

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.

16 Sitting

Thursday, 9th January, 1964.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair.]

Present:

His Honour the Deputy Speaker, Mr. W. O.R. Kendall.

Members of the Government

People's Progressive Party

Ministers

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Dr. the Honourable C. B. Jagan | —Premier and Minister of Development and Planning (Member for Corentyne — East) |
| The Honourable B. H. Benn | —Minister of Agriculture, Forests and Lands (Member for Demerara Coast — West) |
| The Honourable Ram Karran | —Minister of Works and Hydraulics (Member for Mahaica) |
| The Honourable R. Chandisingh | —Minister of Labour, Health and Housing (Member for Lower Demerara River) |
| Dr. the Honourable Charles Jacob, Jr. | —Minister of Finance (Member for Vreed-en-Hoop) |
| Dr. the Honourable F. H. W. Ramsahoye | —Attorney-General (Member for Canals-Polder) |
| The Honourable E. M. G. Wilson | —Minister of Communications (Member for Boerasirie) |

Parliamentary Secretaries

Mr. G. Bowman

—Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Home Affairs (Member for Corentyne Central)

Mr. L. E. Mann

—Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Education and Social Development (Member for Mahãcony)

Mr. S. M. Saffee

—Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forests and Lands (Member for Berbice West)

Other Members

Mr. G. L. Robertson

—(Member for Leonora)

Mr. J. B. Caldeira

—(Member for Pomeroon)

Mr. V. Downer

—(Member for Berbice — East)

Mr. M. Hamid

—(Member for Demerara — Central)

Mr. D. C. Jagan

—(Member for Suddãe)

Mr. H. Lal

—(Member for Corentyne — West)

Mr. M. Shakoor

—(Member for Corentyne River)

Members Constituting the Minority

(i) *People's National Congress*

Mr. L. F. S. Burnham, Q.C.

—(Member for Ruimveldt)

Mr. J. Carter, Q.C.,

—(Member for Werk-en-Rust)

Mr. E. F. Correia

—(Member for Mazaruni-Potaro)

Mr. N. J. Bissember

—(Member for Campbellville)

Mr. W. A. Blair

—(Member for Berbice River)

Mr. R. S. S. Hugh

—(Member for Georgetown — South)

Mr. J. G. Joaquin

—(Member for Kitty)

Mr. R. J. Jordan

—(Member for Upper Demerara River)

Mr. C. A. Merriman

—(Member for La Penitence — Lodge)

Mr. H. M. S. Wharton

—(Member for Abary)

(ii) *United Force*

Mr. P. d'Aguiar

—(Member for Georgetown — Central)

Mr. R. E. Cheeks

—(Member for Georgetown — North)

Mr. I. Crum Ewing

— Clerk of the Legislature (Ag.).

Mr. F. A. Narain

— Assistant Clerk of the Legislature (Ag.).

Absent:

His Honour the Speaker, Mr. R. B. Gajraj — on leave

Mr. M. Bhagwan (Member for Essequibo Islands)

Mr. W. O. R. Kendall, Deputy Speaker (Member for New Amsterdam)

Mr. S. Campbell (Member for North West) — on leave

Mr. E. E. Melville (Member for Rupununi) — on leave

Mr. B. S. Rai (Member for Demerara Coast — East).

2.10 p.m.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

APPROPRIATION BILL

BUDGET DEBATE

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Members, the Assembly will now resume the debate on the Motion for the Second Reading of the Bill intituled:

"An Ordinance to appropriate the supplies granted in the current session of the Legislature."

When we adjourned yesterday the hon. Member for Georgetown South was on the Floor.

Mr. Hugh (Georgetown-South): At the adjournment last evening I was dealing with paragraph 2 on page 34 of the Budget Speech, in which the Minister said that he had tried to analyze the causes of unemployment and poverty in Guiana and had indicated what already had been done and what the Party in power intended to do. I read the part where he spoke of removing inequalities. I detailed what had already been done. I said the Party had created distrust in the minds of would-be investors at home and had exported that commodity overseas; that it had created conditions which brought about unrest in the country; that it had created unemployment in the Public Works Department and elsewhere in order to say that it was solvent; that it had spent its two years in office campaigning in every

way for the next elections; and that it had abused everybody who did not give it large sums of money willy-nilly and who did not agree with what the Party said and did.

If time permits at a later stage I will take the opportunity to congratulate them for "cogging" a few of the items on the programme of the People's National Congress, namely, the creation of an Industrial Development Corporation, the establishment of an industrial estate, the University of Guyana and the Economic Planning Unit. We have already in this House congratulated them on each occasion for their ability to "cog", but not execute, programmes of the People's National Congress, the Party to which I belong.

Having seen what the Party in power has done, we must proceed now to see what it proposes to do as set out by the Minister of Finance. According to the Budget Speech, it proposes to increase old age pensions and public assistance; it proposes to remove the 2 per cent turnover tax and it proposes to work out some sort of scheme to allow interest paid on loans used for building houses, either for rent or owner-occupied, to be deducted from income; and it proposes to buy the Georgetown Golf Course. I am yet to find any other proposal, and it would be very interesting if some Member of the Government would let this House know of some other new proposal.

[MR. HUGH]

We will be told, no doubt, about the Tapakuma Scheme, the Black Bush Scheme, the Bartica-Potaro Road, that is, the Ministers will tell us about the continuation of programmes that have already been started during their regime though they will not admit that these programmes were planned by regimes prior to theirs. It would be interesting for us to ask ourselves what could be the reason for the People's Progressive Party not being able to do anything more within the coming year, why it can do nothing new and why it has done nothing good during its seven successive years in Government.

2.20 p.m.

We have the answer, of course. The Minister says here - and I quote, sir, from the same paragraph on page 34:

"It was possible to do very little about the rising burden of debt charges and about foreign trade and aid because of constitutional restrictions. The essential precondition for further changes which would accelerate development and provide more jobs is political independence."

We concede that political independence allows the people of a country, a people's Government, a great deal more scope than a colonial Government would. But, sir, the People's Progressive Party has always tried to make it appear that when political Independence comes, it will be

"pronto prosperity, pronto we will do all we can with programmes." [Interruption.] I said it appears. [Mr. Benn: "We talk about neo-colonialism."] Are you talking? I thought it was Jacob. I was saying, sir, that all the blame for the Government's inability to do anything worthwhile in this country, is placed at the door-step of the lack of political independence and constitutional restrictions.

Be that as it may, I shall not deal very heavily with that because I am quite sure my colleagues, on this side of the House, will treat that subject very liberally. But I do want to point out that despite the fact that the Minister says here, on page 34, that the Government has not been able to do anything because of rising debt charges, it has not been able to do anything about foreign trade and aid because of constitutional restrictions, one finds, on page 13 of his Speech, an acknowledgement of the theories which he has propounded, copied from books. I quote, sir, from page 13 of his Speech, paragraph 3, beginning with the second sentence:

"Another factor that will retard the development of this region and of all other poor countries is the continued unstable prices received for raw materials and the dependence on one or two basic export commodities. No amount of foreign aid and domestic capital will be enough to bridge the gap between the rich and poor countries un-

less world trade is liberalized and prices stabilized."

This is an economic theory which is accepted. The Minister does not say that constitutional restriction prevents these things, or does political independence. No, it is none of that. He gives here a straight economic theory, which I agree with, but he finds excuses later on for non-development and non-production, and blames lack of political independence and constitutional restrictions for these things.

In the following paragraph, the fourth paragraph on that same page, the Finance Minister speaks about what the Prime Minister of Peru said at the U.N. General Assembly, and he says that he says these things "to show that neither self-help, nor foreign aid, nor stable export prices, alone, will reduce world hunger and poverty." These are theories again. The Minister continues: "Only a combination of all three factors will contribute to balanced economic growth, better living standards, and social justice for the peoples of countries like ours." Incidentally, the Prime Minister of Peru did not speak of a Utopia through political independence. The Finance Minister says he is still punishing, dominated by capitalists.

Now, sir, having accepted this theory, one wonders why, in the face of accepting such a theory, acknowledging it, the Government has not attempted to

use its Planning Unit - if it has one really - or, since it is the "know-all" of everything, tried to examine our existing industries, particularly the three which it has made capital about in this Budget Speech, and on which it so much depends to raise its 1964 revenue.

Examine the position in the bauxite industry in the world! Examine British Guiana's contribution to the industry - its share, the part it plays, its percentage. The Minister knows the percentage of employment and the percentage of gross domestic product of the industries. Sugar: What is the future of sugar? What does sugar mean to us? Can it do anything more? What does the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement mean? Rice: Let us examine the position of the world's production of rice and see if we are not faced with a situation where we in B.G. find ourselves perpetuating a colonial capitalism, depending upon only two industries: bauxite and sugar. The Government should have indicated that it will exert its energies in finding new avenues, new schemes, and initiating new development programmes. Of course, in talking about its rising debt charges, the hon. Minister admits he has the Sinking Fund invested in "capitalist" London, but he wants the insurance companies here to invest 100% of their profits in British Guiana.

Now, sir, instead of the People's Progressive Party Government - primarily some of its Min-

[MR. HUGH]

isters, I can think of two at the moment — sitting by and crying out like some frustrated old maids, about political independence, neurotics in the Opposition, constitutional restrictions and Mr. Sandys — whom I believe because he should know, I do not — instead of politicking all over the place, the People's Progressive Party should recognize this fact: that if it has a Planning Unit, as someone said just now, it is not using its Planning Unit. The Government is not using its Planning Unit because the party itself either knows more than the Planning Unit, or the persons who constitute the Planning Unit are made to serve some other purpose, or the Planning Unit is not complete. The Planning Unit has not got enough personnel to do the necessary investigations, not only within the context of Guiana, but within the context of world commodities and trade.

2.30 p.m.

The P.P.P. must admit and come face to face with the fact that it has no clear industrial programme; it has no agricultural policy; it has injured its own foreign relations and, consequently, it can possess no trade policy. I have said that time and again on my feet in this House and elsewhere. To put it in a Biblical fashion: Where there is no vision, the people perish. The P.P.P. will never possess vision because it believes it knows everything. I wonder if it knows about the creation of God?

Throughout this Budget Speech there has been an extravagant and elaborate handling of bauxite, sugar and, in fact, an attempted political football of rice in a very subtle way. I was saying earlier that if the P.P.P. had a Planning Unit, it would have examined the future of British Guiana with respect to the further development of our two main industries, bauxite and sugar, and it would have revealed some startling revelations so that people would have put their shoulders to the wheel to plan for the future. Of course the Government expects to do everything only with political independence.

I have in my hand a book issued by the Bureau of Mines. It is the *Bureau of Mines Minerals Year Book*, 1962, and it deals with bauxite. Although the P.P.P. Government is very happy over the proposed increased production of bauxite and the increased revenue therefrom, if one goes through this book very carefully one will see that the future of British Guiana's bauxite is not so rosy that the Government can plan as heavily on it as it has done in the past. After reading this book, one can see the true position of British Guiana in the Bauxite World. One will find that Jamaica takes first position, Russia second position, Surinam third position, and British Guiana fourth position. It is interesting to know that this book was printed by the capitalists in America. On page 4 the book states:

"Domestic consumption of bauxite increased 23 per cent. Of the total consumed, 85 percent came from foreign sources. Jamaican-type ore (from Jamaica, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic) provided 56 percent of the total consumption; Surinam-type ore (from Surinam and British Guiana) supplied 29 percent."

With this position before us; with all the difficulties involved in the cost of production; bad harbour facilities; the necessity to transport the ore several times and dump it in Trinidad, and the fact that large ships cannot come here for the ore are having a serious effect on the industry. However, the Government still places so much emphasis on this industry for the future.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Time

Mr. Blair (Berbice River): I beg to move that the hon. Member be granted 15 minutes to continue his speech.

Mr. Jordan (Upper Demerara River) seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. Hugh: I thank you, sir. It will be interesting to hear what this book says about stockpiling. On page 7 it states:

"Bauxite stocks in the United States on December, 31, 1962, had decreased 205,000 long dry tons from year end 1961. On a dry basis, consumers inventories

of crude and processed plants decreased 14 percent. No withdrawals were made from the Government strategic or nonstrategic stockpile. Jamaican, Surinam, and refractory grades of bauxite remained on the Group I list of strategic materials for the national stockpile.

During the year, 1,063,444 long dry tons of Jamaican-type ore and 770,309 tons of Surinam-type ore were acquired by barter, bringing the total Government inventories to 7,558,000 tons of Jamaican-type ore and 7,755,000 tons of Surinam-type ore. Details of the quantities and various types of bauxite stored in the three Government inventory accounts are shown in tables 8 and 9."

This means that a year ago bauxite found itself in a precarious position; stockpiling had to decrease, and yet the Government is so happy today because it believes that there will be an increase in the production of bauxite.

On the question of Foreign Trade, this is what is mentioned at page 9 of the book:

"Imports of bauxite, including ores acquired by the U.S. Government, were 10.6 million long tons on a dry weight basis, 15 percent above that of 1961. Imports from Jamaica, the principal source in recent years, was

2. HUGH] the highest quantity in history, up 22 percent over 1961 and amounted to 57 percent of the total. Imports from Surinam decreased 2 percent and amounted to 27 percent of the total. The remainder came mostly from the Dominican Republic, British Guiana, and Haiti."

What is the remainder? Just 16% from the three territories.

We join with the P.P.P. Government at times in matters of trade agreements, because we know that tariffs can be inimical and dishonest. This is what the book has to say on page 9 on the question of tariff:

"The duties on crude bauxite, calcined bauxite, and alumina imported for making aluminum were suspended in 1962 until July, 16, 1964."

So that in plain and simple language, if the U.S.A. were to impose a tariff on British Guiana's bauxite, we would experience difficulty in finding markets for it. We may find that what we hope to achieve in the 1964 Budget is but a dream.

2.40 p.m.

For the benefit of the Government, which does not seem to understand anything about the bauxite industry, I may say that this book gives the world markets for B.G. bauxite - Canada, France, West Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the

United States. That is our position with respect to the bauxite market and yet this Government lays such great hopes of greater production and higher income from bauxite in 1964.

So much for bauxite. I should like now to deal with "king" sugar, with which the P.P.P. at one time makes love and at another time attempts to abuse. What is the position with regard to sugar? The Budget Speech states that it depends upon higher prices, but when the Minister of Finance says that he depends upon higher prices for sugar I am not so sure that the people in the sugar industry recognize that the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement limits our exports, and consequently we cannot earn one penny more except on higher prices, but for how long? We hear that Cuba hopes to regain her position in the sugar market, a possibility which should influence any good Government to use its planning Unit to seek the necessary aid, at least technical advice, and use some imagination in trying to find other means of developing this wonderful country of ours, British Guiana. But after seven years in the Government the P.P.P. can find nothing else to develop this country other than sugar, bauxite and rice.

The world's best economists agree, and we of the Opposition appreciate, that rice, like every agricultural product, must be highly subsidized as are transport services. I want to tell members of the P.P.P., who have indulged in the cheap propoganda of suggest-

ing that if the P.N.C. or the United Force should come into power they would kill the rice industry, that no party in power would dare to neglect the rice industry, if only for the simple reason that it provides a livelihood for about 40,000 people. But when I talk about subsidizing agriculture I am aware of some wicked forms of subsidization by the P.P.P. for party reasons, and I give notice that I shall ask a lot of Questions concerning the Garden of Eden Scheme. I am not blaming the P.P.P. Government for subsidizing rice alone, but I know that several persons at Garden of Eden have not paid one cent since they obtained their allotments in 1961. If this is disputed I would refer the House to the Details of Estimates of Revenue, 1963, on page VI. of the Estimates. As far as I can see, there were only two land settlements from which the Government collected the amounts of rent expected in 1963. Charity-Amazon and Vergenoegen. In the case of Black Bush, Government collected 28.3 percent, that is \$112,000 less than the amount of rent expected; at Cane Grove-La Bonne Mere it was \$21,000, or 50.25 percent short, and at Garden of Eden only \$3,000, or 50 percent of the estimated \$6,000 was collected. I know that one person at Garden of Eden has paid nothing since his occupation, and he owns two thriving stalls in the Bourda Market.

That is the sort of political subsidies which the P.N.C. or any other good party would not encourage. There must be subsidi-

dization of agriculture; it is done all over the world. But this playing up of the part which rice plays in the country is mere political football for the next General Election, and is intended to create in the minds of rice farmers the idea that the P.P.P. is the only party interested in the rice industry and, if kept in power, would continue to serve and help the rice farmers. That is the subtle insinuation.

2.50 p.m.

Despite the ostentatious interest in rice what has the P.P.P.-dominated Rice Marketing Board done? In August last, the Board invited tenders for rice bags and the P.P.P.-dominated Rice Marketing Board, on which was sitting an officer from the Ministry of Trade and Industry, accepted a tender from Sandbach Parker and Co. Ltd, at 3/- per hundred bags higher than it could have bought them. This is interesting because there is talk about exploitation and bribery. The P.P.P.-dominated Rice Marketing Board, with its great interest in rice and its charges against everybody else of exploitation and bribery, does not think there is exploitation and bribery in this particular transaction with Sandbach Parker and Co. Ltd., the sugar gods, when it buys rice bags for farmers at 3/- per hundred bags higher than they could be obtained elsewhere.

[Mr. Benn: "Quality."]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Time!

Mr. Correia (Mazaruni-Potaro): I beg to move that the hon. Mem-

[MR. CORREIA]

ber he allowed another 15 minutes to continue his contribution to the Budget debate.

Mr. Blair seconded.

Question put and agreed to

Mr. Hugh: Anyone who tells me that there is a difference in quality of those jute bag is ignorant of the jute bag business and the jute industry because the source from which Sandbach Parker draws jute bags; in Calcutta, is the same source from which any other importer would have obtained his. Therefore the only difference is the question of brokerage and payment to the middle-man. The People's Progressive Party deplores the exploitation of rice farmers. I do not know what excuse the Party will have to hand out about this transaction. If this has happened with a single item like bags, what has happened with all the machinery which has been sold to farmers by the big merchants in Water Street through the P.P.P. - dominated organizations connected with rice? I shudder to think of it. What could happen with some of the other items where the competition is not so keen as in the jute bag trade? [Interruption.] Indeed I am personally interested because I was the person who quoted 3/- per hundred bags less. It does not matter because I am a businessman and a politician, but the fact remains that the people at the Rice Marketing Board say that everybody else is stealing from the Board and they are the only honest "Jesus Christs".

The inefficiency with which the Governing Party has handled the affairs of this country during the last seven years can hardly be mentioned too often, but the Party finds excuses and plays up to the farmers. I quote from the third paragraph on page 16:

"Farming, other than cane and rice (that is, cattle, pig, poultry, ground provision, coffee, citrus, etc.), employs large numbers of people at subsistence level all over the country, but this large sector earns only about 3.5 per cent of the national income."

They complain about the cattle industry; they talk about their desire to help agriculture and yet in the Estimates they have reduced the vote on inland fisheries and have put the money so saved on maritime fishery in order to see that the fishing regulations are carried out. They have done this and at the same time are telling the farmers, "You see you are only getting so much; you are unfortunate people; everybody is neglecting you."

I say categorically that the Agriculture Department is either understaffed or most of its staff are unaware of what they are doing, because this Government, like previous Governments, believes that a veterinary surgeon is all-wise when it comes to animals. I have told the Minister, and he would agree with me, that there are specialists in various fields. A biologist is not a "vet", neither is a dietician, a

pathologist or a husbandryman, but because some people went abroad and qualified as "vets" they are given posts in the Agriculture Department as "know-alls".

There is no programme for the cattle industry. The Government has none. I see there is a pig industry in the prisons. [*Inter-ruption.*] It is all well and good for this governing party, or for any governing party, to talk about experiments, but the argument is: Why waste your time experimenting to find something which others have found years ago and from which they are benefiting? Why waste your time to find a species that can give you returns in five to nine months' time when such a species has already been found elsewhere? It seems that the whole accent in our pig industry lies on the pig industry in the prisons. What help is the Government giving to the pig industry compared with the help it is giving elsewhere? What does the Government know about the pig industry? The Government will say that its Agricultural Officers are qualified in husbandry but the one who is qualified in husbandry is used elsewhere.

As for the poultry industry, this is at subsistence level says the Minister. The Minister has confessed to me the only good customers of the Credit Corporation are those who produce the broilers and those who produce baby chicks. These persons pay back their loans faster than anyone else. I intend to move a

Motion on the poultry industry. A partnership in the poultry industry which started a few years ago has broken up and there was a sum of about \$100,000 to be divided. The racket that goes on in this industry is this: low grade chicks are being produced and sold and this Government does nothing about it; diseased birds are being sold and the Government does nothing. The Agriculture Department says everything is all right. During the strike I asked the Minister for permission to get one of the members of his party to bring in some chicks from Barbados. His reply to me was that he would consult his advisers. The advisers said that chicks could not be brought from Barbados because of a law which prevents chicks from coming in from the West Indies although they can come from Holland and U.S.A. and that the problem is that Barbados does not require vaccination of flocks, and therefore there is a danger to the community if the chicks are imported here.

3 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, the poultry industry needs help. The Agriculture Department in the poultry section is being run by a Broiler Association, I do not know if it is even a registered Association. This is a known fact. And yet the governing party comes out here and tries to get poultry men's votes! The Government thinks of the poultry industry as it would think of people who have two or three fowls, people who cannot make a living out of poultry.

[MR. HUGH]

Ground provision: The least said about that, the better. Coffee: Now, sir, while the Government tries to play up to the coffee growers, does it know that there has been an agreement, a coffee agreement, of 1961 which goes right up to 1965? How does the Government intend to fit in its coffee production if this is a partly international agreement? The Government is not a Member of this Coffee Council and it hopes to fit it in. This is the ignorance and stupidity which we have to face in this country, and which we have to suffer with the P.P.P. Government.

Mr. Speaker, one honestly feels sick when one hears this sort of thing and reads this sort of cheap propaganda. The party in Government pats itself while howling that the Opposition, the people, and the critics of Government expect it to take over every non-profitable enterprise and leave the profitable enterprises to private ventures. The Electricity Corporation: is it a profitable thing? The Telephone Exchange: is it a non-profitable thing? Mr. Speaker, may I point out that it was on a Motion by the leader of the People's National Congress, in this House, calling upon Government to buy out the Demerara Electric Company, that any attempt, any move was made to purchase that Company.

Sir, these lamentations and subtle overweening from the P.P.P. continue on page 17 of

the Budget Speech. It says - and I quote the second paragraph:

"Another reason for the poverty of the people is that import and export trading is largely the monopoly of "expatriate" firms (so described because, in spite of local corporation, they are effectively owned and controlled by non-residents). Trade in agricultural machinery and parts, trucks; fertilizers, gasoline and other petroleum products which bulk large in our imports, yield enormous profits.

In addition to this, credit terms are not easy, ranging from two to three years and from 8 to 12 per cent interest per annum (and even higher by finance houses like Olds Discount Company). It is interesting to note here that the Soviets were prepared to sell tractors, bulldozers and draglines at lower prices, with five years to pay, and at 2.5 per cent interest."

Mr. Speaker, we of the P.N.C. agree that in British Guiana we should have the right to enter into fair trading relations which will bring mutual benefits. We of the P.N.C. feel that there must be liberalization of trade, and we will support the P.P.P. on this, but we say there must be a bilateral trade benefit to be had

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Time!

Mr. Bissember (Campbellville): I beg to move that the hon. Mem-

ber be allowed a further 15 minutes to continue his speech.

Mr. Blair seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

Mr. Hugh: When the Minister says, in his Speech here, that the expatriate firms are so described because they are effectively owned and controlled by non-residents, my mind goes to GIMPEX. Who owns GIMPEX? I have known the so-called registered owner personally for years, and at no time in the history of his life - and I know he has not stolen - could he have raised enough money to run a corporation like GIMPEX. Who owns GIMPEX? Is it owned by expatriates elsewhere and registered under the name of Kassim? If this Government had listened to me since the first time I spoke in this House - and I now see why it has not - it would have revised the Companies Ordinance and trading laws ever since and today Mr. Kassim would have been put before the court. If these laws were revised in line with the laws of other progressive countries, and also capitalist countries, Mr. Kassim would be put before the court today to answer a lot of questions about his trading transactions. No wonder the People's Progressive Party will do nothing about it because it believed that, at the time I was talking about revision of the Trade Ordinance and certain laws, I was attacking a certain individual.

The Speech bemoans the fact that the Government could have

brought tractors and bulldozers from Russia. It decries the huge profit made in agricultural machinery, fertilizers and so on. One would gather, from this Speech, that this Government could not have imported these things. This does seem contrary to what Government has already done in respect to the commodities it has purchased from Cuba. I have no quarrel with the Government for importing from Cuba. It cannot fool anybody that it has imported from Cuba at better prices than elsewhere, but it is nonsensical to say - and this is intended to blind the eyes of its supporters, P.P.P. supporters - "The Government would have brought cheaper machinery, but, you know, it could not do so."

How could the Government bring in cement, flour, saltfish and salt, and it cannot bring in bulldozers? The fact is that the P.P.P. Government is itself sceptical of the Russian bulldozers, so it says: "Send us some samples." This is prudence, this is business sense. Why should the Government then say in the Budget Speech that it could not have imported these bulldozers because we are not independent and we have constitutional restrictions upon us? This is to fool P.P.P. supporters, nobody else. This hoodwinking must stop.

3.10 p.m.

In the Budget Speech mention is made of "fictitious pricing of imports and exports". I agree

[MR. HUGH]

with the Government that that is not in the interest of the country; it does harm to the general public, and it benefits only those who forge the figures. But are we to be satisfied that the invoices produced and procured by GIMPEX are true and honest? What evidence has the Government to prove that people have been putting fictitious prices on their invoices in relation to imports and exports? If the Government has evidence, then it condones this offence because it has not brought a prosecution against any one.

This Government has no trade policy, because it has no agricultural policy, no development programme, and it has spoilt its foreign relations. I said earlier that, if time permits, I should like to congratulate the Government for "cogging" from the People's National Congress' code. Before I do that, I should like to ask the hon. Minister to explain why, despite the claims of praises made in his Budget Speech and those made by the members of the Governing Party in and out of this House, the Budget Speech has been void of any mention of the manganese industry, timber and forest industries, and gold and diamond industries? Are they non-existent? Don't they contribute to the revenue of this country? This is therefore an incomplete Budget Statement, and it should not be accepted. If it were not for the fact that I may be looked upon as being rude to Your Honour, I would tear it up in bits because it has insufficient details. [Laughter.]

New Zealand is making a lot of money exporting race horses; Cuba once thrived on tourism, and even Latin America, now under the thumb of the capitalists, is thriving on tourism. The West Indian Islands are also thriving on tourism, but what is our tourist programme for this country? Is this Government ashamed to advertise British Guiana to people abroad? Is it afraid to invite visitors to come here? Very soon the general public will not have an airport. Our airport is the worst in the world. [Interruption.] If any hon. Member of the Government can tell me that he has seen more bush on any other airport in the world than he has seen on our airport, he can have my month's salary! The Government deals with Pan-Am and other Airways; it wants to collect landing-fees, but it will not develop its airport. Is the Government afraid to make a change in its policy? In other parts of the world every passenger pays an airport-service fee to leave the country. Why not do the same in B.G?

So far as the shed at Atkinson Field is concerned, the sheets overlap about half an inch, and when it rains people cannot be properly accommodated under it. Very often passengers have to walk to and from the planes through rain. Under these conditions, can the Government encourage tourists to come here?

In conclusion, lest the P.P.P. fanatics and the newly found "political fighters" get away with the idea that the

P.N.C. did not promise the electorate a Guyana University, an Industrial Development Corporation, and a Planning Unit, etc., with Your Honour's permission, I wish to read certain extracts from the P.N.C.'s programme. I quote:

"The People's National Congress' programme will be phased in two stages:-

- First, light industry, which will include agricultural processing; and

Secondly, heavy industry based upon the exploitation of our admittedly great hydro-electric potential.

The People's National Congress will take the following further steps to ensure immediately accelerated industrialisation in Guiana;

Collect, collate, publicise and act upon the findings embodied in all surveys of the industrial possibilities of Guiana.

We did not say that we knew everything. We said that we would:

"Institute such additional surveys as are necessary, using local and foreign experts chosen for their competence, honesty, experience, and sensitivity to the na-

tional democratic, economic ambitions of Guiana."

We were not setting up anything like the Rice Marketing Board.

"Set up an Economic Planning Unit, staffed with economists, statisticians, and other experts who are necessary for the collection and analysis of facts and determination of action to be taken."

Let the members of the P.P.P. say where they had this in their Manifesto.

"Set up a subsidiary unit of sociologists and anthropologists to work along with those responsible for agricultural, industrial and other development, and advise on how to change social attitudes to such an industrialising climate, and how to deal with the social consequences of accelerated economic development under the PEOPLE'S NATIONAL CONGRESS

Not people like Jack Ali, etc.

"Set up an Industrial Development Corporation managed by men of proved enterprise and experience, able to secure the rationalisation of existing industries, the development of new industries, undertake research, training and teaching at all levels of our industrial life.

[MR. HUGH]

Set up the following:

A Guiana Industrial Bank for short-term and long-term lending."

Mr Deputy Speaker: Time!

3.20 p.m.

Mr. Bissember: I move that the hon. Member be allowed a further 15 minutes to continue his speech.

Mr. Blair seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. Hugh: I continue to quote from the P.N.C. manifesto:

"A Guiana Finance Corporation to finance the various projects.

A Guiana Central Bank to co-ordinate banking policy and control local and foreign currency.

Make a survey of the man-power resources of the country and set up a Man-power Unit.

Take advantage of the faculties of Business Administration, Economics and Technology at our University College to train an expanded industrial cadre for the more effective management of our business at all levels and to staff the industries needing more skilled personnel.

Allocate an area for an Industrial Estate, where a

variety of industries dependent on one another's services and products can congregate and secure economies

Set up a small Business Administration Unit, managed and operated by small businessmen under statutory powers and with aid from the People's National Congress Government, able to deal with the special problems of the innumerable very small businesses throughout Guiana.

Set up a Standards Bureau to examine and ensure the standards of our products at all stages so as to protect the position of Guiana's products at home and abroad.

Encourage participation in exhibitions abroad.

Demand that an increasing percentage of management in all foreign firms and undertakings shall be Guianese. If such are not immediately available, the People's National Congress Government will ensure that they become so in the shortest possible time."

The P.P.P. laughed at our proposals, and asked where was the money to come from?

In all I have said one thing has clearly been established - that the P.P.P. must stop hoodwinking and fooling its supporters, and must learn that when it is presenting a Budget Speech in which it talks about a Deve-

lopment Programme, it must make a bold assessment of all Guiana's industries including bauxite, sugar, gold and diamonds, and let us know exactly what it intends to do with the agricultural potentialities of the country. Fortunately, this may be the last Budget Speech the present Minister of Finance will present to the House, because I cannot see any decent Government keeping a Minister of Finance who leaks out Budget secrets to his comrades about the withdrawal of the 2 per cent turn-over tax.

Finally, I hope the P.P.P. will recognize that it has made enough mess of this country, and stop all the hullabaloo about "Hucks, Go Back" for political reasons, and "Grey Must Go", and "Sandys lied". It must take a more realistic view of the country's problems and seek help from those who can give it help from the Opposition Benches.

Mr. Robertson (Leonora): The pattern which has always been followed by members of the Opposition has not changed. It continues along the same old line - the same ranting and raving as usual, the same old long-playing record, the same venom and poison pouring from their lips. I thought they might have changed for this new year, but they have not done so. Why do they not try to contribute to the welfare of the community, instead of trying to break up its economy? It could be done easily, just by telling their followers the truth. If they only did that they would assist in improving

the living standards in this country. They should not continue to play on the sentiments of their followers. They should tell them the truth and state facts instead of talking dirty politics to their people. It is not healthy for the country in any way. When there is a Budget with tears they rant and rave, and when there is a Budget without tears they also rant and rave. What can we expect? Such irresponsible behaviour by members of the Opposition leaves me with no alternative but to say that they have absolutely no interest in this country and its people.

3.30 p.m.

All their interest is in themselves and perhaps what is coming to them from their capitalist masters. The hon. Member for Upper Demerara River (Mr. Jordan), who is supposed to be Minister of Finance in the shadow Cabinet of the P.N.C., yesterday asked the question: Where will the additional \$9 million come from this year? I can attribute that to nothing but "gallery play". If it is not, then he is really ignorant of what he is talking about. I think it is time for the Opposition to stop using this rostrum as a propaganda platform and to get down to doing something in the interest of the country. [Interruption.]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order in the Gallery!

Mr. Robertson: Instead of picking on parts of the Budget

[MR. ROBERTSON]

Speech in order to build propaganda why do the Members of the Opposition not go into the same speech and explain to their followers the truth of what is taking place. We find that the Minister in his speech says -

Mr. Deputy Speaker: On what page?

Mr. Robertson: On page 16, paragraph 4. I quote:

"Critics of the Government are fond of pointing only to losses, but not to high debt charges and the marginal nature of essential enterprises which the Government and public corporations must run. I wish to emphasize, however, that the significance and success of public corporations are not measured merely in terms of profits. Other tests may be applied from the social viewpoint: the provision of jobs, and essential services and goods at reasonable cost to the public. Every citizen has a personal stake in public enterprise and an ultimate voice in its control."

This is true and it is here that the Opposition, I think, should get down to the task of explaining something like this to the people. Let the people understand exactly what is the position with regard to the efforts of the Government. For instance, as I stated here, when the Government moves into the sphere of enterprises, even in co-opera-

tion with private enterprise, what happens to the profits that accrue from these enterprises? The profits go back to the people. Let us suppose it is the Electricity Corporation. Since the Government took over that business it is expanding. Current can be had as far as Belfield and up to Hope on the East Bank of the Demerara River. That means that the Corporation is expanding. At the moment a cable is being laid across the river to the West Coast. Soon current will be going right down to Uitvlugt on the West Coast, and, as the Corporation moves on it will go further. As this business expands it means that profits will be accruing to the Corporation and these will not be going into the pockets of whoever is in the Government, whether the People's Progressive Party, the P.N.C. or the U.F. The profits will not go into the pockets of the leaders; they will be for the people, the broad masses of the country. The Government will then be able to reduce taxes; it will be able to do things beneficial to the people, perhaps build better hospitals, better roads, better homes, better social services, schools and so forth.

The Government has just expanded its educational programme. This calls for money, but if Government continues to get private individuals alone to move into all businesses to which profits accrue, then where must the Government find money to carry out these other enterprises? There are all these social ser-

vices. For instance, the Government has just increased old age pensions; it has just increased social assistance. There are the health services to be considered. Surely money is needed.

The Opposition is saying that it is the behaviour of the Government which is preventing capital from coming into the country. This is not true, because in this very speech the Minister states that there are people who behave like the Secretary of State for the Colonies who told the world through the House of Commons that British Guiana was bankrupt - which is not true. He was challenged to state the truth; he has not done so yet. These things happen all the time. Every now and then some scurrilous statement comes from the Washington Senate and goes across to the Colonial Office and from there comes into British Guiana.

It is not what the Government says or does that is preventing capital from coming to this country; it is the behaviour of those who are against the Government.

I noticed yesterday that the only congratulations that came to the Government came from the hon. Member for Werk-en-Rust (Mr. Carter) for the part played by the Government in peasant cane-farming. Of course that Member would congratulate us because he is a cane-farmer, but I do not know how he forgot to congratulate us for our encouragement to cabbage growers, because he plants cabbages too.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Would the hon. Member take his seat, please. [After an interval during which three hon. Members entered the House and resumed their seats] You may proceed.

Mr. Robertson: I was saying that it is this party that has always been advocating peasant cane-farming in this country.

3.40 p.m.

As far back as 1950, I can remember that this party was advocating to the sugar producers that they should give the greatest portion of their lands to the peasant cane farmers, and buy the cane from them. It said once that they should not plant more than about 60% of their holdings - about 60 acres rather - and let all the balance be done by the peasant farmers.

In Jamaica - of course, I am subject to correction - I think about 75% of the production of cane is done by peasant farmers. Why can't this be done in British Guiana too? There are huge holdings by the sugar producers who, on the whole, have got too much unused land, at the moment, under their control. Why do they hold all these lands? They are holding them because they are just paying a peppercorn rent of about 5 cents per acre; that is not much. But if these lands are given out to the peasant farmers, it means that these lands would be beneficially occupied.

It is the feeling of my party, Mr. Speaker, that the

[MR. ROBERTSON]
 agricultural programme of this Government is one for which it should be congratulated. Lands, sir, under sugar, are sometimes leased or sold, but whenever they are leased, the lease is a short-term lease, and whenever they are sold, the conditions are onerous. You cannot mind cows, sheep, pigs, you cannot plant trees above a certain height, between 4 feet and 6 feet, and all sorts of conditions are imposed upon anyone purchasing these lands. Government wants to remedy these conditions and improve the living standards of the people. For instance, you will find that where there are these private holdings, if people are on them, the conditions under which they live are terrible.

I remember Tiger Island in the Essequibo River, a privately owned island. I had occasion to go on this island a few times, and the conditions under which the people live there are deplorable. It is only now that they have got drinking water, pure water supply, because the last Government saw to it that an artesian well was dug on the island. On that land, the water was always stagnant and the people had to drink it. I am certain that there is not a single peasant farmer who lives under the conditions on this island, who earns more than \$36 as his income per annum. There are large private tracts of land not beneficially occupied, and they will never be beneficially occupied as long as they are privately owned.

I would like to suggest to Government that it works urgently on the land tax so that, when this tax is implemented, these landlords, who have got these large holdings will beneficially occupy the lands because it means that they will want to avoid the tax.

Sir, I think here and now I should congratulate the Government for its agricultural programme because it is this agricultural programme that fed the people of this country during that eighty-day strike. When the unions and the imperialist running dogs thought that they would have had the people with their backs to the wall, by starving them, farmers came to the rescue. In spite of the looting, beatings, and violence that the farmers in the markets came up against, they stood up to it and were able to feed the people for the duration.

To be able to get rid of the lot of the private lands that are under bush, I know this Government has appointed another Registration Officer. I think this is a very good thing because the work, I believe, was too much for the one officer to cope with. In having another Registration Officer, Government would be able to move in quickly. When the Government moves into these lands, it means that all the lands that you will find on the banks of the rivers in this country will be utilized beneficially.

3.50 p.m.

If you go through the rivers in Essequibo: the Demerara River, the Berbice River, and even in the Corentyne, you will find bush on both sides. The average individual may not know this, but every inch of these lands is privately owned. The Government cannot use these lands because they are owned privately, and people cannot go on them without the permission of the owners. Therefore, when the Land Registration Officer carries out his duties, the people who have titles to the land will have to prove their claims. If they cannot do so, the land will revert to the country and become Government lands. In that case the lands can then be given to people to be beneficially occupied.

Government, in its land programme, has been encouraging people to work on the lands. I think that from 1958 there was a very good land programme, and numerous co-operatives have taken up large areas of land all over the country. They have them on the Corentyne, the Berbice River, on the East Bank of Berbice, the West Coast of Berbice, the Mahaicony Creek, and so on. You have the Corentyne Youth Farmers, Progressive Young Farmers, the Locus Valley, Babylon, Friendly Farmers, Central Corentyne Youth Farmers, and several others too numerous to mention. The people in these co-operatives are cultivating the land and producing things.

On the West Coast Berbice you have the Kabower Co-operative with about ten thousand acres of land. At Mahaicony you have the Wash Clothes Co-operative. You have the Boerasirie Extension Co-operative, and about five others. On the West Bank you have the Cocoa Co-operative. These Co-operatives have been working in different fields, and the Government is encouraging the diversification of crops. Individuals as well as co-operatives are working on these diversified crops. They are planting citrus, cocoa, ground provision, and rice.

In order to show what has taken place in the rice industry, I will quote from a clipping taken from the *Sunday Graphic* dated January 6, 1963, which states:

"Rice is today making a substantial contribution to the economy of British Guiana. And with increasing production and the need for new markets, much research has been, and is being done by the Agricultural Department for the cultivation of rice.

Research investigations on various aspects of the cultivation of rice, have contributed significantly towards the successful expansion of the rice industry during the post-war period. In 1939, rice production stood at 39,000 tons and was reaped from 66,000 acres. In 1962 the comparable figures

[MR. ROBERTSON]

are 130,000 tons and 266,000 acres.

Last year a very good spring crop was reaped and the autumn crop which has just been reaped is excellent both in quality and quantity. Much is due to co-operation and skill of the rice producers themselves but the research activities of the Ministry of Agriculture has contributed significantly towards this major achievement.

Research investigation carried out years ago on the control of unpleasant smell in parboiled rice (referred to locally as stink rice) has been a contributory factor in securing the Cuban market, which has now become so important

The breeding of new rice varieties suitable for mechanical harvesting has now reached the stage where they are being tested on farmers holdings and promising results in yield and quality of grain are being obtained.

For an important industry like rice there must be no lag in research investigations and this research is steadily being pursued at the Laboratory at the Central Agricultural Station at Mon Repos."

Mr. Deputy Speaker: May I interrupt the hon. Member at this stage. Do you have very much more to contribute?

Mr. Robertson. A fair amount, sir.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: In that case, the sitting of the Assembly is suspended for half an hour.

Sitting suspended accordingly at 4 p.m.

4.35 p.m.

On resumption

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I think the hon. Member needs a Motion in order to continue his speech.

Mr. Hamid (Demerara Central): I move that the hon. Member be allowed a further 15 minutes to continue his speech.

Mr. Cheeks (Georgetown North) seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. Robertson: In spite of the destructive propaganda about the Black Bush Polder we find that it is producing the highest quality of rice today in this country. It is producing a quality of rice which is far above that which is demanded by the West Indies, and we can now go boldly into the European market today, as far as quality is concerned, and all that we are waiting for now is quantity. I would like those who always decry Black Bush to go there now and see what is taking place. There are houses going up every day, and schools are already built. [An hon. Member: "What about the rattle snakes?"] As to rattle

snakes, I remember that a man came to this country, who was supposed to be a snake expert, and after visiting Black Bush he went up to Trinidad and told the Press that he had never seen so many rattle snakes in his life; that he even saw a child eating with a rattle snake nearby. I am certain that the infidel has never seen a rattle snake in his life. There are people who have been farmers at Black Bush from its inception in 1960 and have never seen a rattle snake there. Others, of course, have killed a few, but I am yet to know of any savannah area in which one would not see rattle snakes. They like to be in open country. So what is all the fuss about rattle snakes? In a short time we will see beautiful little townships established in the Black Bush Polder. The water supply is splendid.

4.40 p.m.

We find proof of the quality of rice that is being produced in this country at present in a report by the Commonwealth Economic Committee. The report, which was published in the *Guiana Graphic* of Wednesday, September 4, 1963, said:

"British Guiana's rice crop 1962-63 at 238,000 tons was 9,000 tons higher than in the previous year, according to provisional figures published in London by the Commonwealth Economic Committee. Overall the harvest has increased more than 10 per cent in 10 years.

"Although the yield of 32.2 cwt. per acre for 1962-63 showed a slight drop on last year's average, B.G., of all the world's producers, shows the most dramatic yield increase since pre war days when an acre of B.G. paddy rice produced only 12.1 cwt.

"The figures show that Venezuela is rapidly expanding production and expects to harvest 108,000 tons this season.

"B.G.'s exports to Jamaica, at 1,500 tons in the first quarter of this year, declined sharply compared with the same period last year because Jamaica stepped up imports from other sources. Trinidad, however, considerably increased her imports from 7,100 tons to 9,800 tons."

It is because of the work that has been done by the Agriculture Department, through the Ministry, that we are able to produce such quality of rice.

As I said before, the pattern has not changed among the imperialists' defenders in this country. The P.N.C. is supposed to be a working-class party; it mouths socialism yet strongly defends imperialism in every form. The United Force defends imperialism. We can understand that, but, when it comes to this working-class party defending imperialism, it is shocking. [Mr. Burnham: "Cheddi said he wanted Sandys."] The people who are sup-

MR. ROBERTSON] posea to be representing the working class, instead of doing things in interest of the working people, keep on defending the imperialists. This pattern has been going on for years and it is here today. I would like to quote something - it is about 13 years old - just to show the pattern. There are some Members in this House who know what I am speaking about. This was in 1950; - [Mr. Jordan: "Quoted from?"] This is from the *Argosy* of 9th June, 1950.

It is an article under the heading "Government to be asked to acquire Campbellville". It reads:

"The Legislative Council is being asked to recommend that Government acquire Campbellville under the Compulsory Acquisition Ordinance and set up a representative land valuation committee to determine the purchase price of that area as well as other sites intended to be purchased.

Adoption of these measures are embodied in a motion tabled by the hon. Dr. Cheddi B. Jagan at a meeting of the Council on Friday last.

"The preamble to the motion states: that the Corentyne Sugar Coy., Ltd., purchased over 2,000 acres of lands including Liliendaal, Cummings Lodge, Turkeyen, Sophia, Bel Air, Blygezicht,

Kitty, Werk-en-Rust and La Penitence in 1937 for \$60,000; and proposes to sell to Government 252 acres for \$480,000 or approximately one-eighth of the above-mentioned lands for eight times the original price; and that it is in the best interests of the residents that Government should acquire Campbellville; also that it appears that Government intends to purchase other areas."

Now, this is where we have the imperialists' defenders coming up. On the 8th April, 1951, a journalist records a debate in this Chamber. He states:

"When I attended the Council Chamber a week ago, I was forced to queue in the standing-room-only corridor. It was a typical P.P.P. - inspired crowd which had come prepared to hear their leader blast the capitalists. Listening to Cheddi Jagan was like listening to the voice of Moscow. He abused Bookers and damned the Council. His invective was dictated by party spirit and an intemperate warmth of feeling. It displayed ebullition of zeal and the ill-nature of one whom spleen had converted into a rabid oppositionist. Usually calm Attorney General Holder's voice rang through the ornate chamber in demand of a withdrawal of the reflection on members of the Council. The chided Jagan, whose irregularity of conduct had given rise to reproof and

whose improprieties of behaviour had earned this rebuke, withdrew his remarks and sulkily continued.

"His prime bubble, which goes up well at the street corners, went down badly in the Chamber as Financial Secretary Mc David caught him neatly in what one member termed 'the slips'. Jagan's major point was that Campbellville was sold in 1939 for \$60,000 and Government was now buying about one-tenth of the area for \$480,000 a profit, he claims, of 96 times the purchase price.

"Questioned McDavid: 'Could the Honourable Member tell me the names of the purchaser and vendor?' 'Certainly', replied unsuspecting Jagan. 'It was sold by La Penitence and Bel Air Ltd., to the Corentyne Sugar Co., Ltd.,' Countered McDavid: 'The Honourable Member is well informed as to these companies; could he tell me whether there is any relationship between the two companies he has named. Before the portent of the answer could register itself in Jagan's mind, he had answered. 'They are associated companies,' he said. That was it. Would the sale price between companies so related reflect the true market valuation?

"When Jagan sat down, he was no longer his usual

carping self... He seemed to occupy less room in his chair, and as members piled on the pressure he receded further and further.

"Asked John Carter: 'Would Dr. Jagan prefer the private company which was negotiating for the purchase of Campbellville to buy it and maybe profiteer out of their investment?'"

4.50 p.m.

This very hon. Member campaigned, all over this country with the League of Coloured People, against this very fight to get this land cheaper for all the people of this country. I am reading this, sir, because I want to expose all those who defend imperialism while they claim to be representatives of the people:

"In the speech of the day John Fernandes gave examples to show the appreciation of land in the environs and worked out percentages on Jagan's figures to show that this was a No. 1 blessing for the people of Campbellville and that Government had obtained a bargain in its genuine effort to solve the housing problem."

Sir, it is the old pattern. Whenever there is one who is fighting honestly in the interest of the working-class people, there are those supposed representatives who are fighting against the people's interest.

[Mr. Bissamber: "What is the point?"]

[MR. ROBERTSON]

In conclusion, I would like to give a clear understanding of what the people will have to do to be able ever honestly to represent themselves - not only in this country, but in every territory that is under colonial rule, because there are always those who are selfish, who are not interested in the people of the country, who are interested in themselves, and who work against the interest of the people. I would say, sir, that it is not until the working-class people realize what is happening to them, understand who are their enemies, come together as a solid entity, and are able to say: "Look, we are suggesting what should be produced", will we have a real country. When the people are able to make that suggestion to control production and have their real needs produced - not production for capitalist profits, but production for the needs of the working-class peoples - it is only then, sir, will we have a real country. [*Applause.*]

Mr. Cheeks: Your Honour, I would like first to pay tribute to the hon. Member for Leonora (Mr. Robertson) for having given us here one of the most stirring speeches I have ever heard.

Sir, I would like to make a brief analysis of this Budget Speech. From page 1 to page 20 there is the usual jargon: exploitation of the Latin American countries by the United States, and of British Guiana by the United Kingdom. Then there is a

long reference to the Sandys solution, condemning it, and there is also reference to the riots and the strikes. The Minister also includes - as he always does - a reference to some learned professor of the past or present so as to sound learned.

With reference to the riots and strikes, he is blaming everybody, as usual. He is blaming the imperialists, he is blaming the political Opposition, and he would not lay the blame where it really belongs. Members of the Government would not lay the blame for the racial tension on the actions taken by themselves: for instance, the efforts made by themselves to break the strike. Strike-breaking, in every country in the world, always causes violence.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if the Government had done earlier what it did on or about 8th July, the antagonism which developed between the two major races would never have gone so far, and the Government must know that everybody knows where the blame really lies. It was in the Government's power to stop this thing by just raising a finger. It was in the power of the Premier to do it but he did not. Now the Government continues to cast blame everywhere except where it belongs.

5 p.m.

What I think the hon. Premier should do now is to go on the radio, in the streets of Georgetown, in the lanes in the country, and apologize to the people for having brought this evil and

suffering upon them. That would be the first step towards bringing the two groups together. From page 21 to page 24 the hon. Minister of Finance gives us some statistics. He refers to the revenue anticipated and to expenditure. An examination of these figures will disclose that they are nothing more than "guesstimates", and not particularly well calculated either. Anyway, this is our country, and, if what the hon. Minister anticipates in this Budget with respect to revenue can come true, it will be very good for all of us. Indeed, we look on and wish him success.

On page 25 you can see the suspicion or conviction that this is going to be an Election year. [Dr. Jacob: "Who said so?"] He is proposing increases in the various social projects, but all of this should have taken place long ago. In the Budget Speech two years ago, the Government promised to introduce a National Pension Scheme, but there is not the slightest sign of it in the Budget today. In fact, it has not been referred to. Increasing social assistance is merely a sop to the people, so that the members of this Government can tell them about it later on this year when they have to ask them for their votes.

Turning to the development side of the Budget, from page 26 to page 30 is just one long apology for failure on the part of the Government. I need not go into details about this. On page 31 some more sops have been

offered to the people again. I can give you this assurance, sir, the Government will not be able to fool the people. So far as the question of housing is concerned, the Government is offering some kind of concession with respect to loans made for building houses. It has offered to remove the 2% turnover tax. These are just sops because the Election may be around the corner. The Government believes that, after the experience the people have had during the past two years with the PPP as an incubus on their backs, these sops will fool them. I think the Government is wasting time.

Much has been said about investment, the failure to attract investors, and where the blame lies for such failure. At page 9 of the Budget Speech, the hon. Minister of Finance refers to a British firm of contractors that failed to raise money to finance additional development work after Mr. Sandy's decision was made known. He wants to give us the impression that the failure of the British Guiana Government to attract capital to this country is caused by what Mr. Sandys has said about this country. Does the hon. Minister of Finance forget that at the end of 1961, before the disturbances, he himself tried to get a loan for the Government when he tried to raise money by way of Debenture Bonds? He tried to raise \$2½ million, but he collected a few hundred thousand dollars only. Even some of the wealthiest of his own party supporters were sending

[MR. CHEEKS]

their money to England, America, and Switzerland. In 1961 there was no threat - there had been no disturbances as yet.

Let the members of the Government turn back their minds. They were most embarrassed when their supporters let them down - a party commanding 42% of the votes, and having the wealthy merchants in Water Street and the sugar-gods supporting them. Yet the Government could only collect about \$100,000 when it needed \$2½ million! It should see, therefore, that the people in the world know, and we know, what is the real reason why it has not been able to attract capital to this country.

With a lot of fanfare it has established the Industrial Development Corporation, and we sincerely hope that it will succeed. If the Corporation is successful it will lessen unemployment in this country, make for a prosperous people, and we will all benefit, but it is our studied belief that this Government cannot make good. On the one hand it speaks about the need for investment; about initiating policies to attract finance; and about accumulating capital through savings and so on.

There was a big headline in the Press when the Industrial Development Corporation was launched. But the hon. Premier says one thing in this House, and when he goes to Blairmont he tells the people that sugar has exploited them; that the Reynolds

Metal Company is making false claims, and so on. These Companies employ thousands of people, and they are sister Companies. Demba, for instance, is about to invest a few more million dollars on the bridging of the Demerara River and the mining of bauxite at Christianburg. The hon. Premier wants to attract capital to this country, and yet he is abusing the very people who are to bring it in.

5.10 p.m.

Now we must bear in mind that this Government regards all profits as robbery. If that is the stand it is taking with respect to capital, how does it expect capital to come here? Abuse of the source of capital continues in spite of the need for it. The Minister of Finance in his Budget Speech spoke about the high rates of interest on the traditional loan markets. That may be true, but why did he not also speak about the grants this Government has received and the extent to which those grants offset the high rates of interest on the loans? Year after year this Government has admitted receiving those free grants. On page 26 of the Budget Speech there is this admission:

"Development receipts are expected to total \$14.5 million in 1964 - \$4.0 million from C.D.W. grants; \$5.4 million from Exchequer Loan; \$4 million from the National Development Savings Levy; \$1 million from a local market loan; and \$0.1 million from other sources."

What strings are attached to those loans? Are the strings attached to those loans compelling this Government to complete the Tapakuma Project, to develop the Black Bush Polder; to carry out irrigation schemes in the Mahaicony-Abary or the Boerasirie, or to build the Parika-Bartica road? Are those the strings tied to the grants and loans? If those strings, as this Government calls them, were not there, perhaps Government would have preferred to do what Dr. Fidel Castro is doing: to fill the buildings with rockets, so that the people could not open their mouths. If those were the strings attached, Government should let the people in those empoldered areas know that it was not its desire that those settlements should be established, but the demand of the lender. It is a blessing to the Ministers of the Government and the Government, that the people do not understand, but the scales will drop from their eyes, and they will understand.

What I do know is that the loans the Government is getting elsewhere certainly have strings attached - loans like the \$1.7 million which came from Cuba, or possibly from Russia, and from Switzerland through Gracechurch Street. The Government is not leaving any marks on its trails, but what we do know is that money is coming from these sources. What are the strings attached there? This Government must promulgate and practice, as far as possible within the colonial context, Marxist

Principles. That is one of the strings which are attached. The P.P.P. has to send our youths for military training to Cuba and other countries. Those are the strings attached. It has to accept guns which come through the Rice Marketing Board, and it is glad to do so because of its acceptance of revolutionary Marxism. [*Interruption.*] When certain hon. Members are steeped in doctrinaire, old-fashioned ideas, it is impossible for them to understand ordinary English. We must pity them. I wonder if the hon. Minister who is trying to heckle, knows that his idol, Castro, on the 30th of November passed an Order reversing his policy with respect to land nationalization, and the reason he gave was that it was for the purpose of boosting farm production. He was bound to relax his policy because the Cuban people are starving.

Those who have been indoctrinated are going about telling of the glories of Cuba, but those are facts which are known everywhere. Look at what is happening in East Germany. There were 1½ million people from West Germany who went over to East Germany at Christmas time because they were free to go, but nobody from the eastern sector is allowed to go over to the western sector. They are warned that if they attempt to go over they would be shot. I cannot imagine men with human minds condoning that sort of murder. It does not concern us really, but the fact that they admire and have social contacts with those people is amazing.

[MR. CHEEKS]

The American Constitution does not permit discrimination on the ground of race; it declares that all men are equal under God, and the leaders of that Government (as the late President Kennedy did) know what the Constitution demands. They admit that some people in America are subverting the Constitution. But in Russia, where Negroes are called "black monkeys" in the streets, they are saying that there is nothing wrong. They do not admit that there is something wrong, therefore there is no possibility of improvement. If one admits that there is a failing one tries to remedy it, but in Russia they do not admit that there is anything wrong. Everything is right; there is no race and no class. Khrushchev said that there was only one class in Russia, the working class. Let the P.P.P. ask some of those boys whom it has sent to Russia and it will hear the tale of their experience as second-class citizens. Ask them what is the state of affairs in Russia.

5.20 p.m.

I am not speaking about the other restrictions on personal liberty, but just on that one point: the question of race and class. I want to be quite clear. I am saying nothing whatever in defence of the system in the southern States of America. In fact when I read or hear of second-class citizenship imposed upon the Negroes there my blood boils. But when I hear persons who are responsible for conducting affairs in this country

speaking with the most fulsome praise of the Russian system, - when I hear this, my blood boils much more hotly.

On page 4 of his speech, in the second paragraph, the hon. Minister refers to the country's need for political freedom, a cessation of external interference and subversion. I am in hearty agreement with that; let them stop interfering; let them mind their own business; let them keep their guns to themselves; let them stop training our youths in guerilla warfare and sending for others to train; let them stop subverting Guiana, and then there will be peace. When in the history of this country have we known people travelling along the streets by night or day and being shot at? This has happened only since this Government has sent our youths, boys and girls, to be trained by killers in Cuba, Moscow and other Eastern Countries which profess the same ideology. We have had murders in the past; we have always had murders for various reasons, but it was not until this Government adopted this policy that we have had this kind of behaviour here.

The Minister says also that the country should respect the Government's policy of non-alignment. What is non-alignment? Is non-alignment praise for everything Russian and everything Cuban? Is it non-alignment to abuse everything that has been established here? This is not to say that everything was good, but everything was not bad, either. If you want to call yourself

neutral and you want to say you are non-aligned, you cannot find it possible to praise everything that is done in Communist countries; and condemn everything that is done in the West. You cannot throw dust in the eyes of the people in this way. You cannot say you are neutral and you want the presence here of the United Nations and then continue to praise everything in the Eastern Countries. You cannot say that they alone are good and everything else is bad. The Minister speaks of external interference and of his desire to keep out the cold warriors, yet the Government aligns itself with one side.

I have noticed another attitude that is pervading this speech. In the third paragraph on page 4, the Minister speaks of "Incessant racist propaganda". On page 5 he speaks of the "dissemination of vicious political and racist propaganda". On page 6 he speaks of a "psychological block to the vicious racist propaganda". There seems to be some complex built up in the mind of this Minister. It is a Hitler technique - you accuse your enemy of what you are doing, and the more often you repeat it the more likely it is to be believed; the greater falsehood you utter and the more improbable you make it sound the more certain it is to be accepted by the poor, unthinking mob. The mob is not unthinking now; the mob knows.

On page 7 of the Command Paper No. 2203, Mr. Sandys, Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Commonwealth, said:

"I doubt whether either the Indian or the African party could, under its present leadership, hope to increase appreciably its following among the other racial groups."

[Mr. Wilson: "That is where you come in. You are taking away P.N.C. support now."] It is the opinion of Mr. Duncan Sandys. I believe it is true and the Colonial Office believes it is true. Who are the supporters of Dr. Jagan? They fall into four categories: (1) Indian racialists; the thinking ones are turning away; (2) Communists and pro-Communists; (3) those persons who have received patronage from the party; in common parlance, those who have been hauging **their** mouths where the soup is falling, the people who have been bought by special favours; and (4) those whose knowledge of British Guiana consists solely of P.P.P. propaganda. The Government members cannot name one other type of person who supports them. The largest bulk of supporters is composed of the Indian racialists.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Time!

Mr. d'Aguiar: I beg to move that the hon. Member be allowed another 15 minutes to continue his speech.

Mr. Robertson seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

5.30 p. m.

Mr. Cheeks: Now, sir, it is commendable that the hon. Minis-

[MR. CHEEKS] Minister of Finance, in his Speech, condemned this racist propaganda. But to what extent do his words, in this Speech, tally with what the Government is doing, its actions. This appears on page 4:

"This division, maintained by incessant racist propaganda, is responsible for the reform potential in Guiana being so low."

Towards the end:

"However, I am confident that working-class realization of the causes of continuing poverty and the colonial status that goes with it will now have a catalytic effect in restoring racial harmony. This will engender co-operation and spur economic and social changes . "

We are in agreement there, this racist propaganda is something bad, and it should be laid aside by one and all. On page 6 here, the Minister also says:

"Let us all, then, in this - multiracial community, resolve to live and work together in peace and harmony for the realization of the better society of real freedom and abundance for all."

What nice, what pleasant words these are. But, sir, those are the things which the Government wants to believe it represents; but what does it really represent? If you can find it possible to get inside one of its

party meetings, then you will know what takes place there! For instance, at a recent meeting of the party, at which the hon. Minister of Finance was present, one Minister said - they were discussing P.R. and what to do with respect to defeating P.R. - "Let us start violence. Let us attack so-so-so." Another Minister said: "If we attack them in the country, they will attack our people in Georgetown." [Mr. Wilson: "You can make up stories."] It sounds familiar to you. And then the hon. Minister of Natural Resources said: "Let us start a revolution then", and then another Minister said: "All right, start your revolution and we will all follow you." Then the whole plan for starting violence and revolution just dies down with ramblings and murmurings.

But the members of the Progressive Youth Organisation are the ones who are affected, they are the ones who are being fired with this revolutionary zeal for violence. Where have you had a revolution successful in the absence of youth? The older folk, the more experienced men, the Ministers in the Government, know that this thing cannot be done now, and so they will have to keep the young hot bloods in check. But this is not all that is said at their party meetings. When the Minister said: "If we attack them in the country, they will attack us in town", or: "If we attack them here, they will attack us there", he went further. He said: "Let us attack those with the white

skins. We will get the P.N.C. to join us." That is the whole sinister plan.

These words are familiar to everyone of those Ministers who are present in this House, because they have heard them before at Freedom House. [Mr. Wilson: "Sam Chase."] I am not unaccustomed to receiving these kinds of sneers and so on from people of that type. Yes, sir, this is what happened, but their plan has leaked out. In fact, we have got details of it, and I can tell them again that their plan will fail as they are failing in practically everything they are undertaking.

The hon. Minister of Finance, in this Speech here, speaks about racial unity, and yet the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Home Affairs went to the Corentyne, and told this to the farmers: "P.R. is a sword pointed at the rice farmers." Well, that is wicked enough, but he went on and said: "P.R. is a dagger aimed at East Indians." Now, if it were not his intention to inspire racial antagonism in the minds of those people, being himself against P.R., what he would have said is that P.R. is a dagger aimed at the workers, aimed at the people. He would not have picked out East Indians, but the fact that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Home Affairs picked out East Indians to show that P.R. is directed against them, means that the Government is saying one thing to its supporters, inspiring them to keep race alive

in their hearts, and then coming to Georgetown and talking about peace, love and brotherhood. The members of the Government want the people in Georgetown to be peaceful, they want them to love each other and to live in brotherhood, but when they go among their own kind, those who support them, they continue to lie. Because of this evil thing - racialism - from which they draw their support, they have another tale to tell in the country.

It is because of this dual personality of the P.P.P., because of the equivocal attitude which it is bound to adopt, that this country has passed through the era of suffering and until the members of the Government change, until they give up this dual personality, until they realize that an elected Government must be a Government of all the people and a Government for all the people, it will not be possible for them to command the loyalty of the people of British Guiana.

I have said, sir, a few things about proportional representation, because much of this Budget Speech is about it.

5.40 p.m.

On page 2 of the Budget Speech the hon. Minister of Finance refers to "a crooked electoral system for sordid political ends." He is saying that, in all those countries where Proportional Representation is practised in keeping with the will of the people, you will find "a crooked

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electoral system for sordid political ends." The absurdity of his criticism must now be apparent to him.

On page 6 he says:

"The present British Colonial Secretary's plan to keep the working class permanently divided, taken with his defamation of the country (which has already damaged our credit), provides positive proof of an intention to perpetuate economic insecurity for the overwhelming majority of Guianese."

On page 12 he says:

"As I pointed out earlier, those who are opposed to change prevented the reforms from realizing their full potential. The House will, I am sure, share my hope that no further subversion takes place. It is a sad commentary on our society that there are a few who have lost faith in the ballot and in periodic elections, . . ."

- I propose here, just for the record, to enumerate the five main arguments which I feel make it necessary for proportional representation to be the form of the electoral system used in this country in the future. The first reason is that we have had the system of first-past-the-post all the time and it has failed. It is a system which was used all along; it was handed down to us; we did not choose it, and it has

brought a lot of suffering in its train. First-past-the-post has failed in Guiana, and it is time for us to try something else. The fact that it has caused all of this confusion and all this social and racial strife should make everybody join in rejecting it. - [Mr. Benn: "What about the Portuguese riot?"]

Secondly, proportional representation will make racial co-operation obligatory, for the reason that none of the race groups will be able to win a decided majority. Therefore no race will be able to lord it over the other, or to dominate another race, and the minority races will feel safe. That is a very strong argument in favour of the institution of proportional representation as an electoral system in this country. We must remember that politics in this country is a racial affair. It means that if one political party cannot win the election, then one race cannot lord it over the other. [Hon. Members (Government): "That is why you want P.R."] Hon. Members of the Government know that is true. They say that they are willing to co-operate with the other side. Since that is the case, why are they making so much fuss because circumstances are being created which will make co-operation with the other side obligatory? The fact that they are objecting seems to indicate that they hold a false position and they do not mean that the Opposition should merely co-operate.

The third reason is that there can be no charge of gerry-

mandering. On page 2 of the Budget Speech the hon. Minister of Finance says:

"Previous electoral devices, such as the gerrymandering of constituency boundaries in 1957 and 1961 against my Party, have failed to remove it from office."

But if a party is able to obtain 20 out of the 35 seats - 60% of the seats on 42% of the votes, is not that gerrymandering in favour of that party? How can the Government complain about this? That was gerrymandering in favour of the P.P.P. The members of the P.P.P. were prepared to complain from the beginning, so that in case they had lost the election they could blame it on gerrymandering of the boundaries.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Time!

Mr. d'Aguiar: I beg to move that the hon. Member be given a further 15 minutes to continue his speech.

Mr. Wharton (Abari) seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. Cheeks: The fourth reason is the most cogent one in our context: why proportional representation should be adopted. I believe it must have played an important part in the minds of the men who had to assist Mr. Sandys in this matter. In British Guiana, taking the constituencies as at present demarcated, there are at least three which may be described as marginal. By that I mean that the number of potential P.P.P. sup-

porters and the number of those who would support the Opposition are about equal. It would be very easy for a section of the population to be transported from a district where a party has an overwhelming number of supporters to a marginal district for the purpose of registration and voting. And these marginal seats can decide the elections. The party which has the ability to transport such people and give them houses in the district must have an edge over another party. This was illustrated in Houston where, after the first registration had taken place, a certain party seemed to have a majority when the names of supporters were counted by the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Home Affairs. All the Government had to do was to reject that registration on the grounds of irregularity and order a new one.

Sir, this time all the party had to do was to transport people from an area of surplus from which they could be afforded, put them in the marginal district and have their names registered on the Voters' List. It is a simple procedure. Since the difference in the support between the Government and the Opposition is not very great, it means that the shifting of a few votes will make all the difference between winning and losing. That is why the marginal constituencies are so important in the first-past-the-post electoral system.

5.50 p.m.

It is easy for the Government; it has all the money and the

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power. It can use the Government machinery to get itself elected in a marginal constituency. If that were the only reason, the first-past-the-post electoral system should be regarded as a wicked thing, and should not be brought back to this country.

The fifth reason is that under the system of first-past-the-post which we had in 1961, the P.P.P. was able to win a seat on 4,500 votes. The P.N.C. required 8,000 votes for one seat, and the United Force 9,000 votes for one seat. That is a very simple matter of mathematics. What degree of fairness can there be in such a system? It needs no further comment. For these reasons I would say that first-past-the-post has failed as an electoral system. There can be no charge of gerrymandering under proportional representation. Marginal constituencies cannot be manipulated in order to make any one side win a particular seat.

Lastly, proportional representation gives to each vote equal value. What more can be required in a democracy? Why can we not accept a system which is so obviously fair to one and all? Why in the name of democracy are the members of Government saying that the present electoral system is good just because it has given them victory? We will create through P.R. the perfect embodiment of true Democracy. It is only by that means that British Guiana will accede to Independence in a peaceful and orderly way.

On page 7 of the Budget Speech we find this:

"The Government of British Guiana has already denounced the Colonial Secretary's decisions and rejected them as a breach of faith to the Government and people of the country."

Rejected them! How long will this Government have the power to reject? I wonder if the hon. Premier knows of this Order - Section 22 of the Constitutional Instruments, 1961:

"22. Her Majesty hereby reserves to Herself power, with the advice of Her Privy Council, to revoke, add to, suspend or amend this Order and to make laws for the peace, order and good government of British Guiana."

This is embodied in the Constitution. Her Majesty's Government can make laws for British Guiana under Article 22. It does not have to suspend the Constitution to make an Order. Therefore, if H.M. Government does not implement the decision made by H.M. Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies it would be failing in its duty and setting itself up as a mockery for all the world. We shall see what we shall see. We shall see if the British Government is going to allow a puny fellow to talk about rejecting its decisions, a man who cannot command the support of one-half of the electors of his country, and who parades up and down the world like one enjoying the

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loyalty of 90 or 100 per cent of the people of this country.

I have spent much of my time discussing certain aspects of the Budget which were raised by speakers on both sides of the House. I propose now to deal with the subject which is nearest to my heart, the subject of education.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: You have two minutes, and if you intend to go much further in your contribution, I would suggest that we adjourn now. The Assembly is adjourned until 2 p.m. tomorrow.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned accordingly at 6 p.m.