

THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

OFFICIAL REPORT

[VOLUME 2]

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE FIRST ^{PARLIAMENT} ~~NATIONAL~~
~~ASSEMBLY~~ OF GUYANA CONSTITUTED UNDER THE CONSTITUTION
OF GUYANA.

Sitting

Tuesday, 8th August, 1967

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

The Assembly met at 9.10a.m.

Prayers

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

Present:

His Honour the Deputy Speaker, Mr. R. C. Tello

Members of the Government

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. Cheeks

— *Minister of Local Govern-
ment*

The Honourable E. F. Correia

— *Minister of Communica-
tions*

The Honourable Mrs. W. Gaskin

— *Minister of Education*

The Honourable C. M. L. John

— *Minister of Home Affairs*

The Honourable R. J. Jordan

— *Minister of Agriculture 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*

The Honourable M. W. Carter

– Minister of Information

Parliamentary Secretaries

Mr. D. B. DeGroot

*– Parliamentary Secretary, Prime
Minister's Office*

Mr. G. Bowman

*– Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry
of Agriculture and Natural Re-
sources*

Mr. O. E. Clarke

*– Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry
of Education*

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

Mr. W. G. Carrington


Mr. R. G. B. Field-Ridley

Mr. D. Mahraj

Mr. H. Prashad J.P.

Rev. A. B. Trotman

Mr. H. M. S. Wharton J.P.


Members of the Opposition

Dr. C. B. Jagan

– Leader of the Opposition

Mr. A. Chase

Mr. B. H. Benn

Mr. Ram Karran

Mr. R. Chandisingh

Dr. Charles Jacob, Jr.

Mr. C. V. Nunes

Dr. F. H. W. Ramsahoye

Mr. E. M. G. Wilson

Mr. M. Hamid, J.P.

Mr. J. R. S. Luck

Mr. D. C. Jagan

Mr. H. Lall

Mr. Mooner Khan, J.P.

Mr. L. Linde

Mr. R. D. Persaud, J.P.

Mr. M. N. Poonai

Mr. M. Bhagwan

Clerk of the National Assembly – Mr. F. A. Narain

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

Absent:

Mr. T. A. Sancho

Mr. J. H. Thomas

Mr. H. J. M. Hubbard

Mr. Y. Ally

Dr. S. A. Ramjohn

Mr. E. M. Stoby

Mr. S. M. Saffee

PROCLAMATION SUMMONING THE SESSION

The Deputy Speaker directed the Clerk to read the Proclamation summoning the Second Session of the National Assembly.

The Clerk (Mr. F. A. Narain) read the following Proclamation:

Guyana

PROCLAMATION

No. 88/1967

By His Excellency, SIR DAVID JAMES GARDINER ROSE, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Commander in the Royal Victorian Order, Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief of Guyana.

L.S.

(SGD) D.J.G. ROSE,
Governor-General.

WHEREAS by Proclamation dated the thirtieth day of May, 1967, issued under article 82(1) of the Constitution of Guyana (hereinafter referred to as "the Constitution"), the Parliament of Guyana (hereinafter referred to as "Parliament") was prorogued with effect from Tuesday, the thirtieth day of May, 1967;

AND WHEREAS it is provided by article 81(1) of the Constitution that each session of Parliament shall be held at such place within Guyana and shall begin at such time (not being later than six months from the end of the preceding session if Parliament has been prorogued) as the Governor-General shall appoint by proclamation:

NOW THEREFORE, in pursuance of article 81(1) of the Constitution, and by virtue and in exercise of all powers enabling me in that behalf, I do hereby proclaim that a session of Parliament shall be held in the Parliament Chamber at the Public Buildings, Georgetown, Guyana, and shall begin at 9 o'clock in the forenoon on Tuesday, the eighth day of August, 1967.

Given under my hand and the Public Seal of Guyana at Guyana House, Georgetown, Guyana, this 1st day of August, 1967, and in the sixteenth year of Her Majesty's Reign.

By His Excellency's Command.

(Sgd.) R. Cheong

Secretary to the Office of the
Governor-General.

Prayers

Prayers were read by the Clerk.

OATHS

The Hon. Martin Wyld Carter, M. P., Minister of Information, made and subscribed the Oath of Allegiance and the Oath of Office.

BRIEF SUSPENSION

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I shall now suspend this sitting for a short while.

Sitting suspended accordingly.

Sitting resumed at 9.20 a.m.

Their Excellencies entered the Chamber and took their places on the Dais.

Tribute by His Excellency the Governor-General, Sir David Rose, G. C. M. G., C. V. O., M. B. E., to the late Speaker, the Honourable A. P. Alleyne, on the occasion of the Official Opening of the Second Session of Parliament, 1967.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Honourable Members of the National Assembly:

I am sure Honourable Members would join me this morning in paying tribute to our late Honourable Speaker.

The whole country has been deeply shocked and distressed by his sudden passing away and our hearts and prayers must go out to his widow and family in their great loss, — a loss which is shared by the nation.

Our late Speaker in his humility and gentle nature, brought a certain dignity and distinction to his high office which has been both a credit to our first sovereign Parliament and a service to the country he loved so well. A great part of his life was devoted to the high cause of education in Guyana but he will probably be remembered above all as a sincere patriot dedicated to the principle of Parliamentary Democracy.

The Late Honourable Speaker has served his God and his country well and he has left us an example of unselfish public service; a son of

Guyana who gave all he had right to the end in the discharge of his duties as a high officer of the State.

[Honourable Members and invitees stood in silence for a few seconds.]

[The Prime Minister banded the Address to His Excellency.]

**GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S
ADDRESS**

His Excellency addressed the National Assembly as follows:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, hon. Members of the National Assembly, the official opening of this the Second Session of Parliament has national significance in that it almost coincides with the commencement of the second year of our Independence. For me personally it will ever remain a memorable occasion as it marks the first occasion on which I have had the honour to formally open a session of this honourable House. I cannot but help recalling that the last occasion on which I had the privilege of performing a similar function in one of our sister Caribbean territories, I was able to announce to the hon. Members that it was to be the last session of that particular Legislature as a Colonial one acting under the ultimate sanction of Parliament in London.

I little thought then, in January 1966, that it would also be my privilege to be the first native born Governor-General of Guyana to open a session of the First sovereign and independent Parliament of this country. So it is my honour and good fortune today to be the first Guyanese to perform this formal act symbolic of our Independence, the opening of our Parliament and the reading of a Speech expressing the policy and intention of our first sovereign Government and embracing a proposed programme of legislation, subject only to the ultimate sanction of this honourable House.

Both my wife and I are deeply grateful for the warm and kind welcome which but a few months ago I received in this National Assembly on being appointed by Her Majesty The Queen as the first Guyanese Governor-General of Guyana. Since then I have received many tokens of loyalty, friendship and encouragement from so many of our people which have been a source of inspiration in pursuit of my firm pledge to serve the country of my birth to the best of my ability and experience.

The Development Programme

The achievement of the past year are well known and it is my Government's intention to maintain progress and re-double its efforts with the co-operation of the people to ensure economic advance and establish true equality and opportunity for all.

The Seven-Year Development Programme, launched a year ago, has had some initial difficulties chiefly as a result of a shortage of skilled personnel. However, as a result of the dedicated service of those involved and with certain changes in priorities it has made its impact and it is estimated that there was an expenditure of over \$30 million last year under the capital budget spread over a number of sectors and aimed at strengthening and expanding our economic infrastructure. These sectors have included education, transport, communications, housing, agriculture, land development, mining and forestry.

The programme of rural electrification has gained momentum. West Coast Berbice has been electrified and lights will be going on in many other places soon.

Forty miles of all weather road have been constructed and the road programme will be continued during the present year.

It is expected that the Atkinson/Mackenzie Road will be but the first stage of a road network

linking Georgetown to the Rupununi and eventually Brazil — a stage it is hoped to complete within the next nine months. As the first positive and practical measure ever taken to link our coastland by road to the Rupununi Savannahs, it must be surely acknowledged as one of the most exciting developments in the long and arduous task of giving our people access to our great interior region; a task which has hitherto eluded us through more than 150 years of Colonial rule.

The modernisation of air transportation will continue as well as the programme for construction of additional air strips in the interior largely on a self-help basis. The runways at Atkinson will shortly be completed and the new terminal building will be ready for service in a few months.

The surveys of our natural resources and potential continue. My Government is now studying the preliminary report on the development of hydro-electric power and expects soon to commission a feasibility study as the next step towards the establishment of hydro-power as a reality in Guyana.

The Co-operative Movement has made substantial progress. The savings in this sector have increased by two million dollars. Conscious of the role Co-operatives must play in the development of Guyana and the enthusiastic response of the people, my Government will lend every assistance in this field and proposes a revision of the organisational structure and an expansion of education and credit facilities.

Education

The construction of the new University building has been planned and work will commence during the current year. Meanwhile, a comprehensive White Paper on education will shortly be presented in Parliament setting out Government's policy on this most important subject.

During the course of this Session, a Teachers' Pension Bill will be introduced which, should it be passed, will give to the members of the teaching profession basically the same rights and benefits as those enjoyed by members of the Civil Service. The significance of this measure is that it is part of a long-term plan to raise the status of teachers in the community and to recognise the value, importance and significance of their contribution to the nation's progress.

The building of the Guyana Training Centre will commence within a month and the Centre itself will be fully in operation early in the calendar year, 1968. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Labour in co-operation with the Ministry of Education, has launched the first ever training scheme for women and this will continue to expand. These measures are an aspect of the programme for increasing skills and competence amongst our people.

Health and Housing

The provision of adequate housing is a matter of active concern to my Government. There will be an extension of the self-help schemes started some time ago in the rural and urban areas. Further, as a result of negotiations, it is expected that a sum of approximately \$20 million will be invested in housing, making homes available for purchase. It is intended to introduce Legislation to provide for Government guarantees of up to 90 per cent of mortgage loans, made to approved persons for home building, by public corporations and finance institution.

Steps will be taken, legislative and otherwise, aimed at wiping out the abuses, especially with respect to exorbitant rentals and resumption of possession, which now exist in the relationship of landlord and tenant.

The Health Services will be expanded. The present facilities at the public institutions will be improved and plans are now being

finalised for the construction of a new hospital next year. The site will be on the East Coast of Demerara and when completed the hospital will house several specialist departments and also serve as a teaching hospital. Meanwhile, at home and abroad, the programme for the training of health technicians and subordinate staff in the curative and preventive fields will be accelerated.

My Government will introduce during this Session legislation to establish a national insurance scheme to provide benefits for all workers between the ages of 18 and 65. Much work has already been done on the organisational aspects of this important scheme and only the pressures of the legislative programme and a shortage of drafting staff have prevented the earlier introduction of the necessary legislation.

Local Government

A draft Local Government Elections Bill has been published and it is intended that as soon as interested persons and Local Government organisations have had an opportunity to study the draft and make representations to the Minister, and the Government in turn has had an opportunity to give consideration to such representations, legislation based on the draft Bill will be introduced into this House. My Government proposes to adopt the same process of consultation in connection with the introduction of a Municipal and District Councils Bill before the end of 1967. This Bill will provide for the establishment and powers of the new Councils under the arrangements for Local Government reform.

Agriculture

The programme of increased agricultural production and diversification with the active participation of Government will continue and the distribution of

lands to farmers will proceed. New credit facilities will be created, more extensive and concentrated training undertaken and marketing services expanded to ensure the success of the whole programme.

The Guyana Marketing Corporation is being reorganised. The storage capacity is being expanded and the organisation geared for food processing and accommodation of farmers' produce as part of the national drive for import substitution. The Corporation has now programmed its activities to work closely with other Caribbean Marketing Corporations and the future should be promising.

Rice

The Rice Industry is in the process of being reorganised from planting to marketing and a research centre will be set up. It is proposed that the two major Rice Corporations will be unified and a substantial sum will be expended from public funds for the purpose of achieving greater productivity, higher quality of rice and lower production costs. Thus we shall be in a more favourable position to compete in world markets taking advantage of the world grain shortage and ensuring a better standard of living to our rice farmers and a boost to the economy of the country. As a first step, the Boards of the two Corporations have been largely harmonised by dual membership appointments and an agreement has been negotiated and concluded with the United States Agency for International Development as a result of which the Government has been able to retain the services of consultants to advise on long-term reorganisation of the Industry.

Industry

In the field of Industry my Government is committed to a mixed economy in which private enterprise has a role to play. Legislation will shortly be introduced to rationalise incentives and concessions in this sector. At the same time there

continues to be made available, credit and managerial advice to small local business enterprises and artisans.

Youth

My Government, in furtherance of its policy to promote the welfare of youth and their training for useful citizenship, proposes to establish a Youth Corps, the sites for the training of which will be at Atkinson and Tumatumari. The young people who undergo service with this Corps will receive training in a diversity of skills much needed for our industrial and agricultural growth. They will also receive the benefits of living and working together in an atmosphere of corporate discipline and national service. It is hoped that from among these young people we will find some of our pioneers who will help in leading others away from the over-crowded coastlands to possess and develop our vast hinterland.

Home Affairs

The Citizenship Bill has already been published. It deals with all matters relating to citizenship and will shortly be introduced to this House as also will the legislation to make provision for a comprehensive system of permanent national registration and electoral registration.

Early in this Session a Bill to extend the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman and to make provision for matters supplementary and ancillary to those mentioned in Part II of Chapter 5 of the Constitution of Guyana will be introduced.

Labour and Industrial Relations

My Government is convinced, as has been previously announced by Ministers, that measures should be taken to provide machinery for improving industrial relations. After a very careful examination of the situation the Government has concluded that anti-strike legislation is neither appropriate to our conditions nor likely to improve industrial relations. After

consultation with the workers and employers' organisations, it has therefore been decided to introduce legislation to establish an Arbitration Tribunal to which recourse may be had voluntarily by either side. While any matter so referred to the Tribunal is under consideration, neither worker nor employer may take any action involving a strike or lockout.

External Affairs

During our country's one year of Independence, my Government's foreign policy has earned the respect of the international community — a policy of non-alignment in which situations, as they arise, are examined on their merits and actions and decisions are taken with the basic aim of securing and advancing the vital interest of the nation.

In the Caribbean, of which we are an integral part, my Government's aim has been to encourage and sustain the movement towards regional unity. In furtherance of this objective, whenever a proper opportunity has offered, the Government has not hesitated to take an initiative in Caribbean affairs. Such efforts have drawn heavily on our limited resources but it is considered to be a price which Guyana must gladly pay as the Government is convinced that the future of our country and the very standards of living of our people depend on regional co-operation.

My Government through its representatives at the Conference of Officials in Basseterre, the capital of St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, and the subsequent Conference of West Indian Ministers in Barbados, played what is generally accepted to have been a most constructive and positive role in negotiations and agreements aimed at settling the recent constitutional crisis which took place in that State. The agreement so far reached is both a victory for West Indian unity and a vindication of my Government's regional policy.

A further positive step in the direction of greater Caribbean co-operation and unity will be the meeting of Commonwealth Caribbean Governments at official level to be held in Guyana from the 14th to the 18th of this month and the Heads of Government meeting to follow it in Barbados in October. At these meetings it will be the general aim of my Government to plan with the other Governments of the Commonwealth Caribbean for economic co-operation and integration.

In the year ahead as always, it will be my Government's concern to build the economy, to safeguard and extend the markets for our products, to secure aid and technical assistance for development and to foster increased awareness abroad of the needs and achievements of our country. It will also be my Government's policy to maintain the territorial integrity of Guyana and generally to advance those causes on which the peace of the world in general and the development of nations such as our own in particular must always depend.

I now have the honour to declare the Second Session of the First National Assembly of Guyana to be opened and may God bless you and guide your deliberations.

[His Excellency handed his Address to the Deputy Speaker.]

THANKS FOR GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S ADDRESS

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Tello): 'May it please Your Excellency, on behalf of hon. Members, that I first thank you for the appropriate tribute paid to our late Speaker whom we all have learned to love, respect and honour for his many qualities, and we, Sir, shall always treasure his memory very fondly. Secondly, I must thank Your Excellency for first, consenting to visit our Parliament to deliver the Throne Speech in

such an able manner. I assure you, Sir, that all Members are grateful to you for this visit and I am rather confident that the points of policy and the programme on which they would be pursued would be given due attention and I presume that out of them we shall have some lively debates in this House.

Sir, today the mantle has fallen on you to write once more, in golden letters on the pages of the history of this great House. Today, you have removed the very last vestige of colonialism when you, one of our illustrious sons, have delivered for the first time the Throne Speech, and Sir, you have gladdened the hearts of thousands of Guyanese throughout the length and breadth of this, our dear land. Among those thousands are some who sit here in Parliament today on both sides of the House, and both in the back and front Benches, because they are among those visionful people who have for many years prayed, hoped, agitated and relentlessly struggled to make possible this day, that a Guyanese shall have the honour and privilege of delivering the Throne Speech. *[Applause]*

As it would appear, to further ingratiate yourself with the mass of people, I note that at no time did you spare yourself in identifying yourself with the day-to-day life of the community; not restricting this identification to mere social events, but involving yourself as it were with the day-to-day problems, the day-to-day aspirations, and taking the full role so admirably of counsellor, comforter and friend. My delight is heightened to mention these historic facts and I assume to thank your good and kind Lady for accompanying you today, not merely to encourage, inspire and fortify you, but to grace the proceedings with her radiant charms and her dignified poise. *[Applause.]* And so, on behalf of the Members, I hope that you will accept our sincere thanks channelled to you

through the humble servant of this Parliament, and that you will receive our thanks with pleasure and approval. *[Applause.]*

Sitting suspended at 9.55 a.m.

10.08 a.m.

On resumption

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

The Prime Minister: Before the Assembly proceeds, I beg to move a suspension of Standing Orders to enable me to move a Motion expressing the condolences of this Assembly to the widow and relatives of the late Speaker, Mr. Aubrey Percival Alleyne.

Question put, and agreed to.

Relevant Standing Orders suspended.

MOTION

Death of Mr. A. P. Alleyne, Speaker of the National Assembly

“Be it resolved that this National Assembly record its deep regret at the death of Mr. A. P. Alleyne, Speaker and servant of this Assembly, acknowledge the debt owed to him for the time during which he devoted his authority, dignity and wisdom to the high office he held; recognise, as a fitting tribute to his memory, his constant and unremitting service to the Assembly and the Members thereof, and the fairness, wit and ability with which he carried out his duties, and direct that an expression of its deep sympathy be conveyed to his sorrowing widow and children.” —
[The Prime Minister.]

The Prime Minister: It was only late last week that most of us learnt that the then Speaker was not only ill but seriously ill, and before we had become accustomed, so to speak, to that knowledge, we learnt of his passing.

[THE PRIME MINISTER]

Tributes have been paid to the late Aubrey Percival Alleyne by various sections of our community and also this morning by His Excellency the Governor-General.

It is our custom in this House when outstanding members of our society pass, to pay tribute and to record our condolences. We sometimes do that as a matter of duty. On this occasion, however, it is no mere duty on my part, for I feel a personal sense of loss with the death of the late Aubrey Percival Alleyne. He has been the Speaker of the First Parliament of an independent Guyana and as such a number of us would know him for about a year but my acquaintance with the late gentleman goes back a matter of thirty-two years when he was my teacher.

Later in life it was my happy fortune to have been associated with him as my employer when he was Principal of the Washington High School, and still later he was my colleague in politics. Though he was my colleague in politics it must not be assumed that at all times we saw eye to eye, but an outstanding feature of the gentleman's character was his capacity to disagree with you strongly and yet retain a personal affection and interest.

It is always said, as a friend of mine remarked last night, that death is untimely, as if there is any time that death is timely. At 67 the late Speaker, though certainly not a youth, had not reached the grand climacteric and one would have hoped that he would have had so many more years during which he could have presided over the business of this House and given us the advantage of his wit, yet firmness during the course of our debates.

Death is always a shocking, quite frankly a disgusting thing, when it claims those whom we respect and love. One poet in a moment of desperation or self-delusion

explained, "Death, thou shalt die"; but I think the other poet came closer to how we feel when he said:

"The right ear that is filled with
dust Hears little of the false or just."

Those of us who have religious persuasions will be consoled by the fact that there is a life hereafter, but that is little consolation to me and, I believe, to the rest of this House today, now that we recognise that no more shall we hear the voice of Aubrey Percival Alleyne. No more, as some of us like myself and the hon. Mr. Luck would say, shall we hear the voice of "Ochroe". He became so much a part of our lives, he was such an impeccable gentleman, his ideals were so patently high, his sense of justice and fairness accepted and respected by all, so much so that we are inclined to wonder whether there can come such a gentleman again.

I feel, however, that it may be some small solace and consolation to his widow and his relatives to know that not only the country and general society mourn his passing but also his close colleagues in this House some of whom, like myself, he has had reason to discipline, some of whom, like myself, he had reason to lecture; but even as we remember the occasions on which he disciplined us or lectured us, we must recall the calm and conviction with which he carried out those exercises. We little thought he would not have been here today and I ask that this Motion, which will be seconded by the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Dr. Jagan), be passed and that we express our sincerest sympathies to Mrs. Alleyne, the surviving children and other relatives of the late Speaker, on the death of one whom we knew well, one whom we respected greatly, and one whose death has left a vacant place in our hearts.

The Leader of the Opposition (Dr. Jagan):
On behalf of the Members on this side of the

House, I wish to join the Prime Minister and others who have already paid tribute to our late Speaker. In our late Speaker we saw an individual developing with the times, so to speak, first as an educator, then as a politician, and, towards his end, as a statesman.

In the early period of his life he certainly fulfilled a great need which is recognised by all — the need to have a colonial people educated so that they can have an understanding of the forces which are at play in their own country and in the world at large. But, no doubt, like many of us, he realised that mere education was not enough, that it was necessary to mobilise, and thus he joined in our liberation movement. He was one of the early leaders of the People's Progressive Party in the early fifties' and he played a significant role which led to the Independence of Guyana and which placed him in the position of first Speaker of our National Assembly in an independent Guyana.

Having been elevated to the position of Speaker of this House from the position of a politician, there is no doubt that he was subject to a great deal of pressure. Undoubtedly, there were these pressures. In fact he acknowledged them at times, but, in spite of this, he tried as best as he could to hold the scales evenly. We had heated arguments at times, but such is the hurly-burly of politics and parliamentary life. Nevertheless, we found that whenever we went in his office to talk to him he was always a gentleman. He always tried to see both points of view and, at times, spoke with the Leader of the House in order that some compromise might be reached. He was always out for a compromise, and perhaps this is as it should be.

His loss, at this time, will certainly be a loss not only to this Parliament but to this nation. We need steady hands and

influences such as his, and we hope that the person who will succeed him will fulfil the role which he performed with the same dignity and with the same grace.

I wish to take this opportunity to join with the Prime Minister in expressing our condolence and sympathy to his sorrowing widow and family. We hope that his memory will be enshrined in the hearts of all the people of Guyana.

The Minister of Local Government (Mr. Cheeks): It is with profound sadness that I have had to bid the final farewell to my friend and co-worker Aubrey Percival Alleyne. On behalf of the United Force, I tender to his bereaved widow, his sorrowing children and other relatives, the sincere condolence of myself and my party, in their distress.

I have known Mr. Alleyne for a long time. He was one of the early pioneers in secondary education and, for many years, during the 1930s and the 1940s, he worked very hard, often without adequate remuneration to educate and tutor many boys and girls who are now men and women holding high offices in this country. I have been closely associated with him for about 17 years. In 1950, his school and mine became merged and we were co-principals carrying on the work which he had begun.

10:25 a.m.

During those years he and I became close friends. It is somewhat characteristic — I should say it is a characteristic weakness — of human beings on the whole not to associate the idea of mortality with those who are closest to them and, believe me, even though I knew "A.P.", as I called him, was not in perfect health, I did not associate the idea of death with him. To me he seemed somewhat like an institution, and that is why I received the news of his passing with such a deep sense of shock.

[MR. CHEEKS]

It is fitting, in speaking of Aubrey Alleyne, to quote some of Shakespeare's famous lines:

“All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely
players.

They have their exits and their
entrances;

And one man in his time plays many
parts.”

So far as I know, “A. P.” has been bailiff, sanitary inspector, teacher, politician, the Honourable Speaker of this Parliament, husband, father and friend; and whether in success or in failure, [in all the vicissitudes of life] through which he has passed, he has been a strange mixture of humility and impatience, of gentleness and sternness, of strength and weakness. He has made his exit from this life in a style which perfectly befits the taste and character of the man I knew. If it were possible for anyone to direct his own obsequies, we might have seen more pomp and splendour than that which accompanied Aubrey to his final resting place last Sunday.

“A. P.” had an abiding love of English literature and of the Holy scriptures, and in his hey-day as well as recently, he revelled in biblical and literary quotations. At school, every year when the results of the Overseas Examination were published, we would arrange the upper school in the hall. The successful candidates would be put up front, and, after the congratulatory speeches, “A. P.” would stand on the stage and exclaim to the winners, “Go forth into the streets of Babylon and proclaim what great things the Lord hath done for thee.”

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know of no man who adored pageantry and ceremony more than “A.P.” did, and when the final race was run, he would certainly have said with Shakespeare's Henry V –

“And what art thou, thou idol
ceremony?

What kind of god art thou that
suffer'st more

Of mortal griefs than do thy
worshippers?

What are thy rents? What are thy
comings in?

O ceremony, show me but thy worth!

There was one thing “A.P.” never tolerated from Press reporters in this Chamber or from children in school, and that was when they assumed that he had not heard their murmurings. He would threaten the children with fire and brimstone, and I am quite certain that the Press reporters in the Press Gallery will remember how many times he threatened to expel them from this Chamber when they murmured.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Shakespeare tells us, “The evil that men do lives after them, The good is often interred with their bones.” May it be not so with my friend “A. P.” His weaknesses were human; his strength at times seemed even more than human. He was indeed a lover of the people and the people also loved him – undoubtedly they had good reason to love him. I remember one occasion when some vagrants were gaming under his house. The police came upon them and arrested them. When they turned appealing eyes to Aubrey Alleyne, he thundered upon the police: “Loose them; they are my friends. How dare the police enter upon my premises without my permission? Get out!” The men were released, and they remained his close friends; in fact, they followed him for many, many years throughout the time he and I were together keeping school, as he called it. They followed him like faithful dogs.

In Southern France whenever there is a funeral there are some words put up on a sign in Church: “*Aujourd'hui c'est moi; demain c'est toi.*” Today it is me; tomorrow

it is you. May God grant that the soul of my friend Aubrey Percival Alleyne rest in peace.

Mr. Bhagwan: I wish to pay tribute to a successful man and a believer in the system which we have been handed by the British. The lives of great men such as Mr. Alleyne will always be instructive, especially at a period like this. When a country becomes independent there are forces at work from which one has to draw guide-lines for future action. Men, like Mr. Alleyne, have been placed in a most peculiar position, having come from the past and at the same time burdened with the duty of doing something for the future.

10.35 a.m.

The members of the younger generation have to look up to people like Mr. Alleyne and to analyse their lives and find out exactly where the society may have gone wrong in the past. In his role as Speaker, Mr. Alleyne's performance did, indeed, offer very much for those of us who want to construct something for the future. We will find in due course that a process of disillusionment is bound to take place. It takes many forms. Some men who have been bound up in the old colonial society find that in a new Government, a new institution, new forms, they are confronted with choices, and some of these choices are indeed very difficult. Some of them escape. Some of them run away because they are unable to face the new situation.

Mr. Alleyne had been placed in such a position in life that he was confronted with a new situation and he had to develop a definite attitude. All of us here know that Mr. Alleyne believed sincerely in this institution over which he presided. Many times he criticised the way in which this Parliament had been functioning. He was a most ardent advocate of Parliamentary democracy. Mr. Alleyne had come to the final point where he would have been able to

see the need for vital changes in the system of which we are now a part. Perhaps, if there was youth in Mr. Alleyne, as a man who has had such a revolutionary past, a man who has been active in politics and who has been closely associated with the needs of the masses, he would have come to the conclusion that the politicians of today and those who would like to be politicians of tomorrow were bound to do something about the deficiencies and weaknesses of the system which we have inherited.

I have often expressed my own view about this system. Parliament has not functioned according to what has been expected of it. What we must ask ourselves is: "Do we want to pattern our parliamentary system on what the British have in the House of Commons or do we want to follow the guide set out by Mr. Alleyne in trying to construct something new? Mr. Alleyne will always be remembered in this Parliament and in this country as a whole, as a man who had started to set a new stage.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Before I put this Motion, I think that this is the appropriate time to advise the House of messages of sympathy that have been received. We have had messages from:

"Dr. Horace King, Speaker of the House of Commons, U.K.

The Members and Staff of the U.K. Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

The Chairman, Councillors and Secretariat of the General Council of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

Mr. A. Tasker, former Member.

Mr. J. A. F. Hailwood of the Demerara Co., Ltd.

The Acting Lord Mayor and City Council of Georgetown.

Mr. Edward Rangee.

Mr. S. K. Joseph Mortice."

I will now put the Motion.

"Be it resolved that this National Assembly record its deep regret at

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER]

the death of Mr. A. P. Alleyne, Speaker and servant of this Assembly, acknowledged the debt owed to him for the time during which he devoted his authority, dignity and wisdom to the high office he held; recognise, as a fitting tribute to his memory, his constant and unremitting service to the Assembly and the Members thereof and the fairness, wit and ability with which he carried out his duties, and direct that an expression of its deep sympathy be conveyed to his sorrowing widow and children."

Question put, and agreed to.

Members of the Assembly and Invitees stood in silence for a few minutes.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS BY
THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**

Leave to Members

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I have to announce that leave has been granted to the hon. Mr. Carrington from the 8th to the 31st of August, 1967.

**PRESENTATION OF PAPERS
AND REPORTS, ETC.**

The following Papers were laid:

- (i) Address by His Excellency The Governor-General — [Deputy Speaker.]
- (ii) Seventy-sixth Annual Report of the Chamber of Commerce of the City of Georgetown for the year ended 31st December, 1966. — [Minister of Trade.]
- (iii) (a) Reports of the Director of Audit on the Accounts of the Guyana Post Office Savings Bank for the years ended 31st December, 1965 and 31st December, 1966.
- (b) Customs Duties (Amendment) Order, 1967 (No. 18), made under section 8 of the Customs Ordinance, Chapter 309, on the 30th of June, 1967, and published in the Gazette on the 8th of July, 1967. — [Minister of Finance.]

- (iv) Annual Reports of the Ministry of Agriculture for the years 1964, 1965 and 1966 — [Minister of Agriculture and Natural Resources.]
- (v) (a) Annual Report of the Social Assistance Department for the year 1965.
- (b) Hours of Work (Printing Trade Workers) Regulations, 1967 (No. 8), made under sections 26 and 29 of the Factories Ordinance, Chapter 115, on the 11th of July, 1967 and published in the Gazette on the 17th of July, 1967. — [Minister of Labour and Social Security.]

10.45. a.m.

**INTRODUCTION OF BILLS
FIRST READING**

The following Bills were introduced and read the First time:

- Guyana Citizenship Bill, 1967 — [The Minister of Home Affairs.]
- (a) Estate Duty (Amendment) Bill, 1967;
 - (b) Bank of Guyana (Coinage) Bill, 1967 — [The Minister of Finance.]
- Ombudsman Bill, 1967 — [The Prime Minister.]

PUBLIC BUSINESS

**Appointment of
Committee of Selection**

The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs (Mr. Bissemer): I move that the following hon. Members be appointed to the Committee of Selection for this Session:

Dr. F. H. W. Ramsahoye
Mr. C. M. L. John
Mr. R. J. Jordan
Mr. David De Groot
Mr. Derek Jagan
Mr. C. V. Too-Chung

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Members, I have to announce that the Selection Committee, as provided by Standing Order

No. 71 (1), is as mentioned by the hon. Leader of the House.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Bissember: Before I move the adjournment I wish to indicate that the Motion which appears on the Notice Paper

which has been circulated will be the matter to be dealt with on the day to which this House is now to be adjourned.

I move that this Assembly do now adjourn until Thursday 10th August, 1967, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon.

Adjourned accordingly at 10.48 a.m.