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Speeches in the National Assembly

Honouring The 21st August, 2012 Agreement Between The Government Of Guyana And The Regional Democratic Council, Region 10 - Morion

Speech delivered at: 59th Sitting - Tenth Parliament - 27 June, 2013 (<https://parliament.gov.gy/sittings/detail/59thsitting-tenth-parliament>)

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Mr. Morian: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am happy to stand and support the motion. The fact that we are here today simply means that the agreement or agreements were not honoured. I am always worried when agreements between governments and communities are made, especially when it was at a time when tensions were very high and things escalated to a point where three of our citizens were murdered and up to now...

Mr. Speaker: Proceed please.

Mr. Morian: Yes, Sir. The people of Region No. 10 placed a lot of confidence in the Government when they moved to have this agreement established and as I said earlier I am very disturbed because history is replete with incidents that follow when agreements are made between people and their governments. I remember... I could take you back to the Munich agreement in 1938 when Hitler made agreement with the allies and broke it in 1939 which followed with World War II and about 60,000,000 people died.

I remember in British Columbia in 2000 when the government moved to compensate workers after the government broke an agreement... after the government passed the 2002 contract breaking legislation known as "Bill 29" to break the agreement they had with their own people. The government recognised that as a government while both sides – government and people – have responsibilities the government, through the leader of the day, should set the stage, the ground work, the foundation for change. Hence, they compensated the workers with the sum of lots of millions of dollars because the government recognised, as government, the onus is on you to lead a country and to find every conceivable means to bring peace.

I listened to the Hon. Member, Minister Benn, and he spoke of evidence. Those of us who might be lawyers who have had the opportunity

of going through Law 101 will tell you that a lot of times cases are closed and all the evidence is in; that is why there are cold cases, but this evidence that I am going to present here was not presented. The people of Region No. 10, recognising that costs are escalating, did present to the Hon. Prime Minister a counter proposal as it relates to what is happening in Region No. 10 and this did not come out as part of the evidence. The Government of Guyana gave to Region No. 10 a donation of energy saving bulbs that came from Cuba. When these bulbs were tested and tried we recognised that if the entire Region No. 10 was exposed to these very same bulbs, and we worked it out, there would have been huge savings. We moved to present another side or another view to the Hon. Prime Minister that one could give import license either to Linden Electricity Incorporated (LEI) or to the Linden Co-op Society to bring in these bulbs and we identified, we adumbrate the kind of savings that would have been made. We never got a response on that proposal. That proposal is still available to be put on the table.

I do not find it so difficult in dealing with this matter. The people of Region No. 10 continue to search for change. Our expectations of any government or the government of the day would seek at all times to engage the people. I heard the Hon. Member speak of the Linden Economic Network, but I need to bring to this House that the Linden Economic Network is without funding, is without a board. The staff members there are renting the offices to pay themselves salaries. I did not hear that in this presentation.

We need to understand what would push a community to levels where they will take all kinds of actions to highlight their position. I would not want to go back to all of the economic issues but pertinent to the minds of Lindeners is the fact that Linden boasted a steam power plant that was sold without consultation with the people of Region No. 10, hence, every time the matter of electricity comes up these matters come up. I like the presentation by the Hon. Member who said that there needs to be reconciliation. These things need to come to the table and be discussed because our power station was sold to a company overseas without any consultation with the people. It collapsed and this very Government went to arbitration in the States. These things were not discussed. These things were not brought to this House. It seems like we just woke up one day and felt that we do not want to pay but Lindeners are aggrieved to the point when we recognised that we had something working and the Government took it from us without even having the courtesy to come and talk to us and these matters are still outstanding. That is why I said that cases are closed and one has to have cold cases because all of the evidence are never involved in the case at the time.

The call for an independent television station is because the people in Region No. 10 are fed up with Government propaganda and waste of time that comes through the television. I submit to you that the programme seems like a deliberate attempt to under develop Region No. 10 and the best way to do it is through information, disinformation, misinformation and all kinds of crazy information. What is happening in Region No. 10 and why is there this call to have this agreement back on board? It is that the common citizen now finds themselves buying DVDs because we definitely are avoiding the channels that are coming through. We want to develop our culture. We want to hear from our leaders. We are hearing from all kinds of nefarious characters coming through to Region No. 10 and we are saying that it is time for us to go on a path of self determination that relates to what we are hearing. I do not feel that we have gone beyond. I would sincerely like to see a reconvening of the whole process but we need to note that the Hon. Minister Benn spoke like this agreement happened before the demonstration. The agreement was the sum total of what took place; hence, one cannot go back to what happened before the agreement. The agreement is the sum total that evolved based on what took place; hence, the agreement is the vehicle to move forward so I want to say that my call is for a reconvening and all of the semantics I am listing here – I live in Region No. 10 – all of what is coming through... I heard one of the Hon. Members say 'once your application is correct', all of a sudden there are all kinds of things that will happen to your application but I like the question that you posed, 'How soon will all of this be done?' I am calling again, Sir, to have this agreement executed. As I said I have seen, I have lived long enough to see, Governments renege on agreements and what happens? I do not think, and I am speaking from a perspective of Region No. 10... I do not feel that, as one Member said, while we are here this will continue to be protracted. At some point it will stop but I am hoping that it stops, not in the way the Munich Agreement was dissolved. I hope that it could stop in a very peaceful way and we all could see the development of Region No. 10. Thank you. [Applause]

Speech delivered by:

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