

BRITISH GUIANA

FIRST LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FIRST SESSION

1961 - 1962

MINUTES of the Proceedings of the 18th Sitting of the Legislative Assembly of the Colony of British Guiana under the British Guiana (Constitution) Order in Council, 1961, held in the Chamber of the Legislature at the Public Buildings, Georgetown, Demerara,

AT 2.00 P.M.

on

TUESDAY, 3RD APRIL, 1962.

PRESENT:

His Honour the Speaker, Mr. R.B. Gajraj.

(a) Members of the Government

People's Progressive Party

(i) Ministers

Dr. the Honourable C.B. Jagan,
Premier and Minister of Development and Planning.
The Honourable B.H. Benn,
Minister of Natural Resources.
The Honourable Ram Karran,
Minister of Works and Hydraulics.
The Honourable B.S. Rai,
Minister of Home Affairs.
The Honourable R. Chandisingh,
Minister of Labour, Health and Housing.
Dr. the Honourable Charles Jacob, Jr.,
Minister of Finance.
Dr. the Honourable F.H.W. Ramsahoye,
Attorney-General.
The Honourable E.M.G. Wilson,
Minister of Communications.

(ii) Parliamentary Secretaries

Mr. G. Bowman, Parliamentary Secretary to the
Ministry of Natural Resources.
Mr. L.E.M. Mann, Parliamentary Secretary to the
Ministry of Works and Hydraulics.

(iii) Other Members

Mr. S.M. Saffee
Mr. G.L. Robertson
Mr. M. Bhagwan
Mr. J.B. Caldeira
Mr. V. Downer
Mr. M. Hamid
Mr. D.C. Jagan
Mr. H. Lall
Mr. M. Shakoor

(b) Members Constituting the Minority

(i) People's National Congress

Mr. L.F.S. Burnham, Q.C.
Mr. W.O.R. Kendall, Deputy Speaker.
Mr. J. Carter
Mr. E.F. Correia

Mr. N.J. Bissember
 Mr. W.A. Blair
 Mr. F.S.S. Hugh
 Mr. J.G. Joaquim
 Mr. R.T. Jordan
 Mr. C.A. Merriman
 Mr. H.M.S. Wharton

(ii) United Force

Mr. P. d'Aguiar
 Mr. S. Campbell
 Mr. R.E. Cheeks
 Mr. E.E. Melville

Clerk of the Legislature - Mr. I. Crum Ewing.
 Assistant Clerk of the Legislature - Mr. E.V. Viapree.

PRAYERS

The Clerk read prayers.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS, ETC.

(a) By the Minister of Labour, Health and Housing:

(i) Minimum Wages (Saw Mill Workers)(Revocation)
 Order, 1962 (No. 21), made under section 8
 of the Labour Ordinance, Chapter 103, on
 the 1st of March, 1962.
 (L.56/12/22/1(IV))(Circulated).

(ii) Audited Statement of Receipts and Expenditure
 of the Georgetown Replanning Scheme for
 the period 1st August, 1961 to 31st
 January, 1962.
 (HTP: 342/36/2).

(b) By the Minister of Finance:

(i) Order No. 15 of 1962 made under section 8
 of the Customs Ordinance, Chapter 309,
 on the 21st day of February, 1962, and
 published in the Gazette on the 22nd of
 February, 1962.
 (G. 5/61)(Circulated).

(ii) Report of the Directors of the New Widows
 and Orphans' Fund on the working of the
 Fund for the year 1960.
 (G. 105/54).

QUESTIONS TO MINISTERS

Question No. 7

Mr. Jordan asked the Minister of Communications the
 following question:

QUESTION: Is the Honourable Minister of Communications
 aware that there is great need for a house-
 to-house postal delivery in the Government
 Wismar Hill Housing Scheme?
 If the answer is in the affirmative, will the
 Minister take immediate steps to initiate a
 house-to-house postal delivery?

The Minister of Communications gave the following reply:

ANSWER: I am aware that a substantial amount of mail is received for the 325 families who reside in the Wismar Hill Housing Scheme, which is a newly created area. It has not been possible to start a house-to-house mail delivery service in that area for the reason that the staff at the Wismar Post Office is not at present sufficiently strong in numbers to undertake the service. The services of an additional Rural Postal Assistant will be necessary but because of the need for stringent economy it has not been found possible to provide in the 1962 Draft Estimates for an additional Rural Postal Assistant for this specific delivery service. However, provision for certain increases in the Postal staff has been included in the 1962 Draft Estimates and after the Estimates have been passed the Director of Posts and Telecommunications will see what re-arrangement of staff is possible so that at least a thrice weekly delivery service for residents of the area can be provided.

Supplementary questions were asked by Mr. Burnham.

Question No. 8

Mr. Burnham asked the Minister of Home Affairs the following question:

QUESTION: Why has not the writ been issued for the by-election for the Houston Constituency?
When will it be issued?

The Minister of Home Affairs gave the following reply:

ANSWER: On the 27th November, 1961, the Honourable Mr. Justice Fraser declared void the election held in the Houston Constituency - Electoral District No. 23 - at which Mr. George McLinton Henry had been declared the duly elected candidate. The sole ground for declaring the election void was that Mr. Ashton Chase, the successful candidate's election agent, had committed the corrupt practice of aiding and abetting the personation of a voter.

2. At this date there were three other Representation Petitions pending and it was thought best to await the outcome of these Petitions before the election machinery was set up once again.

3. The last of these Petitions was disposed of on the 29th January, 1962, but before the election machinery could be fully set up, there was an outbreak of civil disturbances in the City and a Proclamation declaring a state of emergency throughout the whole country had to be issued by His Excellency the Governor on the 16th February, 1962.

ANSWER: 4. In the meantime, on the 8th March, 1962, (contd.) Mr. Chase was acquitted by a Jury of the offence which the Honourable Mr. Justice Fraser had found to have been committed by him and which was the cause of the avoidance of the election.

5. It is not considered desirable in the present state of the Emergency to hold a by-election. In addition, the legal implications of Mr. Chase's acquittal on the avoidance of the election are being studied by the Government. A further statement will be made in the near future.

A supplementary question was asked by Mr. Burnham.

INTRODUCTION OF BILL - First Reading.

CRIMINAL LAW (PROCEDURE)(AMENDMENT) BILL, 1962.
(L.A. Bill No. 9/1962 published 26.3.62).

The Attorney-General, on behalf of the Government, presented the following Bill and gave notice of his intention to move the suspension of the relevant Standing Order to enable him to proceed with the remaining stages of the Bill at that sitting:-

A BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CRIMINAL LAW (PROCEDURE) ORDINANCE.

The Bill was read the first time.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

BILL - Second and Third Readings.

Item 1 - CRIMINAL LAW (PROCEDURE)(AMENDMENT) BILL, 1962 -
L.A. Bill No. 9/1962.

The relevant Standing Order having been suspended, the BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CRIMINAL LAW (PROCEDURE) ORDINANCE was read a second time and was thereafter taken through its remaining stages and passed as printed.

MOTION

Item 2 - MOTION TO AUTHORIZE CONTRIBUTION TO THE UNITED
NATIONS SPECIAL FUND - AERIAL GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY
PROJECT.

On a motion by the Minister of Finance, the following Resolution was adopted:-

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Assembly authorizes the expenditure of ~~Thirty-two thousand~~, nine hundred and eighty dollars (\$32,980) for the initial contribution of the British Guiana Government to the United Nations Special Fund - Aerial Geophysical Survey Project.

In terms of Standing Order No. 21, the Governor's recommendation, signified by the Minister, was laid over.

BILL - Second Reading.Item 3 - APPROPRIATION BILL, 1962 - L.A. Bill No. 4/1962.

This being the first occasion on which the Assembly was to resume its consideration of the motion for the second reading of the Appropriation Bill following the presentation of the Budget Statement on the 31st January, 1962, permission was granted the Minister of Finance to read a Statement (copies of which were circulated thereafter) setting out the Government's modifications of its revenue proposals in the light of the representations received since the Budget was presented.

To afford Members some time to study the modifications, it was agreed to defer further consideration of the Appropriation Bill, 1962, and of the other related items on the Order Paper, until Monday, the 9th of April, 1962.

MOTIONItem 4 - MOTION TO CONFIRM CUSTOMS ORDER NO. 3 OF 1962.

On a motion by the Minister of Finance, the following Resolution was adopted:-

RESOLVED, That the Legislature in terms of section 9 of the Customs Ordinance, Chapter 309, confirms Order No. 3 of 1962 which was made on the 20th day of January, 1962 and published in the Gazette on the 27th of January, 1962.

BILL - Second and Third Readings.Item 5 - SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION 1960) BILL 1962 - L.A. Bill No. 7 19 2.

The BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE TO ALLOW AND CONFIRM CERTAIN ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURE INCURRED IN THE YEAR ENDED THE THIRTY-FIRST DAY OF DECEMBER, 1960, was read a second time and was thereafter taken through its remaining stages and passed as printed.

Suspension of Sitting

At 4.00 p.m. the sitting was suspended for tea.

Resumption of Sitting

At 4.40 p.m. the sitting was resumed.

BILL - Second and Third Readings.Item 6 - DEVELOPMENT FUND 1960 APPROPRIATION) BILL, 1962 L.A. Bill No. 8/1962

The BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE TO MAKE PROVISION FOR THE APPROPRIATION TO THE DEVELOPMENT FUND OF A CERTAIN SUM OF MONEY TRANSFERRED THERETO FROM THE REVENUES AND FUNDS OF THE COLONY, was read a second time and was thereafter taken through its remaining stages and passed as printed.

MOTIONSItem 7 - MOTION CONCERNING EXPENDITURE FOR REPLACEMENT OF THE BUXTON SEA SLUICE.

On a motion by the Minister of Finance, the following Resolution was adopted:-

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Assembly authorises the expenditure of fifteen thousand dollars for carrying out urgent works on the replacement of the Buxton Sea Sluice.

In terms of Standing Order No. 21, the Governor's recommendation, signified by the Minister, was laid over.

Item 8 - MOTION RE FINANCIAL PROVISION FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF LEGAL ADVISERS TO THE POLICE DEPARTMENT.

On a motion by the Minister of Finance, the following Resolution was adopted:-

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Assembly authorizes expenditure of \$9,000 to provide for the appointment of one Senior Legal Adviser and one Legal Adviser to the Police Department.

In terms of Standing Order No. 21, the Governor's recommendation, signified by the Minister, was laid over.

Item 9 - MOTION CONCERNING THE ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION PROGRAMME IN THE ESSEQUIBO DISTRICT.

On a motion by the Minister of Finance, the following Resolution was adopted:-

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Assembly authorizes the expenditure of ten thousand dollars for carrying out urgent works in connection with the Environmental Sanitation Programme in the Essequibo District.

In terms of Standing Order No. 21, the Governor's recommendation, signified by the Minister, was laid over.

Item 10 - MOTION CONCERNING THE 1962 PURE WATER SUPPLY PROGRAMME.

On a motion by the Minister of Finance, the following Resolution was adopted:-

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Assembly authorizes the expenditure of four hundred thousand dollars for the purchase of materials required for the 1962 Pure Water Supply Programme.

In terms of Standing Order No. 21, the Governor's recommendation, signified by the Minister, was laid over.

../ Item 11

