

BRITISH GUIANA

FIRST LEGISLATIVE

ASSEMBLY

SECOND SESSION

1962 — 1963

MINUTES of the Proceedings of the 34th Sitting of the Legislative Assembly of the Colony of British Guiana under the British Guiana (Constitution) Order in Council, 1961, held in the Chamber of the Legislature at the Public Buildings, Georgetown, Demerara,

at 2.00 p.m.

on

FRIDAY, 10TH MAY, 1963.

Present

His Honour the Speaker, Mr. R. B. Gajraj.

(a) *Members of the Government*
People's Progressive Party

(i) *Ministers*

Dr. the Honourable C. B. Jagan,
Premier and Minister of Development and Planning.

The Honourable B. H. Benn,
Minister of Agriculture, Forests and Lands.

The Honourable Ram Karran,
Minister of Works and Hydraulics.

The Honourable R. Chandisingh,
Minister of Labour, Health and Housing.

Dr. the Honourable Charles Jacob, Jr.,
Minister of Finance.

Dr. the Honourable F. H. W. Ramsahoye,
Attorney-General

The Honourable E. M. G. Wilson,
Minister of Communications.

(ii) *Parliamentary Secretaries*

Mr. G. Bowman,

Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Mr. L. E. M. Mann,

Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Education and Social Development.

Mr. S. M. Saffee,

Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forests and Lands.

(iii) *Other Members*

Mr. G. L. Robertson

Mr. M. Bhagwan

Mr. J. B. Caldeira

Mr. V. Downer ✓

Mr. M. Hamid

Mr. D. C. Jagan

Mr. H. Lall ✓

Mr. M. Shakoor

(b) *Members Constituting the Minority*

(i) *People's National Congress*

Mr. L. F. S. Burnham, Q.C.

Mr. W. O. R. Kendall,

Deputy Speaker.

Mr. J. Carter, Q.C.

Mr. E. F. Correia

Mr. N. J. Bissember

Mr. W. A. Blair

Mr. R. S. S. Hugh

Mr. J. G. Joaquin

Mr. R. J. Jordan

Mr. C. A. Merriman

Mr. H. M. S. Wharton

(ii) *United Force*

Mr. P. S. d'Aguiar

Mr. S. Campbell

Mr. R. E. Cheeks

Mr. E. E. Melville

(iii) *Independent*

Mr. B. S. Rai

Clerk of the Legislature — Mr. E. V. Viapree (Ag.)

Prayers

The Clerk read prayers.

THE GOVERNOR'S PROCLAMATION -- (No. 5 of 1963)

The Acting Clerk of the Legislature read the Governor's Proclamation (No. 5 of 1963) of Thursday, 9th May, 1963, published in an Extraordinary issue of the Supplement to "The Official Gazette," summoning the Legislative Assembly to meet and sit at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, on the 10th May, 1963.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS, ETC.

By the **Premier and Minister of Development and Planning:**

Proclamation No. 2 of 1963 issued by His Excellency the Governor on the 8th of May, 1963, declaring the existence of a state of public emergency for the purposes of Article 14 of the Constitution of British Guiana.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

Statement by the **Premier concerning the seizure of certain documents and articles at Congress House and plan to overthrow the Government.**

The Premier and Minister of Development and Planning, **Dr. the Honourable C. B. Jagan**, read a statement to the House in which he stated that the Police had, in the course of the current series of raids being carried out by them, seized a number of documents and articles at Congress House, the Headquarters of the People's National Congress, and also handed over to the Clerk a photostatic copy of one of the documents seized.

After reading the statement which he had made to the House on the 9th February, 1962, the Honourable Premier read the recording of a tape which had been seized during last year by the Police with an illegal transmitter found in a van owned by Messrs. d'Aguiar Bros., Limited.

The Honourable Premier added that in view of the new evidence which had fallen into the hands of the Police, it would be seen that "in spite of all protestations to the contrary, my Government is once again facing a situation in which violence is apparently being planned to secure the overthrow of the legally elected Government of this country by force", and he assured the House and the public that "his Government intended to take every step necessary to maintain and preserve the rule of law in this country."

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

Mr. Burnham's reason for his presence and that of Members of his Party at that Sitting.

The Honourable Member for Ruimveldt (**Mr. L. F. S. Burnham**) stated that at the Sitting held on the 22nd April last, he had asked that himself and his colleagues be excused from further attendance because of their objection to the use of "scabs" and "strike-breakers."

On the present occasion, however, because of the Emergency which had been declared, Mr. Burnham stated that, while not being less opposed to the use of "scabs", "white-legs" and "strike-breakers", they had found it in the interest of their country to be there in order to be able to contribute to any question that might revolve around the Emergency.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE TO MOVE THE ADJOURNMENT OF THE ASSEMBLY ON MATTERS OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

In terms of Standing Order No. 11 of the Legislative Assembly, the Honourable Member for Campbellville (**Mr. N. Bissember**) asked leave to move the adjournment of the Assembly for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the effect of the prevailing General Strike on the country's economy.

Leave having been granted, Mr. Bissember moved his motion.

Suspension of Sitting.

At 4.00 p.m. the Honourable **B. H. Benn** was speaking to the motion when the sitting was suspended for tea.

Resumption of Sitting.

At 4.40 p.m. the sitting was resumed when Mr. **Benn** resumed and concluded his speech.

Thereafter, **Mr. d'Aguiar** and **Mr. Burnham** spoke to the motion.

ADMONITION BY HIS HONOUR THE SPEAKER TO PERSONS IN THE PUBLIC GALLERY AND TO MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Before the adjournment was taken, **His Honour the Speaker** reminded those persons who were accommodated in the Public Gallery that they were not expected to interrupt the proceedings of the House by their applause or other sounds; such behaviour should be kept for when they left the precincts of the House.

With regard to Honourable Members, His Honour observed that in spite of several warnings he found that Honourable Members on both sides of the House had interjected very loudly while Members were speaking. He had indicated on previous occasions, added His Honour, that he would allow a certain amount of latitude but their behaviour at that sitting had exceeded such latitude.

His Honour invited Members to study the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly with particular reference to Standing Order Number 39 — "RULES FOR MEMBERS NOT SPEAKING" because, after that admonition, he proposed to take full opportunity of making use of the powers which resided in the Chair, if Members continued in the future with the behaviour which he had endured that afternoon.

ADJOURNMENT

At 6.30 p.m. the Assembly was adjourned to 2.00 p.m. on Thursday, the 16th of May, 1963.

Rahman B. Gajraj,
Speaker.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS,
Georgetown,
14th May, 1963.