

THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
OFFICIAL REPORT

[Volume 8]

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE FIRST SESSION (1981) OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FOURTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA.

8 th sitting	2 p.m	Monday, 2 nd March, 1981
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MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (82)

Speaker (1)

*Cde. Sase Narain, O.R., J.P., M.P.,
Speaker of the National Assembly

Members of the Government – People’s National Congress (69)

Prime Minister (1)

Cde. P.A. Reid, O.E.,M.P.,
Prime Minister

Other Vice-Presidents (4)

Cde. S.S. Naraine, A.A.,M.P.,
Vice President, Works and Transport (Absent-on leave)

Cde. H.D. Hoyte, S.C., M.P.,
Vice President, Economic Planning and Finance

Cde. H. Green, M.P.,
Vice President, Public Welfare

Cde.B.Ramsaroop, M.P.,
Vice –President, Parliamentary Affairs and
Party/State Relations

Senior Ministers (10)

Cde. R.Chadisingh, M.P.,
Minister of Higher Education

Cde. O.E. Clarke, M.P.,
Minister of Regional Development

Cde. R.H.O. Corbin, M.P
Minister of National Development

*Cde. F.E. Hope, M.P.,
Minister of Trade and Commerce Protection

*Cde. H.O. Jack, M.P.,
Minister of Energy and Mines

*Cde. Dr. M. Shahabuddeen, O.R., S.C., M.P.,
Attorney General and Minister of Justice

*Cde. R.E. Jackson, M.P.,
Minister of Foreign Affairs (Absent)

*Cde. J.J. Tyndall, A.A., M.P.,
Minister of Agriculture (Absent-on leave)

*Cde. S.A. Moore, M.P.,
Minister of Home Affairs

*Non- elected Member

*Cde. J.R. Thomas, M.P.,
Minister of Education

Minister (13)

Cde. J.P Chowritmootoo, J.P., M.P.,
Minister, Environment and Water Supply,
in the Ministry of Public Welfare.

Cde. U.E. Johnson, M.P.,
Minister of Co-operatives

Cde. J. N. Maitland-Singh, M.P.,
Minister, Consumer Protection, in the
Ministry of Trade and Consumer Protection

Cde. S.Prashad, M.P.,
Minister, Crops and Livestock, in the
Ministry of Agriculture

Cde. Sallahuddin, M.P.,
Minister, Finance, in the Minister of
Economic Planning and Finance

Cde. R.E. Williams, M.P.,
Minister, Fisheries, in the Ministry
of Agriculture

*Cde. C.A.Nascimmmento, M.P.,
Minister, Mechanical Equipment, in the
Minister of Works and Transport

*Cde. F.U.A. Campbell, M.P.,
Minister of information

*Cde. F.U.A. Carmicheal, M.P.,
Minister, Forestry, in the
Ministry of Agriculture

*Cde. Y.V. Harewood-Benn., M.P., (Absent-on Leave)
Minster of Public Service

*Cde. H.Rashid, M.P.,
Minister, Office of the President

*Cde. R.C. Van Sluytman, M.P.,
Minister, Drainage and Irrigation, in the
Minister of Agriculture

*Cde. R.A. Van West-Charles, M.P.,
Minister, Health, in the Ministry of
Public Welfare.

Ministers of State (3)

Cde. M.Corrca, M.P.,
Minister of State for Culture, in the
Ministry of Education, Social Development
and Culture

Cde. R.C. Fredericks, A.A., M.P.,
Minister of State for Youth and Sport, in the
Ministry of National Development.

*Cde. C.E.Wright, M.P.,
Minister of State for Construction, in the
Ministry of Works and Transport

Parliamentary Secretaries (3)

Cde. A.W. Bend-Kirton, M.P.,
Parliamentary Secretary, Women's Affairs and
Housing

*Non- elected Member

- Cde. P.A. Rayman, M.P.,
Parliamentary Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister
- *Cde. E.M. Bynoe, M.P.,
Parliamentary Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister

Other Members (23)

- Cde. D.A.N. Ainsworth, M.P.
- Cde. M. Ally, M.P.
- Cde. M. Armogan, M.P.
- Cde. B. Beniprashad, M.P.
- Cde. B. Bhaggan., M.P.
- Cde. J.B Calderia., M.P.
- Cde. A.A. Chin, M.P.
- Cde. E.B.Davidson, M.P.
- Cde. H. Doobay, M.P.
- Cde. A.B.Felix, M.P.
- Cde. E.H.A. Fowler. M.P.
- Cde. P.Fredericks, M.P.
- Cde. E.F. Gilbert, M.P.
- Cde. J.Gill-Mingo, M.P.
- Cde. A. McRae, M.P.
- Cde. J.M. Munroe, J.P., M.P.
- Cde. R.N. Primo, M.P.
- Cde. C.G. Sharma, J.P., M.P.
- Cde. H.L.B. Singh, M.P.
- Cde. S.H Sukhu, M.S., M.P.
- Cde. B. Tiwari, M.P.
- Cde. C.Vandenburg, M.P.
- Cde. H.B. Walcott, J.P., M.P.
Government Chief Whip

Members of the National Congress of Local Democratic Organs (2)

- Cde. R. Bishop, M.S., M.P.
- Cde. B. Latchminarayan, M.P.

Member of the Regional Democratic Councils (10)

- Cde. K.N. Jones, M.P. (Region No.1-Barima/Waini)
- Cde. K.V. Jairam, M.P, (Region No.2-Pomeroon/ Supenaam)
- Cde. C.A. Singh, M.P (Region No.3-Essequibo Islands/West Demerara)
- Cde. W. Bipat, M.P. (Region No.4 Demerara /Mahaica)
- Cde. H.I. London, M.S., M.P. (Region No 5- Mahaica/Berbice)
- Cde. I. Chowritmootoo, M.P. (Region No. 6- East Berbice/Corentyne)
- Cde. N.R. Charles, M.P (Region No.7- Cuyuni/Mazurni)
- Cde. D. Abraham, M.P. (Region No. 8- Potaro/Siparuni)
- Cde. A. Dorrick, M.P. (Region No.9- Upper Takutu/Upper Essequibo)
- Cde. D. Hinds, M.P. (Region No.10-Upper Demerara/Berbice)

*Non- elected Member

Members of the Minority (12)

(i) People's Progressive Party (10)
Minority Leader (1)

Cde. Dr.C. Jagan, M.P.,
Minority Leader

(Absent- on leave)

Deputy Speaker (1)

Cde. Ram Karran ,M.P.,
Deputy Speaker on the National Assembly

Other Members (8)

Cde. J. Jagan, M.P

Cde. Reepu Demand Persaud,J.P., M.P.,
Minority Chief Whip

Cde. N. Persaud, M.P

Cde. C.C Collymore, M.P.

Cde. S.F. Mohamed, M.P.

(Absent)

Cde. I. Basir, M.P

Cde. C.C.Belgrave, M.P.

Cde. Dalchand, J.P, M.P.

(ii) United Force (2)

Mr. M.F.Singh,J.P, M.P.

(Absent- on leave)

Mr. M.A. Abraham, M.P.

(Absent)

OFFICERS

Clerk of the National Assembly-F.A Narain, A.A.

Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly-Cde.M.B.Henry

PRAYERS

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

LEAVE TO MEMBERS

The Speaker: Leave has been granted to Mr. Feilden Singh for today and tomorrow.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

MOTION

APPROVAL OF ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE

BUDGET DEBATE

Assembly resumed debate on the Motion moved by the Vice President, Economic Planning and Finance for the Approval of the Estimates of Expenditure for the Financial Year 1981.

The Speaker: Cde. Ainsworth.

Cde. Ainsworth: Cde.Speaker, may I take this opportunity of expressing the honour and joyful feeling I associate with being able to make an intervention in this honourable Assembly. As I join the long list of debutants on this side of the Assembly let me again say how proud I feel to be called to higher national service by such a great and potent political party, the People's National Congress. The ability of the People's National Congress to rejuvenate itself by attracting so many young and vibrant people to its fold is testimony of not only its great leadership and correctness of policy but also its commitment to the total development of the youth of this nation.

Sitting in this Assembly as I have done for the past few days I must make a comment on the attempt by some members of the Minority Party to analyse the Budget. To my mind, to have attempted to analyse such a great document and not to relate it to the global situation, not only showed a lack of skills in statistical analysis but an unscientific and biased attempt to discredit a Party and Government that have brought real development to this nation.

To say the least, Cde.Speaker, the presentations by those members of the minority group were tantamount to what I would call manifest ignorance of developmental processes and strategies, which bears an inverse relationship to their numerical representation in this Assembly.

Cde.Speaker, as we analyse the Estimates for 1981 it is good for us to remind ourselves that we are mobilised for the immediate task of salvaging our economy and establishing the pre-conditions for the economic prosperity of this proud nation. The framework for action this year as adumbrated by Cde. Vice-President for Economic Planning and Finance reinforces the self-reliant thrust of this nation and spells out the duties and responsibilities of all the citizens as we face the challenges of economic recovery.

Article 38 of the People's New Constitution clearly spells out the importance of national co-operation for the development of the economy. May I quote:

“it is the duty of the state, co-operatives, trade unions, other socio-economic organisations and the people through sustained and disciplined endeavours to achieve the highest possible levels of production and productivity and to develop the economy.....”

Pursuant to the realisation of the ideals as set out in the aforementioned, article 28 sets out the rights of the youths of this nation. May I quote again:”

“Every young person has the right to ideological, social, cultural and vocational development and to the opportunity for responsible participation in the development of the socialist order of society.”

Cde.Speaker, while we look at the rights of the youth we also need to look at the responsibilities as set out in the Constitution, all avenues are being given for the youths to realise and to play a meaningful role in their developmental task.

May I submit that the Budget Speech here being debated provided the framework for the putting into operation of the policy statement given by Cde. President in an Address to this Assembly on February 9. Such a brilliant presentation could only have come from a man who is informed by socialist principles and who through the years of consistent practice has married the noble ideals of socialism with objective reality. The need for self reliance as expressed by Cde. President and reiterated by Cde. Vice President for Economic Planning and Finance can never be over emphasised. A look at the development processes of all developed societies is more than enough evidence to convince us of the need to be self-reliant. Development cannot be achieved in any dependent relationship.

2.10 p.m.

Youth development cannot be looked at in isolation from the general developmental thrust. There is a direct relationship between the development of the skills of the youth of this nation and achieving our national objectives. As Cde. Hoyte pointed out:

“In the past our political institutions circumscribed the opportunities for the direct intervention of the masses of the people in an organised and authoritative way in the development task.”

This phenomenon generally affected the youth of this nation. Emerging as we are from the plantation system which could adequately be described as a total institution in which the economic, social, political and psychological development were designed and controlled by our colonial masters, our task of becoming self-reliant is, indeed, tremendous. While we have achieved political independence and many structural changes have been made in the society, we have not been able to decolonise the minds of all our people. This is an important variable in restoring the self-confidence to our people, if they are to be involved in successful nation-building.

The People's National Congress has recognised that we can only progress with the total involvement of people in every facet of national life that is why we have made it our duty to provide our citizens with the necessary tools for national building. The promulgation of the People's New Constitution is the most significant instrument given us so far. It is significant because it provides the framework for the radical changes in the institutional structure of our economic, social and political arrangement. It is also significant because it involves more people at all levels in the decision-making processes as well as it provides for the release of the creative, imaginative and productive abilities of our people.

While there has been criticism as to the policies of this Government, many who have attempted to criticize the call for increased production and productivity have attempted to substitute in their places handouts of different sorts. We on this side of the Assembly are not interested in developing a nation of mendicants who are condemned to poverty and the manipulations and machinations which continued relationship with "chronic dependency syndrome which is characteristic of plantation society." Rather we are building a nation of free, self-reliant people, who would share the wealth that they produce through their own efforts. We can only develop if we are self-reliant. The task before us is indeed huge. We have to diversify our economy; we have to maintain our existing factories, industries and social services. We have to train the people in the skills we need for supporting our economy. Our people's expectations are rising; we have to fulfill them. Technological innovations are not going to wait on us; we have to introduce appropriate technologies to hasten our development. The catalogue of our needs is not exhausted. Development in itself is a painful process. Sacrifices have to be made in the short and in the medium term as an investment from benefits that can accrue only in the long run.

It is with a commitment to genuine independence that the P.N.C., since assuming office in 1964, has continuously and consistently struggled to improve the lot of the masses. All the opportunities created and institutions established for harnessing and directing the energies of the youth of this nation have been done expressly to prepare us to be of service to this nation. The investment in the Youth of this nation is sound. Already we are benefiting from the foresight of our party for its early involvement of youth. A look at the representation on this side of the Assembly would justify that fact.

For the successful creation of a socialist society, it is imperative that we have the earliest and broadest possible involvement of young people in public life. The process of promoting the participation of young people in the day-to-day activities has the advantage of allowing young persons to test their ideas, initiatives, the correctness of their opinions as they relate to objective reality as well as providing the opportunity of their participation in responsible decision-making. The P.N.C. had made it possible for us to be given real public responsibility. We are actively participating in decision-making; we can now test ideas against reality, gain experiences,

learn and, most of all, bring youthful freshness to the solving of the many problems that crop up in day-to-day social life. In this year of energy, we are indeed taking positive steps to minimise, if not totally eliminate, the conflicts of opinions which are likely to arise during the interaction between our youths and matured leaders. Nation-building is serious business. We have to channel all our energies for the realisation of that most important task. Now is the time for us to centralize our productive energies for effective and efficient uses.

If we accept the fact that all behavior is learnt and that there is a dialectical relationship between economic development, social progress and education, we are in a better position to appreciate this Government's education policy. Education for us is the foundation of our revolution. It is our main weapon for decolonizing the minds of some of our people who are still dependent and releasing their energies to the productive sectors of the economy. It has a pivotal role to play in the realisation of the full potentials of our people.

Cde. Speaker, allow me to refer to a speech made by our leader, now President of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, when leader of the opposition, in a pre-election broadcast on 27th March, 1961. I quote:

“ for us, education is the corner-stone of equality and one of the chief instruments for the abolition of snobbery, the removal of discrimination, the development of creative beings and the production of a race of men who will never submit to mediocrity or dictatorship of any kind.”

Our leader is known for his consistency and as man who sticks to his word. It is within such a framework that free education from nursery to university was introduced in 1976, that is, four years before the promulgation of the People's New Constitution. The innovations that are unfolding within our education system are all aimed at making relevant the education our people receive as we attempt to fulfill our developmental aspirations.

The involvement of youth in public life did not occur overnight, it is all part of a concerted plan to marshal the energies of the youths for productive uses. The successes we have had in our education is common knowledge. Notwithstanding our achievements, there is still a lot of work to be done. All the major educational institutions are grappling with the onerous task of designing relevant education programme. The Government , in recognition of “it's important responsibilities for training and upgrading the skills of workers and trade unionists will make an additional contribution to the running of the Chritchlow Labour College.

A look at the non-formal and informal structures within the education system shows the all-embracing attempts to grapple with the problems of ensuring that our people are properly educated. The Adult Education Association is widening its sphere of influence. The work of the Extra-Mural Department of the University of Guyana is not only commendable but is bridging the gap that exists between the University and the community to a very large extent. The workers education unit is making its contribution to development. On-the -job training in the Public Sector is being given priority. Those corporations which have not yet institutionalised on-the-job training are in the process of so doing.

It has been careful planning after detailed study that has enabled the P.N.C. to provide the leadership for the successful development of the youth. Cde.Speaker, we all know that life is dynamic and we must go through changes; only those who are capable of anticipating history will enjoy the greatest benefits of positive change. That is why this Government is spending so much money for the provision of facilities to enhance youth development.

We are a nation in transition to socialism. Towards the achievements of that noble objective we have to create the type of individuals who would make the creation of a socialist state a reality, hence, the need for continuous education of our people. While it is important to improve the material standard of the people through socialist construction, it is no less important to raise the people's ideological conscientiousness as well as their cultural and technical levels.

The aforementioned tasks must be continuous if we are to make effective use of and take good care of existing material and technical foundations and further consolidate and develop them. We have the responsibility for making the people of this nation conscious of their status as masters of this society and giving full scope to their creative talents and activities in the building of socialism.

Cde.Speaker, I have already alluded to the dialectical relations between the economy and education. Our achievements in education are most outstanding because of the fact that the democratization process of the education system intensified during a period when our economy was under several pressures. In a society where more than 65 per cent of our population is under 21, the investment in Education and Training were and are absolutely necessary for the survival of this nation. It is in their formative years that youth are most receptive. It therefore follows that transmission and assimilation of knowledge are likely to have the greatest effect on the young people. It is in our hands that the future of this country lies. We have to produce our own scientists, engineers, technicians, doctors, teachers, managers and what have you, if we are to modernise in the shortest possible time. We cannot depend on expatriates to do our work for us, apart from the fact that their services are very expensive; their technical competence is sometimes questionable. Further, there is the strong possibility that some of the values they may tend to impose on this society would be counter to our objectives.

Cde.Speaker, I must admit that many young people who have benefit from advanced training provided by the State have not honoured their legal, moral and social obligations to the working people of this nation. While efforts are being made to recoup the money spent on those deviant students, for us to succeed in our task of developing this nation we can only intensify our training. Not only do we have to continue to raise the technical competence of our youth but the ideological orientation has to be increased in order to create that social awareness which would make students assets to this nation.

Until this day, Cde.Speaker, we are still feeling the effects of an inherited lop-sided education system, for example, the University of Guyana is actively engaged in reversing the imbalance between the Humanities and Science and Technology. It is attempting to have 60-40 ration in favour of the sciences, but for that to be achieved there is need for adjustments throughout the total school systems. The Ministry of Education is fully aware of the situation and remedial action is being taken. The Emergency Science Programme for teachers is just one of the many innovations being attempted.

In keeping with the general policy to improve the physical environment throughout the country, the Ministry of Education is seeking to make the school environment more conducive to study. Maintenance works are to be done on over 900 primary and secondary schools as well as extension works to be carried out on some of the existing buildings.

Secondary schools places have to be found for all the children who write the Secondary School Entrance Examination. Last year, some 20,000 places were found and this year the number is likely to increase. Some 374 nursery schools have to be rehabilitated or re-housed. At the moment, about 600 teachers are trained annually at the CPCE, the Lilan Dewar College of Education and the In-Service Training Centers. A special three-year In-Service Training Programme for nursery school teachers is being conducted regionally and construction of the Training College for Secondary school teachers is proceeding apace.

The Curriculum Development Unit of the Ministry of Education is engaged in designing relevant curricula for the schools and many imaginative and novel programmes in such areas as Social Studies, Visual and Performing Arts, Industrial Arts, Science, Guidance and counseling are being implemented in schools. The Work Study Programme is gaining momentum and has justified its implementation.

In the area of Technical Education, the local examination that replaces the City and Guilds will be written for the first time in 1981. The University of Guyana graduated its first set of Engineers with the Bachelor's Degree last year. Among the 83 graduates were seven young women and Guyana's only female Mechanical Engineer was among that lot. Our first locally trained Mining Engineers also graduated with H.T.O. in 1980.and for this Academic year it is proposed to have that programme upgraded to a full Degree programme. There are many other examples that could be quoted to justify our expenditure in education.

The national Service which is an extension on the formal education system is justifying its establishment and here stands a proud graduate of the Pioneer Corps of that great institution.

In the relationship between the National Service and the University of Guyana , let me point out that at this point in time that the pioneers who have studied the Natural Sciences are

lent to the to the teaching system in ensuring the Science programme proceed apace. The technology students during their one year of National Service are doing industrial training in different industries where they are not only learning on the job but taking their the oretical knowledge and sharing it among the workers.

In the area of culture, the youths have benefited from the enlightened policy of this Government in ensuring that every Guyanese gets the opportunity to realize his full potential. The most significant cultural installations was made possible since this Party assumed office. The National Cultural Centre, the Burrowes School of Art, the national Dance School, the 1763 Monument, the Liberation Monument, all stand out. Carifesta is the brainchild of our President and Guyfesta only affords us rich entertainment but releases the creative talents of hundreds of young people throughout the land. The participation in Mass Games, where our children are learning new skills and are being equipped with those vital ingredients for nation-building, namely, self-discipline, loyalty, patriotism and working co-operatively for a common good, is a hallmark in the development of our youth.

The Youth Palace where our children will be allowed to amalgamate leisure with creative and scientific work will soon be a reality.

The special interest in the youth of this nation is further highlighted by the fact that a Minister of Youth and Sports was established to be a special week every year to highlight the activities of the youth serves to inspire us to be more active in nation-building. The age of majority at 18 was indeed significant for the active participation in public life. As I see it, Cde. Speaker, Youth Development is not and end in itself, but is a necessary activity for the achievement of the wider goal is the establishing of a socialist society. Every investment in youth development is a premium paid on our insurance policy for the nation's progress.

Cde. Speaker, as we proceed with the task of revolutionising our society, our job is not only to increase our acknowledge and technical competence. We have to be aware of our social responsibility and duty to this nation. We have to place our skills at the deposal of the working masses of this nation. While the length of the transitional period is unknown, what is known is that the task of educating the youth and developing their potential is a continuous exercise.

[Cde. Ainsworth continues]

As a matter of fact while there has been a structural changes, there has been a lack in concomitant psychological adjustment. Consequently, the need for education to be continuous cannot be over-emphasized. Knowledge is not static. We have to be prepared to face the challenges of a changing world.

2.30 p.m.

The future of this country and the revelation depend on how the young generation is socialized. Raising people with the correct attitudes is a firm guarantee for energetic promotion of socialist construction in this society. People decide every-thing. Without people who are well-prepared politically, ideologically, technically and physically, we cannot solve the difficult and complex problems arising in the building of a new society, nor can we rapidly develop our economic potential for the benefit of our people. [Applause]

The Speaker: Cde.Bipat

Cde.Bipat: Cde.Speaker, let me for forthwith pay tribute and homage to our Leader, respected and beloved Cde. Linden Forbes Sampson Burnham -[Applause]- and the Party, the People's National Congress, for making it possible for me, an obscure member of the present-day proletariat, to make my humble contribution in this dignified forum.

Our astute and erudite Vice-President and Minister responsible for Economic Planning and Finance, Cde. Hugh Desmond Hoyte, presented on the 20th February, 1981, the seventeen Budget of the People's National Congress party in Government. Not only is this Budget a challenging one to improve our national economy but also a significant one as it is ushering in a new system of local democracy.

And speaking about "democracy" –words to different people have different and varying meanings- to us in the People's National Congress "democracy" is interpreted in two patterns: (1) bourgeois democracy connotes the holding of periodic elections, representative institutions in the Parliament and formal equality of citizens before the law. This results in the concentration or real power, political, economic and cultural, in the hands of a few to the detriment of the masses; (2) the total socialist democracy to which we the members and supporters of the People's National Congress subscribe.

While admitting the importance of periodic elections, let me stress and emphasize the real as distinct from formal equality of the people, for instance, the provision of free education from nursery to university; the substantive economic rights as distinct from formal legal rights; the right of the people to participate actively in the daily administrative processes which affect their daily lives at their work places as well as in their communities.

Cde. Speaker, it is written "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's." Thus praise must be given to the People's National Congress for giving meaning and effect to democracy in this country of ours.[Applause]

It is worthwhile noting that in April 1960 at Marapai in Venezuela, the Leader of the P.P.P. voted against a Motion that called for free elections, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of worship and freedom of religion. Further, at ... in March, 1960, Dr. Jagan said that he wanted Judges who were of the same political conviction as the majority party. Who had the majority party. The Budget before us calls for the development of all Guyanese. [Laughter] Monkeys will giggle and hyenas will bay but the People's National Congress will continue to work for the betterment of the people. [Applause.]

On the 31st January 1962, the P.P.P. Government introduced a Budget later described by the trade unions as a scheme to tax... Is that a lie too? No amount of yapping, coo-cooing and new-moving can distort the truth.

The new system of local democracy has been instituted because of the interest and the commitment of the people's National Congress in the welfare and well-being of the people of this our dear land of Guyana. However, this did not materialize as the result of an accident or conjuncture on the part of the party; rather, by a planned and systematic approach to the institution of the local government. The party realised that the local government system had for many years attracted widespread complaints and criticism. The various communities and have found much to be wanting. Those who are closely involved in the administration have also complained about the inadequacies and problems. The people who should benefit from a properly administered and acceptable local government system have also joined in criticizing its virtual ineffectiveness. Undoubtedly, the problems are deep-seated and our party agreed to have the situation resolved and ameliorated. More so GALA has been urging with persuasion for some time now that the system was outmoded and irrelevant and thus should be replaced.

Towards that end, several meeting were held and dialogue took place with the Minister responsible for local government. These discussions were frank, constructive and in-depth, all with the objective of finding solutions to the many issues. Early it was appreciated that a few amendments here and there would not suffice. The whole system of local government was inadequate and failed to satisfy the needs of the people. It was a colonial arrangement, not devised by the Guyanese people and it did not provide for self-reliance and self-sufficiency. It did not cover the whole country. Several areas were committed, such as Lenora and Uitvlugt on the West Coast of Demerara, Matthews's Ridge in the North West District, the Rupununi and some other communities in the hinterland and elsewhere.

It did not give the people an opportunity for involvement. When people are involved they can really think. No wonder the present size of this National Assembly, because it was the campaign of the part, the People's National Congress, that involved people at all levels. It did not concentrate its work in the hands of a few. The great revolutionary leader of our party, has faith and trusts in people and thus he entrusted our campaign in the hands of a young man and members of the proletariat to use imagination, vigor, determination and dynamism. The present size of this Assembly is what it is-[Applause] – and the person to whom I am referring is not revered Prime Minister or our Cde. Vice-President but rather our Party's first Vice-Chairman and Senior Minister, Cde. Robert Corbin.

The Chinese say, "Many hands make light work". This involvement and participation of the people can do wonders. In like manner the old system was not geared for development. The complex of rules which were related to relationship between the two were designed to secure and perpetuate the dominance and prosperity of the center and under-development of the periphery. It did not have much power to get things done. Further, it was of minor importance in the particular organisation of the state.

As a result of the points mentioned, it is not surprising that the system of local government we have now in this country had one common reason, the reason being that they were not devised by the Guyanese people and did not come out of their ideas and experiences. Rather, they have always been fashioned and framed by the colonialists. As a consequence of the deficiencies and short-comings of those systems, the P.N.C. saw the need for revolutionising the system, not really amending them but rather having a complete re-organisation.

In 1954, the Robertson Commission criticised the local government system that existed. As a result, an Englishman, Dr. A.H. Marshall, was appointed to look at the system and make recommendations. On the 2nd August 1955 the report of Dr.Marshall was released.

In the absence of the P.P.P, the party in Government undertook the implementations of Dr.Marshall's report in 1969 under the Municipal and District Councils Act in 1969. It may also be of interest to note that the P.P.P. in office presented draft legislation to Parliament on 19th October 1960 in the Local Authorities Bill 1960. That Bill was never enacted into law nor was the proposals implemented. It was left to the Vanguard of the Vanguard under the leadership of our Leader, Cde. Forbes Sampson Burnham to lead the revolution of which others hoped and dreamt. Let me emphasise that the old system had to be swept away because it was inadequate and could not enable the people to get on with the task of development either of themselves as human beings or of the physical areas in which they live. The old system was part of the Colonial arrangement to ensure that there was not equal opportunity for all. More so, the old system had no influence on national policies and was therefore of little importance. Now we have local democracy.

Cde.Speaker, the system of local democracy has been put into motion because of the provisions entrenched in our new Constitution, a Constitution that was made by the active involvement and participation of the broad masses of people in this country. The Constituent Assembly, under the distinguished Chairmanship of our Cde. Speaker of the National Assembly,

a committee in which I had the honour and privilege to be involved, did not only participate in its preparation in Georgetown but rather reached out to the far-flung corners of our country to the people in the various communities such as Lethem, Karasabai, Mabaruma, Matthews Ridge, Kamarang, Corriverton, Linden, New Amsterdam, Anna Regina, among others.

The P.N.C. is not a party of limers but of performers, and it pays great respect to people's experience and knowledge, a party that comes from the people, thus, its faith and confidence in them.

As demonstrated in the work of the Constituent Assembly, today we have a Constitution that can really and truly be described as the People's New Constitution; a Constitution of the people, by the people and for the people. The new system covers the entire country. It has great powers given by the Constitution itself. It is organised for development of people; it will involve large numbers of people, some 16,000 it has closed links with the Central Government to ensure coordination of activities and will be an integral part of the democratic organisation of its day.

Further, we see the linkage with the entry into Parliament of ten regional representatives' one coming from each region plus the two from the National Congress of Local Democratic organs. The enlargement of this National Assembly to include so many earth people to some grass- root people has been the handy work for the leader and father of this nation, Linden Forbes Sampson Burnham.

Cde. Speaker, what a glorious party the P.N.C. is. It does not only talk about power to the people but it is serious and committed to the implementation and operation. Above all, we are a fortunate people for on the 20th February, 1923, our Cde. Leader was born, a leader of extraordinary vision and immeasurable intellect, energy, courage and fortitude. He has devoted his life towards our cause. Cde. Leader has given us the vision of an Independent Guyana, Republican status, a new Constitution, local democracy.

Let us show that we can be a more discipline people and that we have the dedication, devotion and patriotism to meet the challenge ahead and make Guyana a great nation.

Cde. Speaker, local Government before was subordinate to Central Government but now under the provisions of the people's new Constitution, the two are part of a whole. I allude to chapter 2 article 12:

“Local Government by freely elected representatives of the people is an integral part of the democratic organisation of the state.”

The object of which is to bring democracy to the most remote corners of our country, and to establish real power to the people by speeding up the process of development for the welfare and well-being of all Guyanese. Local democracy is powered to the people. Real power connotes the ability to govern effectively; to bring necessary changes to the social and economic systems; to weld the sectors of the community into a new nation by using the new road to put the country on the path of prosperity to be accepted by both friend and foe of the Government, a Government that performs and delivers, thus, our new system of Local democracy; to improve the lot of the small man; to make him that real man under the banner of the Vanguard proletariat, the Vanguard of the masses, the People's National Congress. The new system will flourish because it will liberate the energies of the people and thus challenge them into creative endeavours, the total task of developing Guyana to help in building a new society, a free society, a society where political and social democracy will pervade our very lives through the inspiration of our leader, Cde. Burnham, a work horse of the nation demanding from his colleagues and himself prodigies of effort. The P.N.C. belongs to Guyana, we shall overcome.

On the 20th February, 1981, Cde. Vice-President for Economic Planning and Finance presented to the First Parliament elected under the people's New Constitution the seventeenth Budget of the People's National Congress Government. This Budget is of significant importance to us and can be described as historic in its content. It dealt meaningfully with the question of decentralisation, demolition and decentralisation. People now have a dynamic and influential say in fashioning and ordering their own affairs. The whole framework of the Budget is aimed at unifying Guyanese by ensuring their maximum participation at all levels directly and indirectly in community and national development. The spirit of involvement and participation of the masses is fully reflected in the process of regionalisation which is reflected in the estimates. Further the estimates have shown the re-development of Government personnel within each region and also the identification of projects undertaken in the regions and the allocation of financial resources accordingly. Thus the Budget is a challenge to all of us.

In retrospect, Cde.Speaker, I refer to some of the statements being put forward in this Assembly which we can all see as just a lot of waste talk. The unfolding of the 1981 Budget is a living testimony and symbol of faith of our party towards the creation of a just society with equal opportunity for all the Guyanese people. The structure and institutions that are being set up are to ensure the democratisation of our society, the fullest participation of all our citizens in the decision-making and planning in the social, political and economic field.

Cde.Speaker, since the involvement of the people is an absolute ingredient in the new society we are molding, it must be stressed and encouraged using education in its broadest sense, explanation and example. In former times education was used as an instrument of division, class prejudice in support of the imperialist, capitalist system. Today, it is used as an instrument of true democracy and a tool for fashioning a socialist society, for introducing a race of men who will never surrender to mediocrity or dictatorship of any kind. Cde.Speaker, the responsibility devolves upon all of us to make democratic processes, through the new system of local democracy, work. Local Democracy would bring with it a sense of internal responsibility and self reliance and understanding that the future of Guyana belongs only to the Guyanese; only they can make it or break it, development of Guyanese for all, all Guyanese. Let us turn our eyes to the future with confidence, with a determination to make the unheard, the unheeded, the disenchanting, the unknown play a meaningful role for development. We must lay a solid foundation so that local democracy can usher in the new society with the new Guyana man functioning in freedom.

2.3.81

2.50-3.00 p.m

[Cde. Bipat continues]

2.50 p.m.

Cde.Speaker, there are still a few who have misgivings about the new system of local democracy. However, those statements and attitudes indicate a disloyalty and intellectual bankruptcy, a fear of giving power to the people and the of a few above the self-interest and sovereignty of the people. I refer to Cde. Leader's radio broadcast to the nation in dealing with the 1964 election on 19th December 1964 and I quote:

“to us the Amerindians are important; to us the Chinese are important; to us the Portuguese are important; to us the Europeans are important; to us the mixed races are important; to us the Africans are important; to us the Indians are important. In short, all Guyanese are important and valued members of our community and we cherish them and consider that as a Government it is our duty and privilege to guard, protect and further the real interest of all.”

I wish to quote Cde. Leader again, from an article appearing in the P.P.P Thunder on the 11th April, 1955:

“ if we are to continue in unity, we must banish racialism. Each racial group is entitled to but we must not racial differences be reflected in the policies of our country. We must remember that Indians and Africans and all other races for that matter in this country suffer from the same repressive system. Ours is not a fight for one race or another; it is a fight for Guyana. We know only one race and that is the Guyanese race. Let us be aware of the “Divide and Rule” policy.”

Cde. Speaker, are those not words of a noble and inspired man? Mr. Speaker, isn't this consistency? What a glorious party, yes, the party of the working class led by the Leader of the Guyanese people, Cde. Linden Forbes Sampson Burnham. What more can one expect? What more can one asked for? Local Democracy will prevail.

Cde.Speaker, the P.N.C. has taken its time to improve the well-being of all the people of this country. The country will now have six centers of local democracy involving some 6,000 persons and made up of 427 people's co-operative unit, 3,162 neighbourhood councils, 109 community councils, 52 district councils, 26 sub-regional councils and 10 regional councils.

We are on the threshold of a new and exciting era, the people's local democracy. From being a dependent body, an appendage to central government, we will be free to stand on our own feet to direct our own affairs, to shape our own destiny with our own hands. We shall cease being subject to directions from abroad and we will have to think and act as free men with the power and capacity to transform the communities, our own environment, and we must transform the environment of the achievement of the people's power will have been in vain.

Cde.Speaker, we know that the world is looking at us. Some of the cynical pessimists are waiting to say, “ I told you so” but the P.N.C. says positively that the vanguard of the vanguard will confound our critics as we have done so many times, and prove that in the field of human relations we can lead the world and make a name using the experiences and knowledge of the people whom we love and cherish.

The P.N.C. calls on all Guyanese, all citizens, in every walk of life-the artisans, the

farmer, salary and wage earner, the self-employed, businessman, large and small-to identify themselves with this great exercise of nation-building through local democracy. We ourselves will have to accomplish what we want to accomplish. We are the grass root people with brains and talents of our own, with the knowledge of our own people and with an understanding of our own problems and our own resources and an appreciation of the kind of world in which we live. We will apply our own brain power to our own environment and develop our own philosophy.

The Speaker: Five minutes more

Cde.Bipat: Cde.Speaker, our Cde. Leader's address to us at the ceremonial opening of the First Session of the Fourth Parliament of Guyana seeks to tell us that in the bright destiny of this nation let us pick up the challenge seriously and work for a better way of life for our people, to remove poverty, disease, ignorance and malnutrition and hopelessness and in the further analysis to remove completely, exploitation of man by men. Let progress nation-wide continue with the new system of local democracy. Local democracy will prevail under the banner of the People's National Congress, the vanguard of the vanguard with Cde. Linden Forbes Burnham as the Leader and father of the nation. [Applause].

The Speaker: Cde. Janet Jagan.

Cde.J.Jagan: Mr. Speaker, I want to quote from the Budget Statement given by the Minister.

The Speaker: Cde.Jagan, the Vice-President. He is no longer a Minister, he is a Vice-President.

Cde.J.Jagan: The Vice-President. "... the end of one era and the beginning of a new." Then he said:

"...we are at an epochal stage of our history that is at once the culmination of long years of tenacious struggle and the starting point for new and more strenuous endeavours."

I am sorry he is not here but in my opinion and in the opinion of our party he is talking through his hat. There is no relation to the reality of the situation here. The reality is that the people of Guyana will not accept the P.N.C. regime and will not accept his posturing. There is no belief in it. The results are there for all of us to see as he had to admit in his own Budget Address. The Constitution and the recent elections will not give the people "the opportunity to manage and control their own affairs." If they did, things might be different: we might be on the road to prosperity instead of all the loud noise about what we are going to do and what we ought to do. The fact is that unless you "have democracy" not "talk democracy" as the last speaker was doing, unless you have real democracy, the people are not going to put their backs and they are not going to push forwards, which is what all of you are talking about. You will have it.

Mr. Hoyte claims that the Constitution gives a sense of direction. What direct? We are heading towards fascism, which is an autocratic regime, which is controlled by the news media, which is repressive of the Opposition, and the State creating its own elite, as has happened in other countries. We are seeing it here. Look out of the window and you will see a car as big as a boat, part of the elite. The elite is getting better and better.

The Speaker: Cde. Jagan, that car was bought from the Russian Ambassador.

Cde.J. Jagan: He is an Ambassador representing one of the most powerful States on earth. You are an individual, sir, if I may say so, and you are in the process-you will interrupt me-of acquiring massive wealth. You are part of the new elite that I am talking about. I am talking about socialist democracy and trade and an egalitarian society. You are an example of what the P.N.C. calls an egalitarian society and you can have a car as big as a boat and then you can get 153 percent increase in your salary. That is what I am talking about.

The Speaker: My increase in salary shows that I am working here, but you are leading a minority which is dwindling every day. [Laughter] Let us come back to the debate, please.

Cde.J. Jagan: I will get on with the debate if you stop interrupting me, sir. There are people in this Assembly getting ten and twenty times the income of the small man and yet I have to sit here and listen to someone talking about the small man being a real man. The small man cannot be a real man in this society where there are people getting ten and twenty times what the small man is getting. In fact, the theoreticians will tell you that the essence of socialism is shortening the gap between the lowest paid and the highest paid, but this Government is lengthening the gap. Don't fool us with talk about the Constitution focusing attention on "the real, substantive human rights". What human rights?

3 p.m.

The right to work when unemployment is going up; the right to decent housing when we have some of the most abominable slums in the Caribbean. Medical care, leisure. Let me quote the Vice-President, he is talking about employment. Decent housing, education, medical care and leisure. I don't know where everyone is but I say: take a walk down Albouystown where the working class has its leisure. Children have to play cricket in the streets and have to doge as vehicles go by. They have no place for leisure. Only the elite, only the upper crust in our society has leisure. They talk about building a resort for Anna Regina. We heard the same thing last year. The poor children of Guyana have no place for leisure, they have got to run and play on the streets; they have got to mix with the pimps and the prostitutes; they have to grow up under the worst conditions.

You tell us about unemployment. The Vice-President in his speech quotes the unemployment figures in the U.K; in the U.S.A. Why didn't he tell us what the unemployment figure is right here in Guyana? Why doesn't he tell us what the unemployment figure is in the Soviet Union, in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, in Hungary? Let him tell us how inflation is on the rampage in these socialist countries. He says on page 11:

"we in Guyana cannot postpone or defer the provision and upgrading of social services and amenities..."

What about health? I am interested in health. I looked through the Budget. There are four references to this social amenity. I will tell you what the references are. On page one he spoke about medical care and leisure. Then he spoke about completion of a hospital at Aishalton. The exact words used in the 1980 Budget. We are still waiting to see the completion of the Aishalton hospital. He spoke about health care and delivery project which was going to be completed. The

exact words are in the 1980 Budget. So two of his references to health are repeats of what they promised us in the 1980 Budget and what they are now promising again in the 1981 Budget.

On page 16, the fourth reference talks about N.I.S; about Medicare benefits. What does that mean? Does that mean that the injured or sick person will get coverage when he or she goes to a private hospital? Because we have free medical services. Why do you need Medicare? You need Medicare because most of the people who get sick want better treatment. They have to go to private hospitals if they want decent treatment.

That is what medicare is all about. What has happened to all the promises? In the 1978 Budget we were promised a new out-patients clinic; we were promised a 400-bed hospital in New Amsterdam. Let me read a G.I.S. hand-out dated December 17, 1976. This is March 2, 1981:

“A new hospital would be constructed in New Amsterdam in 1977.”

Mr. Minister of information, I am reading –of course you weren’t there then. I am reading from your exact statement as handed out. In 1977 we were going to get a new hospital in New Amsterdam. Where is it? We all know where it is.

What about staffing? Has the Vice-President or anyone really talked about how you are going to give us the medical services that are needed? 75 percent of the doctors serving Guyana are foreigners. You can’t even hold the local doctors. Ask yourself why. A doctor when he comes here as an intern is given \$675 a month.

The Speaker: Comrades, please don’t interrupt

Cde.J. Jagan: it is \$675 per month and you know that the Guyana Government treats its young doctors so badly that they have to wait several months to get their pay. I hope you know that; I hope you have corrected it because it is a fact. When they finish their internship they get \$850. Why can’t we pay them more? If we have a shortage of doctors, let’s pay them more.

Let me tell you that the cost of the whole operation of the Mass Games up to this stage, from the end of the year until now, is \$686,700. I figure I’m not a good mathematician but if the computer is correct, 67 doctors could be employed for one year out of what this Government spends for Mass Games.

The regime pays Ministers of the Government, Speaker, Parliamentary Secretaries and new Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Regional bodies more than its pays the doctors. This is one of the problems. They get paid higher. The recent order- and this is the second order raising salaries-gives Regional Chairman, with their salaries and tax-free allowances, \$1900 a month and yet you pay your doctors \$850. No wonder they are going away. We cannot hold them because we are not paying them what they need. That is why we have a shortage of doctors. Perhaps the Minister will tell us how many doctors we need.

And nurses are underpaid. There must be the money if you’ve got so much money to throw all over the place and pay Vice-Chairmen of Regional Councils \$1500 a month of which a great portion is tax free. We must be able to pay the people who have something very positive to give this society. We must give them a salary with which they can be happy and they can live decently. We must be able to provide them in the hospitals and clinics where they work with an environment that will enthuse them, which will encourage them to work. But what do they have now? You do not have an E.C.G. at the Public Hospital that works. Go, check them. You do not even have containers and reagents to carry out the blood and urine test that have to be taken. You do not have the basic things that doctors and nurses need in order to feel the dignity of their professions so that they can carry forth what they have been taught for themselves, their own satisfaction, and the satisfaction of their patients.

Cde.J.Jagan Continues3.10 p.m.

Let us look at the cost of living. Last year we were promised that it would come down. Let me read to you from the Budget Statement last year, page 51 where the Minister said:

“At the same time there will be an upward adjustment of consumption taxes on imports. The overall effect of adjusting consumption taxes and revising mark-ups downward will be, as already explained, to bring down the prices of many categories of commonly used goods, remove extra- ordinary fluctuations in these prices and ensure that any movements in those prices are related to movements in cost and are justifiable.”

Where did they stabilise the price? The cost of living has gone up and continues to go up. I may mention that the cost of living in Guyana goes up before and after each Budget. Never in the Budget. This is a before and after Budget. You do not put the squeeze and wring the consumer’s neck at Budget time. You do it before and you do it after.

In this 1981 Budget Statement the Vice-President said:

“Price policy will continue to aim at defending the wages of the workers by ensuring that the mark-up on essential commodities bears a reasonable relationship to acquisition and selling costs.”

What is going up? Before he came here with his Budget, rice and milk went up, and electricity, which is basic to our living, and water rates and taxes, so that one thing is said in these Budgets an something else is done.

The P.N.C. regime boasts that it has raised old age pensions from \$30 a month to \$45 a month. According to last year’s estimates we paid out old age pensions to approximately 16,000 persons. This year approximately 18,000. According to what we have in the Estimates it should be an increase of approximately 1,667 more persons in the number of persons who will get old age pensions. I would like at the appropriate time for the appropriate Minister to tell us how many people are entitled to old age pension. In my view 16,000 or 18,000 is far below what a population such as ours should have in people 65 years and above. I believe one of the reasons for this is that in the processing of old age applications there is great negligence, there is grave delay. My information is that the processing of application sometimes takes even more than a year, that there is a lot of patronage involved and a lack generally of fairness and I would ask that we attempt to have a fair process of granting old age pension. I would say that \$45 - [Interruption] I do not think that I have to talk very much to convenience this Assembly. You all think it is a big joke but I would like to see one of you live on \$45 a month, or one of your mothers or fathers live on \$45 a month. No one can live on \$45 in this country. We should be paying old people enough for them to survive and live decently. They have given; they have contributed. How can they live on \$45 a month, especially with the removal of the rent freeze? It is going to be worse because the rents are already going up. All the high-sounding words that the other Vice-President, Mr. Green, was uttering-women’s rights and all the great things the Government is going to do for women. Do you know what it sounded like to me? It sounded like the old colonialists. He was paternalistic in the way he spoke. He was not speaking as a man who really believes in the equality of women. I stand here and I have no hesitation in saying that in my view he is a male chauvinist. He is not a man who really believes in equality of women.

All the high-sounding phrases -- [Interruption]

The Speaker: Comrades, please let us have some order.

Cde.J.Jagan: with all the high-sounding phrases he has not got down to the nitty-gritty yet to know what women's rights are all about. I will tell you what women's rights are about. Women's rights are about full employment; they are about a decent wage; they are about having proper pre-and-post-natal care. Women's rights are about not having two pregnant women in one bed in hospital. That still exists and if the Minister tells me that it does not, I would tell him that it still exists. Women's rights mean that women do not have to carry buckets of water; and they must not spend hours queuing up for the most essential things like salt and flour and margarine and soap. Women's rights, Mr. Vice-President, means that you must give a minimum wage to domestic workers and not talk about maximum hours. Give domestic workers a minimum wage. [Interruption] I do not have a domestic. I do my own work. Under this Government I have to fetch buckets of water. That is what I am talking about. Yesterday I carried five buckets of water. In my house there is no water. I have become an expert on buckets and candles in this country. No electricity, no water.

Where are our women employed, I ask you? Where? In the worst jobs. The women are domestics, they are waitresses, they are field labourers, they are shop clerk, they are cleaners in your Ministries. You do not have one woman on your Front Bench, not one woman. After 16 years you cannot have one woman sitting on your Front Bench? I am the only woman in this Chamber on the Front Bench. You should be ashamed of yourselves. [Interruption]

The Speaker: Comrades, Let us have some order, please.

Cde.J.Jagan: Our women need technical training so that they can have good jobs. Some of them have technical training. I know women trained as plumbers, as masons. They cannot get work. Are we providing the climate where women can get technical jobs? Where they can get decent jobs? Only a small percentage of our women have been able to get jobs in professions—economists, doctors, a few others in administration, but the majority of women— and the women here know it even though we are in different parties; they know as well as I do that women are not treated as equals and that male chauvinism predominates in this country. I for one, as a woman, did not like the paternalism expressed by the Minister.

I heard the last speaker talking about socialist democracy; talking about the small man becoming a real man; talking about free elections. He should be ashamed of himself when he talks about free elections. We do not have free elections. The last elections were no indication—

The Speaker: Five Minutes more.

Cde. Jagan: - of how the people of Guyana feel. He enjoys calling us the Minority Party but I am afraid that in reality we are the majority Party and this group over there is the Minority Party. If you do not believe it, have free and fair elections. Allow an Elections Commission which is not tampered with, not controlled, and does not have poodles, allow a real Elections Commission as they do in other countries of the Third World. For example, in India, the Elections Commission is totally independent and it runs the elections without interferences by any part of the State apparatus. If we had elections such as in India, you would see who would be in office.

In the last few minutes I have I would like to take this opportunity of saying a few words from the statements of my colleague Narbada Persaud who was not permitted to say all he had to say. He referred --

The Speaker: Cde. Janet Jagan, I take exception to that. He was permitted to say what he had to say within the time allotted. If this Assembly did not give him an extension of time, it is no one's fault.

Cde.J.Jagan: thank you for the information. The President in his address said that a well-housed citizen is likely to be more productive than an ill-housed one. Surely this is so. But what about a healthy and well-fed citizen. Knowledge, skills and attitudes are not the only aspects of human resources that affect economic performance. A healthy and well-fed labour force is more physically and mentally energetic than one that is sick and hungry and therefore gets more work done and is more motivated.

Our income of G\$1.488 per capita in 1979 was among the lowest in the Western Hemisphere. Today, it is far less. And he speaks of unemployment. I will not go into this. He speaks of the income tax allowances. When the adjustments were announced for allowances top personal income tax last year, the regime envisaged that revenue on this head would have decreased by \$14.15 million but because the benefits to the workers were so negligible there has been no decrease in revenue collected as has been expected. Instead it increased by \$3 million in the same way the widening of the tax bands announced in the 1981 Budget Speech will hardly increase the workers take-home pay packet and will hardly affect the revenue from this head.

Towards this objective Narbada Persaud made some objective points. He said that we should establish majority popular rule in place of minority bureaucratic rule at Central and Local Government levels. We must make a complete break in economic planning strategy from the pro-imperialist and pro-capitalists western model to a revolutionary socialist-oriented one. We must develop an independent economy free from foreign domination and sever all links with the imperialist-dominated and controlled International Monetary Fund. We must renegotiate and reschedule foreign debt payments, erase extravagance and corruption of all levels, reduce the top-heavy bureaucracy at home and abroad, guarantee workers the right to workers' control in decision making, in management of all enterprises; make a decision shift in our foreign, economic and trade relations from the capitalist States to the Socialist and Non-Aligned countries.

And so, Mr. Speaker, we have put forward these positive proposals to show how we see that this country can go forward.

The Speaker: Cde.Nascimento.

The Minister, Mechanical Equipment, in the Ministry of works and Transport (Cde.Nascimento): Cde. Speaker, permit me to add my voice to the chorus of congratulation which have come your way on your appointment. I would like also to congratulate the Vice-President for an excellent Budget presentation to this Assembly.

“Guyana is a country suffering from a crushing debt burden.” Those words, Cde. Speaker, are not mine. I quote them from a speaker, not at this time and not of this Government. The irony of these words is that they were spoken at a time when there was no international economic crisis in the world; no crisis in the world; no crisis threatening the very survival of small, poor, non-oil producing countries such as Guyana. When those words were spoken, the world’s economy was not in a state of disequilibrium. There was no good reason why Guyana should face a major economic crisis. And certainly there was no justification for this country to be suffering from a “crushing debt burden.” The time, Cde. Speaker that those words were spoken was 1964. The place, this House. The occasion, the presentation of the Budget. The Government then in office, the People’s Progressive Party. The speaker of those words, the P.P.P Minister of Finance, Dr.C.R Jacob. The Government of British Guiana, as it was then, had just been donated the largesse of some \$53.3 million by the British Government. In today’s money term that handsome gift would calculate to about \$140 million. Those who sit in the other side of this Assembly are now going to take up a holier-than- thou attitude, a fine example of which we have just been treated to. Rather than offer constructive criticism, perhaps because they have destructive minds, those persons who now sit on the other side of this Assembly managed for three years, with no economic crisis, with largesse handed out by the British Government to the tune of over \$140 million, to run three Budget deficits in a row. And those Budget deficits came to the amount of some \$85 million in today’s money terms, yet they stand and criticize. Oh my! Oh my!

The British Government sent two financial experts, one of them was called Kinkiness and the other one was called Jacobs, not C.R. Jacob. On receiving the reports of the two British financial experts who came here in 1964, Duncan Sandys, then I believe the Colonial Secretary, described the People’s Progressive Party as insolvent. Insolvency means that one is without money. It means that one is unable to meet one’s financial obligations. Insolvency, Cde. Speaker, means that one is bankrupt. The People’s Progressive Party Government in 1964, with no international economic crisis, with gifts galore from the British Government, was bankrupt. That is what the P.N.C inherited from the People’s Progressive Party- a condition of total bankruptcy and what, Cde. Speaker, was the situation at that time?

3.30 p.m.

While the Budget was in deficit and the P.P.P was benefiting from the huge handouts by its British friends, what was the situation obtaining in Guyana at the time the P.P.P. presented the last Budget to this nation? Public servants were not being paid. Government cheques were being dishonored. They are not dishonoured today. Government buildings were falling to pieces. The sea defences were falling into the sea. Eight hundred vacancies were unfilled in the Public Service. [Interruption] That is a lie too? Look it up. Housing for workers was at a stand still. Mrs. Janet Jagan gets up and her heart bleeds for those unhoused in Guyana today, but when the People's Progressive Party came into office in 1958, it inherited from the Interim Government \$4.1 million for housing and do you know what it voted in 1964? It voted \$31,000 for housing and the members stand there with haloes over their heads. There is one blond somewhat grey in the head--

The Speaker: Cde.Nascimento, please do not make that kind of reference.

Cde. Nascimento: Cde.Speaker, my apologies but I can assuring you I was not referring to any particular person in this Assembly.

There was virtually no investment taking place at the time, no capital investment, and yet we had a Budget that was in deficit. The Budget in those days did not have to meet the expenses of maintaining foreign missions abroad. We are now an independent nation. The Budget in those days did not have to meet the expenses of defence obligations at home. We are now an independent nation. The workers were told by that Government in 1964 "Not a penny more". And her heart bleeds! Oh, what hypocrisy this Assembly is now faced with, Cde.Speaker!

Parallel between that time and today is worth making if only to be reminded that those who live in glass houses should not thrown stones.

The budget by this Government, in contrast, in 1981 is offered in the context of a world universally in economic crisis. Giant economies of the super powers like the U.S.A and the U.S.S.R are in trouble. In the United States of America 35 percent of black youths are unemployed. [Interruption]

The Speaker: Can we have some order, please!

Cde.Nascimento: thank you, Cde.Speaker. The trouble is that the members on the other side get perturbed when they hear the truth and are unable to retain their patience.

Inflation in the United States is in double digits. And what about the Soviet Union? The Soviet Union is in debt to Western banks to the tune of \$ 42. 5 billion as I stand here today. Two great super powers.

We cannot escape the realities of the world in which we live. The minority parties, both of them-the mini and the micro-would have us believe that somehow Guyana should be an island unto itself, miraculously divorced, apparently, from the extension of economic forces which come down upon us in this country today. It is time for the People's Progressive Party and its micro partner, the United Force, to abandon either their naiveté, but, more probably, their hypocrisy. They don't believe me. Well, let me quote from the Economic and social Progress in Latin America Inter-America Development Bank Report on Latin America. Let me quote:

Chapter 1, page3:

“There was a worsening of the more or less chronic external dis-equilibrium of the region as there was by a strong increase in the current deficit in the balance of payments and variations in the structures of external debt.”

This was the region, Cde. Speaker.

Page 6:

“The projections are for very several restrictions on the economic growth of the non-oil exporting development countries. They will continue to need an increasing inflow of foreign exchange to enable them to deal with the increasing current deficit of their balance of payments.”

this was the region, Cde.Speaker.

Page 11:

“Apart from the pernicious effects of inflation on the allocation of resources, the generation of savings and the distribution of income, the perceptible acceleration in price increases in the most recent period is leading the authorities to adopt policy measures that usually slow economic growth. In many cases the objective of reducing inflation-

and, of course, we heard a lot about the cost of living.

“has taken precedences over that of solving balance of payments difficulties and both have become major constrains on the acceleration of economic growth in the short term.”

One could continue to quote from this entire document to illustrate, to underline and to establish the nature of the economic crisis in the world on which this Government has to survive and in which this Budget was so brilliantly conceived and presented to this Assembly. [Applause]

Our friends across the way- I believe you said they were shirking, Cde.Speaker-the P.P.P., peddled the mythology that the crisis is confined to the capitalist world and that if Guyana was genuinely socialist we would not be engulfed in it. It is a favourite theme from the other side. Every non-oil producing nation, without exception, is in varying degrees in economic crisis in the world today. In fact, Guyana is better off than almost all of the rest. [Applause.] It is does not matter whether it is Cuba on the one hand or the Philippines on the other. They are both in trouble like us. Or whether it is Tanzania on the one hand or Kenya on the other. They, too, are in trouble. Or whether it is India or Sri Lanka. They, too, are in trouble. “Some say that we are experiencing difficulties. This give the impression that we are crossing a river. It would be better to say that we are sailing in a sea of difficulties and the shore is far away.” Words of President Fidel Castro spoken about Cuba. Cuba suffers a \$7 ½ billion balance of payments deficit each year. Cuba survives because the Soviet Union picks up its deficit by supplying cheap oil and buying Cuba’s sugar and liquor at premium prices. Food, medicine and other consumer goods are still rationed in Cuba. This is not a criticism of Cuba. The Cuban revolution faces similar problems to the Guyana revolution.

2.3.81

3.30 -3.40 p.m.

3.40 p.m.

I merely point out these facts to illustrate the hypocrisy of the members on the other side of this Assembly because they seek to castigate this Government for exactly the same conditions which obtain, and for the same reasons in other non-oil producing developing nations, which are socialist and which the P.P.P. supports. They “cuss” us but they do not “cuss” other socialist nations of a developing nature who are in the same boat with us and as Fidel Castro says, a boat “sailing in a sea of difficulties.” What hypocrisy! The fact of life is that Guyana cannot import more than it can export. We cannot consume more than we produce. And we cannot produce efficiently unless all the inputs of production happen to be in place.

My own particular concern and the concern of all of us is that Guyana’s critical productive sectors are all, without exception, machinery intensives and oil consuming. Guyana’s situation, as I believe was once said in this Assembly before, is a land without men not men without land. And we have become accustomed to machines to develop Guyana. In this regard we are, as Fidel Castro said, sailing in a sea of difficulties. Our factories, mining, agriculture, forestry, electrical generation, fishing, construction, and mobile equipment need either repairing or replacing. Machinery down-time, exacerbated by spare parts shortages, is a major cause of our failure to meet production targets and this Government is prepared to face that fact.

Indeed, the Vice-President for Economic Planning and Finance has addressed this very problem in his speech in so far as our resources today permit us to do so. Page 9 talks about spare parts; page 17 refers to new agricultural equipment...

that we have to inject into the rice industry; pages 19 and 20 talks about the plant maintenance and hire division rehabilitation programme and the new Guyana Transport Services Ltd. workshop; pages 18 and 19 talk about the need to rehabilitate plant and machinery and the building of the Coldingen workshop.

The Government is conscious of the problem but we are trying to grapple with it realistically. The other side indulges in rhetoric. This side seeks to indulge in performance. That is the difference between the two sides. The other side never admits to its faults. This side confronts the difficulty exposes the fault and offers the solution we are attempting. And, perhaps, when I am finished, Cde. Reepu Deman Persaud will understand both the wisdom and the foresight of the President for having appointed a Minister responsible for mechanical equipment, because if machinery does not function, very little else will in the development programme. Indeed if we get our machinery to function a little better, Janet will have to carry fewer than four buckets a day up to here house. There are reasons for the problems that we now face which are not confined merely to foreign exchange difficulties, and which the nation, I believe, needs to understand and which I shall attempt to analyse here today.

First, the demand by our developmental priorities in mining, in agriculture, in transportation, in construction, and forestry in particular, has caused an accelerated rate of injection of machinery into the system beyond our immediate ability as a nation to efficiently manage and maintain it. High – pressure salesmanship by an import oriented private sector in the ‘50s and 60s’ when those “skillful” people on the other side managed the economy and fortunately resigned, though Janet did not want to obey her husband - -

The Speaker: Cde. Nascimento, I did not know you were carrying on a private conservation.

Cde.Nascimento: Well, you know, we have had an old and long acquaintance. My apologies.

The Speaker: That acquaintanceship must be continued outside. Not in here.

Cde.Nascimento: I thank you for your advice and I will pursue it in due course.

/Cde.J.Jagan: “No friends at all.”] I have often wondered why Mrs.Jagan is without friends.

High pressure salesmanship by an import-oriented private sector in the ‘50s and 60s’ under the leadership of the People’s Progressive Party, converted the rice farming industry in this country into a machine-intensive industry and there is no turning the clock back now. Export-oriented industrial nations both East and West pushed machinery at us that we often did not need and often could not afford. Apparently, attractive credit lines are often offered as bait and we must be aware of that fact. The majority of our major machinery users, our own engineers, have failed to understand the real cost of operating machinery and they overstock their inventory to compensate for high down time. Even today, senior engineers and managers fail to understand

that a parked bulldozer is not a \$300,000 asset, it is a \$300,000 liability.

The pace of machinery – intensive activities has far outstripped our ability to train skilled operators to use and maintain machinery sufficiently. It is a fact we have to face. Aid donors are very anxious to provide us with credit for new machinery, but with few expectations are very reluctant to provide us aid and supportive facilities to maintain that machinery once they have sold it to us and the result of all of this is that today there is a vast amount of mobile mechanical equipment worth a replacement cost value of something like \$300 million which remains underutilized and much of it non-operational, with a high percentage of it beyond economic recovery. We have taken a number of urgent steps to remedy the situation within the possibility of the nation's resources and within the dreadful inheritances that we receive from the People's Progressive Party when, and I omitted to mention that earlier, the level of unemployment was 35 per cent in 1964.

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

3.50 p.m.

In 1976 the cabinet established the Machinery Procurement Committee, chaired by the Vice-President, Works and Transport, myself as Vice-Chairman, and Cde.Sajiwan Singh as Secretary. That Committee has wide powers to control in-discriminate importation of mobile mechanical equipment. It has moved to establish standardization of procedures for the importation of equipment and has already had a salutary effect on managers who in the past purchased and disposed of expensive machinery rather like disposable bottles.

The plethora of Government Ministries and Departments which use mobile equipment were unfortunately duplicating their maintenance facilities and most of those facilities were badly managed; they were inadequately staffed and they were poorly facilitated.

A semi-autonomous, partly self-financing plant maintenance and hire division at the Ministry of Works and Transport was established in 1979. The mission of that Division has been to rationalize maintenance support facilities, recover and rehabilitate non-operational equipment for hire and sale, both to Government and to private owners, and to provide efficient maintenance support to major users of mobile equipment.

Plant, Maintenance and Hire Division employs about 1,000 persons. It is responsible for maintaining 1,300 pieces of equipment with a replacement value of some \$150 million. A national inventory of mobile equipment, owned by the Ministries, is now being taken by the Plant, Maintenance and Hire Division. About 80 per cent of that inventory is completed. It reveals a 54 per cent availability factor. That is not good and 70 per cent of this equipment is over the age of five years. The replacement value of the non-operational equipment is some \$29 million and equipment over five years is some \$42 ½ million, but we have succeeded in spite of the nature context of the economic crisis in which we are forced to function, in slowing down the rates of deterioration of equipment.

The task of recovery is painfully and frightfully slow. We are in a very real sense caught between the devil and the deep blue sea. On the one hand we need desperately to expand and upgrade our maintenance facilities, expand our technical training facilities and accelerate the rehabilitation programme for equipment. To do this, however, means a massive expenditure of foreign exchange on workshops, tools, and spare parts. To fail to do this means the inevitable replacement of vastly expensive equipment eventually at much greater cost. Somehow we have to strike a balance. In 1980 we made sound progress. Some 94 pieces of mobile equipment were rehabilitated at a cost of \$2.1 million.

The replacement cost of that equipment had we not rehabilitated it would have been in excess of \$9 million. The programme was supported with funds and spares and technical assistance from the German Democratic Republic, the U.S.A.I.D., and United Kingdom Government. GUYTRAC, Guyana Stores and AINLIM assisted in this programme. More could have been done had sufficient spare parts been available.

The rehabilitation programme is going to be accelerated this year as the Budget Speech, in fact, point out, provided spares are available rapidly enough to carry it out. The Plant Maintenance and Hire Division has targeted some 200 pieces of equipment for recovery with GUYTRAC, GUYSTORES and again AINLIM rehabilitating another 20.

We anticipated that we will spend some \$12 million on the recovery of this equipment but we will be saving in replacement terms some \$22 million. That, to my mind, is an example of intelligent and skillful management of the economy. [Applause.] But we must point to the difficulties. Unfortunately many of the equipment-users in the Ministries still have what can only be described as a cavalier attitude towards machinery utilization. Rehabilitated machinery is frequently destroyed soon after it has been rehabilitated because of carelessness use and refusal to release it for schedule maintenance. Hire rates will now reflect the real cost of using machinery. Traditional habits in respect of the use of machinery are just going to have to go. Contracting divisions of the Ministries will have to learn to work with these higher rates. Machinery will have to be utilized efficiently. Let us understand that ... downtime machinery is one of the biggest single waste factors in the economy and production targets in agriculture, in mining and elsewhere will not be met if the machinery does not function.

This Government required an exhaustive study on the use, the care and maintenance of mobile mechanical equipment to be carried out by a British firm. P.E International Operations Ltd, in 1978 a capital investment of over \$50 million in maintenance support and technical training facilities was recommended by that firm to meet current requirements.

Fifty million dollars is an enormous sum of money but in spite of the enormity of it, substantial progress towards this target, in fact, has been made by this Government in the past two to three years. Under an economic and technical co-operation agreement with the German Democratic Republic, a major four-phase mechanical workshop facility is being built at Coldingen at an eventual cost of some \$66 million. If the members of the P.P.P. want to know where the money is going they only have to look beyond the end of their noses; it is going to develop the needs and interest of the people of this country.

The first phase, the Heavy Vehicle Central Repairs, Fabrication and Machinery Workshop, which will cost some \$19 million and which was commissioned last year, will be ready for operation in June this year. The second part of the first phase is a craft training centre.

That will cost some \$12 million and construction will begin shortly. The second phase, the Central Workshop for Agricultural Machinery will commence construction in 1982 with drawings and designs completed this year. The third phase is a central workshop for light vehicles and the fourth phase is a regional workshop designed for intermediate repairs.

Guyana can be proud of Coldingen. The Workshop Complex will be the most sophisticated in the Caribbean. The first phase will employ 200 persons and can service 300 vehicles each year, including component manufacture, major overhaul, sub-assembly repairs and routine servicing. The Craft Training Centre will train 220 fully qualified artisans each year.

4 p.m.

Staffing Coldingen will not be easy. It requires more than the flow of rhetoric which we get from the other side of the Assembly.

The Speaker: Cde.Nascimento, it is 4 o'clock. In any event, your time is up and if you are to resume after, you will have to get an extension of time. The sitting of the Assembly is suspended for 30 minutes.

Sitting Suspended at 4.p.m

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY4.30 p.m.On resumption --

The Minister of Regional Development (Cde. Clarke): I move that the comrade be given another 15 minutes to continue his speech.

Question put, and agreed to.

Cde.Nascimento: Cde. Speaker, when we broke for tea I was informing the Assembly about the establishment of the Maintenance Support Facilities at Coldingen. I was about to remark that starting Coldingen will not in fact be easy. A very high level of engineering management and highly skilled artisans are going to be needed for what is a very highly sophisticated workshop. The Plant Maintenance and Hire Division, with technical support from the German Democratic Republic, will begin recruiting and training personnel for this workshop quite shortly.

At M.R.D.S., another \$14 million workshop for agricultural equipment, financed and supported, by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is under construction and should come on stream at year end. That workshop will employ about 150 persons. The E.E.C. has undertaken to finance, to begin in August, a study through the Plant, Maintenance and Hire Division for a possible "technology centre" for the rehabilitation of worn machine components in Guyana.

So we are making consideration strides towards the problem of maintaining the appreciable quantities of mobile mechanical equipment we have in the system. Guyana Transport Services have been a particularly unfortunate example of this trend towards machinery down-time. The availability of 120 buses in a fleet of 213 is not acceptable. Sloppy management and worker indiscipline from part of the reason, but they are by no means the whole reason. The major factor for poor performance is inadequate workshop and depot facilities aggravated by a shortage of spare experienced by the company. This Government intends that cheap and reliable transportation must be provided for the people of Guyana.

Much of the criticism directed at G.T.S.L. and the Transport and Harbours ferry and harbour services can be justified, but a great deal of nonsense has also been spoken about this from the Opposition side of the benches. The leader of the Minority Party, Dr.Cheddi Jagan, for instance, criticized Government for abandoning the railway. That was his terminology. He not only spoke with the benefit of hindsight but e also forgot to mention that the tracks and the trains were all at the time obsolete and an enormous capital investment would have been required, even at the time, when no one could possibly have foreseen the coming of O.P.E.C. and the increase in oil prices, to replace that railway.

And where is the Leader of the Minority Party? Once again he emulates Marco Polo and travels around the world at a time when we are discussing the Budget of Guyana. Where, therefore, is the real interest in representing the people of this country, one can ask?

And, in any event, the railways moved a mere three million people in 1971 and that was the last full year of the operation of the railway. In contrast, Guyana Transport Services have moved over 23 million passengers in one year, a highly creditable performance in spite of the shortcomings of that company. [Applause] We shall improve G.T.S.L. Construction of a multi-million dollar workshop and depot will near completion this year as mentioned in the Budget and valiant efforts- and they can be properly described as valiant efforts- in primitive conditions by G.T.S.L. workshop staff have resulted in 22 Mercedes Benz engines from Brazil being fitted as replacement on Tata buses. A further 50 from Brazil will be fitted by the end of this year. With the delivery of some further \$ 2 million in spare parts outstanding from the Tata Bus Company this year, utilization of the bus fleet should vastly improve and transportation facilities for the people should be considerably better by the need of this year, if not before.

Let me remind this House that the Guyana Transport Services- and this is often forgotten - subsidises travel for pensioners, for the blind, for children and for worker contracts to the tune of some \$3 million every year. [Applause.]

The challenges of management of the Transport and Harbours Department are similar to those of G.T.S.L. and similar kinds of improvement must take place. I believe that this Government can be proud of that fact- and again this is often lost sight of – that the Transport and Harbours Department currently operates at rates which subsidise public transportation to the tune of \$6 million per annum. We forgot that prior to 1980 the freight rates of the Transport and Harbours Department remained unchanged for 12 years and passengers rates unchanged for four years. A 33 ½ per cent and a 40 per cent increase respectively in fares and freight must be measured against a 300 per cent increase in operating coats over that period.

Fuel costs alone increased by 44 per cent in 1980 over 1979. The fact is that this Government altogether, when one takes into account the G.T.S.L., Transport and Harbours Department and G.A.C., is subsidising for the benefit of the people of Guyana, public transportation each year to the tune of \$12 million. They ask where the money is. That is where the money is- benefiting the people of Guyana.

This year we will see considerable improvement in the Transport and Harbours Department. A 600 tons, \$640,000 pontoon is being built by GUYNEC and this is going to go into operation to transport stone. GUYNEC will deliver to T.\$ H.D. an \$8 million, 200 tons cargo vessel constructed especially for palm oil cargo with controlled cooling in the vessel, a tribute to the skill of the engineers of GUYNEC./Applause/

Dry dock repairs will be completed on the “Lady Northcote” and the “Torani” and a number of other tugs. Last year extensive dry dock overhauls approaching a million dollars were carried out. Ships’ radios and wharf- loading facilities on a number of stelling will be refurbished this year from the Budget projections.

By May, the Transport and Harbors Department will be in a position to begin dredging wharves and out-port channels with new dredging equipment supplied under a long term from the United Kingdom. Transport and Harbours Department management and staff are, in my view, Cde.Speaker, to be specially congratulated for negotiating a lucrative contract to transport 15 million clay blocks manufactured by GUYNEC's factory and purchased by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. I think it is apposite to refer here to the fact that it was the imagination and the acumen of the President some years ago, with the support of the People's Republic of China, which has led to the development of the Bel-Lu and Providence Clay Brick Factories. Both factories will produce at maximum capacity this year with demand exceeding supply.

There is still much year to be desired at Transport and Harbours Department. Urgently needed navigational aids for manning shipping channels have had to give way to other priorities. Management and non-management worker discipline alike is not good. The union, in my view, Cde.Speaker, needs to balance exaggerated solicitude for unproductive workers against the inconvenience caused to masses of other community workers.

A captain of a ferry that turns up at six thirty for departure time at six- fifteen and can only be disciplined by a warning does not seem to me to be good enough in these days when we must raise our productivity.

Under the People's National Congress there has been in the past 16 years the most remarkable development of civil aviation in Guyana. And let me pay personal tribute at this time to a great man, Robbie Roberts, who has given his life in the quest for that development. When we recall- and here again it makes no sense of the rhetoric that we hear from the other side of this Assembly- when we recall that in 1964, the G.A.C. under the People's Progressive Party moved a mere 740,000 pounds of cargo, in contrast with today's national airline moving in excess of 15 million pounds of cargo- for the benefit of press 740,000 pounds compared with 15,000,000 pounds of cargo. The magnificence of the achievements really dawns upon us when we examine those figures, and it is evidence of this Government's commitment to the development of the hinterland and provision of an efficient air service to our Amerindians, our pork-knockers and our hinterland pioneers.

G.A.C. is, of course, now an international airline and for its size and for its newness, one of the finest in the world. Someone has suggested, Cde.Speaker that GAC ought to have a slogan. The slogan should be: "Fly with the hostesses with the mostest." GAC's international jet passenger services will realise a surplus in 1981 of half a million dollars. A surplus. G.A.C's total operations in spite of the fuel cost raising in 1987 by some 254 per cent over 1979 will realise only a small loss of about \$200,000, and here again, Cde.Speaker, the major loss factor is built into a 50 per cent subsidy on domestic passenger and freight rate totaling just under \$2 million per annum. The Miami freight service loses money, buy it loses money because it is, in effect, subsidising the poultry industry in this country and the agricultural sector as a whole to the tune of some \$ 1 million.

The Speaker: Time, Cde.Nascimento.

Cde. Clarke: Cde.Speaker, wish to move that Cde.Minister of Mechanical Equipment be

given another 15 minutes to seclude his presentation.

Question put, and agree to:

Motion Carried.

Cde.Nascimento: Thank you, Cde.Speaker. This Year, hinterland flights have been extended and international negotiations are now proceeding by the G.A.C. to fly direct to New York and possibly even Toronto.

Cde.Speaker, the Government of the People's National Congress has revolutionised Guyana's road-building programme. In all of its years in office, the People's Progressive Party built a poultry 51 ½ miles of new road and in the course of it misappropriated \$4 million of public money on the Del Conte fiasco. A disgraceful waste and corruption of the people's money on the side of the Assembly. The People's National Congress in contrast, has constructed over 1,000 miles of road, an investment of over some \$200 million and we have built the Demerara Harbour Bridge and the Canje River Bridge, feats of engineering and management skills beyond even the wildest dreams of the mini and the micro parties on the other side of this Assembly.

Late last year, the Hinterland Roads Construction Company, Limited was formed with the Vice-President, Works and Transport as Chairman, myself Vice-Chairman, and Cde. Fitz Dorway, the Managing Director. This company has demonstrated a high standard of management efficiency and worker performance. The company has successfully completed 60 miles of the 70 mile Mabura Hill Road and will finish the \$18.6 million contract within the estimate and close to the schedule.

In spite of enormous difficulties in obtaining spare parts, the company has maintained its \$30 million fleet of equipment relatively well. The Roads Division of the Ministry of Works and Transport has been amalgamated with the company to extend operations to coastal and construction work. In fact, Cde.Speaker, completion of the re-organisation of the Ministry of Works and Transport already described elsewhere by the Vice-President. Works and Transport, is being undertaken with a number of other divisions being rationalised into professional companies or, like the Roads Maintenance Division, coming under regional management.

This year, GUYNEC will take one more step along the way to developing a comprehensive civil engineering and ship-building capability. A \$5 million capital investment programme will expand the shipyard repair and maintenance capacity by some 50 per cent, integrating the machine shop and the foundries and upgrading the machine shop with equipment from Brazil and will increase the productivity of this corporation. The building Projects Division of GUYNEC will commence manufacture of wheelbarrows, wire nails, door fittings and electrical switch gear, another tribute to the engineering skills of Guyana and GUYNEC, increasing revenue by some 200 per cent and resulting in the division projecting a surplus for 1981.

The clay brick production success has already been referred to, Cde.Speaker. GUYNEC will ship 100,000 clay bricks per month to Trinidad and Tobago and should earn some \$1 million (TT) in foreign exchange and support an urgent need in our sister territory. They are to be congratulated. GUYNEC earned a net after sales tax of \$9.8 million last year and projects an earning of \$12.1 million this year. GUYNEC management and non-management workers continue to set a fine example for the corporations in Guyana.

Few developing nations, very few indeed, if any, of comparative size and population can match Guyana's Development in telecommunications. GUYTELCO, under the P.N.C., provides Guyanese with very nearly first class telephone and telegraph facilities domestically and internationally. You can travel the length and breadth of this world and you will not find telecommunication facilities comparable with those available and in place in this country of a similar size and of a similar population. That comes, as the P.P.P. should learn, from skillful and excellent management of the economy.

There is room, however- and this Government is always the first to admit it- for improvement in management and non-management worker discipline and productivity but I think we can say that the international call operators' have, in fact, demonstrated a remarkable improvement in recent months.

In spite of the difficulties-- [Interruption by Cde.Ram Karran] if I had a little hair on my head, comrades, as he has I would have lots of shame. Nevertheless, the corporation generated a net surplus- another surplus corporation of \$6 million in 1980 and will project a \$ 5 million surplus for 1981. GUYTELCO, this year, in improvement of our international telecommunication facilities, will invest 5 million in capital expansion. Our ground and satellite facilities will be extended to accommodate the use of an additional transponder and to maintain access to the European Circuit. This is the result of INTELSAT having licensed a number of new earth stations. So we have to rent another transponder. Some \$1.7 million will be invested in urgently needed ground cables and replacement of mobile vehicles- 60 per cent of their fleet is over 10 years old and urgently needs replacement.

The Conrack system- that is the first step towards direct international dialing- will be introduced this year and will effectively eliminate the possibility of what I can only describe as the "Call-girl rocket" a 24 hour telephone and telegraph service will be installed at Lethem by July this year. [Applause] Subscribers who have good reason to complain about poor response to request for telephone maintenance will have less reason this year with the installation of the new ground cables and improved mobility of maintenance crews.

I have saved for last, Cde.Speaker, an area of endeavor deserving, in my view, of special commendation and that is the excellent work, under the voluntary chairmanship of Cde.Bonny Fernandes, of the National Parks Commission. [Applause] The Parks Commission administers with skills and a high level of efficiency some 34 open spaces in Demerara and Berbice. The new Joe Veria Park on the West Bank Demerara at a cost of \$180,000 is the latest major achievements of the Parks Commission. But the commission is badly under-equipped. Its pieces of machinery are very old; its staff is over-burdened; the recreational and public events facilities it maintains are vital to the whole community of Guyana but other economic priorities have caused Government to allocate insufficient funds to the Commission. By its own efforts and by its own ingenuity the Commission generated 150,000 in income last year to keep its head above water. I would like to appeal to public-spirited citizens to help support the Parks Commission, some of those half a million persons who enjoyed the Parks facilities last year and will enjoy them again this year. When I sat here and heard criticism by Mrs.Jagan of this Government failing to provide recreational facilities for the people of Georgetown, the true scope of the

dishonesty and hypocrisy of that party impressed itself on me.

The Speaker: No, Cde.Nascimento.

Cde.Nascimento: I beg your pardon

The Speaker: You cannot make that kind of remark in this Assembly.

Cde.Nascimento: I cannot talk about the hypocrisy of a party?

The Speaker: You made special reference to Cde.Jagan.

Cde.Nascimento: Oh, I see. I apologies if you were associating the reference directly, Cde.Speaker.

I have endeavored to present to this Assembly a comprehensive, realistic and factual picture of the responsibilities which essentially are to be found within the portfolio of the Vice-President, Works and Transport, who is away and unfortunately could not make the presentation himself. [Applause]

The Speaker: Cde.Carmicheal

The Minister, Forestry in the Ministry of Agriculture (Cde.Carmicheal): Cde.Speaker, on Friday, 20th February, 1981 the Vice -president responsible for Economic Planning and Finance presented in this honourable Assembly budgetary proposal for the current financial year. In this history-making presentation, the first under the People's New Constitution, the Cde. Vice-President unmistakably exhorted this Assembly and the entire nation to recognise the fact that every section, every sector, has a contribution to make in the turning around of our economy.

Those proposals, I wish to submit, were liberal and generous and lest I am found wanting, I would like to congratulate Cde. Vice-president, associating myself with the speaker before me, on a job well done. [Applause]

This afternoon I wish to submit, in earnest, that the forestry sector has been making, and will continue to make a vital contribution towards the nation's development. It is not sheer accident that a new Ministry has been created; it is rather that the P.N.C. Government conceded that the vast forest resources of this country can contribute significantly to the social and economic development of our state. In fact, over the recent weeks, the officers of the Ministry and I have been making some field trips around the country and representatives of the private sector in whose hands a substantial part of this industry falls have been loud in their praise of the People's National Congress Government for the vision and foresight in creating a separate Ministry for such a vital part of our development.

It means, Cde.Speaker, that our Government once again has demonstrated in no uncertain manner that it is serious about providing services for all the people in every part of the country. I make this point because one of our comrades on the other side a few days ago alluded to the fact that there are too many Ministries created recently.

I wish to suggest to them that, perhaps they have not yet identified, after reading that brilliant presentation contained in the Budget, the emphases on development as adumbrated by the People's National Congress Government.

The objectives therefore, Cde.Speaker, is to achieve greater utilisation of our forest resources and these are some of the means we will use to achieve this goals; the first creating more employment opportunities in Guyana, secondly, meeting the country's needs in wood and wood products and developing export markets for Guyana's hard woods and even those of a non-traditional species, and lastly, to generate increases production and productivity in the sector.

As you now, Cde.Speaker, a great part of this sector-this industry-lies in the hands of the private entrepreneurs. We on this side are not worried about that situation because our policy indicates that the three sectors- the public, the private and the co-operative- must go hand to effect a turn around of this economy.

Cde.Speaker, we are sure that the forest industry can play this developmental role and so with permission I would like to place on record our Government's deep appreciation of the great contribution the private saw millers have made and will continue to make in the development of the timber industry. In fact, during 1980, our export figures show that some 4.5 million cubic feet of wood were exported overseas yielding some \$14.6 million.

During the life of this new Ministry – I daresay that will be for some time- efforts will be made to integrate the industry. We have found that a number of the agencies and the sections need to create a greater understanding amongst themselves and one of the first duties of my Ministry will be to foster this greater understanding so that each one will know what the other is doing for the general good of the industry. For example, the Timber Export Board will take on a new role. Greater emphasis will be places on marketing rather than just selling or satisfying orders. The Timber Export Board must do quite a lot more in promoting the industry and in fact selling what we have rather than trying to satisfy totally what is asked for.

The forest industry in Guyana is pregnant with possibilities-possibilities –possibilities for total development – and surely it has been showing growth over the years. Every attempt is being made to increase this production. Every attempt is being made to establish wood processing enterprise. It is the Ministry's mission in 1981 and in the ensuing years to make full use of the forest resources to stimulate forest sector economic activities which will, in turn, ensure the demand for forest products for local and export markets. These are the broad objectives in pursuance of the co-operatives because in the new arrangement in our new regional system, we hope that the co-operative units will also seize this wonderful opportunity in organising logging co-operative.

My Ministry is prepared to outline a forest development programme for Guyana whereby forest development will be planned and executed for a forest utilisation programme, forest

production marketing programme and a forest industry development programme. Each programme will consist of appropriate activities which altogether will begin with a new detailed assessment of the forest resources and progress satisfactorily to the outcome which the new wood processing enterprises identify.

For example, Cde. Speaker, the activities will include a forest inventory. We need to know exactly what we have before we seek to establish agreement with the producers. We need to identify the species and to allocate the various uses for which these species are most suitable. We will, also, have forest sector management, market research, project planning, sales promotion and distribution, the provision of developmental services for the environment and the expansion of the industry and training of forest resource and industry personnel.

The Forestry Commission, Cde. Speaker will need to have a greater role in the scheme of things. Greater emphasis will be placed on the training of young people in the area of sawmilling and, rather, the Forestry Commission will do quite a lot more than just merely collecting royalty. We will also have identification and establishment of a new wood processing enterprise. These activities will be executed by the appropriate institutions under the control of the Ministry.

5.10p.m.

The Forestry Commission, as I indicated will need to collaborate with the Guyana Timber Export Board so that there will be significant co-operation between the producers and the sellers. The timber industry will surely have this kind of developmental role not only in one area but in all the regions where we have this kind of forest.

Efforts in marketing,, that is to say, the targets have to be set and market areas to assess the needs and the potential of the customer-we are conscious of the fact that the forest industry in Guyana has not yet reached the take-off stage and there are a number of reasons for that, but we are sure that with the State sector, these possibilities will be exploited.

It is the intention of the Ministry, therefore, to provide developmental services in the industry so as to bring it to the level where self-generating development will begin and take place. In this connection the Ministry will more significantly do the following:

Collect ,collate and disseminate information pertinent to the development needs of the industry;

develop new knowledge or adapt existing knowledge for the needs and conditions of the industry in the field of raw materials, products, processing and manufacturing requirements;

identify the training needs, determine training goals establish training opportunities ,and train forest resource personnel in the processing industry;

assist entrepreneurs and existing industry personnel to select machinery and equipment suitable for the need;

provide a link between the industry and the lending institutions;

identify and promote other means of raising the developmental needs of the industry;

organize and co-ordinate the developmental services and these services which have been provided by Government and aid agencies in the industry;

operate a pilot plant under commercial conditions for demonstration and training purposes;

identify new enterprises on regional basis; and lastly

to conduct all other activities which contribute to the promotion and expansion of the wood processing industry in Guyana.

The forestry sector, essential to the economy of Guyana, is important enough and problems and prospects of this development, diverse though they may be, warrant the attention of a separate institution and I wish it to be known that that includes the public, co-operative, and private sector enterprises.

In addition to the provision of developmental services to the entire industry, the Ministry will be promoting the establishment of co-operative proceeding enterprises and pursuing other systems of ownership and operation where it is felt that such systems will contribute to the attainment of the over-all objectives.

At the moment there is located at Kingston equipment used by what used to be called the Guyana Forestry Corporation. We intent to reactivate those pieces of equipment so that we will be able to use not only greenheart. We would like to use the other species of which we have so many but this must be with the addition of a processing and preservation unit. All this we hope during this year will come into being.

Guyana Forestry Commission plans to assist in the construction of a logging road in the Upper Corentyne River area. This road, commencing at Siparuta on the Corentyne River, when completed will be 28 miles long and will be the main access to a forest area of approximately 200, 000 acres. It is expected that the logs produced from this area will supplement the needs of at least six saw mills at crab wood creek and thus lessen the need for importing logs from neighbouring Suriname. It is estimated that the road will be completed in about eight month's time after construction begins.

The Ministry will also lay emphasis on a more intensive wood preservation programme using the diffusion and pressure impregnation system. This latter system is new to Guyana and where effective it has the advantage of the diffusion system. A pressure impregnation system is in the pilot plant system which is being installed under the F.A.O./U.N.D.P Demonstrating and Training Project.

Guyana Timbers Ltd, to take another section of our timber industry, plans to improve the design of its prefabricated buildings so that we will be able to capture more meaningful the very great demand in the Caribbean. A Marketing study in that region during the first half of 1981 will be pursued in order to increase the production facilities that cater for the increased product demand envisaged for the local export market.

On the question of energy- I do not wish to steal the thunder of the particular Minister responsible for energy, but this is related to the recent development in the forest industry.

At Mabura Hill not so long ago, on the 18th of February to be exact, there was a demonstration of a part of the Forestry Development Programme at Mabura, a demonstration of the use of wood waste, wood waste that is gasified to produce energy for the plant.

I think it is important in this year of energy to know that the People's National Congress Government is mindful of the idea of energy conservation and maximising the use of energy. That, indeed, is foresight and in this demonstration is intended to be an example to the other saw millers. In fact a number of private saw millers have already begun to use wood as waste energy. I refer to Anarika, the Interior Forest Industries, and even at G.T.L some attempt is being made to use wood waste as energy. Sometimes we need to explain to the Comrades on the other side the geography of Guyana because places like Anarika and Mabura Hill, perhaps, may be unknown to them. Anarika is up the Essequibo River, perhaps, may be unknown to them. Anarika is up the Essequibo River and Mabura Hill some sixty to seventy miles up the Demerara River.

Demerara Woods Limited, this is the institutions that gave us that timely demonstration, a new forest development institution, is coming on stream. Work has already begun and we hope that by 1982 they would be able to produce some 15 million board feet per annum. The use of energy by this institution is intended to show to the rest of the nation how economically we can produce more timber.

Interior Forest Industries is also nearing completion. They have a most modern saw mill. This saw mill is in the private sector also and is expected to produce another 15 million board feet of sawn lumber per annum. We are very happy to note that another private entrepreneur has set up the first plywood factory in Guyana which is slowly coming on stream.

As I said earlier, we cannot but help complementing the private sector for the great contribution they are making and, surely, this must be because of the confidence reposed in the People's National Congress Government that they have been going a far way in enabling the turnaround of the economy which was mentioned in the Budget.

The Guyana Timber Export Board, if I may return to the Board, Cde. Speaker, proposes to share the site with the Forest Development Centre referred to earlier. This facility will provide wharfage for export, stocks for export and the Board will also be able to conduct technical and marketing research and promotion programmes. It has also begun a training programme to upgrade the staff in marketing techniques. The marketing department is also being reorganised to facilitate a better system of co-coordinating the market functions with other areas.

Cde.Speaker, there are at present 110 registered saw mills in the country and these are expected to produce in 1981 some 40 million board feet of sawn lumber to the value of approximately \$ 38 ½ million, representing an increase of 18 per cent over the 1980 production performance. This increase is largely due to the coming on stream of the Anarika enterprises, the interior Forest Industries referred to earlier. Even our own Guyana Timbers Limited ,G.T.L., has projected for 1981 a production target of 1.8 million cubic feet of logs of which 1.08 million cubic feet will be converted into 6.3 million board feet of sawn lumber. Most of this lumber will be put into the manufacture of prefabricated buildings which is expected to yield \$5.16 million in

revenue.

Also, the Timber Export Board, our sole marketing agency, is expected to yield some \$20 million comprising export sales of 7 million board feet sawn lumber. The major market for sawn and dressed lumber will be in the Caribbean region, that is, 3.9 million board feet, and the remainder shared with traditional markets in the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

Cde. Speaker, these revenues referred to have been earned as a result of extraction, processing, and the marketing of one of our country natural resources in areas where people live and earn a living. My Ministry is interested, and rightly so, in the use of the forest resources for the ultimate benefit of the people who live there. It is in my view, perhaps, the people who live in the forested areas have a first priority to the benefits derived from the resources and here is where we talk about the social development. In the Budget Speech, mention was made of a massive housing programme during this year and this new Ministry will surely be supporting this massive housing drive to add to the successes we have made in this direction.

The comrade on the other side did allude to the situation as he saw it, that enough was not done over the years in housing. We on this side are sure that we shall be building on great achievements and, perhaps, if they would open their eyes and look around the country in areas like Wisroc, Suddie and Tucber and not just single out a small area where never in that area Albouystown, thing are not as bad as they would want this Assembly to feel.

The Speaker: Time, Cde.Carmicheal. Cde.Basir

Cde. Basir: Cde.Speaker, I have looked at the Budget Speech which was presented by the hon. Vice-President and again I want to repeat that this Budget Speech was delivered against the background of many social ills. One of these ills can be termed democracy. The comrades over on the other side can continue to shout from their fancy palaces for production but I want to warn this Assembly that the call for production will be no call unless there is specific plan and also precise objectives and a total participation of working people.

Perhaps my ideological confederates over on that side and , of course my ideological associates over on this side will agree with me that Marxist/Leninist theory maintains that social progress and economic growth are subject to objective laws over which human will and consciousness have no power. Perhaps one may ask, "Well, then, what is the reason for planning since we cannot abrogate or modify these laws" and on the other hand one may say, "well, if we can organise the active role and the purposeful management of human will and consciousness, then these objective laws are not relevant. But perhaps that is a bit to advance for this Parliament. [Laughter]

The Speaker: Cde Basir, you cannot make that kind of statement

[Cde.J.Jagan: "Why?"]

The Speaker: Because I say so.

Cde.Basir: If you will permit me I will clarify what I wanted to say. I wanted to say that if an objective law was examined and at a particular period that army was used to size the ballot boxes, to install a regime, then because they organise certain laws at that particular time it is relevant and necessary to organise certain a law that is relevant to production.

Objective laws are there and useless we do not apply our conscience and understanding, unless we do not act according to these objective laws we can detain or advance the progress of this country considerably.

And so, as I said, the question of production has to do with a number of things and it is rather strange that we come here year after year to call for production and then the Budget admits that we have not done very well. It is very strange that the ruling party over there has claimed to be vanguard in everything but, unfortunately, rearguard in production. I do not understand the dialectics of this party. You have the vanguard of everything but you are in the rearguard of production. It is not consistent.

I do not want to barrage this Assembly with cheap politics. I want to deal with some important issues to explain how they are and to see how we can perhaps tackle them. Transport is complementary to production and it seems that the Budget Speech is a bit vague on transport and, incidentally, I want to refer to this book "A socialist Economy through Agriculture, Industrial and Technical Development." August 1979. I am sorry that I have to refer to this book. I should have been speaking on the Budget but in this book there is food for thought and if the Hon. Vice-President had referred to this book, then we would have had something to discuss here but perhaps we can refer again to the old adage "Just as Men's misfortune are forgotten in the excitement of new enterprise," I hope that there are vacancies for Vice-Presidents.

I do not want to bring the comrades back to the days of “Basra”, “Orange”, “M.V. Carr” or “Tarpon”. I want to say that within the past 15 years nothing much has been done to improve the type of transport we would like to have in this country and when we look at the construction of the M.V. “Kumaka” and the construction of the M.V. “Kurupukari” and we subtract the M.V. “Parika” and the “Lady Powis” we are just where we started from in the days when the People’s Progressive Party had internal self-government.

Our transport services are virtually depleted. The “Northcote” is in the dock “Barima”, “Lukanai”, “Pomeroon” and the “Canje Phesant” are in a state of disrepair and you do not have to feel that I am trying to give a false impression because I am in constant contact with the people who operate these boats. I move around in the country districts and I see these boats every day. If you look back between the period of 1976 and 1977 there was a decline in the shipping services of 18,000 tons. How if our report shows a decline in the shipping services of 18,000 tons between 1976 and 1977 it means that it was a decline in production at some level and if we look at the example from 1976 to 1977 then one can imagine what is the position by 1981. And if we look at the Georgetown/Pomeroon services between the period 1976 and 1977 we can also see that there was a 25 per cent drop in the transportation of cargo.

There are many things which perhaps resulted in these drops in production in addition to the poor schedule, in addition to the system which is being adopted in the transportation services. The North West District is a specific area for production. The: Kumaka” which was established was not suitable there for some reason or another. The M.V. “Pomeroon” is very small; it is leaking and it is often off schedule. When I say “ off schedule”- I know it is difficult for a steamer having to deal with rain and water to be on schedule but two or three or four hours and days off schedule affects not only the passengers but affects the commodities which have to be transported to Georgetown. On several occasions I was at Charity when hundreds of thousands of oranges and citrus had to be cast overboard because the transport system on that route did not work as it should. It is not only that the boat is leaking but a temperature of about 95 degrees Fahrenheit which is created in the hull turns the yams and potatoes and what have you into a very ugly state before they reach the city. This also has an effect on the farmers who have to produce.

Now, if we would, perhaps, look at what the Budget has said that there has to be what I understand a \$1.8 million investment on a new boat for the North-West, I hope that such a boat will carry the necessary facilities which will be able to keep all famers' produce in very good condition and will encourage famers to produce.

At Adventure, between 1968 and 1977, there has been an increase of over 300,000 passengers and if within that period of nine years, you had an increase of 300,000 one can imagine between 1977 and 1981; the number of passengers travelling might have amounted to one million. But when we look at the present schedule, it is very disgusting for the Essequibo people and my very good friend, the Hon. Prime Minister, I would like him to take a very serious view of this thing, perhaps take a note, because when he goes to Essequibo I will talk to him seriously.

Cde. Speaker, the service is very, very miserable and, as I said, the facilities are very, very bad. Besides the loading facilities, the moorage and also the wharves are in a poor state. The channel which should have been prepared over four years ago is still not prepared and as such, it makes it difficult for those boats to operate. The question of radio. The question of buoys which are direct the vessel from various points are not there at all, whether it is in the Supenaam area, or in the Hogg Island area or the Parika area, and it is ridiculous to have such a situation and to ask captains and sailors to maneuver these boats. Incidentally, I happen to be an assistant captain and boat hand and when I speak of these sorts of things, I would like to pay some great homage and respect to those sailors and captains who are doing a marvelous job under these very difficult conditions. It is not an easy task, and therefore, I ask that these matters be looked after immediately.

Cde. Speaker, the stelling at Good Hope is on the agenda. A new stelling should have been constructed at Good Hope on the Essequibo which will ease a travelling distance of over ten miles and that was one of the People's Progressive Party's programme. If you want to win support to avoid the army intervening, then you have to look at some of what we projected.

Bartica, between the period 1968 and 1977, had a passenger increase of about thirty thousand and one can imagine that between 1977 and 1980 that number of passengers should have been over one hundred thousand. The Barima, which is operating there presently, does not have the facilities. It is very inconvenient and the Kumaka which was doing that service is, I understand, in dock for over four months. Presently, I think about nine thousand tons of clay bricks are being taken off from the deck of that boat.

I feel the Minister responsible should have been taken to prison because I cannot imagine something of that nature – five million dollars invested and it cannot work to North-West and cannot work to Bartica, and I understand when it is finished it will pose some navigational problems for the area between Parika and Bartica, and I understand when it is finished it will pose some navigational problems for the area between Parika and Bartica. And so with the question of navigational facilities, the question of the Northcote being in dock, I still feel that a mere \$800,000 is not enough to take care of these boats that need that type of repair.

I was in Berbice two weeks ago. In New Amsterdam the steamer is two and three hours

off schedule and, very strange, the turn table on that main ferry is not working. Because of this, trucks cannot maneuver and, therefore, these things are priorities because they affect passengers, workers and everybody. And last but not least the pontoon service between Rosignol and New Amsterdam has been cut out of commission for the past six months. How do you expect such a service to function?

One Hon. Minister admitted that we have two hundred and thirty buses of which just 50 per cent of them are working. Now, it is a very strange phenomenon. On the West Coast we have fifteen buses in the Garage and five on the road and because of this situation is very disgusting. Thousands of passengers among them, school children can be seen on the road wondering how to get some means of transportation and this affects, also, the school children who, perhaps, paid for contract tickets and have to resort to other means of transportation.

On the Essequibo Coast there are problems also. The bus service there are not functioning as they should because of Government's failure to tell these people whether they would have a license to buy new buses or whether they would not be given that road service license anymore and I feel the Government should take a strong position on that issue.

Let us have a few words on air transport. Just imagine we have buses but no roads, we have rivers but no streamers, and we have airstrips but no aircraft. Our air transport is not only depleted but well harassed. Services to Kamarang , Kato and Imbaimadai are all affected because of the question of transport which is very, very, costly- a diamond –seeking area like Imbaimadai. It is very costly to move people and it is very irregular and sometimes not obtainable. I know the production of nuts, tomatoes and potatoes which is possible in the Kamarang area cannot be examined, cannot be encouraged because of the question of air transport. The same thing goes for Rupununi. It is very costly and it is limited.

Now, if we look also at the unfortunate situation, we had a mishap with one of our Ministers when they were attempting to land at Bartica. Another similar mishap occurred in the Rupununi and, last but not least, most regrettably we lost the Skyvan and some of our great workers. This has placed a tremendous strain on the air transport services and therefore something has to be done immediately. Let us take the North-West District. One has to pay \$115 to get to Georgetown. A single air ticket from Mabaruma to Georgetown is \$80 and this is very extravagant if you expect farmers and people who to come to Georgetown to use these services since the Pomeroon river services are not so suitable.

I remember very well when the People's Progressive Party was in Government. Fortunately I am a very old member in this Party. I know where many comrades stood at that time and what they were doing. There was a service to Charity that was \$ 14 return. That was in the early 60's. All those services have gone. I want to ask the Minister or the person concerned to take a note so that he may be able to look at these things because these things affect the daily lives of people.

If I may say a few words on telecommunications, it seems to me that the Government is holding the Essequibans to ransom. I do not know if they are waiting to see what will be the result of the Chaguaramas Treaty but the Essequibo telephone services are in a miserable state. There are not more than 55 subscribers. [Cde.J.Janet: "Cde.Nascimento says they are the best."] I cannot take that gentleman's word for granted; it has been very peculiar position and not only the telephone services but even when you try to speak to the personnel they say "Cde. Basir, we do not have vehicles." I am in sympathy with those people and I do wish, comrade that you can use your lead pencil and paper for a while to take these jottings so that you can get about investigating these things.

Let us take a look, if I am correct, to see whether we can say that these people are the offspring of the Incas and Aztecs, our Amerindian community whom we met here. Something more has to be done about the Amerindians' way of life, the question of production, the question of land development, which has to do with the production of cassava, nuts, corn and so forth.

I remember last year when something was said about coffee and I want to tell you now that coffee production in the Pomeroon is down to 97 per cent all the way down. The production of yams has been reduced. When I say so, there has not been an increase in production and perhaps if you understand my condition you will forgive me for not qualifying some of these things. We have a total drop in the production of yams by 95 per cent. Corn, the percentage is very low, Cocoa- we are down to zero. The Amerindians at Moruca are producing the coffee and not the Pomeroon farmers and therefore we must examine the question of assisting these people.

Medical facilities. I remember I spoke to the Hon. Minister- he was not a Vice-President then, about the hostel at Charity. I find it difficult to defend the Government and defend our position, because when you go there and look at the condition of the hostel, they say, "Oh, Cde. Basir, you represent the Government and say something for the party which I represent also. I repeat it again that you make a note of that because you promised to look after it.

This is a new year. I hope as we grow older we get wiser. At the ferry stelling at Adventure, there should be a hostel for the Amerindians coming from the Moruca, the Akawini, the Wakapau, and the Saint Monica- all those areas. There should be a hostel prepared at that stelling also those people whom we must regard and appreciate and whom we must keep in this community.

Adequate food supplies are necessary also. I want to tell you also that there are some people here who feel that Amerindians can just go and hold on to a corpse, some wild animal or so some sort of thing to survive but just as we are moving from the historical background we have, as civilization moves in, wild life steps out and because of this Amerindians cannot survive

by the normal traps, the arrows and the bows and the pits to have the types of animals they would like to use. Therefore I am asking the Government to look into the question of making firearms available to these people and not only giving the license, because there are many people who have licenses, but they should be given the necessary ammunition. I do not want to say how many people own guns and have ammunition and they are living around the towns, and have to use for them, trying them out now and then on other people, but people who need these things cannot get these facilities.

You must also look at the question of the reservation laws because that has to do with the question of who should go and who should not go. Right now the reservation laws are being applied against a particular party and I think it is very disgusting to be told that you cannot come into the reservation because you have no particular party and then you find people of other parties or of no party moving into these reservations. I think this should be properly examined. We must not only identify the needs of these people but we must examine their vocation.

Here we come to the question of objectivity again. We must look and see these people are capable of. We must look and see what these people are capable of. We must look and see what can be done for them because while an ox might be used to pull a plough we cannot use a horse although they have the same number of legs. Therefore we must look and see what the Amerindians are capable of and around that we must be able to plan their vocation.

The Speaker: Cde.Basir, you have five minutes more.

Cde.Basir: Thank you very much. I am saying we should organise the programme whereby we can harmonise these people with their interest, with their vocation and the type of work they are capable of doing. If we are going to ask for production and development, we also have to look at the rights and duties of these people and the Guyanese people as a whole. Unless the Guyanese nation does not have any rights they will not perform any duties and once you perform duties you must have rights. Therefore fair counsel elections are necessary for these reservations and they must not be told by the captain or somebody overnight that somebody else is captain.

I make his very strong plea for the Amerindian community because some of our comrades do not seem to understand the needs and problems of these people. If we were to live in Georgetown then we can hide from them but if you have to work and travel among these people and you have a human conscience then you cannot stand and see what is going on in these communities.

I want to put forward some ideas which are very, very important. We have been accused over here. It is said that we are only statements and that we never put forward constructive proposals and so forth. Before I conclude I want to say a very important aspect of development is a waterway between the Waini and the Shell Beach area, a waterway which can be constructed reducing a travelling distance of 170 miles between the Wani and the shores of Pomeroon River and I want to tell this Assembly that I am prepared to help in the feasibility study and to give the geographical aspect of that project.[Applause] That will be connecting an area like the Waini which produces a tremendous amount of things which cannot reach Georgetown. Cde.Van Sluytman and other comrades know very well about that.

Lastly I want to ask you to think of a waterway between Waimanuri and Akuru which will cut out a distance of over 15 miles and have to do with transport. I can also give technical advice on that issue because I have groomed in that area. [Applause] I can tell you the actual cost of such a project and Amerindian labour is available.

6.00 p.m

It seems to some people that the railway is outdated, but it is not too late to think of railways again because all we need for railways is wood, water and a stream and no special engineers, because you don't have proper drivers, as the Minister said, to destroy the vehicles. We have two gears-forward and reverse.

Let us focus our minds on a railway from Bartica to the Rupununi and the whole amount of forests will be available, the amount of sleeper available, everything is available there to keep that machinery going. And last but not least on this special aspect, I am recommending to you, Cde. Vice-President, a railway from Skull Point to Matthews Ridge, passing the Pomeroon River, Waini ridge and the Barima ridge which will cut short a distance of 160 miles which you normally have to go by streamer. You must make a start and you can examine. You are dealing with an energy crisis and these are some of the things you must examine.

I want to say that we on this side of the Assembly give you advice in many ways. I want to say that the call for production has to do a lot with us on this side. I want to tell you that I am in charge of the Essequibo Islands, the Essequibo Coast, Pomeroon and Moruca and at no time did we ever give instructions that there should be no production or reduce production. It is because of your policy, your arrangement, your programme and your paraphernalia which you have which frustrate the people who want to produce.

Cde.Speaker, we here is opposed to conflict. We don't have Vice-Presidents on this side, but please let it be understood that although not defeated we still remain the strongest force in this country. Socialism cannot be built without genuine participation of the total mass of people and, therefore, socialism-real socialism- cannot be built without involving the People's Progressive Party.

The Speaker: Cde. Campbell

The Minister of Information (Cde. Campbell): Cde. Speaker, I wish to confess that it is to me fortunate and it is refreshing to be speaking after Cde.Basir who is one of the few speakers in the Minority benches who made an attempt at a contribution. As we make a contrast between his attempt and what we normally hear from other members of the Minority, both mini and micro, we can only say that there is hope for, at least, Cde.Basir.

Having said that, Cde.Speaker, I should like to join Cde. Prime Minister and other members of this honourable Assembly in extending sincerest congratulations to you on your election as speaker of the first Parliament under the People's New Constitution.

Cde.Speaker: Thank you very much, Cde. Campbell

Cde. Campbell: And I should wish, on behalf of the members of the media, if I may claim to speak on their behalf in this Assembly, to thank you for the statement which you made upon being elected and the words of advice which you offered to members of the media.

Also, I should wish to congratulate the Vice-President, Economic Planning and Finance, as well as those persons who worked with him to present to this Assembly an excellent document, an excellent statement of the present economic realities of Guyana and an excellent statement of the plans and aspirations of the Government of the People's National Congress.

It is a great honour to speak in the name of the Government – in the name of my party. It is a great honour to speak in support of this Budget, and I should wish, also, to remind myself and this Assembly of the objectives of this Budget, succinctly put in the closing words of the speech by the Vice –President, when he said the goal is – and I quote from page 27-

“Nothing less than the creation of a commonwealth of prosperity based, as our Constitution envisages , on the unshakable foundations of a social justice”

It is accepted by members of the Ministry of Information and the nationality owned media in this country as our role to give support to those objectives of the people, the Constitution and the Government.

In relation to the Budget itself, I would wish to report to this Assembly that a number of media and information practitioners got together immediately after the Budget was presented to discuss its implications and an outcome of those discussions was a very clear commitment to work along with the relevant agencies to support those objectives in a meaningful and practical way. It was recognised by my colleagues that here was a Budget; here was a situation in which the Government could have chosen to deal with the pressing problems of our country by the imposition of taxes, reminiscent of an earlier administration in this country, but it chose instead to seek to deal with the problems by constructive and meaningful appeal to the nation to increase production, to increase productivity.

I said that we see our role in the media and in the Ministry as a developmental one- as a contribution to development – and many people in Guyana and in certain other countries, particularly developed western countries, have tended to equate a development approach to journalism with an absence of criticism of Government's performance. But, Cde.Speaker, Cde. Prime Minister dispelled that approach in no uncertain terms two days ago in his speech at the launching of the Guyana News Agency when he made it abundantly clear that it was the role and the purpose of the nationally owned media to monitor and analyse from time to time the performance of the public sector agencies. And in this spirit, in this year even more than in the past, indeed, much more than in the past, it is our hope, it is our intention, if I may repeat what I said on an easier occasion and in another place, that the media will develop and exercise its critical faculty, not to destroy the society, not to give vent to any sensational instinct but to support development and to support the existence and strengthening of the social system.

And so, with the greatest of respect, I wish today on behalf of the Government to issue, indeed to re-issue, a message to the public sector managers that the media will be taking that role seriously during 1981.

The media have also a very important development role in the area of cultural development in the area of ideological development, and in the area of strengthening, enhancing, and the dignity of the Guyanese people.

In this context I should like publicly to pay tribute to my predecessor, Cde. Shirely Field-Ridley, whose contribution to certain changes in the media and in the Press is beginning to bear fruit, for it was she who in the name of the Government put an end to the importation of comic strips and comics which did tremendous violence to the dignity and the psychology of our people. It was she who put an end to the importation, as far as the Government Broadcasting Service, as it then was, was concerned, of radio serials which again did violence to the self-image of our people. During 1980, more than any time in the history of this country, the creative people in our society got to work on the creation, production and airing and/ or publication of comics and serials of our own.

It was she, also, who made this very bold move of ending the media's sensationalist approach to news-writing and news-editing. I remember, in his statement last Saturday, Cde. Prime Minister spoke of McMurdoch, the international media owner whose prescription for ailing publications was a mixture of sex, scandal and violence. Thanks to Shirley Field-Ridley, that approach will never be seen again in the media of this country except perhaps in those with a tendency to print on yellow pages.

How will the media carry out this developmental role during 1981 and beyond? First of all, it is our belief that our first contribution, our prime methodology is to inform, to propagandize – if the word is not too high, and I am sure it is not for this Assembly – by example and it is for this reason that the workers in our Ministry receive with some pride the statements made in the Budget Speech by Cde. Vice- President that our Ministry was not merely the first to have put an incentive scheme in place but the only one so far to have received payments for it. [Applause] Permit me, Cde. Speaker, to express my thanks and my congratulations to my very hard working Permanent Secretary, to the various leaders and all the workers of the Ministry and to the staff of the State Planning Secretariat and the Guyana Management Development Training Centre without whose contribution that schemes would not have been in place.

In order to carry out our task, to execute our mission, it would be necessary for certain new institutions and facilities to be introduced. I have already made mention of the Guyana News Agency, a young fledgling institution led and peopled by young cadres but an institution which is going to write an impressive story for the history of this country.

This year also there would be much greater activity with regard to our plans for the introduction of television in Guyana but while we have mentioned so far certain dates for implementation of this scheme, I would wish to counsel that this House should exercise that kind of patience which would ensure that, having waited as long to create and plan the kind of television without the errors of other developing countries, we should not at this stage find ourselves in such a hurry that we make those same mistakes that we spent ten years or more

trying to avoid.

This year also would see the enhancement of the work which we have started for the introduction of NATIS or the National Information System, which is intended to establish greater co-ordination in the areas of libraries, archives and other related services, which is intended to prevent waste through lack of co-ordination in these services and which, even though we do not have access to the kind of "Informatics", the kind of development technology in countries in the developed world, is nevertheless important for Guyana at the present stage of development and for Guyana as part of the present international community.

When last I spoke in this Assembly on the work of my Ministry, I was necessary for me to admit that the conditions under which our national archives operated were, one may say, squalid but certainly inadequate and inappropriate for the tasks of that institution. It is therefore with a great deal of pleasure that I announce to this Assembly that within another five days, Cde. Vice-President, Economic Planning will officiate in the handing over of the new temporary accommodation of the national archives [Applause]

6.20 p.m.

In order for us to carry out these tasks, to achieve these goals, it will be very important that the training and, generally, the level of professionals in this area should be developed, should be enhanced. There are many things that we are doing and are seeking to do during this year in that regard and I shall not burden this Assembly with the details. I merely wish to say that within a few weeks we shall be opening one of the institutions intended to make this kind of contribution to the development of standards and education of my colleagues and that is the establishment of a communication library which would be named after a great journalist, a great Guyanese, and one who served with great distinction in this Assembly, Cde. Winifred Gaskin.

But while we seek to do these new things, to put these new institutions and arrangements in place, the traditional work of the Ministry goes on and it is my hope and my confidence, Cde. Speaker, that those traditional functions will go on with renewed vigor during 1981, thanks to the greater feeling of pride, the much clearer orientation on the part of my colleagues within the Ministry.

The field service of our Ministry will continue to make a contribution not merely to Government propaganda as some people believe, but to the development of people in the rural areas. It is worthy of note that it was a result of confidential reports and recommendations from District Information Officers that Cabinet, after the first increase in rice prices was announced last year, reconsidered that decision and gave subsequent increases to our rice farmers. Our publication unit, some of whose works have been made available to Members of this honourable Assembly will continue, and again, continue not merely to print Government propagandas, as some would have us think, but to print information which would be valuable to our people. Indeed, some of my colleagues are wondering whether one document that that unit should produce is not the 1964 manifest of the People's Progressive Party because we are sure

that in these days that document would make very good reading to indicate the kind of hypocrisy with which we are entertained in the nineteen eighties. And so our department continues, the photographic department, all of the, with a greater vigour in this New Year.

Also, Cde.Speaker, at the international level, our Ministry, our Government will continue during 1981 to make a contribution, and one that is worthy, to the debate on, and the realisation of a new International Information and Communication order which is an important parallel to the struggle for a new International Economic Order. Guyana had developed itself as a recognised spokesman on the new International Information and Communication Order within the Non-Aligned Movement, within UNESCO and within Caricom, I am sure that members of this Assembly know that we shall be hosts to two meetings in the area- one at the level of the co-ordinating committee on co-operation in Information of the Non-Aligned countries and another, the second meeting of International Ministries of Caricom. It would be interesting to report that as far as that second meeting is concerned, the first meeting of Information Ministers in Antigua was able to reach consensus on a very wide range of relevant subjects, problems and issues.

Cde.Speaker, there has been in this Assembly and outside of this Assembly a great deal of talk about freedom of the Press and whether the national press is subjected to strangulation on the part of the Government.

The Speaker: Five minutes more.

Cde. Campbell: Perhaps I should quote from page 10 of this Budget speech in which it is written--:

“The national objective of the creation of a socialist society is not at large. It is a directive of our new Constitution.”

That, Cde.Speaker, is clearly understood by the nationally-owned media, but that is not inconsistent with the critical faculty of the nationally-owned media and it is not inconsistent either with the opposition newspaper continuing to exist and continuing to provide scandalous entertainment for our people. It is, also, not inconsistent with the media continuing to provide exposure to the Minority. Indeed, that exposure proved a very great embarrassment to that party, or one of those parties in particular, during the recent elections. It is interesting that given an opportunity to appear on “Face the Nation”, the Leader of the Minority was afraid to accept that challenges unless he was given the right to decide who would be his questioners. Any political leader who is afraid to accept the challenge of facing a small group of journalists forfeits the right to speak about freedom of the media.

It was also through the media that the Leader of the Minority was able to embarrass himself and to expose himself and to public view by speaking about the nostalgic desire on the part of people to return to the days of 1964. Never has the nation been so entertained, Cde.Speaker. And it is a standing procedure on the part of the International Affairs Unit of my Ministry that whenever we have working journalist visiting this country, part of their programme is a visit to, and an interview with the Leader of the Minority because we think it is proper that the Leader of the Minority should be so exposed if only to let people know what alternative there is to this Government, and that people in the opposition should seek to deny that fact and should seek to accuse us of hiding journalists from them could be described as a gaping Conrad.

2.3.81

6.20-6.30 p.m

The record of those who today speak about newsprint and who speak about freedom of the Press is there to be seen. At a time when Guyana was British Guiana, a colony, at a time when the government of the day had absolutely no control in formal terms of the media, at that time they exercised a censorship which frightened the Guyanese people and frightened the world.

It is frightened, Cde.Speaker, to reflect on the way that party would behave if it were to be in power in an Independent Guyana and in a situation of Government ownership. They censored broadcasts, they refused journalists permission to attend Press conferences, and in a cheeky letter written by one gentleman a Mr. Jack Kelshall, one of infamous memory, that government announced a decision to set up a Press Council to control the media in this country, and fully four years before this country became independent.

6.30p.m.

In this Budget Speech Cde. Vice-President said, and I quote:

“There are periods in the history of a nation which the historian, from the vantage grounds of a later age, identifies as being watersheds in the development of the nation. These periods could be said in a general way to mark the end of one era and the beginning of a new.”

The Ministry of Information and the nationally-owned media in this country recognise that watershed and we are earnestly preparing ourselves to contribute to the new era. [Applause]

Sitting suspended at 6.30 p.m

On resumptionThe Speaker: Cde, Chin

Cde. Chin: Cde. Speaker, given this opportunity to address this honourable Assembly is testimony of the fact that the People's National Congress is the only broad-based political party in this country. That is why we have been given the mandate by the people under the People's New Constitution to manage the country's affairs for another term of five years and will do so for many terms to come. I would like to address my presentation arising out of the Budget speech made by the honourable Vice –President, Cde. Desmond Hoyte, on this Public Corporations-their role in increasing national wealth, providing efficient services and the new institutions to be set up to monitor the fulfillment of these goals.

Cde.Speaker, provisions have been made under the People's New Constitution, article 15, sub-articles (1), (2), and (3) as follows:

“15. (1) in order to achieve economic independence as the imperative Concomitant of its political independence, the State will revolutionise the national economy.

(2) The national economy of the state will be based upon the social ownership of the means of production and the eventual abolition of internal arrangements and relationships which permit the exploitation of man by man.

(3) The economy will develop in accordance with the economic laws of socialism on the foundation of socialism relations of production and development of the production forces.”

Our Government, to truly revolutionise the economy, has expanded the public sector by the addition of the public cooperations. This was done through the means of nationalisation – Guymine, Guysuco, Guyana Stores Limited. To name a few, and by our own creation, the Guyana Glass Works Limited, Guyana Leather Industries Limited and Sanata Textile Mill which during 1981 will produce 1.5 million meters of fabric. Our Government in so little a time owns and controls on behalf of the people of Guyana about 85 per cent of the economy.

A task that could not have become a reality in the past regime has become a reality under the might of Sampson and the People's National Congress.

I can recall, Cde.Speaker, reading a book on “Persistent Poverty in the Caribbean” where the author, a West Indian, stated that Bookers was as vast in Guyana that if she sneezes Guyana will catch a cold. This Government nationalised this giant and we have not up to now got a fever, such less a cold.

Under the great leadership of Sampson Burnham we tackled not only one giant but many giants put together. Today we have under our control about 30 public corporations, the majority falling under the umbrella of Guystac. There are the service corporation, namely, Guyana Airways Corporation, Guyana Broadcasting Corporation, Guyana Electricity Corporation, Guyana Telecommunication Corporation, Guyana Stores Limited, Guyana National Trading Corporation and the surplus generating corporations, namely, Guysuco , Guymine, Guyana Rice Board. These corporation have to increase their production and productivity so that our economy can afford to satisfy the needs of the people materially, culturally, intellectually and spiritually.

The corporations for last year contributed \$73 million in taxes and showed a surplus of \$100 million after taxes, dividends and also after allowing for depreciation.

To mention a few corporations which have done extremely well and which have over the past five years shown a growth within the organisation is testimony of the fact that this Government has succeeded in its nationalisation goals. For instance, Cde. Speaker, the Guyana National Trading Corporation has contributed to the state a total of \$14,831,609 from operations over the period of 1975 to 1979. The Guyana Pharmaceutical Corporation showed a surplus of \$912,000 in 1976, but in 1979 showed a surplus of \$6,479,000.

Our export figures for the year 1980 from our major corporations show that Guysuco earned on the export market \$292 million; Guysuco earned \$484 million and Guyana Rice Board \$87 million, bringing together total export earnings of \$863 million in 1980, this being 36 per cent higher than our 1979 earnings

Cde. Speaker, there have been rapid expansion programme in many corporations and for 1981 a lot of our new ventures will materialise. These expansion programmes will save us the much-needed foreign exchange. For instance, the Guyana National Trading Corporation will this year construct an assembly plant for tractors which will benefit us by removing the enormous freight charges we had to pay in the past and at the same time it will make available tractors to the farmers at a relatively cheap price, considering the hundreds of thousands of acres which will go under the plough when we complete the M.M.A., Tapacuma and Black Bush projects.

A new workshop is also to be undertaken by the G.N.T.C. limited which will assist greatly the agricultural sector. It is hoped that with these two ventures skilled personnel will be trained and as such in the near future will be able to fabricate components locally.

The Guyana Pharmaceutical Corporation this year will produce vegetable oil from indigenous raw materials, for example, rice bran, copra and cotton seed. This will assist in satisfying the local consumer demand for edible oil while achieving invaluable foreign exchange savings and establishing linkages with other sectors of the economy. The agricultural sector will utilise the processed oil and by-products, rice bran meal, copra meal, soap stock, for stock feed and soap production.

Cde. Speaker, while the corporations are expanding, they are also creating new employment opportunities, as compared with Britain who at the moment has an unemployment figure of two million workers, and United States approximately seven million unemployed. We have not had any lay-off of employees, but instead we are creating new employment opportunities. For example, the G.P.O. in 1976 had on record 220 employees while in 1979; the figures show over 1,000 employees.

To fully achieve our targets there is need for stricter financial management and control. Deadlines for reports must be met on time. A more careful and effective monitoring system needs to be set up and at the same time we must root out ruthlessly of forms of dishonesty. There is also the need for more discipline from our workers and at the same time efficiency in the job. Training on the job should be co-ordinated with the various trade unions so that no duplication of training is effected. Today we see the great advancement of worker participation in decision-making. This is spelt out in article 13 of the People's new Constitution and I quote:

“The principal objective of the political system of the state is to extend socialist democracy by providing increasing opportunities for the participation of citizens in the management and decision-making processes of the state.”

Our public corporations must offer our workers scope and opportunity in fulfillment of this article.

We have a great task ahead of us. This year promises to be an eventful one being the year of energy. In the corporation's hands lies the economy of this country let these be safe hands.[Applause]

The Speaker: Cde.Benipersaud

Cde.Benipersaud: Cde.Speaker, this afternoon I proposed dealing with education and the development of our young people, but permit me to mention right away that this 1981 Budget will go down into the records of this National Assembly as the first budget prepared under the people's new Constitution and aimed at ensuring that the rights and privileges inscribed therein are real. [Applause]

Indeed, it is a budget prepared by the people and for people and as a member of the People's National Congress I see it as my bounden duty to congratulate the Vice-President, Economic Planning and Finance, Cde. Desmond Hoyte, and all those other comrades whose work has made so splendid a presentation possible.

Free Education. Certain basic principles are clearly specified in the new Constitution. These are the principles and bases of the political, economic and social systems and they affect us collectively as a people and individually. One of the principles is right to free education where opportunities are provided for education and training, to provide citizens with the ideological orientation that will enable them to contribute to the achievement of our socialist objectives.

Ideological Education. We must develop and in many cases re-orient our human resources if we are to successfully produce our own character of the rights and liberties, the hope and aspirations and the aims and objectives of the new society which we are building to create conditions in which hunger, ignorance, disease and poverty will be abolished as well as exploitation of man by man and where each man, woman and child will have ever-increasing opportunities to live happy, creative and productive lives and develop his or her personality in circumstances of freedom and social justice.

This Government is continuously reviewing the education system, a process aimed at eradicating the old colonial and capitalist values and introducing and emphasising new and relevant ones. This process is essential since not only are the attitudes deep-rooted, but even those responsible for training in many cases need re-training. To this day there are still some

misguided teachers and lecturers who have no concept of, and are resistant to, the co-operative. They prefer to inculcate in their wards and emphasise selfish individual objectives instead of those directed at the progress of the community and the nation as a whole. A new Ministry of Higher Education has been set up to ensure that full attention is given to every aspect of the education system.

Our secondary schools now cater for approximately 75,000 students, an increase of 25,000 students from 1970. A training programme for teachers was also introduced and a new secondary Teacher's College is now under construction to provide the environment, atmosphere and facilities conducive to the training of our teachers who are given \$150 per month while attending this institute.

Another contributor towards this programme is the Kuru Kuru Co-operative College which offers training in co-operative Management, Accounting for Co-operatives, Management of Agriculture Co-ops and Credit Union Management. A correspondence course in book-keeping also a radio programme was introduced in 1980. Some of these courses were also conducted at centre at Anna Regina, Essequibo, Georgetown and Manchester in Berbice. In addition to this, four major weekend seminars in relation to the new Local Democratic Organ were hosted by this College and the response to these courses was gratifying.

8.20 p.m.

Technical Education: Cde. Speaker, due to the fact that Guyanese are moving towards becoming a more industrialised nation much emphasis is being placed on technical education to meet the present and future needs of the country. At the Technical Institute thousands of young people have been trained in such important fields as building mechanism and surveying. Our secondary school system now includes six multilateral schools which are located in various parts of our country in order to provide training to meet the country's manpower requirements, while the community high schools equip our children with skills to suit the development of our particular communities in which they live.

All these opportunities were neglected in the past where it was impossible to find secondary or technical schools in the country districts with only a few secondary schools in and around the city, most of them being owned and controlled by certain individuals or organisation and where only a privileged few were able to attend.

Today, Cde. Speaker, our Government has taken over all schools in Guyana and has established several secondary, technical and ideological schools. Not only in and around the city, but throughout the length and breadth of Guyana education is free and free text-books are given to children. Education is not for a privilege few but for all Guyanese.

The former education system was not geared for the new society and, therefore, we had not the type of training in the various skills as we have today. We now have C.X.C and G.C.E. at ordinary and advanced levels, also a vigorous work-study programme with centre at Transport and Harbours Central Workshop and GUYNEC.

In order to further accelerate and develop technical education several schools are being expanded, re-equipped and re-staffed. Students no longer have to travel long journeys outside

their communities to attend schools in the city since the new system is aimed at taking education to the people. Under colonialism, education is used to promote the class system and to support the imperialist capitalist system and it is for that reason that technical education was not emphasised and so there was a greater recognition and appreciation for what is called the “White collar job”. Under this circumstance the technical employee must count as second class citizen.

Today under the socialist Government, education is used for founding a truly socialist society and Guyana is now coming to understand and accept the new system of technical education since the necessity arises daily for more professional, skilled, and semi-skilled people to provide the necessary services for the efficient running of our country. Cde. Speaker, this Government has done and will continue to do quite a lot for the development of education in order to completely abolish ignorance from this society.

The Speaker: Cde. Munroe.

Cde. Munroe: Cde. Speaker, it is with a deep feeling of pride and gratitude that I rise to speak under the banner of the People’s National Congress for the first time in this historic chamber, pride that I have been chosen to speak on education, and gratitude to those who have made it possible.

Education, Cde. Speaker, has been dear to my heart all my life. I would in no way claim that I am an expert on education, but since I first attended school at the age of four, I have never really left school and so I can bring these years of experience to bear in most matters touching on education, especially primary education.

It is from the platform of those years with the experience acquired that I can look back over the last 20 years, a time when this land of ours passed through some of the most outstanding innovations in our educational history.

You will recall, Cde. Speaker, how during 1976 our Government celebrated the hundredth anniversary of compulsory primary education in Guyana. It was in 1876 that a law was passed making attendance at primary schools compulsory up to 14 years in Georgetown and New Amsterdam and up to 12 years in the rural area; and in same year, on the 7th December, 1976, another law was passed establishing a training college for teachers in Guyana. One hundred years later, in 1976, saw the establishment of a new training college for teachers at Turkeyen, and the most startling and far-reaching innovation of all, the decision to make education free for all from nursery through primary and secondary to university level.

This long tradition of education advance has helped to make Guyanese achieve their standard of literacy, perhaps the highest in the Caribbean. But Cde. Speaker, it was during the last 20 years or, to be exact, it was during the last 16 years, while the People’s national Congress held the reins of Government, that the greater advance in education have taken place.

Indeed, between 1961 and 1964, during the periods when a previous administration held the reins of power, some retrograde steps were taken which have left their mark on our education system. Thus, in 1961, the then Government abolished the Government County Scholarship and introduced a Common Entrance. Test which catered for only two subjects in the school curriculum, Arithmetic and English, with Verbal Reasoning thrown in for good measure. Every

school taught only two subjects- Arithmetic and English. It became clear, therefore, that the children of that generation knew nothing about the history and geography of their country. They did not know anything of their culture heritage. This was a tragic mistake which has since been corrected by our Government, the People's National Congress. [Applause] But the damage was done. Generations of children and teachers have grown up to whom subjects like Guyanese history, geography and social studies are unknown.

8.30 p.m.

Those were the years of the academic bent "bottom house" schools, another tragic error which caused teachers and pupils to accept substandard conditions and inculcate insanitary habits. With better planning our Government has eliminated the needs for "bottom house" conditions in our educational system.

Again, the University of Guyana, which was started in 1963 as a bottom-house night school. Has now overseas accreditation and is situated amidst surroundings of scenic beauty on the lovely campus at Turkeyen. No longer is the University content with teaching only those with an academic bent. Today, our University has broadened its curriculum so as to accommodate those students who are inclined to the science and technology programmes.

Today, our educational system is neatly designed with some 998 schools and intuitions of learning serving the educational needs of the children and youths of Guyana. First there are nursery schools- 374 of them with nursery school supervisors assigned to various districts to ensure that the young three-year olds get a good start. Next, the primary schools, numbering 537, scattered over the length and breadth of Guyana, where pupils are trained to take the next step in their school career and thus preparing them for the secondary level. Here selection by tests will place them in the general secondary schools such as Queen's College or Christ Church Secondary, the multilateral schools like North Ruimveldt, Bladen Hall or Anna Regina, or Community High such as the model at Beterverwagting, or agriculture schools as well as technical institutes. Lastly, the University where, as I have already mentioned, the curriculum has been given a broader based more relevant to our Republican status and the consequent development thrust.

There are two facts that I would like to emphasise and they concern our school building programmes. During that time the P.P.P. was in power, secondary schools were almost entirely confined to areas where a particular ethnic group was predominant. We do not subscribe to that type of educational philosophy. Our Government has plans to build and renovate schools in all areas irrespective of race, colour or creed, for all Guyanese, because Guyana belongs to all of us.

The other point is one of content, or what is taught in our secondary schools. We do not believe that secondary education should be limited to those children who have an academic bias. We hold the view that education should be extended not only to those pupils who are inclined towards the liberal arts and sciences, but to those pupils who are gifted to use their hands and who, in the final analysis, could end up with a technical competence that can bring them even greater financial awards than what their academic brothers and sisters could ever receive.

Therefore, the new trend is to encourage the pupils in our general secondary schools to broaden their education so as to embrace not only academic but science and technical subjects and also agriculture.

Because of this new thinking we are in the process of erecting an industrial arts complex at Annadale Secondary Schools, one of the schools erected during the regime of the People's Progressive Party, thus showing that it is our intention to include all sections of our student community in this new educational development.

This brings me to our definition of education. In our view, education is not merely instructing and teaching but also the strengthening of the powers of body and mind, so that the child or the youth can find a niche in society and become a useful unit in the community in which he finds himself. To this end our Government has introduced during the last few years a number of innovations in our educational system, some of which I have already mentioned and which I can now review, beginning with our nursery schools. We have expanded and revitalised our nursery programme. In 1961, there were 93 children in the 3-5 age group under 7 untrained teachers. Today, there are 374 nursery schools and their teachers have an on-going in-service training programme.

In the primary schools the selective test for entrance to secondary schools has a much wider curriculum than the old two-subject common entrance tests. Pupils now are exposed to the history and geography of the country by means of a social studies programme and also a science programme. This test will be further broadened and extended to include extra-curricular activities, such as the active participation of pupils in sports and games.

The secondary schools Proficiency Examination introduced about four years ago have taken the place of the C.P. examination. In this year those children who failed to gain places at the secondary schools are offered a second chance. This is the examination which helps the late achievers and fulfills the socialist dictum of equal opportunity for all.

Next comes the Caribbean Examination Council C.X.C. where questions more relevant to the Caribbean environment are posed and marked by Caribbean educationalists and fees for these tests are thus much lower than those charged by London for the Ordinary and Advanced levels.

There was the introduction since 1976 not only of free education from nursery to university level but also the issue of free exercise book, free text books, free uniforms and concessionary fares for commuting students. Work-study programmes now form an integral part of the community High-School programme, thus relating the youths early to what happens in the work-place and the routine of the job atmosphere. The re-training of teachers trained in the old days who now need refresher courses to bring them in touch with the present day programmes are actively involving the attention of our Government.

All these innovations in our education system have been initiated by the People's National Congress since taking office. You will observe, Cde. Speaker that they touch on every facet of education from the Nursery to the University level, showing the intentions of our Government to provide the people of Guyana with the best educational facilities our country can afford.

In his Budget Speech, the Vice-President, Economic Planning and Financing, in outlining the financial provisions for 1981-1982, stressed the importance of our new concepts of education for the development of all in the country, unlike our predecessors in office, and I feel confident, Cde. Speaker, and assure that the community at large would take up the challenge and move forward in geometric progression towards the continuance of progress nationwide.

I thank you, Cde. Speaker, for the wonderful opportunity afforded me this evening to address this distinguished national Assembly.

The Speaker: Cde. Davidson.

Cde. Davidson: May, I first of all, say how many happy I am to be afforded this opportunity to speak in this honourable Chamber under the banner of the People's National Congress, the only party that is interested in the development and welfare of all the women in Guyana. This was evident when our party, the People's National Congress, contested all ten regions in the December last elections.

Cde. Speaker, it is more than a formality when I say that I am truly pleased to be speaking in this forum- speaking as a developed woman made possible by the vanguard party, the People's National Congress.

I would like, Cde. Speaker, to draw attention to page 25 article 29 paragraphs (1) and (2) of that great book written by Guyanese for Guyanese, written both in content and form, and I refer to the Constitution of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana.

“ 29. (1) Women and men have equal rights and the same legal status in all spheres of political, economic and social life. All forms of discrimination against women on the basis of their sex are illegal.

(2) The exercise of women's rights is ensured by according women equal access with men to academic, vocational and professional training, equal opportunities in employment, remuneration and promotion, an in social political and cultural activity, by special labour and health protection measures for women, by providing conditions enabling mothers to work, and by legal protection and material and moral support for mothers and children, including paid leave and others benefits for mothers and expectant mothers.”

Cde. Speaker, this decade, 1975-1985, the United Nations decade of Women in which we find ourselves, has more than ever revolutionised the way of thinking of all, especially our Guyanese women. Women's involvement reflects not only women's progress but progress of the country as a whole. We are embarking on a new regional system. If this system is to be successful, then all our human resources, including our women. Must be mobilised to provide the necessary service.

Cde. Speaker, our women have been entering non-traditional areas of employment. In industry, figures show a sizable percentage of the total workforce as women. To name a few, they are employed in the fish port, Guymine, the textile mill and the glass factory.

At the fish port, out of a workforce of 37, 11 or 29.7 per cent are women. At the glass factory, out of a workforce of 364, 66 or 18.2 per cent are women. At the faculty of mining at the University of Guyana, of a total enrolment of 56, 10 or 17.9 per cent are women. At the textile mill, of a workforce of 788, 225 or 28.9 per cent are women. At Linden works in the

bauxite mining area, of workforce of 338, 35 or 16.3 per cent are women. In the industrial sections of the mining enterprise itself, of a workforce of 4,746, 141 or 3.3 per cent are women.

Cde. Speaker, we, the women of Linden, are very grateful to the People's National Congress for the opportunity given to us to contribute to the nation's economy by working in such an important industry. Through our revolutionary Government's sanction, Guyanese women can now voluntarily develop their talents and skills to the fullest. Our women today hold senior positions in the military and in local corporations. In the areas of income-generating schemes women are engaged in bulk purchasing, laundering, food processing, agriculture and livestock rearing.

More women, Cde. Speaker, are being trained in technical fields. This is done even in our school system. Female students constitute about 70 per cent of the total population in bricklaying and plumbing. At university level, women now constitute 36 per cent of the total population of students and today women are making practical use of opportunities provided by the Guyana National Service and trade unions.

When debating Cde. Leader's address at the previous sitting of this National Assembly, Cde. Speaker, one comrade asked the question, where has all the money gone. Cde. Speaker, it is important to note that some of the money was spent in developing the talents and skills of our Guyanese women.

Our Government has provided routine ante-natal care for women. In the field of health, women have been provided with scholarships to be trained as nurses, doctors, medex, and speaking of scholarships, I am proud to say that I, a mere housewife benefitted from one of those scholarships, thanks to the People's National Congress, the party that demonstrates socialist democracy at all levels.

In sport and culture, women have excelled. Some of our women have become medalists for performance at the international level. They have even become calypsonians. Our women have been involved in politics. They have become Ministers of the Government, Members of Parliament. As you can see, Cde. Speaker, they adorn this Chamber with their splendor and charm. Women in Guyana have played a vital role in national planning. In trade unions our women hold executive posts at branch and national Levels. Our own Agnes Bend-Kirton is evidence of this.

In foreign affairs our women have become ambassadors, political councillors, student's welfare councillors, secretaries to missions. They have represented the country on trade, political, economic and general mission. I would like to emphasise that the role and contribution of women in and to the political, economic, social and administrative processes of the country have never been as they are today. This was made possible by the People's National Congress. [Applause]

Even before the People's Constitution was promulgated, equality for women was recognised and practiced by the People's National Congress. One of the founders of the Women's Auxiliary, now the Women's Revolutionary Socialist Movement, and the late Cde. Winifried Gaskin, acted as Prime Minister for one day under the banner of the People's National Congress.

In our society today, women occupy important posts. To name a few, they are involved in public corporations. They are chairpersons and Vice-chairpersons and history was created when we had our own women judge. There are female Mayors and Deputy Mayors, Ministers of Government, Parliamentarians, Lecturers, magistrates, lawyers, doctors and medex.

Guyanese women are honoured and are progressing steadily under the dynamic People's National Congress Government, then only Government that practices socialist democracy at all levels. [Applause]

The Speaker: Cde. Davidson, you have dazzled the Deputy Speaker, into silence with your charm. Cde. Collymore

Cde. Collymore: Cde. Speaker, I rise to make a few comments on the Budget Statement as tabled in this National Assembly by the Hon. Vice-President for Economic Planning and Finance. I wish to say that the Budget seems to be a "war" budget. Several members on the opposite side at various forums, including the Parliament, have been intimating that military expenditure is rising throughout the world and therefore it must rise in Guyana. We do not share this philosophy. When we take into consideration the various circumstances surrounding us we see that we are not going to wage war against our neighbours. We cannot. Therefore we on this side have to come to the conclusion that we are going to wage war against the Guyanese people and as I proceed you will see why I come to this conclusion. Nowhere in the Budget is statement, which I concede is a well-written document, there evidence of light at the end of the tunnel; and the tunnel is 16 years long.

At present, many things are plaguing the Guyanese nation, among them, tax, crime, insecurity. The Vice-President on page 15 referred to this but the inference and tone do not convince us that he meant what he was saying here. I quote from page 15 of the Budget Speech: I quote from page 15 of the Budget Speech:

"The integrity of our country, the right of our citizens to go about their lawful occasions without fear, the maintenance of the conditions favourable to production and development- these are all matters to which the Government is firmly and unequivocally committed and on which it will never compromise."

While he was saying so he was looking very hard at this side of the Assembly, he looked at us very hard when he concluded with these words:

“These are assurance to the Nation.”

He actually thundered when he said that.

We are saying that this is a mistaken or misconceived paragraph which seems to be directed- these kinds of matters are in the wrong place. People are being plagued at large-armed hold-ups, murders, fraud and rackets, arson and embezzlement and corruption in high places.

The Vice-President was correct when he said-

“... the maintenance of the conditions favourable to production and development...”

but we are saying that there is fear at large in our country and we can identify three aspects of this fear- the industrial sector where we find there is no production as a result; fear of bandits. Again no production. And political fear. Again you find that people are not induced to contribute to the optimum and then they are being exhorted to “produce or perish.”

We have an over-size security force and for many years we have been saying that the security forces are too large. We do not need such a large army. We do not say that we do not need an army. Why do we need such a large army when we are not going to fight Brazil or Venezuela or Suriname? What is going on? Last year in this honorable Assembly the Government passed the Army and police vote at \$103 million. In that year it fell to \$116.4 million. That was election year and the Army had seized the ballot boxes so they spent \$13.4 million more.

We have been hearing a lot of talk from the other side about housing. What happened with housing? We are going to come to that. We are going to show you where the real priority is. For this year they are going to expend \$139.33 million. You will see these figures when compared with housing. We feel that our friends on the opposite side are going to buy tanks and rockets. Why do they need nearly \$140 million to spend on the armed forces? What are they going to buy? For the National Service alone they are going to vote \$49 million. To do what? This is money misspent and ill-appropriated. As I said, peace reigns on our frontiers. We therefore need austerity in the army forces. There is need for the Government to buy fewer guns and build more houses.

As I was saying, they intend to wage war on the people. Why did I say that? I have here a clipping from the “Guyana Chronicle” the Government newspaper, dated 31st January 1981; and this pertains to a speech as reported by Government reporters. This is a speech by another Vice-President, the Vice-President of Public Welfare, Cde. Hamilton Green. Here what he is going to talk about? What does the reporter say?

“Vice-President for Public Welfare, Hamilton Green, has said that the prevention of any serious work disruption.”

Note this Ram Karran,

“and the avoidance of acute Labour problems were strict objectives of the Ministry of Labour this year”

“to those who are committed to disruption, let me say publicly, that when you bring your swords, we will display our cannons.”

That is why they want \$140 million. They are going to buy arms. They are going to suppress the people.

The Speaker: Cde.Collymore, he was telling you that you had better take warning.

Cde.Collymore: I always take warning.

Cde. Speaker, you know what? This Vice-President was speaking to the workers. He was speaking to the workers at the Guyana National Trading Corporation. You don't speak to workers like that, in that kind of language, when you want them to produce. He was speaking to workers, not the political opposition. Go and check the chronicle. This is the reason we say that these people are loading up for gear and they are going to wage open season on the working class.

Now, housing. Much concern-crocodile tears, no funds- were shown by the opposition side about housing. Once again we are saying on this occasion that there is no seriousness by these people on the opposite side where housing is concerned. The hon. The Vice-President said about housing on page 20 of his well-written speech, "This year will witness the start of a massive housing drive." We already had a start of a housing drive. This is a re-start. That is the correct definition. That is what it is.

The Speaker: He said "massive". You didn't say that before.

Cde.Collymore: The other Vice-President, Steve Naraine, he had said at that time it was a massive drive. He said so.

The Speaker: I am reminding you to insert the word "massive"

Cde.Collymore: All right, we are saying that the Government is relying on the private sector to house this nation and this is not the credential of a socialist regime. We are opposed to this. We don't say that the private sector doesn't have a role to play, but it must not play the major role in the Government moving socialist.

Now, just to remind comrades on the other side about the Government's credentials where housing is concerned, between 1972 and 1976 there was this big massive drive. They spent \$47.5 million on housing and in the same period they spent \$ 617 million on security, 12.9 times as much. For 1981, what are our friends going to spend on housing? They are going to spend \$8.9 million of 0.7 per cent of the capital and recurrent Budget. Compare that with \$139.3 million and you are going to see where our friends' priorities are. Guns and not homes.

Cde. Speaker, what happened last year about housing? This National Assembly passed a housing Budget of \$ 8.2 million but our friends didn't spend that. They cut it by \$ 2.9 million. Even that miserable sum they cut by nearly \$ 3 million. Those people who say they are concerned about the low income group. They cut it. They slashed it. They spent only \$ 5.3 million and in that same period when they were shedding these crocodile tears about housing they increased the military expenditure by \$ 13.4 million.

Cde.Speaker, the previous Minister of Housing, Cde. Steve Naraine, who is now Vice-President, had introduced in the very early years of the Second Development Plan a Scheme to produce an average of \$ 13,000 units of housing per year. That was commendable and in the debate on the President's address, I said that was good because it seemed as though the Government was coming to grips with the housing crisis. It fell short.

We are trying, therefore, that the Government must give an undertaking that it would build 60 percent of this; 60 percent of this, according to our calculations, would come to 7,800 housing units per year. If the Government would give the undertakings, we would say it is doing something and would stop criticising it here in this Assembly. The 40 per cent can be left to the private sector and we would have no quarrel whatsoever. Now, it is going to be difficult if the Government is going to spend miserable sums, because for the five year period 1972-1976, less than 8,000 houses were built. It means the Government would have to dig up and spend much more money that it is spending here.

What is the Government's plan? The Government's plan, as the Vice-president intimated, is to rely on the insurance companies, mortgages finance bank pension fund, credit unions. He didn't include certain other areas such as the private commercial banks, the New Building Society, the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund, co-operatives also. Well, you can include all those things and these can be included in the 40 per cent which must produce 5,200 houses per year.

Now, our grouse is that if you are going to rely on these private sectors to produce low-income houses you are doing no business. Only recently I was to produce low-income houses you are doing no business.

Only recently I was speaking to a comrade who went to one of these societies for a loan. The persons said he went there and asked for \$8,000. The society insisted that he must take \$10,000 and he had to take \$10,000 at 10 percent compound interest and has 15 years within which to repay the loan.

That person has to meet over \$1,000 a year. If that person is a worker, that person cannot afford it because these private enterprises are telling you how much money you must borrow. They don't give you what you want. They give you what they think you must get. They told the person, "Look, you have to paint and you have to repair" and so forth so they gave him \$10,000 when he asked for \$8,000. So where is the saving? Is this what we want? The Minister said that the insurance companies will spend about \$30 million, that is in three years at \$10 million per year, but we are saying that these private sector operations are not conducive to the overall situation of improving houses.

Cde. Speaker, we note also something very positive in the Minister's statement and this is seen on page 20 where he is referring to mortgage payments. These are some positive things in his Budget statement. He said:

"To encourage private citizens to rehabilitate and extend their residences, consideration will be given to the possibility of making the interest payments on mortgages obtained for such purposes – tax deductible".

This should have been done already. What are we waiting for? Put it and we will say, "Good, well done, Desmond". What is he waiting for? It should be deducted. You want to encourage people to build their own homes? Well, make it easy. Give them low-interest loans and in this way you will be able to solve the housing crisis.

Cde. Speaker, we note that there is no development plan and at this stage we would like to call on the Government and the Minister responsible for housing to present to this Assembly a housing plan. Let the nation and this August Assembly have an insight, a comprehensive view, as to the Government's housing policy on an assessment paper. At least treat this Assembly with courtesy. Let us have a housing plan. You cannot produce a development plan let us have a housing plan for a start.

Now, let us go on to energy. Much steam has been generated in this Assembly about energy and much concern has also been voiced here about the small man. Once more the small man is the whipping-post and whereas I said just now that we should have a housing plan, we should also have an energy plan in a comprehensive manner presented to this National Assembly.

The President's Address spoke in very warm terms about the workers and the people who are in the low income bracket, and the President actually said that those who consumed a certain amount of electricity will not be able to pay more. Well, I have figures which show that they are going to pay more. Whether the President realises this or the Guyana Electricity Corporation is running this country, you will see from the figures I will tell you about.

9.10 p.m.

They have shocking increases in power rates. What did the Vice-President say about it? Let us turn to page 11. He was talking and asking if we can afford it. He said:

“If we were unable to afford the cost of energy then we will be unable to achieve the development goals we have set ourselves.”

I am claiming, I am asserting, that the small man in Guyana cannot afford to pay electricity increases and these increases which were promulgated recently are in direct contravention of the Presidential address on the state of the nation. The fuel charges have risen by 142.8 percent. From 13.58 cents per unit to 33.71 cents. Calculate it! It is nearly one and a half times more. I am challenging the Minister of Energy who is here to say in this Assembly that fuel prices rose on the world market from O.P.E.C. and Eric Williams' Government in Trinidad by 150 percent. I am challenging him to say that and that these prices rose with six months from August 1980 to February 1981. I dare him to get up here and say that they rose 150 percent, yet we are faced here with fuel charges that have risen by nearly 150 percent.

The President in his State of the Nation address said that the people in Guyana are being called upon to pay for inefficiency and incompetence. This bears it out because if the fuel prices have not risen by that amount and then we are paying for inefficiency and incompetence.

Cde. Speaker, I want, with your permission, to quote from the Guyana Chronicle again. The Chronicle some time after the election was saying that electricity rates would go up by 55 percent. In the Guyana Chronicle on February 14, 1981, quoting from an unidentified senior G.E.C. official, the reporter said:

“In addition”

they were talking about new rates –

“this new development has nullified an earlier announcement relating to a 55 percent increase which was to be stretched over 12 months.”

That is not so. We are saying this is a total and absolute equivocation.

What are the facts? Prior to these new increases you had rates 1 and 2. There were the rated for the small man. Rate 1 was the domestic rate but it took into consideration small cottage industries- a man with a power saw or a power drill and women with sewing machines or a tailor shop. They merge rate 1 and 2 together and call it rate A and what has happened? Rate A, the new rate for the energy charge- not the fuel charge which has gone up nearly 150 percent- the energy charge rose from 21.5 cents to 26.92 cents per unit. Rate B which rate 3, rose from 36.1 cents to 39.60 cents. Rate 4 which is now rate C, rose from 34.93 cents to 38.29 cents. Rate 5, which is now rate D went from 27.95 cents to 24.20 then on to 29.20 cents by June. Then rates 1 and 2, have become rate A which is the General and Residential Tariff. Rate 3 which is now rate B is the Government, Municipal and Commercial Tariff. Rate 4 is now Rate C is the Industrial Power Rate Tariffs and rate 5, which is rate D, to be increased by June, is the bulk supply. Now what are the facts? Before we go on let us see what the President said in the state of the Nation Address. If we turn to page 9, this is what he said:

“We shall have to pay for the power we use. Though the tariffs will be structured in such a manner that the small man with four house lights, a radio and an electrical iron in use on an average of five hours, eight hours and one hour per day, respectively, will not be called upon to pay a higher bill than at present.”

I know a small man who has two lights and I deliberately went to him-two electric lights, an electric iron and a radio which plays on the mains and he uses the average of 16. In fact on his last reading which they look, it was 16 units. You know what is the experience of the small man? Listen to the experience of this small man to show whether it is the G.E.C. or Burnham running this country. Units used which total below the 50 units, which Mr. Burnham says is the maximum the small man must use, amounted to 16 units. The energy charge- \$ 3.44. That is this last bill. Fuel charge \$ 2.17. Total bill \$ 5.61. In the new dispensation what will happen to the small man? Energy charge -\$3.64 fuel charge \$ 5.39. Total bill-\$9.03. He is going to pay \$ 3.42 more or 16.9 per cent.

The Speaker: Cde. Collymore, you did not say how many units of fat he burns.

Cde.Colltymore: I am assuming that he is going to use 16 because that is the last bill.[Laughter] I don't see why the members are laughing. If he used 16 units and he paid\$ 5.61, under the new charges he has to pay more on the energy charge. The fuel charge- from 13.58 it has gone to 33.71 cents. That is more. You do not have to get the bill.

Now, what about the average domestic consumer? Units used -117. Energy charge \$25.16; Fuel charge- \$15.89. That is the old bill. Total \$41.05. Under the new regime this

2.3.81

9.10 – 9.20 p.m.

domestic consumer will pay; Energy charge-\$31.49; fuel charge-\$39.44; total \$70.93, that is, \$28.88 more or 70.3 per cent. When the members have to pay their light bills they will know that I am speaking the truth.

Commercial. This is the most crucial area, the commercial and industrial area. One commercial firm. Unit used-\$1,483. Energy charge-\$534.03; fuel charge-\$201.35. Total bill - \$735.38. This is ignoring two other small bills which have total \$57.46. Under the new Dispensation this firm will pay: Energy charge- \$587.26; fuel charge- \$499.91. The total is \$1,087.17. In other words, \$351.59 more or \$47.8 per cent. Contrary to the domestic consumer and a small man, this firm will pass on the increases to the buying public. The same thing applies to the industrial sector.

The point I am trying to make is that the small man will be forced to consume less because he has to pay a bigger light bill. The industrial and commercial concern will pass on the increased expenditure to the public.

The Speaker: Five minutes more

Cde. Collymore: I will finish within that time. The Government will be faced with upward pressure on process and cost of production. The members know it. What is going to happen? Many of these Government corporations and private enterprises use colossal amounts of electricity to produce. The cost will go up and they will charge the consumer. We have to expect that in this year the following things will rise: rice, sugar, flour, butter, margarine, footwear, textile, garments, bread, chowmein, vermicelli, etc., aerated beverages, cigarettes, will go up again, processed foods, including weaning foods, livestock feedstuff, furniture and domestic goods, ice for fishing and shrimping, sawmill materials, lumber and so on, quarry products crushed, paint. You know Cde. Speaker. Paint has gone up. Milk and milk products, pharmaceuticals, mechanical, electrical and engineering products, etc. everything is going to escalate because electricity is a basic commodity and if this Government is concerned about the small man and the people, the Government must maintain very, very low electricity costs. And it is not doing it.

One of our members early this afternoon made the comment that this Budget says nothing much. Price increases took place before the Budget and they take place after the budget. We are prognosticating now that all these items, 22 items I have called here, will also be subjected to increased pressure on their production costs which will eventually and inevitably produce increased prices because the Government will be forced to remove certain price controls and jack up the price limits of very many items. This is one of the reasons why we are saying that we do not see any light at the end of the tunnel which is 16 years long. [Applause]

The Speaker: Cde.Felix.

Cde.Felix: Cde.Speaker, I rise to speak in support of the national Budget presented to the national Assembly by the Vice-President of this Republic responsible for economic planning and finance. In doing so I desire to present an overview of the energy programme of my party and Government, but I ask your permission to express my disappointment at the poor quality of the substance contained in the contribution made so far from the other side of this Chamber on the serious question of the national Budget which should be engaging the attention of all of us leaders, both the majority and minority representatives of the National Assembly of this country.

One is constrained to feel very strongly and to inevitably conclude, Cde.Speaker, that from the low level of intervention, the disjointed and rambling nature of the presentation, the lack of high quality of participation reflected by prolonged absences or the flitting in and out like butterflies during the sessions, some people who manage to come to this place through the bountiful goodness of Providence are neither mentally ready, properly informed and in structured in good manners and decorum, sufficiently motivated nor committed...

Cde. Ram Karran: I rise to a point of order, Cde. Speaker, and would ask that the member should desist from those remarks.

The Speaker: Yes, Cde, Ram Karran. Cde. Felix, please don't make any disparaging remarks.

Cde. Felix: I am sorry, Cde.Speaker, I was not making any disparaging remarks on the other side of the Assembly, but if I was doing so in your opinion while speaking, I am sorry.

In making my contribution, Cde.Speaker, I have decided to approach the vital area of energy with an instructional bias in order to be able to present information of the energy programme of my party and Government which does not seem to be available to those whose preoccupation position in the Assembly is negative.

Cde.Speaker, energy can neither be created nor destroyed by man. This is a statement which embodies a natural law. Energy is transformed from one state to another to satisfy the numerous methods for the accomplishment of work, for the economical and social well being of the society. There is no activity relating to the provision of goods and services in which in some way or another energy is not an input. The earth would be barren, dead planet without the sun. The mother of energy. So, too, Cde.Speaker, Guyana would be a lost cause as a nation if its energy resources are not tapped and a dynamic programme conceived and pursued. Put another way, it means no energy, no development.

The reading of figures of shortfalls is a mere academic exercise, some things which any schoolboy can do. The pinning of shortfalls, dubbing them as mismanagement is a wicked and mischievous past-time which clearly demonstrated a complete lack of awareness of the effect, which the manipulation of the pricing structure of hydrocarbons, has made in the world economic scenes.

There are shortfalls in almost every country in the world. Hundreds of businesses have been closed and only the great depression of the thirties exceeded in severity the economic constrictions now felt in every nation on this planet. With this kind of global picture I can hardly be fair to rationalise away the economic problem of this nation as if it is a unique experience confined solely to Guyana.

Since energy, Cde.Speaker, is the most vital input in development and economic activities, it has a direct relationship to the cost producing goods and services and to the cost of selling goods and services. Put in ordinary shopkeepers' parlance which should be familiar to all, if energy costs more, production of goods and services costs more. In production of goods and services costs more, then the goods and services would have to be sold for more to cover the production cost. When the goods and services are sold on the open markets and compete with the same goods produced by countries with an abundance of energy and which can sell for less, than we have to sell at a loss. If we sell at a loss our foreign reserves are constricted.

If on top of that, Cde.Speaker, we have to buy machines in order to produce at high costs, then have a limited amount of money to increase wages and of the vicious cycle if events go on as long as the cost of hydrocarbons upon which we depend keeps escalating.

The continuous call for increased production and productivity, first prescribed by our beloved leader, seems the only answer and is now adopted by every nation.

The prescription "produce or perish" is no gimmick or threat, Cde.Speaker. Gimmicks and threats are for the politically immature and are hardly a tool for those who must grapple with the real problems of running a country.

Cde.Speaker, our energy programme encompasses two broad approaches. First, energy conservation. This entails (a) a careful categorising, cataloging and inventorising and assessment of all hydrocarbon fuel imports, (b) a comprehensive energy balance exercise to determine final needs in every sector of the economy, (c) strict adherence to efficiency criteria on system which employ hydrocarbon fuels to generate other forms of fuel, (d) meticulous monitoring of the distribution methods of these fuels and (e) preference always in the use of systems operating on less costly hydrocarbon fuels over those using more expensive ones.

Secondly, Cde.Speaker, we have embarked on a wide and varied programme of identifying and developing alternate sources of energy. I would like to emphasise right away that system which operate on hydrocarbon fuels, and with the exception of the sugar industry all others do, it is extremely difficult and expensive and generally impossible to make conversions for operation on other fuels. As a consequence, our efforts at substitution with indigenous fuels and energy sources are confronted with the alternative of replacing massive plant infrastructure which the fragile economy can afford, or developing technology which would allow for the mixture of indigenous fuels with hydrocarbons for use even at degraded but tolerable efficiency.

This alternative has been the hub around which this aspect of the energy programme of my party and the Government is fashioned. I might say here that in this Assembly is tabled a Bill the Hon. Member on the other side was asking for an energy programme. That bill is designed to create an Energy Authority and that Energy Authority has been given the necessary premise which represents a programme within which it will operate. Last week when the Hon. Minister of Energy and Mines spoke he made reference to this fact. As a consequence our alternative energy profile is as follows.

First, the development of a bio-gas programme which lends itself to use by small farmers and isolated communities. This programme is run in conjunction with the Latin American Organisation of Energy, OLADE, and this programme is designed to put 15 such bio-gas structures in this country, some of which have already been constructed and at least from one, methane gas is obtained. We are in the process now of quantifying the gas and testing its characteristics.

The second programme on the Alternative Energy Programme is the bio-mass programme which is a programme that utilises wood waste. This programme is centered around our saw-milling complex, the Upper Demerara Forestry Complex at Mabura Hill. Much work has been done in the use of wood waste, which hitherto had to be destroyed, to provide energy. Wood waste- this is no new thing- was used previously in boilers to provide steam and from the steam machines were allowed to run. However, this method is not as efficient as the production of wood gas and with the new technology wood gas is now used and from it, a gas is obtained which can run machines directly.

At the Mabura site, as was explained this morning by my senior colleague, the Minister of Forestry, a pilot plant of 130 Kilowatts was used and it is designed now that generating capacity to the value of 4.7 megawatts would be used exclusively on wood gas. What this means is that the generation of about 4.7 megawatts of electricity in diesel plants would cost about \$2,452,000. If we were to even try to understand, if we were to use indigenous fuel like wood gas on large installation such as those at Kingston, then the amount of savings would be astronomical. It is hoped that from the successful experiments which were carried on at Mabura Hill we will be able to use this fuel for future generation of electricity and at least to provide heat.

I want to make a comment on the wood waste which we have available. The amount of wood waste which would be accrued at the Mobilssa Hill Station would be equivalent to 45,000 tons. This is the amount of wood waste. The amount of wood waste which would be used for the generation of electricity at Mabura Hill would be 20,000 tons. There would be a residue of 25,000 tons of wood waste. At the moment efforts are being made by GUYMINE- and these are in the advance stage- to use wood waste in a mixture of fuel that is bunker 'C', to drive the kiln.

These experiments have been successful and it is hoped that during this year wood waste would be used as a part of the fuel that the people at Linden would be using in the manufacture of alumina.

I also would like to say this juncture on our programme of energy that the Mabura Hill complex in order to meet its contractual arrangements would have to supply 100,000 tons of

sawn lumber. To achieve this the area of forestry which has had to be removed would produce 800,000 of bio-mass and this is tree trunks, and species which are not used, and branches etc. This 800,000 tons of bio-mass, when it is properly cured turns to 500,000 tons of wood chip/fuel. This can be changed by a simple process which we are now looking at into methanol. The amount of methanol that can be obtained from 250,000 tons of this type of fuel is about 125,000. This amounts to a daily output of about, 5,500 barrels of methanol. If we were talking of natural oil we would have said this amount to an oil well.

Methanol is used as the base of the plastic industry and methanol can also be changed into gasoline. This is done in Australia and the cost of changing one litre of methanol into gasoline is twelve Guyana cents. So our programme of wood gasification has a number of opportunities which are engaged the attention of those in the energy sector.

I would like to say a word on hydro power. Last times were given a tremendous discourse on the Tiger Hill system and I would like to say a word on the Tiger Hill system. Tiger Hill is situated some 610 or so miles from Linden and what we heard from the Minority members was that they had advised the Government- this is what they said- that the Government should develop Tiger Hill. What we did not get from the Minority: what is the capacity of Tiger Hill, what kind of power was Tiger Hill supposed to be giving? Of course, Cde. Ram Karran said- when the P.P.P. handed over the Guyana Electricity Corporation to the present Government the capacity at Kingston 'B' Station was 20 megawatts and it was opined that the Tiger Hill site should have been develop instead of an additional hydrocarbon set which has made the Kingston station 30 megawatts. Now Tigerhill is 15 megawatts and the cost of Tiger Hill was \$61 million. (U.S.).

9.40 p.m.

There is a figure that is used in hydropower work which must be taken into consideration when you are going to conceive a hydropower installation and that figure is the index cost per kilowatt – dollars per kilowatt. Now, the figure per kilowatt or the index cost of Tiger Hill is \$2,440. The index cost at that time of an equivalent set that was using Bunker "C" – and remember, Cde. Speaker, we are talking of a period when there was no energy crisis, when oil was cheap – a comparative system was \$640 (US) per kilowatt. The difference in price is so large that anyone who was really interested in the development of this country would go for a Bunker "C" system. Event at this stage, according to this report which was recently done, Tiger Hill remains not a feasible system to be developed.

There is another thing about hydropower when people want to talk about it which must be taken into consideration. A hydropower system consists, like any other system, of generation and transmission. When you have generated your power you have to remove that power to a site or to an area where the power could be used. The total cost of any system – any generating system – must include its transmission and distribution costs.

This is the reason, Cde. Speaker that Upper Mazaruni on which this Government is equivocally set is the best site there is in Guyana which would satisfy the needs of this country

for the balance of this century and well cost into the next. The next cost of the Upper Mazaruni scheme is about \$640 (US) per kilowatt and we have other schemes which are more attractive the Tiger Hill. The Tiboku scheme, if we were to look at it, would cost \$806 (US) per kilowatt hour.

Cde. Speaker, we are not putting all our eggs in one basket, nor are we dictated to by those foreign consultants who come to this country. We have had a study of the hydropower facilities in this country and 50 hydropower schemes have been surveyed. Out of these schemes we are irrevocably decided on the development of the Upper Mazaruni as the ultimate system which can satisfy the needs of this country.

Cde. Speaker, our other energy activity includes uranium mining. This is an activity which is looked upon as a possibility source of energy, although this would not be used in this country since this country is endowed with other forms of energy which can suffice. Suffice it to say, however, that there is a company now that is doing uranium exploration and we are hoping that the exploitation of this energy source would bring some positive results.

Now, Cde. Speaker, our other activities in the field of energy especially a heavy energy is the exploitation of oil. Some people want to have a blueprint on the development of energy in this country. The development of energy in this country is a complex development. It is a development that takes into consideration the use of energy for small users and the use or finding of energy for heavy users. If our industrial revolution must progress, if we must go on developing this nation, then we will have to find our own energy sources.

I would like to say of the energy profile of this country, that the activities in which we are engaged, are designed to find cheap energy in order that our economic situation can be improved. As I earlier said, there is great merit in our President's assertion that this year 1981 is called the "Year of Energy", for in this activity alone lies the future of this country or the tragedy of this country. If we are going to continue to pay enormous prices for hydrocarbon energy, then we are going to be in trouble. If, however, and we have all reason to believe, we can find and exploit the sources of indigenous energy, the fears of increased costs at the Guyana Electricity Corporation would all be wiped away because then it would be easy to generate energy at a cheaper cost for the betterment and benefit of the nation as a whole.

The Speaker: Cde. Caldeira.

Cde. Calderia: Cde. Speaker, I crave your indulgence to allow me to extend a few words of appreciation to the President, the Prime Minister, Ministers and members of the People's National Congress for having the privilege to be in this National Assembly, the highest forum in this country, and to be able to play an active role in the molding of the destiny of this nation. It is simply because of the conviction of the People's National Congress to socialism that today you would see representatives from a broad section of the working class taking part in the construction of socialism in this peaceful and beautiful green land of Guyana, one of the most beautiful countries in the world.

Previously, the working class in Guyana and in most countries of the world, excluding the socialist countries, had only one role to play and that was the role of the beast of burden in the society, that is to produce, but not good enough to take part in the decision-making in the country. Today in Guyana because of the socialist policy of the People's National Congress, it can clearly be clearly be sad without fear of contradiction that with the new Constitution the People's National Congress has politically emancipated the working class of Guyana. Today you can see the true manifestation of the working class in their forward march to build socialism this country.

Once again, without the fear of contradiction, it can clearly be counted and will go down in the history of this country as one of the great achievements of the only genuine socialist party in Guyana, the People's National Congress. [Applause.]

Being a farmer by profession I would like to deal with some of the Government's achievements in agriculture. In the time of the P.P.P. Government, the G.M.C. used to buy only 13 crops from the farmers at the lowest possible price. With the advent of the People's National Congress, it became possible for the G.M.C. to purchase all the crops that the farmers produced. The G.M.C. over the period of years purchased 34 different crops at a more economical price. I will give you a run down of the 13 crops that was purchased during the time of the People's Progressive Party.

During the 1964 period, plantains were sold at 4 cents per pound. Today they were getting 29 cents per pound, an increase of 625 per cent. Eddoes, 3 cents per pound. Today we are getting 25 cents per pound, an increase of 733 per cent. Sweet potatoes, the purchase price at that time was 4 cents per pound. Today we are getting 26 cents per pound, an increase of 550 per pound. Tannis, 4 cents per pound. Today we are getting 35 cents per pound, an increase of 975 per cent. Yams, 4 cents per pound. Today we are getting 43 cent per pound, an increase of 550 per cent. Oranges were sold at 2 cents each, \$2 per hundred. Today we are getting 16 cents per pound, an increase of 700 per cent. Grapefruit were sold at 2 cents each, \$2 per hundred. Today we are getting 10 cents, an increase of 400 per cent. Pumpkins were purchased at 4 cents per pound. Today, the price is 15 cents, an increase of 275 per cent. Coffee beans were purchased at that time at 45 cents per pound. Now it is \$3 per pound, an increase of 567 per cent. Black eye peas were purchased at that time at 16 cents per pound. Today we are getting \$1.10, an increase of 588 per cent. Corn: the purchasing price at that time was six cents per pound. Today we are getting 24 cents per pound, which is an increase of 300 per cent. Sweet cassava: the purchasing price was 1 ½ cents per pound. Today it is 18 cents per pound, an increase of 1100 per cent. Cocoa beans were purchased at 30 cents per pound. If any firm wants cocoa to buy, the G.M.C. buys at \$1.30 per pound, which is an increase of 333 ½ per cent.

In addition, we have 21 other crops which can be called new crops. In the field of new crops Carambola-this crop was only used by births, children and pregnant women. Today we have an export market foe carambola. The Government will build a factory in the Pomeroon for processing this crop by mid-1981. Carambola is one of the most economical crops to grow in the Pomeroon and most parts of Guyana. We the farmers are very grateful to the P.N.C for this [Applause]

Cassava was cultivated by the Amerindians on a very limited scale as a means of subsistence. Today we have three factories- one at Look out, one at Mabaruma and one at Charity. We the farmers have a ready market for cassava. We cannot produce for the factories. I have with the production figures for 1980. The mill at Charity in 1980 bought 1,616,331 pounds of bitter cassava.

They made 317,270 pounds of cassava flour, 64,865 pounds of cassava middling's, 3,341 pounds of cassava starch and 173.7 gallons of casareep. We the farmers have a lot to thank the Government for. We fully realise that Rome was not built in a day and that great God took seven days to build this world. We are prepared to stand the P.N.C come what they may to build Guyana. [Applause]

Land development. The Amazon Land Settlement. Steps will be taken by the Commissioner of Lands and Surveys to cancel and repossess the lots and a fair system of distribution will be done. Only the needy will get a lot and only one to a person, or family. Those who already have will not get.

A new stelling will be built at Charity and a new bond for storing farmers crops by 1981/2. This Government, the people's Government, has built three new stellings or wharves to facilitate farmers in the Pomeroon River.

A propagation station will be built at Charity by mid-1981. The old nursery will be re-activated. Another propagation station for the distribution of planting materials etc. Will be built in 1981 at Supenaam on the Essequibo coast.

A Marketing centre and crate factory will be built at Charity in 1981/2. The Marketing centre will cost \$2,936,581.75. The crate factory will be built in 1981 at a cost of \$400,000. Another marketing centre will be built at Supenaam on the Essequibo Coast at a value of \$1,389,649.47.

Medical. In the medical field an ambulance will be stationed at Charity at any time now. We have a Medex and there is a well-equipped boat which services the Pomeroon River. [Applause.] We have also extended the service to a place called Karawab, about 50 miles from Charity. The postal service will be extended also.

Education. The Government is right now building a new primary school at Karawab. At St. Monica we are about to start to build a Home Economics Centre. At Kabakaburi we will build a nursery school. These projects should be completed by mid- 1981.

Over the last three years, Region 2 has built or established over 29 nursery schools. Time does not permit me to speak more on education.

In conclusion I will now categorically say that we the farmers and working class are perfectly satisfied with the progress made by the People's National Congress and that we are prepared to give our service in the construction of socialism in this beautiful green land of Guyana. [Applause.]

ADJOURNMENT

Resolved, "That this Assembly do now adjourn until Tuesday, 3rd March, 1981, at 2.p.m." [The Vice-President, Parliamentary Affairs and Party/State Relations.]

Adjourned accordingly at 9.57 p.m.