

**THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

OFFICIAL REPORT

(VOLUME 3)

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

47th Sitting

2.00 p.m.

Wednesday, 29th October, 1969

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

(Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

Present

His Honour the Deputy Speaker, Mr. O.E. Clarke

Members of the Government

Ministers

Dr. the Honourable P.A. Reid,
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance

The Honourable M. Kasim,
Minister of Communication

The Honourable H.D. Hoyte
Minister of Home Affairs

The Honourable N.J. Bissember,
Minister of Trade and Parliamentary Affairs

The Honourable C.M.L. John,
Minister of Local Government

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

The Honourable B. Ramsaroop,
Minister of Housing and Reconstruction

Parliamentary Secretaries

Mr. J.G. Joaquin, O.B.E., J.P.,
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Finance

Mr. W. Haynes
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Works and Hydraulics

Mr. A. Salim,
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources

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

Other Members

Mr. J.N. Aaron
Miss M.M. Ackman
Mr. J. Budhoo, J.P.
Mr. L.I. Chan-A-Sue
Mr. O.E. Clarke, Deputy Speaker
Mr. M. Corrica
Mrs. P.A. Limerick
Mr. D.A. Singh
Mr. R.C. Van Sluytman
Mr. C.E. Wrights
Mr. M. Zaheeruddeen, J.P.

Members of the Opposition

Mr. Ram Karran
Mr. R. Chandisingh
Mr. F.H.W. Ramsahoye
Mr. E.M.G. Wilson
Mr. G.H. Lall
Mr. M.Y. Ally

Mr. R.D. Persaud, J.P.
Mr. R. Ally
Mr. E.L. Ambrose
Mrs. L.M. Branco
Mr. Balchand Persaud
Mr. Bholu Persaud
Mrs. R.P. Shahoy
Mr. R.E. Cheeks
Mrs. E. Da Silva
Mr. J.A. Sutton

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

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

Absent

His Honour the Speaker, Mr. R.B Gajraj, C.B.E., J.P.	-	on leave
The Honourable L.F.S. Burnham, Q.C. Prime Minister	-	on leave
The Honourable F.J. Jordan, Minister of Agriculture and Natural Resources	-	on leave
The Honourable S.S. Ramphal, C.M.G, Q.C. Attorney General and Minister of State		
The Honourable M.W. Carter, Minister of Information		
The Honourable H. Green, Minister of Works and Hydraulics		
The Honourable H.O. Jack, Minister without Portfolio		
Dr. the Honourable Sylvia Talbot, Minister of Health		
Mr. P Duncan, Parliamentary Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister	-	on leave
Mr. K Bancroft	-	on leave
Mr. E.F. Correia	-	on leave

Mr. E.H.A. Fowler
Mr. S.M. Saffee
Dr. C. B. Jagan, Leader of the Opposition
Mr. D.C. Jagan
Mr. A.M. Hamid, J.P.
Mr. E.M. Stoby
Mr. I.R. Remington
Mr. V. Teekah
Mr. M.F. Singh

- on leave
- on leave
- on leave
- on leave

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ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPAKER

LEAVE TO MEMBERS

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Members, I have to announce that leave has been granted to the hon. Members Mr. Bancroft, Mr. Stoby, and Mr. M.F. Singh for today's sitting.

RECEIPT OF SUBPOENA BY THE CLERK

I should also like to announce that the Clerk has received from the Court a subpoena, which I will ask him to read, requesting his attendance at the High Court and the production of certain documents.

The Clerk read the following:

“Before the Honourable Mr. Justice Morris.

Form No. 2

SUBPOENA DUCES TECIM

1968, No. 2604 Demerara.

IN THE HIGH COURT OF THE SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE’

Civil Jurisdiction

BETWEEN

Harry Lall

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Plaintiff.

And

Peter Taylor and Company Limited a company incorporated in this Country under the Companies Ordinance, Chapter 328 whose registered office is situate at La Penitence, East Bank Demerara.

Defendants

ELIZABETH the Second by the Grace of God, Queen of Guyana and Her other Realms and Territories, Head of the Commonwealth.

To The Clerk of the National Assembly

c/o House of Parliament

Public Buildings

Georgetown

Greeting.

We command you to attend at the Victoria Law Courts Georgetown at the sitting of the High Court of the Supreme Court of Judicature to be held on Thursday, the 6th day of November, 1969, at the hour of 9.0 clock in the forenoon, and so from day to day until the above cause is tried, to give evidence on behalf of the Plaintiff.

And also to bring with you and produce at the place and time aforesaid (specify documents to be produced). All books, papers, copies of Letters and other writings and documents in their custody, possession or power containing any entry, memorandum or minute relating to the matters in question in this action, and particularly all records and or instruments, showing that the Plaintiff was a member of the National Assembly on the 2nd June, 1968.

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Witness the Honourable Mr. Edward Victor Luckhoo. Q.C. Chancellor of Guyana the 24th . day of October in the Year of Our Lord one thousand Nine hundred and Sixty Nine.

The sum of \$5.00 is lodged for your attendanc

(Sgd.) S. Ali

Sworn Clerk & Notary Public

For Registrar.”

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Ho. Members, as the leave of the Assembly will have to be given in this matter I will now put the question.

Question –

That the leave of the Assembly be given for the Clerk to attend the sitting of the Court and to produce the documents requested.

put, and agreed to.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

MOTION

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE MR. ANDREW JACKSON

“Be it resolved that this National Assembly record its deep regret at the death of Mr. Andrew Jackson, and pay tribute to the service which he rendered to Guyana and to Parliament and direct that an expression of its sympathy be conveyed to his sorrowing relatives.” (The Minister of Trade and Parliamentary Affairs.)

The Minister of Trade and Parliamentary Affairs: (Mr. Bissember): May I seek your permission to move a Motion of condolence on the death of Mr. Andrew Jackson. I

seek your indulgence and the indulgence of Members of the House for Standing Order No. 23(3) to be suspended to enable me to move the Moti

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. Bissember: I am grateful to you. I think that the late Mr. Andrew Jackson was well known to those of us who have been involved in politics for a number of years. I am instructed that he was born at Mahaica on the 30th April, 1906, and that he was educated at the Mahaica Scots School. He joined the postal service in May 1921 and worked his way up to what is now known as Town Postman. In 1941, along with others, he left to join the Royal Corps in England. He saw service in Britain, the European Continent, and in North Africa.

After the war he entered the Ruskin College where he did a political course in political science and economics. Before he left for war service he was one of the pioneers in the formation of the Post Office Workers Union as it was then known and, at the time of leaving for Europe, he was its president.

On his return to Guyana in 1949 he continued the struggle for betterment of the life of the post office workers and in that same year he was returned as president, a post he held for an unbroken period until his death. In 1950 he was instrumental in the formation of the Federation of Unions of Government Employees. He was its president for a number of years and held that position at the time of his death. The late Mr. Jackson was for several years either the vice-president or a member of the executive council of the T.U.C

During the suspension of the Constitution in 1953 he was attending a trade union conference in Vienna in company with Mr. Brentnol Blackman who is well known to us in Caribbean trade unionism. In 1956 he resigned as Postmaster in the postal service.

He was secretary of the P.N.C from 1957 to 1962. I should like, with your permission, to strike a rather personal note. It was in January 1957 that I had the pleasure of first meeting Mr. Andrew Jackson and, if I may say so, my close relationship with him in political campaign has

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been of tremendous help to me and other members of my party. He was elected to the Legislature as a P.N.C. representative representing Georgetown-North for the years 1957-1961. During those years many persons, including myself, who had the pleasure of sitting in the public gallery, would have heard the great contributions he made to the various matters which came before this honourable House.

I am instructed that, during the 80-day strike in 1963, he presented the movement's case, the T.U.C's case, before the United Nations. He had also represented his own movement, the Postal and Telecommunications Workers Union, at many international conferences, the last on being in West Berlin in July/August of this year. He had just returned from the Caribbean where he offered his assistance in the reorganization of the P.T.T.I in that region.

I think we all would agree that, in offering condolence and sympathy to his wife and children, we do so because, in various ways and various fields of activity, he rendered human services to the Government and people of Guyana. I think that no other trade unionist has contributed more to the social and economical advancement of the working class than our departed Andrew Jackson. I think all hon. Members will agree that he was indeed a stalwart among the stalwarts of the Trade Union Movement.

I feel sure that his loss will be felt not only in the local trade union scene but also in the Caribbean where, as I said earlier, he spent over a week assisting in the organization of sister unions there.

2.25

As a politician, he never compromised on the basic principles of democracy. He was a firm believer in the tenets of political and social democracy. He jealously guarded all the fundamental rights and freedoms. Perhaps when the history of Guyana is written, his name will assume a prominent place among the truly great men of his time. To me, he has carved a niche in the temple of political and trade union fame in which no other Guyanese is likely to excel.

I sense the feelings of all hon. Members of this House when I ask that we place on record our deep appreciation of the services he has rendered to humanity. Lest I forget, he was president of the Legionnaires for some time, an organization which did tremendous work for the social and political upliftment of those who served in the two World Wars. I think in asking my colleagues here to express our sympathy, I am only doing what they themselves would like to do. I ask, if this Motion is carried, that a copy of it be sent to his wife and sorrowing children.

Mr. Ram Karran: I beg to leave to second the Motion moved by my friend, the hon. Minister of Trade and Parliamentary Affairs and to express support of the Motion that a copy of this Resolution be sent to Mrs. Jackson and her family. I met Comrade Andrew Jackson, as he was universally known, some time in 1948, from which time onwards we have worked together in a number of organizations including those listed by the hon. Minister, G.U.F.E, T.U.C., and of course, committees of those organizations all the way through.

Comrade Jackson has been a man dedicated throughout his life to the trade union movement and to people generally. It has been said that he was a prominent member of the ex-servicemen's association but those are only two of the interests which had Comrade Jackson's attention. He was engaged in a number of other activities, not to mention the individual unions which he counseled during the years. I remember working during the late 'forties' and early 'fifties' with Comrade Jackson for long hours in the night. Very often he never went home until two or three in the morning but he was available in the morning. Whether one called at seven or eight, he was ready.

I remember particularly the part he played in trying to bring about unity between the so-called free trade unions and W.F.T.U., the present organization to which the T.U.C. in this country was affiliated and he travelled to Vienna to attend the conference in 1953, the fateful year for Guyana, when our Constitution was again suspended. I remember leaving the conference to go to London when our leaders from this territory, the then Minister of Education, Mr. Burnham, and the Leader of the House, Dr. Jagan, were unable to travel to any

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part outside the country because of a neighbouring ban by Surinam and Trinidad. It was only after a great deal of pressure that they were able to leave.

Comrade Jackson, although he has made it known that his first interest is in the trade union movement rather than in politics, did take an active part in politics and in that early period, he did much for the political enlightenment of the English people who had been told by persons, who are not now in this House, that the communists were ready to burn down the city of Georgetown. That was given as the reason for the suspension of our Constitution. Comrade Jackson was unceasing in his agitation against this lying against the Guyanese people both in England and all over the world.

I remember another incident when the trade union movement presented a memorandum to the Waddington Commission some time in 1952. It was his and Ivan Edwards' contribution to the political side of trade unionism in presenting their recommendations to the Commission, which, even today, are startling in so far as recommendations are concerned.

As I said, he had been trying very much to bring about unification of the international trade union movement but unfortunately he was unsuccessful because of the great strength of the Americans and British. It was unusual to see him sitting down, a non-starter in the programme of the W.F.T.U., the international trade union which represented his own union when one knows the part he played in defending the right of the workers to have one international centre for their problems. Brother Jackson will be missed at the Post Office, for after his retirement from the Post Office, to which he had given yeoman service, there was the union, of which he was president for a long time. He held very strong views and it took a great deal of going to persuade him against whatever views he held.

After his resignation from the Service, you will recall, he entered this House and served for one term during which time he enlivened the debates, not with loose talk as many of our young Members are inclined to indulge in. He spoke very often in this House but he made very

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sure that he spoke from records. We on this side recognize the great contribution he made to the welfare of the working class of this country and even though in the latter part of his life he seemed to have been persuaded against the best interest of the Guyanese people – possibly by a movement that deteriorates day after day and which eventually must fade out – history will recall his place among the working people.

We on our part wish to express our sincere sorrow at the passing of so great a man and to recognize him as a great leader of the working class. I formally beg to second the Motion moved by the hon. Minister.

2.35 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member Mr. Sutton.

Mr. Sutton: Mr. Speaker, I have had the honour and pleasure of knowing Mr. Jackson personally for very many years and, although I have not been able to know personally of his political and labour union activities as the two previous speakers have done, no one would be living in this country and following its affairs who failed to be impressed by the sincerity of purpose of Mr. Johnson in whatever he undertook to do. I have no doubt that if all the labour leaders in this country could satisfy the citizens of Guyana that they had the integrity and honesty of purpose of Mr. Jackson, we all would be very happy and would have no doubts as to the benefit of all the actions of the labour leaders involved. We in this section of the Opposition are certainly impressed with the loss which this country has suffered by the death of Mr. Jackson, particularly the Labour Union Movement, and we only hope that his life would be an example for the younger and less experience unionists, in which case we would all be sure that we are all pulling in the same direction and all our efforts would contribute to the progress of Guyana which I hope is the intention of all people in politics and the Labour Union Movement and who have to share the responsibility of public life.

We would like to be associated with the sentiments expressed and, as far as the loss of the country of Mr. Jackson is concerned. We ask that in the expressions of condolence sent to his family, and I hope his union, we would be closely associated.

The Minister of Labour and Social Security (Mr. Carrington): Mr. Speaker, in expressing sympathy in respect of the death of Comrade Jackson, I would like to do so going back just a few years of his life as a leader. As shop steward and member, then, of the Transport Workers' Union, I was then a very junior member of the union and I had heard something of Andrew Jackson, it was not until I attended the meetings of the Federated Union of Government Employees that I was able to recognize the sterling qualities in the individual. His loss to the movement has created a vacuum, a vacuum that, at a time when Guyana needs leaders like Andrew Jackson in every field, as time when we need stability and a greater sense of responsibility, is a loss of a great leader.

To those who know Comrade Jackson as a man in the political field addressing various meetings, that is just one part of his leadership qualities, but it is to know the man around the table bargaining for the workers. The first time that I saw his strength and determination was when he was negotiating for the workers in 1959 when he was faced with a hostile Government who had no appreciation for the workers, who said "Not a penny more!". He represented his union – it was at Christmastime when everyone was worried in many ways he stood and demanded what the workers deserved.

His contribution to the Trade Union Movement will be ever remembered in this House. Today we are paying our respects to this man and I would wish to convey to his family and to his organization, the T.U.C., of which he was Vice-President the sympathy – and I would like to go further and say that in his position as Vice-President of the T.U.C., he was what the nation body needed. I made reference to my contact with him as a trade unionist but I must refer to my contact with him as Minister of Labour. The first meeting where he led a T.U.C. delegation was when we were discussing Amendments to the Trade Disputes Bill and, surprisingly, the attitude and the understanding of Comrade Jackson compared with many other was most

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surprising. It was clear that he understood the needs of Guyana, the need for stability and peace. This was his whole approach to the matter at the time. I will never forget the co-operation that he gave during those discussions. I will miss him and I know that the T.U.C. and the trade unions will miss him also.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member Mr. Lall.

Mr. Lall: Mr. Speaker, I also would like to associate myself with the hon. Member in this House in paying great regret at the death of a valiant son of Guyana. I also know, as the hon. Minister of Labour indicated, that up to last year Mr. Andrew Jackson showed his militancy in calling off the Post Office-Telecommunications workers strike because of what he thought was right.

2.45 p.m.

In Mr. Jackson, we have lost a father of the trade union movement in our country. I hope those of us who are active in the trade union field will follow his footsteps. As the saying goes:

“Lives of great men all remind us

We can make our lives sublime,

And, departing, leave behind us

Footprints on the sands of time.”

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Members, I think it is fitting for us to stand in silence for one minute.

Assembly stood in silence.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Labour and Social Security.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE INTERNATIONAL

LABOUR ORGANISATION ON ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

“Whereas on 29th October, 1919, the International Labour Organisation came into being and;

Whereas the aims and purposes of the International Labour Organisation as set out in the Declaration of Philadelphia are to achieve:

- ‘(a) full employment and the raising of standards of living;
- (b) the employment of workers in the occupations in which they can have the satisfaction of giving the fullest measure of their skill and attainments and make their greatest contribution to the common being;
- (c) the provision, as a means to the attainment of this end and under adequate guarantees for all concerned, of facilities for training and the transfer of labour, including migration for employment and settlement;
- (d) policies in regard of wages and earnings, hours and other conditions of work calculated to ensure a just share of the fruits of progress to all, and a minimum living wage to all employed and in need of such protection;
- (e) the effective recognition of the right of collective bargaining, the co-operation of management and labour in the continuous improvement of productive efficiency, and the collaboration of workers and employers in the preparation and application of social and economic measures;
- (f) the examination of social security measures to provide a basic income to all in need of such protection and comprehensive medical care;
- (g) adequate protection for the life and health of workers in all occupations
- (h) provision for childwelfare and maternity protection;
- (i) the provision of adequate nutrition, housing and facilities for recreation and culture;
- (j) the assurance of equality of educational and vocational opportunity;” and

Whereas on 18th June, 1966, Guyana was by resolution of the International Labour Conference admitted as a member of the International Labour Organisation; and

Whereas it has been suggested by the International Labour Organisation that the occasion be marked among other things by a debate in the National Assembly on the activities of the International Labour Organisation:

Now therefore be it resolved that this National Assembly records its satisfaction with the activities of the International labour Organisation, pledges to support fully the Organisation, in the future and offers its wholehearted congratulations to that august body on the attainment of its 50th Anniversary. (The Minister of Labour and Social Security.

The Minister of Labour and Social Security (Mr. Carrington): Mr. Speaker, today we meet to congratulate and record our satisfaction of the work done by the International Labour Organisation in its 50th year of service in the field of social activities. I would say it has been fifty years of social progress. The I.L.O. is known as the International labour Parliament where workers and employers meet to discuss various matters and problems with respect to their different countries. At the Conference of the I.L.O. recommendations and conventions were ratified- all in the interest of workers. The conditions of employment of workers of great concern to the I.L.O. The International Labour Organisation came into being on the 29th October, 1919 after the signing of the Treaties of the First World War, it has lived through many hot wars and cold wars. In 1919, the I.L.O. as a body, had forth-five Member-States and over the fifty years, it has been able to double this number. Today, there are 121 Member-States. Over the years the majority of the States which became Members of this Orgaisation were fortunately independent countries, they did not spare any time in becoming members. The reason for this is because of the policies and philosophies of the I.L.O. this organization was responsible for the championing of independence for many of the countries that wee colonial territories; and because of its policies and philosophies these young nations saw it fit to join this international body.

Guyana, on becoming independent on the 26th May, 1966, spared not time, and within thirteen days, Guyana joined the I.L.O. as a full member and so participated in the conference

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which was held in June, 1966. This is a clear indication of this country's respect for the I.L.O.'s policies and we are fully conscious of the benefits of being a member of this organization.

At the present moment, the I.L.O. is a specialized agency of the United Nations. Its main object as an organization, is to look into matters of labour. Guyana, as a member of this organization, ratified twenty-six recommendations and conventions in this Parliament and will continue to do so; and will continue to take part in discussions at that level. Further, we have had the services of Mr. Petrie who came to Guyana to assist this Government in establishing national insurance. It is very gratifying at this time to know that on the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of this organization, Guyana launched the National Insurance Scheme. Today, we know it as a fact, the workers will benefit from this scheme. We have the services of Mr. Matthews who is still in Guyana who assisted in establishing the scheme, this is just one of such schemes that the I.L.O. has been involved in throughout the world. Such schemes are intended to bring benefit to workers, not employers.

What greater contribution can there be to an organization than working in these fields? The I.L.O. recognized the problem that is facing under-developed countries of the world. We need to develop our manpower resources. Here again, the I.L.O. has been active, and has carried out various programmes: vocational training, skilled training and other fields that one can think about. This is intended to develop the human resources of our country. Such development is the key to economic development; for if you are incapable of developing your human resources, nothing else will be developed.

2.55 p.m.

We have had the services of Mr. Max Swordlow, another I.L.O. representative in Guyana. He has been working for months with the T.U.C. in preparing its education programmes and he was mainly instrumental in the establishment of the Critchlow Labour College.

The last assistance we have had is in the person of Mr. Conner, who came here on the invitation of this Government through my visit to the I.L.O. in 1969, to establish a Productivity Centre and, to show the true spirit of tripartism, this Productivity Centre is intended to assist managers. We must have efficiency at all levels and, in examining our skills, we discovered in Guyana, as in many of the underdeveloped countries there is a shortage of managerial skills.

This productivity centre will be established for the sole purpose of improving these skills. Further, the Productivity Centre will also provide training for persons who will manage co-operatives. The I.L.O. is engaged in assisting with such training for persons engaged in the field of co-operatives and thrift societies. As you know, sir, at this time when Guyana will soon become a Co-operative Republic and will need development in the co-operatives sector the Productivity Centre will make a tremendous contribution to Guyana.

It is clear there is recognition of this institution throughout the world. I may be corrected, but I cannot remember that any institution or organization has been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. It think it more than fitting at this time in the life of this organization, after 50 years of service to humanity, that it should be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. One may wonder why. It is not like giving the award to an individual who has able to stop some war in the Far East or in the Middle East, in Africa or in Europe. What I.L.O. is doing in its activities is to establish peace – because when people are hungry there will be no peace – through their activities to improve the skills and resources of peoples all over the world.

As I said earlier, the nations who take advantage of this body are in most cases the underdeveloped nations. We recognize the services of this organization. I am sure that this House will agree with me that we should say, “Hearty congratulations for 50 years of service to humanity!”

If I may read the Resolution of this Motion –

“That this National Assembly records its satisfaction with the activities of the International labour Organisation, pledges to support fully the Organisation, in the future and offers its wholehearted congratulations to that august body on the attainment of its 50th Anniversary.”

(Applause)

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

Mr. Lall: Sir, I should I should like to associate myself with the hon. Minister in congratulating the I.L.O. on its fiftieth anniversary, but I should like to advise the hon. Minister and his colleagues that it would be meaningless to congratulate a world organization that is made u p of 121 countries, including the socialist countries, while t the same time the recommendations made by this body to look after the working conditions of the working class are not accepted.

I should like to make mention the recommendations made by this world body, namely the I.L.O. Conventions. I have here a copy that was circulated in Parliament during its second Session, 1967 – 1968 (Sessional Paper No. 2/1968). The first recommendation dealt with the maximum weight that a worker should carry. It is recommended here that a worker should carry a maximum weight of 2,530 lbs., but what do we find in Guyana? Workers, such s cane-cutters, have to cut and load at least three tons of cane per day before they can make an average day's pay

This world organization recommended a maximum weight of 2,530 lbs. but the cane-cutters in Guyana are carrying 6,720 lbs when they cut and load three tons of cane per day. Not only do they have to carry this weight, but they have to cut the cane, carry it and load it. This is what they have to do. It was said here by this Government that there was no legislation in Guyana restricting the weight to be carried by one worker. If we want to make this body meaningful, then we have to abide by its recommendations. I am asking the Government to put these recommendations into effect.

3.05 p.m.

The Minister referred to the National Insurance Scheme. Everyone knows that we support the National Insurance Scheme in principle, but we criticized certain aspects of it, for

example, the retiring age. The Government's Statistical Bureau indicated in no uncertain terms that the life expectancy of a male is 59 years and that of a female 63 years. If that is so, it is logical to fix the retiring age at 65 years? We would be giving pension to dead persons. Therefore, the Government should reconsider this.

It is also unacceptable that before one qualifies for old age pension one has to make 750 contributions. This is quite impossible in a tropical country where workers in certain industries get employment for only thirty weeks per year and so they will take a considerable amount of years to qualify, if they live. The Government will collect around \$15 million to 20 million per year from the operation of this Scheme. It will invest this money, the investment might generate capital, and some of this capital should be ploughed back into the Scheme in order to lower the retiring age and cut down on the number of contributions to enable a person to qualify for old age pension.

I should like to refer to the question of dependants. In the brochure distributed by the Government it is stated that if a woman has been married for not less than three years at the time of her husband's death and is over 55 years of age or is sick, she is entitled to survivor's benefit. I should like to advise what is termed a dependent in the recommendation concerning invalidity, old age and survivors' benefits. I quote from Appendix D of Sessional Paper No. 2 of 1968.

“(c) the term ‘dependent’ refers to a state of dependency which is presumed to exist in prescribed cases;

(d) the term ‘wife’ means who is dependent on her husband.” There is no qualifying age here. As long as the wife is dependent on the husband for survival, then the wife should automatically be entitled to survivor's benefit. The same applies to a child. As long as a child is dependent on the father for survival, the child should be entitled because he would be a dependent. These are recommendations which we feel the Government should accept.

I should like to speak on the invalidity benefit. It is stated in the brochure that invalidity benefit will be paid to a worker at the age of 55 years. I want the Government to pay some attention to this. Let us say that a worker becomes an invalid at the age of 45 years. According to the regulations of this Scheme, this worker will have to wait until he is 55 years before he is entitled to invalidity benefit. We are saying that invalidity benefit should be paid as soon as the worker becomes an invalid. What will the worker do during the 10-year period? Will he swallow grease to exist? (Mr. Hoyte: "What are you speaking on?") I should like to quote what is the definition of invalidity. I quote from Appendix D of the same Sessional paper:

"4. The definition of invalidity should take into account incapacity to engage in any activity involving substantial gain."

I continue:

"6. With a view to protecting persons who are over a prescribed age but have not attained pensionable age Members should provide benefits, under prescribed conditions, for –

(a) Persons whose unfitness for work is established or presumed;"

There is nothing here to show that a person must be 55 years before he is entitled to invalidity benefit. Therefore, we are saying that the Government should give a person invalidity benefit as soon as he becomes an invalid. A person should not have to make 750 contributions to be entitled to invalidity benefit.

3.15 p.m.

A man does not suffer invalidity every day or every year. I said before that one-half out of one per cent of the Workers suffer from invalidity and therefore the amount that the Government will have to pay on this invalidity scheme would be nominal, so the Government should reconsider its requirements that a person is qualified for this benefit only when he has contributed 750 weekly payments. It should be counted in the same way as the sickness

benefit. A person who makes 50 contributions will be entitled to the sickness benefit. The Government should accept the recommendation of 50 weekly contributions and also the recommendation of the other Convention, then I would say that the Government is doing something meaningful.

I hope that my contributions was of some help to Government and it will review the whole matter of the National Insurance Scheme. I also join with the Government to thank those persons who came here to work on the Scheme but I would tell the Government to accept the good part of their recommendations and to throw away the bad part because we are Guyanese and we know what Guyanese are faced with. I beg to support the Motion

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member Mrs. DaSilva.

Mrs. Da Silva: Mr. Speaker, sir, I wish to associate my party, the United Force, with the congratulations now being expressed by other Members of this honourable House to the International Labour Organisation on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary. As we have just been told by the hon. Minister, 121 states are members of this world-wide organization which has done so much to bring together the workers in unity in order to fight and to work for their upliftment and for their betterment.

The I.L.O. had done a great deal to bring to the forefront, the dignity of labour and it is to be admired for what it is being doing. We here in Guyana are learning much from it because, here, many of our people have a very false idea about labour. They feel that unless one wears a shirt jac and pushes a pen, one is nobody. That the man in the street who cleans drains or dust bins is not considered to be as important on the scale of labour, but this should not be so. All labour has its dignity about it, all labour is entitled to be recognized for the benefit it brings to society because without the people who look after the sanitation, or the people who do the most supposed mental tasks you can think of, it would be impossible for others to continue.

The I.L.O. has done much to bring forward and put to the forefront this idea that there is dignity in Labour. By its own Declaration of Philadelphia, it stands for full employment and the

raising of standards of living, the employment of workers in the occupations in which they can have the satisfaction of giving the fullest measure of their skill and attainments and make their greatest contribution to the common well being.

Recently, sir, we had a special effort put forward – I think it is still on – where careers in health are being brought to the forefront, where the different aspects of work in the field of health are being brought to our young people. Formerly, one thought of being a doctor for a career in health, or possibly of being a nurse, but there are other aspects in the field of health just as important and which need people and which can help provide employment. This recent scheme of bringing it forward and showing the different aspects can do much to provide job openings and put people in jobs for which they are well suited.

I would suggest to the hon. Minister that a similar type of exercise be carried out in the other fields of employment, in the field of agriculture, in the field of engineering, all the different aspects in connection with these types of jobs could be put before people so they do not think there is one side to agriculture, that you can only be a cane cutter or plant vegetables but that there are other aspects to it. They can get both sides of the story to suit their needs and the type for which they are qualified. There would then be few square pegs in round holes.

I would suggest too that the Minister should encourage all unions to hold seminars among their members so as to explain to them how much industry depends on them and so give them a greater sense of responsibility in the part they have to play in the general welfare and the welfare of our country. May be then, with their fuller co-operation and understanding of what is expected of them and how important it is no matter how small the job in industry, how important it is for them to work together for the betterment of themselves and the country, there will be fewer wildcat strikes which we have so very often. People just walk off the job without first going into the pros and cons of the matter as we have had in the recent occurrence in the Mine Workers' Union.

These are a few of the points my party would like to put across as we congratulate and join with the rest of this House in offering our best wishes and our thanks for all the I.L.O. has done for us here in Guyana. We have had many instances of help, the most recent one being the National Insurance Scheme and help with the starting of the productivity centre. Our thanks are to be recorded for what the I.L.O. is doing for our country and our congratulations and best wishes for the future. May I ask that when congratulations are being forwarded to the I.L.O., that my party's congratulation be associated with them.

Mr. Ram Karran: This hon. Minister has asked us in this Motion to tender our congratulations and to express satisfaction with the contribution by the I.L.O.

3.25 p.m.

We have always been generous, and perhaps over generous, in tendering our feelings of satisfaction and in offering congratulations to others. I certainly do not wish to detract from the Government's programme in relation to this I.L.O.. But looking into this document presented to the hon. Minister, I would like, with your permission, to make some observations to underline some of the deficiencies of the International Labour Organisation; perhaps the hon. Minister will air them correctly when he makes his reply. But I do see that there are many deficiencies on the part of the government which has the support of the International Labour Organisation which, in turn, scratches the back of the ... I shall deal with those deficiencies as we go through the document published by the hon. Minister.

The hon. Minister tells us that the International Labour Organisation has been freeing the colonial territories; that is an excellent activity and we are all glad to know of it. But this Government has had its sponsors and champions, the Tory Secretary of State for Britain. I wonder, in fact, for there are responsibilities to their workers, if it was Duncan Sandys who sponsored them. I wonder if that South African, Sir Richard Luyt, is fighting against apartheid in South Africa, but these were our sponsors for Independence; that is why ... out of a minimum of these listed in the preamble of this Motion.

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The hon. Minister tells us that we have had fifty years of progress. Fifty years ago we saw the record of the British working class demanding complete break from capitalism and, indeed, fifty years ago we saw a complete break from capitalism in the Soviet Union. The English workers had been demanding this but the bell has not yet been heard by the labour leaders in these parts. We are still trying to get Government employers' representatives and workers' representatives together. To do what? To pass conventions! Conventions upon conventions which falls on deaf ears. My colleague, Mr. Harry Lall, since 1948 has been fighting for the workers of this country against the cut and load system. The ILO came later and they recommend the weight which a human should fetch on his head, but this Government has not seen fit to implement it. (Mr. Hoyte: "How many strikes you had for this Year?") Conditions they say are of some concern to the ILO but are they of any concern to this Government? As far as we can see, never! The hon. Minister tells us that the ILO is indulging in training and developing manpower resources. Training for what? Thousands of school children are leaving school every day. What are you training them for? To beg or to prostitute?

Where are the jobs? Three hundred have been retrenched from the Ministry of Works and Hydraulics. They tell us that the contractors are going to take on their own men. The contractors have themselves retrenched men. I wonder if the hon. Minister will go to the University of Guyana now and again? They talk of ILO.

What are you going to train them to do? To become politicians, to become prostitutes, to beg as you see them doing on the streets? Co-operative republic and consultative democracy and a lot of rubbish but all that it means is hunger...and nakedness! There is a new pastime – they catch young people and take off their male organs. I hope they try to find the correct people to do that to! I was in Essequibo over the weekend; my hon. Friend in the secret police (Mr. Hoyte) knows that. (Interruptions). But instead of educating and training a lot of ignorance goes around the place and all these things are responsible for the number of crimes around the places; and yet nothing can be done about it. (Mr. Hoyte: "Next point!"). no, I want to talk of that!

The racial feeling is the creation of the Government. The International Commission of Jurists came and addressed itself to the question of the racial imbalances of the forces in the

country. The Government told us in this House that it was going to observe the recommendation of the Commission. What has happened? We saw promotion on-the-spot; we saw recruitment of people of one ethnic group in the Police Force; we saw promotion and all the names that we saw were names belonging to persons of one ethnic group in the country. We heard that a little innocent child in the Essequibo was killed and his headless body was found; we saw in the Corentyne the same thing where the parents made repeated requests to the police. When the child was finally found, it was found with its head off. We read of one at Mahaica; and these very clever people claim that there is a lunatic walking around. The hon. Minister knows that I was in Essequibo. They cannot find a lunatic who would kill the innocent.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Let us talk about this Motion before us.

Mr. Ram Karran: My hon. Friend tells me that it is not peculiar to hear things like this. We pride ourselves on being a civilized committee. We are moving off from a consultative democracy to a co-operative republic. What are we getting? Where is the influence of ILO and why do we have all action on the part of the population and no action on the part of the Police?

Full employment and the raising of standards of living! I wish to invite the hon. Deputy Prime Minister (Dr. Reid) to re-read what is allegedly recorded by him in one of the newspapers. This Government knows of all the ills of unemployment – what is it doing about it? It has the I.L.O. preaching to us about full employment and the raising of standards of living, but what is it doing about it? The hon. Minister of Labour ought to have told us. All this Government is doing is retrenching on sea defences and all other works. The employment of workers in the occupations in which they can have the satisfaction of giving the fullest measure of their skill and attainments and make their greatest contribution to the common well being, these hypocrites! Sir, it was only last week we paid tribute to a former Clerk of this Assembly, a man who was trained, was side-tracked like a broken down engine, and shunted off. This is what is happening all over the country today – people are hunted off to make room for activists of the P.N.C.

Now, sir, we see recorded in the preamble its limitations, and (c) states:

- “(c) the provision, as a means to the attainment all concerned, of facilities for training and the transfer of Labour, including migration for employment and settlement;”

Incidentally, we were just talking about Mr. Andrew Jackson who was an authority on emigrant labour. In fact, he had a great deal of experience in this. Some time ago, he wrote an article in the Thunder about the exploitation that is meted out for itinerant labour.

Whatever are the qualifications for emigrant employment, they are not known but certainly that aspect ought to have been indicated because one is very suspicious of emigrant labour. A large section of our population have been the sufferers under the emigration system. (Interruption by the hon. Minister (Mr Hoyte). We refer to history now and again. As I was saying sir, when I was interrupted by the hon. Minister, a large number of Guyanese, in recent times, have been emigrant labour in the United States under the farm schemes, and in the domestic help schemes in Canada; and the limitation, inconvenience and the deficiencies of emigrations are well-known.

Today, a large number of Guyanese are leaving the country. One does not understand the policies of this Government. While it is telling us about migration and settlement, there is a bottle-neck in the Ministry of Home Affairs – thousands and thousands of people are waiting for their passport and cannot get them (Interruption by the hon. Minister (Mr Hoyte), this is a means by which this Government hopes to prevent the large number of young Guyanese, the assets of the country, from going abroad, and even those who succeed – (Interruption by the hon. Minister (Mr. Hoyte) My hon. Friend suggested that we have been losing elections all the time. It was only last week we went through the whole Bill – proxy and the rest – and the hon. Minister need to be reminded, but we do not wish to remind him. (Interruption.)

Despite the fact that there is a block at the passport office, the Government seems to invoke other provisions for the harassment of the people who wish to leave or are leaving and in collusion with the United States. (Government Members: “C.I.A.”) (Laughter.) I do not know if the C.I.A. is involved in this. My friend, the hypocrites, across the Table seem to be in collusion with the American Embassy here, that even if a person goes to the Income Tax Department and

signs the affidavit, the Income Tax Department hears about it and immediately begins its campaign to recover. (Mr. Hoyte: "How did Janet get out of here within two days?")

3.35 p.m.

I wish to point out the collusion on the part of the Government and the United States with respect to people who sign documents testifying that they are in receipt of so much. If a person is in receipt of X dollars per annum and meets the declaration with the American authorities, I imagine that such a person will meet such a declaration when the time comes with the Commissioner of Inland Revenue. But the person does not have the opportunity so to do, because of this closely knit organization between Government and the Americans and before long, pressure is put on this man or woman not to pay income tax for that year in which he signs the document and the Commissioner of Inland Revenue uses power under the law saying since you have been ... income tax of X dollars for this Government you must pay for five years back.

This is to guarantee a check on the exit of persons to the United States, Canada or the United Kingdom. No doubt if a man is in receipt of such an income he is going to be afraid because the machinery of the Government is going to be put on him for him to pay income tax for five years past. This Government certainly should not write something like this unless it really means what it is saying. It is stated in the Motion:

“policies in regard of wages and earnings, hours and other conditions of work calculated to ensure a just share of the fruits of progress to all, and a minimum living wage to all employed and in need of such protection;”

How high sounding this is! It continues:

“the effective recognition of the right of collective bargaining, the co-operation of management and labour in the continuous improvement of productive efficiency, and the collaboration of workers and employers in the preparation and application of social and economic measure;”

What is a living wage? Let us go back \$2.52, \$2.75, \$2.78, 3.04 \$4 a day for the unskilled Government employees. What is the minimum wage for sawmill workers? I wonder if the hon. Minister of Labour will tell us what is the minimum wage for sawmill workers. It is \$3.50 per day for people who work at a hard job. Their duties are far more onerous than the duties of the

unskilled Government employees. If \$4 a day is the minimum wage for unskilled Government employees this Government ought to hang its head in shame to agree to an award of \$3.50 for sawmill workers by the Wages Council.

I have always spoken very strongly in favour of my friend and former colleague, the Minister of Labour. We graduated in the same trade union and you see him sitting there and allowing sawmill workers to receive a wage of \$3.50 when unskilled Government workers are getting \$4. What does the I.L.O. say about it?

What is more, since 1964 when the P.N.C took office in this House the cost of living has been going up and has not stopped going up. If in 1964 \$4 was a living wage, can you regard \$4 as a living wage today? Surely not. And the hon. Minister of Labour has the effrontery to put in this document the words “living wage”.

The Motion continues:

“the extension of social security measures to provide a basic income to all in need of such protection and comprehensive medical care;”

I wonder if the hon. Minister was sleeping when this took place. The members on this side of the House did say that the national insurance scheme was an improvement in the place of nothing but the valid criticisms made by the members on this side of the House and by people outside of this House, such as the M.P.C.A., in respect to the qualifying age –

Mr. Deputy Speaker: You are repeating what the hon. Member Mr. Lall said.

Mr. Ram Karran: I am sorry, sir, I shall refrain from doing so. Absolutely nothing has been done about the quarry workers. We are no spokesmen for big business, but we drew attention to the fact that there are many schemes which are superior to the Government scheme and that legislation ought to have been enacted to ensure that these schemes remain, but instead we hear the solemn voice of the hon. Minister of Labour and Social Security and the voices of other spokesmen for the Government appealing to big business. “Please do not abandon the schemes you already have.”

In the first place, the employers will all the tricks at their disposal, with all the skill and manipulation, with threats and what not, have been telling the workers, “You cannot afford two schemes. The Government is crazy.” Then the Government sits back. These are non-contributory schemes and yet workers are encouraged to discard the more attractive schemes for the pittance which the Government under the national insurance scheme.

I quote again:

“adequate protection for the life and health of workers in all occupations;;
Provision for child welfare and maternity protection”.

Provision for child welfare – and as soon as they reach the age of 12 years to take off their male organs. (Mr. Bissember: “This is under police investigation.”) What about the murder in Essequibo? Are the police still investigating it? Under police investigation! That is the sort of rubbish they come and tell us in this House so often. You say it is under police investigation and nothing can be heard. They are wasting their time searching for ammunition instead of going and doing their police work.

I continue:

“the assurance of equality of educational and vocational opportunity,”

I have referred to equality of education and what the education is for. A very pleasant Minister of Education has taken over from – I nearly said “a lunatic”. But she herself has often admitted the inadequacy of the system which seems to be moving in no direction at all. The former Minister of Education went like a bull in a china shop destroying everything. Schools were scrapped. One would have thought that by now some emphasis would have been placed on the type of education required in our country, but nothing is being done. What do we find? We find the same old colonial system. (Interruption) I know that all this hotchpotch put up by the hon. Minister of Labour and Social security (Mr. Carrington) sounds exciting. The Motion states;

“That this National Assembly records its satisfaction with the activities of the International Labour Organization, pledges to support fully the Organization in

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the future and offers its whole-hearted congratulation to that august body on the attainment of its 50th Anniversary.”

3.45 p.m.

What does the I.L.O stand for with respect to the future? Does it support a socialist economy? Hon. Members on the other side have said that they believe in socialism, or the I.L.O. believes in the perpetual arrangement of employer, employee, and Government. We on this side are impatient for an end to discrimination, unemployment, ignorance, disease, and all the evils of our society. We are impatient for the introduction of socialism so that all Guyanese, regardless of race, religion, etc., would embark on a brighter future.

Regardless of whether the Government gets support from the I.L.O., the C.I.A, or Duncan Sandys, we are convinced that it is moving in the wrong direction. We ask the Government to stop whitewashing its programme so that we can move forward to a brighter future for all and our country can unitedly move forward to progress and to peace. The hon. Minister tells us the the I.L.O. believes that there can be no peace where there is hunger. If there is anything I believe that the hon. Minister has said it is that and I urge upon him and his Government to move forward to a stage where we will end the state of hunger.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Minister.

Mrs. Sahoye rose

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I thought the hon. Member Mrs. Sahoye was bowing to leave, but since she wishes to speak we had better taken the suspension at this time.

Sitting suspended at 4. p.m.

On resumption -

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member Mrs. Sahoye rose just before the suspension as taken. She may now speak to the Motion.

Mrs. Sahoye: I rise to speak on the Motion moved by the hon. Minister of Labour and Social Security. I am indeed in sympathy with the I.L.O. in that it is a body comprised of representatives from member states. If we examine the various conventions and declarations we will observe that they are what member states voted for at the I.L.O. But we should examine further and ask if those conventions and declarations are implemented in the various countries. There are representatives from many member states who go and vote “aye” at the I.L.O. but when they return to their respective countries they fail to accept the obligations of the conventions or declarations.

I should like to refer specifically to the recommendations with respect to women. I wish to say something about the Women’s International Democratic Federation which has observer status at the I.L.O. and which, for a number of years, has been trying to let member states gathered at these I.L.O. conferences understand the various problems of working women throughout the world.

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There are many member states especially in the Socialist countries that understand the plight of women who work and there are many other states that understand but fail to accept the realities that confront women who work throughout the world. Therefore, it becomes necessary, since we are discussing the 50th anniversary of the I.L.O. that we say in this Parliament that the I.L.O. might be sincere and try to get ratified certain clauses in the interest of the working class, but they are far away from the expectations of the workers. If one will observe there are many countries in Africa which have member status in the I.L.O. and which have failed up to this day to employ any one of the conditions of the I.L.O.

I read what is said here, “the extension of social security measures to provide a basic income to all in need of such protection and comprehensive medical care.” I remember in Parliament when we were discussing the Budget there was a big hue and cry about the economy of the country being disrupted through strikes. I tried to bring people to the understanding that the economy is not only interrupted by strikes but also by illness. It is here where member states will have to observe and make a close examination of the changes that concern all the

undeveloped and under developed countries of the world. I feel it is very vital because if a child is sick, he cannot learn properly. If the teacher is sick she cannot teach properly. If the Government servant is sick, he cannot perform properly and if a farmer is sick, he cannot produce abundantly. I think that the I.L.O., being very clear in its mind, is indeed facing the realities and facts of life, and it has realized that we cannot find the formula for this unless and until we examine the causes of war. The causes of war throughout the world are economic ones and here is where the trade union has a vital part to play in society. We must make it our bounden duty to examine the plight of the working people.

Protection for the life and health of workers in all occupations. This is why this is put down, to be ratified. Can we say in Guyana there is adequate protection for the life and health of the working class in all occupations? In Guyana, we are far from having this, for presently in the sugar industry, if a man is sick, the employers claim that he is malingering. In the sugar industry when a woman attains 50 years or in so many cases before that time, the estate claims that she cannot perform her duties properly. We are far from having a sane and humane approach to the problems of the working class.

Sir, we go further. Provision for child welfare and maternity protection. Even the National Insurance Scheme has failed to cover convincingly the women in our country. Few women will fall within the scope of the scheme. What about the people who cannot work and have to eat and feed their children? There are many women who are compelled to go out to work so that their children might eat. Domestic servants, how many of them will receive maternity leave through the N.I.S.? I should like to ask the Minister.

In Finland, there is a social security scheme where women are not only given pay for the thirteen weeks when they go on leave but they are supplied with preparations for the baby, the baby's basket, blanket, napkins, feeding bottles, and milk until the child reaches a certain age. If we are to have earnest representations on behalf of the working-class people, I think we have to tackle the problems that confront us in a realistic manner, not to have within the scope of the scheme only a few people. If the Minister of Labour should take a survey of the number of women employed in Guyana, he would find that not even 50 per cent of them are under the

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National Insurance Scheme. The other 50 per cent will not be getting leave with pay. Therefore, what will happen to the child?

The provision of adequate nutrition, housing and facilities for recreation and culture. Here again, no matter it is written in black and white this does not say that in the respective countries these things will be implemented. They will vote “aye” at the I.L.O. they will return to their countries and they will forget they said yes, and all the way the trend is the same.

I spoke of recreation facilities for children. Where in the housing area are proper recreation fields set out where our children can have time to play? I should like to ask the Minister of Labour since, being a trade unionist and being responsible, he tried his best to see that there are improvements since our country received its Independence. Our country now has delegate status at the I.L.O. so that when progressive measures are put up by other members states in the I.L.O., Guyana should be the one to support those progressive measures. It is a fact that they are put up at the I.L.O. but many of the member states fail to ratify them and therefore all that is being ratified is inadequate for working people throughout the world.

I should like the Minister to state that it is not only what is put up by the I.L.O. or what is being fought for by member states, but what is being done in the respective countries to improve the standard of living that is important. If we are to become a socialist co-operative republic, what we do is important. I just picked up the Evening Post where the headline is “No Substitute”. Then it goes on:

“If people lived in a better and nobler way, working for the good of all instead of for private gain, they would be better fed, housed and educated, crime would be abolished, evil things will disappear; everyone will have enough and no one will be tempted to steal or cheat.

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This is the society into which we hope Guyana will move where the mass of our country will not be in the hands of privileged few; where our people will be able to work and enjoy life; where the people will give their labour power and will receive adequate wages in return; where our children will be properly fed and clothed; where they will receive proper medical facilities and

education; so that, when we get old, they will not blame us for failing them but will clap us on our backs and say that their parents have tried. I hope that the hon. Minister of Labour (Mr. Carrington) will take these words into consideration and make the working class feel happy, make the farmers feel happy to have the produce to give us to eat, make their lives a happy life and allow their children to live in a society where opportunity is equally met out for all in the interest of Guyana

Mr. Carrington *rose --*

Mr. Wilson rose --

Mr Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Labour and Social Security.

Mr. Carrington: In winding up the debate on the Motion standing in my name, I must say that I have been disappointed at the irrelevance which came out in these discussions since this Motion was one of commendation and was dealing mainly with the ILO.

The hon. Member Mrs. Da Silva did put forward many suggestions in connection with employment and the questions of dignity of labour are those which my Ministry will look at from time to time and implement, where necessary, training along these lines. On the discussions of the National Insurance, you should remember that I answered many of the questions during the debate on that Bill and, for a moment, I thought that such a Bill had been reintroduced in Parliament today. The hon. Member Mr. Harry Lall made reference to the question of the maximum weight to be carried by workers; his figures were not correct, it is one hundred and ten. Further on his question of recommendation, I think that hon. Member realize that here are recommendations but when the ILO discusses these matters and record it as recommended, it means that the member States may implement those recommendations depending on their economic resources, et cetera. It is a recommendation to the State and in many cases, at these discussions, the developing countries can implement the proposals because of their economic resources, but the undeveloped countries cannot implement the proposals. We do ratify them because we recognize that these are the ideals, these are the goals that even the undeveloped

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countries will like to achieve, but only time and resources at our command will enable us to do so.

I attended the 53rd Conference of the ILO and I delivered an address as leader of the delegation from Guyana. On my return I circulated this address and, to every Member of Parliament, I sent a booklet on what the ILO does and what it stands for. I thought that then the hon. Members would have been in a position to discuss the ILO and put me in a position, when I return to another Conference, to put forward the views of Guyana. But, instead, there was a lot of irrelevance. I listened to the debate as to what is taking place in the other countries. This country is concerned with sending people to train in Canada. But when they return they say that the things which they see in Canada should happen in Guyana. Not taking into consideration the fact that this is a poor country; and they go to the U.S.A and they talk of \$* per day minimum wage, and when they go the U.S.S.R they talk of the 37 hours a week. If one went to the U.S.S.R. twenty or thirty years ago one would have been shocked and ashamed. People had to work a 12 hours day or they were sent to Siberia!

They had to build their economy; now they can talk of 37 hours a week. And I want to say that most of my comrades do not realize that the Soviet Union, even after the revolution in 1917, was a rich country and still remains so with all the resources. They can actually feed the rest of the world. And then to talk of what is happening to socialist countries! Whether socialist or not, one has to have the money to get the economy that we are talking of now. But they are only recommendations so we need not go on on that.

What we do need here is to commend to the ILO our satisfaction on the work that has been done by this organization. I thought that the speakers would have referred to the question of training, the question of manpower planning, vocational rehabilitation, labour relations, co-operatives, education, health, and safety. These are many of the activities of the ILO. We go there and we discuss these matters. From time to time, it is a fact that we vote, at times we do not vote; but we know fully well that if we can ratify or implement any of these, we would be happy to do so.

In my address to the ILO at the 53rd Conference, I said that Guyana was embarking on one of the recommendations of the ILO – you will remember that the implementation to the undertaking of this recommendation was passed in this Parliament. From this we introduce, as question of policy in Guyana, and this came out in the Speech from the Throne, workers participation in industry. This is a marked development for workers generally, and I am happy to note that some of the big concerns are considering placing workers on their Boards of management. Here is where we consider one of the ILO recommendations. This is what I thought should have been said and emphasis laid on the workers' interest. In that very Speech from the Throne, reference was made to the world employment programme which was the theme of the ILO's 53rd Conference. The ILO, as an international body, is in a position to collect information and to disseminate and make an analysis of the situation with respect to labour and working conditions.

4.55 p.m.

At the 53rd Conference, the main concern was the world employment programme. I should like to quote from the Secretary/General's Report and here is where the I.L.O., for the next decade, will be occupied in trying to solve the unemployment situation. I wish to quote from page 21:

“Between 1970 and 1980 it will be necessary to abort the increase of 226 million in the labour force of the developing countries.”

As the labour force will raise by 22 per cent, that is 112 million to 1, 238 million, this would be a challenge to the I.L.O.; this would be a challenge to all developing countries of the world. The I.L.O. believes that this should be its main occupation for the next decade and its activities would be to assist by way of training to enable countries to provide employment and to produce more. It is no wonder that this organization was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. For the millions of workers, for the thousands of leaders who look for a solution to this problem of unemployment, the I.L.O. is hoping to assist in this field.

The Government of Guyana sends congratulations to the I.L.O. on their 50th Anniversary and wishes to thank the organization for the work which has been done over the past fifty years. (Applause.)

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I shall ask the Clerk to read the Resolution.

The Clerk read the Resolution.

Question put and agreed to.

Motion carried.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance.

CONSUMPTION TAX (PETROLEUM) ORDER

“Be it resolved that this National Assembly in terms of section 5 of the Consumption Tax (Petroleum) Order, 1969, which was made on the 6th September, 1969 and published in the Official Gazette on the 13th September, 1969. **(The Minister of Finance)**”

The Minister of Finance (Dr. Reid): Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the Motion standing in my name. It is well-known that this is giving effect to the proposals in the Budget Speech which have already debated in this House.

Today, we are dealing with one product – petroleum – because it was agreed under the Caribbean Free Trade Agreement that from the 1st of May, 1969, we would reduce import duty on all petroleum products, 40 per cent of what it was in May 1968. It is known that most of our petroleum products come from Trinidad and Tobago. The reduction, therefore, would cause a substantial loss of revenue; hence, in this regard, the Consumption Tax is a useful device so that Government will not lose any revenue from petroleum products which are imported from Trinidad or the Caribbean Free Trade Area. Thus this Order is before the House. It has been so arranged that the Order will be retroactive so that there can be no loss whatsoever.

There was one error in connection with lubricating greases which has been incorrectly stated in the Order; 1.8 cent per gallon should be 1.8 cent per pound. Since we have already gone through the lengthy debate on the Consumption Tax, I now move the Motion standing in my name:

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Members the Motion is before the House. Does any hon. Member wish to speak on it? (After a pause.) Well then I shall put the question.

Question put and agreed to.

Motion carried.

CUSTOMS DUTIES (AMENDMENT) (NO.6) ORDER

Dr. Reid: I beg to move the following Motion standing in my name

“Be it resolved that this National Assembly, in terms of section 9 of the Customs Ordinance, Chapter 309, confirm Customs Duties (Amendment) (No. 6) Order, 1969 (No. 38), which was made on the 17th of September, 1969, and published in the Official Gazette on the 20th of September, 1969. (the Minister of Finance)

Mr. Speaker, this in keeping with the policy of the Government and from time to time we bring to the House an Order of this kind, because we believe that if industries are to thrive they must be given encouragement. This is the reason why this Guyanese industry, for the manufacture of brandy and liquors, in keeping with our policy, should have the imported content of this product used in its manufacture give similar concessions. That is all this Motion seeks to do. We need certain ingredients to be imported so that the compound will taste well. Without much ado, I move the Motion standing in my name.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Motion is before the House.

(After a pause)

Question put and agreed to.

Motion carried.

29.10.69

National Assembly

4.55 –5.05 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Trade and Parliamentary Affairs

ADJOURNMENT

Resolved, “That this Assembly do no adjourn to a date to be fixed. (Mr. Bissember).

Adjourned accordingly at 5.05 p.m.
