

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

OF THE 13TH SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST
SESSION (1986) OF THE FIFTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD

AT 14:00 HRS

ON WEDNESDAY 1986-06-04

IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, GEORGETOWN

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (73)

Speaker (1)

*Cde. Sase Narain, O.R., S.C., J.P., M.P., Speaker of the National Assembly

Members of the Government - People's National Congress (61)

Ministers in the Cabinet (10)

Prime Minister (1)

Cde. H. Green, M.P., Prime Minister

Other Vice-President and First Deputy Prime Minister (1)

Cde. Dr. M. Shahabuddeen, O.R., S.C., M.P., Vice-President, First Deputy Prime Minister and Attorney General

Other Vice-Presidents and Deputy Prime Ministers (2)

Cde. R. Chandisingh, M.P., Vice-President, National Mobilisation, and Deputy Prime Minister

Cde. Viola V. Burnham, O.R., M.P., Vice-President, Education and Social Development, and Deputy Prime Minister

Other Deputy Prime Ministers (2)

Cde. W.A.L.H. Parris, C.C.H., M.P., Deputy Prime Minister, Planning and Development

Cde. R.H.O. Corbin, M.P., Deputy Prime Minister, Agriculture

Senior Ministers (4)

Cde. R.E. Jackson, M.P., Minister of Foreign Affairs (Absent - on leave)

*Cde. C.B. Greenidge, M.P., Minister of Finance

Cde. S. Prashad, M.P., Minister of Transport

*Cde. W.S. Murray, C.C.H., M.P., Minister of Trade

Other Ministers (11)

Senior Ministers (3)

Cde. J.R. Thomas, M.P., Minister of Manpower, Housing and Environment (Absent - on leave)

Cde. Dr. R.A. Van West-Charles, M.P., Minister of Health

Cde. Yvonne V. Harewood-Benn, M.P., Minister of Information and the Public Service

Ministers (4)

Cde. Urmia E.H. Johnson, M.P., Minister within the Ministry of National Mobilisation

*Cde. R.C. Fredericks, A.A., M.P., Minister of Youth and Sport within the Ministry of Education

Cde. C.G. Sharma, A.A., J.P., M.P., Minister within the Office of the President

*Cde. D.M.A. Bernard, M.P., Minister within the Ministry of Education

*Non-elected Member

Ministers of State (4)

- *Cde. D.A.N. Ainsworth, M.P., Minister of State within the Ministry of Manpower, Housing and Environment
- Cde. J.T. Kissoon, M.P., Minister of State within the Ministry of Agriculture
- Cde. D. Sawh, M.P., Minister of State within the Ministry of Forestry
- *Cde. Dr. Faith A. Harding, M.P., Minister of State within the Ministry of Planning and Development

Parliamentary Secretaries (3)

- Cde. A.K. Habibulla, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Office of the President
- Cde. Stella Odie-Ali, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Home Affairs
- *Cde. Jean M.G. Persico, A.A., Parliamentary Secretary, Education (Absent - on leave)

Government Chief Whip (1)

- Cde. Jennifer A. Ferreira, M.P., Government Chief Whip

Other Members (24)

- Cde. R.E. Williams, M.P.
- Cde. Agnes W. Bend-Kirton-Holder, M.P. (Absent - on leave)
- Cde. E.H.A. Fowler, M.P.
- Cde. Joyce Gill-Mingo, M.P.
- Cde. M. Ally, M.P.
- Cde. Bissoondai Beniprashad-Rayman, M.P.
- Cde. Elaine B. Davidson, M.P.
- Cde. H. Doobay, M.P.
- Cde. Joyce M. Munroe, J.P., M.P.
- Cde. Edwina Melville, M.P. (Absent - on leave)
- Cde. Anna Ally, M.P.
- Cde. L.R. Arthur, M.P.
- Cde. J.R.L. Bovell-Drakes, M.P.
- Cde. N. Calistro, M.P.
- Cde. G.W. Chin, J.P., M.P.
- Cde. F.M. Cumberbatch, M.P.
- Cde. M.I. Deen, M.P.
- Cde. Cyrilda A. DeJesus, M.P.
- Cde. Edith Deygoon, M.P.
- Cde. Clarice A. Edwards, M.P.
- Cde. C.L. Geddes, M.P.
- Cde. G. Marshall, M.P.
- Cde. B. Persaud, M.P.
- Cde. E.W. Trotman, M.P.

Members from the National Congress of Local Democratic Organs (2)

- Cde. E. Mohamed, M.P.
- Cde. Rose I. Semple, M.P.

Members from the Regional Democratic Councils (10)

- Cde. Nellie R. Charles, M.P. (Region No. 7 - Cuyuni/Mazaruni) (Absent - on leave)
- Cde. R. Bishop, M.S., M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)
- Cde. Bhagmatee Latchminarayan, M.P. (Region No. 5 - Mahaica/Berbice)
- Cde. Y. Khan, M.P. (Region No. 2 - Pomerom/Supenaam)
- Cde. Enid E. Abrahams, M.S., J.P., M.P. (Region No. 3 - Essequibo Islands/West Demerara)
- Cde. I. Ally, M.F. (Region No. 6 - East Berbice/Corentyne)
- Cde. Patricia A. Daniel, M.P. (Region No. 10 - Upper Demerara/Berbice)
- Cde. B.L. Domingo, M.P. (Region No. 1 - Barima/Waini) (Absent - on leave)
- Cde. S.I. McGarrell, M.P. (Region No. 8 - Potaro/Siparuni)
- Cde. M. Stephens, M.P. (Region No. 9 - Upper Takutu/Upper Essequibo) (Absent - on leave)

*Non-elected Member

Members of the Minority (11)

(i) People's Progressive Party (8)

Minority Leader (1)

Cde. Dr. C. Jagan, M.P., Minority Leader

Deputy Speaker (1)

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud, J.P., M.P., Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly

Other Members (6)

Cde. Janet Jagan, M.P.
Cde. C.C. Collymore, M.P. (Absent)
Cde. S.F. Mohamed, M.P., Minority Chief Whip
Cde. H. Nokta, M.P.
Cde. I. Basir, M.P. (Absent - on leave)
Cde. C.C. Belgrave, M.P. (Absent)

(ii) United Force (2)

Mr. M.F. Singh, C.C.H., J.P., M.P. (Absent - on leave)
Mr. M.A. Abraham, M.P.

(iii) Working People's Alliance (1)

Mr. E. Kwayana, M.P.

OFFICERS

Cde. F.A. Narain, A.A., Clerk of the National Assembly
Cde. M.B. Henry, Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly

PRAYERS

The Clerk read Prayers.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

(i) Leave

The Speaker announced that leave had been granted to -

- (a) Cde. Jackson to the end of the week,
- (b) Cde. Thomas to 15th June,
- (c) Cde. Stephens to 14th June,
- (d) Cde. Melville to 11th August,

and

- (e) Cdes. Persico, Bend-Kirton-Holder, Nellie Charles, Domingo, McGarrell, Basir, and Mr. M.F. Singh for that day's sitting.

(ii) Acting Leader of the House

The Speaker informed the Assembly that he had been advised that during the absence of Cde. Thomas, Cde. Yvonne Harewood-Benn, Minister of Information and the Public Service, would be performing the duties of Leader of the House. He extended congratulations to Cde. Harewood-Benn.

(iii) Death of Cde. Albert McRae

The Speaker informed the Assembly that he had learnt of the death of a former Member of Parliament, Cde. Albert McRae. He was advised that at its next sitting, the Assembly would deal with a motion on the matter.

(iv) Gift of "Canadian Encyclopedia" from Canadian High Commissioner

The Speaker announced that the Parliament Office had received on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of Guyana's attainment of Independence, from the Canadian High Commissioner in Georgetown, a gift of three volumes comprising the Canadian Encyclopedia, for the Parliament Library. The volumes had been acknowledged and their grateful thanks had been conveyed to the High Commissioner. The three volumes of the Encyclopedia had been taken into the records and were available for Members who might wish to consult them.

(v) Five-day Work Week - New Working Hours

The Speaker, observing that the normal official working hours of the Parliament Office had been the same as those in the Public Service, informed the Assembly that with the introduction by the Government of a five-day work week from 2nd June, 1986, Ministries and Government Departments and certain Agencies would no longer be opened on Saturdays and new working hours had been proposed for the other working days. The new working hours from Monday to Thursday were from 8.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon and 1.00 p.m. to 4.30 p.m., and on Friday from 8.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon and from 1.00 p.m. to 3.30 p.m. He said that unless it was otherwise decided, the Parliament Office would also be using these new working hours. Members of the National Assembly were, therefore, asked to note the new working hours of the Parliament Office.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS, ETC.

(1) By the Prime Minister:

- (i) Annual Report of the Guyana Fire Service
for the year 1984.

(HA: 1/1/3)(Circulated)

- (ii) Annual Report of the Ministry of Co-operatives
for the year 1985.

(MC: 5/0)(Circulated)

(2) By the Deputy Prime Minister, Agriculture:

- Annual Report of the Ministry of Forestry
for the year 1985.

(FOR: 14/7)(Circulated)

(3) By the Minister of Finance:

- (i) Consumption Tax (Amendment) (No. 2) Order 1986 (No. 21), made under section 4 of the Consumption Tax Act, Chapter 80:02, on 17th April, 1986, and published in the Gazette on 26th April, 1986.
(ST: 34/2/1/9)(Circulated)
- (ii) Financial Paper No. 1/1986 - Schedule of supplementary Provision on the Current and Capital Estimates totalling \$33,056,388, for the period ended 1985-12-19 (Advances made from the Contingencies Fund in 1985).
(ST: 10/4^{IV})(Circulated)
- (iii) Financial Paper No. 2/1986 - Schedule of Supplementary Provision on the Current and Capital Estimates totalling \$100,705,322, for the period ended 1985-12-31.
(ST: 10/4^{IV})(Circulated)
- (iv) Financial Paper No. 3/1986 - Schedule of Supplementary Provision on the Current and Capital Estimates totalling \$229,896,616, for the period ended 1986-05-23.
(ST: 10/4^{IV})(Circulated)

In terms of Standing Order No. 68(1), the Minister of Finance named Thursday 1986-06-12 as the day for consideration of the Financial Papers in Committee of Supply.

(4) By the Minister of Information and the Public Service, on behalf of the Minister of Manpower, Housing and Environment:

- (i) Annual Report of the Ministry of Health and Public Welfare (Housing) for the year 1985.
(Circulated)
- (ii) Annual Report of the Ministry of Manpower and Co-operatives for the year 1985.
(L:7/1/42)(Circulated)

(5) By the Minister of Information and the Public Service:

- (i) Annual Report of the Public Service Ministry for the year 1985.
(PS: 14/1/24^{IV})(Circulated)
- (ii) Annual Report of the Ministry of Information for the year 1985.
(MI: 18/4^{III})(Circulated)

QUESTIONS TO MINISTERS

No. 1 - Ministry of Education - Heroes, etc.

Mr. Kwayana asked the Vice-President, Education and Social Development, and Deputy Prime Minister, the following question:

QUESTION: In view of the statement by the Parliamentary Secretary, Education, in the National Assembly on February 6, 1986, and in order that education may be regarded as a matter under public control, will the Minister list the heroes and the false prophets who to date have been identified by the Ministry of Education?

The Vice-President, Education and Social Development, and Deputy Prime Minister, gave the following reply:-

ANSWER: During the presentation of the Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Education, Social Development and Culture in the National Assembly on February 6, 1986, it was said that the curriculum of our schools today is required to offer opportunities for creating and fostering good habits as well as for building character. Consequent upon this, moral and spiritual values are highlighted in subjects such as Social Studies, History and Literature. Students learn not only about events and struggles, causes and consequences; they learn also about the men and women who took part in them - those whose outstanding intellectual, physical and moral strength furthered the struggle or won the victory as well as those, who in ignorance or by deliberate intent, hindered or betrayed the cause. Heroes are usually found among the former and false prophets among the latter.

Thus, in essence, their powers of critical thinking are encouraged and developed.

It is expected that they will reach the stage, which unfortunately some of us never reached, of discovering for themselves the heroes and false prophets whose qualities are incontrovertible and transcend all limits of space and time.

It is not necessary, therefore, to compile lists, for our educators are carrying out an exercise not in rote-learning but, in critical thinking.

Mr. Kwayana asked a supplementary question.

No. 2 - Action Programme for Economic Recovery

Mr. Kwayana asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Planning and Development, the following question:

QUESTION: (i) Will the Minister confirm or deny that Government in or around 1982 established an Action Programme purporting to aim at the economic recovery of Guyana?

- (ii) If the answer is yes, will the Minister say whether the IBRD and the IMF have officially received copies of the Action Programme?
- (iii) Will the Minister consider laying the Action Programme, if there is an Action Programme, on the table thus making it available to members of the National Assembly?

The Deputy Prime Minister, Planning and Development, gave the following reply:-

ANSWER: (i) A statement of Government's Action Programme was prepared in 1982. It was dated May 25, 1982.

(ii) The IBRD was officially given a copy of the statement referred to in the previous answer. The IMF did not officially receive a copy from the Government.

(iii) The statement can be obtained by any member of the National Assembly who wishes it by simply asking the Deputy Prime Minister, Planning and Development, who will be pleased to make a copy available.

However, since the statement is dated May 25, 1982, no useful purpose can be served in laying the statement before the Assembly, especially since all further analyses on this matter, dealing with the problem in much greater detail, are contained in the Annual Budget Speeches of 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985 and 1986.

Mr. Kwayana asked a supplementary question:

No. 3 - Livestock Feeds

Mr. Kwayana asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Agriculture, the following question:

QUESTION: Will the Minister say with reference to milling facilities in the public sector:

- (i) How many bags or other units of livestock feeds were produced by GRMMA (Burma) from January 1, 1985 to December 31, 1985?
- (ii) Will the Minister further say how many bags or other units were sold in each month
 - (a) to wholesalers,
 - (b) to retailers,
 - (c) to direct consumers?
- (iii) Will the Minister also say what is the largest quantity sold in each month of the year 1985, whether variable or not, to the same purchaser?
- (iv) Will the Minister say whether the terms of sale of these products are uniformly cash?

The Deputy Prime Minister, Agriculture, gave the following reply:-

ANSWER: (i) From January 1, 1985 to December 31, 1985, the following units of livestock feed were produced:

BRAN (a) 140 lbs. bags - 97

(b) 70 lbs. bags - 208629

BROKEN RICE 110 lbs. bags - 129,593

(ii) (a) With the exception of the R.D.C. of Region 4 all Bran was sold to consumers.

Broken Rice is sold mainly to Guyana Stockfeeds Ltd. hence 75% of 1985 production was sold to them.

(b) The following is a monthly breakdown of Bran Sales:

January	16963	(39 bags	140 lbs.
February	- 12895	(13 "	- 140 lbs.
March	- 13328	(28 "	- 140 lbs.
April	12616	(21 "	- 140 lbs
May	- 17192		
June	- 15800		
July	- 15408		
August	- 12822		
September	- 19317		
October	- 15372		
November	- 14407		
December	- 16336		

182456

(iii) These are O.T.C. Sales and therefore transactions are not recorded with sufficient detail to permit an answer to the question.

(iv) With the exception of Guyana Stockfeeds Limited the terms of sale are cash.

No. 4 - P.N.C. Appointments of Former Ministers, etc.

The Minority Leader asked the Minister of Finance the following question:

QUESTION: Will the Minister say whether the following appointments are intended to rank as Government appointments with all the accompanying perquisites, including the allocation and use of a State car, and if so, will he say under what Financial Regulation and Head of Estimates of Expenditure the persons named are being paid, and what are their salaries?

(i) Cde. Harun Rashid (former Minister of Energy and Mines), as Head of the Department of National Production within the People's National Congress

- (ii) Cde Kenneth W.E. Denny (former Minister of Manpower and Co-operatives), as Senior Executive Secretary and Head of the Department of Party Affairs and Mass Organisations within the People's National Congress.
- (iii) Cde. Malcolm Corrica (former Minister of State within the Ministry of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection), as Co-ordinator with special responsibilities for the Development of Culture, Department of National Orientation and International Relations within the People's National Congress.
- (iv) Cde. Agnes W. Bend-Kirton-Holder (former Parliamentary Secretary, Housing), as Projects Officer of the Women's Revolutionary Socialist Movement and Trade Union Affairs within the People's National Congress.

The Minister of Finance gave the following reply:

ANSWER: Since, as is recognised by the question, the appointments to which it refers are to positions within the People's National Congress and are therefore not Government appointments, the related terms of employment are a matter for the People's National Congress.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Presentation and First Reading

SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION (1985) Bill 1986 - Bill No. 7/1986

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

A Bill intituled An Act to provide for the authorisation of the issue during the financial year ended on the 31st December, 1985 from the Consolidated Fund of moneys expended for any purpose in excess of the amount appropriated for that purpose by the Appropriation Act 1985 or for a purpose for which no amount has been appropriated by that Act, a statement of excess whereof has been approved by the National Assembly, and for the inclusion under appropriate heads of the sums in question, in conformity with the Constitution.

PUBLIC BUSINESSMOTIONSITEM 1 - SYMPATHY ON DEATH OF CDE. A.I. CRUM EWING, A.A.

The Minister of Information and the Public Service moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly expresses its deep regret at the death of Cde. Alexander Irving Crum Ewing, A.A., Honorary Officer of Parliament, and pays tribute to the distinguished service which he rendered as Clerk of the Legislature, and directs that an expression of its sympathy be conveyed to his sorrowing widow and children.

The Minority Leader spoke to the motion.

The motion was, thereafter, put and carried with Members standing in silence for one minute.

ITEM 2 - RESPONSIBILITY FOR WOMEN'S AFFAIRS

Mr. Kwayana moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly, noting the assignment of responsibilities as notified in the Official Gazette (Extraordinary) of January 18, 1986, and without any motive of questioning the competence of the Minister, is of the opinion that the assignment to the Minister concerned of responsibility for mobilisation of women for development and progress, Women's Bureau, all matters relating to the well being of women, funds established by law for the well being of women and allied responsibilities, is ill advised, savours of tutelage on grounds of gender, fails to reflect the aspirations of Guyanese womanhood and ought to be revised.

There being no seconder of the motion, the Speaker did not propose it.

ITEM 3 - RESPONSIBILITY FOR WORKERS' EDUCATION UNIT

Mr. Kwayana moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That in the opinion of this National Assembly, it is inappropriate for the Honourable Vice-President, National Mobilisation and Deputy Prime Minister, who is also General Secretary and Deputy Leader of the People's National Congress, the Party in Government, to be assigned responsibility for the Workers' Education Unit.

The Deputy Speaker seconded the motion.

The Vice-President, First Deputy Prime Minister and Attorney General spoke to the motion.

Thereafter Mr. Kwayana replied.

The Prime Minister concluded the debate on the motion.

The motion was put and negatived.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 16:00 hrs, the sitting was suspended for refreshments.

At 16:30 hrs the sitting was resumed.

ITEM 4 - RESPONSIBILITY FOR WELL-BEING OF YOUNG PERSONS AND CHILDREN

Mr. Kwayana moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly, noting the assignment of portfolios and responsibilities by His Excellency the President as notified in the Official Gazette (Extraordinary) of January 18, 1986, and without any motive of questioning the competence of the Honourable Minister concerned is of the opinion that the assignment of responsibility for the well-being of young persons and children and their development and advancement to the same person who is charged with responsibility for National Mobilisation and is known to be General Secretary of the People's National Congress and Deputy Leader of that party may sharply conflict with parental choice and the accepted principle of individual freedom.

The Deputy Speaker seconded the motion.

The Vice President, First Deputy Prime Minister and Attorney General spoke to the motion.

Thereafter Mr. Kwayana replied.

The motion was put and negatived.

ITEM 5 DISCRIMINATION ON GROUNDS OF SEX OR GENDER

Mr. Kwayana moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That in the opinion of this National Assembly, the fundamental rights in the Guyana Constitution, in particular Article 149 of that Constitution, do not guarantee the right of freedom from discrimination on the grounds of sex or gender and ought to be amended to correct this omission.

The Deputy Speaker seconded the motion and reserved the right to speak at a later stage.

The Vice President, First Deputy Prime Minister and Attorney General spoke to the motion.

Thereafter Mr. Kwayana replied.

The Vice President, First Deputy Prime Minister and Attorney General concluded the debate on the motion.

The motion was put and negatived.

ITEM 6 - OTHER INCOME ACTIVITIES OF POLICE

Mr. Kwayana moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That the existing laws restricting members of the Police Force of Guyana, and also members of their families, from carrying on legitimate business or from residing at any premises where a family member carries on business may have driven members of the Police Force into other forms of income earning and ought to be re-examined by a committee of this National Assembly to establish after full consideration whether there is a need for revision with a view to correcting abuses.

The Deputy Speaker seconded the motion.

The Parliamentary Secretary, Home Affairs, and the Vice-President, First Deputy Prime Minister and Attorney General spoke to the motion.

The motion was put and negatived.

ITEM 7 - DEDUCTIONS FROM WAGES AND SALARIES OF THE DISCIPLINED SERVICES

Mr. Kwayana moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly appoint a Committee to examine fully the practices of imposing fines on members of the Guyana Defence Force and other units of the joint forces and of authorised and unauthorised deductions from their wages and salaries and of the procedure involved in making such or other levies on their wages and salaries.

Cde. S.F. Mohamed seconded the motion.

The Prime Minister spoke to the motion.

Thereafter Mr. Kwayana replied.

The Prime Minister concluded the debate on the motion.

The motion was put and negatived.

ITEM 8 - AFFIRMATION OF THE CONSUMPTION TAX (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2)
ORDER 1986 (No. 21)

The Minister of Finance moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly affirm the Consumption Tax (Amendment) (No. 2) Order 1986 (No. 21), which was made under section 4 of the Consumption Tax Act, Chapter 80:02, on 17th April, 1986, and published in the Gazette on 26th April, 1986.

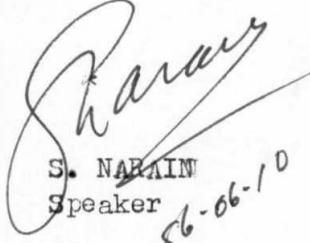
The Deputy Speaker and Mr. Kwayana spoke to the motion.

Thereafter the Minister of Finance replied.

The motion was put and carried.

ADJOURNMENT

At 18:40 hrs, on a motion by the Minister of Information and the Public Service, the Assembly was adjourned to 14:00 hrs on Thursday 1986-06-12.


S. NARAIN
Speaker

86-06-10

PARLIAMENT OFFICE,
Public Buildings,
Georgetown.

1986-06-10