

THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
OFFICIAL REPORT

[VOLUME 3]

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

12th Sitting

Monday, 25th May, 1964

SENATE

The Honourable Senate met at 9.30 a.m.

Prayers

[The President in the Chair]

Present:

Appointed under Article 47(2)(a):

His Honour the President, Senator Ashton Chase

Senator the Honourable H. J. M. Hubbard, — *Minister of Trade and Industry*

Senator the Honourable C. V. Nunes, — *Minister of Education and Social
Development*

Senator the Honourable Janet Jagan — *Minister of Home Affairs*

Senator M. Khan

Senator C. S. Persaud

Senator Christina Ramjattan

Senator H. Thomas

Appointed under Article 47(2)(b):

Senator Anne Jardim

Appointed under Article 47(2)(c):

Senator A. G. Tasker, O.B.E.

Senator C. V. Too-Chung, Vice-President

Mr. E. V. Viapree Clerk of the Legislature (Ag.)

Mr. F. A. Narain Assistant Clerk of the Legislature (Ag.)

**ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PRESIDENT
DEATH OF
SENATOR TOO-CHUNG'S FATHER**

The President: As Senators are aware, quite recently Senator Too-Chung suffered the loss of his father. I should wish, on behalf of the Senate and myself, to express to Senator Too-Chung our very deep condolences in his recent bereavement.

Senator Too-Chung: I thank you, Mr. President.

**DEATH OF
MR. ALLAN YOUNG**

The President: I should also like to mention the sudden and tragic passing of Mr. Allan Young, a former General Manager of Transport and Harbours Department. Mr. Young, as you are aware, died while on public service for this country in Copenhagen. I am sure that Senators will feel that the loss which the Public Service has suffered is the loss of an outstanding servant to this country, and I feel sure that Senators will wish to send to his widow an expression of our sympathy in her bereavement.

Senator Nunes (Minister of Education and Social Development): Mr. President, I should like to share with you the expressions which you have uttered with regard to John Allan Young who has served us faithfully and well in the field of communications not only as the Permanent Secretary of that Ministry, but as General Manager of Transport and Harbours Department.

Mr. Young was a man of many parts. Although this was so, he displayed excellent service in all of these parts. The appointment to Chairman of the National History and Culture Council fell on his shoulders, and his performance as Chairman was, indeed, creditable. He was a loyal Guianese, and sought to weld the peoples of this country into one nation by the action he took as Chairman of that Council. I should wish, on behalf of the Government, to record our expressions of sympathy to his sorrowing wife and relatives.

Senator Tasker: Mr. President, I should like, to identify myself with the words of the hon. Minister. I, too, should like to pay tribute to a very distinguished public servant from whom we had all hoped to see even greater things in the future. His death is most untimely, and it is a loss which we can ill afford today.

Senator Too-Chung: Mr. President, Mr. Allan Young was a personal friend of mine. We were all shocked to hear of his death, which has come as a great loss to this country. We join in expressing our sympathy to his family.

Senator Jardim: I wish to associate myself with the tribute which has been paid by the hon. Minister, and with the words of sorrow and regret which have come from both sides of this Senate.

DEPARTURE OF GOVERNOR

The President: The following letter was received from the last Governor of British Guiana, His Excellency R. F. A. Grey, and it is dated February 29, 1964:

[THE PRESIDENT]

"Dear Mr. President,

I very much regret that as my official instructions in regard to the assumption of my new duties in the Bahamas and the succession to the Government here were not received until so short a time before the date for my departure, there is no opportunity for me to meet personally with members of the Senate and to take leave of them.

My wife and I will be grateful if we may, through you, proffer to the Senate our thanks for the courtesies we have had from you and from the Chamber over which you preside since the establishment of the Senate in 1961. We shall take away with us memories of much kindness in this country and we shall continue to trust that the Legislature and the country which it serves will move happily forward to a future satisfactory to all.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd.) Ralph F. A. Grey
Governor

His Honour Senator Ashton Chase,
President of the Senate,
BRITISH GUIANA."

The following letter was sent to His Excellency the Governor on the 2nd March, 1964:

"Your Excellency,

I thank you for your letter of the 29th February, 1964. I shall of course con-

vey your message of thanks to the Senate at its next meeting.

I am sure that all Senators would desire me, on their behalf, to wish you success in your new assignment. They will, no doubt, be very sorry that official instructions arrived so late that it was not possible to meet you personally to express their good wishes.

My wife and I take this opportunity to bid Lady Grey and you, Godspeed.

I have the honour to be,
Your Excellency's
obedient servant,
(Sgd.) Ashton Chase,
President of the Senate."

ATTAINMENT OF INDEPENDENCE BY KENYA

The following letter was received from the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Kenya, and it is dated 5th March, 1964:

"The Clerk of the Legislature,
Georgetown,
British Guiana.

Dear Mr. Clerk,-

On behalf of the Members of both houses of our National Assembly, I am writing to thank your Senate and Legislative Assembly for the resolutions of congratulations and good wishes which you have communicated to us.

We have greatly appreciated their kind thoughts, and the trouble which they

have taken to express these thoughts by formal resolution.

In the ordinary course, we should have published such resolutions to our Members by formal Communications from the Chair, but on this occasion we were prevented from doing so by the large numbers of messages of goodwill and the variety of their form. Enclosed is a copy of the Communication which I made to the House of Representatives on Tuesday the 25th February, 1964.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd) Humphrey Slade
Speaker
House of Representatives.

The communication referred to in the letter is as follows:

**"Official Report - 25th February,
1964**

**Communication from the Chair
Independence Congratulations**

Hon. Members, on a happier note I have to inform you that we have received messages of congratulations on the Independence of Kenya in many forms and from many countries throughout the world.

Some of these messages have taken the form of a parliamentary resolution, transmitted to this House, or to our National Assembly as a whole; but it might seem invidious to give them special publicity here, when there have been so many other

written or verbal messages of goodwill to the Prime Minister and other Ministers, and Speakers in person.

It seems best therefore not to read in this House the text of any one of these messages, even though specially addressed to us; but simply to inform hon. Members in general of these many kind and encouraging messages, and to record our gratitude for all of them."

**BILLS FROM THE LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY**

The President: The following letter dated 14th May, has been received from the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly forwarding Bills Nos. 6 and 11, 1964:

14th May, 1964.

Your Honour,

I have the honour to forward for the consideration of the Honourable Senate -

- (a) a Bill intituled "An Ordinance to incorporate The Full Gospel Movement Streams of Power in British Guiana and for purposes connected therewith;
- (b) a Bill intituled "An Ordinance to incorporate The Association of the New Testament Church of God in British Guiana and for purposes connected therewith.

[THE PRESIDENT]

2. These Bills were passed by the Legislative Assembly at its Sitting on the 13th of May, 1964, without Amendment.

I have the honour to be,
Your Honour's obedient servant,
(Sgd.) Rahman B. Gajraj,
Speaker.

His Honour,
The President of the Senate."

These Bills will be taken as having been read the First time, and at a subsequent meeting we will proceed with their Second and Third readings.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS

The following documents were laid on the Table:

(a) Seventy-third Annual Report of the Chamber of Commerce of the City of Georgetown for the year ended 31st December, 1963.

(b) Reports of the Executive Commissioner, Board of Commissioners of Currency, British Caribbean Territories — (Eastern Group) for the years 1961 and 1962.

(c) Report of the Director of Audit on the Accounts of the Government Produce Depot, New Amsterdam, for the year ended 31st December, 1961, together with the comments of the Director of Marketing.

(d) Report of the Director of Audit on the Accounts of the Fish Market and Centre

for the two years ended 31st December, 1961 and 31st December, 1962.

(e) Annual Report and Financial Statements of the East Demerara Water Conservancy Board for the year ended 31st December, 1963.

(f) Report of the Director of Audit on the Accounts of the Milk Pasteurisation Plant for the year ended 31st December, 1961. [The Minister of Trade and Industry.]

(a) Report of the Administrators of the Patoir Trust Fund for the year ended 31st December, 1963.

(b) Triennial Report on Education Division - 1957 - 1960.

(c) Annual Report of the Registrar General for the year 1959. [The Minister of Education and Social Development.]

(a) Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police for the year 1962.

(b) Report on the General Election of Members of the Legislative Assembly, 1961.

(c) Proclamation No. 3 of 1964 issued by His Excellency the Governor on the 22nd day of May, 1964, declaring the existence of a state of public emergency for the purposes of article 14 of the Constitution of British Guiana. [The Minister of Home Affairs.]

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Senator Jagan: I beg to introduce the Georgetown Town Council (Amendment) Bill, 1964.

Bill read the First time.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

MOTIONS

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE SIR MILTON MARGAI

Senator Hubbard: Mr. President, the newly independent State of Sierra Leone recently lost its first Prime Minister, the late Sir Milton Margai, and I wish to move:

"That this Senate expresses its deepest sympathy to the bereaved relatives and the people of Sierra Leone on the recent death of Sir Milton Margai, late Prime Minister of Sierra Leone."

Senator Jardin: In the death of Sir Milton Margai the people of Sierra Leone have lost a man who led them to independence, unifying the people who live in the interior and who live on the coast and who, to a great extent, were culturally divided because of this. They have lost a man who by moderation took his people through the struggle for independence to its achievement without tragedy, without division and without destruction of hope for the future.

In associating myself with this Motion of sympathy I would wish that the introducer would take account of the history of Sierra Leone which was written in great part by the late Sir Milton Margai.

The President: I take it that the Mover does not wish to reply.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion carried.

INCREASE IN TONNAGE AND LIGHT DUES

"Be it Resolved that the Legislature, in terms of section 24(2) of the Transport and Harbours Ordinance, Chapter 261, approves of the increases in the tonnage and light dues specified in the third schedule to the Ordinance as follows:-

I. TONNAGE DUES -

(1) On a sailing vessel -

(a) under 100 tons net register on every ton of the net register tonnage - \$0 07½.

Provided that tonnage dues shall not be levied on any one such sailing vessel more than 4 times in any one year.

(b) between 100 tons and 500 tons both inclusive net register, on every ton of the net register tonnage - \$0 37½.

(c) over 500 tons net register, on every ton of the net register tonnage of the vessel or of the cargo landed or taken on board, as the case may be - \$0 45.

(2) On a steam vessel, on every ton of the net register tonnage of the vessel or of the cargo landed or taken on board, as the case may be - \$0 45.;

II. LIGHT DUES

(1) On every coasting vessel of 10 tons burthen and upwards which enters the port of New Amsterdam from the sea, for every ton of the net register tonnage - \$0 03.

(2) On every vessel (other than a coasting vessel or a vessel under 10 tons burthen) which enters any port of the Colony from the sea, for every ton of the register tonnage - \$0 07½. [Senator Hubbard.]

Senator Hubbard: Your Honour, in his speech in introducing the Budget for 1963 the hon. Minister of Finance intimated that Light and Tonnage dues for the Port of Georgetown would be increased. By some administrative mischance action was delayed on this matter and it is only now before the Legislature. I move Motion No. 2 standing in my name to give effect to the proposal put forward by the Minister of Finance some time ago.

Senator Tasker: I think the hon. Minister is a little inaccurate in the way in which he has introduced this Motion. The Minister of Finance referred in his Budget Speech to increased Harbour dues, not specifically tonnage and light dues. As I remember it, his intention was to obtain \$100,000 per annum in additional revenue from an increase in harbour dues. The dues were never specified and, as the hon. Minister says, they have not yet been implemented.

I understand that the Ministry of Communications is in fact considering substantial increases in the scale of fees for pilotage which, of course, also comes under the heading of harbour dues. In September last year the Ministry, in reply to an inquiry from the Shipping Association regarding its proposals over harbour dues referred to the proposed new scale of fees for pilotage and added that, because of the present financial situation, it was also proposed to levy a temporary surcharge of 50 per cent of light and tonnage dues as early as possible.

The dues proposed in the hon. Minister's Motion are broadly of the order of a 50 per cent increase. I assume, therefore, that this Motion is implementing the Ministry's intention to levy a temporary surcharge of 50 per cent on light and tonnage dues.

I make this point because the Shipping Association has, I know, made representations to the Ministry regarding the whole issue of harbour dues - not merely tonnage and light dues, but the whole question of increased revenue from the harbour dues - and has pointed out the possible effects of these proposed increases, including the pilotage fees, on one export trade, with particular reference to timber, the transport and handling costs of which are already marginally high.

These views have been put to the Ministry and it is, I think, unfortunate that as far as I am aware, apart from a formal acknowledgement, no discussions have been held with the Association since that letter was sent in

October last year. We now have this Motion increasing the tonnage and light dues by approximately 50 per cent in each case. I would ask the hon. Minister to tell us whether these proposals are designed as a temporary surcharge of some 50 per cent on these dues, or whether they are designed to provide additional finance for improved facilities in the Georgetown Harbour. If the Minister would give us some more information on that I think it would help to reassure the Association and others whose lives are bound up with Shipping in the Port of Georgetown.

Senator Hubbard (replying): I am grateful to Senator Tasker for the information which he has placed before us this morning. I have no information that the proposal now before this Senate is of a temporary nature but in view of what he has said and what he claims to be the assurances given by the Ministry of Communications I shall communicate what he has said to the responsible Minister and see that the discussions which have been held with the Shipping Association are resumed and that any doubts and uncertainties are cleared up.

*Question put, and agreed to
Motion carried.*

**BILL - SECOND READING
DAVSON CENTENARY FUND
(AMENDMENT) BILL**

A Bill intituled "An Ordinance to amend the Davson Centenary Fund Ordinance."

Senator Nunes: Mr. President, Regulation 11 of the Davson Centenary Fund Regulations requires the Committee to certify

to the Governor before the end of December in every third year, certain particulars in connection with any award which has been made under the Ordinance.

With respect to the award for 1962, so far as the time factor is concerned, it has not been practicable to comply with the provisions of the Ordinance and this Bill, the Davson Centenary Fund (Amendment) Bill, 1964, seeks to amend the Ordinance to enable the Governor to extend the time prescribed for the doing of anything by the Ordinance or any regulations made thereunder, whether the time prescribed therefor has elapsed or not. I therefore have great pleasure in moving that the Bill be read a Second time.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a Second time.

Senate in Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Senate resumed.

Bill reported without amendment, read the Third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

Senator Hubbard: Your Honour, I beg to move the adjournment of this House but I take this opportunity to remark for the benefit of Senator Jardim, that people of sensibility do not use the occasion of mourning for political propaganda.

I beg to move that this Senate do now adjourn until Monday, 1st June, 1964, at 9.30 a.m.

*Adjourned accordingly at
10.05 a.m.*

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