

Ministers (8)

- Cde. U.E. Johnson, M.P.,
Minister of Co-operatives – (Absent – on leave)
- Cde. J.N. Maitland – Singh, M.P.,
Minister, Consumer Protection, in the
Ministry of Trade and Consumer Protection
- Cde. S. Prashad, M.P.,
Minister in the Ministry of Agriculture
- Cde. Sallahuddin, M.P.,
Minister, Finance, in the Ministry of
Economic Planning and Finance
- Cde. R.E. Williams, M.P.,
Minister, Fisheries, in the Ministry
of Agriculture
- *Cde. Y.V. Harewood – Benn, M.P.,
Minister in the Office of the Prime
Minister
- *Cde. H. Rashid, M.P.,
Minister, Office of the President – (Absent – on leave)
- *Cde. R.A. Van West – Charles, M.P.,
Minister, Health, in the Ministry of Public Welfare

Ministers of State (3)

- Cde. M. Corrica, M.P.,
Minister of State for Culture, in the
Ministry of Education, Social Development
and Culture
- Cde. R.C. Fredericks, A.A., M.P.,
Minister of State for Youth and Sport, in the
Ministry of National Development
- *Cde. C.E. Wright, M.P.,
Minister of State for Construction, in the
Ministry of Works and Transport – (Absent)

Parliamentary Secretaries (4)

- Cde. A.W. Bend – Kirton – Holder, M.P.,
Parliamentary Secretary, Women’s Affairs and
Housing
- Cde. P.A. Rayman, M.P.,
Parliamentary Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister
- Cde. D.A.N. Ainsworth, M.P.,
Parliamentary Secretary, Education, Social
Development and Culture
- Cde. B. Bhaggan, M.P.,
Parliamentary Secretary, Foreign Affairs

*Non-elected Member

Other Members (22)

- Cde. M. Ally, M.P. – (Absent)
- Cde. M. Armagon, M.P. – (Absent – on leave)
- Cde. B. Beniprashad, M.P.
- Cde. J.B. Caldeira, M.P. – (Absent – on leave)
- Cde. A.A. Chin, M.P.
- Cde. J.P. Chowritmootoo, J.P., M.P.
- Cde. E.B. Davidson, M.P.
- Cde. H. Doobay, M.P.
- Cde. A.B. Felix, M.P.
- Cde. E.H.A. Fowler, M.P.

Cde. P. Fredericks, M.P.
 Cde. E.F. Gilbert, M.P.
 Cde. J. Gill – Mingo, M.P.
 Cde. A. McRae, M.P.
 Cde. J.M. Munroe, J.P., M.P.
 Cde. R.N. Primo, M.P.
 Cde. C.G. Sharma, J.P., M.P. – (Absent)
 Cde. H.L.B. Singh, M.P.
 Cde. S.H. Sukhu, M.S., M.P.
 Cde. B. Tiwari, M.P.
 Cde. C. Vandenburg, M.P. – (Absent)
 Cde. H.B. Walcott – Nascimento, J.P., M.P.,
 Government Chief Whip - (Absent – on leave)

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

Cde. R. Bishop, M.S., M.P.
 Cde. B. Latchminarayan, M.P.

Members from the Regional Democratic Councils (10)

Cde. K.N. Jones, M.P. (Region No. 1 – Barima/Waini)
 Cde. K.V. Jairam, M.P. (Region No. 2 – Pomeroon/Supenaam) – (Absent – on leave)
 Cde. C.A. Singh, M.P. (Region No. 3 – Essequibo Islands/West Demerara)
 Cde. W. Bipat, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)
 Cde. H.I. London, M.S., M.P. (Region No. 5 – Mahaica/Berbice)
 Cde. I. Chowritmootoo, M.P. (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne)
 Cde. N.R. Charles, M.P. (Region No. 7 – Cuyuni/Mazaruni)
 Cde. D. Abraham, M.P. (Region No. 8 – Potaro/Siparuni)
 Cde. A. Dorrick, M.P. (region No. 9 – Upper Takutu/ Upper Essequibo)
 Cde. D. Hinds, M.P. (Region No. 10 – Upper Demerara/Berbice)

Members of the Minority (12)

(i) People’s Progressive Party (10)

Minority leader (1)

Cde. Dr. C. Jagan, M.P., – (Absent)
 Minority Leader

Deputy Speaker (1)

Cde. Ram Karran, M.P.,
 Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly

Other Members (8)

Cde. J. Jagan, M.P., – (Absent)
 Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud, J.P., M.P.,
 Minority Chief Whip
 Cde. N. Persaud, M.P.
 Cde. C.C. Collymore, M.P. – (Absent)
 Cde. S.F. Mohamed, M.P.
 Cde. I. Basir, M.P.
 Cde. C.C. Belgrave, M.P.
 Cde. Dalchand, J.P., M.P.

(ii) United Force (2)

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

OFFICERS

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

PRAYERS

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

Leave to Members

The Speaker: Leave has been granted to Comrades Rashid, Armagon, Caldeira, Walcott – Nascimento and Jairam for today's sittings and to the hon. Member Mr. Feilden Singh.

Cde. Johnson will be granted leave until the end of this month.

Changes in Membership

The Speaker: Comrades and hon. Member, I have been advised of the following changes:

Cde. J.P. Chowrimootoo, who was Minister, Environment and Water Supply, in the Ministry of Public Welfare, ceased to be a Minister with effect from 1st December, 1981.

As Cde. Chowrimootoo is an elected Member of the National Assembly, he continues to be a Member of the Assembly.

Cde. S. Prashad, who was Minister, Crops and Livestock, in the Ministry of Agriculture, has been designated "Minister in the Ministry of Agriculture" with effect from 1st December, 1981.

Cde. F.U.A. Campbell, who was Minister of Information, ceased to be a Minister, with effect from 1st December, 1981.

As Cde. Campbell was not an elected Member of the National Assembly, he has ceased to be a Member of the Assembly.

Cde. F.U.A. Carmichael, who was Minister, Forestry, in the Ministry of Agriculture, ceased to be a Minister, with effect from 1st December, 1981.

As Cde. Carmichael, was not an elected Member of the National Assembly, he has ceased to be a Member of the Assembly.

Cde. Y. V. Harewood – Benn, who was Minister of Public Service, has been designated "Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister", with effect from 1st December, 1981.

Cde. R.C. Van Sluytman, who was Minister, Drainage and Irrigation, in the ministry of Agriculture, ceased to be Minister with effect from 1st December, 1981.

As Cde. Van Sluytman was not an elected Member of the National Assembly, he has ceased to be a Member of the Assembly.

Cde. E.M. Bynoe, who was Parliamentary Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister, ceased to be a Parliamentary Secretary, with effect from 1st December, 1981.

As Cde. Bynoe was not an elected Member of the National Assembly, she has ceased to be a Member of the Assembly

Cde. D.A.N. Ainsworth, an elected Member of the National Assembly, has been appointed a Parliamentary Secretary, and has been designated "Parliamentary Secretary, Education, Social Development and Culture", with effect from 1st December, 1981.

Cde. B. Bhaggan, an elected Member of the National Assembly, has been appointed a Parliamentary Secretary, and has been designated "Parliamentary Secretary, Foreign Affairs", with effect from 1st December, 1981.

On behalf of Members of the Assembly and myself, I wish to extend best wishes to those Members in their assignments.

As a result of these changes in membership, consequential and other changes have also been made in the seating arrangements.

With the new arrangements, the two Members from the National Congress of Local Democratic Organs and the ten Members from the Regional Democratic Councils are now all sitting together in one

row.

Cde. Ram Karran (The Deputy Speaker): May we express a word of sympathy to those who have gone out.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS ETC.

The following papers were laid:

- (1) Pensions (Designated Service) Order 1981 (No. 82) , made under section 23 (2) of the Pensions Act, Chapter 27:02, on 30th November, 1981, and published in the Gazette on 5th December, 1981. [Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister]

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- (2) (a) Annual reports (9) of the Comptroller of Customs and Excise for the years 1971 to 1979.
- (b) Consumption Tax (Amendment) (No. 3) Order 1981 (No. 76), made under section 4 of the Consumption Tax Act, Chapter 80:02, on 16th October, 1981, and published in the Gazette on 21st October, 1981.
- (c) Report of the Auditor General on the Public Accounts for the years 1972, 1973 and 1974.
- (d) Financial Paper No. 5/1981 – Supplementary Estimates totaling \$80,121,990 for the period ended 12th December, 1981.
/The Minister, Finance, on behalf of the Vice – President, Economic Planning and Finance./

In terms of Standing Order No. 68(1), the Minister named Wednesday, 23rd December, 1981, as the day for the consideration of the Financial Paper in Committee of Supply.

- (3) Annual Report of the Guyana Fire Service for the year 1976.
/The Minister of Home Affairs./

MOTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OR SITTING OF THE ASSEMBLY AND MOVED BY A MINISTER

Motion to Suspend Standing Order No. 23 (3)

The Vice – President, Parliamentary Affairs and Party/State Relations(Cde. Ramsaroop): Cde. Speaker, may I crave your leave under Standing Order 83 to move a Motion for the suspension of Standing Orders to enable a Motion of sympathy on the death of Cde. Esther Elizabeth Dey, M.B.E. to be taken.

The Speaker: Leave is granted.

Cde. Ramsaroop: I respectfully ask your leave, Cde. Speaker, that Standing Order 23(3) be suspended to enable the said Motion to be taken.

Question put, and agreed to.

Standing Order No. 23(3) suspended

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS – FIRST READING

The following Bills were introduced and read the First time:

- (1) National Cane Farming Committee (Amendment) Bill 1981 – Bill No. 11/1981.
/The Minister of Agriculture./
- (2) Guyana Gold Board Bill 1981 – Bill No. 12/1981.
- (3) Mining / Amendment) Bill 1981 – Bill No. 13/1981.
/The Vice – President, Parliamentary Affairs and Party/State Relations on behalf of the Minister of Energy and Mines./
- (4) Guyana Timber Export Board (Transfer of Functions) Bill 1981 – Bill No. 14/1981
/The Vice – President, Parliamentary Affairs and Party/State Relations, on behalf of the Minister of National Development./
- (5) Weights and Measures Bill 1981 – Bill No. 15/1981. /The Minister, Finance on behalf of the Vice – President, Economic Planning and Finance./

PUBLIC BUSINESS

MOTIONS

SYMPATHY ON THE DEATH OF SIR DONALD EDWARD JACKSON. C.C.H

Be it resolved that this National Assembly records its deep regret at the death of Sir Donald Edward Jackson, C.C.H., and pay tribute to the distinguished service which he rendered to Guyana and to its Parliament and directs that an expression of its sympathy be conveyed to his sorrowing daughter and relatives. [Minister of Home Affairs.]

The Minister of Home Affairs (Cde. Moore): Cde. Speaker, it is for me a signal and distinct honor to be afforded the privileges of moving before this honorable Assembly the motion of sympathy on the death of the late Sir Donald Edward Jackson, C.C.H.

Cde. Speaker, throughout the course of human history and in every organized society whether highly advanced and developed or primitive, institutions have been created and administered by the inspired women of those societies. Because, perhaps of the limited longevity of the human being and because, perhaps of the enduring quality of the institutions created by man, many of the societal structures established out of the flowering of human genius have been so intrinsically sound that they have served beyond the lifetime of their creators and indeed beyond the existence of those who have contributed to their nurture and development.

And so, Comrade Speaker, though the contribution of any one man must of necessity be limited in terms of the overall life of the institutions, the labours of some have been of such outstanding and enduring quality as to enrich in perpetuity not only the fabric of the institution and of its impact upon contemporary events, but also of its influence upon history and upon posterity.

It was the Lord Jesus Christ himself who in the parable of the talents alluded to the capricious endowment by nature of her gifts. Some, alas have been but modestly bestowed, but others, more fortunate, have been richly endowed with a sparkling array of talents or with characteristics and capabilities as varied and as dazzling as the hues emanating from several windows of the most priceless and multifaceted gem.

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(Cde. Stanley Moore continues)

But, Cde. Speaker, it was the Lord himself who illustrated in that parable that the mere possession of talent is not enough. What is more important, Cde. Speaker, is the use to which one's talents are put that determines the true greatness of the recipient of those talents, for the world is replete with examples of those who have been richly blessed with talents but whose conduct has involved a distressing waste of those gifts with which nature has so generously endowed. No one will deny that the late Sir Donald Edward Jackson, who came to be known as Sir Donald after his elevation to the distinguished order of knighthood, was a man of many and varied gifts. No one will dispute that unlike the sluggard who buried his talents and did not seek to multiply them Sir Donald, throughout his long and distinguished career had vigorously and fruitfully exercised his prodigious potential with the most benign and beneficial effect not only to the Guyanese people and Guyanese nation but also to Caribbean man in his habitation of that necklace jewels which stretches across the West Indian archipelago nestling in the azure Caribbean.

Cde. Speaker, the record of his life will show that Donald Edward Jackson, knight, was born on May 17, 1892 and departed this life on November 18, 1981. His was a life which characterized service and almost to the very end of his days he held the office of Chairman of the Elections Commission. He had, Cde. Speaker, been the incumbent of that office since May 26, 1966 and over the period of his tenure, dastardly attempts have been made from time to time to tarnish the image of the office and to impugn the integrity of its holder. These assaults justified themselves upon the narrow ground of political expediency hurled by men who sought a cheap political advantage but, also, their barbs and salvos were launched against the formidable character, integrity and reputation of Sir Donald Jackson which stood like a bastion and repelled the salvos of the marauding miscreants.

Suffice to say that the Office of Chairman of the Elections Commission has survived and remains upon firm foundation shored up and solidified by Sir Donald's occupancy.

Cde. Speaker, Sir Donald Jackson began his working life in the primary school system of our country and soon rose by the power of his emerging intellect to the rank of Headmaster. It is a notorious fact that some equally endowed but lacking the drive and the resourcefulness of the late Sir Donald ended their careers at the distinguished rank of Headmaster or perhaps just beyond that rank at the level of Inspector of Schools, but I think, Cde. Speaker, that it is an open secret that those Headmasters of those days, limited as their opportunity for upward and onward mobility was by the circumstances in which they found themselves, bore themselves with dignity and decorum and indeed possessed the qualities of scholarship and learning which, had they lived in our time would have borne them on to worthwhile academical attainment in institutions of higher learning.

One of the hall-marks of those school-masters was the reverence with which they viewed and used the English Language, as if it were a finely-tuned instrument only to be put into the hands, or more accurately speaking, into craftsman, the mouths of those who had a feeling for its beauty. I say Cde. Speaker, because we live in a day and in an age where there are vicious assaults upon the English Language, made by many misguided persons in the name of the promotion of creolese and in the name of the promotion of part of our natural heritage. I do not believe, speaking for myself, that any part of our national heritage is to be found in the speaking of lame and halting English, creolese at its best, is but a corruption of the English Language, a vulgar and rough vehicle of communication which those who are without the benefit of scholarship must in order to be understood.

We have, Speaker, in this country, in our own life-time heard some of the finest speakers in the English Language. I refer to our Cde. President. I refer to our Cde. Prime Minister. I refer to the

Secretary General of the Commonwealth, to our Vice – President responsible for public welfare, to the Attorney General, to the Minister responsible for Foreign Affairs and I believe I would in fairness couple a name or two from the Opposition benches. In my own life-time, I have heard Sir Eustace Gordon Woolford and therefore it puzzles me and amazes me as indeed it must have puzzled and amazed Sir Donald to see the decay of the English Language which we are witnessing before our very eyes.

I would in his name and in the name of all those who hold to the view that the voice of a person speaking the English Language correctly is a finely-tuned instrument, urge that our ears would become more sensitized to the dulcet sounds of the English Language and would reject the roughages of any other form of communication.

Cde. Speaker, it is well-known that Sir Donald, after he had left the occupation of Headmaster pursued a career in law. That career has been one of the most distinguished legal careers in the history of Guyana. I myself have never had the privilege as some of my colleagues have done, of appearing before him, but I understand, on the authority of the learned Chancellor of the Judiciary and of the learned Attorney General, that his was an incisive mind which went rapidly to the pith of a legal issue and that his legal judgements were balanced and sound and of the highest order, and Cde. Speaker, I am prepared in the absence of powerful evidence to the contrary to accept the testimony of the learned Chancellor of the Judiciary and the learned Attorney General on this matter.

I have heard that such was his judicial bearing and demeanor that awe was sometimes struck into the hearts of the very young or the sloppy, or the ill-prepared, or those who did not appear in his court fully cognizant of the importance of the forum in which they found themselves. I am reliably informed that Sir Donald Jackson represented a kind of living embodiment of the majesty of the law and of the power of the State and that he demanded by his very presence due deference and respect from any practitioner who appeared before him.

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(Cde. Moore continues)

Some, indeed might have found his presence daunting, but steel itself is tempered in the fire before it is honed upon the grindstone and then it becomes a fine instrument and fine tool. I have no doubt that those who shivered in their boots in their initial appearances before him have lived to become finer and better lawyers for their experience.

Cde. Speaker, throughout the course of his life Sir Donald Jackson served in a number of quasi judicial functions and served on a number of commissions as Chairman and, indeed, as a member. He, the records will reveal, served in those capacities with the greatest of distinction. I think he will very best be remembered for the contribution he made to the cause of good neighborly relationships between Guyana and Venezuela on the Mixed Boundary Commission which met in order to try to determine the question of the boundary between those two countries. As a tribute to the measure and quality of his contribution then, I can do no better than to quote from the writings of his distinguished colleague, Mohamed Shahabuddeen, who had this to say about his contribution. I quote:

“He was fair and indeed judicial in his contributions and yet, in a life filled with achievements, here I think he would have said lay his greatest disappointment. He wanted so much to see the work of the commission crowned by a solution satisfactory to both sides but beckoning and inviting as such a prospect was, to reach it, he could not see his way to take the shortcut of jettisoning a certain principle on which he had been matured and nurtured, the principle that ‘he who alleges must prove’. In the adherence of that principle he was immovable and, I think we will say today, rightly so. At the end of his work on the Commission he headed the list of living recipients in the first award of National Honors, receiving the Cacique Crown of Honor, then our second highest honor.”

Cde. Speaker, we all know that the labours of Sir Donald Jackson and of Shahabuddeen and, indeed, of all Guyanese who served on that mixed Commission did not bring the truth which we would have hoped they would have brought, those of us who are left to carry on these discussions and negotiations with Venezuela will do so fortified by his example of an unwillingness to yield on the ground of principle, of a refusal to accept a shortcut on the grounds of narrow expediency and a determination not to sacrifice our rights or our principles on the altar of any kind of expediency. And for those of us who are charged with the duty of negotiating once again with our neighbors in the search for a just and lasting solution to the problem, we and they will go forward confident that we have behind us the example of Sir Donald as reported by Shahabuddeen and that I believe, will fortify us in the face of a seemingly unreasonable and unreasoning Venezuelan intransigence.

Cde. Speaker, Sir Donald Jackson has come from a family. He has come from a very distinguished Guyanese family. We have had in this country a phenomenon of families which contain many members who have all done extremely well: The Lucks, the Lonckes and there are several others. The Jackson are such a family. We have at my left but one, a member of that family who even now is carrying on in the tradition of service of the family in his discharge of the onerous duties of the office of Minister responsible for Foreign Affairs. I feel sure that this whole House would join me in the moving of this Motion, in expressing our condolences to the daughter Wendella who is with us today and to all the relatives of the Jackson family. I want to assure them that this entire nation expresses its sympathy on his passing. But even more important, not only this House, but I believe this entire nation would wish to express its debt, its thanks to him for a lifetime of service of a most distinguished kind. I would invite us all to be ever grateful to him and to his family for a lifetime of service.

We on this side are not without a mutual support. You would have seen the pieces of paper coming in. That is the speech which I had written, which fortunately I remembered. The learned Vice –

President, Parliamentary Affairs and Party/State Relations and Leader of the House, my colleague, has just reminded me to mention, which would have been invidious of me if I did not, that part of his life which was perhaps of greatest importance and was of the most direct connection to this House, is to say, his tenure of the office of Speaker of Legislative Assembly of British Guiana, as it then was, during the years 1957 to 1961. That was a very uncertain period in the history of this country. That period followed the suspension of the Constitution in 1953 which was followed by the so-called period of marking time, as the then Governor Sir Alfred Savage of 'My wife and I' fame was fond of saying. It was not easy to head the legislature as Speaker. The legislature for the period 1957 to 1961 was an elected legislature. We were then taking the tentative step back into the normal path of constitutional processes and, therefore, the role of the Speaker then was a very vital and important role. Again, I think the record will show that those duties were discharged with a steady and firm, but with a just and fair hand. Indeed I would say that it set the tone and laid the stamp for the future quality of deliberations which have taken place in this Assembly ever since. You, Cde. Speaker, I have observed, have been heir to a fine tradition of strength and fairness as you have demonstrated on so many occasions when you have brushed aside with a swift, sure, but sometimes with a humane and benign hand, the trivial matters which have been raised from time to time in this honorable Assembly. You have taken firm decisions on the great issues of the day as, indeed did the late Sir Donald, so that I would wish to record the gratitude of this House for his service in that very important capacity.

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Cde. Stanley Moore continues: So Cde. Speaker, I return to the point from which I was resisted by the Leader of the House and that is the recording of the gratitude of the nation to the late Sir Donald for his public service during the whole length of a long and distinguished career to this nation and indeed to this Assembly. Cde. Speaker, it gives me the greatest pleasure to move this motion standing in my name of sympathy on the death of Sir Donald Edward Jackson, C.C.H.

The Speaker: The question is proposed.

Cde. Ram Karran: Your Honor, I wish to support the motion that our condolences be extended to the relatives of the late Sir Donald Jackson who, as we have been informed by the Minister and as we have heard from so many sources of the activities of this Guyanese. I happen to have served under him during the period when he was Speaker in this Assembly and the tradition is that we express on the death of any member or past member our sympathy and condolences. But so far we have heard merely one side, the erudition, the service and so on of this Guyanese. I would like to put in perspective, not contradicting what has been said but to point out what made this Guyanese so great.

He was born in the period, Your Honor, when certain human accidents were not liberally looked upon as they are today, and we must not gloss over these things, because these are the things probably that made the man what he was – the difficulties. I refer to the period in our history when a uterine bastard was held in greater respect than a person born out of wedlock, and I know Sir Donald well. I know his mother and I know the difficulties that sort of forced this individual and another individual, I refer to the late hon. E.M. Duke, propelled them into positions of height, eloquence erudition and so on. We used to make jokes of these things.

I remember when his mother died, I used to work on the East Coast Railway, Kem Carter, father of Sir John, came out and boasted to us that he had sent a telegram. He called his drugstore, the War Office. The next day we saw in the Argosy mention of the death, but there was no mention of the names, and that was understandable in that period. The Comrades today would not probably understand but the telegram went to Sir Donald Jackson, “Sympathy from the War Office”, when the Argosy was read the next day and there was no reference, it was probably coarse and vulgar to do it, but he boasted that he sent another telegram “War Office withdraw sympathy.” Those were the human frailties and faults that existed in those days, and as I said, sometimes those difficulties that one had to face in life were the things that propelled great Guyanese to these positions.

I agree with my friend when he said that as Speaker of this Assembly Sir Donald had lived up to very high expectations. We used to see him coming in there begowned and bewigged as lawyers were in those days. I can assure you Sir, I think I am the only one in this Assembly at the moment, who served in the legislature during that period and those were the days when points of order were taken. I would invite my young colleagues who are sitting in this Chamber now to read the Hansard of that period when the points of order were taken and ruled upon, and I can venture to say that Sir Donald Jackson as Speaker of the House did not look on one side and did not rule in favour or against in any hit and miss manner. The matters were considered – maybe because of his legal training or maybe because of his service in the Judiciary, but I would say that justice was done to both sides of the Assembly in those early days. Another thing we must regard Sir, is that Sir Donald and those early Guyanese who served in the Judiciary were competing. In those days our judges came from the United Kingdom and it was a great thing for a Guyanese, - a black one at that to be elevated to the Judiciary, of course he was promoted in the West Indies. But, nevertheless, it was a great competition between the Europeans who were then

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considered the only people likely to be judges in the country, and that is another high water mark in his career at this time.

But the two periods which my friend omitted, that is the Robertson Commission and the Elections Commission. I would not attempt to go contrary to what my friend has said on an occasion like this, but I think that the historian in the future will disagree with the very high sounding language that was used to describe Sir Donald's activities in those two things. I as a Guyanese and a loyal one to my country would think twice to endorse a statement put in the Robertson Commission on which Sir Donald Jackson served that Guyana will be marking time, until such time as the P.P.P. changes its leaders or the Leaders change their policies. I think today with Venezuela on our border and with our new found freedom and all that we will not tolerate a statement like that from any source, be it the United Kingdom or any other country. I think that statement is an indictment against every Guyanese that the elected Government elected in 1953 had to mark time until the leaders of that party who had expressed their views to the Guyanese people for the constitution to be suspended and for a statement like that to have to have come out from a commission on which a Guyanese sat is an indictment against all of us. I remember in this same chamber here Sir, the Leader of the P.N.C. had said, sitting at the head of the table, that the constitution would be suspended over my dead body. I do not think that will go down well with the historians, nor do I think that the activities of the elections commission from the time it was started in 1966 to the present moment can have the endorsement, in the glowing terms used by my hon. Friend, in the future.

I do not for one minute suggest that Sir Donald Jackson who has acted in so many capacities in this country did not act in his own way. I am not for one minute suggesting that he did not believe in what he did but I do say that what was done in his own discretion had not been in the interest of the Guyanese people and the historians of the future will not so endorse.

Once again Sir, I wish to join with my colleagues, I do not think there should be a division on this matter from all sides of the Assembly to express our sincere sympathy to the relatives including my friend the hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs and all those Jacksons who I know are related to Sir Donald our deepest sympathy.

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2:50 p.m.

The Speaker: Comrades and hon. Member, it is not usual for the Speaker to contribute to debates, but as Sir Donald Jackson was a former Speaker, I wish to take liberty of joining in support of the Motion and of adding and making a few observations.

Following the Interim Government from 1954 to 1957 after the suspension of the Constitution in 1953, elections were held on 12th August, 1957, for a new Legislative Council.

The Council consisted of 24 persons – A Speaker appointed by the Governor, 3 ex officio Members, 14 elected and 6 nominated Members. On 21st August, 1957, the Governor, Sir Patrick Renison, appointed Sir Donald Edward Jackson, Knight Bachelor, to be the Speaker of the new Legislative Council. At the first sitting of the Legislative Council on 10th September, 1957, Sir Donald Jackson made and subscribed the oath. On three members who were present then are still today members of this Parliament.

In his address to the Legislative Council at its first sitting, the Governor, speaking to and about Sir Donald said:

“Mr. Speaker, I am privileged in this Council Chamber to be the first to address the Chair under your Speakership. I welcome you to your high office as a Guianese of great attainment, a man known for scholarship and judgement, integrity and impartiality.”

It was also at that first sitting of the Legislative Council that a Mace was first out into use. The Mace which was bought by Government was entrusted by the Government to the Speaker, Sir Donald Jackson, as the symbol of his authority. Co-incidentally, the first person to bear the Mace is our present Sergeant-at-Arms, Cde. Kenneth King, who was at that time performing the duties of the post of Marshal of the Legislature in the absence of the substantive holder of the office on leave.

I will now put the Motion and will Members kindly assent to that Motion by standing for one minute.

[All Members stood in silence for one minute.]

Motion carried.

DEATH OF CDE. ESTHER ELIZABETH DEY, M.B.E.

“Be it resolved that this National Assembly records its deep regret at the death of Cde. Esther Elizabeth Dey, M.B.E., and pays tribute to the distinguished service which she rendered to Guyana and to its Parliament and directs that an expression of its sympathy be conveyed to her sorrowing relatives.” [The Parliamentary Secretary, Women’s Affairs and Housing.]

The Speaker: Cde. Bend-Kirton-Holder.

The Parliamentary Secretary, Women’s Affairs and Housing (Cde. Bend-Kirton-Holder): Cde. Speaker, it is indeed a distinction for me to move the Motion of sympathy in this honorable House at the passing in death of Esther Elizabeth Dey.

Esther Elizabeth Dey was born on 20 August 1893. she died on the 14th November, 1981. Esther Dey was nominated a member of the Interim Legislative Council. She subscribed to the oath on January 5, 1954 and served until the 20th June, 1957.

Esther Elizabeth Dey was a woman who gave service, who gave guidance, who gave leadership, who gave commitment and dedication, so that today we the women can say, without any reservation, that Esther Elizabeth Dey did play her part meaningfully in lighting the way toward the total involvement of our women in all spheres of development.

Esther Dey started her career under the Headmastership of Mr. Hazelwood. She opened a school which she called the Lincoln Grammar School and that was housed in Robb Street. She later became the Headmistress of the Trinity High School and spent some time at the Carnegie School of Home Economics.

Esther Dey was involved also in the setting up and running of the Women's Institutes, an aged institution that over the past years has contributed meaningfully to our society. She served on several Boards and Corporations. We can remember her for her contribution at the Belfield Girls School. She was on the visiting committee at the Prisons and a member of the Board of Film Censors. She was also a member of the Board of Governors of the Bishops High School.

Cde. Dey was a woman whose only desire was to serve and she contributed toward serving in all spheres. Even with a broken leg and on crutches she went to Parika on the West Coast Demerara when the Women's Institutes held their Convention and, on crutches she served tea to the women who attended the session. She did this that shows the type of spirit, commitment and dedication on that Cde. Esther Dey had to any institution in which she was involved.

Indeed, Esther was a woman for all seasons. We recall that her inspiration and guidance among other women in our society led to the recognition of the part that women play in making our society a better one. Indeed, we are aware that women have always played that meaningful role and because of her and others we in the Peoples' National Congress have given recognition to those contributions by ensuring that our Constitution provides for the rights of women and their total development in society.

Cde. Speaker, I think that this honorable House has a debt not only to Cde. Esther Dey but to other women who have contributed meaningfully in this honorable House. Esther played her part during her lifetime here. She ensured that the women's voice was heard and today, as she rests in peace, I move this Motion:

“That this National Assembly records its deep regret at the death of Cde. Esther Elizabeth Dey, M.B.E., and pays tribute to the distinguished service which she rendered to Guyana and to its Parliament and directs that an expression of its sympathy be conveyed to her sorrowing relatives.”

Motion proposed.

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Cde. Ram Karran: It is customary that words of sympathy be expressed to the families of departed members of this Assembly, and I would like to join with my colleagues across the table to endorse that motion. I cannot say I knew the late honorable Member except in the lobby of this Chamber. You probably recognised the hostility that existed between what I can call, the loyal Guyanese in the 1950's against those who served with the Interim Government. They were regarded by most Guyanese as puppets. But with the passage of time and the mellowing of individuals, one tends to over look these things. I met the lady, Mrs. Dey, in the lobby of this Chamber on many occasions, but I cannot say that I got to know her as well as my friend across the table says she knows her. If she has made a contribution, then we must all recognise it, but my personal view is that those who served from the Robertson Commission down, and particularly the Interim Government, could not have been acting in the best interest of democracy in Guyana. However, one does not draw that across the table. One does not pull, as they say, a red rag. We must let the motion go without division, and I support the motion.

The Speaker: I will now put the motion, will Members kindly stand to indicate their assent.

Members stood in silence for 1 minute.

Motion carried.

MOTION

CONFIRMATION OF CONSUMPTION TAX (AMENDMENT) (NO. 3)
ORDER 1981 (NO. 76)

“ Be it resolved that this National Assembly, in accordance with section 5 of the Consumption tax Act, Chapter 80:02, confirm the Consumption Tax (Amendment) (No. 3) Order 1981 (No. 76), which was made on 16th October, 1981, and published in the Gazette on the 21st October, 1981.” /The Minister of Finance on behalf of the Vice – President, Economic Planning and Finance./

The Speaker: Cde. Leader of the Assembly.

The Minister of Finance in the Ministry of Economic Planning and Finance (Cde. Sallahuddin): Cde. Speaker, I rise to move the confirmation of the Consumption Tax (Amendment) (No. 3) Order 1981 (No. 76) and to say that the measure is a simple one in that it did not at the time of the signing of the Order, nor does it now, require the consumers of Kerosene and Gas oils to pay any more than they paid prior to the signing of the Order, but to emphasize that it is just an administrative adjustment which needs to be effected by the passage of this Order.

Motion proposed, put and agreed to.

Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Resolved, “that this assembly do now adjourn to Wednesday, 23rd December, 1981, at 2 p.m.”
/Vice – President, Parliamentary Affairs and State/Party Relations./

Adjourned accordingly at 3:06 p.m.