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THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

OFFICIAL REPORT,

[VOLUME 7]

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

8th Sitting

2 p.m.

Friday, 31st August, 1973.

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Speaker

His Honour the Speaker, Mr. Sase Narain, J. P.

Members of the Government — People's National Congress (49)

Prime Minister (1)

The Honourable L. F. S. Burnham, O.E., S.C.,

Prime Minister

(Absent)

Deputy Prime Minister (1)

Dr. the Honourable P. A. Reid,

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Development and Agriculture

Senior Ministers (7)

The Honourable H. D. Hoyte, S.C.,

Minister of Works and Communications

*The Honourable S. S. Ramphal, S.C.,

Minister of Foreign Affairs and Justice

(Absent)

*The Honourable H. Green,

Minister of Co-operatives and National Mobilisation

(Absent)

*The Honourable H. O. Jack,

Minister of Energy and Natural Resources

*The Honourable F. E. Hope,

Minister of Finance

* Non-elected Minister

- * Dr. the Honourable K. F. S. King,
Minister of Economic Development (Absent)
- * The Honourable S. S. Naraine, A. A.,
Minister of Housing

Ministers (5)

- The Honourable W. G. Carrington,
Minister of Labour
- The Honourable Miss S. M. Field-Ridley,
Minister of Information and Culture
- The Honourable B. Ramsaroop,
Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Leader of the House
- * The Honourable Miss C. L. Baird,
Minister of Education (Absent)
- * Dr. the Honourable O. M. R. Harper,
Minister of Health (Absent)

Ministers of State (9)

- The Honourable M. Kasim, A. A.,
Minister of State for Agriculture
- The Honourable O. E. Clarke,
Minister of State — Regional (East Berbice/ Corentyne)
- The Honourable P. Duncan, J. P.,
Minister of State — Regional (Rupununi)
- The Honourable C. A. Nascimento,
Minister of State, Office of the Prime Minister
- The Honourable M. Zaheeruddeen, J. P., (Absent)
Minister of State — Regional (Essequibo Coast/ West Demerara)
- * The Honourable C. V. Mingo,
Minister of State for Home Affairs
- * The Honourable W. Haynes, (Absent)
Minister of State — Regional (Mazaruni/ Potaro)
- * The Honourable A. Salim, (Absent)
Minister of State — Regional (East Demerara/ West Coast, Berbice)
- * The Honourable F. U. A. Carmichael,
Minister of State — Regional (North West)

Parliamentary Secretaries (8)

- Mr. J. R. Thomas,
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Housing
- Mr. C. E. Wrights, J. P.,
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Works and Communications
- * Non-elected Minister

Mr. M. M. Ackman,

• *Parliamentary Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister, and Government Chief Whip*

Mr. E. L. Ambrose,

Parliamentary Secretary (Agriculture), Ministry of National Development and Agriculture

Mr. K. B. Bancroft,

Parliamentary Secretary (Hinterland), Ministry of National Development and Agriculture

Mr. S. Prashad,

Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Co-operatives and National Mobilisation

Mr. J. P. Chowritmootoo,

Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education

Mr. R. H. O. Corbin,

Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Co-operatives and National Mobilisation

Other Members (18)

Mr. J. N. Aaron

Mrs. L. M. Branco

Mr. M. Corrica

Mr. E. H. A. Fowler

Miss J. Gill

Mr. W. Hussain

Miss S. Jaiserrisingh

Mr. K. M. E. Jonas

Mr. M. Nissar

(Absent — on leave)

Dr. L. E. Ramsahoye

Mr. J. G. Ramson

Mrs. P. A. Rayman

Mr. E. M. Stoby, J.P.

Mr. S. H. Sukhu, M.S., J.P.,

Mr. C. Sukul, J.P.,

Mr. H. A. Taylor

(Absent)

Mr. R. C. Van Sluytman

Mrs. L. E. Willems

Members of the Opposition

Liberator Party (2)

Mr. M. F. Singh, *Deputy Speaker*

Mrs. E. DaSilva

OFFICERS

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

Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly — Mr. M. B. Henry, AMBIM.

2.05 p.m.

Prayers

VACATION OF SEAT BY DR. G. KUMAR

The Speaker: Hon. Member Dr. Ganraj Kumar, who was declared to be an elected Member of the National Assembly, has been absent from seven (7) sittings of the Assembly held as follows:

- (i) Thursday, 26th July, 1973;
- (ii) Monday, 30th July, 1973;
- (iii) Thursday, 2nd August, 1973;
- (iv) Friday, 3rd August, 1973;
- (v) Tuesday, 7th August, 1973;
- (vi) Friday, 10th August, 1973; and
- (vii) Tuesday, 14th August, 1973;

These have been consecutive sittings and have been held during the present session of Parliament and within the period of not longer than two calendar months.

Dr. Kumar did not apply for and was not granted leave of absence by me.

He has, therefore, vacated his seat in the National Assembly in accordance with article 61(2)(h) of the Constitution and Standing Order No. 77.

Dr. Kumar has been formally informed of this.

In accordance with article 70 of the Constitution, the appropriate Member of the Assembly was called upon to extract from the list in which Dr. Kumar's name was included, the name of a person to fill the vacancy.

The name of Mrs. Elinor DaSilva was extracted from the list and Mrs. DaSilva has been declared to be a Member of the National Assembly.

As Mrs. DaSilva is present the Oath of Office will be administered to her.

- Oath of Office

The Oath of Office was made and subscribed by Mrs. Elinor DaSilva.

The Speaker: Hon. Member Mrs. DaSilva, on behalf of the Members of the National Assembly, may I congratulate you and welcome you back to Parliament.

Mrs. DaSilva: Mr. Speaker and fellow Members of Parliament, I wish to thank you for your congratulations and your kind welcome back to the House.

I am indeed happy to be here because Parliament is the place where you make your voice heard no matter how small it is, and where you say what is needed to be said.

My presence here, as that of my Leader, does not mean that we condone what took place at the General Election. This has to be repeated so that it can be clearly understood. We do not condone what took place before, during and after the General Election but, nevertheless, we feel that Parliament is the forum where your presence must be if you want to be of service to your country, and this is the object of my Leader and myself, the United Force faction of the Liberator Party.

Mr. M.F. Singh: Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my hearty congratulations to Mrs. DaSilva on having become a Member of this honourable House.

Mrs. DaSilva is no stranger to this Chamber. Indeed, I do not think she is a stranger to any of us in this House. She was a Member of the last Parliament. I am sure we, who were Members then, remember her sterling and, indeed, her lively contributions to the debates. I welcome her as my colleague to this House and I am grateful that I will now have her valued assistance on this side of the House to ease the burden which, up to now, I have carried as the Opposition.

I do regret the circumstances under which Mrs. DaSilva entered the House but as the saying goes, , ut of evil cometh good. As everyone knows, the United Force joined with the Guyana Anti-Discrimination Movement under the name "Liberator Party" with the United Force symbol, "The Sun", to fight the last General Election. After the Election, as List Representative, I appointed Dr. Kumar and myself to Parliament but Dr. Kumar refused to take his seat. His group's decision was to follow whatever the P.P.P. did. They claimed that if the seats were taken, it would give the stamp of legality to an illegal P.N.C. Government. By not taking the seats, they added, the outside world would recognise that the P.N.C. had no right to be in power. This was their reasoning.

I would like all Guyanese to appreciate how idiotic this reasoning is. The Prime Minister was recently at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Conference. This conference was held in Canada. What impact did the P.P.P. G.A.D.M.'s boycott have on that conference? And now, to top it all, Dr. Fidel Castro, Dr. Jagan's greatest friend, is coming to Guyana, warmly recognised by the Prime Minister and warmly recognising the P.N.C. Government, and hosting Guyana's Prime Minister on his Cuban Airlines plane to Algiers.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Jagan should have been in Parliament today as the official Leader of the Opposition. He should have been here representing the people who voted for his party. Instead, he and his P.P.P. are going around the country preaching violence, the effect of which would only be to bring suffering to his misguided followers.

2.15 p.m.

In yesterday's *Mirror*, Mr. Speaker, they cried: "Fidel, Si! Burnham, No!" That was written on the front page. "Long live Fidel! Down with Guyana's Batista Regime!" Mr. Speaker, why "Castro, Si"? Castro does not rig elections. He does not even bother to have elections. Does this make Castro more virtuous? Or does it make rigging more heinous?

Let me not be misunderstood. I do not agree with many of Dr. Castro's policies and actions any more than I condone election irregularities, but we must recognise the realities of the situation, the realities of politics. Dr. Castro leads a large Caribbean nation with whom we must have productive dialogue, just as we must bring our local political differences into public hearing within this Chamber. In any case the visit of Dr. Castro is testimony to the fact that Guyana is recognised by the Third World countries as being among the foremost of the progressive nations in the Third World who are striving for economic reconstruction and for a better way of life for its people.

But of course, this does not at all mean that the United Force section of the Liberator Party agrees with the policies, the methods used by the P.N.C. Government to attain its objectives.

However, to get back to Mrs. DaSilva's appointment —

The Speaker: I was just about asking you if you are going to congratulate Mrs. DaSilva or make a political speech.

Mr. M.F. Singh: Let us look again at the circumstances because this is very relevant. Dr. Kumar and his group, political infants that they are, have blindly followed a sightless Jagan and his lost P.P.P. tribe into the wilderness. Dr. Jagan and his group are heading for the political wilderness. Dr. Kumar and his group refused to recognise me as the list representative to appoint someone of their choice and left me with no alternative but to choose someone who recognises the need for an active opposition to represent the people in Parliament.

But let me now appeal publicly to Dr. Jagan to end the antics, to put an end to the racial politics and the incitement to violence which goes with them and to come to Parliament and take his rightful place as Leader of the Opposition and help us in the fight to correct those evils which prevail in our beloved Guyana.
[*Applause.*]

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

Leave to Members

The Speaker: Leave has been granted to the hon. Member Mr. Jonas from 3rd to 20th September and to the hon. Member Mr. Nissar from 31st August to 22nd September, 1973.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS

The following Papers were presented:

- (1) Report of the National Insurance Board for the year 1971. [**The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Development and Agriculture on behalf of the Prime Minister.**]
- (2) (a) Caribbean Community Order, 1973 (No. 76), made under section 3 of the Caribbean Community Act 1973 (No. 14), on the 1st of August, 1973 and published in the Gazette on the 2nd of August, 1973.

- (b) Statement of Guarantees given by the Minister of Finance under section 3 of the Guarantee of Loans (Public Corporations and Companies) Act, 1971 (No. 16), for quarter ended 31st March, 1973. [The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Development and Agriculture on behalf of the Minister of Finance.]

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS — FIRST READING

The following Bill was introduced and read the First time:

A Bill intituled an Act to amend the National Insurance and Social Security Act, 1969.
[The Minister of Labour & Social Security.]

The Speaker: Hon. Leader of the House.

ADJOURNMENT

Resolved, “That this Assembly do stand adjourned to a date to be fixed.
[Mr. Ramsaroop.]

Adjourned accordingly at 2.23 p.m.