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This Government is more open to scrutiny than ever before

The comment by the Opposition that the Government wishes 'to prevent scrutiny by Parliament of Government policy' is absurd.

It is obvious that they are now running out of arguments and wriggling on the hook.

Within one month of taking office, this Government published its official statistics on-line, something that had never been done before. By doing this, all kinds of data was made available to anyone who was interested, not just Members of Parliament.

A few weeks later, audio recordings of Parliamentary debates were also made available on-line to the public and then, at the end of January, these debates were also made available in text form (ie Hansard) in record time. These initiatives are hardly the mark of a Government that is afraid of closer scrutiny!

But, most surprising of all, is that Mr Feetham and the Opposition should raise the subject of Parliamentary 'Question and Answer' sessions.

The accusation that when in Opposition the GSLP/Liberals did not support a motion to increase the number of sessions is, like much of what Mr Feetham has said, an irrelevant red herring. The point is that the new Government was elected in December and introduced monthly meetings of Parliament in January. Mr Feetham's party had 16 years in which to do this and they failed to do so. This year there have been meetings for questions in January, February, March, May and June. There will be another meeting for questions in July. The GSD Government very often used to have two or three meetings a year and in 2003 there was only one opportunity for the then Opposition to question them in Government.

Therefore, whilst the previous GSD Government averaged fewer than 3 such sessions per year, this current Government has already provided 5 sessions in its first 7 months in power! If this is not opening itself up to scrutiny than we don't know what is!

Deputy Chief Minister, Dr Joseph Garcia said:

“It is the height of irony that the Opposition should behave as if they did not have this very poor track record when they were in Government. The public can see through the smokescreen.”