. You do not have to tell them whom to marry and whom not to marry. The hon. Leader of the Opposition brought somebody from America to marry, but that is not a full integration.

I say that integration of any set of people must be achieved by increasing their education and by sharing in all services. The Guyana marketing Corporation is a market for all farmers.

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Amerindians have been provided with a secure market at the G.M.C. This is a part of integration. They receive money; they buy from people; they mix with others. That is why it hurts me to see that the United Force member continues to sit in this honourable House. They would have been contributing to integration if they allowed Amerindians to occupy their seats, they should not expect any votes from Amerindians at the next election, in these circumstances.

Quite a lot needs to be done for the improvement of the services in these areas to serve not only Amerindian communities but all others. I should like to say that there are certain regulations which will need to be amended in order to have integration effectively implemented. There is the regulation concerning mining. To a certain extent that regulation is discriminatory; it discriminates against Amerindians in many areas. There are discriminatory sections in the State Lands Regulations, in the Firearms Ordinance and in the Amerindian Ordinance, Chapter 58.

In our programme to effect integration of Amerindians in a proper order we need to amend those laws so that hon. Members like the hon. Member Mr. Stoby, may sell rum when and where they desire.

I am sorry that time does not permit me to report on the development that we have so far achieved for the Amerindians and the hinterland.

6.15 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran.

Mr. Ram Karran: Your Honour, reading through the Budget Speech by the hon. Minister of Finance I came across a few words on the front page which reads:

“The pressures were great, the difficulties legion.”

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Today and tonight, sir, we can see the reason for the pressures and we can see why the hon. Minister proclaims the difficulties are legion. We have it here where an hon. Member professing to be or perhaps is, a member of the Amerindian community comes before this House and reads a lot of invoices giving weights and prices as if he was working in a “salt goods” shop. It shows that the Government to which he owes allegiance has not even caused his integration as yet; he is still in the backwoods and I pity him and hope that he will wake up and attempt to represent the Amerindian community which he claims to represent in this House.

I have in my hand a document *The Report of the British Guiana Independence Conference 1965* the last page of which deals with Amerindian affairs. I should like to read paragraph 2 which states:

“It is impossible to set out these areas and reservations or to describe these rights in the Constitution in view of the time that would be necessary to survey the areas or reservations to ascertain what traditional and customary rights may exist there and to carry out the other investigations necessary to give effect to the foregoing decision.”

The hon. Member Mr. Duncan sheds a great deal of crocodile tears and says: we have not got surveyors’. When we sat in this House at the instance of the hon. Member Mr. Jordan the then Minister Agriculture and passed legislation to allow surveys to be done by aeroplane we on this side were very reluctant and hesitant about new procedure. Nevertheless we thought that in the case of Amerindian Settlements which did not need - the interior lands were big and did not need to watch very carefully where the falls fell. Surely since serial surveys were passed in this House I do not see why – in fact it is a poor excuse for the hon. Member to come here and tell us that there is a shortage of surveyors. It will be recalled that in the time of the PPP, surveyors were taken by the dozens and trained at the Government technical Institute and within a year surveyors were coming out capable of surveying and putting their names down on plans and things of that kind.

Why is the Government unable to train surveyors? Perhaps it is looking in directions where it cannot find literate people. Perhaps the illiterate fellow this band of jokers and that is why this Government cannot get people qualified.

One would have been inclined to express some sympathy with the hon. Minister on his appeal in this statement about the pressures being great. Had it not been for the fact that today marks the anniversary of the great rigging of 1968 – I see the hon. Member Miss Ackman wearing a red dress. Perhaps it is a celebration of the anniversary of the great rigging of the 17th December, 1968. Perhaps we had another celebration of that anniversary in the yard when a woman took off her garments and remained naked for the public to see the kind of administration this Government offers them. Perhaps it is an indication. I express sympathy to the hon. Minister.

I am inclined to the view that this Government is responsible for the pressure the hon. Minister complains about. I do not need to go very far but merely to recall yesteryear when the hon. Member from across there was calling the country to a one – party state. That causes fear, that causes pressure, that causes difficulties which must be legion when it is added to the many that come after them. The continued rigging of the elections, as my friend the hon. Member Mr. Wilson indicated the Government is allergic to free and fair elections that is why it would not recognise elections in the rice industry, that is why it would not recognise elections in the cane industry, in the country side, in the community where people regardless of race and regardless of everything live together. This criminal Government has caused a division in the rank of the people in the rural areas. The hon. Minister of Local Government cannot deny that in Beterverwagting / Triumph where the people regardless of race they knew when they went over to neighbour they could have borrowed a little salt, or some black pepper, or some rice. This Government is causing division down to the level at the grass root. How are you going to integrate Amerindians whether you marry them with other races, when you are disintegrating the people at the bottom. This Government is calling for the pressures the hon. Minister complains about.

The policy of coercion against a section the community, the question of rice, the question of rice, the question of milk and now the banning of dholl is an indication that this Government is bringing pressure on itself. And it is no use coming to this National Assembly to complain about pressures.

Let us leave that field and more to the bauxite industry which the hon. Minister deals with in the Budget. The bauxite industry is important to the whole community. As he said here that funds were used ungrudgingly for the acquisition of the Plant. Here have a concern that is allegedly publicly owned, it is the Guyana Transport Service which is registered as a private company and is in the name of two people. What sort of co-operative? What sort of publicly-owned institution is this which is owned in the name of high executive and former Director of Geological Surveys. The hon. Prime Minister was beating his breast and talking about workers participation and about union participation, but a long time has passed. I sit that the Government again being allergic to elections has not been able to work out a formula to have a workers representative on the Bauxite Board? Is it that the Government's allergy to free and fair elections that has caused it not to be able to find a trade union representative to put on the Bauxite Board? It is a shame.

Then the hon. Minister come here in this House and slanders the workers. He slanders the workers who have traditionally been in support of this Government. Workers who have traditionally been in support of the Government. Workers who have been emotionally in support of this Government. What does he say? He says that they nearly lost their manhood. What has happened is that the workers at the bauxite company at Linden have got some sense. They saw what this Government has done to the public servants since 1969 when it promised increased wages and it has not been able to fulfil that promise as yet. All that the workers at Linden have said is that, "A Commission of Enquiry has gone into this thing. When this Commission of Enquiry has reported we want our money before Burnham takes over control of the Board". The workers do not trust the Government; they do not trust the Prime Minister or any of them at all.

That is all they said. How they say the Government wants to lock their money in the R.I.D.A. money. The fact is that nobody has any respect for this set of gentlemen. The hon. Minister put in this paper that the Guyanese personality will triumph in the end. The Guyanese personality and character are far above the standard fixed by the P.N.C.

Much has been said about the External Trade Bureau. I am sorry that the Minister of Trade is not in the House today because I wish to remind him that his predecessor in office, who I consider more competent, was sincere and honest enough in this House to tell us that the External Trade Bureau is geared to help the big boys like Stokes and Bynoe. Jaikaran, Bookers, Tang's and all those big importers, who are now allowed to import and to sell at whole sale to people who formerly imported. I am grateful to the hon. Member Mr. Sutton who has coined such a word, and I hope you, sir, will not ban it from the Assembly because it is an apt description of those who sit on the other side, the joker stands on the other side and tells us that the External Trade Bureau is there to help the small man.

It is significant that it was only since the E.T.B. came into existence that we are paying 14 cents a pound for potatoes despite what the hon. Member for the hospital, who spoke about the tons of potatoes and onions that were rotting, said. If the businessmen made a stupid deal, they paid for it. I wish to inform the Government that we are not opposed to E.T.B. We say it must be run in the interest of the Guyanese people. We say most forcefully that the discrimination in the E.T.B. in relation to the 10 percent on Sino – Soviet trade should be removed promptly.

The Minister accuses others of not being in their depth. If he wrote this, he was out of his depth, if he did not, I understand. He said "We are committed to the ideal of Caribbean economic and political integration. We believe that the Commonwealth Caribbean has no future as small separate units in view of the world trend toward large political economic groupings. I will not read the balance.

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I want to observe that this joker tells us about Caribbean integration when in our own Guyana, half the Guyanese people are separated from the main stream. Half of the population is left out of the security forces. The same applies to the public services. The price of rice, which, incidentally, has not done so well, as admitted by export prices has suffered a dramatic reduction. Farmers' milk fetched 84 cents a gallon at the Milk Pasteurisation Plant but when it comes to the milk sold by Bookers, when it comes to milk sold by Ptolemy Reid, When it come to the milk from Burnham's garden. It is 16 and 17 cents a pint. Sir, you call this community integrated?

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Member, this is a suitable time for us to have the suspension. The Sitting is suspended until 8 o'clock.

Sitting suspended at 6.30 p.m.

8 p.m.

On resumption - -

Mr. Speaker: When the Adjournment was taken 6.30, the hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran was speaking and he may continue.

Mr. Ram Karran: Your Honour, I was at the point of integration. The hon. Member Mr. Duncan had indicated to this House that the Amerindian in our community are not yet integrated and that it needed something for that to be completed. I am mindful of the fact that the whole Guyanese community is not integrated when one thinks in terms of what is happening, but I do not want to go over all that. The hon. Minister tells us in this document that we are moving off to Caribbean integration, economic and political. We have no quarrel with the Government's alleged move but we must first try to integrate our own community, before we attempt to integrate a disintegrated community, to attempt to integrate elsewhere. Or, is it a question of the hon. Prime Minister's claim in reference to another subject, Demba, that like a camoudi he

swallows one first, take some time, digests it, and then he moves to another? Perhaps he feels that the Guyanese community has already been digested and after some time he is moving on to the Caribbean to swallow. The story says, sir, “*Wha sweeten goat mouth does hut he belly.*” Let me warn the Prime Minister.

Let me go now to quote an authority, the eminent Professor Gunda Myrdal, the world renowned Swedish economist, on the subject of integration when he said in the international *Economy Harper* 1956, New York, Page 11,

“The economy is not integrated unless all avenues are open to everybody and the remuneration paid for productive services is equal regardless of social, racial and cultural differences.”

Let me read that again, particularly for the benefit of my friend and colleague, the hon. Member, Mr. Phillip Duncan for whom I have a great deal of sympathy.

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Let the Government examine itself; let it examine the Guyanese community today and ask whether, in the situation that exists today, this can be regarded as a socially, economically and politically integrated community. It is important for those who administer our country to recognise that we are in almost the same position that we were in when the imperialists, who wanted to keep us divided for their own purposes, left here. In fact, we are in a worse position.

I wish to say that the Government must make an honest attempt to integrate our society so that the fruits of our labour, the cultural development and everything else that we have achieved may go to the whole community.

I should like now to move on to another observation concerning the enunciation in the penultimate paragraph on page 8 of the Minister’s Budget Speech. The hon. Minister says that

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public corporations are entitled to economic rates for the services they provide. We have ourselves been fairly critical of the very heavy subsidies to certain public corporations. In those criticisms we have always made the point, which I make again tonight, that the excessive subsidies were due not to the functioning of the corporation concerned, but to the mismanagement of the Government when hand – picked, but incompetent, members and supporters of the party in office were thrust into position where they were unable to keep their heads above water.

In as far as certain of these corporations are concerned, we would like to disagree with the principle enunciated by the hon. Minister, namely, that all corporations must make a profit. That is not in keeping with the Government's alleged policy of helping the small man. The policy should be based on the objective of stimulating agriculture production and, if that is done, the corporations must be run with a view to assisting the small producers of agriculture products. The hon. Minister, then, is quite inaccurate when he makes that statement.

The Rice Marketing Board, which was mentioned earlier today during this debate, cannot afford to function with the great bureaucracy that is thrust upon it by my friend and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture, who is responsible for this corporation.

The rice industry, the sugar industry, that is, the peasant part of it, and any industry which can be run by the people themselves should be run by them. I have a sneaking suspicion that the friends of the Government cannot get their finger into the till and that is why they have thrust this bureaucracy on the Rice Marketing Board. We want the people to run it.

I said earlier tonight that this Government is allergic to elections. Take the case of the Greenland Co –operative. Their tender was for \$70,000 more than any other person's bid and the Government will take that out of the taxpayers' money. *[Interruption]* The hon. Members are brazen enough to stand up and say "Yes." These people have no shame!

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It this is a Co –operative Republic – and we all subscribe to the principle of co –operatives – why shy away from co –operative in the Rice Marketing Board? Do you not see that they are ashamed? *[Interruption]* They say “When in doubt shout out.” That is what they are doing. If this is the policy to assist the farmers then they must get off their backs and get off quickly. They should not talk about co –operatives and not mean it.

I was not going to speak on rice as my colleagues have already spoken on rice. I was speaking about the statement made by the hon. Minister when he referred to economic rates for the services provided by the corporations. The point is that these people who are imbued with the spirit of co –operatives, and who are allegedly socialists, have as their chief Planning Officer, a Yankee trained official. The Manager of the Marketing Cop[oration is a Yankee trained official and that is why the philosophy propounded is based on the American system of profit. Profit is not going to be the only thing that will bring progress to the Guyanese working class and the Guyanese farmers.

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On page 11 of the Budget Speech the hon. Minister very cleverly measured production by the three, I would say, most important products of the country – rice, bauxite and sugar. He said that production grew from \$473 million to \$505 million, or by 7 per cent. But this analysis must be regarded as artificial, it does not take into account the true situation as it relates to the wealth retained among the true Guyanese people. I would prefer to rely on a statement made in an earlier Budget Speech, the one in 1971, when the Minister’s predecessor said on page 12:

“ . . . Economic development must mean not only growth of Gross National Product (G.N.P.), but also productive activity of the people and human development.”

Bauxite and sugar, even though bauxite is supposed to be nationalised into private company, they have most of their financial activities even for the time being in the case of bauxite outside of Guyana; and the only industry which we can call Guyanese which is integrated in the blood and in the sweat of the Guyanese people is the rice industry. The hon. Minister admits that there has been a shortfall. I was laughing when the hon. Deputy Prime Minister in an earlier debate attempted to castigate the Opposition when he used the Spring crop figures to - -

The Prime Minister (Mr. Burnham): Mr. Speaker, may I draw Your Honour's attention to my hon. Friend's audience of a dog and ask that you get it out. Because I think my hon. Friend is entitled to a better audience than that. *[Laughter]*

Mr. Speaker: Order, Order.

Mr. Ram Karran: Sir, I keep dogs and I can assure you that I have the greatest respect for some of them. I cannot say the same of some human beings.

I was saying that the analysis is artificial when the hon. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture then Minister of Finance attempted to castigate the PPP by prophesying that in 1971 there is going to be increased production based on the falling production we have had all the year since this Government took over the Rice Marketing Board. I laughed at him, and I hope he would not attempt to befuddle the people by using the figures of a half year or one crop of the year's production. *[Interruption by the hon. Deputy Prime Minister]*

The hon. Deputy Prime Minister did not know that when he spoke. He did not even know about the flood when we moved the suspension of the Standing Orders to have it debated. The Government must not gloat over this measure of production and boast about the economy being increased. What has happened is that production of nearly everything, including rice, has gone down. The hon. Minister said that there has been increased production per acre but the overall

production has gone down. Perhaps the Prime Minister will tell us in his reply what has happened to the extra land under rice. Are they under fallow? Have they been changed to other crops? It would be interesting to know, because if you had an increased yield per acre and the overall production has been reduced there must be something that has caused it. What is it? Maybe the Minister will be able to tell us where the shortfall occurred. It is an indication that the Governments' squandering of the money of the rice farmers for the erection of silos will be a wasted exercise because what are they going to store if this situation continues? They have built these things all over Guyana with American loans and American assistance allegedly to store rice against the advice of the farmers in this country. The records show and the hon. Members Mr. Saffee and Mr. Jagnaraine Budhoo will bear me out that production has gone down that they do not even need those men on the Rice Action Committee; even at that point they are retrenching.

Yesterday evening the hon. Minister of agriculture was hammering away on diversification and quite inaccurately and perhaps deliberately accused the Opposition of being opposed to diversification. I wish to say here again that it is not our policy to oppose diversification. We are not opposed to diversification at all; we support it, and to put the matter in proper perspective is to underline what we have said before that the Government rather than causing a reduction in the existing crops which we know how to grow – and I referred to them earlier in the debate, we know how to grow rice well – let the Government stop interfering with the people so that they can produce more rice rather than in attempting to diversify, destroy the Knowledge and what you have.

The same applies to coconuts. There is a shortfall in coconuts. [**Mr. Hoyte:** "Plantation LookOut."] The hon. Minister reminds me of Plantation Look Out.

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We want the farmers, who are producing coconuts, to continue to produce coconuts at the same level and at an increased level, but not to allow this Government to put its hands on the

industry to destroy it and cause reduction. The same applies to coffee and to everything. The withered and blighted hand of this Government seems to destroy everything that we have. Let those continue to progress while the Government goes not into diversification without research but after proper and adequate research.

The hon. Minister was telling us about sorghum, and telling us about corn, peanuts, and so on. We agree to the cultivation of these things but I submit that we have got into that excursion as a result of rascality. I would not call the names of the people here but Kibilibiri came into being not after any research, not even into the research of the honesty of people. It came into being when one Mr. Green came here. He told Mr. Jordan, he told Dr. Reid that he was going to set up a plantation there to plant these things. Without research, they jumped into it and they have a baby in their hands. The hon. Minister did not know Green was robbing them until he came with last item, he said drainage and irrigation, and his tenth sense began to work, after his house was padded with carpets and swimming pool. I defy the hon. Minister to convince this House that corn is being planted at Kibilibiri at a profitable figure compare with imported corn.

A great deal of research needs to be done to find out whether these crops are economic. How can anyone measure it if it is done directly from Government funds? What the government has set up at Kibilibiri and in the North West are state farms. We are not opposed, but if the Government is going to spend the taxpayers' money the Government must tell us how it is done. If it is a question of subsidising the workers and the farmers, then it must be a decision of the House. Going there and seeing it in the ground does not convince anyone that this economic crop. The Minister must not think he is talking to fools. We say go ahead and do the necessary research and they might be better crops, but at the same time, do not destroy what we have. In every section of the Government, this blighted hand has fallen.

I want to set right the philosophy of the Opposition in relation to diversification. We do not have far to go. Another Minister of Agriculture, the hon. Member are Mr. Jordan, has had his

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fingers burnt and he did not even have the courtesy to apologies to member of the Opposition when we told him that he was running into bananas and he would run out like a tom cat. And they have. Tens of thousands of the taxpayer's dollars were sunk in the drain, the houses were sold to be removed, they are ashamed to have them in the Demerara River for people to see the white elephant. We warned them, and we are warning them again about Kibilibiri. The banana project failed because the Government chose to listen to what the Yankees said and then ran and did it.

I am dealing with the Minister's speech seriatim as the items appear. He tells us about the Guyana National Co – operative Bank. Another fake. What is co –operative about this bank? This institution, we were told, was necessary because small industries and agriculture were not getting any help from the commercial banks which we were told were to be miniaturized, or from insurance companies. Aside from the fact that it is a fake, it is not co – operative, and I should like the hon. Minister to tell us who owns it because this bank seems to be involved in transactions similar to those of the commercial banks. *[Interruption]* is the bank carrying out the function of assisting the farmers? Is it helping the small industry, or is it helping people like Fred Wills with a loan of \$15, 000 for what? He goes on the radio and accuses people of being racist, yet he is the biggest racist. The Guyana National Co –operative Bank set up to help the farmers, to help industry, is using the money of the people who put it there to help its friends.

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On page 67 of the 1967 Report, the Credit Corporation was dealt with. It was pointed out in that Report the Credit Corporation was helping small industries and helping in housing and so on. The Government did not reply on the Credit Corporation alone, which, it said, was doing a good job. It set up the Guyana National Co – operative Bank and now it is going to set up another lending institution because, allegedly, farmers and small industries are not getting enough money.

Have the members of the Government ever given thought to the very important point, namely, the overhead cost for all these institutions? Do they think of money frittered away in administrative expenses so that their friends can find position? There was a Credit Corporation, to which funds could have been channelled for all these things; we gained independence and set up a Guyana National Co – operative Bank. We are not satisfied with that. We like children at Christmas time. We want more and more toys and so we set up another institution, allegedly to channel money to the farmers and to small industries.

We were all in sympathy with the hon. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture when he went on the radio to speak on the so – called ‘Advance Guyana Campaign’ and referred to the sugar estates and to their production during the war years. The hon. Minister made references to the quantity of food we had produced by ourselves when, in those difficult years, we were unable to get imported potatoes and other products.

As I said, we listened to him with sympathy. Surely, if the Government wanted to speed up local production it could do as the Barbadians have done. In fact, we do not need to do the same thing, as the Barbadians have to use the same land on which sugar cane is planted. There is a lot of land here and the most valuable land in the country has been given by the Government to the sugar industry.

The Government should ask the sugar industry to produce some of the things we need so that in as short a time as possible, we will be able to increase our production so that the taxpayers’ money will not be wasted at Kabilibiri and to the North West District. These people in the sugar industry will produce at a profit. They have to know – how. They can produce all the black peas you need: they can produce all the crops that are needed. In fact, if they produce eddoes, tannias and other root crops, they might be able to carry out some research and make these crops as durable as the potato and, if there are people who do not consider them palatable, make them palatable also.

This Government will not do anything in an economic manner, because it wants to waste money so that somebody's fingers can get into the till. The hon. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture told us last night that the sum of \$2 million was earmarked for pumps to be used on the coastal areas. My hon. Colleague, Mr. Bholia Persaud, has already drawn attention to one aspect of this. He said that the Government had installed a pump at Mainstay on the Essequibo Coast to pump the excess water off the land, but, to his dismay and regret and to the suffering of the people in the area, the pump is useless.

Mainstay is higher than Better Success. Anyone who has been to Essequibo will recognise that Better Success is always flooded. It is the lowest part of the country. If the pump had been put at better success, then all the excess water would have been drawn off. It is as simple as that.

I shall deal with the question of drainage and irrigation in a much wider sense. The hon. Minister of Works, Hydraulics and Supply certainly could not be getting the advice of the eminent engineers attached to his Ministry when he told the hon. Minister of Agriculture to inform us that the farmers will be assisted by the installation of pumps to the value of \$2 million.

In 1906, Mr. J.P. Santos moved in this House a Motion for a comprehensive system of drainage and irrigation throughout Guyana. In 1934, after a flood, another Motion was moved by Mr. Eleazar in almost the same words. In 1934, the Motion had the unanimous support of elected members. Even some of the non – native members supported Mr. Eleazar. Mr. Seaforth was the only person who opposed the Motion; Mr. Brassington and all the other members supported it.

Nothing was done about drainage and irrigation except the experiment at Mahaicony/Abary where Mr. Seaforth tried to get one trench to do both drainage and irrigation. The trench is still there. Nothing was done until the P.P.P. came into office. I do not wish to say much about what the P.P.P. has done, but Black Bush and Tapakuma were set up.

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The Hutchinson scheme envisaged, not only a system of drainage, but drainage and irrigation. Everyone knows the topography of the country, everyone knows that the rainfall in Guyana is too heavy at one period and that reservoirs must be built to store water so that farmers can get it when they wish, as in the Black Polder and in the West Demerara Water Conservancy.

8.45 p.m.

You do not have to be an engineer to know that. My friend said that you - -

Mr. Speaker: It seems that the hon. Member has forgotten that he was once Minister of Works and Hydraulics.

Mr. Ram Karran: A Minister is not necessarily qualified to talk about that as in the case of my friend across there. A layman can obtain the necessary experience, and farmers are people who have a great deal of experience. The PPP installed Black Bush Polder, we put in Tapakuma. Installing pumps is going to be used once every ten years when you have a flood to pump the water out, but where are people going to get irrigation water from? The Government probably got some consignor abroad to sell it pumps. I wish that the Government will listen to the demands of the people, that it will make an effort to continue the work already begun in this country, to offer to give the people drainage and irrigation and not to install pumps hither and thither hoping that it will have brought some measure of satisfaction. People are not going to be satisfied unless they get the best possible service.

I want to deal with the last point. It is the question of the Electricity Corporation which has been referred to in this Report by my friend the hon. Minister. If you look at the Report of the Corporation you will find that reference has been made to the cost of generating electricity which is 32 per cent of the whole cost. It is stated that Administration and interest charges together add up to 24 per cent. The point I wish to make is that this other bureaucracy, this place where the Government has been able to install all its friends, has almost been destroyed, and to

say that administration and interest charges together amount to more than the cost of generation is really taking it too far. But I do not think anything better can be done having regard to the near breakdown of this Plant. The Minister tells us that additional generating equipment will be available plus trying up with the hydro – station with GUYBAU and the necessity for changing down to 50 cycles to meet the requirements. I want to ask the Minister in passing, whether the Government will be prepared to replace equipment owned by people, that is the sensitive equipment so that they will be able to have uninterrupted supply of electricity. *[Interruption by an hon. Member]* Because it is the responsibility of any concern that generates and sells electricity to replace equipment when they have change either the voltage or the cycle. I hope that the Government would be in a position to offer assistance to those people who have equipment of 50 cycles.

A very serious development is taking place at the Electricity Corporation which I should like to make public and perhaps to draw to the attention of the appropriate Minister who has charge of that Corporation. It will be recalled in this table at Appendix 1V that three 10 megawatts generating sets were installed after the Demerara Electricity Company went out and there is the capacity to the extent of 8,500 kilowatts on the small steam sets, there are also two diesel sets generating 2 megawatts of electricity in the South Ruimveldt area. The position at the Corporation is that one of the 10 megawatts station is completely out. I do not know what sort of administration is this to allow them to take out a unit generating 10 megawatts of electricity at this time. The two small sets have already been almost destroyed by filling in of tubes with cement. Therefore, capacity stated on this paper is inaccurate because the Corporation refuses to spend money on these old sets. In times of crises, like Christmas time the Electricity Corporation is generating only about 24 to 26 megawatts of electric during the peak hours. When you open your tap in the morning you find that the pressure of water is as if nothing is happening. You feel as if you live in Black Bush Polder. The pressure is reduced. The standby plant at the Georgetown Sewerage and water Commissioners has to run all the time in order to ease the situation at the Georgetown Electricity Supply. They have got their friends. The Government says that it is no friend of Sandbach Parker. But Sandbach Parker has its plant running to help

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out the situation. Cable and wireless has its generating plant running so as to assist *[Interruption]* There is technically load shedding, but if these plants were not in operation we would have had to switch off our lights tonight and we would have to meet 8 ‘ 0 clock in the morning. It is important that these things are drawn to the attention of the Guyanese taxpayers because it is their money that is being squandered by these people. Billy Carto Started to establish his Black Pussy Cat Restaurant but the Prime Minister told him not to worry with that, but that he must go and rig elections in America. All these jokers are sitting in high positions in all these Corporations squandering the taxpayers money and not doing the necessary rehabilitation to plan so that we may be able to have in this case power when we want it.

I want to make a very serious amendment which I am sure the Government will not reject, I want to put an amendment at the end of this admirable paragraph inserted at the instance of the hon. Minister of finance when he said:

“Let each Guyanese therefore accept the challenge of his responsibility and dedicate himself, in a spirit of earnestness and co –operation, to the task of
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I wish to amend it by saying, and let the Guyana Government prevail upon itself to conduct free and fair elections, to stop its discrimination, and to pursue a true socialist policy that will ensure the most rapid advance for our beloved Guyana.

Mr. Speaker: I think it was agreed that the hon. Prime Minister will conclude his speech if necessary after 10 0’clock, so there will be no need for a Suspension at that stage.

The Prime Minister (Mr. Burnham): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I was particularly fascinated by the irrelevance of the concluding remarks of the hon. Deputy Leader of the Oppositions, but I think with few notable and salutary exceptions, those remarks typify generally the contributions

which we have had from the opposition on the Budget Debate. Mr. Speaker, as I understand it, one takes the opportunity of a Budget Debate to do one or both of two things, to recapitulate what has passed during the previous twelve months and/ or to deal with projections for the ensuing twelve months in terms of policy, but for the whole afternoon and evening, I have been listening, and what have I heard? There are some tracks on the East Coast railway that need repairing! These are matters that can be settled with Minister or public officials. There is no need to raise them to the high level of a Budget Debate contribution.

I remember that it was Friday, 14th December, 1970, as I was winding up the Budget Debate, I emphasized that we were on the verge, so to speak, of taking an important and historic step so far as Guyana was concerned, and that was taking control of the bauxite industry in Guyana. We have done so. *[Interruption]* I understand that a certain Hon. Member has been referred to as an obeah man. Since that new appellation was given by member of my party, I want to apologies on his behalf, and I want to observe that the hon. Member is not an obeah man but his physiognomy and his hair give evidence of his being the object of the machinations of an obeah man.

But it is not enough to take ownership of an important industry like the bauxite industry, not enough merely to say and to prove that it has been run more efficiently than it had been in the past, and the figures are there, not enough merely to allude to the proposed expansion. To my mind, we have got to do more than merely taking over these industries. We have got to bring about some radical changes in economic and monetary terms.

As the hon. Minister of Finance has observed, the world virtually is in a dither over the monetary crisis that has arisen and which has been the subject matter of discussions within the so – called Group of Ten. This crisis that has arisen emphasises the need for us in a country like Guyana to protect ourselves against buffetings of this sort, to strengthen our economy by the

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level of our production, and to be more dependent upon ourselves for the surplus out of which there will flow the capital accumulation for further development, this is the type of subject I want to discuss.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the first thing I should like to suggest that we look at our import bill, and when we look at the import bill, consider it against the proposed objectives of the Government and the nation of Guyana for the period 1972 to 1976. We say that we should and must feed ourselves by 1976. This is not a case of wanting to be chauvinistic. This is not a case of wanting to be isolationist, nor does this general goal indicate a dream on our part to have Guyana economically self sufficient. It is to ensure that Guyana is economically independent.

When we look at the import bill of 1970, what do we see? We see that in food imports we expended \$37.3 million. Let us look at some of the things on which we spent this \$37.3 million. The sum of \$18.8 million went on dairy products, \$2.3 million went on meat and meat products and extracts, nearly \$0.5 million went on honey, biscuits, bakery products, jams and jellies, potatoes, \$1.9 million, tomato products - \$0.75 million; peas, including chick peas - \$1.5 million infant food and the other food preparations - \$1.6 million; fish, general - \$8 million; salt fish - \$1,369,463; and sardines - \$1,039,856.

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There is no item of food here, which we imported during 1970 and, apparently, from the statistics available so far, imported in even greater quantity and value in 1971, which Guyana cannot produce, or a substitute for which Guyana cannot produce.

Therefore, one begins to see the relevancy, in terms of economic development, of the programme set out by the Government. It would mean that approximately \$ 40 million can be made available to the economy of Guyana, if we set about feeding ourselves. And I have reason

to believe that, with very few exceptions, none of the items necessary for keeping body soul together and producing healthy citizens takes more than nine months to produce.

It was in an area of discussion, such as this, that I had hoped for assistance from the Opposition. I had hoped for proposals, for criticism as to where the tactics might have gone wrong, or where the strategy might have been ill conceived. But what did I get? [**Mr. Ram Karren:** “Free and fair elections first.”] There was a man in Roman history, by the name of Marcus Proclus Cato, and every debate in which he became involved in the Roman Senate he ended with the words *delinda est Cartage*, completely irrelevant. The only claim to distinction of my hon. Friend, Mr, Ram Karran, is that he emulates Marcus Proclus Cato. Of course, he may think that I am being abusive, but Proclus is a good Roman name. This, my hon. and learned Friend, Dr. Ramsahoys, would understand.

So far as fish is concerned, the Government propose to use the event of its becoming involved in the trawling business to bring in more deep sea fish, which in the past, by regulation and by preference of the trawler owners, did not come in because it was considered not as paying a cargo as prawns.

The Leader of the Opposition has been the recipient of advice, in so far as another aspect of Government’s programme in fish is concerned, in that he has sought the advice of a Fisheries Officer to set up a pond in his yard in which to grow tilapia. [*Laughter*] It will give him the necessary proteins, and proteins are most necessary for brain power.

The Ministry of Agriculture, as an established policy throughout the length and breadth of Guyana, is encouraging the growing of tilapia. For instance, in the stretch of villages between Golden Grove and Victoria, ponds are being re – stocked and new ponds are being dug.

In the case of meat, it will mean that we shall have to increase our production and quite frankly we think it will take longer than the first year or two of our Five – year Programme. We expect it will be achieved by 1976.

So far as things like vegetables are concerned, it is a crying shame that we in Guyana should be importing \$1.8 million worth of potatoes, c.i.f. It is a shame that we should be importing these tubers to the tune of \$1.8 million and well over \$1 million worth of peas.

Government has, therefore, undertaken a campaign (a) of encouraging the farmers by the distribution of seed and giving of assistance; and (b) of ameliorating some of the bad conditions under which they have had to farm.

When one looks at the amount of money to be spent in the capital budget on drainage and irrigation, one begins to see how the things are going to be pieced together. But we need a little more than that. We need a little more than Government's assistance by way of seed, by way of advice, by way of drainage and irrigation, not only with the pumps to which my hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture referred, but also by the rehabilitation of many of the existing drainage systems and by and by planning drainage regionally.

It is a shame, for instance, that on the East Coast all the sugar estates are well drained, but the villages are not well drained. Once upon a time the sugar estates used the villages for drainage. The Government will have the villages use the sugar estates for drainage now. That is a Governmental decision.

But even that is not enough. What we want also, at the same time, is a re – orientation of our people, both with respect to their choice of vocation and their taste preferences. It is alarming to hear Guyanese praising the excellence of Irish potatoes. And what sort of names do they have? Ram Karren, Burnham, Jagmohan, Fredericks, they prefer Irish potatoes as if they are lineal descendants of O'Reilly.

It is also disgusting to find all sorts of rationalizations with respect to a preference for sardines or salmon. What does this Government propose to do as a general tactic in the light of the specific strategy of feeding ourselves? First of all, the encouragement of the production of certain items and the production of the local substitutes has, as one of its facets, the offer to train and retrain people.

You will recall, sir, if I may digress, not irrelevantly, for a moment, that when we were discussing the closing down of Sandbach Parker I observed that, in Government's view, there are too many people employed in the service industries. In a little City like Georgetown that does not have a population of one quarter of a million look at the number of little stores, big stores, big shops, and little shops crawling on each other's back; people being employed in such large numbers to service unproductive industry.

Government, by voting, for education and training, over \$30 million for the year 1972, is expressing in monetary terms its determination and undertaking to carry out a programme of radical training to bring about the re – orientation that is necessary. But even these things may not be enough. Sometimes we have to be assisted. It was the war, for instance, that assisted many Guyanese to recognise that cassava could make palatable bread.

We have, therefore, decided to assist the producers of local substitutes. There will be, in some cases partial, and in other cases absolute, restrictions against some of those goods which are imported. *[Applause (Government)]* There will be no need in 1972 for the Guyanese palate to savour the taste of sardines in Guyana. There will be no need for Guyanese to be eating salmon. With the erection of two plants for the production of salted fish from our own deep sea fish, there will be no need for us to be eating salted cod, salted haddock, and all these fancy fishes which God did not put out in or around the waters of Guyana.

When one further peruses the food import bill one is flabbergasted by the fact that jams and jellies are, imported into Guyana because sugar we have, fruits we have, the expertise we

have. If we want to savour or taste blackberry jam we must go where blackberries are grown. Therefore certainly this is one area in which a total restriction can be put. What is more, there will be an automatic fillip, not only to proper preservation of fruits, but also to cottage industries, on which we can rely for the production of jams and jellies.

The Government takes this question of feeding ourselves seriously because, so long as we import food and allied products, alternatives to which we can produce, we are in fact importing the unemployment of other countries. And it is a little sottish for Members of the Opposition to come here and, merely beating their breasts, talk about unemployment. What proposals have they? There is the United Force, to the right, saying, "Oh, we must encourage foreign investment. Foreign investment will give employment at \$15,000 per job." Now go into the field of astronomy to calculate how much foreign investment we need. And when we have all the foreign investment, assuming that we get it, we are going to eat the products of our manufacturing industries. We are going to eat our iron; we are going to eat our alumina.

Therefore, whether we industrialise or not and I will deal with that later – the necessity of feed our selves is palpable.

The statistics show that unemployment has dropped by 5 per cent since 1965, but this Government is not satisfied with doing better than the incompetent. This Government is not satisfied merely to say that unemployment is 5 per cent lower than it was in the days of the incompetent P.P.P. because, so long as we have a substantial part of our labour force unemployed, we are in fact making of the employed a privileged group in our society.

We are going to feed ourselves because we have to feed ourselves Says the Opposition, "We are not against diversification." I am happy because it means that the Opposition will now, assuming some logic in their minds, assist the Government in the re – orientation of tastes and the re – orientation of choice of vacation. From now on, none of the Opposition member will

come to me to ask for “clerk work” for their brothers, their sisters, their daughters, their cousins and their good friends.

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There is no need for us to continue importing peanuts after the 31st December, 1971, nor carrots, nor tinned fruits, nor jams and jellies – the farmers, agriculturalists, are entitled to some assistance and protection – and as for ice cream, Wall’s ice cream, what infamy! Tinned pears! Let us also observe that there can be no justification, in the light of the entrepreneurial skill shown by the former leader of the United Force, for the further importation of beer, stout, and even Scotch Ale. When, of course, his skill in the production of wine proves itself, that too will be an area in which we will give further protection to the people who produce these things here and, at the same time, provide employment.

It is calculated that if our objective of feeding ourselves is achieved, this will mean at least directly 20,000 jobs. I am not speaking of the other jobs that arise, so to speak, adventitiously from exercises in agricultural. What shall we be doing? We shall at one and the same time be providing employment and protecting ourselves against inflation of our parts of the world.

Then, I want us in the same strain, so to speak, to look at our fabric and clothing importation. If we look at the fabric and clothing import bill, what do we see? In 1970, and it would appear that in 1971 the figures are going to higher, there was an importation of fabrics in the tune of over \$13 million. And then clothing, including things like stocking, vests. Another \$3.6 million, and footwear, \$3.9 million. That is well over \$20 million in clothing and fabrics.

We cannot, I will concede, Mr. Speaker, in one year, or perhaps two years, replace this entire import bill with the locally produced article or articles, but two things are necessary. The first is that we make a start, and Government does propose to make that start during the year

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1972, by setting up a textile mill for processing cotton fabric, and subsequently, within another year, integrating backward and producing as well, the raw cotton, which we will have grown. But the second thing that is necessary and if the Opposition wants to justify what others consider their unjustified claim to national dedication, they can assist in seeking to re – orient the thinking, and taste and attitudes of the Guyanese people.

It we examine out tropical circumstances carefully, we will concede even though grudgingly that clothing in the tropics is decorative. Therefore, we should wear light clothing to ensure our bodily comfort. A cotton base, therefore, is the base for all clothing that we ought to wear. It is going to be difficult for some of us to change these, such as I still wear. It will be difficult, for instance, to persuade, some members of the Opposition, who still appear here sometimes in serge suits and alpaca coats, but we have got to do it, because if we are to clothe ourselves, we should seek to use the raw material that is next relevant and can be produced here.

Since we can produce cotton and will produce cotton, and since modern technology puts us in a position to get all types of colours and all types of finishes on cotton, we must as a people go for cotton clothing. It is much more comfortable. It will mean, eventually, thousands of jobs in the economy if one includes the stage of growing, the stage of picking, the stage of cleaning, the stage of spinning, the stage of weaving. Then, again, we will not ne importing other people's inflation: then, again, though we cannot completely insulate ourselves from movements in the world of monetary arrangements, at least, we will be less susceptible to the tragic consequences which seem to be our heirloom, our lot at the moment. So that this objective again introduces two salutary results, employment and, at the same time, not having to be buffeted by other people's inflation and monetary crises.

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There is a noteworthy thing in the import statistic of this year, namely, that while the food bill has been rising, indications to the 30th September are to the effect that the importation of

agricultural and industrial machinery has dropped. In other words, we are developing our stomachs and we are not importing the necessary equipment which we cannot, in a short while, produce.

As I have sometimes said, when speaking to small and unsophisticated groups, a country can spend abroad only what it has in terms of external credit, or gold, if its currency is backed by gold. If we, as a people, persist in buying ice cream, Canadian sardines, salt fish and Canadian dhol – which we can produce here from pigeon peas – if we are going to continue wanting to import, for instance, potatoes rather than use our own root crops, sweet potatoes, yams, eddoes, tannias and our plantains, how will we find the exchange for buying the equipment to clear land and to develop the hinterland? How will we find the external credits to buy the heavy machinery and equipment necessary for carrying out the expansion of the bauxite industry?

It is in the field I had hoped for some assistance, especially at the level of tactics, from the Opposition.

Housing ourselves is another of the objectives in the 1972 – 1976 Development Plan. How do we house ourselves? Of course we have timber; of course we have clay; but only a short-sighted person considers the provision of housing to be the simple matter of the structure. Regard must also be had to the fittings that go into a house – the toilet bowls, the wash basins, the hinges, the nails, the electrical fittings and things like that.

Therefore, we see here in the thrust of housing the nation, not merely the use of local material, especially clay, because, as I have already said, Government's emphasis is on the use of clay to release more timber and wood for earning external credit – and I shall deal with the question of external trade shortly – but it is estimated that if we are to house ourselves we shall need an average of about 13,000 units per annum. I am not saying 13,000 houses; I am saying 13,000 units. For the construction of those units it is further estimated that we shall need between

44,000 and 50,000 more working people than are at the moment employed in the building trades. Of that 44,000 to 50,000, 88 per cent, approximately, will have to be skilled persons.

This means, therefore, that the Government has immediately to do two things at least first, to begin a programme placing greater emphasis on training people in the building skills; and, secondly, providing the facilities and the finance. Government has already partially introduced this Programme by virtue of Housing Act.

The Government has also had further discussions with certain lending agencies and plans to add a mortgage department, or section, to the Guyana National Co – operative Bank as another financing institution for building and construction.

I wish to emphasise, by repeating here, that Government also proposes, during 1972, to start on the exploitation of some of the nation's iron reserves. We have no ambition to be one of the world's great steel producers, but we have iron reserves and, by relatively simple methods, we can convert some of our iron ore to some of the basic steel and iron inputs required in the building trade.

So far as things like porcelain basins are concerned, these can be the direct products of our kaolin and sand reserves. It follows that during the period 1972 to 1976, we shall see a rapid development of our kaolin reserves, not only for export as finished product, but also for conversion into some of the fittings that go into the building of a house. The same is true also of the glass or fiber glass which comes from the sand that we have.

We may not, by 1976, be in a position to manufacture or fabricate, from our own raw materials, every single item that goes into a building, but we certainly hope that, by 1976, the bulk of what will go into our buildings will be things wrought and fabricated in Guyana.

Having, by then, acquired the expertise, we should be in a better position to take advantage of export opportunities. At the moment, however, the emphasis will be placed on producing for our own needs. Obviously, as soon as we start producing, we will have by partial or total restriction, to protect what we produce, and certainly we would have to set up Bureau of Standards. This shall be done in 1972.

Some persons are inclined to consider our programme to feed, clothe and house ourselves, as indicative of economic isolationism. Of course, it is not. It should be apparent that when we feed ourselves, when we clothe ourselves, when we house ourselves we shall not be in a position to produce every commodity or good which we need to use in Guyana, for example, witness certain heavy equipment. It is not a question of becoming isolationist, it is a question of putting to good advantage the resources which we have and at the same time providing employment, whether it be in the form of direct job employment, or in the form of opportunities for self-employment.

As my Government sees it, Guyana must, to a considerable degree, provide the necessary capital formation for its own development by one means or another. The tactic for achievement of this endemic in the Budget Speech and in the estimate figures, is to cut out unessential importation of commodities which are not necessary for further development. It is a double tactic for there is the tactic on the other end of increasing our production of goods and commodities which can be exported and for which there is a ready market.

There is, as is clear from the Budget, going to be expansion of the GUYBAU operations, not only in the production of calcined ore, but also of the dried refractory bauxite which we propose to begin the course of 1972.

For instance, I can point to the construction of the first of four kilns for the production of more calcined ore, of which we have virtual world monopoly. We propose, naturally, by 1976, to be able to have a sufficient amount of cheap power to produce aluminium. We plan, also, during

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the year 1972, to start construction on a relatively small kaolin plant of about 200,000 tons. In other significant areas of economic expansion we propose to enlarge our shrimping fleet in the public sector in order to take advantage of the foreign market for shrimp, both in the East and West. We propose to accelerate the extraction of useful timber for export trade, and it is estimated that when the project 80 miles south of Wismar comes into production in 1975, the contribution to our economy will represent, I am told, an additional 20 per cent to our gross national product.

We will import but we must be discriminatory in our importation. In other words, we will import what is necessary for our development.

Now, if one looks at the Budget Speech one sees that most of the things I am saying are really hinted at, or referred to. But there are two big questions that arise. One is: Can we hold down our import bill and discriminate with respect to what we are going to bring in? The second question is: Can we manage to execute the domestic saving necessary for further development?

Let me deal with the first. It is clear that our programme cannot be faulted at the level of principal by anyone in this House in his right senses. It is also clear that the programme demand that there must be a central Government – controlled agency responsible of external trade – import and export.

Unfortunately, we must face opposition on this. Even our efforts under the External Trade Bureau, as at present constituted, have invited complaints from the traders. But, let me repeat, in so far as the importation of consumer goods is concerned, Government has absolutely no intention of permitting the private traders to import from what sources they want and at what prices they want.

Sir, if you allow Tom, Dick, and Harry to buy what they want, from what sources they want, at what prices they want, how are you really going to make a success of your programme which is premised on getting the best prices from any source whatsoever? I want to repeat that Government has absolutely no intention of putting the private trader out of the distribution business, but Government insists that for any successful development programme along the lines I have been describing, Government must be the final arbiter so far as the import – export trade is concerned.

There is the other aspect of it concerned with producing things ourselves. There will be more money in circulation. But if that money is going to go chasing prices, to what end will you put it into circulation, because remember, it is to provide employment and it is to provide the accumulation for further development. The Government, therefore, as the people's agent has got to collect its pound of flesh in taxation and Income Tax Department not merely will be strengthened but it will be the most active and personal responsibility of the Minister of Finance and I can say now that he will be Minister of Finance in 1972 – to see that the Inland Revenue Department is no longer a receiver of Taxes but an active collector of taxes.

It will be necessary to have direct and indirect domestic savings, and this is where it is a little disappointing hear suggestions that the National Insurance Scheme is not a good one, and to hear, as I did hear on one occasion, the Leader of the Opposition publicly suggest that the capital from the National Insurance Scheme should not be invested in Government securities. That is a form of domestic savings and as long as the benefits under the scheme are available to the subscribers from the dividends, interest, income, what have you, that come from the use of the capital, that is the end of the matter. It is nothing original. It is used in all parts of the world.

Of course, another reason to which I should have alluded for the necessity for Government to control the foreign trade is that even if, Mr. Speaker, you were to have partial or total restriction on certain things, you can have the toothpaste tube effect that since consumers cannot buy split peas, and sardines, and salmon, they may want to buy motor cars. It is apposite

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to remark en passant that we find in two of the nuclear powers of the world today, to prefer, since they have more income, to take that income and put it in unproductive consumer durables which are not necessary, something has to be done so that that income can be used in the economy for further development.

Another time we shall discuss in greater length, the tactics to be used for the greater domestic savings in the economy of Guyana. But let me this firmly and unapologetically that the people of Guyana, as the people in every other part of the world, have to pay for what they have. The people of Guyana have got to recognise that you have to pay for whatever you get. You have to pay for development; you have to pay for services. For instance, you may pay directly or you may pay indirectly. In some parts of the world, how do they ensure the surplus for further development? They depress wages, they depress standards of living, and any good Marxist known that, though for purpose of political propaganda, in the open economy of Guyana, they will never admit it, they pay for it indirectly by the depression of standards of living and of wages, as was done in Japan, as was done in the Soviet Union, to give only two examples from both sides of two sets of curtains, bamboo, iron, what have you.

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And then you have to pay for services, as I was saying, directly or indirectly. If you want a good telephone system, you can get it free. Completely free, on the surface, but you have to pay for it somewhere else along the line, or you pay for it directly and pay an economic rate.

If you want a good road system, a highway, you pay a toll or you pay for it indirectly. Regardless of the ideological orientation of the Government, that is a fact of human existence. There is no "freeness" in this world; none whatever. "Freeness" is an illusory thing.

I would plead with this House to understand, therefore, that while we go through the process of development, let us neither fool ourselves nor our audiences, I heard, for instance,

members of the Opposition say we must have free university education and, what is more, we must pay a salary to all university students while they are at university. We can do that, but we have to understand that this kind of thing has to be paid for by the nation somewhere along the line.

You cannot, at one and the same time, say you want wages and salaries comparable with those paid in the United States of America and better education facilities. We have to decide, in the process of development, on our priorities. We have to appreciate that, since development is a process, we cannot, early in that process, expect all the results which are expected at the end.

The time has come in this House and in this nation, for Guyana to face the problems of development squarely; to understand that the national cause is not served by always complaining that the wages are too low, or always complaining if a service has to be paid for.

What have we had out of this Budget Debate? What do we get in this House from Opposition? A needling complaint here, a needling complaint there! For instance, you hear them saying that exchange control has been put on because of the flight of capital due to a lack of confidence. The same jokers – I am glad for that term - will explain the situation in Chile how the situation in Cuba how? That is why they always have to say, “Look, it is not that we are against this, but the Yankee boss – *[Interruption by Mr. Ram Karran.]* I have no Yankee boss. You have a petticoat Yankee boss. I am sorry, Mr. Speaker.

Let us face certain facts. You cannot say that Government’s programme is not radical enough and then come and speak for Lord Thomson. You cannot say that Government’s programme is not radical enough and when Government seeks to shift the emphasis of taxation to income as distinct from commodities, you find all sorts of holes in income tax legislation, we have to be consistent.

If the P.P.P. wishes to criticise us from the left, there must be an internal consistency in their criticism, not like the hon. Member, Mr. Roshan Ally, who spoke about the poor man who owns an \$18,000 truck. Our poor man owns an \$18,000 truck and the average Chinese citizen either has a bicycle or two feet and China has nuclear weapons.

There must be an internal consistency in the criticisms that are levelled. Let me be the first to admit. Of course, that with the United Force there is absolute consistency. They believe in free, unfettered, *laissez – faire*, untrammelled private enterprise, they believe in antediluvian economies; they would make the Americans look like Communists. At least, they are consistent in their conservatism.

You hear from the other part of the Opposition at one time a leftist criticism, and at another time a rightist criticism. This House and this nation are entitled to the benefit of consistency on the part of the Opposition when we come to discuss fiscal, monetary and economic matters. Let the Opposition pick where they stand. I, naturally, do not argue with them whether they wish to pro – Brezhnev or pro – Mac. If they have sense they would know where they ought to be.

In the same way as at the end of 1970 we were on the verge of an historic event, that of controlling the major industry, even so at the end of 1971, as the minutes tick away, we are on the verge, I suggest, of taking a most significant step towards controlling the rest of our economy and towards providing to means, internally, of developing.

May I just a moment say that when I speak of our providing, internally, the means of development, I am not all saying that this Government does not welcome assistance.

Every Government in the world, one way or another, has been the recipient of assistance, but this Government believe that the people of Guyana must be the primary factor of the development of Guyana.

Mr. Speaker, as we go into 1972, we have got to appreciate that, as my hon. Friend, the Deputy Prime Minister said in his Budget Speeches of 1969 and 1970, change is dangerous, change is frightening, but we who lead, must not ponder to or encourage these fears. It is our duty as leaders, to explain to the people that without changes in this country, without revolutionary changes in this country, we are going to continue to be poor forever and ever – Amen. The alternative to vital change is retrogression: subservience, having to accept second – class status on our country and out of it. I feel that our people are sufficiently intelligent to understand, if it is explained. I appeal not to those approaching their second childhood. I appeal to my young and knowledgeable friends. *[Applause]*

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Member, this concluded the general debate on the 1972 Budget Speech. I understand that consideration of the Estimates in Committee of Supply will commence tomorrow I propose now that we resolve into Committee of Supply.

Assembly in Committee of Supply

REPORT OF THE BUSINESS SUB – COMMITTEE

The Chairman: The Assembly is in Committee of Supply. The Business Sub – Committee met on Tuesday 14th December, 1971 and passed a Resolution in terms of the matters set out in paragraph (1) of Standing Order 64, that is, on the allocation of time for the consideration of the Estimates of Expenditure for 1972 in Committee of Supply.

16.12.71.

National Assembly

10.15 – 10.20 p.m.

Copies of the Minutes of the proceedings of the Business Sub – Committee and of the Resolution passed by the Committee were circulated to Members on Tuesday 14th December, 1971 during the sitting of the National Assembly.

Mr. Hoyte: Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee doth agree with the Business Sub – Committee in the dais Resolution.

Motion put and carried.

Assembly resumed.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Leader of the House.

ADJOURNMENT

Resolved, “That this Assembly do now adjourn until Friday, 17th December, 1971, at 2 o’clock.” [Mr. Ramsaroop]

Adjourned accordingly at 10.20 p.m.
