

THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

OFFICIAL REPORT

[VOLUME 1]

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

37th Sitting

Wednesday, 25th January, 1967

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

The Assembly met at 2p.m.

Prayers

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

Present

His Honour the Speaker, Mr. A. P. Alleyne

Members of the Government

Ministers

The Honourable L. F. S. Burnham, Q.C.,
The Honourable P. S. d'Aguiar,
The Honourable N. J. Bissember,

The Honourable R. E. Cheeks,
The Honourable E. F. Correia,
The Honourable Mrs. W. Gaskin,
The Honourable L. John,
The Honourable R. J. Jordan,

The Honourable M. Kasim,
The Honourable W. O. R. Kendall, C.B.E.,
The Honourable C. A. Merriman,

— Prime Minister
— Minister of Finance
— Minister of Information (Leader
of the House)
— Minister of Local Government
— Minister of Communications
— Minister of Education
— Minister of Home Affairs
— Minister of Agriculture and
Natural Resources
— Minister of Works and Hydraulics
— Minister of Health and Housing
— Minister of Labour and Social
Security

Parliamentary Secretaries

Mr. D. B. deGroot,

Mr. Bowman,

Mr. O. E. Clarke,

Mr. P. Duncan,

Mr. J. G. Joaquin, O.B.E., J.P.,

Mr. C. V. Too-Chung,

— Parliamentary Secretary,
Prime Minister's Office
— Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry
of Labour and Social Security
— Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry
of Education
— Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry
of Local Government
— Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry
of Works and Hydraulics
— Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry
of Finance

Other Members

Mr. W. A. Blair
Mr. J. Budhoo
Mr. W. G. Carrington
Mr. R. G. B. Field-Ridley
Mr. D. Mahraj
Mr. T. A. Sancho
Mr. M. F. Singh
Mr. R. Tello, Deputy Speaker
Mr. J. H. Thomas
Rev. A. B. Trotman
Mr. H. M. S. Wharton, J.P.

Members of the Opposition

Dr. C. F. Jagan, Leader of the Opposition
Mr. A. Chase
Mr. Ram Karran
Mr. R. Chandisingh
Mr. H. J. M. Hubbard
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. H. Lall
Mr. M. Khan, J.P.
Mr. Y. Ally
Mr. R. D. Persaud
Mr. M. N. Poonai
Dr. S. A. Ramjohn
Mr. S. M. Saffee
Mr. M. Bhagwan

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

Absent:

Dr. the Honourable P. A. Reid,
Minister of Trade - on leave
The Honourable S. S. Ramphal, C.M.G., Q.C.,
Attorney-General and Minister of State
Mr. H. Prashad - on leave
Mr. B. H. Benn - on leave
Mr. D. C. Jagan
Mr. L. Linde - on leave
Mr. E. M. Stoby

PUBLIC BUSINESS
MOTION
APPROVAL OF ESTIMATES OF
EXPENDITURE
BUDGET DEBATE

Assembly resumed debate on the Motion moved by the Minister of Finance on 16th January, 1967, for the approval of estimates of expenditure for the financial year 1967 totalling \$110,645,905.

Mr. Speaker: When the adjournment was taken last night the hon. Member Mr. Hamid had concluded his speech. [Pause.] Shall I call on the hon. Minister of Finance?

Mr. Wilson: The Budget as presented by the Minister of Finance reveals a state of confusion in the ranks of the Coalition Government. It reveals an act of shadow-boxing, a making of smoke-screens and a set of contradictions. I shall illustrate my reference to one or two cases as revealed in the Budget.

Let us take the case of assistance to farmers who are engaged in agriculture. — In one part of the Budget Speech we find that the Minister indicates the necessity or the desire on the part of the Government to subsidize what is most important to agriculture, that is drainage and irrigation, and also assistance by way of marketing and guaranteed prices. Let me read from page 12 of the Budget Speech:

“The major group, as I pointed out, comprised the subsidies that go into agriculture mainly through the unrecouped capital charges on drainage and irrigation and land development works and guaranteed prices for farm produce. The Government proposes in 1967 to formulate detailed proposals for a substantial reduction and rationalization of these subsidies . . .”

Yet this Government, with its tongue in its cheek, tries to give the impression that in imposing taxation on imported commodities it is its desire to

help the local farmers. Instead of subsidizing or even providing free drainage and irrigation facilities, this Government intends to reduce drainage and irrigation facilities substantially. Now what contradiction does this reveal on the part of the Government?

The Government has also increased the licence fees in respect of motor vehicles. It has also increased the rates of duty on motor vehicles, parts, tyres — [Mr. Bissember: “For cars only.”] — and tubes to curtail assistance by way of cheap transportation. The farmers must use motor vehicles to take farm commodities from one place to another. It seems as if some people do not realize that after plantains are reaped they are to be transported to the markets and farmers cannot, as in days gone by, put the produce on his head and take it to the village market. It seems as if some people are living about forty years behind the times. The produce must be taken to centres of dense population and, in order that it may reach those centres, it must be transported by motor vehicles. Now the Government has taxed motor vehicles thereby causing further hardship on the farmers. Yet it is saying that it is its intention to assist the local farmer, the local producer.

In his Budget Speech the Minister of Finance glossed over the fact that the Government has been able to chase down bush rum manufacturers and has succeeded, to some extent, to hound them down. But the Government did not give the farmers protection against the marauders and bandits who steal their produce. The farmers are left to the mercy of bandits who trespass on their farms. The situation is very bad. I will mention two instances: Some men went on a man's farm to steal coconuts and were accosted by him, the thieves asked him what he wanted. His reply was that he wanted to see

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if he could get a few coconuts. They said, "All right." There were four of them and they gave him one coconut each and told him to find his way out quickly. This would have been very amusing had it not been for the fact that this happens every day.

There was another incident which occurred on a coconut estate at Greenfield. The Police went there and saw a man stealing coconuts and packing them into a boat. When they accosted him he assaulted them. What would that man have done if the owner of the estate had gone there?

On another occasion some thieves asked the owner of an estate to assist them by giving them a "lift" and the man was obliged to do so. That was a ridiculous situation. The point is this: just as this Government has spent a lot of money to hound down bush rum manufacturers, it should use its security forces and all the resources at its disposal to give protection to the farmers on their farms. How do you expect the farmers to produce when they are left at the mercy of the thieves and bandits who raid their farms? Is the Government really sincere about assisting farmers to produce?

2.20 p.m.

Now, we are hearing a lot about the emergency being lifted, and arms and ammunition being returned. Yet, under the National Security Act, the Minister of Home Affairs has the power to withhold the farmers' shotguns which they use to protect themselves from two-footed and four-footed thieves. I must ask this Government whether it is sincere about assisting the farmers to produce more. Take the farmers at Bonasika. They cannot carry on their cultivation because parrots, wild dogs, tigers, labba and all sorts of animals destroy it.

I now pass on to my second point. Government's policy in ruining agri-

culture has led to another situation which is unpleasant and that is, it has led to the rise in the incidence of unemployment. Let the housewives tell you. Their husbands cannot get work. They also know that many of their menfolk who have been employed for 20 years are being retrenched. What absurdity! This Government is committed to centrally organized thuggery. It has to find work for these boys because they are threatening to use the same device on it that it used on people who were in office previously.

The Government's policy of strangling the rice industry is creating more difficulties. We know that each rice farmer indirectly provides work for five other persons, and this Government knows it too. Several rice farmers have had to "close shop." It is uneconomic to them. It does not pay them to plant, when you take into consideration the cost of ploughing, reaping and transporting. They have to pay \$20 per year for renting one acre of land. They have to pay \$16 for ploughing an acre of land on two occasions. Then there is the cost of milling. When you put all these costs together, you find that the man is left in the red.

The Government removed people who were planting rice from the management of the rice industry, and it put in control those who know about rice only when they see it on the plate. We also see that duties on building materials have gone up which means that there will be a depression in the building field. That will have the effect of putting people out of work. Transportation costs are increasing. There will be less employment for builders.

I go now to my third point, that is, the impact which the Budget proposals will have on the cost of living. We know as a fact that there is what is known as the "accumulative effect"

beginning in 1965. Subsidies are being reduced on freight rates and fares have gone up. The cost of local as well as imported commodities has gone up. Now, what do you expect? If the cost is going up and there is not enough of local produce, the immediate result is that the cost of local products will go up. Eddoes, plantains and so on will get dearer. But you cannot eat your cake and have it too.

I am contending that there is so much confusion by the Budget proposals that this Government is causing the very things which it wants to prevent. It is putting heavy burdens on the consumers, heavy burdens on the masses. But that is to be expected when there is, in this coalition, one who said that "the masses are asses." As we all know, asses are beasts of burden. This Government is out to crush the masses. It puts them out of employment. The labour market will be flooded. Building costs will go up. There will be less building, and on top of all of this, the cost of living is rising.

2.30 p.m.

One person very aptly described this Budget. The person said that it is a "gastro-enteritis Budget" for the workers. This Budget is to give them "belly work"; they do not know what to do; they cannot settle themselves. The people are feeling the pressure, and the time will come when they will push you off their backs. They will not remain asses all the time; you can fool the people for some time, but you cannot fool them all the time. The nice words in the Budget will not fill their bellies, give their children clothes, and buy books for them to use in school.

I invite the hon. Ministers and the members of this National Assembly to go around the districts and see the misery in which some people

are living. The proposals in this Budget will merely make things worse. The cost of living has gone up. I have looked through the Budget Speech and I have not found any proposal for increasing social assistance. These poor people have given their blood, sweat and tears to build this country for all of us. When you increase duties the cost of living must go up. When you increase the duties on foreign goods and cause the cost of living to go up, then you must also increase social assistance to enable certain people to keep pace with the cost of living. There is nothing in the Estimates to provide a cost of living bonus for these old people! I trust that the Minister concerned will enlighten us as to whether the Government intends to increase social assistance in order to make it less difficult for persons who receive social assistance to eke out an existence.

What is happening today? Some people have made applications for social assistance since January last, and up to December no officer was sent to investigate the matter. I know of cases where people made applications two years ago and up to now no officer has been sent to investigate the matter. The applications of several people have been deferred all the time, so you can see the behaviour of this Government.

The Government must increase taxation in the right direction. Tax the people who can afford to pay; increase the tax on profits; tax the hon. Minister of Finance some more. This Government is taking the tax burden from the shoulders of the rich and putting it on the shoulders of the poor. Some members on the other side of the House feel that the masses are asses.

I spoke about smoke screens in connection with this cost of living, and the failure of the Government to do something about it. Two smoke

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screens have been put up. First, is the King's Committee to go into the question of prices? The Government is trying to make the people believe that it is doing something to protect them from being exploited by the big shots. Since March last, the Committee has been sitting, and up to now the Report cannot see the light of day.

On top of this the hon. Minister of Trade mentioned to the Press that the Government was stretching a dragnet to catch the big fishes. That is the other smoke-screen. The Government believes that the people will be assuaged for the time being. You cannot fool the people all the time. You cannot put Gajraj in gaol, because Gajraj and his friends helped to put you in office. Do not fool people by saying that you are going to put the big fishes in gaol. You cannot remain with the United Force when you are talking about putting big fishes in gaol. [Mr. Luck: "Gajraj gave the Prime Minister a car."] Yes, Gajraj gave the hon. Prime Minister a car, and the hon. Deputy Prime Minister is now trying to fool the people.

I come now to the fifth point of my address which is in reference to the relief of displaced persons. Since this Government took office it said that it would do everything possible to spread relief to the displaced persons and to rehabilitate them. On the occasion of Independence, the Duke of Kent was told to say that the Government was concerned about the displaced persons and that everything would be done to find homes for them. Over a year ago the Gomes Committee sent its Report to the Government. A few months ago the hon. Minister of Housing and Reconstruction appointed what is known as the National Aid Board as a smoke-screen. Examine the personnel of the National Aid Board and its membership, and you will see that, apart from one or two

Government officers, it is a partisan Board. The reason for that is that whatever funds there are must be channelled to supporters of the Government.

The hon. Prime Minister in his "Meet The People Tour" a few weeks ago went to Islington, No. 11 and No. 12, and it was only then that he became aware of the fact that the situation of displaced persons was a perilous one. He suggested that it is his intention to give the matter high priority.

2.40 p.m.

If hon. Members were to look in the Estimates they would see that less money has been voted for the relief and rehabilitation of displaced persons although high priority is being given to the question. In other words, these people are being left in the mud. If you go to these areas at this time you will have no less than 10 pounds of mud on your shoes when you leave. The Prime Minister was right when he said that the condition of these people was deplorable and when he called for swift and urgent action. But what do we find? There is nothing in the Budget. If this is to be given high priority we should see some reference to it in the Budget, but the Budget is silent and the amount voted is less than in the previous years. I suppose it will be less as the years go by. In winding up my speech —

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member has exhausted his time.

Mr. Hamid: I beg to move that the hon. Member be granted an extension to continue his speech.

Mr. Ally: seconded.

Question put, and agreed.

Mr. Wilson: I should like to give the members of the Government some advice. First, tax profits and excess

profits, and do not tax the goods which poor people have to use. Secondly, they must not waste money; they should stop squandering and try to put an end to fraud and corruption which goes on all down the line. When the Minister of Finance comes to this House and says that \$1.5 million has been spent illegally and when the Prime Minister condones it, what can one think? Nothing but that some of his supporters delivered five loads of sand and are paid for ten and fifteen loads. The Government should stop squandering, corruption and fraud, spend the people's money wisely and save more in order to give the population the benefit of social services and the like.

Mr. Mahraj: I address this Assembly, not because I am privileged to do so as a Member of Parliament, but because my family worked in this country ever since it was established way back in 1876 and expanded from the county of Essequibo to the county of Berbice. This gives me an added responsibility to participate in every respect in the affairs of my country.

The position in which Guyana finds itself today is not unique. It is a stage through which every country that has emerged from colonial status passes. As soon as a country emerges from colonial status and attains its independence, there is an inescapable task thrown upon the Government in office to set about remedying all the ills, the difficulties and disadvantages that were left by the imperial powers that governed that country.

Taking remedial measures calls for more finance. The measures are not merely what the Government is trying to introduce but what the entire country is clamouring for. The entire population is clamouring for something more than it enjoyed eight months ago. After all, we attained independence only eight months ago.

Some people — a very small section of our community — are under the impression that we are not yet independent. I plead with them to end their ignorance and accept the fact.

In attempting to improve the status of our people, it is necessary for everyone to bear a share of the expenses that will have to be incurred. But what do we find? Our expenses, in trying to introduce economic, social and other changes, are beset by inescapable difficulties in that our standard of education, which we have inherited from colonial days, is not compatible with independence. The natural initiative of our people, if not completely destroyed under colonialism, was so disabled that we are left with a minimum of initiative or drive and there is hardly any evidence of patriotism.

2.50 p.m.

Again, the administrative machinery has been so geared by the colonial powers that we have inherited a machinery that is weighted with indolence. All of this must be corrected. This must be done by Government. We have only had eight months in which to do it. Yet a clamour is there for employment for the unemployed, for more houses for the citizens. There is a clamour for more primary and secondary schools. The urge is there for more technical institutes, for expansion and improvement of medical facilities, public transport services, postal and telecommunication services. Expand! Expand! Provide more scholarships! Finance housing and agricultural projects! All these improvements call for more and more money.

One section of this Assembly continues to rant and rave that the Government is doing nothing to improve the lot of the people. Yet this Government has spent millions of dollars in improving all these facilities. As the family grows the demand in-

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creases, and the cost of upkeeping the family must increase. The burden has to be shared by all; therefore, in any developing country, taxation is an inescapable requirement. Can we satisfy these extra needs merely by asking people from outside to help us, or should we not contribute also?

This Government is accused of wasting money. It is accused of throwing money down the drain. Who are the ones responsible for this waste, if indeed there is waste? Are they Guyanese? Are they strangers from abroad? Is this not evidence that we are either incompetent to do what we are doing, or that we are not mature enough to fulfil the tasks that we have assigned to ourselves? Is this not something that is called "growing pains" which occurs in every country? Should we not try and experiment with what we have here so that we can perfect ourselves? [Mr. Hamid: "Tell us about the Budget Speech. This is nonsense."] Is this the only set-back we are suffering?

What has the Opposition been doing since this Government assumed office? The Opposition has been carrying on a series of boycotts. Apart from this, what else has the Opposition done? I am advised that meetings are held throughout the country and all sorts of propaganda are being peddled to the people. They are told not to co-operate in any development programme initiated by Government. This is harmful propaganda and the country does not get the assistance it deserves but, after all, a development programme is for the benefit of the masses. This propaganda has reached such a stage that the Opposition puts a "nogood" stamp on everything that the Government initiates. These are some of the difficulties we are facing today.

Has the Opposition ever given the slightest bit of encouragement to Government? Have the members of the Opposition, as taxpayers if not as politicians, taken an interest in the amount of money that the Government has been spending? Have they shown any other interest except to say that this is no good and that is no good? Have they uttered anything for the past two years to prove their sincerity in a programme of development for this country?

Let the Members of Parliament engage in their tug of war. Confine it to this House of Assembly and do not take this attitude outside to the masses. A house divided, or a country divided, cannot stand; it would be difficult for us to make any progress in our development programme. Because we were colonial for a long time we have not got a strong public opinion to condemn anything that is wrong and, because of this, lots of good men have left this country.

Members should look at other countries, particularly Asia and Africa, and see what is happening today. The loyalties of their citizens are divided. One section of the people is loyal to their native land and the other section is loyal to some foreign power. That is what tears a country apart.

3.00 p.m.

Now, I am asking that section of Parliament which does not seem to owe its loyalty to Guyana to re-examine its position, to see the nakedness of its faults, and to support this Government's endeavour to raise the Country. This Government has got the ability, the goodwill and the credit-worthiness to get money. Since we are getting the money you should be able to give all the help. Instead of that, we find the Opposition baulking. The Budget is right. I support the Budget.

Dr. Ramjohn: I must congratulate the hon. Prime Minister for making the hon. Member Mr. Deeroop Mahraj an ex-Minister. He seems to be more impressive. The hon. Minister of finance has painted a rosy picture in his Budget Speech. Figures, like words, can be twisted to give various meanings. We have been told from time to time by the hon. Minister of Finance and the hon. Prime Minister, during various broadcasts and speeches, that Guyana is progressing so wonderfully that the Government is indeed creating a paradise. I wholeheartedly agree that the Government is creating a paradise. Where we seem to be in conflict is: "A paradise for whom?" Is it for the Guyanese people, for the masses, or is it for the hon. Ministers? Is it a paradise for the 600 workers who were retrenched before Christmas, and those who are going to be retrenched? Is it a paradise for those workers who must live on loans year after year, and who have to repay the loans in monthly instalments? Is it a paradise for those people who must now pay higher rentals, higher taxi fares, higher transportation costs, higher prices for their transistor radios and higher prices for foodstuffs? Is it a paradise for those thousands of people who are unemployed? Is it a paradise for those people who, yesterday, under a different regime saw fit to give their children a higher education, but who now find that the opportunity has been removed? Is it a paradise for the Amerindians who have not been able to get the lands which they occupy transferred to themselves and which this Government at the last Constitutional Conference promised to give them? Is it a paradise for those people who have to live in slums in the displaced persons' areas, who have to live in filth and mud, under the most insanitary conditions, who have to see their children racked with sickness? Is it a paradise for those who are dismissed daily, both by Government and

industries? Is it a paradise for the man in the street?

The hon. Minister of Finance, in his Budget Speech, lay great emphasis on the need to bolster industry, to attract capital to exploit our wealth. Investors can come here and make larger and larger profits because they are given tax holidays for subsidiary industries. If, perchance, they do not make enough money during the period of tax holidays, then they do not have to pay income tax. A Bill is to be passed to make it possible for them to receive increased tax holidays for subsidiary industries.

3.10 p.m.

Every item which has been taxed affects the poor man. I do think there has been an actual reduction in building frames, and I think I heard something about a reduction on washers, prefabricated frames and steel-frames for building purposes. The poor man does not erect steel-framed houses and he is not directly concerned with that. What he is concerned with is that when this Government took office, it made a big play about giving Government workers a minimum wage of \$4 a day. What the Government gave the workers a short time ago it is now taking back several fold. The people were receiving three dollars and some cents a day at the time, and they were able to purchase more with the money which they received than they can purchase with \$4 today.

In spite of the assurance of the hon. Minister of Finance that the cost of living has not risen, or is not expected to rise much, the man in the street knows exactly how much he can buy because his pocket is feeling the pressure. I am sure that the hon. Minister cannot convince him that his buying capacity is greater now than it was three years ago. The hon. Minister says that we

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must tighten our belts. I think one member of the Government went so far as to say that we should eat less. To whom is that advice directed? Is it directed to the members of the Government? Is it directed to the people who are being squeezed by the Budget?

It is said that we are creating a paradise. Indeed we are creating a paradise, not for our poor people, but for big finance, a paradise for investors, and a paradise for exploiters. This has been done in the name of attracting huge capital for development. Of course we want capital, but I think the hon. Minister of Finance is going too far to obtain this capital. Very soon all that will be left for us to do to encourage this capital to come here would be to provide the investors with a nursing bottle and cradle and to treat them like little babies. We are practically doing that already. We are selling our souls; we are punishing our people and creating great hardships for them in order to make it possible for capitalists to come here with their millions of dollars to invest and exploit the workers.

We are not against investors coming to this country and making reasonable profits, but the hon. Minister seems to be bent on giving everything to these people and very little or nothing to the masses of the Guyanese people. I repeat that the paradise is not for us; the paradise is for the big shots from abroad, for the big capitalists and for the big firms. Much of the legislation which has been passed in this House has been for the benefit of that section of the community — the capital gains tax, the gift tax. The road to Mackenzie is being built for the benefit of a particular section of the community. If you are clever enough with words and figures you can stress these things and make a nice speech

to show how well the Government is doing and what wonderful things are to be done, but we must face realities in the end.

The man in the street must face realities. He wants a job, a decent place in which to live, food for his family and himself, clothing, books and education for his children. In addition to this he has to pay more for a long list of articles, and the Government is asking him to tighten his belt a notch this year, another notch next year and so on. When is all this going to end? The P.P.P. has never been against the policy of encouraging local farmers to produce more. The previous Government did a very great deal in order to encourage local production. The fact of the matter is that local production was higher during the regime of the previous Government than it is today. During the past two years this Government has done everything possible to discourage farming and to destroy the small farmer. At the moment the production of local foodstuffs is at its lowest.

Having broken the farmers who produce our local foodstuffs — foodstuffs which we ought to encourage people to use — the Government comes at this late stage and tells us to eat local instead of imported food. We are not against people eating local foodstuffs, but it must be remembered that at the present low level of production the cost of local foodstuffs will spiral tremendously. When the duties have been placed on certain imported articles and prices are beyond the reach of the Guyanese worker, then there will be inflation because the Marketing Corporation has been doing very little to help the situation.

3.20 p.m.

We have been told that the rates of duty on certain articles, for example in the building trade, were re-

duced as a sop to the public. I remember that in the 1966 Budget the duty on sulphur drugs was reduced with the expectation that it would benefit the public, as people would be able to purchase sulphur drugs at a cheaper price in times of illness. In practice this has not happened. If the hon. Minister would take the trouble to find out he would discover that the price of sulphur drugs has remained the same or has probably increased. When I pointed out to the clerks at some drug houses that the duty had been reduced they pointed out that there had been large stocks in the country. [The Minister of Finance: "If you all would stop taking the drugs —"] I am glad that the Minister brought that out. I shall deal with that very point in a moment, but if the hon. Minister is a man I invite him not to cloak himself with the privilege of this House but to repeat that outside. [The Minister of Finance: "I would not doubt that you had too."] Corruption is not my line; it is for you and your Ministers. [The Minister of Finance: "You would not deny that goes on — that doctors steal the drugs."] The Minister has said I took drugs. I invite him to say that outside. [The Minister of Finance: "I said I would not doubt that."]]

I regret the interruptions, sir. Having taxed the average Guyanese who will have to pay more for almost everything, the Government did not have the courage to broadcast which items were taxed. The broadcast stated which items were not taxed, which is the reverse. It was left to the public to discover by devious means what was taxed.

Having thus raised several million dollars by taxing the poorer people and having made sweeping concessions to the pampered industries with prospect, as the Minister said in his speech, that more concessions will come, what will be done

with the additional money received? If he felt that his money was being wisely spent, that it was spent in the interest of the country so that we could see progress, the average Guyanese would be able to say — as I would — "I am willing to tighten my belt. Let us put our shoulders to the wheel; let us pay a little more for the benefit of the country".

What is done with the millions of extra dollars collected by extra taxation? We have seen that \$1½ million cannot be accounted for. We have heard of corruption, of waste, of people who are on the payroll but have never worked a day; we have heard of the banana industry which flopped, of the road to Rosignol which should have been completed but is in a bad state.

I am personally concerned with the Ministry of Health. What exactly has been done in this Ministry? — I receive complaints daily of shortages of drugs, of equipment, of departments not functioning, of patients not receiving treatment for months on end. Sometimes syringes and injection needles are in short supply. When I came to this House and complained to the hon. Minister that there was a shortage of drugs, I was told this was not true and I should prove it. I took the trouble this morning to look through some of my papers. This is a letter I received today from a specialist at the Georgetown Hospital regarding a patient I sent for treatment. It is dated 21st January. I shall read the last paragraph which concerns a man who had severe pain in his back and was admitted to the hospital. This is what the specialist has to say:

"He was treated with analgesics and I would have prescribed treatment at the physiotherapy department, but this department is now closed."

This is an important department in a hospital and when I was there it was fully staffed and running effi-

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ciently. No treatment has been received by the patient.

That is not an isolated instance. I have another letter dated 16th December, 1966. This is a case where a person was suffering from a backache and the letter is from another specialist. He says:

"To be honest I do not know the reasons for his backache and I should have prescribed physiotherapy but the physiotherapy department is out of commission."

This letter is dated 16th December. On the 21st January the department is still out of commission and next month the position will be the same.

When I spoke of the shortage of drugs the hon. Minister denied it. This is a letter from another specialist. I have hundreds of such letters. [Interruptions.] Hon. Members may see them if they wish. In this letter the specialist, in referring to the patient, says:

"I would have liked to prescribe hetrazan, but the Georgetown dispensary is out of stock."

3.30 p.m.

Hetrazan is a drug which is used for filaria. This is a filaria-ridden country and this drug cannot be obtained at the Georgetown Hospital or at the Chest Clinic. A child who was suffering from gastro-enteritis was brought to me today. He received a prescription at the Out-Patients' Department and he was given sulpha drugs, the cheapest possible form of drugs. The pattern goes on and on.

I wish to refer to another incident. A man came to me with a very severe case of gastro-enteritis. I really felt sorry for him. He had severe diarrhoea and fever. He was vomiting; he could not walk; he had to be lifted. The man was not examined at the Georgetown Hospital.

His wife was given a prescription to be filled out.

Mr. Speaker: Time!

Mr. Ram Karran: I beg to move that the hon. Member be permitted to continue his speech for another 15 minutes.

Mr. Ally seconded.

Question put, and negatived.

[Pause.]

Mr. Speaker: Let us proceed with this debate.

The Minister of Local Government (Mr. Cheeks): The fact that only one of the members of the Opposition who spoke on this Motion made any attempt to give a critical analysis of the Budget Speech is an indication that the Opposition really has nothing to criticize. All that the members of the Opposition did was to indulge in undesirable personal attacks on individual members of the Government — [Mr. Luck: "Who did that?"] — and to involve themselves in demagoguery.

I have undertaken to explain to this House some of the inaccuracies which were deliberately put over by that one Member who attempted an analysis. His figures were all false and his calculations had no basis in mathematics. I refer to the hon. Member Mr. Luck. He told this House that the Budget Speech contained inaccuracies and that the hon. Minister of Finance made a deliberate effort to mislead the public. [Mr. Luck: "That is what he did."] The hon. Member confuses Gross Domestic Product with national income. I understand that he is a lecturer in Economics and, therefore, if he confuses Gross Domestic Product with national income, it must be a deliberate attempt to mislead the House. If he had looked at page 5 of the Budget Speech he would have seen that, in 1966, production in Guyana totalled about \$360 million. That would correspond

to Gross Domestic Product and not national income as he called it.

According to the most recent statistics the corresponding figure for national income for 1966 was \$578 per head.

Now the hon. Member Mr. Luck is saying that, in 1961, the figure was \$477 per head and that according to the hon. Minister of Finance the national income fell to \$470 in 1966. I submit that the hon. Member was making a deliberate attempt to confuse this House. If the G.D.P. was \$477 in 1961 and \$470 in 1966, then we have made no progress. But the truth is that in one case he gives GDP and in the other case he gives national income. If he had used the same index for both years he would have had to tell the House that, in 1961, the Gross Domestic Product was \$477 and, in 1966, it had risen to \$578 per capita.

But that was not the only attempt he made to mislead this House. Another attempt which had a bit more subtlety was the one in which he referred to the Treasury Savings Certificates. Quite glibly and cleverly he said: "How can 20,000 people contribute \$21 million? That alone shows that it is the big fish who made the contribution, the friends of the Minister of Finance." The first big act of deception was that the figure he mentioned as the amount invested in Treasury Savings Certificates is false. That is just 3½ million and not \$21 million as the hon. Member alleges. [Mr. Luck: "What is the rate of interest on those Treasury Savings Certificates? Do you deny it is 26 per cent?"]

The hon. Member said that members of the public took \$100,000 and some may have taken \$300,000. He overlooked the fact that the law allowed an individual \$5,000 only and that the Treasury Savings Certificates were designed to give the ordinary man an opportunity to invest.

3.40 p.m.

He went on to calculate that these people who are in the higher income brackets are paying 70 per cent income tax, and when they invest they would benefit to the extent of 26 per cent. [Mr. Luck: "26.6 per cent recurrent."] That is not true. [Mr. Luck: "What is not true about that?"] It is not true in fact. The savings certificates after the first period of maturity, which is 3½ years, would earn 10 per cent. That would give you roughly 3 1/3 per cent per year. At the end of the second period of maturity which is 6½ years, 40 per cent is paid. If you divide 40 by 6½ you would see that the percentage works out to just over six.

Then, those investors who remain for the full 9½ years would get double. This is where the hon. Member has been trying to confuse the House. I do not doubt that there must be certain members of the public who will be able to allow their money to remain, in order to gain what was intended, that is, to earn double the amount, but the vast majority will not be able to do so. In any case, even these would have earned only 7½% at compound interest. The hon. Member did not take into account that, over every period of about 25 years, in the ordinary course of events in a society dominated by a money economy, money becomes less in value and it would just have half its value in 25 years. The hon. Member will not deny that in 10 years from now money will not have the value that it now has. This is true in any country in the world.

They predicted that there will be a budget deficit of \$10 million, and the fact that that has not happened has so shocked them that they are out of breath. [Mr. Luck: "\$17 million from the banks!"] That is a good point. The fact is that this Budget Speech is an example of what this

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Government stands for — truth and progress. The Government has not tried to hide the fact that the banking system supplied \$15 million. That itself is a certificate of the confidence which the outer world and the people of this country have in the Government. Without the confidence of the public and investors abroad, Government would not be able to obtain credit. But we have the confidence! We have not tried to conceal anything.

I refer once more to page 13 of the Budget Speech. We have made certain increases on the duties charged on imported goods. Import duties are estimated to yield \$34 million — \$1.5 million more than the 1966 revised estimate. Look at the 1962 Budget which was put forward when members of the Opposition were in power. The hon. Dr. Jacob said it was proposed to increase the rates of duty to \$6.5 million on the present level of imports. They wanted to raise money by direct taxation, a burden which falls most heavily on the ordinary man because it is concealed in the articles which he buys. When we examined the various items and the ruthless and indiscriminate way in which they sought to apply their taxation system, we had to call that Budget the bare-faced, bare-footed and bare-backed Budget.

I referred just now to the confidence which this Government has generated, and which we are proud of. You have heard the extent to which people rushed to buy those savings certificates to provide for building and construction which had fallen from the high level of \$14 million in 1960 to \$7 million in 1964, and which expanded to \$15 million in 1966. These are indications of the confidence which the public has in us, and one of the reasons for the buoyancy of this economy.

In spite of the expenses which we had to face, we have managed to tackle the unemployment problem. At least 10,000 people who were not employed prior to 1964 were employed in 1966. We have been finding markets for our produce. We have built, and are building, schools to accommodate the rapid increasing school population. [Mr. Luck: "That is not true."] The present average net increase in population is something approaching 1,700 per month. In other words, there are 1,700 additional mouths to feed in this country every month. About six years ago the increase was about 1,500 per month. This Government would already have found places in schools for that 1,500 per month because at this time they would have reached the compulsory age for attending schools.

In their 1964 Budget Speech they boasted that they were spending \$12.3 million on education, and that included \$2.9 million on social assistance from the Social Welfare Department. We are now spending \$15.9 million on education alone, and that does not include capital expenditure. I will not go into details. These are facts. We have managed to establish the University of Guyana in such a way that its diplomas will have international currency, something which you could not boast of in your time. In addition to that, the academic staff has intellectual freedom and that is something which is valued very highly.

3.50 p.m.

What else have we done? We have built roads and we are still building more; we have improved the sea defences along the coast of Kitty; we have established Embassies in New York and London; we have improved our Police Force, and we have established the nucleus of a Defence Force and an Army required by a sovereign nation; we have brought

in a large number of doctors to staff our hospitals and to improve the quality of service given; we have extended electricity along the East Bank up to Soesdyke, along the East Coast up to Mahaica, and on the West Bank up to Wales; we will soon be extending electricity on the West Coast Berbice from the Onverwagt Station. Unless somebody's mind is twisted, he must be able to recognize what has been done. We are living in a democratic country and a man can say what he likes, but there must be some sense of justice in making criticisms. Criticism must be constructive if it is to be examined and accepted.

I have heard the price list of increases read out. I should like to refer to certain actions on the part of members of the Opposition. They contrive to influence the merchants, who are their supporters, to raise the price on practically every item in their shops, and then they turn and blame the Government for the increase in the cost of living! They are now condemning their own supporters. They tell the merchants to raise the prices because the hon. Minister of Finance has increased the duty on certain things, and if they increased prices they would raise the cost of living. Which one of them will deny that no less than 90 per cent of the thousands of businessmen in this country are supporters of the P.P.P.? I have spoken merely to bring out that point.

Quite recently the percentage increase on the duty on certain items was published in a newspaper in such a manner as to make it appear that the percentage was the increase on the price of the commodity. That in itself is the result of either dishonesty or ignorance. The duty on an article which costs, say, \$1, may be 20¢. An increase of 10 per cent or 5 per cent means an increase of one penny or one cent on the selling price. What was published in the newspaper

was that Government, by increasing the duty, had increased the price of these articles by 10 per cent or by 5 per cent, whereas the increase was not on the price, but on the duty of the articles. [Mr. Ram Karrán: "Go to Berbice and say that."] Mr. Ram Karrán wants me to go to Berbice and say it, because he knows what the members of his party have told the people.

This Government has achieved a great deal; it has restored peace in this country; it has established schools not only on the coast, but also in the interior; it is spending large sums of money to improve and build roads in the interior; in 1967 a road will be built in the interior from Kamarang, and another road from Karasabai to Good Hope; efforts are being made to give the people what they deserve despite the fact that money is hard to get and capital is not going a begging.

All of the undeveloped nations of the world and, particularly, Latin-American countries are trying to get as much money as possible for development. Without capital formation there cannot be fiscal and economic progress. I should ask hon. Members on the opposite side of the House to remember that we are still living in a democracy, and we still treasure our freedoms. We are not saying that we are perfect. No Government can be perfect, but we are trying our best to improve this country with the resources at our disposal. We are glad that we are in the Government at this time. What would happen in this country if people were to believe that it was possible for the present Opposition to change seats with us? We would have to bow our heads in horror at the idea. I suggest that hon. Members on the other side of the House should change their attitude towards things. [Interruption.] They should join Year Honour in trying to raise the level of behaviour

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in this House and the standard of debates.

Meeting of Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

Mr. Speaker: Before I suspend this Sitting, I should like to remind hon. Members that there will be a meeting of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association at 4.30 p.m.

Sitting suspended at 4.00 p.m.
4.36 p.m.

On resumption —

Mr. Chandisingh: This is a great Budget for the rich and for the monied interests, but it is a criminal assault on the conditions of the working people and on their hopes for the future. I have looked at the Budget Speech to see if there is any indication of a change in the Government's policy but sad to say I have found nothing, not an iota to give any encouragement or to lead to the belief that the Government is making a change to serve the interests of the working class. It brings to mind the legend of Robin Hood, namely, that the goodly gentleman attacked the rich in order to help the poor. This Government is doing the complete opposite. It is robbing the poor in order to help the rich and the monied interests, particularly the overseas investors.

I should like to deal with the point made by the Minister of Finance with respect to the growth in G.D.P. This matter has been dealt with in another respect by one of my colleagues and even though the hon. Minister of Local Government, Mr. Cheeks, attempted a refutation, I should like to make reference to a point that strikes me particularly forcibly with respect to the figures quoted by the Minister of Finance. He boasted of a rise in both the national income per head of population and in the Gross Domestic Product. He said that there was a

rise of something like \$60 million over two years and he also said that national income per head of population had gone up from \$400 in 1964 to \$470 in 1966. In the first place, the Gross Domestic Product, as I understand it reflects the growth of production of goods and services for a year.

4.40 p.m.

The point I wish to make is that this figure includes foreign-owned enterprise and locally-owned enterprise; in other words, enterprise owned by Guyanese and also enterprise owned by foreigners. If we examine the structure of our economy we will note that the overwhelming share of our total economy is taken by a few foreign-owned firms and companies in this country. The most prominent of them would be sugar, bauxite and manganese companies. One may perhaps include the banks, certain big stores, certain factories and certain enterprises. The Minister of Finance would have done well to tell us how much of this increase would accrue to the local sector and, furthermore, how much of the total benefits would go to the masses of the population. Page 5 of the Budget Speech states:

"This success . . ."

— that is the increase in production —

" . . . is attributable to the bauxite-alumina industry."

This seems to establish the point that it is at least one of the foreign-owned enterprises which is responsible for this increase in the Gross Domestic Product. The point is that although the Minister of Finance has referred to great success, I would say that this success does not reflect the success of the Guyanese people.

I should like to discuss another aspect of this whole arrangement. Let us take the national income figures. The hon. Minister said that the national income per head of popu-

lation rose from \$400 in 1964 to \$470 in 1966. I think that this is very misleading. We want to know — at least those of us on this side — What all of this has to do with the working people of this country? What has this to do with the poor people of Guyana? What goes to them when it is said that the national income per head of population has risen from \$400 in 1964 to \$470 in 1966? Does it mean that the well-being — the wealth, so to speak — of the average Guyanese or of the masses of the Guyanese people has been increased to the extent given in these figures? The ordinary man is worse off despite the \$4 per day wage of Government employees.

This point made by the Minister of Local Government (Mr. Cheeks) must be nipped in the bud immediately. The members of this Government are trying to give the impression that it was they who at last went to the rescue of Government-paid employees, but they have entirely forgotten the fact that it was the P.P.P. Government which had taken a decision to raise the minimum wage of Government employees to \$4 per day beginning from 1st January, 1965. What this Government did was to try to go one step better than the P.P.P. Government, and so in order to pretend that it was really a working-class Government and it would go one step better than the P.P.P. Government, it back-dated it to October 1964. That is the point.

If the Government wants to show its solicitude for the working people of this country, it should increase the minimum wage not only for the workers in the Government service but for those workers, such as the sawmill and quarry workers, who are covered by certain regulations. The Minister of Labour, who has the power to vary the decision of the Committee which was appointed by him, has accepted a decision that the minimum wage for sawmill and quarry

workers should be \$3.50 per day in one case, and \$3.52 per day in another case. Why not increase all these wages to \$4 per day and help people who are looking to you to help them? Why are you continuing to help the wealthy by reducing taxation so that they can benefit, and you are not even raising the wages of sawmill and other workers who are covered by similar minimum wages provisions?

In any case, I have just diverted for one moment to deal with this, and I want to proceed with the line that I was pursuing before. I should like to make absolutely clear what I mean when I say that the national income figure per head of population is meaningless so far as one wants to know how the average person's position has been improved. Let me give an example. Let us say that 10 people account for \$50,000 each — that gives you \$500,000 — and 90 people account for \$1,000 each — that gives you \$90,000. If you add \$500,000 and \$90,000 you will get a figure of \$590,000. But let us divide that total amount by 100 which is the number of people that you are taking into account. It works out to \$5,900 — almost \$6,000 — for each person when, in fact, according to the example just given, only 10 people account for \$50,000 each whereas 90 people account for \$1,000 each. It means, therefore, that there is some foundation in the accusations made by speakers on this side that the conditions of the masses have not improved and, in some cases, have even regressed.

4.50 p.m.

The point is that one can fiddle with figures if one likes. You would not even have to be a wizard, financial or otherwise. What the hon. Minister of Finance has done is to pass off the increase as though it stood for the general improvement of the conditions of the working people.

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Another way one can tell this is not true is by going around and talking with people. People will tell you that things are worse now than they were before. Even some of the business people are saying that things have fallen off. Business is worse because the people who are the main consumers of the goods do not have enough money to buy them.

Let us take a figure from the Statistical Digest index. For the seven years that the P.P.P. was in the Government the cost of living index increased by 10.9 points. That is 1.55 index points on the average per year. In our figures one may say 1½ index points per year. In 21 months — not even two years, but let us give the coalition the benefit of two years — it went up by 1.8 points per year. Now, we can call it 4 points for two years, and Heaven only knows what will be the result next year.

Another thing the hon. Minister of Finance has told us in the Budget Speech is that the prices will rise by approximately 1 per cent as a result of all this. Last year he told us the same thing and we know that the cost of living has gone up much more than this. From what we have heard and from our own experience, we can say that the conditions of the working people, particularly those who are unemployed, those with no source of income and who have to live on charity will be greatly affected by this Budget.

The Ministers have made statements about the big "sharks" and the little "sharks" and so on. But they cannot really be expected to do anything to the big "sharks" because the biggest "sharks" are the ones — (Mr. Luck: "Killer sharks") — who are exploiting our country and our people. It is to these sharks that they have not directed any attention at all. As a matter of fact, Bookers and other such firms are the big "sharks". The

merchants in Water Street are not big "sharks". [Dr. Jagan: "Sardines."] They are the sharks next in line. These big expatriate firms dominate our country and they have been taking out \$60 million every year. This Government ought to direct some attention to them. When it begins tackling them then we can appreciate its sincerity. At the moment it is merely making bold statements for public consumption. It cannot go against the big business profiteers who are really looting the wealth of our country. When they put a stop to all of this, the working people will live better.

Now for the Budget Speech again at pages 3 and 4. On page 4 it is stated that:

"Capital-inflow - from - abroad, which is a measure of the confidence the outside world places in our future, has expanded from about \$15 mn. in 1964 to \$30 mn. in 1966."

Surely, those people who are putting money here — and remember that a large proportion of the money comes in the form of grants from the United States — must have some sort of confidence in the Government, and that confidence is based on the knowledge that they are the ones who put the Government in office in the first place. It has to carry out its duties in the interest of these people, so, naturally, they have confidence in their own agents. But this cannot be claimed to be world confidence because the overwhelming majority of the people of the world today are struggling for liberation from the domination of these big "sharks." Therefore, they cannot show confidence in this Government.

Let me quote from *The New Road*, a P.N.C. publication. It is stated on page 2 that:

"Pressure of world opinion has led to the present policy of conceding independence to colonies. A colony can, -however, -achieve -formal -politi-

cal independence and still be a colony. Its economy can continue to be dominated and controlled by and for foreign nations and interests; its society can continue to be stagnant and riddled with false values and discrimination."

5.00 p.m.

This very pithy statement in the P.N.C.'s manifesto is a complete description of the present situation in Guyana. We have achieved formal political independence, but we are still a colony. Why? Because our country is still dominated and controlled by foreign nations and their big business interests. The big firms are the ones that dominate and control this country, and that is the reason why this country is stagnated and riddled with discrimination even in the Government.

So far as capital inflow is concerned, I believe that South Vietnam, under the leadership of that arch criminal Marshal Ky, is a good example of how things are going. We have read about the reception the masses gave him in Australia. Of course, South Vietnam will be given millions of dollars in aid from the U.S.A. Such a Government has the confidence of the big business rulers of the U.S.A., because it has helped to preserve their interests in South Vietnam. Let this Government attempt to honour its election pledges as contained in *The New Road*, and we will have a great day in Guyana. I am not taking into account *Highways To Happiness*, the manifesto of the United Force. Incidentally, *The New Road* contains many passages which, if implemented, would go a long way towards ending the domination of our country by foreigners, but it is worded in such a manner that anything could be done under the umbrella of *The New Road*.

I would like to deal with a few other matters. Another point that has been criticized is the shifting of taxation from direct to indirect tax-

ation. What does this Budget hold for the ordinary man and woman? The people have been told to work hard and eat less, but while the poor man is working hard the profits are being channelled in the direction of those who already have so much. What is left for the poor man? If we look at the expenditure side of the Estimates, which will be discussed at length in a few days, we will see that very little is provided to help the ordinary man and woman. It is true that we have seen provision for a certain amount of infrastructure development, but even when we look at social services such as health, housing, old age pensions, social assistance, and so on we find that enough has not been done.

It is clear that housing, for example, is almost at a standstill; self-help housing has come to a standstill. All the Government is doing is to complete 75 houses which are already under construction, but very little is provided for housing for rental. Surely \$100,000 is not enough to take care of housing. I say this because the hon. Members opposite are the ones who said that if they were in the Government they would do all sorts of things. They are in the Government now, but they are doing nothing. They have told us that they were given something like \$16 million by way of grants. What have they done with the money? They are not spending the money in the direction which will make the lot of the poor man in Guyana any better. This is a fundamental criticism.

I am not saying that the Government should not tax the people; that taxation should be abolished or anything like that. If the Government wants the people to pull their weight, if the Government wants the people to work harder, then this demand on the working man should come after several other sources have been dried up. It must not come at a time when

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there are other lucrative enterprises around that are getting off scot-free. This is the point on which I wish to criticize this Government. Look at the direction in which the Government is spending its money and the source from which it gets its money.

So far as the question of employment is concerned, the Government refers to the 10,000 jobs which have been created. Even in the days of the P.P.P. Government the Employment Exchange used to fill 7,000 vacancies. If one looks uncritically at these figures alone, without seeing the purposes to which the vacancies apply, one can get a very misleading impression. During the regime of the previous Government it could also have shown similar figures, but it never published such figures because it knew that such figures alone would not be an accurate picture of the unemployment situation in Guyana. At the time when the previous Government employed more teachers, when it placed more people on the land and gave them useful employment, it did not publish all kinds of figures. Today this Government is laying off teachers. I am sure that the figures quoted by the Government are entirely misleading.

Let us look at other matters. The figure for old age pensions remains the same as last year. Why has no effort been made to improve old age pensions? Social assistance, which affects those people who are unable to maintain themselves, remains the same. Can we conclude from that, that the people do not need increased social assistance, bearing in mind the adverse conditions under which they are living since the introduction of the last Budget? I merely mention these points to show that the people who really need social assistance are not getting an increase, and money is going in other directions.

5.10 p.m.

We have had the Manpower Survey. What has happened as a result of the Manpower Survey? Was this Manpower Survey not an attempt to throw dust in the eyes of the unemployed? I see the hon. Mr. Carrington looking at me very closely. What has been done as a result of the magnificent Manpower Survey? We see nothing by way of a reduction or elimination of fees at the hospitals. This was a measure which the P.P.P. had intended to introduce but this Government, after two years in office, has not found it possible to give a little help to the sick people who visit the hospitals. What is being done about the new hospital? The members of the P.N.C. criticized us very much. They said in their manifesto *The New Road* that immediately upon assuming office they would begin —

“the rebuilding, re-equipping and re-organising of the Georgetown Hospital”.

Hardly anything has been done to the Georgetown Hospital. Hon. Member: “The mortuary has been improved.” I would say that is useful but what about the operating theatres? These were scheduled to be built two years ago and this Government has not been able to do it.

All these things show that there are no bold new proposals, no bold new drives to solve the problems of the people on questions of health, education or agriculture. As for agriculture, already we know the story connected to this. In no field can we say that the conditions of the working people have been improved. On the other hand, let us see what is being done in the field of labour. The Minister of Labour had to use his influence to intervene and tell the workers and the unions not to press for a 40-hour working week. Why did he do this? Does he want more ex-

plottation of the workers when those of us who know a little about economics know for a fact that the profits accruing to the sharks come from the labour of the workers? Increasing the number of hours which a man works is one of the ways in which we can increase the share of the profits which goes to employers rather than the share which returns to workers.

What has been happening in the field of labour? Mechanization has been taking place in the sugar industry, but the Government has not so far made any effort to do anything to ensure that increased mechanization in the sugar industry does not lead to grave unemployment. Retrenchment of workers is taking place all the time, among workers at the Transport and Harbours Department among sea defence workers and even among policemen and teachers. The Prime Minister is continuing to harangue workers to work harder in order to increase the national income and wealth, but the Government cannot offer workers an increase in wages. Why not increase wages for workers now, seeing that the cost of living has risen so high? What is the T.U.C. official leadership doing about this situation? Why has the Government to use its influence to press the right-wing T.U.C. leaders to white wash this action? Why does not the T.U.C. make a pronouncement on the Budget? Why did these hon. Members when they were in the Opposition, use the official trade union leaders to demonstrate against the then Government, when a major portion of the taxes that were then imposed were to come from the propertied class? At that time they quickly demonstrated; they did not need much time to consider the Budget. Everything was there; all they had to do was to continue their activities.

The silence of the T.U.C. today is significant. I am sure the working

class will in time realize the type of leadership it is being given. It is significant, too, that the T.U.C. is also silent in other respects, for instance, when there was strike-breaking action recently, encouraged by the Government, at Atkinson Airport to break the backs of the Fire Service workers at Atkinson. The Government tried to break that strike by using firemen from Georgetown, instead of meeting the legitimate demands of workers. The workers, in any case, have won certain concessions as a result of that strike.

The whole policy of the Government is leading towards an anti-working class policy. As I said before, the P.N.C. section of the Government chooses to create the impression that it is a section which wants to do everything it can for the working people, the poor people, but it is being hindered. — There are certain obstacles and so on in various places, and it is being prevented from doing what it wants to do. I do not think we should be taken in by this because the P.N.C. wants to do the right thing and to honour its pledges, it would have been able to carry through its programme in a spirited way.

There are people in this country I would say the vast majority — who would be prepared to undertake a bold programme of economic development once the Government decides to begin it. This brings me to consider the whole philosophy of the Government. It is trying to solve the problem in the same old capitalist way, the discredited way, but we cannot as an underdeveloped country develop our resources and ourselves in the capitalist way. That is no longer open to us; we are fooling ourselves. No country can do this. All the underdeveloped countries which have tried to adopt the capitalist methods have failed. Their

[MR. CHANDI SINGH]

problems are growing daily and are being compounded. The point is that countries that have grown wealthy or powerful as a result of the capitalist approach are those which accumulated capital long ago by methods which are not longer open to us. England is a classical example.

5.20 p.m.

Such countries acquired their capital for industrialization by the slave trade, by piracy, by the loot of rich colonies. [Mr. Luck: "Like Angola."] Yes, like Angola and India. That was how they were able to amass their capital for industrialization. All other countries which are now starting out, the Third World countries — although I do not think, from the foreign policy of this Government, that it has reached in the Third World — find it increasingly necessary to move along the non-capitalist path of development.

This means that one has to adopt a new philosophy towards development and planning. One has to be bold enough to undertake more public enterprise, one has to go in for publicly-owned enterprise rather than adapt the philosophy of this Government of giving more incentives, as stated in the Budget, to private enterprises to come in and do what they wish. These companies go away, after the tax concessions have ended, and leave the country in perhaps a worse condition than it was before. We know that the Minister of Finance is dead against increasing or expanding the public sector of the economy. He is even against co-operatives. It cannot be said that co-operatives are anything so greatly revolutionary.

As I said before, the hon. Minister has an obsession with communism and the sooner he can separate his thinking from this type of philosophy the sooner we will be able to move forward. By taking the

non-capitalist road Guyana can develop not in such a way that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer, but so that the working people may truly advance and grow wealthy. We on this side advocate that this is the policy that would really solve the problems of this country.

Mr. Sancho: I think it was Voltaire who said that certain debates have much more heat than light and this particular Budget debate, so far as the Opposition is concerned, has produced a great deal of heat and little light. Perhaps the light of the facts of the Budget has blinded the members of the Opposition. As a matter of fact, I was speaking to one of the members of the People's Progressive Party and he admitted to me that after the Minister of Finance had read his Budget Speech, there was very little that he and his colleagues could see in it to criticize in this House. This gentleman admitted to me that he thought that it would have been a harsher Budget. He thought that the Government would have needed to impose a heavy strain on the masses.

It is well known that any taxation proposal as revealed in the Budget must be aimed at producing a certain amount of money so that the Government can carry out its development programme and expansion schemes. It is also well known that it is the purpose of the Opposition to attack the Budget. It must scrap the barrel to find something to attack even in the best Budgets. I am reminded that the figures which so many of them try to confuse and to interpret in a way that is not in keeping with any possible type of analysis must have blinded them in the same way as those figures which our friend Gladstone often used in the British Parliament years ago blinded his Opposition. There can be no doubt that as long as taxation is going to be raised — whether on the rich or

on the poor — an Opposition would have and should have something to say but, so far as this Budget is concerned, the buoyancy of the economy cannot be denied.

The hon. Member who was absent for the last two months asks me to quote. Perhaps he is not busy up to date so I will quote from pages 9 and 15 of the Budget Speech. This appears on page 9

"The revenue has been remarkably buoyant since 1965. Between 1961 and 1964 it had risen by only about \$8 ma. (13%), the bulk of which was attributable to higher rates of taxation. Between 1964 and 1966 the revenue (excluding the United Kingdom budgetary grant) rose by \$16 ma."

It is clear that the last regime collected more money from indirect taxes than this Budget will collect from the poor people. It is clear too that some of the taxes which the previous Government had hoped to collect a lot of revenue from — capital gains was one — yielded next to nothing in terms of revenue to the Government. It is also clear that the last regime did not have the control and administration to collect the tax revenue it should have collected from what was passed in its Budgets.

5.30 p.m.

The Minister of Finance has spoken on more than one occasion about tidying up controls to collect finance. What is important is to note that we have been able, without undue strain on the masses, to collect taxation in a much more efficient way than the last Government. Even from the rich very little was collected, and this was revealed in the statistics. We have been able to collect more taxes, and indeed, we levied less taxes on the poor than the P.P.P. regime levied in past years.

It is well known that matters of taxation are always matters of great

moment in any Parliament. In matters of taxation, Ministers in particular come to the forefront to defend the policies of their own departments. It is expected that there must be some kind of opposition from the Members of the Opposition to the Budget proposals of the Government. But the fact remains that, regardless of how efficient or inefficient some of the services and policies may be — a point which I do not grant the Opposition — money must be raised to carry on the Government's development schemes. The purpose of the Budget is to raise this money.

The Prime Minister of England, the hon. Mr. Wilson, has found himself in a position where matters of policy are reflected in his Budget and in other aspects of his Government. A time comes when one has to decide for the benefit of the country. It is not for me to say where the hon. Prime Minister of England should place his emphasis. But it seems to me that, in the deliberative judgement of his Government at this stage, he has come to the conclusion that certain things which the workers, through their unions and otherwise wish to have now, must at least be put in cold storage for a time. A man who himself is a trade unionist has had to come out courageously, in so far as his assessment of the position is concerned, and tell the masses of the people that this, in his view, is not possible just yet. We have not done that.

It is in these underdeveloped territories that Governments and Prime Ministers all the more have need to do this, without causing excessive strain on the masses of the people as the 1962 Budget did. It is in these territories that the leaders of both the Government and the Opposition must have the courage, if necessary, to impose such taxes which may cause only a temporary halt to the desire

[MR. SANCHO]

for better goods and services which our people aspire to.

Only the other day I was talking to a man — I think his name was, strangely enough, not Dr. Ramjohn but Mr. Ramjohn — and I asked him what he thought of the Budget. His view was that all Governments must tax. He also made the observation that he considered the sacrifice he had gone through to gain a certain amount of wealth — if we may call it that — or of personal goods, a tax on his pleasures which pleasures he is now able to enjoy if he wishes. I would say that the underdeveloped country must now tighten its belt, but it must tell the people that the taxes it is imposing are necessary for the future development of the country as a whole. The Opposition has not been able to show where these taxes will cause an undue hardship on the masses of the people.

What is the position in the other underdeveloped territories? There is need, one Member just said, for a hospital. If we were to get a loan from America or Britain, I suppose we would hear that it is an imperialist loan, even though the Leader of the Opposition went the United States of America and rocked the chair of President Kennedy and could not get one. There is need for better medical service; there is need for more schools in the underdeveloped countries; and on all fronts there is need for money. Regardless of what the Opposition says about millions of dollars being given to this country, our view is that it has not been all that much. When the time comes, even if the millions come from outside under the proper circumstances without undue strings attached, if any strings at all, it is for us to inculcate into our own people the need to service these local departments.

What is wrong with forcing local productive initiative in agriculture?

What is wrong with putting up protective tariffs so that our local produce can be grown in large enough quantities for the Guyanese people, and so that we can keep out all types of tinned foods that come into this country? There was a school of thought many years ago in England called protectionism. That was around the period of the Corn Laws. Foreign corn was not allowed in the country until the local English corn was sold at a certain price per bushel. True enough, in those days the British Government was an aristocratic Government of the landed aristocracy. But in this House no one can say that a Government which is elected by the majority of the people represents the landed aristocracy. The protection which we are giving to local agricultural produce is to encourage local initiative.

Now, as time went on in England, a new group of politicians emerged. These politicians felt that protection was not the proper thing. What was needed to raise the rate of economic growth was free trade. Is the Opposition advocating that there should be no protection for our local goods? Is it saying that countries like ours should not put a higher tariff on foreign goods, when there are local goods that may be as good or could be produced even better than the foreign goods?

5.40 p.m.

An hon. Member tried to denigrate the Buy Local Campaign and asked the question why History and Culture Week was changed from October to February? The important thing is not only to buy local and to put barriers in the Budget to encourage people to buy local, but to be local. Somebody in the Opposition said that we should completely ban foreign goods. Surely the hon. Member should know that may result in a boomerang in which the markets

where we sell our goods may be closed to us. The hon. Members of the Opposition should know that in this day and age in undeveloped countries like ours we cannot have total protectionism, but at the same time we must have sufficient protection for our locally produced goods.

I heard a most ridiculous argument advanced by the hon. Member Mr. Saffee who said that rum and beer are luxuries in Guyana and they should be taxed. I have never yet heard of luxuries in Guyana being consumed by 90 per cent of the population! I know that luxuries are consumed by the minority. Is it that he dislikes the person or persons at the head of the local beer and rum industry? If that is so let him say so, but he should not say that these two items are luxuries, and then say that a car is not a luxury item. A car may not be a luxury item in every sense, but what is certain in this country is that the man who drinks a bottle of beer or buys a large bottle of rum is not in many cases the man who can buy a car. If we classify things by this chart, then a car would be a luxury item. I believe that Mr. Saffee is thinking of a tax-free society. I think that this may be possible in Sir Thomas Moore's Utopia, but I do not think it can happen in any of the territories on earth. What I know has happened in the undeveloped independent territories is that the Governments waited too long to encourage the people to rely upon themselves and use what the countries produced. Even Dr. Nkrumah had to do the same thing in Ghana. We know that when independence came to Ghana it waited eight years before it started to encourage this attitude. However, this Government has started it in this Budget eight months after independence.

I am very much concerned over some of the criticisms made by certain

members in the Opposition. Mr. Saffee said that motor-vehicles licences have gone up. He must realize that this Government has expended a good deal of money and found a lot of jobs in order to provide better roads on which these vehicles can travel. This will result in less wear and tear on car tyres, buses and big sand trucks, which many of the acolytes of the P.P.P. own. This will certainly mean that the higher tax which a man has to pay for a car licence will be made back as a result of the better roads. It is necessary to find money to improve our Road programme. A good road programme in any country is an important affair. Much money has to be spent on roads [Interruption.] I am not concerned with what a particular Minister is reputed to have done. The fact remains that this Government must find money to service schemes. [Interruption.]

I repeat that the Government must find money to service schemes, and it must encourage people to avoid conspicuous consumption. If you consume more than you can produce, eventually, it will affect your balance of payments. This is a very elementary thing, and the taxes in the Budget are therefore calculated to stimulate production which must keep pace with and must not be allowed to drop below consumption.

Let us look at some of these schemes that will need to be serviced. There is the extension of many of our health services; there is need for defence and so on. I am sure the members of the Opposition would not like to know that the Venezuelans ran down the Ankoko line and we do not have soldiers there. I am not saying that the Venezuelans will do this, but I am sure the members of the Opposition would not like anything like that to happen, if they are nationalists.

[MR. SANCHÓ]

A lot of people are parading their belief in how left wing they are, but they are only left wing in what they say and not in what they believe. I know that more members on that side of the House are more anxious to acquire goods than many members on this side of the House. There are members on this side who, it is alleged, are not in receipt of money from foreign Governments. The question of quoting from *The New Road* to show what a colony is and to say that an independent country can still be in a colonial status despite the legalism of independence does not go very far.

We have to be pragmatic in this country and to understand that there are certain things which, at the moment, cannot be done. I should like to point out that even in submitting figures we have to be realistic. The hon. Member Mr. Chandisingh said that two years the cost of living index would rise by 7 to 8 points. Of course, he did not give us figures to show how he came to this rise, which would be rather alarming. I doubt that his figures are correct.

5.50 p.m.

So far as the interest of this nation is concerned, the Government must find the money to service certain schemes. External Affairs becomes a very important department in an independent country. We cannot expect our diplomats to live like urchins on the streets of London or Washington. If we are an independent country with some pride in ourselves we would like them to live at the same standard as diplomats from Canada and the developed countries. This is an area where we have to spend money. As a result of the development programme there has been an increase in the number of jobs. More posts are listed under Personal Emoluments and we

have to pay the persons who fill these posts.

Apart from the road programme, there are certain sums of money to be paid to organizations to which we are affiliated now that we are independent. For example, the United Nations. It is time that people understood — and, indeed, they do — that certain items must be taxed in the Budget. What is important is that such taxes must not put an undue strain on the masses of people.

There can be no doubt that persons such as the hon. Members on the opposite side should not dare to criticize this Budget, for they taxed almost every conceivable edible item in their 1962 Budget. They should not criticize this one for, in a sense, that is to impose a tax on their own honesty.

I should like to say that there has also been a great spirit of self-help. A few days ago the Prime Minister and the Minister of Education went to Manchester to open a school that was built completely by self-help. The project cost some \$120,000. There will be many more of such projects. It is well known that large countries have no particular use for small nations. It is well known that people have to provide the motif, the progressive spirit, to build many of the things that need to be built, such as the Manchester school. This talk about people being frustrated and needing jobs is something that has gone on even in affluent societies such as America. There will always be a certain level of unemployment and it is the business of this Government to continue, as it is doing, to reduce that level of unemployment.

I do not know what the hon. Member, Mr. Chandisingh, meant when he spoke of retrenchment. The figures he gave were untrue. I have often heard hon. Members from the Opposition benches giving examples

of what happens in Russia, but have they asked themselves what were the economic motivations of Stalin and how he accomplished what he did? Russian workers were expected to make sacrifices for a Government in which they played no part at elections. The Russian workers were expected to produce all the agricultural crops required in that country and to export them. That money was used to build heavy industries. Thus Russia was industrialized. I do not know whether we can do that; we are late in terms of time as compared with developed countries like Russia and America, but we can inculcate in our people that unless they find the money themselves for development projects people abroad will not be willing to help us. If we are receiving a few million dollars it is because the advanced countries are looking at our Budget and our Development Programme and, regardless of what the Opposition says, they realize that we are making an honest effort.

I would suggest that a country is not built overnight. I have often heard the Leader of the Opposition mention how millions of Chinese worked day and night on the Meen Toombs Valley. This was mentioned two or three years ago. This sort of thing is not achieved by saying that we must not present a Budget taxing items which will not cause an undue strain on the people. Clearly it cannot be done like that.

Then there was mention of strikes. The hon. Member, Mr. Chandisingh, said that the T.U.C. was silent about the Budget. I happen to be a member of that body and I know that in 1963 it was the aim of the Government then in power not to give that organization a chance to express its views. It rushed through the Labour Relations Bill forgetting that the T.U.C., whether they are called right-wing, left-wing, centre, left of

centre, or right of centre, represent a large percentage of workers who are in large measure affiliated to the two parties on this side of the House.

The aim of the Labour Relations Bill was to circumscribe the freedom of the trade union movement. Thank God the trade union movement has not been circumscribed and is still in the position where it can speak on this or any Budget put forward by this or any Government. If that Bill had been passed the trade union movement might well not have been in such a position today.

The hon. Member, Mr. Chandisingh, referred to the firemen at Atkinson and to workers at the Transport and Harbours Department. My hon. Friend, Mr. Carrington, informs me that not a single worker has been retrenched at the Transport and Harbours Department. The firemen had grievances which existed during the regime of the previous Government but they were afraid to strike because they feared the Government. Now that a Government which is more sympathetic to their cause has come into power and finds many problems to tackle, these workers think that this is the only way by which they can bring such matters to the attention of the Government, which will deal with them in a different manner. During the regime of the last Government, the trade unions were fighting a defensive battle for survival. The trade unions, under this Government, are sure of themselves and cry out to us to have their long outstanding grievances settled overnight.

It remains for us to see how people will react to this Budget. On the last occasion when we presented our Budget and again at this time the demonstrations outside this House against the Budget were very poor and not from the heart. On this occasion the noise was a little louder in that the demonstrators hit tin cups

[MR. SANCHO]

with great force. If the noise is louder it is because there is more energy as people are healthier and taxation in the last Budget has not hurt them. [Laughter.]

6.00 p.m.

My friends in the Opposition find themselves in a situation which can aptly be described in the two lines of a poem I read a few years ago:

"Oh what a tangled web we weave,
When first we practise to deceive."

I should like to commend this Budget to this honourable House and I feel that because we are an independent Guyana, the taxes which our countrymen are asked to pay will be gladly borne so that we can help to make this country not merely a green land but a land where at least we must first be able to feed ourselves, and then we can consider, as early and as quickly as possible, the march to industrial development. [Applause.]

Dr. Ramsahoye: The 1967 Budget Speech reflects two problems which this Government faces, the dimensions of which are remarkably wide. The Government's first problem since 1965 has been to endeavour to balance the recurrent expenditure with the revenue. The second problem has been to raise money for capital development. I do not for one moment concede that the development which this Government has attempted since 1965 is the correct type of development which a Government, faced with the problems of this country, ought to have attempted, but it is clear that success has differed considerably in respect of the recurrent expenditure and the capital expenditure.

In 1965 there was a prediction that the current expenditure would be in the vicinity of \$77.2 million. It was predicted that the revenue would be \$72.6 million. In other

words, a deficit of about \$5 million was predicted for 1965. In the events which happened the expenditure was actually \$82 million and the revenue \$77 million. Although the figures were different, the predictions were roughly correct so far as the deficit was concerned. In 1966 the predicted expenditure was \$84.2 million and the revenue \$76.7 million. Actually, the expenditure was \$85.4 million and the revenue \$86.3 million. However, this \$86.3 million included a grant of \$4.8 million which the Government got from the United Kingdom, or else the deficit would have been considerable.

In 1967 we are told that the predicted expenditure is \$89.4 million and the predicted revenue \$89.1 million, making a surplus of \$0.3 million. So far, so good. One will not expect to quarrel with the current revenue and expenditure position but, having regard to the economic problems facing the country, I would think that the Government should strive in all years to balance its current expenditure against current revenue. This is the only way it could ensure that whatever resources accrue from the year's business would go towards development.

On the other side, the side of development, the picture is far from good. In 1965 it was predicted that capital expenditure would be \$35.5 million and it was predicted that the sum of \$41 million would be recovered from grants and loans. In the results which happened the expectations did not materialize. At page 15 of the 1965 Budget Speech the following items were given by the Minister of Finance:

"Grants

United Kingdom (C.D. & W.)	\$7.0mn.
United Kingdom (Special Service Unit)	\$1.0mn
United States	\$8.0mn.
United Nations	\$0.4mn.

Canada and West Germany	\$2.0mn. \$18.4mn.
Loans	
United Kingdom (Exchequer)	\$ 6.0mn.
United States	\$ 2.5mn.
Contractor-Finance	\$ 2.1mn.
Local	\$10.0mn.
Other	\$ 2.0mn.

As I see it, the amount which was actually received from grants and loans was not \$41 million as he anticipated but \$22.8 million. His predicted expenditure is, to my way of reading the estimate, more by \$11 million. According to how I read the estimate, capital expenditure should have been \$35.5 million but it was actually \$24.05 million, although in the Budget Speech the amount given is \$20.4 million.

If \$20.4 million is the correct figure, it means that expenditure on development fell \$15 million from the \$35 million which was anticipated and the assistance in the form of grants and loans fell by \$18 million. This is bad enough.

When we go to 1966 the position is just as bad. In 1966 it was predicted that capital development would be \$45.9 million and the predicted revenue from grants and loans would be \$42.2 million. Actually, the development expenditure was \$30.4 million. There again it was only two-thirds of what was predicted. It fell \$15 million below what was predicted. The Government did not get grants and loans to the extent of \$42.2 million but to the extent of \$21.5 million, and of this \$21.5 million, only \$20.7 million came from grants and loans.

In 1967 there is a prediction of a development expenditure of \$39.2 million and loans and grants are supposed to reach \$30.6 million. Amidst all these problems, what do we find? We find that there was a

general revenue balance. There were cash balances left by the last Government. The cash balances were \$5,852,000 in 1964.

6.10 p.m.

In 1966 it was estimated that the accounts were to be \$14.5 million in the red. In other words, \$18 million has been frittered away for capital development. When we refer to Sessional Paper No. 1 of 1966 — Subsidies and Losses of Public Undertakings — which was presented to this House, we see how this Government is of the opinion that the revenue from certain infrastructure items cannot even bear the cost of maintenance, much less the cost of repayment.

According to the Budget Speech for 1967, there is a balance of \$17 million to be recovered, and I refer particularly to pages 16 I quote:

"The deficit of \$8.9 mn. (of which \$4.2 mn. was covered by anticipated further receipts in 1967 against 1966 expenditure) together with the accumulated capital deficits of previous years (\$8.2 mn.) — a total of about \$17 mn. — was financed by bank overdraft and Treasury Bills. This kind of financing has been carried as far as is practicable and desirable."

As far as is practicable, it has gone much too far, and I should like to know how it is proposed to pay off this \$14 million. This Government cannot hope to pay off this \$14 million which it owes the banks, on short-term. It is \$14.5 million and then, of course, it owes on other things.

Let us put it as low as \$14.5 million. The rate of expenditure that is expected to flow for the year 1967, in my opinion precludes any progress being made to recover the loss. The reason is not far to see. The Government is spending money, but it is not spending money to generate economic activity and lead to the production of revenue which is necessary

[DR. RAMSAHOYE]

at this period of the country's economic history. If you borrow \$9 million or \$10 million to build the Atkinson Field — Mackenzie Road, you must remember the road is almost a white elephant, unless you take steps to make use of it in a definite way.

This country has 4.5 million acres of land in the intermediate savannahs, land which will border that road. This Government is not taking any steps to ensure that this 4.5 million acres of land will be of use to the people in this country. What will it cost you to make the land useful to the people? It may cost you \$1½ million even \$3 million to erect a fertiliser plant.

You said that you wish to tax imported foods in order to prevent people from using them. At the moment, the people have to buy imported foods because you do not have enough substitutes. You did not make any attempt in your Development Programme to create conditions under which there would be increased food production. These problems were examined by Gyanchand when he was here, and certain results were obvious. The total figure for imported foods was given then at about \$30 million. It is probably much more now with the increase in the population.

If some attempt is to be made to persuade people to buy local foods, one would have thought that this would have gone hand in hand with agricultural development on the broadest level. As far as I know, we have about 3.4 million acres of agricultural land on the coastal plain of Guyana, but only about 1 million is actually cultivated. Some effort must be made to encourage the people who are on the land, and those who are not on the land to work there and develop it. I am sure that agricultural production would increase. It would be too tedious for me to go into the

figures here, but they are very disheartening.

Let us look, for example, at the estimates for the Ministry of Forest, Lands and Mines. It appears as if that Ministry is going to spend about \$3.2 million on capital estimates of which sum \$2,438,000 will be spent on topographical surveys. The balance will be spent on minor things including forest industries development, and so on. But by the time the research is finished the figures will spread. This Government was probably given the assurance in 1965 that it would receive \$41 million in assistance. I have no doubt that people at their cocktail parties or otherwise told them: "Boys, you all are in office now. We are glad that the communists are out. We are going to give you so much." Therefore, if they only give half, they show their cards. They are going to give as little as possible. What we really need is a new method of thinking about how to manage this country.

6.20 p.m.

The people are being divided from the top; they are not being permitted to unite. The reason is that the people who are supposed to govern are not sitting down and considering the problems facing this country.

I have said in this House that, on the figures taken during the regime of the last Government, this population will double itself in 18 years. In 1975, which is about eight years from now, the estimated population in this country will be 937,000 souls. At the moment we have 630,000. In 1975 we still have a problem to provide for 937,000 people. Where are we going? The annual increase in the population of this country is about 43,000. We hear a lot about employment and how many people are getting jobs, but this Government is making no inroads on unemployment. How are we going to provide

for the increasing labour force? How are we going to deal with 43,000 more people and the 9,000 or 10,000 leaving school every year? It must be remembered that 43,000 is the population increase, and 8,000 or 9,000 are added to the labour force every year.

In 1960 there were 43,000 unemployed, and that figure is increased by about 8,000 or 9,000 every year. If you have to find jobs for about 8,000 a year, then in four years you will have to find jobs for 32,000 people. You will not be able to do so unless you take active steps to provide for them. Do not wait on industrial development, because you will find yourself in open competition with people all over the world including Japan and the U.S.A., and you will not be able to compete with them, and find markets but, as a result of the rising food shortage, you will be able to export food at a good price to certain countries. I do not mean that you will export food at

half the price but at the prices our people were paid when the previous Government was in office. This reduction has occurred in great measure with respect to the price of rice.

Certain members of the Government have been talking about how our imports exceed our exports, but they have forgotten that we have been suffering from falling prices and that sugar and rice have been hard hit. Probably we may not be able to get a high price for anything we produce.

ADJOURNMENT

The Leader of the House Mr. Bissember): I move that this House stands adjourned until Monday, 30th January, 1967, at two o'clock in the afternoon. It is hoped to conclude the debate on the Budget Speech and to proceed with other related business.

Assembly adjourned accordingly at 6.30 p.m.