

Inaley

THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

OFFICIAL REPORT

[VOLUME 3]

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE THIRD SESSION OF
THE FIRST LEGISLATURE CONSTITUTED UNDER THE BRITISH
GUIANA (CONSTITUTION) ORDER IN COUNCIL, 1961.

9th Sitting

Monday, 17th February, 1964

SENATE

The Honourable Senate met at 9 a.m.

Prayers

[The Vice-President in the Chair]

Present:

Appointed under Article 47(2)(a):

- Senator the Honourable H. J. M. Hubbard - *Minister of Trade and Industry*
- Senator the Honourable Janet Jagan - *Minister of Home Affairs*
- Senator M. Khan
- Senator C. S. Persaud
- Senator Christina Ramjattan
- Senator H. Thomas

Appointed under Article 47(2)(c):

- Senator A. G. Tasker, O.B.E.
- Senator C. V. Too-Chung, Vice-President.
- Mr. E. V. Viapree - Clerk of the Legislature (Ag.)
- Mr. F. A. Narain - Assistant Clerk of the Legislature (Ag.)

Absent:

- His Honour the President, Senator Ashton Chase - excused.
- Senator the Hon. C. V. Nunes, Minister of Education and Social Development - on leave.
- Senator Anne Jardim - excused.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PRESIDENT

LEAVE TO SENATORS

The Vice-President: I have to announce that His Honour the President has asked for and is granted leave of absence from today's sitting. Senator Nunes has been granted leave to attend the West Indies University Council meeting in Jamaica from the 19th to the 22nd of February, 1964.

Senator Jardim has asked to be excused from today's sitting.

CARD FROM MRS. KENNEDY

I also wish to announce the receipt of a card from Mrs. Kennedy expressing thanks for the Senate's Resolution of sympathy on the death of her husband, Mr. John Fitzgerald Kennedy, late President of the United States of America.

KENYA'S INDEPENDENCE

The following letter has been received from the Administrative Secretary of the National Assembly of Kenya:

"The National Assembly,
Parliament Buildings,
Nairobi, Kenya.
28th January, 1964.

The Ag. Clerk of the Legislature,
Public Buildings,
British Guiana.

Dear Mr. Clerk,

I have been directed by the Speaker of Parliament to thank you for transmitting to the resolutions passed by the

your Legislative Assembly and the Senate on the occasion of the attainment of Independence by Kenya.

We are very much touched by this gesture on your part and the contents of the Resolutions will be brought to the notice of all members of our National Assembly.

With my kindest regards.

Yours sincerely,

L. J. Ngugi,
Administrative Secretary,
National Assembly."

BILLS FROM THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

The following letter has been received from the Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly:

"29th January, 1964.

Your Honour,

I have the honour to forward for the consideration of the Honourable Senate a Bill intituled AN ORDINANCE TO APPROPRIATE THE SUPPLIES GRANTED IN THE CURRENT SESSION OF THE LEGISLATURE.

2. The Bill was passed by the Legislative Assembly at its sitting today with the amendments as indicated thereon.

3. In terms of Article 69 of the Constitution this is a Money Bill, and in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 2 of that Article, I have duly endorsed on the Bill my certificate that it is a Money Bill.

[THE VICE PRESIDENT]

I have the honour to be,
Your Honour's obedient servant,
(Sgd.) W.O.R. Kendall,
"Deputy Speaker."

A letter has also been received from the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly forwarding the Public Loan and Colonial Treasury Bills (Amendment) Bill, and the Drainage and Irrigation (Amendment) Bill. The letter reads:

"8th February, 1964.

Your Honour,

I have the honour to forward for the consideration of the Honourable Senate -

(a) A Bill intituled An ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE PUBLIC LOAN AND COLONIAL TREASURY BILLS ORDINANCE.

(b) A Bill intituled An ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE DRAINAGE AND IRRIGATION ORDINANCE.

2. These Bills were passed by the Legislative Assembly at its sitting on the 7th February, 1964, without amendment.

I have the honour to be,
Your Honour's obedient servant
(Sgd.) Rahman B. Gajraj,
Speaker."

The Bills were read the First time.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS, ETC.

The following documents were laid on the Table:

- (a) (i) Draft Recurrent Estimates, 1964;
- (ii) Draft Development Estimates, 1964;
- (iii) Budget Statement 1964;
- (iv) British Guiana Report on the Financial Position by K. C. Jacobs Esq., C.B.E. - August, 1963;
- (v) Statement by the Government of British Guiana on the Jacobs Report and on the Insolvency Allegation by the Secretary of State for the Colonies - Sessional Paper No. 1/1964;
- (vi) Annual Report of the Licence Revenue Office for the year 1962;
- (vii) Report by the Premier Dr. the Hon. C.B. Jagan, M.L.A., on the Conference of Commonwealth Caribbean Countries held at Kingston, Jamaica, from 13th to 17th January, 1964;
- (viii) The Electric Installation (Amendment) Regulations, 1964, which were made on the 15th January, 1964, by the Government under paragraph (a) of the proviso to paragraph (g) of subsection (1) of section 7 of the Electric Lighting Ordinance, Chapter 237, in accordance with Article 22 of the Con-

stitution of British Guiana and by virtue and in exercise of all powers enabling him in that behalf.

[The Minister of Trade and Industry.]

(b) (1) Annual Report of the Director of Land-Development for the year 1961;

(ii) Annual Report on the Education Division 1960 - 1961. [The Minister of Trade and Industry on behalf of the Minister of Education and Social Development.]

(c) (1) Annual Report on the Treatment of Offenders (Probation, Essequibo Bcys' School and Prisons) for the year 1961;

(ii) Annual Report of the Commissioner of Local Government for the year 1962. [The Minister of Home Affairs.]

QUESTIONS TO MINISTERS

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT SAVINGS LEVY

Senator Tasker: I beg to ask the Minister of Trade and Industry Question No. 1 standing in my name on the Order Paper: Will the Government state:

(a) Whether the Commissioner of Inland Revenue has notified all contribu-

Development Savings Levy Fund of their holdings in that fund in respect of the year, 1962, and of the interest payable on such holdings, as is required by the National Development Savings Levy (General) Regulations, 1962?

(b) Whether Ordinary Savings Bonds have been issued in respect of contributions to the National Development Savings Levy Fund for the year ended December 31, 1962, and whether the interest payable on such contributions was paid on January 1, 1963, as is required by the National Development Savings Levy Ordinance, 1962?

(c) If the answers to the above questions are in the negative, why such actions have not been taken in compliance with the legislation, and when the issue of Savings Bonds and the payment of interest will be made?

Senator Hubbard: (Minister of Trade and Industry): (a) No, sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The Processing of collections under the National Development Savings Levy Ordinance has been delayed because of initial difficulties

[SENATOR HUBBARD]

organisation, the late submission of information by certain employers and the strike in 1963. However it is expected that bonds will be ready for issue very shortly.

According to law interest is due for the first time in January, 1964, on bonds relating to collections in 1962. Interest is being computed and will be paid shortly.

Senator Tasker: Arising out of the Minister's reply, I wish to ask as a supplementary question: Is Government aware of the confused position of both employers and employees over the National Development Savings Levy following a recent judgment in the Supreme Court and in view of the lack of any directions by the Commissioner of Inland Revenue, and will the Minister make an early statement to clarify the position?

Senator Hubbard: The Government will give consideration to the request of Senator Tasker. I can say no more because the matter is still a matter within the competence of the Court, sir.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

GEORGETOWN CULTURAL CENTRE (AMENDMENT) BILL

Senator Hubbard: On behalf of the Minister of Education and Social Development I beg to

*Georgetown Cultural Centre
(Amendment) Bill, 1964.*

Bill read the First time.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

MOTION

ELECTRIC INSTALLATION (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS

Senator Hubbard: Your Honour, in 1907 Regulations were made to cover matters relating to Electric Lighting. In those Regulations was provided at Section 52 the procedure to be adopted in relation to the reporting of accidents, when accidents occurred, and it was required in that regulation that "the Undertakers shall also summon immediately to the scene of such accident the Government electric inspector."

Now, in 1907 the electricity undertaking had been operating only for a very short time and the area electrified was very small. Today the area electrified is quite considerable and it is now impracticable for an inspector to be summoned immediately to the scene. To be more realistic the Government has made a regulation requiring that the electric inspector shall within 72 hours of the receipt of a notice visit the scene of the accident.

We are fully conscious of the need for protection and the safety of workmen engaged in electricity supply, and it is one of the regrets of the Government and the Electricity Corporation that accidents continue to occur while linesmen are at work on the service. The Corporation has

given a great deal of attention to the tightening up of its safety regulations. It has had consultation with the trade union concerned to try to get employees of the Corporation to adhere strictly to the safety regulations with the aim of avoiding accidents or cutting them to an irreducible minimum. But, as we say in this country, familiarity breeds contempt and we have had cases where men believed that because they have been familiar with electricity they must be contemptuous of it and they have neglected to take the precautions prescribed for their own safety.

I think it necessary to mention this to satisfy the public that our alteration of this regulation is not intended in any way to give licence to the Undertakers to be slack in the application of safety measures or to relax their vigilance. I do hope that these remarks will induce the persons who are exposed to the danger of electricity to recognize that the danger does not disappear because they have become accustomed to it by living with it every day.

I beg to move the following Motion -

"Be it resolved that the Legislature in terms of section 7 (1) (g) of the Electric Lighting Ordinance, Chapter 237, approves of the Electric Installation (Amendment) Regulations, 1964, which were made on the 15th January, 1964 by the Governor under

paragraph (a) of the proviso to paragraph (g) of subsection (1) of section 7 of the Electric Lighting Ordinance, Chapter 237, in accordance with Article 22 of the Constitution of British Guiana and by virtue and in exercise of all powers enabling him in that behalf."

9.20 a.m.

The Vice-President: Hon. Senators, the Motion is before you. Does anyone wish to speak before I put the question? [Pause] Hon. Minister, I notice that this Amendment says: "The Government electric inspector shall, within seventy-two hours of the receipt of such notice, visit the scene of such accident." It is presumed that he will take whatever necessary action is required.

Senator Hubbard: The other regulations prescribe accordingly.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Resolved, "That this Senate do now adjourn to Monday, 24th February, 1964, at 2 p.m." [Senator Hubbard.]

Adjourned accordingly at 9.22 a.m.