

THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
OFFICIAL REPORTS

[Volume 7]

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY OF THE THIRD PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA UNDER THE
CONSTITUTION OF GUYANA.

209 th Sitting	2 p.m.	Monday, 24 th March, 1980
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MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (63)

Speaker

*Cde. Sase Narain, O.R., J.P., Speaker

Members of the Government – People’s National Congress (46)

Prime Minister (1)

Cde. L.F.S. Burnham, O.E., S.C.,
Prime Minister (Absent)

Deputy Prime Minister (1)

Cde. P.A. Reid, O.E.,
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of
National Development

Senior Ministers (11)

Cde. H.D. Hoyte, S.C.,
Minister of Economic Development and Co-operatives (Absent – on Leave)

Cde. S.S. Naraine, A.A.,
Minister of Works and Transport

Cde. B. Ramsaroop,
Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Leader of the House

Cde. C.V. Mingo,
Minister of Home Affairs

Cde. H. Green,
Minister of Health, Housing and Labour (Absent)

Cde. H.O. Jack,
Minister of Energy and Natural Resources (Absent)

Cde. F.E. Hope,
Minister of Finance (Absent)

Cde. G.B. Kennard, C.C.H.,
Minister of Agriculture (Absent)

Cde. M. Shahabuddeen, C.C.H., O.R., S.C.,
Attorney General and Minister of Justice

Cde. R.E. Jackson,
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Cde. J.A. Tyndall, A.A.,
Minister of Trade and Consumer Protection (Absent)

Ministers (2)

Cde. O.E. Clarke,
Minister – Regional
(East Berbice/Corentyne)

Cde. C.A. Nascimento,
Minister, Office of the Prime Minister (Absent – on leave)

*Non-elected Ministers

Ministers of State (10)

- Cde. F.U.A. Carmichael
Minister of State – Regional (Rupununi) (Absent)
- Cde. P. Duncan, J.P.,
Minister of State, Ministry of
Economic Development and Co-operatives (Absent)
- Cde. K.B. Bancroft, J.P.,
Minister of State – Regional (Absent)
(Mazaruni/Potaro)
- Cde. J.P. Chowritmootoo, J.P.,
Minister of State – Regional
(Essequibo Coast/West Demerara)
- Cde. J.R. Thomas,
Minister of State, Ministry of Education,
Social Development and Culture
- Cde. R.H.O. Corbin,
Minister of State for Youth and Sport,
Ministry of National Development
- Cde. S. Prashad,
Minister of State – Regional
(East Demerara/West Coast Berbice)
- Cde. R.C. Van Sluytman,
Minister of State,
Ministry of Agriculture
- Cde. F.U.A. Campbell,
Minister of State for Information,
Ministry of National Development
- Cde. H. Rashid,
Minister of State,
Office of the Prime Minister (Absent)

Parliamentary Secretaries (6)

- Cde. M.M. John, C.C.H.,
Parliamentary Secretary, Office of the
Prime Minister, and Government Chief Whip (Absent – on leave)
- Cde. E.L. Ambrose,
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture
- Cde. M. Corrica,
Parliamentary Secretary,
Ministry of Education, Social Development and Culture (Absent)
- Cde. E.M. Bynoe,
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Trade
and Consumer Protection.
- Cde. C.E. Wrights, J.P.,
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Economic
Development and Co-operatives
- Cde. J.G. Ramson,
Parliamentary Secretary,
Ministry of Works and Transport

Other members (15)

- Cde. W.G. Carrington, C.C.H. (Absent – on leave)
- Cde. S.M. Field – Ridley (Absent)
- Cde. E.H.A. Fowler
- Cde. J. Gill
- Cde. W. Hussain
- Cde. K.M.E. Jonas (Absent)
- Cde. P.A. Rayman
- Cde. A. Salim, C.C.H.
- Cde. E.M. Stoby, J.P. (Absent)
- Cde. S.H. Sukhu, M.S.
- Cde. C. Sukul, J.P.
- Cde. H.A. Taylor (Absent)
- Cde. H.B. Walcott
- Cde. L.E. Willems
- Cde. M. Zaheeruddeen

Members of the Opposition (16)

(i) People's Progressive Party (14)

Leader of the Opposition (1)

Cde. C. Jagan,
Leader of the Opposition

Deputy Speaker (1)

Cde. Ram Karran,
Deputy Speaker

Other Members (12)

Cde. J. Jagan (Absent)
Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud, J.P., Opposition Chief Whip
Cde. Narbada Persaud
Cde. C. Collymore
Cde. S.F. Mohamed (Absent)
Cde. I. Basir
Cde. C.C. Belgrave
Cde. R. Ally
Cde. Dalchand, J.P.
Cde. Dindayal
Cde. H. Nokta
Cde. P. Sukhai

Liberator Party (2)

Mr. M.F. Singh, J.P.
Mr. M.A. Abraham (Absent)

OFFICERS

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

PRAYERS

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

National Honours

The Speaker: Comrades and hon. Member, in the recent announcement of awards made by the President, three members of the National Assembly were honoured. They are: Cde. Dr. Ptolemy Alexander Reid, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Development, who was awarded the Order of Excellence in recognition of the distinction and eminence achieved by him in Guyana in service of the people /Applause./, Cde. Dr. Mohamed Shahabuddeen, Attorney General and Minister of Justice, who was awarded the Order of Roraima for outstanding services to Guyana. /Applause./; Cde. Abdul Salim, who was awarded the Cacique Crown of Honour for political service of an exceptionally high quality and beyond the normal call of duty. /Applause./

Four persons, who gave service on the Advisory Panel of the Constituent Assembly, a Committee of the National Assembly, which drafted the new Constitution, were also the recipients of awards: Cde. Joseph Henry Pollydore – /Applause./ was awarded with the Cacique Crown of Honour for service of an exceptionally high quality and beyond the normal call of duty in trade unionism; Cde. Basil Barnett Blair was awarded with the Golden Arrow of Achievement for long and dedicated service of a consistently high standard as a teacher and trade unionist; Cde. Hyacinth Cunningham was awarded the golden Arrow of Achievement for long and dedicated service of a consistently high standard in public and social services; Cde. Dr. Hewley Eustace Hinds was awarded the Golden Arrow of Achievement for long and dedicated service of a consistently high standard in public, social and community services.

On behalf of Members of the Assembly and myself I extend heartiest congratulations and best wishes to the Members of Parliament and to those who served on the Advisory Panel of the Constituent Assembly, who have been honoured.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Development (Cde. Reid): Cde. Speaker, with your permission, may I take this opportunity to say, Thank you, to you, Cde. Speaker, and to Members of this National Assembly and to record my appreciation for what has happened. Also, let it be known that I am only trustee for this award as it is the work of thousands of people who by their efficient exercises in field, office and factory, have made it possible for me to be identified. /Applause./

The Attorney General and Minister of Justice (Cde. Shahabuddeen): Cde. Speaker, may I follow on the Deputy Prime Minister by expressing my own appreciation to you and to the House for so kindly noticing the honour which has been bestowed upon me by my country.

Cde. Salim: Cde. Speaker, I wish to say, Thank you, for the kind words you have expressed and to associate myself with the replies given to the House by the Cde. Deputy Prime Minister and the Cde. Attorney General. As for the honour, I do not think that I

alone worked for it but all the people combined, and whatever has been achieved has been achieved by the people while I consider myself only a ward. /Applause./

Cde. C. Jagan rose - -

The Speaker: You have not received any award yet, Dr. Jagan.

The Leader of the Opposition (Cde. Jagan): Mr. Speaker, you know I rejected one of these awards, and I thought you would allow me to make an expression in this House.

The Speaker: This is the heading, Announcements by the Speaker. You may do that under another heading.

Change in Surname of Cde. Ackman

I have been informed that Cde. Margaret Ackman's surname has been changed to that of John. She is now known as Margaret John.

Leave to Members

Leave has been granted to Cde. Hoyte for today's Sitting; to Cde. Nascimento for the period 16th March to the 30th April; to Cde. John for two weeks from 17th March; and to Cde. Carrington up to the 31st March, 1980.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS

The following papers were laid:

- (1) (a) Ratification of International Labour Conventions and implementation of International Labour Recommendations adopted at the 63rd Session of the International Labour Conference held in Geneva from 1 to 22 June, 1977. (State Paper No. 1/1980).
- (b) Ratification of International Labour Conventions and implementation of International Labour Recommendation adopted at the 64th Session of the International Labour Conference held in Geneva from 7 to 28 June, 1978. (State Paper No. 2/1980) /The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Leader of the House on behalf of the Minister of Health, Housing and Labour./
- (2) Financing Contract between the European Economic Community and the Co-operative Republic of Guyana for the Improvement of the Milk Plant, Georgetown. /The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Leader of the House on behalf of the Minister of Finance./

REQUESTS FOR LEAVE TO MOVE THE ADJOURNMENT OF
THE ASSEMBLY ON DEFINITE MATTERS OF URGENT
PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Settlement of Refugees in Guyana

Cde. C. Jagan: Cde. Speaker, I wrote to you today on a matter which I consider to be of urgent public importance, with the hope of getting your permission and the permission of the House to have this matter discussed today as an adjournment Motion.

This matter I refer to has been in the attention of the public for the past fortnight but this House has not been informed officially and there seems to be a great deal of speculation about it. I refer to the proposed settlement of refugees from Asia and it seems that an attempt is being made to set up another state within the State, somewhat like the last Jonestown incident.

What is more, this organisation which is dealing with this outfit, we have, I think, to get from the Government some word as to its background. I know from what I have read that Mr. Billy Graham's son is involved in this incident. Mr. Speaker, you may not be aware of it, but Mr. Billy Graham's Latin America crusade was financed by the C.I.A. sometime ago. We know that the Mung tribe which is supposedly coming here is viciously anti-Communist and, indeed, the area where they were settled formed what was called the Opium Triangle for the production of opium, in which it is also said the C.I.A. was involved. We know also, I have this from good sources, that the U.S. State Department is involved in this and therefore we would like, before another tragedy is created in this country, a full debate to take place in the House so the Guyanese people could be fully aware of what is being done in their name.

2.15 p.m.

This Government has signed all kinds of agreements which have never been debated in this House and I hope that the opportunity will be given to the House to debate...

this matter which is of great importance to the lives of the Guyanese people. I now ask for leave for the suspension of the Standing Orders to permit this matter to be discussed on the Adjournment of the Assembly.

The Speaker: As you are very well aware, for a matter to qualify as one to be raised on a Motion for the Adjournment of the Assembly, it must be raised at the earliest possible moment, it must be definite, and it must be urgent and in the public interest.

On the 23rd December, 1979, in the Daily Chronicle, a statement was issued on behalf of the Government mentioning the question of the refugees team as well as the letter of intent. We have met in this House at least on three or four occasions subsequent to that publication, therefore, you did not seek the first opportunity on which to raise the matter. Secondly, in your letter you mentioned that reports are circulating in Guyana and elsewhere but there is nothing definite. As a result, there may be many other reasons why it would be that the Government may bring a Motion for debate in the House. I do not know, that is not for me to determine, but so far as this is concerned, under the Standing Orders, your request does not qualify.

Cde. C. Jagan: I am merely raising some comments. Cde. Speaker, you know we have been having discussions with you time and time again on the way this House is being run and you have always said that you cannot call the House, that you cannot put the items such as Questions and Motions on the agenda, and when an opportunity like this arises, you do not respond. This is why I have always said in this House that you are behaving like a puppet.

The Speaker: Will you, please, allow this debate to take place. Cde. Clerk, please proceed.

Cde. C. Jagan: I repeat, you are not behaving like a Speaker. When was it that the Government put before the House a letter of intent? At what time did they put such a statement? If the Government had put such a statement in the House –

The Speaker: Cde. Jagan, please take your seat.

Cde. C. Jagan: I am not taking my seat. You should depart from the Chair for your behavior. You are misbehaving. How is it, about this Motion, when you ask the Leader of the House to tell us when - -

The Speaker: Please proceed, Cde. Attorney General.

Introduction of Bills – First Reading

Cde. Shahabuddeen: Cde. Speaker, I beg to present the Criminal Law Bill 1980 and ask that it be read the First time. As I am on my legs, may I take the opportunity of indicating that I do not propose to proceed any longer with the remaining Stages of the Bill today. This is because I have acceded to a request from my hon. and learned Friend, Mr. Feilden Singh, whose views always carry considerable weight with me, and of Guyana Bar Association, to defer the remaining Stages so as to allow for consultations

24.3.80

2.15 – 2.23 p.m.

with the Bar Association which is due to confer with me tomorrow in my Chambers at 9 o'clock.

The Speaker: Let the Bill be read the first time.

The following Bill was introduced and read the First time:

Criminal Law Bill 1980 – Bill No. 4/1980.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

Suspension of Standing Order No. 42 (2) and (3)

“Be it resolved that paragraphs (2) and (3) of Standing Order No. 46 be suspended to enable the Assembly to proceed at its Sitting on Monday, 24th March, 1980 (Bill No. 4/1980).”

/The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Leader of the House./

The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Leader of the House (Cde.

Ramsaroop): In the light of the remarks made by the Cde. Attorney General may I ask the leave of this House to withdraw the Motion standing in my name.

The Speaker: Leave is granted.

ADJOURNMENT

Cde. Ramsaroop: Cde. Speaker, may I move, with your permission, the Adjournment of this House to Friday, 28th March, 1980, at 2 p.m.

Adjournment accordingly at 2.23 p.m.