

BRITISH GUIANA

FIRST LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIRST SESSION

1961 - 1962

MINUTES of the Proceedings of the 38th 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

FRIDAY, 22ND JUNE, 1962.

PRESENT:

Mr. W.O.R. Kendall, Deputy Speaker - In the Chair.

(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 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 Finance.
Mr. S.M. Saffee, Parliamentary Secretary to the
Ministry of Works and Hydraulics.

(iii) Other Members

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. J. Carter
Mr. E.F. Correia
Mr. N.J. Bissember
Mr. W.A. Blair

Mr. J.G. Joaquim
 Mr. R.J. Jordan
 Mr. C.A. Merriman
 Mr. H.M.S. Wharton

(ii) United Force

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

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

Absent:

His Honour the Speaker, Mr. R.B. Gajraj - on leave.
 Mr. R.S.S. Hugh - on leave.
 Mr. E.E. Melville - on leave.
 Mr. B.S. Rai.

PRAYERS

The Clerk read prayers.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

(a) Letter re Minister of Home Affairs

The Deputy Speaker read a letter dated 21st June, 1962, from the acting Secretary to the Office of the Governor, informing him of the revocation of the appointment of Mr. B.S. Rai as Minister of Home Affairs with effect from 15th June, 1962, and of the appointment of Senator the Honourable Claude Christian as Minister of Home Affairs with effect from 15th June, 1962.

(b) Leave

The Deputy Speaker announced that leave had been granted to -

- (i) Mr. R.S.S. Hugh from that day's sitting; and
- (ii) Mr. E.E. Melville from 22nd June to 6th July.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS, ETC.

(a) By the Minister of Natural Resources:

- (i) Interim Report of the Special Select Committee appointed under Resolution No. XX of the 1st of February, 1962, together with the Minutes of Meetings held on 16th March, 21st and 22nd May, and 8th June, 1962. (LEG. 5/5/1)(Circulated).
- (ii) Report of the Second Commonwealth Education Conference, New Delhi, India: 11 - 25 January, 1962. (Circulated).

(b) By the Attorney-General:

- (i) Annual Report of the Commissioner of the Interior for the year 1960. (M: 219/4^V)(Circulated).
- (ii) Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police for the year 1960. (P. 77/11^{VIII})(Circulated).

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

Report of the Advisory Committee appointed by His Excellency the Governor to enquire into a dispute between the Sugar Estates Clerks' Association and the British Guiana Sugar Producers' Association and to make recommendations.

(L: 56/4/5/1)(Circulated).

(d) By the Minister of Finance:

Statement of Loans from Voted Expenditure written-off during the period ended 31st December, 1961.

(MFT. 9)(Circulated).

(e) By Mr. S.M. Saffee, Chairman Public Accounts Committee:

Report of the Public Accounts Committee of the Legislative Assembly on the Director of Audit's Report on the Accounts of the Transport and Harbours Department for the year ended 31st December, 1960.

(LEG. 5/6/2)^{II}(Circulated).

QUESTIONS TO MINISTERS

Question No. 11

Mr. Campbell asked the Minister of Natural Resources the following question:

QUESTION: Is Government aware that during September, 1961, the Director of the Marketing Division informed coffee growers in the North West District that Government was arranging for the establishment of a Coffee Board to be run on similar lines to the Rice Marketing Board, and that coffee would be processed in three grades at prices of 45¢, 35¢ and 25¢ per pound in the three grades?

If so, will the Minister inform the House what arrangements are being made for implementing this Scheme?

The Minister of Natural Resources gave the following reply:

ANSWER: Yes, Sir.

The Ministry has been taking steps to implement the Scheme. In particular, the Ministry has been examining the legislation which has been passed by neighbouring territories, establishing Coffee Boards and it is hoped that draft legislation will shortly be prepared for introduction in this House. Concurrently, the Minister has also been examining proposals for appropriate accommodation for the Coffee Board when it is established, the possibility of the Board undertaking the processing of the coffee beans and most important, the possible sources for providing the finance for the Board.

It should be pointed out that the prices which the Director of Marketing announced are prices which were suggested as being economic ones by the Department of Agriculture at the time. However, the Government would not wish to and could not commit in advance of its establishment, the prices which the Coffee Board would have the power to fix for farmers' coffee. The prices will be related to grades and ruling export prices and the Board will have to fix grades with the approval of the Director of Agriculture.

Supplementary questions were asked by Mr. Campbell.

Question No. 15

Mr. Wharton asked the Minister of Labour, Health and Housing the following question:

QUESTION: When will Government place pipe lines along the east side line dam of Lichfield Village, West Coast, Berbice, so that the Health Centre and the Mortuary may be served with pure water?

The Minister of Labour, Health and Housing gave the following reply:

ANSWER: Provision has been made for this work in the 1962 Development Estimates and it will be carried out at an early date.

Question No. 16

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

QUESTION: Is Government aware that several residents in the Trafalgar 29 and 30 Village areas get their letters three to five days after they reach the Fort Wellington Post Office? If so, when does Government propose to have this situation improved?

The Minister of Communications gave the following reply:

ANSWER: There have been a few reports that mails arriving at the Fort Wellington Post Office were not being delivered the same day. This appears to have resulted from the strict control which is being exercised in relation to overtime payments to postal employees.

The situation at the Fort Wellington Post Office was examined and suitable arrangements have been made to ensure that letters reach their destination not later than the day after their receipt at the Post Office.

Question No. 17

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

QUESTION: When will a house to house delivery of mails be introduced between Sisters Post Office and Pln. Mara on the East Bank, Berbice River?

The Minister of Communications gave the following reply:

ANSWER: It is not proposed to introduce a daily house to house delivery of mails in the entire area between Sisters Postal Agency and Mara Settlement on the right bank of the Berbice River. A house to house delivery service has for some time been in operation between Sisters and Lighttown which is 4½ miles away from the Sisters Postal Agency. Mara itself, at the

ANSWER: end of the road, is served by a Postal Agency (Contd.) and a thrice-weekly service has recently been started between Vigilante and Mara. The possibility of starting a thrice-weekly service in the intervening area (i.e. between Lighttown and Vigilante) is under active consideration and it is hoped to make an announcement about this very shortly.

Supplementary questions were asked by Mr. Burnham.

Question No. 18

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

QUESTION: When will the M.V. Lukanani now operating on the Berbice River route be replaced by a boat with more cargo space and better accommodation for passengers?

The Minister of Communications gave the following reply:

ANSWER: The need for improving the Berbice River Steamer service is recognised but because of an acute shortage of ships there is no certainty that this service can be improved within the near future though ways and means of doing so are under constant examination. In any event, however, it should be possible to provide a larger ship for this service when the third new ferry vessel, which is due for completion about the end of the year, is brought into service.

Question No. 19

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

QUESTION: When will a boat with better accommodation for passengers be provided for the Kwakwani and Canje Creek routes?

The Minister of Communications gave the following reply:

ANSWER: The Kwakwani and the Canje Creek areas are served by the same launch which was designed to operate in the peculiar conditions obtaining in the Canje Creek. The heavy growth of Missouri grass in this creek makes it impracticable to use a larger vessel. I am advised that experiments are now in progress to determine whether this grass can be controlled or completely eliminated by the use of modern weedicides. Should these experiments prove successful, the arrangements for transport service will be re-examined.

Supplementary questions were asked by Mr. Blair.

Bill from the Senate - First Reading.

MINING (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1962.
(Bill No. 13/1962 (S) published 9.6.62).

The Deputy Speaker informed the Assembly of the receipt of the following Bill which had been passed by the Senate on the 4th of June, 1962:

A BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE
MINING ORDINANCE.

He added that the Minister of Natural Resources had signified his willingness to take charge of the Bill.

The Bill was read the first time.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS - First Reading.

PENSIONS (CONSOLIDATION)(AMENDMENT) BILL, 1962.
(Bill No. 15/1962 (L.A.) published 2.6.62).

The Minister of Finance, on behalf of the Government, presented the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE
PENSIONS (CONSOLIDATION) ORDINANCE, 1957.

The Bill was read the first time.

MOTOR VEHICLES AND ROAD TRAFFIC (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1962.
(Bill No. 14/1962 (L.A.) published 2.6.62).

The Minister of Communications, on behalf of the Government, presented the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE MOTOR
VEHICLES AND ROAD TRAFFIC ORDINANCE.

The Bill was read the first time.

PUBLIC BUSINESSMOTIONS

Item 1 - MOTION TO ADOPT INTERIM REPORT OF THE SELECT
COMMITTEE RE INDEPENDENCE AND TO APPROVE OF
THE NAME "GUYANA".

On a motion by the Minister of Natural Resources, the Assembly adopted the following Resolution:

RESOLVED, That the Interim Report of the Select Committee appointed in terms of Legislative Assembly Resolution No. XX of the 1st February, 1962, to deal with matters relating to Independence, be adopted.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That this Legislative Assembly approves of the name "GUYANA" for this territory on its attaining Independence.

Item 2 - MOTION TO REFER A REPORT OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY TO THE GOVERNMENT FOR CONSIDERATION.

On a motion by Mr. Saffee, Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, the Assembly adopted the following Resolution:

RESOLVED, That the Report of the Public Accounts Committee of the Legislative Assembly on the Director of Audit's Report on the Accounts of the Transport and Harbours Department for the year ended 31st December, 1960 be referred to the Government for its consideration.

Item 3 - MOTION CONCERNING THE SUSPENSION OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE ISLAND OF GRENADA.

On a motion by Mr. Bhagwan, Standing Order No. 23(3) was suspended to enable him to move the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this Legislative Assembly places on record an expression of its deep concern and profound regret at the action taken by Her Majesty's Government in the suspension of the Constitution of the Island of Grenada.

Mr. Lall seconded the motion but reserved his right to speak at a later stage.

Mr. Campbell, Mr. Bissember and Mr. Cheeks spoke to the motion.

Mr. Burnham moved and Mr. Joaquim seconded the insertion of the following second resolve clause:-

"AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies."

Mr. d'Aguiar spoke.

Mr. Bhagwan accepted Mr. Burnham's amendment.

Thereafter, the motion as amended was put and carried on the following division:

../ FOR

FOR

Mr. Wharton
 Mr. Merriman
 Mr. Jordan
 Mr. Joaquim
 Mr. Blair
 Mr. Bissember
 Mr. Carter
 Mr. Burnham
 Mr. Shakoor
 Mr. Lall
 Mr. Jagan
 Mr. Hamid
 Mr. Downer
 Mr. Caldeira
 Mr. Bhagwan
 Mr. Robertson
 Mr. Saffee
 Mr. Mann
 Mr. Bowman
 Mr. Wilson
 Dr. Ramsahoye
 Dr. Jacob
 Mr. Chandisingh
 Mr. Ram Karran
 Mr. Benn
 Dr. Jagan

26AGAINST

Mr. Cheeks
 Mr. Campbell
 Mr. d'Aguiar

3BILIS - Second and Third Readings.Item 4 - MINING (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1962 - Bill No. 13/1962(S).

Standing Order No. 46(2) was suspended to enable the Assembly to proceed with the remaining stages of the BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE MINING ORDINANCE.

On a motion by the Minister of Natural Resources, the Bill was then read a second time and was thereafter taken through its remaining stages and passed as printed.

Item 5 - PENSIONS (CONSOLIDATION)(AMENDMENT) BILL, 1962 - Bill No. 15/1962(L.A.)

Standing Order No. 46(2) was suspended to enable the Assembly to proceed with the remaining stages of the BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE PENSIONS (CONSOLIDATION) ORDINANCE, 1957.

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

On a motion by the Minister, the Bill was then read a second time and was thereafter taken through its remaining stages and passed with the following amendment in Committee:

Clause 2: Paragraph (a): Inserted - the word "any" after the word "includes".

Extension of Sitting

At 4.00 p.m., on a motion by the Minister of Natural Resources, in terms of Standing Order No. 9(6), the sitting was extended for a short while.

Item 6 - MOTOR VEHICLES AND ROAD TRAFFIC (AMENDMENT) BILL,
1962 - Bill No. 14/1962 (L.A.).

Standing Order No. 46(2) was suspended to enable the Assembly to proceed with the remaining stages of the BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE MOTOR VEHICLES AND ROAD TRAFFIC ORDINANCE.

On a motion by the Minister of Communications, the Bill was then read a second time and was thereafter taken through its remaining stages and passed as printed.

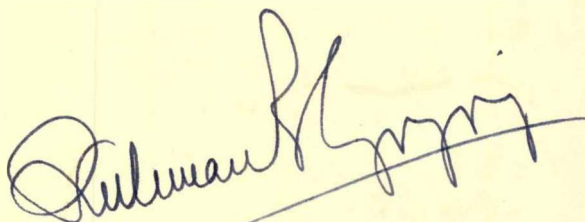
Expression of Thanks to Deputy Speaker.

Before the adjournment was taken, the Minister of Natural Resources (the Honourable B.H. Benn) intimated that His Honour the Speaker was returning to the Colony on Sunday, 24th June, and on behalf of the Members, expressed thanks to the Deputy Speaker for the manner in which he had conducted the sittings of the Assembly during the absence of Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker thanked the Minister for the kind sentiments expressed and also the Clerk of the Legislature for his advice and assistance given during the time that he occupied the Chair.

ADJOURNMENT

At 4.10 p.m., on a motion by the Minister of Natural Resources, the Assembly was adjourned to 2.00 p.m. on Friday, the 29th of June, 1962, when it was proposed to consider Supplementary Estimates and to introduce the National Development Savings Levy Bill, 1962.



Speaker .

PUBLIC BUILDINGS,
 Georgetown.

26th June, 1962.