
FIRST SESSION

1969

MINUTES of the Proceedings of the 1st Sitting of the National Assembly under the Constitution of Guyana, held in the Parliament Chamber at the Public Buildings, Georgetown, Demerara,

AT 9.30 A.M.

ON

FRIDAY, 3RD JANUARY, 1969

PRESENT

His Honour the Speaker, Mr. R.B. Gajraj, C.B.E., J.P.

(a) Members of the Government

(i) Ministers

The Honourable L.F.S. Burnham, Q.C.,
Prime Minister
Dr. the Honourable P.A. Reid, Minister of
Finance
The Honourable R.J. Jordan, Minister of
Agriculture and Natural Resources
The Honourable M. Kasim, Minister of
Communications
The Honourable S.S. Ramphal, C.M.G., Q.C.,
Attorney-General and Minister of State
The Honourable M.W. Carter, Minister of
Information
The Honourable H. Green, Minister of Works
and Hydraulics

(ii) Other Members

Mr. J.N. Aaron
Miss M.M. Ackman
Mr. K. Bancroft
Mr. N.J. Bissember
Mr. J. Budhoo, J.P.
Mr. W.G. Carrington
Mr. L.I. Chan-A-Sue
Mr. O.E. Clarke, Deputy Speaker
Mr. E.F. Correia
Mr. M. Corrica
Mr. P. Duncan
Mr. E.H.A. Fowler
Mr. W. Haynes
Mr. H.D. Hoyte
Mr. J.G. Joaquin, O.B.E., J.P.

Mr. C.M.L. John
Mrs. P.A. Limerick
Mrs. S.M. Patterson
Mr. B. Ramsaroop
Mr. S.M. Saffee
Mr. A. Salim
Mr. D.A. Singh
Mr. J.R. Thomas
Mr. R.C. Van Sluytman
Mr. C.E. Wrights
Mr. M. Zaheeruddeen, J.P.

(b) Members of the Opposition

Mr. R. Chandisingh
Mr. E.M.G. Wilson
Mr. Ram Karran
Dr. F.H.W. Ramsahoye
Mr. D.C. Jagan
Mr. M.Y. Ally
Mr. R.D. Persaud, J.P.
Mr. G.H. Lall
Mr. A.M. Hamid, J.P.
Mr. I. Remington, J.P.
Mr. Bholu Persaud
Mr. V. Teekah
Mrs. R.P. Sahoye
Mr. R. Ally
Mr. E.L. Ambrose
Mr. Balchand Persaud
Mrs. L.M. Branco
Mr. R.E. Cheeks
Mr. M.F. Singh

Clerk of the National Assembly - Mr. F.A. Narain
Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly (Ag.) - Mr. L.F. Choy

Absent

Dr. C.B. Jagan, Leader of the
Opposition - on leave
Mr. E.M. Stoby
Mr. P.S. d'Aguiar
Mr. C.V. Too-Chung

PROCLAMATION SUMMONING THE SESSION OF PARLIAMENT

The Clerk read Proclamation No. 6 of 1968, made by the Governor-General and published in the Gazette on the 30th of December, 1968, proclaiming that a session of Parliament shall be held in the Parliament Chamber at the Public Buildings, Georgetown, Guyana, and shall begin at 9.30 o'clock in the forenoon on Friday, the third day of January, 1969.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

The Clerk read an extract from a letter dated 30th December, 1968, from the Chief Election Officer to the Speaker and called the following names of the persons who became Members of the National Assembly:-

(a) People's National Congress

- ✓ Joseph Nathaniel Aaron
- ✓ Margaret Matilda Ackman
- ✓ Kenneth Bancroft
- ✓ Neville James Bissement
- ✓ Jagnarine Budhoo
- ✓ Linden Forbes Sampson Burnham
- ✓ Winslow George Carrington
- ✓ Leonard Ignatius Chan-A-Sue
- ✓ Oscar Eleazer Clarke
- ✓ Eugene Francis Correia
- ✓ Malcolm Corrica
- ✓ Philip Duncan
- ✓ Eugene Hugh Allan Fowler
- ✓ William Haynes
- ✓ Hugh Desmond Hoyte
- ✓ John Gabriel Joaquin
- ✓ Clifton Mortimer Llewellyn John
- ✓ Robert James Jordan
- ✓ Mohamed Kasim
- ✓ Patricia Anita Limerick
- ✓ Shirley Merle Patterson
- ✓ Bishwaishwar Ramsaroop
- ✓ Ptolemy Alexander Reid
- ✓ Sheik Mohamed Saffee
- ✓ Abdul Salim
- ✓ David Arthur Singh
- ✓ Jeffrey Ronald Thomas
- ✓ Ralph Chesterfield Van Sluytman
- ✓ Conrad Egerton Wrights
- ✓ Mohamed Zaheeruddeen

(b) People's Progressive Party

- ✓ Cheddi Jagan
- ✓ Ranji Chandisingh
- ✓ E.M.G. Wilson
- ✓ Ram Karran
- ✓ Fenton Ramsahoye
- ✓ Derek Jagan
- ✓ Mohamed Yacoob Ally
- ✓ Reepu Daman Persaud
- ✓ Eugene Stoby
- ✓ Goberdhan Harry Lall
- ✓ Abdul Maccie Hamid
- ✓ Ivan Remington
- ✓ Bholi Persaud
- ✓ Vincent Teekah
- ✓ Regina P. Sahoye
- ✓ Roshan Ally
- ✓ Edgar Lealand Ambrose
- ✓ Balchand Persaud
- ✓ Lilian Maud Branco

(c) United Force

- ✓ Randolph E. Cheeks
- ✓ Peter S. d'Aguiar
- ✓ M. Feilden-Singh
- ✓ Cyril V. Too-Chung

As their names were called Members answered, with the exception of the following, who were absent:

Dr. Cheddi Jagan
Mr. Eugene Stoby
Mr. Peter S. d'Aguiar
Mr. Cyril V. Too-Chung

The Clerk then called the following names of the Ministers who were not elected Members of the National Assembly but who had by virtue of their appointments as Ministers, become Members of the Assembly:

Shridath Surendranath Ramphal
Martin Wylde Carter
Hamilton Green

The Ministers answered as their names were called.

ELECTION OF SPEAKER

The Clerk read paragraphs (1) and (2) of Article 62 of the Constitution and Standing Order No. 2 and invited Members to make proposals for the office of Speaker.

The Minister of Finance proposed and the Prime Minister seconded Mr. Rahman Baccus Gajraj, C.B.E., J.P.

Mr. Wilson proposed and Mr. Ram Karran seconded Mr. Ashton Chase.

As more than one person was proposed it was necessary for the Assembly to elect a Speaker by ballot.

The Clerk explained the procedure for balloting after which ballot-papers were distributed to Members present.

The following Members voted:-

Mrs. Branco
Mr. Balchand Persaud
Mr. Ambrose
Mr. Roshan Ally
Mrs. Sahoye
Mr. Teekah
Mr. Bhola Persaud
Mr. Remington
Mr. Hamid
Mr. Lall
Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud
Mr. Mohamed Yacoob Ally
Mr. Derek Jagan
Dr. Ramsahoye
Mr. Ram Karran
Mr. Wilson
Mr. Chandisingh
Mr. Zaheeruddeen
Mr. Wrights
Mr. Van Sluytman
Mr. Thomas
Mr. Singh
Mr. Salim
Mr. Saffee

Mr. Ramsaroop
Mrs. Patterson
Mrs. Limerick
Mr. John
Mr. Joaquin
Mr. Hoyte
Mr. Haynes
Mr. Fowler
Mr. Duncan
Mr. Corrica
Mr. Correia
Mr. Clarke
Mr. Chan-A-Sue
Mr. Carrington
Mr. Budhoo
Mr. Bissember
Mr. Bancroft
Miss Ackman
Mr. Aaron
Mr. Kasim
Mr. Jordan
Dr. Reid
Mr. Burnham

The following Members declined to vote:-

Mr. Singh
Mr. Cheeks

The ballot-papers were examined by the Clerk who reported the results as follows:-

There were 47 ballot-papers.
Mr. Gajraj received 30 votes.
Mr. Chase received 17 votes.

The Clerk therefore declared Mr. Rahman Baccus Gajraj, C.B.E., J.P., duly elected Speaker of the National Assembly. His Honour the Speaker who was present was then escorted by his proposer and seconder to the Chair.

ELECTION OF DEPUTY SPEAKER

In accordance with Article 62(3) of the Constitution and Standing Order No. 3(2), His Honour the Speaker invited Members to make proposals for the office of Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Bissember proposed and the Minister of Finance seconded Mr. Oscar Eleazer Clarke.

Mr. Ram Karran proposed and Mr. Wilson seconded Mr. Derek C. Jagan.

Ballot-papers were distributed to Members present.

The following Members voted:-

Mrs. Branco
Mr. Balchand Persaud
Mr. Ambrose
Mr. Roshan Ally
Mrs. Sahoye
Mr. Teekah
Mr. Bholia Persaud

Mr. Remington
Mr. Hamid
Mr. Lall
Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud
Mr. Mohamed Yacoob Ally
Mr. Derek Jagan
Dr. Ramsahoye
Mr. Ram Karran
Mr. Wilson
Mr. Chandisingh
Mr. Zaheeruddeen
Mr. Wrights
Mr. Van Slutyman
Mr. Thomas
Mr. Singh
Mr. Salim
Mr. Saffee
Mr. Ramsaroop
Mrs. Patterson
Mrs. Limerick
Mr. John
Mr. Joaquin
Mr. Hoyte
Mr. Haynes
Mr. Fowler
Mr. Duncan
Mr. Corrica
Mr. Correia
Mr. Clarke
Mr. Chan-A-Sue
Mr. Carrington
Mr. Budhoo
Mr. Bissember
Mr. Bancroft
Miss Ackman
Mr. Aaron
Mr. Kasim
Mr. Jordan
Dr. Reid
Mr. Burnham

The following Members declined to vote:-

Mr. Singh
Mr. Cheeks

The ballot-papers were examined by the Clerk who reported the results as follows:-

There were 47 ballot-papers.
Mr. Clarke received 30 votes.
Mr. Jagan received 17 votes.

His Honour the Speaker then declared Mr. Oscar Eleazer Clarke duly elected Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly.

OATHS

The oaths of allegiance and the oaths of office were made and subscribed by -

His Honour the Speaker, Mr. R.B. Gajraj, C.B.E., J.P.
Mr. O.E. Clarke, Deputy Speaker
The Hon. L.F.S. Burnham, Q.C., Prime Minister

Dr. the Hon. P.A. Reid, Minister of Finance
The Hon. R.J. Jordan, Minister of Agriculture
and Natural Resources
The Hon. M. Kasim, Minister of Communications
The Hon. S.S. Ramphal, C.M.G., Q.C.,
Attorney-General and Minister of State
The Hon. M.W. Carter, Minister of Information
The Hon. H. Green, Minister of Works and Hydraulics
Mr. J.N. Aaron
Miss M.M. Ackman
Mr. K. Bancroft
Mr. N.J. Bissember
Mr. J. Budhoo, J.P.
Mr. W.G. Carrington
Mr. L.I. Chan-A-Sue
Mr. E.F. Correia
Mr. M. Corrica
Mr. P. Duncan
Mr. E.H.A. Fowler
Mr. W. Haynes
Mr. H.D. Hoyte
Mr. J.G. Joaquin, O.B.E., J.P.
Mr. C.M.L. John
Mrs. P.A. Limerick
Mrs. S.M. Patterson
Mr. B. Ramsaroop
Mr. S.M. Saffee
Mr. A. Salim
Mr. D.A. Singh
Mr. J.R. Thomas
Mr. R.C. Van Sluytman
Mr. C.E. Wrights
Mr. M. Zaheeruddeen, J.P.
Mr. R. Chandisingh
Mr. E.M.G. Wilson
Mr. Ram Karran
Dr. F.H.W. Ramsahoye
Mr. D.C. Jagan
Mr. M.Y. Ally
Mr. R.D. Persaud, J.P.
Mr. G.H. Lall
Mr. A.M. Hamid, J.P.
Mr. I.R. Remington, J.P.
Mr. Bholu Persaud
Mr. V. Teekah
Mrs. R.P. Sahoye
Mr. R. Ally
Mr. E.L. Ambrose
Mr. Balchand Persaud
Mrs. L.M. Branco
Mr. R.E. Cheeks
Mr. M.F. Singh

PRAYERS

The Clerk read prayers.

At this stage of the proceedings, His Honour the Speaker suggested that the sitting be suspended until 2.00 p.m.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE TO MOVE THE ADJOURNMENT OF THE ASSEMBLY
ON A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Mr. Ram Karran rose and referred to a letter addressed to His Honour the Speaker which he had submitted that morning giving notice of his intention to ask leave to move the adjournment of the Assembly for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance.

His Honour the Speaker in expressing his opinion on the matter, stated that he was not prepared to allow it to be discussed at that time.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE SPEAKER AND DEPUTY SPEAKER

The Prime Minister congratulated Mr. Gajraj on his re-election as Speaker and Mr. Clarke on his election as Deputy Speaker. He also welcomed the Members of Parliament and wished them and their families a happy and prosperous 1969.

Mr. Cheeks also offered congratulations to His Honour the Speaker.

His Honour the Speaker thanked the Honourable Prime Minister and Mr. Cheeks for their kind remarks and expressed his gratitude to the Members for the opportunity given him of presiding once more as their Speaker.

Suspension of Sitting

At 12.04 p.m. the sitting was suspended.

Resumption of Sitting

At 2.32 p.m. the sitting was resumed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

Leave

His Honour the Speaker announced that leave had been granted to -

- (a) Dr. Jagan for one month from 3rd January, 1969;
- (b) Mr. John for six weeks - 6th January, 1969;
- (c) Mr. Corrica from 4th January to 22nd February, 1969

APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE OF SELECTION

On a proposal by the Minister of Finance, the Assembly nominated the following to be Members of the Committee of Selection, with His Honour the Speaker as Chairman in accordance with Standing Order No. 71(1):-

- Mr. J.N. Aaron
- Mr. N.J. Bissember
- Mr. W.G. Carrington
- Mr. S.M. Saffee
- Dr. F.H.W. Ramsahoye
- Mr. D.C. Jagan

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

The Prime Minister made a statement relating to disorders in the Rupununi area.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

The Prime Minister on behalf of the Government presented the following Bill which was read for the first time:

CONSTITUTION OF GUYANA (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1969 -
Bill No. 1 of 1969 published 1.1.69

A BILL intituled AN ACT TO MAKE PROVISION FOR THE AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION OF GUYANA IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 73 THEREOF.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

BILL - Second and Third Readings

With the leave of the Speaker and on a motion by the Prime Minister Standing Order 46 was suspended to enable the Constitution of Guyana (Amendment) Bill, 1969 (Bill No. 1 of 1969 published 1.1.69) to be read a second time.

The Prime Minister then moved the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. Ram Karran, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Lall, Dr. Ramsahoye, Mr. Cheeks and Mr. Singh spoke to the motion.

Thereafter the question was put and carried on the following division:-

FOR

AGAINST

Mr. Zaheeruddeen
Mr. Wrights
Mr. Van Sluytman
Mr. Thomas
Mr. D.A. Singh
Mr. Salim
Mr. Saffee
Mr. Ramsaroop
Mrs. Patterson
Mrs. Limerick
Mr. John
Mr. Joaquin
Mr. Hoyte
Mr. Haynes
Mr. Fowler
Mr. Duncan
Mr. Corrica
Mr. Correia
Mr. Clarke
Mr. Chan-A-Sue
Mr. Carrington
Mr. Budhoo
Mr. Bissember
Mr. Bancroft
Miss Ackman
Mr. Aaron
Mr. Jordan
Dr. Reid
Mr. Burnham

Mr. Singh
Mr. Cheeks
Mrs. Branco
Mr. B. Persaud
Mr. Ambrose
Mr. R. Ally
Mrs. Sahoye
Mr. Teekah
Mr. Remington
Mr. Hamid
Mr. Lall
Mr. R.D. Persaud
Mr. M.Y. Ally
Mr. D. Jagan
Dr. Ramsahoye
Mr. Ram Karran
Mr. Wilson
Mr. Chandisingh

The Bill was then read a second time.

Assembly resolved itself into Committee to consider the Constitution of Guyana (Amendment) Bill, 1969, clause by clause.

In Committee

Clause 1 was passed as printed.

Clause 2

Mr. Ramkarran moved the following amendment:

The substitution of the word "three" for the words "six or such greater number as Parliament may prescribe" in the third and fourth lines.

Mr. R.D. Persaud and Mr. Wilson spoke to the motion.

Thereafter the question was put and negatived.

The question that Clause 2 should stand part of the Bill was then put and carried on the following division:

FOR

Mr. Zaheeruddeen
Mr. Wrights
Mr. Van Sluytman
Mr. Thomas
Mr. D.A. Singh
Mr. Salim
Mr. Saffee
Mr. Ramsaroop
Mrs. Patterson
Mrs. Limerick
Mr. John
Mr. Joaquin
Mr. Hoyte
Mr. Haynes
Mr. Fowler
Mr. Duncan
Mr. Corrica
Mr. Correia
Mr. Clarke
Mr. Chan-A-Sue
Mr. Carrington
Mr. Budhoo
Mr. Bissember
Mr. Bancroft
Miss Ackman
Mr. Aaron
Mr. Jordan
Dr. Reid
Mr. Burnham

29

AGAINST

Mr. Singh
Mrs. Branco
Mr. B. Persaud
Mr. Ambrose
Mr. R. Ally
Mrs. Sahoye
Mr. Teekah
Mr. Remington
Mr. Hamid
Mr. Iall
Mr. R.D. Persaud
Mr. M.Y. Ally
Mr. D. Jagan
Mr. Ram Karran
Mr. Wilson
Mr. Chandisingh

16

The question that the Bill be reported to the Assembly was put and carried.

Assembly resumed.

The Prime Minister reported the Bill to the Assembly and moved that the Bill be read the third time. The question was put and carried on the following division:-

FOR

Mr. Zaheeruddeen
Mr. Wrights
Mr. Van Sluytman
Mr. Thomas
Mr. D.A. Singh
Mr. Salim
Mr. Saffee
Mr. Ramsaroop
Mrs. Patterson
Mrs. Limerick
Mr. John
Mr. Joaquin
Mr. Hoyte
Mr. Haynes
Mr. Fowler
Mr. Duncan
Mr. Corrica
Mr. Correia
Mr. Clarke
Mr. Chan-A-Sue
Mr. Carrington
Mr. Budhoo
Mr. Bissember
Mr. Bancroft
Miss Ackman
Mr. Aaron
Mr. Jordan
Dr. Reid
Mr. Burnham

29

AGAINST

Mr. Singh
Mrs. Branco
Mr. B. Persaud
Mr. Ambrose
Mr. R. Ally
Mrs. Sahoye
Mr. Teekah
Mr. Remington
Mr. Hamid
Mr. Lall
Mr. R.D. Persaud
Mr. M.Y. Ally
Mr. D. Jagan
Mr. Ram Karran
Mr. Wilson
Mr. Chandisingh

16

The Bill was then read a third time.

ADJOURNMENT

At 4.20 p.m. on a motion by the Minister of Finance, the Assembly was adjourned to a date to be fixed.

