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THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

OFFICIAL REPORT

[VOLUME 2]

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE FIRST
PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF GUYANA

14th Sitting

Wednesday, 20th September, 1967

~~MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY~~

SPEAKER

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

Members of the Government

People's National Congress

Elected Ministers

The Honourable L. F. S. Burnham, Q.C.,

Prime Minister

Dr. the Honourable P. A. Reid,

Minister of Trade

The Honourable P. S. d'Aguiar,

Minister of Finance

The Honourable N. J. Bissember,

Minister for Parliamentary Affairs (Leader of the House)

The Honourable R. E. Checks,

Minister of Local Government.

The Honourable E. F. Correia,

Minister of Communications.

The Honourable Mrs. W. Gaskin,

Minister of Education.

*The Assembly met at 2
Prayers*

*Present
His Honour the Deputy Speaker, Mr. R. E. Tello*

(absent) (on leave) (on leave)

(absent) (on leave)

The Honourable C. M. L. John,
Minister of Home Affairs.

The Honourable R. J. Jordan,
Minister of Agricultural and Natural Resources.

The Honourable W. O. R. Kendal, C. B. E., J.P.,
Minister of Health and Housing.

The Honourable C. A. Merriman, J.P.,
Minister of Labour and Social Security.

The Honourable M. F. Singh,
Minister of Works and Hydraulics.

The Honourable S. S. Ramphal, C.M.G., Q.C.,
Attorney General and Minister of State. (absent)

The Honourable M. W. Carter,
Minister of Information.

* *Parliamentary Secretaries:*

Mr. D. B. DeGroot, *2 p.m. 20*
Parliamentary Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister.

Mr. G. Bowman,
Parliamentary Secretary, Minister of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Mr. O. E. Clarke,
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education. (absent) (on leave)

Mr. P. Duncan,
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Local Government.

Mr. J. G. Joaquin, O.B.E., J.P.,
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Works and Hydraulics.

Mr. C. V. Too-Chung,
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Finance.

Other Members:

Mr. W. A. Blair
Mr. J. Budhoo
Mr. M. Kasim (~~absent~~ *on leave*)
Mr. W. G. Carrington
Mr. R. G. B. Field-Ridley
Mr. D. Mahraj (absent) ✓
Mr. H. Prashad, J.P. ✓
Mr. T. A. Sancho
Mr. J. H. Thomas (absent) ✓
Rev. A. B. Trotman ✓
Mr. H. M. S. Wharton, J.P., ✓

Members of the Opposition

People's Progressive Party

Dr. C. B. Jagan,
Leader of the Opposition. (absent ~~on leave~~)

Mr. A. Chase (absent ~~on leave~~)
Mr. B. H. Benn (absent ~~on leave~~) ✓
Mr. Ram Karran
Mr. R. Chandisingh

Mr. H. J. M. Hubbard ✓
Dr. Charles Jacob, Jr. ✓
Mr. C. V. Nunes ✗ (absent) ~~on leave~~
Dr. F. H. W. Ramsahoye (absent) ~~on leave~~
Mr. E. M. G. Wilson ✗ (absent) ~~on leave~~
Mr. M. Hamid, J.P. ✓
Mr. J. R. S. Luck ✓ (absent) ~~on leave~~
Mr. D. C. Jagan
Mr. H. Lall
Mr. Mooneer Khan, J.P.
Mr. Y. Ally
Mr. L. Linde (absent ~~on leave~~)
Mr. R. D. Persaud, J.P.
Mr. M. N. Poonai ✓ (absent ~~on leave~~)
Dr. S. A. Ramjohn (absent) ~~on leave~~
Mr. E. M. Stoby (absent) ~~on leave~~
Mr. S. M. Saffee (absent) ~~on leave~~
Mr. M. Bhagwan (absent) ~~on leave~~

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

[DR. REID]

" Capital gains tax shall, subject to the provisions of this Ordinance, be payable at the rate specified in section 12 of this Ordinance upon the net chargeable capital gains of any person accruing in or derived from British Guiana or elsewhere and whether received in British Guiana or not in respect of the capital gains arising from —

- (a) the change of ownership of any property . . .
- (b) the surrender or relinquishment of any right in any property . . .
- (c) the transfer of some of the rights in any property . . .
- (d) the redemption of any shares, debentures, or other obligations;
- (e) the dissolution of a business or the liquidation of a company;
- (f) the amalgamation or merger of two or more businesses or companies;
- (g) the formation of a company; or
- (h) any transaction in connection with which a person who promotes that transaction without being a party to it receives any commission or reward."

It must be clearly understood that, notwithstanding this Ordinance, if a person calculates capital gain as income then he will be charged at the rate of income tax. This is allowed by the Commissioner of Inland Revenue.

We thought that, in giving effect to the Budget speech, the tax will now be 15 per cent as it was before and, once the period is extended, instead of 15 per cent the tax will be 10 per cent. This will give to the public the opportunity, if I may use that word, to pay tax over a longer period on a transaction of a business nature, the beginning year being 1960. Therefore if someone did any business in 1958 and sold the property before the seven-year period expired and made a capital gain, he is not caught between the period '60 and '67 but between '58 and '65 and will not come under this. If after 1960 there was such a transaction then the person would have to pay tax covering the period for seven years to 1967. If business is done in another 10 years from that time and if previously tax was payable on it, then tax will have to be paid because

the period is now extended to 25 years.

The same provision is made for losses so that there can be a reasonable and equitable tax on both sides. If you make gains, you pay, and if you make losses, the time is extended so that you have a longer period to cover your losses.

We think that at this stage in our development this is a realistic tax which should continue to assist in stimulating financial activity in the country. I now move the Second Reading of the Bill No. 19 of 1967.

Dr. Jacob: I think that nothing demonstrates more fittingly the class character of the Government's fiscal policy than this. Ever since the Government came into office it has done everything possible to grant relief to the wealthy sections of this community and to penalise those who can hardly afford to pay more taxes. At the present time one will find that the incidence of direct taxation is much less than that of indirect taxation, and, generally speaking, indirect taxes fall more heavily on the lower income group in any community than direct taxation.

I warned the Government when it presented its first budget that if it interfered with the capital taxes introduced by the People's Progressive Party it would find itself in financial difficulties because its revenue on current account would be reduced. I recall that not so long ago Mr. d'Aguiar, the Minister of Finance, lamented the fact that the current budget was unable to generate any surplus which could be used for development purposes. This is the result of granting tax relief to those members of this community who can afford to pay taxes and this demonstrates, as I said, the class character of the Government we now have in office. It is only interested in promoting the interests of those members of the community who are in high-income groups, — both persons and companies.

It is well, in considering this amendment, the second amendment since the Government came into office, to the Capital Gains Tax Ordinance, to recall what the People's Progressive Party did with respect to the taxation of capital gains. In the 1962 Budget of the People's Progressive Party Government it was fully explained why it was necessary to tax capital gains, something which had never been done before, and to tax it in such a way that it could produce revenue in an equitable manner and also assist to improve the condition of the masses.

2.30p.m.

We regarded capital gains as a form of unearned income, and we felt that unearned income, that is income gained not by the sweat of the brow but by speculative activities and the like, was a better object of taxation than income which was earned by labour. We therefore re-defined income to include earned as well as unearned gains, and we brought capital gains within the scope of ordinary income taxation. However, although the rates chargeable on earned income were progressive, starting from 6 per cent and going as high as 70 per cent, we however thought that capital gains should be taxed at the same progressive rates but up to maximum of 45 per cent.

The reason for that was that companies also would be liable to pay capital gains tax, and the company rate of taxation was at a fixed flat or rate of 45 per cent. We therefore thought that capital gains should be taxed from 6 per cent at these progressive rates up to 45 per cent.

What did the Coalition Government do immediately upon the assumption of office? In the first year of its term of office it virtually abolished our capital gains tax and it introduced a tax of 10 per cent flat on short-term gains only. When that was done, I remember warning the Government that this was not enough. In the following year, on the 13th October, 1966, the National

Assembly passed its first Amendment to the coalition's Income Tax Ordinance whereby it increased the flat rate of 10 per cent on short-term gains to 15 per cent. At that time, I also asked the Government to consider whether this was a reasonable increase in the flat rate and I pointed out that Trinidad and Tobago had recently levied a capital gains tax of 20 per cent flat, and that even in the United Kingdom, which claims to have a workingclass Government in office, so-called "socialist", the Government had introduced a capital gains tax of 30 per cent flat. What we are saying today is that this flat rate of taxation on capital gains is not only inequitable but it provides very favourable treatment to those members of this community who usually make this type of gain and we would think that the more equitable system of taxation of capital gains would be to make the rates progressive, as had been done by the P.P.P.

The two Amendments, the first one in 1966 and the second one which is now being discussed, amply indicate the Government's recognition of the fact that it was wrong, on the Government's part, to interfere with the capital gains tax which it found on the Statute book when the P.P.P. was pushed out of office. There were other capital taxes, too, which the Government dismantled or virtually abolished. . Only last week, or not so long ago, the Government brought an Amendment to the Estate Duty Ordinance because it had abolished another capital tax - the gift tax.

All of these things show that the Government realises the mistake it had made. What I am saying is that the remedy it now seeks to put these matters right is not the proper remedy. The proper remedy for the capital gains tax is to have re-enacted what the Government repealed and, with respect to estate duty, to reintroduce the gift tax to plug the loophole which existed long before the P.P.P. came into office and which now exists again with the Coalition Government in office.

who are becoming richer. This 15 per cent jiggery-pokery which is extended to twenty-five years is all nonsense and I hope that the hon. Acting Minister of Finance will recognise this. It was not with any ulterior motive that Guyana was called "Bookers Guyana". Kitty and all the area up to Golden Grove at one time was owned by the sugar industry. The hon. Minister's village, Buxton, is excepted. On the West Coast Berbice and the Corentyne, everything was owned by Bookers. These people acquired lands many generations ago at what price? Buttons. These lands are being sold to unsuspecting Guyanese at fantastic prices when all the sea defences are being put up at the expense of the taxpayers.

Campbellville, was bought originally in 1932 from the sugar industry for \$60,000. One-ninth of that area was sold in 1947 for \$450,000. It was the poor people who made rice fields into Campbellville. All that has gone without a single measure of taxation, and more of it is going out on the East Coast where the lands bought originally [Mr. Prashad: "Shut up."] and which cannot be used by the sugar industry are being sold. The Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund Committee acquired some of the lands in 1947 and 1948 for sugar workers and these have all been taken up on the East Coast and West Coast. They are not thinking of making the lands available to people who are eligible, who are at the moment working in the sugar industry, the sugar barons are selling the lands to people like Hari Prashad and others. These "draught oxen" are being used as middle-men and even though some sugar workers have been able to buy, the price is not one dollar a house lot as was originally intended, but eight and ten cents per square foot and the irony of it all is, that the Crown lands for which they were paying six and twenty cents an acre have been virtually handed over to these companies as if they held transports bona fide.

The Minister of Finance, when he was in his campaign of terror and looting, would probably have said that he believed in the freehold system and that he would have had their leases turned over to freehold transports but nevertheless we have seen that it is not those people on whose backs he climbed to get into this hon. Chamber who have benefited. The people of Widsor Forest and Vergenoegen still have leases; the people at Cane Grove not only have leases but they are virtually being chased out for reasons we have already disclosed in this House.

2.50 p.m.

The people should have got titles to the lands which they held on Government leases during Her Majesty's Pleasure; is it useless for the hon. Minister to come and tell us about an Amendment to the other Amendment on the original Bill which was enacted in this Parliament. The Government and the Minister ought to do the right type of research and see that gains accruing to people from no effort or for social causes are taxed.

The lands at the back of Rosehall Village on the Corentyne are tiny pockets and there is absolutely no opportunity for the people to get employment except on the sugar estates. Those lands were held on D.H.M.P. — During Her Majesty's Pleasure — leases. The people, because of their backwardness in the post-slave period have lost their rights to those lands, and if they cannot get the lands back, the Government ought to see that those people who have acquired them as a result of their sprees with turkey and whisky, are made to pay something.

The situation with which we are dealing today is fraught with a great deal of difficulties for the ordinary working-class people, — the poor people with their children. While this Government may appear to be progressive something else is happening. We read in the newspapers — I

[MR. RAM KARRAN]

am sure the hon. Minister of Home Affairs will not say this is inaccurate — that persons who went out at four o'clock one morning were stabbed. People who go to the back of the gardens are molested. The hon. Minister of Health told us that his hospitals can be run without doctors. All of these things are resulting from the Government's backward policy in taxation. If more money is obtained from the people who can afford to pay, Government will be able to stop all these things. People would be able to walk the streets without being molested.

Again, we read in the newspapers that two children strayed from their homes and were taken to a Tiger Bay hotel. I do not know if any of my friends on the other side visit Tiger Bay very often. But look at the situation. Children are taken to these places. I have in my hand a copy of a letter sent by the Ministry of Works and Hydraulics to the President of the union catering for workers in the Ministry of Works and Hydraulics. I should like to read the second paragraph of this letter. It reads:

“The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the broad principles involved in the Ministry's proposal to effect a reduction in the various levels of employment.”

There was a hue and cry in 1962 when, as a result of the campaign carried out by the hon. Gentleman — the terrorism and what not — Government was forced to offer five days' work instead of six. Today, when there is no trouble, when things are normal, except for the fact that Police Commissioners are getting their heads rolled now and then, we see that workers are being thrown out of employment. We are going back to the pre-1957 days. When I took over the Ministry in 1957, people came to see me with their problems. The biggest problem was retrenchment. At that time the policy was to send away the people when the money that was provided for the various projects was exhausted. We changed that policy —

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Member, you seem to be embarking on a policy of administration. You would agree with me that I am rather liberal with you.

Mr. Ram Karran: Thank you, sir. I merely want to show that the Government's policy today is aimed with vengeance on the working class. That is why I read out the second paragraph of the letter which is very revealing.

Mr. Hubbard: I should like to say that this legislation is like most other legislation that came before us — the hon. Dr. Jacob called it class legislation. It also resembles the other legislation in that all the facts relative to the legislation are not declared when the Second Reading of the Bill is moved.

I wish to advise the Government to abandon this dismal measure of taxation on capital gains. In this socialist age when all mankind is striving towards a more just society, it is immoral to attempt to fool the people by saying that you are making laws to tax those who can afford to pay when you are merely offering a palliative.

3 p.m.

The proposals here stated follow the pattern in the United States of America where provision is made for those persons who have the means of holding on to their property to benefit by merely holding on to it. If they are penurious or in distress and have to get rid of their property they pay a higher rate of capital gains tax than if they are affluent and are able to hold on to their property beyond what may be called the short-term.

This is a loophole designed by the rich for the rich and I am not in the least bit surprised that in his rather laboured explanation of the period provided in this Bill the Minister avoided disclosing the truth behind the provision.

Some years ago I was invited to have dinner with an Englishman who came to this colony — it was then the colony of

British Guiana — and described himself as a left-wing socialist. He boasted that he had put aside a sum of money into a fund for maintaining Lord Russell, the great humanist Bertrand Russell who discarded the peerage which he inherited to become an ordinary citizen, a great Englishman and a man of the world. This so-called “left-wing socialist” who marched against the atom bomb, so he told me, was the Chairman of one of the big dairy chains in the United Kingdom and there he was, boasting of the manner in which his company cheated the Exchequer on the profits that it made. Said this left-wing socialist, “We standardise dividends at 10 per cent and for the rest of the profits we issue bonus shares”. The persons who can hold on to those shares for a long enough time escape capital gains tax.

I can see little difference between the British left-wing socialist and the left-wing socialist who has presented this measure to us. They both seek to accomplish the same end, that is, to cheat the exchequer to the advantage of the rich while the poor stay outside and suffer.

I should like to plead with this hon. Acting Minister of Finance not to proceed further with this Bill in view of the fact that inadequacy of funds has compelled the Government to give retrenchment notices to about 50 per cent of the staff of the Ministry of Works and Hydraulics. This is the time for the Government to take from the rich in order to put food into the mouths of the poor. What the Acting Minister of Finance is doing today is writing warrants of commitment to hunger for large numbers of public employees while at the same time he writes certificates of plenty for the rich.

It is, of course, to be expected that this Government will follow the lines laid down by its patrons since it hopes to develop this country by supplementing the absentee landlord with the absentee factory owner. What has plagued us and has been our curse throughout history is that we are multiplied

unto generations exceeding in number, even those in the Old Testament.

I ask the hon. Acting Minister of Finance to take into consideration the plight of those public employees who will very shortly be losing their employment through lack of Government funds, and I urge that he take this Bill back to the air-conditioned Cabinet room and ask his colleagues to alter the measure so that it may bring us some of the capital which we badly need to keep our people from starvation. *[Applause.]*

Dr. Reid: Mr. Speaker, there is not much to which I can reply because my friends on the other side did not speak on this Bill. They wandered and covered all sorts of other things.

The policy of taxation of this Government was compared with that of the last Government. When my friend talks about people leaving their homes at 4 o'clock in the morning and being murdered and when he claims that this is the result of our policy of taxation I wonder if he has forgotten that during the regime of the last Government it was, without doubt, the policy of taxation that created in this country such chaos, such slaughter, such violence, that people did not dare to leave their homes even in broad daylight. *[Interruption.]*

I do not know what kind of incitement my friend speaks about, but I think of the Mahaicony creek which no one but a P.P.P. supporter dared to cross. It was the policy of the P.P.P. Government that sent this country to ruins. It is hoped that with the change of Government some of this fear has been removed.

3.10 p.m.

My hon. Friend the last speaker had to admit the fact that things are now normal and people can go about their business. We must not follow that bad example that nearly ruined this country but, in instituting taxation, we must be determined notwithstanding what is said — that the policy should be realistic so that people

[DR. REID]

live and work without fear and intimidation. We know that financial activity has increased in this country and we shall continue to ensure, whatever policy we institute, that improvement continues. I therefore ask that the Bill be read a Second time.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a Second time.

Assembly in Committee.

Clause 1 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clause 2.

Dr. Jacob: May I seek an explanation from the hon. Minister? Will he kindly tell us why the word "twenty-five" was selected for this Clause?

Dr. Reid: The Government, in its consideration of this Amendment, thought that the extension of the period should be from seven years to twenty-five years so that properties that might have escaped after seven years should be subjected to tax.

Dr. Jacob: Why not thirty or fifty years; why only twenty-five years? [Dr. Reid: "The Government fixes that."]

Clause 2 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Cluase 3 to 5 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Assembly resumed.

Bill reported without Amendment, read the Third time and passed.

MOTIONS

REVISION OF STANDING ORDERS

"Whereas the Standing Orders as in force in the previous House of Assembly prior to the 26th May, 1966, are still in force as the rules of procedure of the present National Assembly;

And whereas the aforesaid Standing Orders need revision and/or modification;

Be it resolved that the said Standing Orders be referred to the Standing Orders Committee of the National Assembly for the necessary revision and/or modification."

— [The Minister for Parliamentary Affairs
 (Leader of the House)]

Mr. Bissemer: Under Section 7, paragraph 4 of the Guyana Independence Order, 1966, provision is made whereby the existing Standing Orders shall be enforceable until amended or revised. Provision is also made in Article 74 of the Constitution for this National Assembly to regulate its own procedure. This Motion seeks to ask the approval of this House for those Standing Orders to be referred to the Standing Orders Committee to consider the revision or modification of them to bring them in conformity with the constitutional provisions. The members of the Committee are:

The Leader of the House.

The Honourable L. John, Minister of Home Affairs.

The Honourable M. F. Singh, Minister of Works and Hydraulics.

Mr. T. A. Sancho.

Dr. F. H. W. Ramsahoye.

Mr. D. C. Jagan.

I should like to say that if this Motion is approved it is hoped that the Committee would meet as often as possible to consider the revision of the Standing Orders. I therefore beg to move the Motion standing in my name on the Order Paper.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion carried.

CONFIRMATION OF CUSTOMS DUTIES (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) ORDER

Dr. Reid: (On behalf of the Minister of Finance): I beg to move:

"That this National Assembly, in terms of section 9 of the Customs Ordinance, Chapter 309, confirm Customs Duties (Amendment) (No. 2) Order, 1967 (No. 25), which was made on the 24th of August, 1967, and published in the Gazette on the 26th of August, 1967."

This Motion deals with coffee, coffee extract and coffee essences.

3.20 p.m.

At the moment, the importation of coffee is restricted due to the fact that this country processes overseas its own coffee beans into instant coffee, and it is noted that the tariff as of now, is preferential 80 per cent, and general 100 per cent; but this affects also, the coffee that is processed away and brought back into this country, hence, the sales have not been as it was hoped, and other substitutes are used. It is believed that if the processed coffee comes into Guyana at a substantially lower tariff, then more Guyanese-owned coffee will be sold and coffee farmers will benefit: I am certain that both sides of the House will commend this Motion.

Mr. Hubbard: I am surprised at the explanation given by the hon. Minister of Trade speaking as Acting Minister of Finance for the Government's reduction in the existing tariff on coffee imports. First, he told us that the importation of coffee and coffee extracts is restricted. I have all along been under the impression that the total ban on the importation of coffee and coffee extracts, which was instituted by the People's Progressive Party Government is still in existence, so I am surprised that he could come and tell us here that it is restricted. I have had many representations from persons who are engaged in the production of coffee on farms and I have assured them all along that the ban which we instituted is still in force. The hon. Minister in his reply may wish to let us know to what extent the restrictions now apply.

The second thing that I am surprised to hear him say is that substitutes for coffee are being used to the detriment of the coffee farmers. So far as I am aware, and I have been keeping an eye on this because it is a matter of special concern to me as shadow Minister of Trade, there is nothing in the shops which is a substitute for instant coffee. Therefore, if coffee substitutes are coming in, then there is a lot of smuggling going on which the Minister of Finance

should look into very promptly and he would not have to spend \$80,000 to block that hole as he is vainly trying to do in regard to bush rum. The fact is that the production of coffee has increased very considerably since the manufacture of instant coffee from our own beans began, because when that was done, it was possible to pay an economic price to the farmers for coffee beans, and coffee cultivations, which had gone to bush, were weeded, drained and fertilised, and production went up from one million pounds to two million pounds.

Now with the recession in coffee prices, production is likely to fall very considerably because the prices currently prevailing will not permit the farmer to pay the cost of keeping his farm going. When the duty on coffee was fixed at the high level, this was done to penalise persons who insisted on drinking the manufactured product imported from abroad and this measure before us is not going to have any great effect upon the consumption of instant coffee. The Government Marketing Corporation, which handles Guyana Instant Coffee, pays duty only on the expenses incurred in this process and the duty which it pays is therefore less than what it would have to pay if the product imported had been made from beans provided by the manufacturer rather than from beans provided by the importer.

I suspect that the Minister of Trade may have been advised by his Chamber of Commerce advisers, because they are the people who tell him how to exercise his functions — that he should now permit them to resume the importation of coffee on the restricted scale that he talked about when he introduced this Motion — and if that is the case, he is following the counsel of ruin which will put the coffee farmers into very considerable distress. Another possibility is that the Guyana Marketing Corporation may continue to sell coffee at the present price even though it will be paying a lower rate of

[MR. HUBBARD]

duty; it may also decide, since this is a merchants' government, to pass some of this freeness on to the merchants by giving them higher wholesale and retail margins, it may even be the Government's way of hiding a subsidy to the Guyana Marketing Corporation. Let me say at once that I have no objection whatsoever to subsidising the Guyana Marketing Corporation, provided the subsidy is applied to implement a policy of guaranteeing minimum prices on a proper scale, that is to say, ensuring to the farmer that what he produces will be purchased at a guaranteed minimum price.

3.30 p.m.

There are people who can also grind that coffee to suit other epicures who like percolated coffee, boiled coffee or drip-drawn coffee. All of these things would have helped to stimulate the sale of coffee. The consumers would have been able to buy the real stuff without the discomfort of parching the coffee at home. The Marketing Corporation may have succeeded in getting more customers for coffee than exist at the present time.

This measure may not help the coffee industry. I would have liked to see some of the money which is collected by the customs, on these coffee beans, applied by the Marketing Corporation to provide better marketing for Guyana coffee. I should like to see the Marketing Corporation parching coffee and packaging that parched coffee into sealed plastic containers so that those people who like freshly-ground coffee can turn out of their mills what they want. There are people who like it that way.

I should like the Minister to tell us clearly whether it is contemplated that foreign brands of instant coffee should be admitted to our market, and whether the price of

instant coffee which is imported by the Marketing corporation should not be reduced?

Dr. Reid:(replying): One begins to wonder whether the hon. Mr. Hubbard was ever Minister of Trade, and whether he was responsible for the Marketing Corporation. He has all these ideas but ideas alone will not result in the execution of plans. It seems as if he does not fully comprehend the word "restrict" and, therefore, there is a bit of confusion. But you can restrict things in several stages. Complete restriction is just the same as banning. I said "restrict" but you did not interpret it to mean "ban". At the present time we know that the importation of coffee is not allowed in this country. [Mr. Hubbard: "What do you propose for the future?"] The ban continues.

I have to teach you something else this afternoon. To substitute means to put one thing for another. That is all it means. It does not mean that you must put a coffee product for coffee. It is putting one commodity for another. Therefore, when I spoke of substitution I was not referring to a coffee substitute. The thing sounds so foolish! It is difficult to come in here and use words and then have to come back and interpret them for these people. It is sometimes irritating.

The last thing I have to say is that the price of export coffee beans now depends on world market trends. If we are growing coffee beans for export, there must be a change in price depending on what happens in the world market, unless we are to introduce some other means of selling, and the Guyana Marketing Corporation is giving active consideration to this. But I want to repeat that the Marketing Corporation is constantly trying to help the farmers. The farmers know what price they are going to get for their produce even before they have

planted them. For seven years my friend had his ideas and he is now asking us to institute them. With these few words I move the Motion.

*Question put, and agreed to.
Motion carried.*

ADJOURNMENT

Resolved, "That this Assembly do now adjourn until Wednesday, 27th September, 1967, at 2 p.m." [Mr. Bissember.]

Adjourned accordingly at 3.37 p.m.