

THE CAMPAIGN
FOR
SOCIALISM AND DEMOCRACY
IN GUYANA

**

Source Documents of the People's
Progressive Party
(1965-1991)

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[Compiler and Editor]

GNI Publications
Georgetown Caracas Boston Toronto Montreal

Internet Edition

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Dedication and Thanks

This volume is the brainchild of the late Mrs. Janet Jagan, one of the great leaders and a founder-member of the People's Progressive Party. In early 2009, she suggested to me that the Party, as part of its 60th anniversary commemoration, should publish its main documents to show how it carried out its campaign to promote its socialist ideology while simultaneously waging a struggle to win back democracy for Guyana. After a series of telephone conversations and e-mail contacts, we both agreed to the compilation of the documents in this volume. Mrs. Jagan died in March 2009 before the editing of this work was completed.

To her everlasting memory I dedicate this volume.

I must also thank the Cheddi Jagan Research Centre for providing to me the text of most of the documents in this collection. And my special appreciation goes to my brother, Jamaladeen Ishmael, who assisted me most diligently in proof-reading the text and checking other details of an editorial nature.

Odeen Ishmael
Caracas, 2010

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Introduction

In December 1964, despite winning the national elections with the highest proportion (almost 46 percent) of votes under the British-imposed electoral system of proportional representation, the People's Progressive Party (PPP) was replaced as the government of Guyana (then British Guiana) by a coalition of the People's National Congress (PNC) and the United Force (UF), which together polled more than the 50 percent of votes. As a result, the PPP was relegated to the Opposition, and was kept in that position by a series of fraudulent elections in 1968, 1973, 1980 and 1985, all managed and conducted by the PNC regime.

Despite being forced in the Opposition for such a long period, the PPP maintained its close contacts with its supporters throughout the country and remained a formidable political force under the leadership of Dr. Cheddi Jagan. And due to its own struggles, locally and internationally, the party, working with other political allies, was able to force concessions for free and fair elections at the beginning of the 1990s from the PNC regime. Eventually, in the first free and fair elections in almost three decades, a PPP-led government was elected to power in October 1992. Democracy was finally restored to Guyana.

From the first day of 1950 when the PPP was first established, it stated firmly that its objective was to establish socialism as the political and economic system for Guyana. The Party was mass-based and drew multi-racial support in both the urban and rural areas from workers, farmers, small business-people, a large section of the middle class. Many of its leaders, since then, were "socialists" or "Marxist-Leninists".

The Party's socialist ideology drew the wrath of both British and American imperialism, as well as local pro-capitalist political groups in 1953, and then after 1957 from the People's National Congress (PNC) and the United Force (UF). Ironically, the PNC, while claiming to be "socialist" was the PPP's leading challenger and openly opposed the pro-socialist policies of the PPP governments from 1957 to 1964. The PNC also accepted covert financial support from the US government after 1962 to assist in the political and extra-political efforts to remove the PPP from the government.

Despite its removal from power after the 1964 elections, the PPP, true to its principles, never abandoned its objective of striving towards the establishment of socialism in Guyana. It constantly agitated on behalf the working people and urged the PNC-led regimes from 1965 to abandon its pro-capitalist policies and to establish a tri-sectoral economy involving the state, private enterprise and cooperatives.

Interestingly, the PNC regime, after 1973, began to propagate some similar ideas, as it gradually began to promote itself as a "socialist" party based on the tenets of "Marxism-Leninism".

However, the PNC's brand of socialism was proclaimed as "cooperative socialism", a utopian idea in which the cooperatives were touted as the main engine of economic growth. "Cooperative socialism" never brought any practical economic benefits to the vast majority of the Guyanese people, but its propagation by the PNC only assisted to distort the ideas of Marxist socialist ideology.

The Guyanese people's living conditions deteriorated drastically under the rule of the PNC, no doubt also due to the fact that the PNC refused to practice democracy, and unashamedly rigged national and local government elections to maintain dictatorial powers.

The PPP had always maintained that socialism could not be built without democracy, and ever since it was removed from power through the machinations of the British-imposed proportional representation electoral system, it maintained a valiant struggle for the return of democracy in Guyana. At first it waged a lone battle, but gradually other political and social forces join the struggle. The Party mobilised its supporters all over the country, some of whom sacrificed their lives for the cause. International support from the West was also won, particularly

after the collapse of the Soviet Union, when the PPP was no longer seen as a “communist threat”.

This collection of PPP documents gives a clear picture of the Party’s campaign for socialism and democracy in Guyana from 1965 to 1991 — the period when it languished in the opposition. Numerous PPP documents relevant to this campaign exist, including reports to county conferences and special national party conferences, including the report to the 1969 special conference when the Party announced that it was transforming itself into a Marxist-Leninist organisation, and those of other regional and county conferences in the 1970s on opening political dialogue with the PNC. However, issues raised in those regional, county and special conferences are generally included in the main documents in this volume.

These documents — the congress reports and the papers on “critical support” and the proposal for a “National Patriotic Front” — not only analysed the political, economic and social conditions existing in the specific periods, but also discussed the political developments in various regions and countries, and showed how they influenced the political situation in Guyana. They also provide a vivid description of the PPP’s strategy as an opposition party in maintaining its links with its grassroots support while conducting a political struggle to win support for its ideology and, most importantly, working towards building alliances to combat a dictatorial regime and restore democracy to Guyana.

Odeen Ishmael
(Editor)
April 2010

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The Twelfth Congress

Report of the General Secretary, Mrs. Janet Jagan, to the Twelfth Annual Congress of the PPP — Zeeburg, West Coast Demerara, 17-19 April 1965

Comrades,

Unlike previous Annual Reports, this one covers two years, as the last Congress was held during the Easter weekend of 1963 at Tain, Corentyne.

Comrades will recall that a 1964 Congress was tentatively planned for the Easter weekend of that year but because of numerous requests from members who were then involved in the sugar industry strike and therefore could not give the attention required for preparation for Congress, the 1964 annual Congress was deferred indefinitely. The events following that postponement made it impracticable for a Congress to be held before this time.

Congress meets this year when our country is at the most critical stage of its struggle for freedom and economic development. The prevailing crisis conditions are the result of successful Cold War manoeuvres by Anglo-American imperialism determined, in combination with local forces of reaction, to crush our Party and therefore halt our country's advance to socialism.

After the recent electoral fraud, a government representative of less than half of the population has been imposed on Guianese; the inevitable process, with such a government, of mortgaging our country to international monopolies is well underway; many of the admirable self-help fiscal measures introduced by our Party have been jettisoned to make our country more dependent on the imperialist West; the long overdue budget with all its concessions to big business (as we expected) will produce a deficit of over \$4.5 million and increase the tax burden on all other Guianese; victimisation on racial, political and other grounds is being openly practised by the puppet government and the big employers who back it; all indications are, with the colonial power's refusal thus far to act on the Party's five demands, that our country faces a ruthless right wing dictatorship at the hands of power hungry mercenaries to whom full powers may be handed over at any time under American pressure.

For the record, the Party's five demands are:

- 1) The release of all detainees;
- 2) New constitutional arrangements to bring about a political settlement acceptable to the great majority of the people of the country;
- 3) New elections and a changed electoral system;
- 4) Voting at 18 years; and
- 5) The reconstituting of the police and security forces, so that they reflect a broad cross section of the population.

The grave signs and indications mentioned call for a strong, united Party that can mobilise the support of patriotic Guianese and restore to the working class movement those workers who have been led astray by the exploitation of ethnic and other differences and by false promises of material betterment. As we all knew, only socialism can provide abundance for all.

Any attempt, from within or without, at this critical juncture or at any other time, to weaken the Party by causing further divisions will be an act of treachery more serious than previous ones, because betrayal now would make survival impossible. Witness the continued existence of a state of emergency unwarranted by prevailing conditions; the continued detention and harassment of Party members; the British Order in Council enabling the Governor to hand over the management of the emergency to a coalition of parties with known terrorist gangs attached to them; and the so-called manpower survey with all its sinister implications. These are positive indicators of more extreme forms of repression to come. We certainly cannot afford the luxury of internal dissention, which only provides comfort to the enemy and the encouragement he needs to plot our total destruction.

One has only to observe the barrenness of the most recent Throne Speech, with its avoidance of fundamental issues, and the 1965 deficit budget with its built-in subsidies to big business and the wealthy to realise that the UF/PNC alliance does not, as the Party had warned, intend to prevent the rich from becoming richer and thereby not improving the condition of the poor. These factors, in conjunction with the coalition's monetary policy (to be disclosed when the Bank of Guyana bill is published), will further expose the government's brazen hypocrisy to its mass support. We must be united and strong to take advantage of all opportunities to open the eyes of the misled working class supporters of this coalition created by the avowed enemies of socialism.

INDEPENDENCE CONFERENCE

Since the last Congress in 1963, several important events in the life of our country have occurred, most of them unfortunately bringing suffering and destruction, contributing to the present state of fear, and threatening the future welfare and security of more than one-half of the people. In a report of this nature, it is impossible to chronicle and deal with all of these events.

One important event, however, during the period under review, was the Independence Conference in London. Held towards the end of 1963, the Conference was really the reconvening of the freedom talks sabotaged by the UF and PNC in 1962 in their efforts to block independence.

Tory trickery and duplicity in their basest terms were revealed by the unprincipled Sandys imposition at the end of the Conference. The introduction of proportional representation and the changes in the voter registration system were all designed to rob the Party of political office since all the past Tory electoral manipulations under first-past-the-post had failed to do this. These manoeuvres were well in keeping with British complicity in the unsuccessful treasonable efforts of the political opposition since February 1962, to overthrow the PPP government.

As soon as the details of the evil Sandys plan to install the opposition in office by foul means were made known, there was a flood of protests from all over the country. The Party organised countrywide protest rallies on Sunday, November 17, 1963, and the British governor's residence was picketed all day on November 27 by the Women's Progressive Organisation.

Notwithstanding the protests of Guianese and of people in Britain and elsewhere, the Tory scheme to oust the Party from the government was put into operation, without a single modification, by the succeeding Labour government in Britain at a premature general election on December 7, 1964.

GENERAL ELECTION, 1964

After much lengthy discussions within the Party, the decision to contest the general election under protest was made, and the Party machinery geared for this purpose. Prior to this decision, however, was the previous one, taken after most careful consideration, to participate fully in the registration of voters for the PR general election.

The Party put up a list of 35 candidates (corresponding to the 35 first-past-the-post constituencies under the 1961 constitution) instead of 53 as required under the Sandys plan. This was in keeping with the Party's decision to contest under protest.

The result of the election, despite rigging against the PPP, was a clear vote of confidence in the Party. The PPP emerged the majority party, with the highest number of popular votes (109,332). The Party's percentage of the votes cast rose by 3.2 over that secured in 1961, while both PNC and UF percentages decreased by 0.4 and 3.9 respectively.

On the basis of the 35 constituencies for the 1961 general election, the Party won again in 20 of them — an overall majority which would have ensured its retention of office but for the dishonest introduction of PR to rob it of the government.

Under the fraudulent Sandys system of PR, the Party's share of the 53 seats was only 24. The UF and PNC, as the British had planned at the dictation of their senior imperialist partner, now form the government. The Party's very apt commentary — "cheated, but not defeated" — is not only a reminder of the foulest British deed in our long colonial history, but also an inspiration to the movement to persist in the struggle for national reunification and socialism by exposing the pro-imperialist creature that is now the government.

The majority findings of the Commonwealth team that observed the conduct of the PR election came as no surprise to the Party. The Minority Report, however, clearly stated the position and named those who cheated at the election. The frauds committed against the Party before and during the election were all consistent with the very nature of the manipulations and innovations of the British. What else could a team handpicked by the British themselves do but whitewash?

INDEPENDENCE

The desire of the PNC for independence (previously sabotaged by it as a matter of policy) now that it is part of the US-inspired coalition is viewed with alarm by the vast majority of Guianese (including some UF members and supporters) who all know from personal experience and otherwise what they can expect from a party that has exploited race for political ends and planned and executed violence because of repeated failure to win power by honest means.

This Party, which has spearheaded the struggle for independence, cannot at this or any other time stand for anything less. This would be inconsistent with the socialist principles by which the Party is guided. It would also be equally unprincipled and irresponsible for the Party not to heed the danger signals along what has now become the perilous road to freedom because of the recent British electoral fraud committed in our country.

These signals indicate that the transfer of the residual powers held by the British to the terrorist PNC/UF alliance would spell doom for all who dare oppose the puppet regime. Honest dissent and the right peacefully to organise and protest would be replaced by naked oppression and the establishment of a ruthless dictatorship fully supported, financially and otherwise, by imperialist America once independence is handed over to the existing coalition without the five PPP demands (previously mentioned) being met.

The Party repeats its demand for independence under conditions that will remove all existing fears and give reasonable assurance that such independence will be real and not nominal. These conditions can be easily created if the administering power so wishes. But the Party is well aware of the dirty role being played by the American bully in our domestic affairs. US pressure can easily force the British to abandon us to the fate already described.

It is difficult for reasonable people to contemplate the handing over of full powers to two minority parties that sit in a parliamentary body in which more than one-half of the people are not represented. But though the British people may be reasonable, their rulers are not unlikely to be under American dictation. And therein lies the grave danger facing our country.

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Because of the political situation in 1963 and 1964 and the lengthy periods of disturbances, the programme of Party education suffered. It was not possible to carry out many ac-

tivities except one series of weekend seminars. Accabre College, which will be dealt with in another report, was obliged to close down during 1964 because of the general disturbances.

A seminar for Party organisers was held early in 1965, and it is felt that this, the first such training exercise, was highly successful. At the present time, weekend seminars are in progress, and it is intended to keep them going. A programme of study for the Party leadership is also in progress.

A new feature of Party educational work has been the holding of film shows. The periodic weekly lecture series at Freedom House, open to the public, continued throughout the period.

MEMBERSHIP

Since the last Congress in 1963, Party membership increased by some 12,000, the most remarkable period of increase being that prior to the 1964 general election.

There are now 255 groups and 33 constituency committees on our register.

SCHOLARSHIPS

During 1963 more students went abroad on scholarships allocated by the Party, bringing the total number now overseas on PPP scholarships to approximately 71. Because of the situation in 1964, scholarships were not awarded. This year, however, there is a resumption, and the Scholarship Committee, made up of the Party Chairman, the General Secretary, the Secretary of the PPP Education Trust, the Education Officer, and a representative of the PYO, are presently working on the selection of students. Our first fully qualified student, Comrade Fred Sookdeo, sent on a Party scholarship to study economics, has now returned to British Guiana. He is rendering valuable assistance to our scholarship work.

COMMITTEES & STAFF

Functioning committees of the Party include: the Trade Union Committee, the Propaganda Committee, the Finance Committee, the Rice Committee, the Coordinating Committee, of the PPP and its Sections (PYO and WPO), and the Scholarship Committee.

The staff at Freedom House include the following: The Office Manager, General Secretary, three typists, two clerks, the Education Officer, the Organising Officer, and personnel concerned with transport and sales, extra-Party activities, as well as those in the offices of the PYO and WPO, and in Michael Forde Bookshop.

The Party now has 13 full-time organisers, 3 part-time organisers, and 8 voluntary organisers. This is a great increase in the number we had in years past. Our sincerest thanks are due to those comrades rendering voluntary service to the Party at much sacrifice to themselves.

PUBLICATIONS

During the period under review, the Party's official organ, *Thunder*, ceased to be a weekly and began to appear monthly, sometimes less frequently. With the February-March issue of 1964, the format of *Thunder* was changed and the contents of the journal now seek to give better theoretical guidance to Party members and supporters.

The editorship of *Thunder* changed during this period. Comrade Hubbard, who served as editor for a while, assumed other Party duties, and his place was filled by two other comrades, Zaman Ali and Audrey Chase, as co-editors.

The regular publication of booklets, pamphlets, handbills, and the like, is a standing Party activity. During the disturbances, and before, during, and after the election campaign, the output of these publications naturally increased. Time and space do not permit the listing of all publications here, but the more important recent ones have been:

Dr. Jagan's Freedom Rally Speech
Sugar, Yesterday and Today
The Racialists of Guyana
British Guiana's Future — Peaceful or Violent?
What is Socialism? (by Richard Hart)
Workers of Guiana, Reunite!
The Anatomy of Poverty in British Guiana (by Cheddi Jagan)

GUARDIAN LIBRARY

The Party library, which had grown somewhat during the past years, had to be closed following the bombing of Freedom House. Guardian Library is now being reorganised for reopening, which is expected to be by month-end.

MICHAEL FORDE BOOKSHOP

The Progressive Bookshop continued to make steady progress and now provides a unique source of the finest progressive literature in the country. During the period covered by this report, extensive damage was done to the bookshop and to Freedom House by a time-bomb planted by a terrorist connected with an opposition political party. Michael Forde, a comrade employed in the bookshop, in removing the bomb, paid with his life when it exploded; but his sacrifice saved the lives of many others in the building. A number of comrades were, however, injured by the explosion.

The Party immediately renamed the bookshop for Michael Forte, whose courage and sacrifice saved the lives of so many others and prevented the total destruction of Freedom House.

OBITUARIES

During April 1963, the Party suffered a severe loss in the sudden death of comrade Claude Christian, Minister of Home Affairs. Many sterling tributes were paid to him for his selfless devotion to the Party and for the many fine qualities he possessed, not the least of which were his modesty and his lack of desire for high office, which he nevertheless held at the time of his passing only because of persuasion by the Party.

It is with deep regret that this report must also record the passing of a number of other devoted comrades. Included among them are: Bally Lachmansingh (legislator in the 1953 PPP government) and comrades Boniface Brutus and Baptiste.

POST-ELECTION PARTY REORGANISATION

In order to streamline the activities of the Party and its associated organisations so that they may all make better contributions to the harder struggle facing the movement now that the Party has been cheated of office, leading comrades and most of the former Ministers have been assigned special full-time duties and placed on the Party payroll. This reorganisation is aimed at making the Party and associated units more efficient, and involves decentralisation of the administrative machinery to relieve Party headquarters of unnecessary work that can be performed by regional or area committees.

Among the assignments of responsibilities made are the following:

- Education, Accabre College, Scholarships — Comrade Ranji Chandisingh.
- International Bureau — Comrade Charles Jacob (honorary position)
- Fund Raising — Comrade M. Yassin.
- Party Organisation — Comrade C. V. Nunes.
- Roving Party Organiser — Comrade George Robertson.

OVERSEAS ORGANISATIONS

The party continued to maintain and strengthen contacts with fraternal organisations overseas. Efforts to establish relations with other progressive organisations abroad, particularly in Latin America, are being made, since the struggle for a better world is a universal one. We have particularly close ties with the Movement for Colonial Freedom in London, and are forging closer links with a number of overseas organisations, including the Progressive Labour Movement which is launching this very month a Marxist-Leninist party in the United States, the Anti-Apartheid Movement in London working for the release of South African political prisoners, the United Democratic Left of Greece, and others.

PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

The new Parliamentary Group met on a few occasions since the last general election and elected certain officers, including Whips, in the event of the Group having, as a matter of strategy, occasionally to participate in the legislative process.

BREACH OF PARTY DISCIPLINE

The General Council had decided, after consulting the Parliamentary Group, that Party members of the Legislature should boycott the initial proceedings of the House of Assembly and swear-in, with the object of limited participation, only after the ceremonial opening of the House. The date of entry was left to be determined by the Party Executive. One member of the Parliamentary Group, Sheik Mohamed Saffee, breached Party discipline by breaking the boycott and entering the Legislature before the Executive had fixed a date on which all PPP legislators should swear in. The Executive promptly decided to expel Mr. Saffee after he was unable to offer satisfactory reasons for his action. The Parliamentary Group later unanimously endorsed the act of the Executive.

The Executive Committee has now decided that Party legislators shall swear in during the 1965 budget debate.

SECURITY

The activities of terrorist gangs attached to the PNC and the UF have made it imperative that continuous security measures be maintained at Freedom House. The danger of sudden attack on former Ministers and other leading comrades is still present. The Party is therefore providing such comrades with night watchmen at their homes.

REPORTS OF CONSTITUENT PARTY UNITS

Separate reports on the activities of Party Sections (WPO and PYO), and on Accabre College, and a paper on Party organisation will be presented to the Congress.

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE PARTY AND ITS SECTIONS

Differences of opinion have recently arisen with respect to the constitutional relationship between Party Sections and the parent organisation, the PPP. The duties, functions and obligations of Sections, explicit and implicit in the Party's constitution, have been challenged by the PYO. The Executive Committee has therefore appointed a sub-committee to consider, with representatives of the PYO and WPO, the whole question of the relationship of Sections to the Party, and more specifically the refusal of the PYO to carry out the directions of the Executive requiring the prior approval by the Party of four public statements issued by the PYO at a rally

on the Parade Ground on Sunday, March 21, 1965. This sub-committee of the Executive, which has not yet reported, is proceeding with its work.

CONCLUSION

During the past two years the Party passed through what was probably the most difficult period of its existence thus far. While efforts are constantly being made by racial, religious and ether groups and individuals to cause further working class divisions, the necessity for vigilance assumes greater importance now that the enemy feels strong enough to bring about the total destruction of our movement.

The harmful influence of external forces on the weak links within is something which we all have to watch and expose as soon as it becomes manifest. Any division in our ranks at this time would be fatal. More than one-half of the people depend on the Party to safeguard the interests of the nation. This is a heavy responsibility, but not one impossible to discharge if we remain united and therefore strong. We cannot, we must not, fail the nation.

Long live the PPP!

-2-

The Thirteenth Congress

Report to the 13th Congress by Dr. Cheddi Jagan, Leader
of the PPP — Accabre College, Land of Canaan,
East Bank Demerara, 27-28 August 1966

Comrades,
Greetings!

Since our last Congress, many noteworthy events have taken place at home and abroad. At home, government policies are slowly but surely eroding the standard of living of the Guyanese people as a whole. Abroad, the split in the socialist camp continues to be a source of concern. Because of this, imperialist aggression has become more pronounced, resulting in several setbacks, particularly in the underdeveloped countries, most notably in the Dominican Republic, Brazil, Ghana, Indonesia and Ceylon, to name the principal areas.

In, spite of this, however, there are growing difficulties in the imperialist camp. An indication of this is the increasing number of strikes. The average annual number of strikes in the developed capitalist countries rose from 11,484 during the period 1946-52 to 12,855 between 1953-58, and 13,900 between 1959-64. In Canada, during the first six months of 1966, there were 359 strikes with 1,505,200 man-days lost. In July 1966 alone, there were 93,000 dissatisfied Canadians on strike. On July 27, close to 300 farmers stormed the Queen's Park Parliament Building in Toronto, Province of Ontario, to put their grievances to Premier John Roberts and Agriculture Minister William Stewart. This was the culmination of a farmers' campaign of demonstrations and road-blocks with tractors.

Referring to the present situation at unrest, John Tuner, Canadian Federal Minister without Portfolio, recently told a service club in Montreal that "anxiety over job security and fear of unemployment is the prime cause of industrial dispute in North America today - not wages or working conditions."

Henry Ford, in a speech to the National Association of Purchasing Agents in Detroit, in early 1966, gloomily surveying the situation in the USA, said: "I am troubled by the growth of violence, riots, vandalism, irresponsible demonstrations, the tendency toward rebellion for its own sake."

Gardner Ackley, Chairman of the US President's a Council of Economic Advisers, told businessmen that the main reason for some of the tension was the increasing profits gained from the working class by the monopoly capitalists. Profits after tax jumped 88 percent between early 1961 and late 1965. The 1965 net profits of US monopolies aggregated US\$45 billion, about four times as much as the annual average during the Second World War. Second quarter earnings in 1966 set new records. The Wall Street Journal reported the earnings of 498 companies as to 10.9 percent above the same period in 1965. Ackley warned, "It is time to ask whether a further rise in the share of profits in the national income is in the interest of business itself." He said that in the last five years of the US boom profits had climbed twice as fast as the gross national product, personal income or wages, and they should not continue to do so. "I think prices have been raised more than cost or prices have not been reduced where costs have fallen," he said, and warned that if businessmen continued to raise prices to increase their profit margin, labour will make demands and inflation will take off unfettered.

This kind of inflation has resulted in a lowering of the standard of living of the working class. On May 2, 1966, the US Department of Labor produced figures showing a decline in the workers' standard of living. A worker with three dependents in the New York-New Jersey metropolitan area took home \$84.26 per week during March in terms of 1957-59 dollars. A week before, his pay was \$84.67. The Department of Labor attributed wage losses to "higher social security tax and 3.2 percent increase in area and consumer prices."

Poverty is now a serious question which is plaguing the US policy makers. Even Time magazine, in its issue of May 13, 1966, devoted space to what it calls "Poverty — A War Within A War." It stated:

More than 7,500,000 Americans live in rat-infested tenements or tumbledown shacks that are officially and euphemistically classified as dilapidated; 1,500 US citizens still die yearly from diseases caused by malnutrition; 6,000,000 subsist on free government surpluses. In today's society, the nation's 11 million functional illiterates are relegated for life to the precarious ranks of the poor. Paradoxically, it is the neediest who are helped least by the welfare state. The majority of the poor reap no benefits from the social security, unemployment insurance, or the right to unionize. Farm subsidies mostly enrich the prosperous; the poorest farmers, with 40 percent of the working spreads in the US, account for a scant 7 percent of farm income. Public housing has brought the poor more eviction notices than new apartments and slum dwellers scornfully refer to urban renewal as urban removal. While Washington lavishes \$18 billion a year on a galaxy of welfare programmes — to which the state and local governments and private philanthropists add another \$15 billion — only the crumbs reach the bottom of the heap.

According to another authority, Michael Harrington, the estimated 32 million Americans who live in poverty "exist beyond history, beyond progress, sunk in a paralyzing, maiming routine."

In order to solve its growing financial and economic problems to conduct its so-called "War on Poverty" at home, to finance this vast military expenditure in Vietnam of about \$20 billion annually, to prop up US puppets elsewhere, the USA has taken action which has aggravated the difficulties of its allies.

In order to re-finance part of the National Debt (\$3,200 billion), the Treasury Department offered to the public \$8,000 million worth of notes at 5 percent, the highest interest rate since 1921. This, of course, will be an additional burden on US taxpayers later.

Increase of the bank rate in the USA, meant to prevent the flow of capital abroad, has put pressure on the pound sterling. Bank rates had to be raised also in the United Kingdom. Anti-making money dear and tight is affecting investments and employment. Indeed, unemployment looms as one of the biggest problems facing the Labour government in its "policy of restraints" — wages and incomes freeze.

Faced with balance of payments deficits, the US administration has also issued guidelines to Big Business to get US subsidiaries abroad to repatriate liquid assets and to purchase supplies, know-how, etc., from parent companies in USA.

This is part of the explanation for the recent sale by the Demerara Tobacco Company, a subsidiary of the giant British-American Tobacco Company Ltd. at 300,000 of its \$1 shares for \$1.75 each. The sale of one million dollars of shares by another lucrative foreign subsidiary company, Diamond Liquors, must be viewed against the background of Britain's balance of payments difficulties.

These measures have resulted in difficulties for countries such as Switzerland, France, Britain, West Germany, Japan and Canada where US investments and influence have been increasing since the war.

During 1946-1961, US capital abroad amounted to US\$32,895 million. Investments of US companies between 1959-64 amounted to 52 percent of investments in West European capitalist countries. In 1965 alone, US investments abroad amounted to \$7,400 million.

US private investments in the UK jumped from £72 million in 1958 (37 percent of total private investments in UK) to £126 million in 1963 ((40 percent of total private investments).

These investments are utilised for purchasing direct ownership of formerly British-owned companies or to establish US branch concerns.

Britain is also increasingly dependent on US, loans. This amounted to £1,639 million (70 percent of all foreign loans to the UK) in 1953 and to £1,462 million (81 percent) in 1964. Consequently, Britain is tending to become increasingly an appendage of the USA.

US private capital amounted in 1964 to 45 percent of all investments in France (\$2,250 million out of a total of \$5,000 million) and in 1963 to about 34 percent in West Germany. In Canada, US investments amounted to nearly \$25 billion with control of industry ranging from over 50 percent to 90 percent as follows:

Auto	— 97 percent.
Electrical	— 66 percent
Chemicals	— 54 percent
Farm equipment	— 52 percent
Total manufacturing	— over 50 percent
Oil and gas	— 60 percent
Mining and smelting	— 52 percent
Food canning	— 90 percent

Canada's economy is coming increasingly under US control. In 1965, there were 90 percent sales of Canadian-owned companies to foreign investors. The year before, there were 30 such takeovers. More recently, the Canadian government had to enact a Bank Act in order to prevent US takeover of Canadian banks. (There has been a steady increase of US banks overseas. In 1964, it was 26; in 1965 it was 38. Chase Manhattan Bank has broken into the monopoly of Barclays Bank and the Royal Bank of Canada in Guyana.)

Faced with increasing difficulties in recent times, particularly with balance of payments deficits, Canadians are voicing criticisms about US domination of their economy. Formerly, the campaign was led by communists, socialist and radicals. Now, even liberals and conservatives have joined.

Eric Kierans, the Liberal Quebec Minister of Health, speaking in February 1966 to the Toronto Society of Financial Analysts, openly attacked US dictation in economic matters:

Canada has passed in the last decades out of inherited political colonialism into a new economic colonialism, and we are . . . the only developed nation in the world with no 'economic autonomy'. . . The guidelines . . . will have the effect . . . of the US government increasingly influencing various segments of capital development in Canada. They represent, in my opinion, a tightening of the American grip on our economy that threatens the attainment of our own economic objectives and are an infringement of our political sovereignty. The guidelines will accentuate the structural distortion in our economy, weaken further our competitive position and increase our deficits on current account. . .

Under these guidelines issued by President Johnson to US big business, Canadian subsidiaries are forced to buy from parent companies in the USA goods and services which are obtainable in Canada.

Another Canadian, Walter L. Gordon, until a year ago Minister of Finance in the Liberal government, in a recently published book, *A Choice for Canada*, wrote: "Canadians ask themselves whether they have become free of Britain's colonial influence only to fall under the spell of the US economic imperialism." More than half of the 500 corporations in Canada with taxable incomes of at least \$1 million are controlled by foreigners. And more than one-third are wholly-owned subsidiaries in which Canada has no financial interest whatsoever.

Gordon went on: "Too much of Canadian industry is controlled abroad. Foreigners, with the aid of Canadian friends and agents, wield far too great an influence on public policy in Canada."

In another section of the book, he quoted John Foster Dulles, the brinkmanship man of the Eisenhower cabinet, as saying: "There are two ways of conquering a foreign nation — one is to gain control of its economy by financial means."

Later, he pointed out: "There is, as you know, in Europe a growing fear of massive US investment, a growing determination, as one European official somewhat exaggeratedly put it to Bernard Nossiter of the New Republic, 'not to become another Canada with our economic destiny determined in Detroit, Chicago and New York'."

Similar language is now being heard in Europe. Recently, President de Gaulle attacked the encroachment of United States capital in the French economy. The French Minister of Finance said that France did not object to foreign investments, "but only to excessive investments in certain crucial sectors of the economy." Professor Duverger in an article in *Le Monde* spoke even more forcibly. He said: "These investments are so many Trojan horses sent here by the United States and the outcome will be that the power of decision will be transferred to large American groups which today are more or less in control of the United States themselves."

Why this fear and resentment? Because US monopoly companies make and take out fantastic profits. This was recently exposed in the case of the US monopoly, Procter and Gamble. Writing about this monopoly in the magazine, *Dimension* (March/April 1966), C.W. Junich said:

Its capital outflow from the US was \$11 million. Its income from subsidiaries over the same period was \$290 million. The bulk of this income came in the form of sales of raw materials and equipment and new products to the subsidiaries (\$243 million); only \$47 million was received in the form of dividends. And as the chairman of Procter and Gamble, Neil McElroy, pointed out, net export of capital from the US comprised only a small portion of the investment of the foreign branch plants. The subsidiaries re-invested out of profits and borrowed from local financial institutions \$67 million. This is over six times the contribution made by capital exported by the parent company.

Little wonder today that Europeans complain of Europe becoming a colony of the USA, and that de Gaulle would like Europe to play a role independent of the United States and Britain.

At the same time, the growth of monopolies under capitalism continues unabated. In the USA, there were 2,361 mergers in 1965. There are more and more business failures and bankruptcies. For instance, in Japan in 1960, 1,172 firms went bankrupt, representing 65,200 million yen turnover. In 1964, there were 4,212 cases, amounting to 463,100 million yen turnover; that is, three-and-a-half times more. At the end of October, the number of bankrupt firms had reached 5,021 and their total turnover amounted to 475,600 million yen (101.3 yen = £1).

These contradictions in the Western camp are becoming more and more pronounced, resulting in cracks on the imperialist front. De Gaulle has asked NATO to remove its military installations in France. Financial and economic difficulties in France and UK may result in the withdrawal of French and British troops from West Germany. West Germany is facing budgetary problems and the prospect of footing the bill for the maintenance of foreign troops on its soil. And the UK Labour government, confronted with growing unemployment, Labour back-bench opposition and unrest, will be forced to make cuts in its imperialist "East of Suez" military apparatus in the Middle and Far East.

Meanwhile, in spite of the ideological division in the socialist camp, significant gains are being made. In the period 1961-1965, the industrial output of the world socialist system increased by 43 percent as compared with that of the capitalist system of only 34 percent.

In the Soviet Union in the past seven years, gross industrial output rose 84 percent including a 96 percent gain in producer goods, and 60 percent in consumer goods; gross agricultural output increased 14 percent (from 48,300 million roubles in 1958 to 55,300 million in 1965).

Social benefits to the Soviet working people increased. Benefits out of public consumption funds (free education, pensions, free and reduced-price accommodations in sanatoria, holiday homes, etc.) increased from 23,800 million roubles in 1958 to 41,500 million in 1965.

New homes built from the time of the Revolution in 1918-1965 totalled 1,191 million square metres of which about half was built in the period 1959-1965. Twenty and one-quarter million new homes were built in collective farms.

The working day was reduced to seven hours, and for some brackets of workers to six hours. Soon there will be a five-day working week.

For the five-year period ahead, Soviet production is to increase significantly. The national income will go up by 47.5 percent and agriculture by 25 percent more than the average for the past five years. Real income will increase by 30 percent, that is, roughly 6 percent per year. This should be compared with the wages and income freeze in the UK, and with official advice in the USA to trade unions that the "guidepost" for wage increase should be not more than 3.2 percent, which does not exclude direct and indirect taxes and rising prices.

Greater wages and other benefits are to be given to the people in the countryside in the Soviet Union so as to bring about an equalisation in their cultural and material well-being with those in the towns. While salaries and wages will grow by 20 percent, monetary incomes and income in kind received by collective farmers will grow by 35-40 percent (not including benefits and services — health, housing, education, pensions, etc. — offered free by the government from public consumption funds). This is in marked contrast to the West where there is growing pauperisation in the countryside, a widening gap between town and country, and a population drift from country to town.

In order to produce more gains in livestock and other agricultural products and to bring about the necessary equalisation in standards of living between town and country, state capital investment in agriculture is to be doubled, amounting to £16,400 million.

Those who are critical of Soviet agriculture should note that in 1954-1961, Soviet agricultural production increased at an annual rate higher than in the United States. The ultimate aim is to remove shortcoming and obstacles, technical and otherwise, and to raise it to 9-10 percent annually, the same as for industry.

Another objective in the five-year plan is to aim at the abolition of the distinction between mental and physical labour. This is to be achieved in an all-round advance in culture and education. In the next five years, free universal secondary education will be completed. About seven million specialists will be trained with a higher and specialised secondary education, about 65 percent more than in 1961-65.

An important feature in the new plan is the distribution of production in such a way that the interests of the Republics, which were former "colonies" of Czarist Russia, would not be jeopardised. In marked contrast to the capitalist West and the politically dominated and economically subjugated countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, where the gap in living standards is widening, there is to be in the USSR a steep upsurge of the productive forces and a rise in the living standards of the people in all Union Republics.

For the people of the non-socialist world who are suffering from capitalist, imperialist, colonialist and neo-colonialist subjugation, exploitation and oppression, the Soviet Union is a shining example of what can be achieved when the system of capitalism — the exploitation and despoliation of man by man — is abolished.

This is how two professors, W. K. Medlin and W. M. Cave, see development under socialism and capitalism. Writing on the Soviet Asian Republic of Uzbekistan, in the *Comparative Education Review*, published by Teacher's College of Columbia University, for October 1964, they declared:

The transition of Uzbekistan from an overwhelmingly agrarian, technologically undeveloped society to a rapidly industrialising one with dynamic programmes for change must be classified as a major achievement for the Soviet system. To gain some perspective on the enormity of this accomplishment, one need look no further than those countries contiguous to the Uzbek Republic: Afghanistan and Iran. While they cannot be compared uncritically with Uzbek society, both have a great deal in common with Uzbekistan, particularly with religious ideology, ethnic composition, and cultural history. Yet, for the most part, they remain comparatively backward societies with a high percentage of illiteracy and a persistent philosophical orientation toward the past. Conventional explanations such

as a lack of economic investment and technical assistance, etc., do not suffice, for both Iran and Afghanistan have been recipients of huge sums of foreign capital. Still, pastoral economies and traditional social structures persist.

People's China is making rapid economic strides, while another large country, India, is beset with difficulties and millions face starvation. In Cuba, unemployment and hunger have been abolished, and despite US imperialist blockade, the foundation of a great new future is being laid. This has been noted even by the conservative New York Times. On December 21, 1963, it wrote:

The Castro regime is certainly strong and possibly stronger than ever. . . There is no apparent weakening of Premier Castro's appeal inside Cuba or of his stature as a world figure. . . All children are getting some education; the great bulk are being well fed and taken care of, however poor their parents. The Negro and mulatto population is getting genuine equality. The government leaders are untainted by any fiscal scandals. . . To have survived five years was a reasonable feat whose explanation is far more complicated than attributing it solely to Soviet-bloc help.

While the socialist camp is gaining in economic and financial strength, and while the imperialist camp is beset with financial and economic difficulties, the problems of their puppets are also multiplying.

Forced to carry out policies dictated from abroad, the imperialist lackeys create an ever-widening gap between the rich and the poor. Increasingly, they resort to force and fraud, to violence against the people in order to maintain themselves in power. The culmination of this policy is the undeclared war in Vietnam. The USA is carrying out its criminal aggression with 300,000 troops at an annual cost of US\$15,000 million. And no end is in sight. Before long it will have to commit more men and more money.

In Latin America, the much-heralded Alliance for Progress is virtually dead. Even the inadequate annual economic growth rate of 2.6 percent projected by it for Latin American countries has not been realised. From a figure of 2.2 percent for the period 1950-1955, it has declined to 1.7 percent in 1955-1960 and to 1.6 percent in 196-65.

In Argentina and Brazil, to name only two countries in South America, US puppets are confronted with growing problems and inflation. In Brazil, the value of the cruzero declined 60 percent in 1963 and 86 percent in 1964. In Argentina, the new military dictatorship is being pressed from all sides.

In Guyana, we had noted more sharply this year what imperialist dictation means. There is a business recession while the cost of living soars. As compared with the average for the last three years, business turnover in mid-1966 was about 30 percent lower. This is a clear indication not only of the pursuit by the government of erroneous policies, but also of lack of confidence in the government.

In the field of agriculture, the government is fumbling at drifting. During the 1964 electoral campaign, farmers were told that each one of them would receive thirty acres of land, guaranteed drainage and irrigation, good markets and fair prices. The Cuban market was to be retained, and farmers would obtain for rice \$10 more per bag than we had obtained from Cuba.

But today the situation is far different:

- (1) There is grave land hunger and severe competition for land and jobs.
- (2) The plans laid out by the PPP government for a progressive implementation of drainage and irrigation schemes have been scrapped. The drainage and irrigation project for 6,000 acres of land in the Pomeroon Triangle bounded by the sea, the Pomeroon River and the public road, which was to be a follow-up to the Tapakuma Lake Scheme, has been shelved. So has the Mahaica-Mahaicony-Abary Project. Not a word has come from the coalition government about the Greater Canje Project. Instead, the government has withheld irrigation water from Black Bush farmers in 1966 and has threatened to increase drainage and irrigation charges throughout the country.

(3) The government has undermined the foundation of guaranteed minimum prices instituted by Governor Lethem and continued by the PPP government. Both in 1965 and 1966 the Government Marketing Division refused to purchase citrus fruits in times of glut from the Pomeroon and North West District. Farmers were forced to sell oranges for 50 cents per hundred as compared with \$2 per hundred which they obtained during our regime.

Besides citrus, other agricultural produce has been affected. The price paid for milk to the farmers on the East Coast of Demerara has dropped from 84 cents to 60 cents per gallon. Before the coalition government was formed, the Guyana Marketing Corporation purchased plantains at 5 cents per pound, after purchasers, taking plantains to Trinidad, had paid 6 and 7 cents per pound. As a result of government's blundering in its foreign trade policy, the Trinidad market for plantains has been lost and farmers now get only three and four cents per pound.

Rice and coffee are also threatened. Producers of these crops are likely to face a fall in price for the coming crop year. Crop bonuses, which the PPP government had started for coconuts, black-eye peas, cabbage, etc., in its policy of agricultural diversification to get Guyanese to consume local, in preference to imported, products have also been slashed.

Meanwhile, the government has produced a White Paper claiming that it is losing \$14 million per year as a result of subsidies to agriculture in the form of guaranteed minimum prices and crop bonuses, subsidised drainage and irrigation rates, and deficits by the Transport & Harbours Department. The Finance Minister made it clear that the government could not afford these losses; that in the future government bodies like the Guyana Marketing Corporation and the Transport & Harbours Department must pay their way. This accounts for increase in fares and freights on trains and steamers, which has affected farmers considerably, especially in the riverine and remote areas. This also accounts for the government terminating certain services started by the PPP government — the closing of the self-help Produce Depot built at Hackney, Pomeroon, and the purchase of produce fortnightly instead of weekly at Charity, Pomeroon.

(4) The loss of the Cuban market for rice and railway sleepers:

On April 13, 1962, L.F.S. Burnham declared in the Legislative Assembly that the "PNC does not oppose trade on the basis of ideology." But this government has jettisoned exports to Cuba and restricted imports from socialist countries.

After the abandonment of the Cuban market, the government employed the Connell Rice and Sugar Company of the USA, with a retainer fee of a little over a quarter of a million US dollars, to sell Guyana's rice abroad outside the Commonwealth Caribbean territories. This rice is now sold by Connell under its own brand name. It appears that Connell pays the Rice Marketing Board a low price and sells in the world market at higher prices. The losses sustained by the Board for 1965 and 1966 will be in the vicinity of \$8 million.

Since the government has not been fulfilling its promises of subsidising rice farmers, this will no doubt lead to a drop in price and or the rising of guide samples during the ensuing crop year. This will create further hardships. Already rice farmers are experiencing grave difficulties. In Western Berbice, many farmers, particularly PPP supporters, were forced to sell their paddy at low prices because of the refusal of the Rice Development Company to make purchases. As a result, they have been compelled to purchase broken rice for domestic consumption.

The loss of the Cuban market has been tragic not only for rice farmers. Many others, including Amerindian loggers and small saw-millers who were able to cut mora trees and fashion them into sleepers, have also been affected.

Cuba, with a population of about 8 million, could have been a potential market not only for timber, but for agricultural products such as plantains, pumpkin, squash, etc., which today can find no ready market. Instead, the government is pursuing a free-trade arrangement with Barbados and Antigua, with a population of less than half a million people, which produce similar products and trade with us negligibly.

(5) Failure on the industrial front:

On January 20, 1960, L.F.S. Burnham in the Legislative Assembly, attacking the PPP government, shouted: "Where in the plan for the towns, and where is the plan even for villages?..."

No industry for villagers; no plan to get an industrial area and see whether it is possible for government to erect factories.”

Yet today with the exception of one mosquito coil factory, little has been done by way of new industrial enterprises. All that has been accomplished so far is the extension of some existing factories which was contemplated during the PPP regime.

Local investors prefer trading to manufacturing enterprises. The industrial projects—the manufacturing of glass, cement, bicycle tyres, yachting shoes, galoshes, jams, etc.—investigated by the PPP, have been shelved.

Meanwhile, on June 2, 1966, the government amended the Industrial Development Corporation (now Economic Development Corporation) Ordinance. The IDC was formed to promote, facilitate and undertake the establishment of industry. Now it can only facilitate and promote. The keyword “undertake” has been removed. This has been done, no doubt, through pressure from the United States government whose philosophy is opposed to public enterprise — government ownership of industrial, banking, insurance and trading concerns,

(6) Growing unemployment:

The recent man-power survey carried out by the government indicates a growing unemployment problem. From a 1956 figure of 18 percent unemployed, the latest figures indicate 17 percent for Georgetown and 23 percent for the rural areas. This problem has its roots in a complex of factors — mechanisation, as in the sugar industry; growing number of school-leavers (the Man-Power Survey Report indicated that there was a total of about 30,000 children, 14 years and over, in primary schools who would soon be thrown on the labour market because of the government’s decision to curtail instruction in all-age schools from the GCE to the College of Preceptors level); retrenchment, as at Sandbach Parker, the result of a fall in trading in agricultural machinery due to the lack of purchasing power of rice farmers.

(7) Trade policies:

The government has not only lost the Cuban and Trinidadian markets for our exports. (Trinidad for plantains only). It has also placed restrictions on imports from socialist countries where prices for comparable products are lower. This is in keeping with United States dictation. The United States government would like to get all its client states to purchase more from the West to solve budgetary and balance-of-payments deficits. The United States’ share of world trade fell from 38 percent at the end of World War II to 16.5 percent in 1965.

(8) Increase in the cost of living:

Higher prices and increased taxation on consumer goods have led to a lowering of the standard of living. In the past year and a half of the puppet government’s rule, the cost-of-living index jumped six points, with an average of four points per year, as compared with ten points for the eight-year period, 1956 to 1964, with an average of a little over one point per year,.

Contributory factors which have added to the increasing burden on the people have been:

- (a) increase in railway fares and freight costs;
- (b) withdrawal of subsidy on cooking oil;
- (c) government’s decision to reduce education in all-age schools from GCE to College of Preceptors level, and the failure of the government to standardise primary-school text books.

There is also a threatened increase in the price of sugar.

The difficulties experienced by the Guyanese people are also partly due to the wasteful expenditure of public funds by the government, and to bribery, corruption and nepotism. As against 10 Ministers and 3 Junior Ministers during the PPP regime, the coalition now has 15 Ministers and 6 Junior Ministers. The Prime Minister squandered over a quarter of a million dollars to repair and redecorate the building formerly occupied by the Director of Agriculture as his residence. In addition to the salaries and allowance previously received by the PPP Premier, the Prime Minister now receives \$1,246 for domestic help. Other Ministers now receive \$100 more than the PPP Ministers in the form of entertainment allowance. Attorney General Sonny Ramphal and the High Commissioner in London, Lionel Luckhoo, are being paid fabulous sala-

ries and allowances, no doubt for the sole purpose of fooling world public opinion that the puppet coalition government is representative of all sections of the community.

The consequence of the government's behaviour, attitudes and policies is a lack of confidence in it. An result, there has been —

- (a) An outflow of capital amounting to \$12 million since the relaxation in 1965 of monetary controls imposed by the PPP government in 1962.
- (b) The drop in deposits at the Post Office Savings Bank and an increase in savings deposits at private banks.
- (c) The failure of Guyanese to invest. John Jardim, a past president of the Chamber of Commerce, indicated that local investors were "holding their hands" as they were uncertain of the future.
- (d) A shortage of credits. The government, Georgetown Town Council, the Rice Development Company, the Rice Marketing Board and the Guyana Electricity Corporation are heavily committed in overdrafts with the commercial banks. Consequently, little money is available for credit to business and agriculture. The Guyana Credit Corporation has reached a position where it has virtually stopped giving out loans, particularly to the "small man".
- (e) Emigration. More persons left Guyana in 1965 than in 1964, the most troubled year in our country's history.
- (f) A record-breaking number of strikes. There were 146 strikes in 1965 and 86 already up to the end of August 1966. Strikes will continue because of the attitude of employers, increased taxes on consumer goods, and the government's economic, fiscal and trade policies.

The future will certainly be more difficult with the new \$300 million 7-year development plan. Nearly three-quarters of the expenditure is in the infrastructure sector. This will lead to increasing debt charges and annual budgetary deficits.

In 1965, the deficit was made good by the collection of arrears of income tax. In April 1966, the budget was balanced by the \$5 million independence gift (for development) from the British government and by \$2.5 million from taxation on consumer commodities such as yachting shoes, exercise books, cotton piece goods, khaki drill, and so on, which adversely affected the poor. Already, nearly \$4.5 million of supplementary expenditure has been passed by the National Assembly.

The coalition government has brought the country to near bankruptcy. At the end of December 1964, the PPP government had left a general revenue balance of \$5.4 million. At the end of December 1965, the coalition government reduced it to \$0.6 million and owed \$8 million.

In his budget speech on April 5, 1966, the Finance Minister admitted:

Indeed, with this deficit and the advances to the Post Office Savings Bank and the Rice Marketing Board, the cash balances have deteriorated by \$8 million during this year. The government in fact had a bank overdraft of about \$6 million and outstanding Treasury Bills of \$1.8 million at 31 December, 1965.

The position will worsen in the near future. A spending spree, an expanding bureaucracy and security apparatus, and increasing debt charges will all add a crushing burden on the people, which will have to be met either by more taxation and/or loss of services already enjoyed, such as education, pensions, health, subsidies and bonuses.

Already, the Guyanese people are feeling the dire effects of the government's reactionary policies. This is leading on the one hand to disillusionment and dissatisfaction, and on the other to growing political consciousness and action.

The PNC, despite its socialist pretensions, has completely abandoned the programme it set out in its 1961 manifesto, *New Road*. Instead of talking about socialism, it now talks about

“consultative democracy”. Meanwhile, the UF is allowed to dictate and have implemented pro-capitalist and pro-imperialist financial and economic policies. This accounts for the complete about-turn of the PNC in the 1965 and 1966 budgets.

Speaking in the Legislative Assembly, L.F.S. Burnham, as opposition leader, on April 13, 1962, remarked:

. . . The People’s National Congress did not oppose the Capital Gains Tax nor the Gift Tax, nor in principle do we oppose to tax on net property. Our opposition was mainly directed to those Customs duties, the imposition of which resulted in the increased cost of widely used commodities, and this increased cost could have meant the lowering of the already low standards of the working class. And I would say that our Party was rather concerned that a so-called socialist party could seek to raise the bulk of the new extra revenue from the pockets of the poor.

A year later, in 1963, speaking on the budget, Burnham reiterated what he had previously said:

Let us say immediately that of the tax reforms passed during 1962 there were some which the People’s National Congress agreed to — the capital gains tax, the net property tax and the gift tax. These three taxes the People’s National Congress agreed with and supported because to our mind, whatever might have been the motive, ulterior or expressed, of the People’s Progressive Party, those measures represent an attempt (1) at re-distribution of income and wealth, and (2) an attempt to find the means whereby the government would be able to do one of two things, both of which are necessary: to put money or investment into the public sector of the economy, or to provide services for the community.

May I say immediately, without apology, that the People’s National Congress opposed in February, 1962, the proposed taxes on consumer goods, and no snide remarks about our holding on to the coat-tails of other parties will change us. It does not matter what the People’s Progressive Party says on this question. We opposed the imposition of those import duties on what in fact were necessities, in the 1962 No. 1 budget.

Yet, L.F.S. Burnham, as Prime Minister, abolished or drastically reduced the capital taxes in 1965 and imposed consumer taxes in 1966.

GROWING DIFFICULTIES AND RIFTS

As result of growing contradictions, rifts are developing between the two coalition partners. While UF business elements are somewhat satisfied with the policies of the coalition government, they have expressed reservations about employment practices. The hierarchy of the UF are perturbed about the ruthless manner in which the PNC hierarchy are creating jobs for their “big boys” at the expense of those who support the UF.

Meanwhile, the rank and file support of the PNC and UF is becoming restless as a result of the government’s failure to solve the unemployment problem and to check increasing inflationary trends and the drop in living standards. Noting these developments, the UF in its organ, the Sun, has begun to become critical, and to talk about “squandermania” or public funds and to shift the blame to the PNC for failure to produce results. At the same time, the New Nation, organ of the PNC, attacks the ministries controlled by the UF for lack of achievements.

To remain in power in the face of these growing difficulties, the coalition will attempt to destroy the PPP and all progressive organisations.

It will use the weapons of anti-communism, fear, intimidation, individualism and opportunism. It will bribe a few of our supporters with scholarships, jobs and land. It will use organisations, such as the Gandhi Youth Organisation, to confuse and split our supporters on the basis of “freeness” and culture. It will indoctrinate the masses with new propaganda and ideology — “Moral Re-Armament” — concentrating on youths, with the idea that all political systems are bad; the New World, preaching equal guilt, condemning both East and West and attacking the PPP for being tied to Moscow; Sydney King and his ASCRIA group, backing the pro-imperialist

government but issuing placatory statements condemning some of the racist and reactionary policies of imperialism, and at the same time making it appear that the PNC is encumbered by the reactionary UF.

The British will continue to hold key positions such as that of the Governor General, Chief of the Army, Head of the Security, while the USA will infiltrate the country and its institutions with US spies and capitalist ideology through the Peace Corps, scholarships, cultural and other exchanges. The Junior Chamber of Commerce (International), the Lions and the Rotary are concentrating their attention on the middle class and on the middle category of businessmen.

The government will use the weapon of fear, detention and restriction to silence criticisms and political opposition. It will try to divert attention by creating scapegoats. Notice a recent Graphic editorial attacking local businessmen for the present sufferings of the poor while calling for patience and hard work. It will create the impression that we are too small, that we cannot solve our problems alone, that we can do so only in the context of a Caribbean political union, beginning with a free trade area as the excuse to flood the country with potential voters for the PNC. Meanwhile, it will refuse or hesitate to hold elections for "Marshall" county councils for fear of risking defeat, and will psychologically prepare the people either for no general election or for a fraudulent election in 1968.

We must carry out a vigorous attack against the government in defence of the people's vital interests. We must from day to day relentlessly expose the government for its imperialist, anti-working class policies. We must establish the PPP as the only working class party.

Simultaneously, we must combat attitudes of defeatism, based on the invincibility of the USA. There are some who propound the theory of fatalism, that in no circumstance will the USA, which is dominant in this hemisphere, permit the PPP to win power. These persons have failed to grasp recent events. The USA is today becoming increasingly isolated. In an unequal battle in Vietnam, it is caught in a quagmire. It can neither retreat nor win. In the USA itself, the popular forces and the Negro civil rights movements are becoming more vociferous daily, resulting in an enforced shift in thinking of US policy at home and abroad, even among certain of their war-mongering leaders.

There are some among us who think not of power, organisation and activity, but only of the next election. We must think not only of winning an election but of maintaining power. This means support of the broad masses of the people, much more support than we polled at the last election.

We must clearly fix in our minds that power does not mean only winning the election. Power means the people — people who were opposed to us, who marched against us from 1962 to 1964, who created havoc and disturbances while we were helpless in the government. Power means understanding — understanding of all the financial, economic and ideological issues of the day. The time is long past for thinking that we can fool the imperialists. Any such tactics will only succeed in confusing the masses. We must aim not only at political consciousness but also at attaining deep ideological roots.

We must develop a core of the leadership with a complete understanding of scientific socialist ideology.

We must concentrate on day-to-day work on every front to achieve racial integration and unity of the working class.

We must also work for international solidarity and Caribbean unity to counteract our isolation and to confront imperialism. To determine what form this should take, we must discuss more fully during the coming months.

Forward to unity and struggle. Our motto must be: A united, informed, ideologically developed Guyanese people will be an invincible force!

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The Fourteenth Congress

Report to the 14th Congress in 1967 by the Leader of the PPP,
Dr. Cheddi Jagan — Leguan, Essequibo, 5-7 August 1967

Comrades, Delegates, Observers.

I salute you with the fighting sign of the PPP.

Our fourteenth congress is meeting at a crucial time in the history of man's struggle for peace, freedom and bread.

Two systems — socialism-communism on the one hand and capitalism-imperialism on the other — are today more than ever joined in a world-wide battle for supremacy.

In this battle, we are witnessing at one and the same time the ruthlessness and the sharpening of the crisis of imperialism. Mounting problems are facing the imperialist puppets and the post-war monolithic western alliance is in disarray.

In Guyana, clear evidence was forthcoming this year about what we have always charged; that is, that the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) was the instrument of the US administration to remove us from the government. The influential New York Times and the London Sunday Times not only exposed the CIA involvement in the 1963 strife and riots, but also implicated in the CIA plot the former Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, former Colonial Secretary Duncan Sandys, two top security men in Britain, and a number of British officials here. This explains the connivance of the Governor and the Commissioner of Police with the PNC, UF, TUC and the CSA and their failure to cooperate with our government.

Having been installed in power by the Anglo-American imperialists, the puppets are forced to carry out trade, fiscal and economic policies dictated by Washington. Consequently, from the time of the last congress, there has been further deterioration of economic and social conditions. Unemployment, crime and juvenile delinquency are on the increase. So alarming has the position become that the Chancellor of the Supreme Court recently threatened choke-and-robbers with life imprisonment, and a senior magistrate observed that if the crime rate continued to climb there would be no room in the jail.

Mr. Cleveland Hamilton, Deputy Lord Mayor, a strong supporter of the People's National Congress (PNC) recently launched a vicious attack on the snobbery of the new ruling elite, and on bigotry, corruption, nepotism and favouritism in high places. He said:

There is a real danger that a new, larger area of snobbery is being created in this country, or alternatively, that old areas are being activated or fertilised, or merely perpetrated or revived in a country where the professed aim by politicians and other leaders is the building of a classless or equalitarian society. . .

About bribery, he said:

It is all over the place, and is fast becoming a national scandal. . . Every citizen's position is in peril where he may not justly achieve what is bargained for, where he pays far more than he ought, and where even his rights may be delayed or even denied altogether. The harm done in any situation in which bribery, corruption, nepotism and favouritism assume national proportions and is a way of life from top down, can never be calculated.

Even the Civil Service Association (CSA), politically sympathetic to the PNC, in a letter to the TUC asking for its intervention, accused the government of causing a breach in industrial principle and a display of gross irresponsibility and arrogance. The CSA also expressed its grave dissatisfaction with several recent appointments made by the Public Service Commission (PSC) appointed and controlled by the Prime Minister. Some of the appointments the CSA considered "most questionable, and have seriously disrupted the association's confidence in the integrity of the PSC."

As a result, there is deepening disillusionment and frustration. The Deputy Lord Mayor recently also commented on the mass exodus from Guyana. And Lucian, a strong supporter of the coalition, put it very bluntly in the *Guyana Graphic* on June 16 when he wrote: "Many people — Guyanese and non-Guyanese — are disgusted with the recent state of affairs in this country. Some are packing up to leave out of sheer frustration, while others are dejected from unbearable disgust."

Meanwhile, the government propaganda peddles the line that all is well, that things are booming. The *London Daily Telegraph*, no doubt influenced by Guyana's High Commissioner, the reactionary Lionel Luckhoo, recently editorialised: "This Caribbean country in the first financial year of independence has increased its Gross Domestic Product by 8 percent and doubled private investments from abroad." The paper then went on to observe: "African leaders can learn something from Guyana."

Similarly, in the 1967 Throne Speech, the government declared that recent achievement has been significant and that it intended to "maintain progress".

But the facts prove otherwise. Guyana is certainly no model for Africa or anywhere else. Indeed, even Government figures show an unhealthy trend.

The government has based its case mainly on a growth rate of 8 percent in the Gross Domestic Product at current factor cost. But this figure is largely illusory. As is well known, statistics can be made to hide reality and to peddle half truths. The fact is that this figure has been inflated as result of the large expenditure by the government on infrastructure. Production of real material wealth has been negligible. On page 7 of the *Economic Survey of Guyana*, 1966 it is noted:

In general the productive sectors, that is, those producing tangible goods, are expected in 1966 to provide an increase in net output of 4 percent. The services sector including construction would probably generate an increase in incomes of approximately 12 percent, while as it has already been noted in the previous paragraph, incomes arising from the current spending by Government — central and local will probably increase by 13 percent.

And much of the real wealth has been produced in the bauxite sector, not in manufacturing and agriculture, the *Survey* on page 20 says: Thus with the failure of other productive sectors to achieve any substantial real growth, it was the mining sector, particularly bauxite mining and processing, that accounted for some 22 percent of the growth in the economy during 1966."

But after the initial impetus and big jump in bauxite production, it is unlikely that the bauxite industry will continue to expand at the same rate.

Outside of the extractive bauxite industry, very little has been achieved in the field of manufacturing. This sector accounts for only 7.2 percent of the Gross Domestic Product in 1966, mainly as an increase in production in industries already established. Actually, the *Survey* admits that "the rate of expansion was slowing down."

As regards the future development of industry, the prospect is dismal. The *Survey* on page 51 states:

A statement of intentions indicates that the firms involved in manufacturing expected to invest approximately \$4.8 million in 1966. As in the previous year, almost a third of this would represent the expected involvement of the Electricity Corporation. Further, as no new large scale manufacturing en-

terprise has been set up during the year, investments in 1966 are hardly likely to exceed the estimated \$4.8 million. In 1966 fixed investment in the manufacturing sector did not achieve the level expected and is now estimated at \$2.5 million; and practically a third of this was attributed to the Guyana Electricity Corporation. It is apparent that most companies did no more than maintain their capital intact.

It is clear that private investors are reluctant to invest for a number of reasons. With the Caribbean Free Trade Area (CARIFTA), many local and foreign capitalists will no doubt prefer to establish their industries in Barbados and Antigua because of lower wages and better climate, and export their goods free of duty to Guyana. Another reason may be the search for high profits. Foreign investors would like as far as possible to recover their investments in three or four years. The Director of the Puerto Rico Planning Board is reported to have told a conference on development planning in Jamaica in 1957 that foreign capitalists look for at least 30 percent return on their investments. It is unlikely that there are many industries which can be established in Guyana to provide such high rates of profit.

Little wonder that the Governor of the Bank of Guyana recently declared that no loans were made up to the end of 1966 from the Private Investments Fund, which was established with the help of US\$2 million from the US Agency for International Development. Another obstacle may be the condition that goods and services must be purchased from the United States of America for the establishment of light industries.

The government in the meantime has done nothing to give the lead to change the depressing state of affairs. In the Throne Speech, the government continued to declare that it was pursuing a mixed economy. This is in keeping with the promises by the PNC in its 1964 election manifesto *New Road*. Under the heading "Goals and Attitudes", it said:

Ours will be a mixed economy with a public and private sector. Government will own and run outright those industries which the circumstances and facts suggest. These will not be limited to infrastructural undertaking where the capital investments are heavy and the returns not immediately recognisable, but will include what are described as productive and immediate profit-bearing enterprises.

In the same manifesto, under the heading "Policy Foundations", there was stated the following:

Essential industries must be under social control. These will include all public utilities, others which are important for ensuring adequate protection of satisfactory standards of quality, and yet others which from time to time it may appear beneficial and in the national interest to have publicly owned, controlled or operated. These will not exclude by any means profit bearing undertakings.

It has reversed the policy of our government. In November 1964, we had voted the sum of \$5 million in 1965 for the Industrial Development Corporation. This was to be used for the setting up of government-owned industries to manufacture items such as bicycle tyres, galoshes, yachting shoes, glass, etc., for which feasibility studies had been undertaken. Out of this sum, \$1 million was earmarked for government participation with local private entrepreneurs in jointly-owned factories. But under pressure from the United States, the government has changed the policy of the PPP government. The Industrial Development Corporation (now Guyana Development Corporation) by an amendment to its statute on June 2, 1966, can no longer establish government-owned industries.

The future for manufacturing industry is therefore bleak. This accounts for the coalition's belated recognition of the importance of agriculture in the economy. However, the Economic Survey for 1966 shows a progressive decline in agriculture. For the agriculture sector including sugar, rice, ground provisions, other crops, and livestock, the Gross Domestic Product was 22.5 percent in 1961, 22.2 percent in 1962, 24 percent in 1963, 21.4 percent in 1964, 20.5 percent in 1965 and 19 percent in 1966. Clearly the position of agriculture has deteriorated

even when compared with 1964, the worse year of civil unrest, riots and disturbances in the country.

This is due to the fact that government has no overall policy in the various fields — drainage and irrigation, minimum guaranteed prices, bonuses, price control, land distribution — which is necessary for success in agricultural production.

Everything is being done to shackle agriculture and to discourage the farmers. In the face of an increased cost of living and rising costs of production, prices received by farmers for products such as plantains, milk, citrus, coffee and rice have fallen. From 48 to 55 cents per pound for coffee, during our regime, farmers now get only 30 to 35 cents. As a result of withdrawal by the Rice Marketing Board (RMB) of certain grades of rice and reduction in prices, rice farmers have suffered a loss of approximately \$4 per bag.

Those who sell paddy to the Rice Development Corporation (RDC) have found their prices slashed below the cost of production from \$7.30 to \$4.70 for Grade C and from \$6.30 to \$2.90 for Grade D. The hardship to the farmers will be appreciated when it is realised that more than half of the paddy purchased by the RDC is Grade C and below.

The coalition government now intends to place further burdens on the rice producers by its proposed merger of the Rice Marketing Board (RMB) and the Rice Development Corporation (RDC). On principle, we are not opposed to such a merger. But we are irrevocably opposed to such a merger under prevailing conditions when control of the industry has been taken out of the hands of the rice producers, when a deliberately created huge bureaucracy is resulting in big losses at both the Rice Development Corporation and the Rice Marketing Board.

During the term of the PPP government, the farmers had a majority of 11 out of 16 members on the RMB. Today they number only three. Where formerly profits were made — \$839,754 in 1961-62; \$643,053 in 1962-63; \$98,908 in 1963-64 — now there are continuous losses — \$4,308,877 in 1964-65; \$2,800,000 in 1965-66. The cost of handling one bag of rice at the Rice marketing Board has jumped from \$2.21 in 1964 to over \$3.00 in 1965 and \$4.32 in 1966.

Similarly, there has been a reverse at the Rice Development Corporation. From a profit of \$192,000 in 1964, the RDC sustained losses of \$741,546 in 1965 and \$1,053,000 in 1966. These losses have been suffered despite the high millers' margin of \$5.55 for super grade and \$455 for No. 1 grade, which is allowed to the Corporation. It should be noted that the milling fee charged by private millers range from \$2.50 to \$3.00 per bag. And in cases where farmers provide their own labour at the rice mills, the fee ranges between \$1.00 and \$1.50 per bag.

The proposed merger is therefore likely to reduce severely the net income of the farmers. Besides, the annual losses sustained by the Rice Development Corporation and the \$5 million debt owed by the Corporation to the Commonwealth Development Corporation will all be passed on to the rice farmers.

And while the government has declared a policy in favour of diversification and "buy local", it is doing everything to discourage production. Benefits received by the farmers have been slashed. Crop bonuses to help diversification of agriculture have been cut from \$36,939 to \$20,000 in 1967. Aid to the fishing industry has been reduced from \$92,000 in 1966 to \$50,000 in 1967.

Duty free gasoline concessions for the rice and timber industries have been liquidated in the face of rising prices for agricultural machinery and parts, and increased licences for tractors and trailers. RMB subsidies for bags and insecticides have also been cut out.

For veterinary preventive measures, expenditure of \$40,000 in 1966 has been reduced to \$27,000 in 1967. Anti-rabies vaccines, which were provided free of charge, had to be paid for by farmers in 1966.

The "progressive farmers" scheme, inaugurated by the PPP, was sabotaged by the coalition government. Although \$7,500 was voted in 1966, only \$1,000 was actually spent.

Little is being done about pest control. As compared with \$9,000 in 1966, no money has been voted in 1967 for the eradication of acushi ants.

But the government is hindering agriculture not only directly; it is doing so indirectly.

Take the case of Guyana Stockfeeds Ltd. This company, an Anglo-American tie-up of Bookers with the Quaker Oats Company, is virtually the sole producer of stockfeeds. The brand produced is Ful-O-Pep, under license from the Quaker Oats Company which supplies the concentrates no doubt at a handsome profit.

Besides, Guyana Stockfeeds Ltd. itself is making lucrative profits. It complained in 1967 that its profits were low, but it was still able to share a final dividend for 1966 of 25 percent.

Dividends previously shared out were 15 percent in 1962, 15 percent in 1963, 20 percent in 1964, and 21½ percent in 1965. This means that the company has recovered its investments in 5 years.

High profits and quick take-out may be good for the foreign investors. But they inhibit the growth of the economy and affect the farmers.

Take corn as an example. The company imports large quantities of this product. This importation would not be necessary if the company paid remunerative prices to the farmers. Hucksters selling corn in Georgetown to the company are paid 6½ cents per pound. But because of the increased cost of steamer-fares and freight rates, they refuse to pay more than 6 cents per pound, which the farmers in the Berbice River district, for instance, find unremunerative.

If the company shared a smaller dividend, and paid 7 cents per pound to the hucksters, the latter would be in a position to pay the farmers a higher price, which could very well stimulate local production.

But production is affected not only at the farm level. High prices of stockfeed also inhibit production of livestock, poultry, eggs, milk, cheese, bacon, ham, lard, etc. High prices of feed mean high prices for livestock, poultry, eggs, etc. These high prices place a limit on the ability of consumers to purchase these products. A vicious circle is thus created which limits production and increases the cost of living.

Clearly, a basic industry such as stockfeed should be either government-owned or government-controlled.

The decline in agriculture has meant increased imports not only of corn but also of foods, which jumped from \$28.7 million in 1964 to \$30.7 million in 1965 and \$33.4 million in 1966. Because of the government's trading policies, our terms of trade have deteriorated. Taking 1961 terms of trade as 100, we have dropped down 20.5 points since 1964. In 1962, the year of the burning down of Water Street, the figure was 98.7, a loss of only 1.3 in 1961. The figures for other years are: 1963 — 113; 1964 — 114.9; 1965 — 94.3; 1966 — 94.4.

Balance of visible trade was in surplus from 1961 to the end of 1964. It was in deficit in 1965 and 1966 by \$4.3 million and \$7.6 million respectively; and by the first months of 1967 by \$26 million.

The balance of payments on current accounts has changed from a surplus in 1962 and 1963 and a small deficit in 1964 to a large deficit of \$27.9 million in 1965, \$30.5 million in 1966, and according to the Economic Survey of Guyana, 1966, "a larger current account deficit is forecast for 1967."

Higher purchase credit totalled \$12.6 million at the end of 1966. Of this, 61 percent was for durable consumer goods and only 39 percent for productive goods for agriculture, industry and construction.

And since the GDP "was attributable largely to bauxite and the government", the Bank Report concluded that "Guyana's economic growth in 1966 was thus not as broadly based as might have been desirable."

As regards long-term prospects, it is important to compare our situation with that of Jamaica. For that country, too, the imperialist propagandists are busy at work to create an illuminating picture. In a recent article in the Trinidad Express, Robert P. Lee headlined "Jamaica gives a lesson on how to stride ahead."

But Owen Jefferson, a lecturer in economics at the University of the West Indies, in an article in the New World Quarterly, showed that the rosy picture painted is far from reality. He wrote:

Between 1950 and 1965, Jamaica's gross product (the total value of goods and services produced within the economy) increased at an annual rate of about 7.2 percent. When allowance has been made for the steady rise in prices, for population growth and the portion of the domestic product which accrues to foreign owners of factors of production located in the country, we find that the real national income per head of the population increased by 4.5 percent per annum. During the same period, gross investment expenditure as a percentage of gross domestic product increased from 11 percent in 1950 to 21 percent in 1965. . .

[But] if the period of 1950 to 1965 is broken down into five-year periods, we discover that rate growth of per capita national income for the period 1950-55 was of the order of 7 percent; for 1955-60 it was 5.7 percent, and for 1960-65 it was 3.0 percent. In other words, starting from a low base in 1950 and with the introduction of new sectors such as bauxite, alumina and the rejuvenation of others such as tourism, the rate of growth of output was pronounced in the early stages. But the subsequent slowing down of the rate of growth of the mining sector, the levelling off of construction activity, the continued sluggishness of the agricultural sector, the worsening in terms of trade, and the increase in population growth (as emigration outlets dried up) have all combined to bring about a slower rate of growth of per capita real income in each successive five-year period.

It should here be observed that Jamaica had a completely new bauxite industry, the advantages of tourism, and by the end of 1966 had established 149 factories. Jamaica also had at a certain period the advantage of mass emigration of 164,000 persons particularly to the United Kingdom. Yet Jamaica has an unemployment problem which at the last count was 19 percent of the labour force for the urban and 10 percent for the rural areas. The immensity of the unemployment problem can be gauged from the fact that while the labour force is increasing annually by about 20,000, emigration has virtually ceased, the 149 factories created only 9,000 jobs, and 10,000 were retrenched between 1955-65 due to mechanisation.

In Guyana we do not have the advantages of tourism. Nor is it likely that we will have a large manufacturing light industry because of the present policy of the government. Unemployment, which in 1965 was estimated at 17 percent for urban and 25 percent for rural areas, is likely to increase. While the labour force is increasing by about 8,000 to 10,000 a year, the development programme has put less than 2,000 persons in government employment. Meanwhile, retrenchment continues unabated. About 1,000 workers have been retrenched in the sugar industry during 1966. Sea defences and the Transport and Harbours Department have also retrenched about 1,000 workers.

Other Caribbean territories which, like Jamaica and Guyana are carrying out United States dictated fiscal, trade and economic policies, are facing the same unemployment problems.

In Trinidad, the position is becoming unbearable. According to the Trinidad Guardian in an editorial on August 9, 1967:

One hundred jobs in Canada. The possibility of three hundred in Puerto Rico. A steady trickle of domestics to North America. A fairly large flow of skilled and professional people to Canada. These are the avenues being used or explored in a society where the rate of unemployment may not be the worst in the world, but is nonetheless unbearable.

Puerto Rico, whose "Operation Bootstrap" we are supposed to follow as an economic model, is still in trouble. Despite the fact that Puerto Rico's incentive give-away tax laws attracted 446 factories which provided 35,000 jobs, and 500,000 Puerto Ricans emigrated to the United States since 1944, Puerto Rico still has a 14 percent unemployment rate. And the national income per head of population is lower than even that of the most depressed States in the United States of America.

In Guyana, the government boasts about an increase in the national income per head of population from a figure of \$445 in 1965 to \$468 in 1966. But this again is illusory. Averages hide the truth; they do not tell the whole story. Actually, there is a growing gap between the rich and the poor, and between the urban and the rural.

The per capita increase in national income is largely due to the big bureaucratic machine which the government has built up with fantastic salaries at the top. For the man at the bottom, increasing unemployment and a rising cost of living are making serious inroads into the standard of living. For the past two years, the cost of living index has climbed 8 points as compared with 10 points in the previous eight years. And with the large number of consumer items taxed in 1967, the cost of living has risen sharply.

The government's ruinous agricultural policies are likely to result in the development of agriculture outside of the sugar belt in large and larger capitalist forms. In such a situation, more and more mechanisation will take place and a greater trek to Georgetown will be the result.

The deteriorating position of the working class has led to growing militancy as evidenced by the increasing number of strikes. From 146 in 1965, the number jumped to 172 in 1966 and 57 by the end of April this year. In the face of growing militancy of the working class, the Prime Minister on May Day announced the intention of the government to enact legislation for compulsory arbitration. But as a result of our strong opposition and resistance from some sections of the TUC, the Prime Minister announced in the Throne Speech that the government will not enact anti-strike legislation, but will make provision for voluntary arbitration.

But this is only meant to delude the people, as under a pro-big-business government, the employers will always resort to the weapon of arbitration, thus defeating the workers' objectives. Note the government's position of fixing a minimum wage for sawmill workers of \$3.50 per day as compared with \$4 for unskilled government workers when previously under the PPP government sawmill workers received the same minimum wage as government workers.

Difficulties now felt by the working class and peasantry will continue to sharpen. This will be largely due to the economic planning measures forced on the government by the United States which has one of its planners, Mr. Davenport, as the chief adviser to the government.

The government's concentration on infrastructure — roads, sea defence, harbours, airport, public buildings, etc. — will result in higher and higher debt charges with each succeeding year. Those charges which were 12 percent of budget expenditure in 1960 jumped to 16 percent in 1967 and are expected to reach about 30 percent in the early 1970s.

Besides, the government today squanders 44 percent of government revenue on salaries for personnel to run the government's over-bloated machinery. This makes a total of 60 percent with only 40 percent remaining for education, health, pension, subsidies, crop bonuses and guaranteed minimum prices. This percentage is inadequate as can be seen from lack of adequate medical services, drugs, the closing down of health centres, the reduction of free secondary education in all-age schools from the GCE to the College of Preceptors level.

But it will be further reduced; the 40 percent will drop to about 25 percent at which time present services enjoyed by the people would not be maintained. As the government is faced with budgetary difficulties (at the end of 1966, the government admitted that it owed the banks as overdrafts \$15 million which normally are paid at the end of the year), there would be cut in services and/or increased taxation.

However, difficulties are being encountered not only in Guyana and other British Commonwealth Caribbean territories, but also in other third world countries. Dean Rusk hypocritically bewailed the widening gap between the rich and the poor countries. He pointed out that 29 percent of the world's population earned 83 percent of the world's gross product as against 71 percent in the poor countries with only 17 percent of the GNP. He called this the "frightening gap in productivity". And he added: "The prospect is that this gap will continue to widen unless productivity in the developing countries can be sharply stimulated."

Policy makers of imperialism like Dean Rusk and other apologists, professors, anthropologists, ministers of religion and politicians are now trying to mislead the people about the ills of the so-called underdeveloped third world countries. Instead of dealing with the root cause of backwardness they peddle half-truths.

They point to such factors as lack of technical skills, increasing population, and small size of territory and population as being the main causes for lack of development. These factors, however, are largely secondary. It is not primarily because of these Latin American countries

have been showing a progressive decline in the rate of growth from 2.6 percent in 195-55 to 1.7 percent in 1955-60 and 1.6 percent in 1960-65. If these factors were of decisive importance, how can one account for the advance of Cuba and the decline of Latin America, the advance of China and the decline of India?

Both India and China achieved independence at about the same time. Both started out with about the same level of technical skill. The population explosion in both countries is about the same. In terms of geography and size of population, both are huge. Yet India is today on the verge of starvation and bankruptcy; hundreds of thousands of people will die from hunger. The devaluation of the Indian rupee by 33.3 percent has not materially helped the situation. The Bank of Baroda in its Weekly Review of August 21, 1967, wrote:

Indian economy has now been passing through a very critical period. While the agricultural sector is in a perilous state thanks to two successive droughts, industrial economy is afflicted with recession on a scale unknown hitherto. The declaration of the growth of industrial production in the last two years may be termed as stagnation. Recession, on the other hand, is a recent phenomenon which represents a climate of chronic stagnation in the past few years and has proved to be more far-reaching in terms of its undesirable economic consequences.

It has been reported that India has reached the point where she would be unable to meet her debt payments, a position long ago met by Latin American countries.

China, on the other hand, despite her internal political turmoil, has been making rapid strides, and is feared as one of the three world super-powers (the other two being USA and USSR). From a backward country, China in less than 20 years has surpassed even France in science and technology. Note her independent development of science and technology in the manufacture of the hydrogen bomb, an achievement which has not yet been made even in France. Little wonder that Kurt Mendelssohn, FRS, a reader in physics at Oxford University, in a talk on the BBC Third Programme, recently said:

I am fully conscious of having used the word "prosperous" because it is the only way in which I can describe the truly miraculous economic advance which China has made in only seventeen years. The progress in agriculture and, above all, in industry which I have seen since my first visit to China early in 1960 is hardly believable. Then, people were struggling with the beginning of industrialisation; now, there is practically nothing which the West can produce and China cannot; from merchant ships to motor-cars, from computers to electron microscopes, and from high-grade metal alloys to synthetic insulin. And here, incidentally, is a case where they outpaced us.

Not to be outdone, the Washington Post, editorialising on July 3, 1967, on the Congressional Joint Economic Committee's special study of the Chinese economy, stated:

Far from being the land of total chaos and conflict, China is . . . a country which has made considerable progress in the past and which continues to tackle major economic concerns. The Committee's study is the most comprehensive and timely one available. Its central conclusion summarised in Chairman Prexmire's report, are that China is a 'reasonably satisfactory food situation with no indication of stringency'; that 'remarkable gains' in education is limited not by its economic resources but by its technical know-how (itself 'not inconsiderable and expanding'). China's recent explosion of its thermonuclear bomb underscores this assessment of its nuclear progress.

The reason for China's advance and India's decline is rooted in the basic fact that the Chinese Communist Party in capturing state power in 1949 expelled the foreign exploiters, nationalised the mines, factories, plantations, banks, insurance companies and foreign trade firms, and took away the land from the warlords and gave it to the exploited landless peasants.

India on the other hand, on independence and up to this day, was not only saddled with big foreign exploiters, but also carried on her back a huge burden of defence, a legacy of the early history of Pakistan, which with United States military help was always determined to annex the disputed Kashmir. It should be observed that at the recent Congress Party convention in India,

the delegates were unanimous in calling on their leaders in the government for a swift movement to the left — nationalisation of the banks, a drastic land reform, etc. This movement to the left is growing.

PROPAGANDA, TERROR AND FRAUD

The coalition answer to the growing discontent is to resort increasingly to Hitlerite weapons of the “Big Lie”, discrimination, terror, fraud and psychological warfare. As with the first Interim Government, the Information Services is constantly being reformed and expanded. Martin Carter, a one-time revolutionary, has now replaced Bissement as minister of propaganda for neo-colonialism. And Kit Nascimento, the former UF election manager, a rapid anti-socialist, has become consultant to the Minister of Information!

To placate its rebellious supporters, the coalition practices discrimination, favouritism and nepotism.

To contain the growing militancy of the working class, the government has already enacted the National Security Act under which it can restrict and contain at will. We have seen how the government has intimidated the dissatisfied Americans with the deportation of Wilson. Now it seeks to muzzle the workers with voluntary arbitration. And in by-passing the Elections Commission and setting up its own election registration machinery, it proposes to rig the next elections. Besides, there is the psychological warfare — no matter what, the US government will not allow us to form the government again.

In the face of these developments, some comrades despair. They see the future as hopeless. But this is no time for despair. It is true that today US imperialism has made some successes in Asia, Africa and Latin America. But this is only a temporary phase — a phase of counter-revolutionary successes. We must not allow our visions to be blurred, to see only failures and not successes.

History, like the tide, moves in waves, ebbing and flowing. Actually, over the past 25 years, socialism and national liberation have made overall net gains. From 1938 to 1943, imperialism-turned-fascism seemed invincible. The fascist dictator, Franco, destroyed democracy in Spain in 1936. Hitler overran Europe within a few years. But the revolutionary movement came out on top. From one country, socialism spread to the whole of Eastern Europe. In 1947, India, Burma and Ceylon became free.

This revolutionary tide was stemmed in the late 1940s and early 1950s by the Churchill-Truman Axis, the Truman Doctrine of “containment of communism”, McCarthyist red witch-hunting in the USA, and imprisonment in the colonial territories — the jailing of Nkrumah, Banda, Kenyatta, Makarios and, not to forget, the suspension of our constitution, and the jailing of our leaders.

But the revolutionary tide could not be stopped. Following the liberation of China by the Chinese Communist Party in 1949, the Indonesian revolutionaries succeeded in expelling the Dutch from Indonesia, and the Vietnamese disastrously defeated the French at Dien-Bien-Phu. The Anglo-French-Israeli attack on Egypt was repulsed in 1956. Sekou Toure opted out of the French community in 1958. And in the Iraq revolution of 1958, the hated US puppet dictator, Nur-es-Said was murdered. The Castro revolution in Cuba removed the ruthless dictator, Batista. France conceded defeat in Algeria in 1961.

This revolutionary tide clearly put into shambles the policy of containment of communism — socialist influence was now felt in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The Anglo-French imperialists adopting new tactics hastily conceded independence, hoping as in India to preserve their spoils, and at the same time to prevent American subversion and penetration.

Today the USA is the bastion of imperialism. But those who say that the US is invincible are misreading reality. Today, imperialism — in general US imperialism in particular — is in serious crisis.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Unemployment, the Achilles heel of imperialism, is growing. New Zealand, according to Time magazine (July 28, 1967), "the most complete welfare state in the more or less capitalistic world is having economic trouble. Protest marchers with banners ("We Demand Guaranteed Employment") were out demonstrating in cities and towns throughout New Zealand last week. So far, only some 6,600 people (out of labour base of 1,000,000) are looking for work, but to New Zealanders, who had known to employment for decades, this was matter for deep concern. Union leaders darkly predicted that there would be 20,000 jobless before long".

The position is growing worse in Europe also. In Britain, there were 496,000 unemployed in July 1967, the highest in 27 years. In France, the number of unemployed in early 1967 was about 370,000, of whom about 90,000 were below the age of 25. It is expected that by 1970 France's unemployed population will be about 600,000. In Holland, there are more than 100,000 unemployed. In Belgium, unemployment is becoming particularly marked in the mines and in the steel industry. In Italy, the number of unemployed or on short time runs into millions.

The situation in Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece is particularly aggravated because workers from these countries usually emigrate to the more advanced Western European countries. With economic recession in the latter countries, this free movement is stopped and the safety valve shut off.

The position in the United States of America is by no means different. Senator Robert Kennedy recently said: "Unemployment was one of the gravest problems", particularly among Negroes, and "its solution demands a joint effort on the part of the government and business While since 1960 the average family income in America has gone up 14 percent, in the Los Angeles ghetto of Watts it has gone down 8 percent. . . I can think of no better solution than to invite business to set themselves up in or near ghettos."

The dilemma of America is that it is an imperialist state and imperialism is not concerned with solving the problems of the people. Profit is the dynamo of the imperialist system. And under the law of capitalist development, rationalisation, mechanisation and automation are inevitable regardless of how many are thrown into the streets. It is to be noted, for instance, that as a result of rationalisation and automation in the railways of the United States, the labour force has been cut over the past 40 years from two million to a little over 600,000 workers, despite an increase in traffic of some 70 percent.

NEGRO REVOLT IN THE USA

American Negroes suffering from more than three centuries of abuse, humiliation, discrimination and segregation are in open revolt. To date in 1967, thirty-one Negro ghettos have exploded resulting in 38 dead, 2,058 injured and 11,094 arrested.

Negroes are in revolt because they are the most oppressed of the US working class, with about half their numbers living in poverty, in overcrowded, rat infested slums and ghettos. Although they are only 10 percent of total US population, their children constitute 44 percent of those in receipt of welfare relief.

Some moderate Black leaders have called for crash programmes. A Phillip Randolph proposed two years ago a "Freedom Budget" of US\$185 billion over a ten-year period for wiping out the ghettos, a guaranteed annual income, increased spending on education, housing, vocational training and health services. Whitney Young called for a "Domestic Marshall Plan" of \$145 billion over ten years.

But Congress is in no mood to "reward the rioters". Indeed it seems bent on a course of revenge and retaliation. The House of Representatives has passed a bill providing \$300 million to aid cities to improve riot-control techniques. And a new measure aimed at the Black militants has been enacted, making incitement to violence a crime punishable by both a 5-year jail sen-

tence, and a \$10,000 fine. Meanwhile, the Senate has voted to reduce the appropriation for the Teachers Corps from \$33 million to \$18 million.

What moderate leaders like Randolph and Young must realise is that slums, ghettos, unemployment, illiteracy, ignorance, crime, etc., are part of the system of monopoly capitalism (imperialism), that the imperialist power-elite can no more eradicate them, than they can refrain from aggressive limited wars as in Vietnam in defence of vested interests. (US investments in the Far East have grown from \$309 million in 1960 to \$2,000 million in 1965).

US imperialism will find less and less for butter and more and more for guns and subversion. Sargent Shriver, head of the War Against Poverty programme earlier this year wailed: "We were just about to put the bottle in the baby's mouth, and we find that there is damned little milk to give."

SPLIT IN IMPERIALIST CAMP

Rivalry between imperialist USA, the "colossus of the North", and other smaller imperialist nations is growing.

President Charles de Gaulle who came to power in France with the help of the rightist French Colons has become the "bad old man" of the West. He has recognised and established diplomatic relations with China and asked Latin Americans to follow a course of non-alignment and independence from the USA. He has caused NATO to pull out of France and has publicly urged the USA to withdraw from Vietnam. He has told French Canadians that they must struggle for their national status, free from second-class Canadian citizenship.

The West German so-called economic "miracle" has faded and the economic "wizard", former Chancellor Erhard, has fallen. The West German coalition government hopefully looks for an economic growth rate of 2 percent in 1967 as compared with 7 percent previously. The expectation in non-government circles is a figure of minus 2 percent. Early this year, the new West German Chancellor had to postpone his official visit to the United States because of a budget crisis. Now there is increasing pressure in West Germany for the scaling down of military expenditure for its large standing army. However, the United States is against such a move.

In Canada, there is growing opposition to control of more than 50 percent of Canadian industry by the United States big corporations, which has led to growing balance of payments deficits with the United States of America, amounting to nearly \$1 billion. Recently, Canadian Minister of Mines, Mr. George Wardrobe, recently expressed satisfaction that less and less Canadian ores were being shipped abroad and more and more of them were being smelted and manufactured in Canada itself. He said that large iron ore mines were finding a market "within our own country" and continued:

It is always been desirable that the treatment of our minerals should be carried just as far as possible in the country, rather than exporting them as raw ore so that we Canadians are obliged to buy back the finished product at a greatly enhanced price. Perhaps it is not too much to say that this is a step — an important step — toward buying back our country."

European countries have also been lately expressing more and more concern about US economic penetration. The British Minister of Technology at a recent Conference in Europe warned that unless serious attention was given to the development of science and technology in Europe it will soon become a technological colony of the United States. United States corporations collected about US\$1.5 billion yearly from West Europeans and other foreigners as royalties and fees for the use of American patents and know-how.

By such tie-ups, they are also able to gain controlling ownership share in the foreign company, and thus American take-overs of West European business.

It is precisely for this reason that De Gaulle opposes Britain's entry in the Common Market. De Gaulle is the political exponent of the French bourgeois class which feels insecure in the face of penetration by United States monopolies.

The recent feverish drive by the US to set up common markets and free trade areas, particularly in the Western Hemisphere, must be understood in the context of the increasing rivalry between competing imperialisms. The objective of American imperialism is to squeeze out their competitors.

De Gaulle's opposition must be understood in the light of the following excerpt taken from a newsletter circulated by the private West German banks, Merck, Fink and Co. and Waldhausen which commented:

When Britain becomes a member of the EEC, several thousand US companies which are already established with their own British subsidiaries in the UK will also enjoy the benefits of this continental market. They will be able to mesh and synchronise their investments and operations in Britain and on the continent so as to quickly develop an all-European plan for their production and sales. In view of the size of their direct investment . . . generally speaking the Americans are in a better position than their British or European competitors immediately to exploit the advantage of an expanded Common Market.

In a speech recently made to the New York Chamber of Commerce, the chairman of the big investment ranking firm, Lehman Bros. International Ltd., George W. Ball, former Undersecretary of State, but it quite bluntly when he said:

The multi-national US corporation is ahead of, and in conflict with, existing world political organisations represented by the nation-state. Major obstacles to the multinational corporation are evident in Western Europe, Canada and a good part of the developing world.

The multinational US corporation would like to bring up the existing trade and other ties between Caribbean, Latin American and European countries, to group them in regional common markets which can then be dominated from inside by one or more multinational US corporations established at strategic points.

Faced with growing financial and economic difficulties, Britain has announced that it is scuttling its imperialist "East of Suez" policy. Of the 80,000 military men and civilians in the Far East, about 10,000 were sent back home during the last year. Another 20,000 are to leave by 1968, and by the middle of the 1970s evacuation is planned. The Aden base is also to be evacuated by 1968.

The British government has come around to the view expressed by the British Communist Party for many years that it would not be possible to maintain a healthy level of industrial growth or to pay for major social reforms without a massive cutback in defence. Britain no doubt has watched with envy France's success after she had decided on the futility and costliness of colonial wars in Indo-China and Algeria.

REVOLT IN THE THIRD WORLD

The USA too is finding out that despite its vast resources it cannot have a "guns" and "butter" policy at the same time. If its mammoth US\$70.3 billion defence expenditure, \$20.3 billion is for the war in Vietnam where, by mid-1967, 480,000 US troops are committed. General Westmoreland has called for an additional 120,000 but President Johnson was only able to provide 45,000.

The Vietnam War is the American graveyard. From January 1, 1961 to June 10, 1967, there were 10,956 killed, 1,966 non-combat deaths; 66,130 wounded, and 544 missing or captured.

By mid-June, North Vietnam celebrated the shooting down of the 2,000th US plane. According to the New York Times (March 16) fighter and attack aircraft "losses had actually ex-

ceeded new production" in the fiscal years 1966 and 1967. Where the losses seem to be even more irreplaceable is that of pilots. Colonels, 45 to 47 years old, drafted from instructor jobs, are now being captured. This has caused the US government recently to announce high rewards for lost US pilots.

The Vietnam War is the first war which America has not been able to win. It is making a huge dent in US public finance. The budget deficit for fiscal 1966-67 was \$9.9 billion. For 1967-68, President Johnson has proposed an increase in taxation amounting to 10 percent on company personnel income taxes. But this surcharge which is expected to bring in about \$6.3 billion will only reduce, according to Time magazine, "the national budget deficit from a crushing \$29 billion to between \$14 and \$18 billion."

Another casualty is President Johnson popularity. From a landslide victory less than two years ago, Johnson's rating in the latest public opinion polls has slumped to 43 percent.

But Vietnam is not the only US graveyard. In other "third world" countries, the US imperialists are faced with new dilemmas.

In Chile, President Eduardo Frei, who won the last presidential election with the help of US dollars and Castro's renegade sister, is in deep trouble. As a result of the growing militancy of the Chilean people, the Congress was forced to pass a radical land reform measure which was for a long time opposed by many conservative landlords and many of Frei's own Christian Democrats who are owners of big estates. The new land reform act, according to Time magazine (July 31, 1967), "authorizes the Chilean Agrarian Reform Corporation (CORA) to seize property from anyone who owns more than 200 acres in the fertile valley or an equivalent amount in drier lands. In compensation, the owner gets 10 percent of the value in cash, the rest in 30-year bonds. . . And rebel left-wingers have won control of Frei's own Christian Democratic Party. The Party's national committee recently endorsed the formation of a new Chilean branch of Fidel Castro's Latin American Solidarity Organization and further suggested that guerrilla warfare is a legitimate tool against arbitrary governments."

In India, following the severe defeat of the Congress Party in the recent general election, the Party's recent convention called for a swift movement to the left — nationalisation of banks, the non-payment of tribute to former princes and maharajahs, and drastic land reform.

And in Bolivia, another guerrilla front has opened up, allegedly under the elusive Che Guevara, the Tom Paine of the second half of the 20th century.

EXPOSÉ ON THE CIA

Meanwhile, the vast subversive apparatus of the US government, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), has been exposed. A partial list of CIA-financed organisations include the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, and its affiliates in Argentina, Peru, Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad, and Tobago; Retail Clerks International Association; American Newspaper Guild; Communication Workers of America; Institute of International Research; International Labour Training Programme; World Confederation of Organisations of the Teaching Profession; International Confederation of Journalists; International Federation of Petroleum and Chemical Workers; Congress for Cultural Freedom; American Council for the International Commission of Jurists; African-American Institutes; American Friends of the Middle East; Institute of International Education; American Society of African Culture; Institute of Public Administration; Atwater Research Programme in North Africa; American National Student Association; International Development Foundation of New York; University of Pennsylvania; National Education Association; International Student Conference of Leyden; US Youth Council of New York; World Assembly of Youth; Brussels; International Market Institute; Independent Research Service; India Committee Trust; Asian Students Press Bureau; Council for International Programme for Youth Leaders and Social Workers; Crossroads Africa; Gambia National Youth Council; Guyana Assembly for Youth; International Union of Young Christian Democrats; International Youth Centre, New Delhi; National Newsmen Club Federation; National Student Press Council of India; North American Secretariat of Pax Romana; National Federation of Ca-

nadian University Students; Synod of Bishops of the Russian Church outside Russia; National Council of Churches; Billy Graham Spanish-American Crusade; Young Women's Christian Association; Radio Free Europe; Center for International Studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; League of International and Social Development; etc.

These disclosures have put millions the world over on guard. They have also exposed the US power-elite as completely venal and immoral. In our own case, many at home and abroad now acknowledge what we have always charged, namely, the Anglo-American plot to remove us and install the PNC and UF puppets in the government.

All Guyanese owe a debt of gratitude to the London Sunday Times Insight Team for exposing not only the CIA plot but also the complicity of the former British Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, Duncan Sandys, two top security men in Britain and a number of British officials in Guyana, including no doubt the Governor and the Commissioner of Police, who refused to cooperate with us and connive with the traitors of the PNC, UF, TUC and CSA.

Guyanese who wittingly and unwittingly helped to overthrow our government are now realising that they were duped. Many have come to regret. And some of the staunchest supporters of the coalition are voicing sharp criticisms.

Meanwhile, to absolve themselves from responsibility for the failures of the coalition, the PNC and the UF have resorted to attacking each other. In 1966, D'Aguiar charged that he was not being adequately consulted. This year, he accused the PNC part of the government with spending \$1.5 million illegally and without proper accounting. Soon after, he asked for the removal of UF minister, M. Kassim. At the same time, the PNC has resorted to attacking the UF. In a recent editorial, the PNC's *New Nation* through its Secretary declared: "A close parallel is now reached with the situation towards the end of the life of the Interim Government."

But unfortunately, some who are not armed with a working class ideology, who do not have a Marxist scientific approach, cannot see these developments in perspective and thus become the purveyors of despair and gloom. Even if they observe some change, their limited viewpoint makes them see phenomena not in a state of flux but in static terms. They see the performance of racial divisions and alignments. It is true that racism has been used by the imperialists in their divide-and-rule game. It is also true that racism has distorted and diverted our struggle for national liberation and socialism.

But it is also true that although the divisions and trauma caused by the racial disturbances between 1962-64 cannot be forgotten and resolved overnight, astonishing results have already been achieved in a very short time. The disillusionment and dissatisfaction of all rice farmers, and farmers generally in the Berbice, Essequibo, Pomeroon and North West District are clear for all to see. The increasing number of strikes, from 146 in 1965 to 172 in 1966, and 57 to the end of April 1967, are not due mainly to PPP supporters. In fact, the great majority are caused by government supporters.

The recent strike of Bookers' waterfront workers and Charlestown sawmill workers were not only directed against the employers but against the seat of power itself — Burnham's union and Burnham's government. It is to be recalled that in 1963 the sawmill workers deserted the Sawmill and Forest Workers Union, which was pro-PPP, and joined the Guyana Labour Union. Their expectation was a wage of \$5.00 to \$10.00 per day with a change of the government, and thus they joined the 80-day strike which helped to topple our government. But their reward today is only \$3.50 per day, less than the \$4.00 minimum wage paid to government unskilled workers. During our regime, sawmill and forest workers and government workers received the same minimum wage.

The Bookers' waterfront workers want the Clerical & Commercial Workers Union (CCWU) instead of the Guyana Labour Union to represent them. It should be recalled also that in 1963, DePeana with PNC backing succeeded in removing Samaroo, who was pro-PPP and against the strike as President of the CCWU, and joined the 80-day strike. Now DePeana, who has been traditionally pro-American and pro-PNC, faced the militancy of the workers, is forced to confront Burnham.

Similarly, Egbert Bolton, a candidate in the United Force list in 1964, now openly attacks the government for its callous attitude in retrenching workers and practising open discrimination. In July, after leading a delegation of NUPSE executives to the Minister of Labour, Bolton declared that the government's labour policy was anti-progressive and inimical to the interests of the working class, and its labour placing policy is "fraught with disregard for service and is a cold, calculating act of retrenching workers with years of service and experience."

Then there is a growing consciousness and unity among Indian and Negro sugar workers. Those sugar workers who did not support us are openly saying now that they would have succeeded in getting their once-for-all bonus had the PPP not been removed from the government.

The unity of Indo-Guyanese and Afro-Guyanese sugar workers was clearly demonstrated in a strike on the East Coast. The strike resulted from the dismissal of a Negro worker with 30 years of service in the sugar industry. He was dismissed because he fell short in his qualifying period by one day. The Negro workers of Buxton requested the assistance of Indian sugar workers on the East Coast. The latter agreed when Buxton workers promised to collaborate and join with them in any future problems. In the face of this unity, the worker was reinstated.

Then there is the case of the refusal by the SPA to pay production bonus to workers at Blairmont and Enmore. The SPA did so even though these two estates had reached the production target set for them. Their excuse was that the workers had gone on an unofficial strike which they claimed violated an agreement made between the SPA and MPCA in 1952. All the workers struck. As a result, the employers were forced to retreat. To save their face, they agreed to pay the money, but called it an *ex gratia* payment.

Despair and defeatism must therefore be combated. But this does not mean that we must become over-confident. We must face realities. We must not live in a dream world and hope for the best. We must take it for granted that the puppets, having been put into office by force and fraud, will use the same means to perpetuate themselves. They will rig the next elections by manipulating the voters list, by using voting machines, by registering Guyanese abroad, and by many other corrupt means. We must be aware of this. We must also be aware of the definite possibility of a coup d'état in case we win even a rigged election. Such consciousness and awareness will prepare us psychologically, mentally and physically how to act now and in the future. By and large, our supporters are too election-oriented. They have little concept of what power means and involves. To many, power means elections and being in Parliament. As such, many do not involve themselves in day-to-day activities and struggles, but await voting day to show their support for the party. And after voting day, they lapse into lethargy. There must be struggle in parliament and out of parliament.

We must engage in political work, in mass activity. We must involve the people day by day in activity, however small and apparently insignificant — strikes, demonstrations, rallies, marches, picketing, vigils, fasts, petitions, resolutions.

It must be realised that power does not mean only people in the countryside, but also in Georgetown and in strategic places, such as the civil service, police, army, waterfront, electricity, telephone and cable, airport, etc. Although we are numerically stronger, our opponents are strategically stronger. Our aim must be to win more support in these strategic areas.

We cannot hope to win power without achieving decisive shifts in political support. This is already taking place, as anyone can see. Our aim should be to win over a third of opposition support, to neutralise another third, and to leave with them the remaining third who are emotionally committed and bigoted.

We must combat racism. We must resolutely weed out from our ranks any one who consciously or unconsciously peddles racism. There are many in our ranks who in public take a non-racial stand, but who in private crawl into their racial skins. We must make a clear distinction between racism which believes in the superiority of one race over another, and a racial pride which signifies certain cultural differences and achievement of different ethnic groups. The first we must combat, the second we must cultivate.

Unity of the working class regardless of race is vital. If we are to move forward, the party must have the backing of the working class, the peasantry and the intelligentsia, not of one

race, but of all races. Indeed, not only the following but also the leadership of the party must increasingly come from these sections — the intelligentsia who is armed with the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism, other cadres who come from or work among the workers and farmers in trade union and peasant organisations.

It is necessary for all peoples in Guyana and other poor “third world” countries to realise that the cause of our poverty is national oppression by imperialism. We need to develop among the masses, our supporters and non-supporters alike, fuller understanding that it is necessary to have a Marxist, and not a racist, approach to our problems; to fight for a genuine democracy and an anti-imperialist programme based on the public ownership of the commanding heights of the economy.

We need to develop understanding not only of the social and economic forces at play in our society, and the world at large, but also of strategy and tactics of counter-revolution. Recently in Africa and Asia, military coups d’etat have taken place not only against progressive leftist leaders, but also against puppets. When the latter can no longer serve imperialism by holding the allegiance of the people, they are eliminated and replaced by other stooges.

Bribing the young intelligentsia through the creation of a large bureaucracy is another device. CIA-financed front organisations operating under the guise of religious, cultural and social activities will be set up to splinter our support and to prevent the discontented from joining our ranks. Note the formation recently of the Amerindian party, and the declaration that such a party must be in the Parliament and in an anti-communist coalition. Since the Amerindians are fed up with the two coalition parties, it is better, so the imperialist strategists manoeuvre, to have them in a separate anti-communist party than to be part of our movement.

And we must be on guard against imperialist agents who will be planted inside our movement. The US Federal Bureau of Investigation once admitted that a large part of the membership of the Communist Party of the USA was infiltrated with US agents. Agents will be planted not only for intelligence purposes, but to act as agents provocateurs, and to change the anti-imperialist line of our party.

Such all-round vigilance and understanding must come about by intensive study, work and struggle. We must concentrate on our ideological work at Accabre College, at constituency and regional seminars, at study groups and, whenever possible, studies abroad.

In the past, we concentrated on quantity. Now we must concentrate on quality. We must develop sufficient ideological understanding to withstand the wiles and machinations of the imperialists and their puppets.

We must now concentrate on building the well-disciplined party. We must constantly promote into leading positions comrades armed with the ideology of Marxism-Leninism. We must at the same time combat left adventurism and right opportunism. Unfortunately, the Sino-Soviet and now the Soviet-Cuban splits have added confusion. We regret this open disunity and wrangling which can only embolden the imperialist camp.

We wish to make our position quite clear. We stand by the position taken at the Tri-Continental Conference held in Havana in January 1966. The conference proclaimed the inalienable right of all peoples to full political independence and to resort to all forms of struggle that may be necessary, including armed struggle to achieve that right.

We do not believe that revolution can be exported. Nor do we believe that ready-made formulae can be prescribed for all situations. We must make a concrete analysis of the concrete situation and evaluate properly the subjective and objective factors. Although in general we are all oppressed by imperialism in every country, the subjective and objective factors are different. The leadership in each country are the best to decide what course of action to follow.

Actually we do not see peaceful and non-peaceful forms of struggle as opposite. It is the imperialists and their puppets who really decide what the form should be.

Clearly, those who recommend abandonment of the peaceful, parliamentary road and who virtually advocated an armed struggle under the conditions of 1964 and 1965 were the victims of subjectivism and bourgeois radicalism. Fortunately, they do not dominate our leadership.

But it is equally important to guard against right-wing opportunism which seeks to make an accommodation with imperialism. This way, too, lies disaster. If we are to make an accommodation, it must be with the PNC, who still hold the allegiance of large sections of the working class and peasantry. But this accommodation must be made on the basis of unity and struggle — unity with those progressive elements in the leadership and in the rank-and-file, and struggle against the pro-imperialist leadership which now dominate the party. Such unity and struggle must be based on a dynamic anti-imperialist programme.

Let the coming months be a period of consolidation.

Forward with the PPP!

Down with imperialism!

Long live national liberation!

Long live socialism!

-4-

The Fifteenth Congress

“For a United, Free Guyana”: Paper to the 15th Congress in 1968, presented by Dr. Cheddi Jagan, Leader of the PPP

Comrades,

We meet at a time of grave crisis. The coalition’s domestic and foreign policies have landed Guyana into a morass.

There has been a steady deterioration in living standards. Unemployment is increasing with growing frustration, social and industrial unrest, crime and delinquency.

This is in sharp contrast to promises made but not fulfilled. The Guyanese people have been betrayed.

In its 1964 election manifesto, called the New Road, the People’s National Congress (PNC), led by L.F.S. Burnham, declared:

Independence though emotionally satisfying, is not an end in itself. To be worthwhile, it must be an instrument for building a cohesive nation, liberating the people from the economic yoke imposed by the foreigner and establishing a prosperous, self-reliant and free society. Some other Guyanese are militant and noisy in their demand for independence from Britain, but consciously would immediately pawn Guyana, the moment after independence, to some other foreign power. Such persons are colonial charlatans or at best infants, the witting or unwitting tools and agents of new masters. Theirs is the concept of a new servitude not independence.

In January 1963, the same L.F.S. Burnham, as Opposition Leader, bravely uttered these words in the Legislative Assembly:

If all we are going to do in this country after we have got independence is to pass a few bits of legislation and embark upon a few reforms within the framework of the existing economic and social order, we are wasting our time and the uneasiness of the masses will certainly catch up with us, and will certainly remove us from the political scene.

In the 1964 election, the PNC campaigned under the banner of socialism. But public enterprise now has no place in the imperialist scheme of things in Guyana. In June 1966, the law enacted by the PPP government in 1962 empowering the Industrial Development Corporation to “stimulate, facilitate and undertake the development of industry” was amended — without parliamentary debate — by the deletion of the key word, “undertake”.

Monetary, fiscal, trade, agricultural and industrial policies were dictated by the US to better serve the interests of foreign (mainly American) monopoly-capitalists. May 26, 1966, did not bring independence to the Guyanese people, only a new servitude, a change of colonial overlords. The United States has merely replaced Britain.

Fortunately, after more than four and a half years of puppet rule, more and more Guyanese are realising that Guyana is retrogressing instead of progressing, that things were never so bad, not even in the dark days of direct British colonial rule.

The broad handwriting is on the wall. It will not be long before the puppets are removed from the political scene.

ECONOMIC RETROGRESSION

In 1964, the UF manifesto, *Highways to Happiness*, said that it would obtain “\$900 million for the economic and social development of Guyana” for a 6-year programme.

The PNC’s New Road, not to be outdone, declared that its target of \$130 million annually was feasible.

But the 7-year D-Plan (1966-72) was only \$300 million. And in the first three years of coalition rule, the yearly average of \$43 million was not reached — \$24 million was spent (wasted) in 1965, \$32 million in 1966, and \$41 million in 1967.

A Ministerial Paper, appended to the 7-year Development Programme under the title, “Financing the Development Plan”, stated in the last paragraph: “In brief, the Government can support a Development Plan of \$286 million over the years 1966 to 1972 if it can find:

- i) \$96 million in grants, \$100 million in “soft” loan, and \$41 million in “hard” loans from external borrowing;
- ii) \$50 million from internal borrowing; and
- iii) \$40 million from expenditure cuts (especially subsidies) and increased taxation.

What is the position today? Clearly, the targets set out in the Ministerial Paper will not be achieved.

For the 3-year period, 1966 to 1968, grants amounted to \$24 million, foreign loans to \$31.5 million and local loans to \$121.5 million.

Of the local loans, the largest amount, \$13.5 million, was raised in 1965, before the Plan began. Since then, there have been diminishing returns — \$18 million in 1966, \$9 million in 1967 and only \$4.5 million in 1968. So difficult has the position become that the government in 1968 agreed to allow write-offs in income tax for money invested in Government Bonds. This manoeuvre, while helping to raise some local loans, will certainly affect adversely income tax receipts.

Foreign aid in the form of loans and grants has come mainly from Great Britain and the United States. But because of their own serious financial difficulties, they are unlikely to pump aid into Guyana in the future at the same rate as over the past three years.

Actually, US foreign aid has dropped from US\$3.5 billion during the Kennedy period to \$1.4 billion in 1969. And President Johnson has now suggested a cut of \$0.5 billion leaving a balance of \$1.75 billion — exactly half the amount of the Kennedy era. This amount is likely to be further reduced.

Besides, foreign aid is becoming increasingly tied. Minister of Finance Dr. P. Reid, in his 1968 budget statement cautiously complained: “But though foreign aid is welcomed Guyana cannot accept aid under any conditions; hence, unfortunately, aid from some donor countries has not been fully utilised during the year under review” (1967).

Nearly 80 percent of US loans are tied to the purchase of US goods and services. The Bank of Guyana Annual Report, 1969, noted: “A major problem in financing capital expenditure is the insufficiency of untied funds — funds which are tied neither to specific projects nor to specified foreign expenditures.”

A look at another aspect of the Ministerial Paper shows that current expenditure is running ahead of what was planned. The plan was to spend \$81 million in 1966, \$86 million in 1967 and \$92 million in 1968. The actual figures are \$84, \$88 and \$97 million respectively.

The increased expenditure unfortunately is not going toward development and social services. Instead, it is being squandered and frittered away in a growing bureaucracy and ministerial extravagance. Of nearly \$5 million increase in expenditure in 1968 over 1967, the bulk went toward personal emoluments and public debt charges. The 1967 increase in expenditure of \$7 million over 1966 was largely used up in significant increase for defence, police, prisons, overseas representation and payment of public debt.

And the government has put Guyana in the red. At the end of 1963 there was a credit balance of \$5,852,656. The government has admitted that at the end of 1968, the credit balance will become a debit of \$17 million. It is more likely to be about \$20 million.

It was suggested also in the Ministerial Paper that at the end of the 7-year period, the government would have to raise a total of about \$10 million by way of taxation to close the financial gap in the Plan. But already taxation for the first three years of the Plan has reached a cumulated total of \$27 million (\$2.77 million in 1966, \$5.4 million 1967, and \$7.95 million in 1968).

And it is obvious that we are not at the end of the road on taxation. From now on, the Guyanese people will be called upon every year to pay more and more taxes.

COST OF LIVING

The cost of living has been mounting due to the government's pro-imperialist monetary, fiscal, trade, industrial, agricultural, labour and other policies. In the four-year period, 1965-1968, the cost-of-living index figure rose by 16 points as compared with 8.8 points in the previous 7 years.

The pro-big business policies include:

1. Wage freeze
2. Devaluation
3. High interest rates
4. Removal of consumer subsidies
5. No effective price and rental controls
6. Restrictions on trade with socialist countries
7. Bankrupt agricultural policy leading to skyrocketing food prices
8. Sabotage of industrialisation
9. Indirect (consumer) taxes in the form of increased import duties
10. Decrease of real income.

WAGE FREEZE

The government is carrying out an anti-working class wage-freeze policy, contrary to electoral promises.

At the street corners during the 1964 election campaign, both the PNC and the UF had wickedly told the people that the PPP was anti-working class and was holding down wages. They promised \$5 to \$10 per day.

The UF manifesto, *Highways to Happiness*, specifically stated:

1. Immediate minimum wage of \$4 per day.
2. Minimum annual increment.

But this was not implemented.

It is now clear that had the PPP government not promised to pay \$4 per day, the coalition would have raised wages only to \$3.52 per day. For that is the minimum wage fixed by the coalition government for sawmill, forest and quarry workers. During our regime, these workers received the same minimum wage as government unskilled workers.

The government is aware that the sawmill and quarry industries are highly lucrative. High profits have produced many local millionaires.

With reference to high profits, *New Nation*, the organ of the PNC stated:

Nearly half a million dollars in revenue has been paid into Government coffers as a direct result of forest products extracted during 1966, *New Nation* has been reliably informed. The sum collected (\$480,051) was \$12,000 or two-and-a-half percent more than that collected for the year 1966, the

previous highest revenue-yielding year, and 20 percent higher than revenue collected from the forestry and the lumber industry during 1965.

But the government, and the Burnham-led Guyana Labour Union, which raided the membership of the Sawmill and Forest Workers Union in 1963 with promises of steep wage increases, were no doubt acting in deference to the wishes of their wealthy capitalist backers whose concern is industrial peace, low wages and high profits. The then Finance Minister, Peter D'Aguiar, made this clear some time ago, when he addressed the Post Office Workers Union. He warned against the agitation for higher wages and said increased wages must go hand in hand with increased productivity or else, "you will be driving the country's economy into a state of bankruptcy".

So now the workers are being told that they must submit to a fraudulent wages and incomes policy, and give up their right to strike. The Guyanese workers should note that the British working class by an overwhelming majority at the 1968 TUC Annual Conference rejected the British government's wages and incomes restraint policy.

MONETARY POLICIES

The coalition government, faithful to its masters abroad, refused to heed the advice of the PPP to take steps to anticipate and thus cushion the effects of the devaluation of the pound sterling. Consequently, our dollar was devalued in November 1967 by 14.3 percent, the same extent as the British pound.

Devaluation has hit the Guyanese consumers now in increased prices of goods from non-Commonwealth areas. It will hit them later in the form of increased taxes to meet larger debt payments to non-sterling countries like the USA and Canada.

Meanwhile, those companies and individuals who export bauxite, alumina, manganese, sugar, rum, molasses, gold, diamonds and timber to non-Commonwealth countries will reap a windfall of about \$10 million annually from devaluation.

Devaluation of our currency has not been the only means by which the puppet government's monetary policies have helped the capitalists and imperialists. No attempt was made to pursue economic and financial policies in the interest of our development. The difficult problems of monetary control and economic emancipation remain. By refusing to appoint Guyanese Dr. Clive Thomas as Governor of the (Central) Bank of Guyana, as we had proposed, the coalition placed the Bank under the governorship of one sponsored by the West German Government, Dr. Horst Bocklemann, now succeeded by Mr. W.P. D'Andrade, an instrument of big business and the private expatriate banks.

Interest rates were not brought under control; they still depend on the state of foreign economies, not our own. The average interest rate for all loans and advances was 7.7% in 1966, and 7.9% in 1967. These high rates were eventually passed on to the consumers in one form or another.

Exchange control on sterling imposed by the PPP government in 1962 was lifted in 1965. This led to an outflow of about \$15 million of capital in 1965 and 1966, which reduced Guyana's foreign reserves and contributed to the devaluation of our dollar.

REMOVAL OF SUBSIDIES

In 1966, the government in a White Paper declared that it was losing \$14 million annually in various subsidies to the consumers — drainage and irrigation; Transport and Harbour fares and freight; the Marketing Corporation; duty-free gasoline to rice farmers, timber producers and fishermen; deodorized cooking-oil, crop bonuses; etc. This subsidy the government claimed it could not afford, and would gradually reduce. As a result, the government (1) increased railway and steamer fares and freights (except the passenger fares on the Georgetown and New Amsterdam steamers), and re-introduced first-class travel which was abolished by the PPP; (2)

withdrew the subsidy on cooking oil; (3) withdrew duty-free gasoline for rice farmers and loggers; and (4) sabotaged incentives to farmers.

TRADE

On April 13, 1962, L.F.S. Burnham declared in the Legislative Assembly that the "PNC does not oppose trade on the basis of ideology". But his government has jettisoned exports to Cuba and restricted imports from socialist countries.

Quota restrictions have been placed on less expensive goods from the East. This measure, which has helped to increase the cost of living, is in keeping with United States dictation. The United States government would like to get its client states to purchase more from the West to help solve balance of trade and balance of payments difficulties. The US share of world trade fell from 34 percent at the end of World War II to 16.4 percent in 1965.

By the abandonment of the Cuban market, rice farmers and timber producers and workers have been hard hit. Many Amerindian loggers and sawmillers, who were able to cut more trees and fashion them into sleepers, have lost their means of livelihood. Many sawmill workers have also lost their jobs. Thus an area like Bartica is today a depressed "ghost town".

The government contracted the Connell Rice and Sugar Company of the USA at a retainer fee of a little over one-quarter million dollars to sell rice outside of the British Caribbean area. The government claims that Connell also gets a commission of 1 percent. But some RMB members express doubts about this, stating that if Connell was selling on a commission basis, it would not have been using its own brand name, "Rooster", to market Guyana's rice abroad. They claim that Connell buys at low prices and sells at higher prices.

The coalition's mishandling and mismanagement of the rice industry have caused the Rice Marketing Board (RMB) to lose \$4.3 million in 1965-66 and \$2.9 million in 1966-67. The government claims credit for a profit of \$1.4 million in 1967-68. But this has been made at the expense of the sweat and blood of the rice farmers, who have been penalised in many ways.

The RMB reduced prices and dropped certain intermediate grades, resulting in a drop in prices to the farmers of between \$3 to \$5 per bag of rice.

This drop in prices also affected the income of the government-owned Rice Development Corporation (RDC). Consequently, prices paid to farmers at the RDC mill at Mahaicony-Abary for paddy were dropped to \$4.70 for Grade D and \$2.90 for Grade E, well below the cost of production. At the RDC mill at Anna Regina, the lowest price per bag of paddy in 1968 was \$3.14 as compared with \$5.19 during the PPP regime. And to further squeeze the farmers, the RDC has decided to abandon the 3-man system of grading of paddy.

Another adverse effect of the loss of the Cuban market and the lowered income of the RDC was its inability to meet its \$5 million loan commitment to the Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC). The government was thus forced to give the CDC lucrative concessions—low prices for land and option to lease their lands in the whole of the Pomeroon, Moruca and Northwest District — for a 12-year extension of the loan.

AGRICULTURE

Today, from every government quarter, it is being said that agriculture constitutes the backbone of the country. This is in sharp contrast to the epithets hurled against the PPP regime, that it was a "coolie government", "a rice government", concentrating too much on the countryside, on agriculture, on drainage and irrigation. But the coalition has done everything to downgrade agriculture. The progressive farmers scheme, on which the PPP placed great hopes, was virtually killed.

Thus, there is a progressive decline in agriculture. The 1966 Economic Survey of Guyana, stated: "Income arising in the agricultural sector generally are projected to remain fairly static at approximately \$68 million in 1966, and the contribution of the sector to the Gross Domestic Product is expected to decline from 20.6 percent in 1965 to 19 percent in 1966". The actual

percentages for 1966 and 1967 were 18.1 and 17.8 respectively. These should be compared with 21.3 percent for 1964 and 24 percent for 1963, years of CIA-fomented and financed strikes and strife.

The share of "other agriculture", other than sugar and rice, declined from 3.2 percent of GDP in 1961 to 2.6 percent in 1966.

On page 16, the Survey reveals that the "production of livestock (except poultry) is believed to have declined during the year".

Agricultural production is therefore clearly not even keeping pace with the rate of population increase. This shows up in the increased imports of foods — \$33.4 million in 1966 and \$30.7 million in 1965 as compared with \$28.7 million in 1964. For 1966, the report says: "Food imports rose sharply by about 9 percent above the value recorded in 1965".

Cassava, eddoes, tannias and plantains have now become so scarce that they retail for 14 to 20 cents per pound in Georgetown, as compared with prices of 2 to 6 cents per pound during the PPP regime. So plentiful was the supply of local produce then that L.F.S. Burnham could have boasted in a pre-election broadcast in 1961 that when the PNC assumed office no one would go to bed hungry, and there would be free distribution of milk and cassava.

During the 1964 electoral campaign, the United Force declared that 30,000 farmers would each receive 30 acres of bona-fide land, guaranteed drainage and irrigation, good markets and fair prices.

But today the situation is grave. There is land hunger and intense competition for land. And the coalition's overall agricultural policies have caused great suffering both to producers and consumers.

FOOD PRICES

Local food prices have increased because of a combination of factors:

- sabotage of drainage and irrigation
- ejection of farmers
- dismantling of minimum guaranteed prices
- increased role of middlemen
- reduction on crop bonuses
- reduction of expenditure on pest control
- negligible credit to small producers
- destruction of crops by wild animals and birds
- praedial larceny
- increased cost of production

Water control for adequate drainage and irrigation is a basic requirement for agriculture. That is why the PPP had embarked on a progressive plan of implementation of major drainage and irrigation schemes. The coalition government, however, has changed the PPP's order of priorities. Emphasis has been changed from drainage and irrigation to roads.

Drainage and irrigation schemes, so vital to the success of agriculture, were set out in the \$300 million 7-year Development Plan to cost \$40 million. However, for the first 3 years of the plan, only \$900,000 would have been expended.

There has been a cut in drainage and irrigation expenditure at the Cane Grove and Black Bush Polder land settlement schemes. The Pomeroon farmers were also hit by floods in 1965 and 1966. Compensation for loss of crops and loans to rehabilitate farmers were promised, but never given.

The 6,000-acre Pomeroon follow-up scheme was to be undertaken after the Tapakuma Lake Scheme. But it was abandoned. So was the Mahaica-Mahaicony-Abary Project. The internal

drainage and irrigation works of the West Coast Boeraserie Extension Project have not yet been completed.

And even though priority has been given to roads, one of the most important roads, the Parika-Mokouria, was abandoned. Had priority been given to this road, the land on the East Bank of the Essequibo River, which was improved by the Boeraserie Extension Project, would have been producing much needed crops.

The coalition government sabotaged the scheme of guaranteed minimum prices to farmers. Prices of plantains, milk, coffee and other items dropped significantly in 1965 and 1966. In 1966, the Guyana Marketing Corporation refused to purchase oranges from the farmers. They were forced to sell oranges at 50 cents per hundred as compared with \$2 which they received during the PPP regime. Now the Marketing Corporation is buying on the basis of three grades and is requiring shipment in crates instead of, as previously, in bags.

The price paid for milk to the producers by the milk plant was reduced from 80 cents to 60 cents per gallon.

Coffee farmers now get only 30 to 35 cents per pound as compared with 48 to 55 cents per pound during our regime.

The discriminatory policy pursued by the government has also contributed to a fall in the production of "provision". Lands have been taken away from farmers in Hubu and other areas which were actually producing crops and given to PNC supporters, the majority of whom are not interested in farming.

Nearly 300 persons on the West Coast of Berbice had constituted themselves into the Greater Kabawer Cooperative Society and applied for 4,000 acres of land. Instead of facilitating the society and acquiring more land from the sugar planters to meet other needs, the government split the holding, giving 2,000 acres to the society for farming and 2,000 acres to a group of 30 persons for cattle rearing — a clear violation of the terms for the release of the land by "Bookers" to the government.

The "crop bonus" scheme inaugurated by the PPP to help in the diversification of agriculture and to encourage the production of food items imported from abroad was also sabotaged. The coalition government reduced expenditure on this head from \$36,939 to \$20,000 in 1967. The same was done in many other fields, such as veterinary preventive measures and aid to the fishing industry. Aid to the fishing industry has been reduced from \$92,000 in 1966 to \$50,000 in 1967. Many fishermen are complaining that the government has not given them remission of duties on gasoline, twine, and outboard engines.

Those steps have disheartened the farmers. Besides, very little help is given by way of loans to the small farmers. Writing about the Guyana Credit Corporation, the Bank of Guyana Annual Report, 1967 states that the "lending capacity of the Corporation is now virtually confined to repayments received because no new funds have been channelled into it in recent years".

There is also the problem of pest control. For many years, it has been suggested that the riverain lands offer a large scope for agricultural development. One problem, however, has been the destruction of crops by pests, such as acushi ants. The government has done very little to aid agriculture in this field. As compared with government expenditure of \$9,000 in 1966, no money was voted in 1967 for the eradication of acushi ants.

Whereas during the PPP regime farmers obtained free supplies of drugs to destroy acushi ants, now they have to pay. The same applies to vaccine for cattle infected by rabies.

Another cause for loss in the riverain areas is destruction of crops by wild animals and birds. Monkeys, birds and wild hogs destroy farms willy-nilly, while tigers destroy livestock. By refusing to return shotguns to farmers, the government is largely responsible for loss of crops and animals.

Another reason for loss is praedial larceny. Because of increasing unemployment, crime is rapidly increasing. In the city, this has taken the form of choking-and-robbing and crimes of violence. In the countryside, it has taken the form chiefly of stealing from farms. The East Coast Union of Local Authorities has recently called on the government to provide more police protection to farms at night.

High prices of provisions have come about not only from a fall in production. A contributory factor is the increased cost of production to the farmers. Farmers have had to meet not only increased costs for consumption goods. Those who employ labour have been forced to pay increased wage bills as a result of the spiral of inflation. They have also had to meet increased prices for farm implements, fertiliser, stockfeed, seed, etc.

The coalition is thus hindering agricultural production not only directly but also indirectly.

Take the case of Guyana Stockfeeds Ltd. This company, an Anglo-American tie-up of Bookers with the Quaker Oats Company, is virtually the sole producer of stockfeeds. The brand produced is Ful-O-Pep, under license from the Quaker Oats Company which supplies the concentrates no doubt at a handsome profit.

Besides, Guyana Stockfeeds Ltd. itself is making lucrative profits. It complained in 1967 that its profits were low, but it was still able to share a final dividend of 25 percent for 1966.

Dividends previously shared out were 15 percent in 1962, 15 percent in 1963, 20 percent in 1964, and 21½ percent in 1965. This means that the company has recovered its investments in 5 years.

High profits and quick take-out may be good for the foreign investors. But they inhibit the growth of the economy and affect the farmers.

Take corn as an example. The company imports large quantities of this product. This importation would not be necessary if the company paid remunerative prices to the farmers. Hucksters selling corn in Georgetown to the company are paid 6½ cents per pound. But because of the increased cost of steamer-fares and freight rates, they refuse to pay more than 6 cents per pound, which the farmers in the Berbice River district, for instance, find unremunerative. If the company shared a smaller dividend, and paid 7 cents per pound to the hucksters, the latter would be in a position to pay the farmers a higher price, which could very well stimulate local production.

But production is affected not only at the farm level. High prices of stockfeed also inhibit production of livestock, poultry, eggs, milk, cheese, bacon, ham, lard, etc. High prices of feed mean high prices for livestock, poultry, eggs, etc. These high prices place a limit on the ability of consumers to purchase these products. A vicious circle is thus created which limits production and increases the cost of living.

Clearly, a basic industry such as stockfeed should be either government-owned or government-controlled.

DANGEROUS TRENDS

The present trends in Guyana pose grave danger signals, Guyana must at all cost avoid what has happened to Latin America and the Caribbean. These countries which previously produced their own food are now importing large quantities of food, particularly from the USA.

This has been principally due to the fact that under US imperialist influence, agricultural policy became export-oriented for the production of plantation crops like coffee, bananas, and sugar.

North-east Brazil, which went over completely to sugar production, is one of the worst hunger spots in the world.

Many Guyanese farms have been converted in recent times into cane lands. This is a trend which has grave dangers for the future.

Another trend noticeable in the largely agricultural Caribbean and Latin America is the trek of the population from the country to the city. This is very noticeable in places like Barbados, St. Vincent and Jamaica.

Owen Jefferson, a UWI economist, recently postulated an explanation for this trend. He said that the Jamaican economy had certain very profitable "islands" such as bauxite and tourism, which can afford relatively higher wages. Prices and cost of living are eventually adjusted to these wages. Meanwhile, the unemployed or underemployed refuse to work in small farms

which, in the majority of cases, cannot afford the wages paid in the highly profitable “islands” – thus, the trek from the country to the towns and the eventual shanty-town and slums.

INDUSTRIAL FAILURE

On January 20, 1960, L.F.S. Burnham in the Legislative Assembly, attacking the PPP government, shouted:

Where is the plan for the towns, and where is the plan even for villages? . . . No industry for villagers; no plan to get an industrial area and see whether it is possible for government to erect factories.

In a budget debate on January 11, 1963, L.F.S. Burnham observed:

The country is going to export more sugar, bauxite, manganese and so on, and therefore, we should be happy. If exports are increased and the Government is likely to get more revenue, we will be very happy. Is that what the people of Guyana are looking forward to? Must an improvement in conditions depend upon the export of sugar and bauxite and increased import duties? Shades of the old colonial budgets!

Yet, very little has been done by the coalition to industrialise and diversify the economy.

In the Throne Speech, the government continued to declare that it was pursuing a mixed economy. This is in keeping with the promises by the PNC in its 1964 election manifesto *New Road*. Under the heading “Goals and Attitudes”, it said:

Ours will be a mixed economy with a public and private sector. Government will own and run outright those industries which the circumstances and facts suggest. These will not be limited to infrastructural undertaking where the capital investments are heavy and the returns not immediately recognisable, but will include what are described as productive and immediate profit-bearing enterprises.

In the same manifesto, under the heading “Policy Foundations”, there was stated the following:

Essential industries must be under social control. These will include all public utilities, others which are important for ensuring adequate protection of satisfactory standards of quality, and yet others which from time to time it may appear beneficial and in the national interest to have publicly owned, controlled or operated. These will not exclude by any means profit bearing undertakings.

The major coalition party has not only betrayed its pledges, but has also reversed the policy of the PPP government. In November 1964, we had voted the sum of \$5 million in 1965 for the Industrial Development Corporation. This was to be used for the setting up of government-owned industries to manufacture items such as bicycle tyres, galoshes, yachting shoes, glass, cement, etc., for which feasibility studies had been undertaken. Out of this sum, \$1 million was earmarked for government participation with local private entrepreneurs in jointly-owned factories. But under pressure from the United States government, the coalition has not honoured this commitment. Indeed, as has already been pointed out, the Industrial Development Corporation (now Guyana Development Corporation) by an amendment of its statute on June 2, 1966, can no longer establish government-owned industries.

The future for manufacturing industry is therefore bleak. This accounts for the coalition’s belated recognition of the importance of agriculture in the economy.

All that has been done is the expansion of government activities in the field of construction — roads, sea defences, airport, airstrips, etc. — the extraction of bauxite and manganese, the extension of some existing factories, and the erection of factories which were con-

templated during the PPP regime in the private sectors; those in the public sector were dropped.

The coalition government has certainly relegated industrialisation to a minor role. In the field of manufacturing industry, \$16 million was allocated in the D-Plan. But for 1966-68, only \$3.5 million has been voted for forest, agricultural and industrial development.

A total of \$62.3 million for industries, including cement, wood pulp, fibre bags, milk condenser, oil refinery, etc., has been listed in the D-Plan report for the private sectors. But so far very little has been done.

The oil refinery and the huge banana project, on which so much hopes have been built, fizzled into thin air.

In 1967, only two loans totalling G\$0.2 million for air transportation and trawler fishing (the latter to an imperialist company) were granted under the Private Investment Fund, which was established since 1966 with the US Agency for International Development (USAID) contributing US\$2 million and the Guyana government G\$600,000 annually for five successive years. The obstacle here is certainly the condition that purchasers of goods and services for the establishment of light industries must be made in the USA, where prices are generally higher.

Thus, the manufacturing sector in 1966 accounted for only 3.2% of the Gross Domestic Product in industries already established. And the Economic Survey Report for 1966 admitted that "the rate of expansion was slowing down."

The Survey did not regard future prospects as bright. It stated:

A statement of intentions indicates that the firms involved in manufacturing expected to invest approximately \$4.8 million in 1966. As in the previous year, almost a third of this would represent the expected investment by the Electricity Corporation. Further, as no new large scale manufacturing enterprise has been set up during the year, investments in 1966 are hardly likely to exceed the estimated \$4.8 million. In 1966, fixed investment in the manufacturing sector did not achieve the level expected and is now estimated at \$2.5 million; and practically a third of this was attributed to the Guyana Electricity Corporation. It is apparent that most companies did no more than maintain their capital intact.

The Minister of Finance in his budget speech stated that "it is now anticipated that private investment may decline in 1968."

Government construction and the extractive industries (bauxite, manganese) provided the main impetus to economic growth. But bauxite expansion has now tapered off. The Bank of Guyana Annual Report, 1967, disclosed that the "upward trend of production in the bauxite industry, which was the main factor in economic growth in recent years levelled off."

In October, 1967, the Demerara Bauxite Company announced a cutback of 20 percent in production of metal grade bauxite. And the Manganese Mines Ltd. has decided to suspend production.

TAX ON THE POOR

The coalition's fiscal policies have been directed at easing the rich and squeezing the poor. All the budgets introduced from 1965 have hit the working people.

In 1965, the government removed exchange control on sterling, and abolished or drastically scaled down capital taxes (capital gains; gift tax; net property tax; etc.) imposed by the PPP 1962 budget. And for four consecutive years, the government imposed indirect taxation in the form of increased import duties.

This was a complete somersault by the PNC leader. Speaking in the Legislative Assembly as Opposition Leader, L.F.S. Burnham on April 13, 1962, had remarked:

. . . the People's National Congress did not oppose the capital gains tax nor the gift tax, nor in principle do we oppose the tax on net property. Our opposition was mainly directed to those customs duties, the imposition of which resulted in the increased cost of widely used commodities, and this in-

creased cost could have meant the lowering of the already low standards of the working class. And I would say that our party was rather concerned that a so-called socialist party could seek to raise the bulk of the new extra revenue from the pockets of the poor.

A year later, in 1963, speaking on the budget, Burnham reiterated what he had previously said:

Let us say immediately that of the tax reforms passed during 1962 there were some which the People's National Congress agreed to — the capital gains tax, the net property tax and the gift tax. Those three taxes the People's National Congress agreed with and supported because to our mind, whatever might have been the motive, ulterior or expressed, of the People's Progressive Party, those measures represent an attempt (1) at redistribution of income and wealth, and (2) an attempt to find the means whereby the government would be able to do one of two things, both of which are necessary; to put money on investment into the public sector of the economy, or to provide social services for the community. May I say immediately, without apology, that the People's National Congress opposed in February 1962 the proposed taxes on the consumer goods, and no snide remarks about our holding on to the coat-tails of other parties will change us. It does not matter what the People's Progressive Party says on this question. We opposed the imposition of those import duties on what in fact were necessities, in the 1962 No.1 budget.

The PNC has betrayed the people by renouncing its pledges. It has reversed the trends established by the PPP government to use the tax system to re-distribute wealth in favour of the poor.

Under the PPP, income tax (direct taxation), which was 25 percent in 1961, increased to 29 percent in 1963; custom duties (indirect taxation), which were 26 percent in 1961, were reduced to 22 percent in 1963.

In 1964, the last year of the PPP government, the gap between indirect taxation (\$32.5 million) and direct taxation (\$25 million) was \$7.5 million. In 1968, the gap widened to \$17 million.

The government's fiscal policies are clearly redistributing income against the lower and middle income groups and in favour of the upper income groups. In 1968, out of a total taxation of \$7.95 million, \$7.25 million will fall on the lower and middle income groups.

In the 1968 personal income-tax revisions, the lowest income earning groups have to pay 12 dollars more per year and the middle income groups up to \$200 more. But those in the top income groups with over \$14,000 taxable income will pay \$10 less per year!

This discrimination in favour of the wealthy is clearly not in the national interest. It will mean widening the already wide gap between the rich and the poor.

Figures of income distribution in Guyana are not available. But it cannot be far different from those of Jamaica, where 5 percent of the top families earned 30 percent of the national income, the middle 10 percent of families earned 43 percent, and the bottom 60 percent earned only 19 percent.

In Guyana, thousands of families engaged in agriculture other than sugar and rice earned in 1966 only 2.6 percent of the gross domestic product. And a large percentage of the working class, earning low wages and underemployed, support large families and unemployed dependants.

In the case of the other 1968 tax measures, there was also discrimination. Big business dominated by foreign companies was favoured; small local business was squeezed.

The government imposed a special 4.5% development tax on all companies. This tax will hit harder the smaller companies, which are not involved in the export trade, than the bigger companies. The latter, which trade in sugar, bauxite, manganese, timber, etc., with countries which have not devalued their currency will receive a windfall of about \$10 million annually.

In place of this obviously discriminatory tax, the PPP suggested a variation — the imposition of an export tax on all exports to countries which have not devalued. This was meant to secure the windfall which will be pocketed by the big foreign companies.

The PPP legislators argued that such an export tax would bring back into the Treasury part of the great losses, which the government and country suffered from devaluation at about \$40 million.

It was further argued that the \$10 million obtained from the export tax could be used to cushion the ever-increasing cost' of living — \$7.25 million in place of the 1968 taxes on the lower and middle income groups, and the rest for subsidisation of school textbooks and other essentials such as flour, milk, split peas, salted fish, salted meats and cooking oil.

The coalition, oblivious to the needs of the people, rejected the proposals. It is clear that with or without Peter D'Aguiar as Minister of Finance, the course of the government is set — set for the sell-out to imperialism and the betrayal of the Guyanese people.

PRICE AND RENT CONTROLS

High profit margins charged by the merchants add to the misery of the working people. The government issued threats about “jailing the sharks”, but did nothing to control prices effectively. Instead, it allowed the sharks to swallow the sardines.

The tax on Banks Brewery is an example. The government decided in 1968 to tax the beer company 4 cents per bottle. We said that we would support the tax, provided it was not passed on to the consumer. We argued that the company has been extraordinarily profitable. In recent years, it shared 45 percent, 50 percent and 60 percent dividends. A \$1 share is now valued to \$3. But the government failed to heed our advice. The company was allowed to pass on not 4 but 5 cents to the consumers!

WHY TAXATION?

The poor have been squeezed and. taxed because of:

- Tax relief to the capitalist class;
- Squandermania;
- Growing bureaucracy and “jobs for the boys”;
- Increasing debt charges.

The difficulties experienced by the Guyanese people today are also due to the wasteful expenditure of public funds by the government, and to bribery, corruption and nepotism. Ministers and bureaucrats have taken to Cadillac-style decimal living at home and abroad. The Prime Minister squandered over a quarter million dollars to repair and redecorate his residence. Extravagance is the order of the day.

The bureaucracy today consumes nearly half of the budget. Forty-four per cent has to be paid for personal emoluments because of the rapid expansion of the government machine. Ministries have expanded by 50 percent. As against 10 ministers and 3 junior ministers during the PPP regime, the coalition now has 15 ministers and 6 junior ministers. Two Parliamentary Secretaries served 10 PPP ministers; six now serve the Prime Minister alone.

Nepotism, corruption and “jobs for the boys” have resulted in “square pegs in round holes” and general inefficiency.

A past Deputy Lord Mayor, Mr. Cleveland Hamilton, in a broadcast in May 1967, cried out against the new elite, creating “a new, larger area of snobbery”, and against bribery which “is all over the place and is fast becoming a national scandal. Every citizen's position is in peril where he may not justly achieve what he bargained for, where he pays far more than he ought, and where even his rights may be delayed or denied altogether. The harm done in any situation in which bribery, corruption, nepotism and favouritism assume national proportions and is a way of life from top down can never be calculated.”

The Civil Service Association (CSA), which helped to bring the coalition parties into the government, accused the government in a letter to the Trades Union Council (TUC) in August 1967

of causing a breach of industrial principle and a display of gross irresponsibility and arrogance. It appealed to the TUC to "intercede before it is too late." The CSA also attacked the Public Service Commission for rubber-stamping the government's decisions on matters of appointments and promotions.

The Sunday Graphic of August 6, 1967, wrote:

The CSA Secretary said that his Association was most dissatisfied with several recent appointments made by the PSC. Some of these appointments the CSA considers most objectionable, and have seriously disrupted the Association's confidence in the integrity of the PSC.

The Police Federation charged in its evidence before the Collins Commission that unless policemen were prepared to bow, and scrape and kowtow, they were bypassed. The President of the Federation alleged that favouritism was rampant. He declared:

The merit principle is seldom applied. Many men have belittled and degraded themselves in order to find favour with an officer in the hope that they would be recommended for promotion.

There have even been cases where men who have been before the court on charges touching on their integrity and honesty, have been favoured when neither characteristic could recommend them.

Too often men have taken the examination and passed only to have their names overlooked in favour of someone who may not have ventured to test himself. At present, this system is responsible for a considerable amount of frustration and dissatisfaction.

It is this kind, of nepotism and corruption which has led to inefficiency and added expenditure at the Guyana Electricity Corporation. The end result is that a formerly well-run and profitable undertaking has had its management turned over to the Commonwealth Development Corporation at an annual cost of £25,000 and further burdens on the poor consumers. Finally, there is the danger of denationalisation of the Corporation.

MORE UNEMPLOYMENT

The situation in Guyana is today very bad. But it will grow progressively worse. Since the coalition usurped power, unemployment has been rising steadily. Government denies this claiming that unemployment has dropped, that it has created 50,000 jobs in the past four years.

Guyanese people have long since recognized that there is a wide credibility gap in the statements of ministers, a wide difference between statements and facts.

The government has been challenged to prove that 2,000 permanent jobs have been created within the last two and a half years since the new development programme began.

Clearly, when the government now speaks of 50,000 jobs, that is a statistical lie. For in the government method of counting, anyone offered a job for one day, two days, or one week can be counted as a person who has been placed in a job.

That unemployment is rapidly mounting is evidenced by the growing incidence of crime, praedial larceny and delinquency. From every quarter — judiciary, East Coast Union of Local Authorities, the general public — there are cries for harsher and harsher punishment.

Unemployment has mounted and will increase for several reasons:

- Population (working) increase
- Retrenchment
- Government's industrial failure
- CARIFTA
- Drift from country to city

GROWING POPULATION

The population of Guyana is increasing by over 3 per cent a year. Infants' births over debts have now reached the figure of over 20,000 per year. In 1968, over 10,000 children, aged 11 to 12, took the Common Entrance Examination. In a short while, the bulk of these will be thrown on the labour market looking for employment.

But little is being done by way of creating additional jobs. Government industrialisation policy has been a failure. There has been retrenchment on a wide scale. In 1966, about 1,000 workers were retrenched by the sugar industry. In the government services, particularly public works, sea defences, and transport and harbours, nearly 1000 were retrenched.

In October 1967, Demerara Bauxite Company announced that 1500 workers will be retrenched during the next 18 months. In August, Manganese Mines Ltd. of the North West District retrenched 150 workers, and by year end about 600 workers will be unemployed when operation cease. The CDC branch at Winiperu which employed 450 workers in the 1950s now has a labour force of only 180.

The coalition government, relegating industrialisation to a minor role and sabotaging agriculture despite its shouts that agriculture is the backbone of the country, is not creating the conditions for self-sustaining economic growth; and thus for the absorption of the growing army of unemployed and underemployed.

CARIFTA

With Guyana now linked in a Free Trade Area with the other British Caribbean territories, she will assume the rule assigned to it by imperialism as a non-industrialised country.

Previously, Guyana without CARIFTA protected its nascent industrialisation by tariff-wall protection. As a result, any imperialist company, which formerly exported goods, was forced to set up a branch factory in Guyana to preserve its market.

Take the case of the local company, Continental Agencies. When it began producing "Torginol" paint and captured a significant portion of the Guyana market, British Paints Ltd., which previously distributed through Bookers, established a branch factory here. Had CARIFTA been in existence before, it is quite possible that British Paints would have set up in some other part of the West Indies.

With CARIFTA permitting free movement of goods without tariff-walls, the imperialists will now "have the power of decision" as to the siting of their plants. Obviously, they will go to those countries where inducements are greatest — inducements such as low wages, duty-free importation of equipment and raw materials, generous tax holidays or low taxes, anti-labour measures such as anti-strike laws, etc.

In this respect, some of the small islands will benefit. The banana project on with so much hopes had been put was given up mainly because of competition from the Windward-Leeward Islands. In these territories, the imperialists can get workers to sweat at about half the rate of pay in Guyana.

CARIFTA will also aid Trinidad and Jamaica which had a head start of industrialisation. It would be much cheaper for the imperialist companies to expand their factories in these two countries than to set up new enterprises elsewhere.

LOWER LIVING STANDARDS

The Guyanese people will suffer from the lowering of living standards. Taxes on the poor will increase and social services will be cut. This will be mainly due to the fact that debt charges will mount and the bureaucracy, particularly on the security and military side, will increase.

Debt charges have jumped from \$5 million in 1960 to \$18 million in 1968, an increase from 12 percent to 19 percent of budget expenditure. Because of double-your-money-in-nine-years

local loans (\$33.5 million borrowed between 1965 and 1968) and 5 and 10 years moratoria (grace period) on repayment of foreign loans, debt charges are likely to reach 31 percent of budget expenditure in the 1970s. This was the figure projected by Cambridge University economist, Mr. Kenneth Berrill in 1958 when we had suggested a Development Plan of \$200 million for 5 years. Now the D-Plan is even larger — \$300 million for 7 years.

With 19 percent of the budget for debt charges and 44 percent for the government's over-bloated bureaucracy, only an inadequate 37 percent remains for health, education, pensions, subsidies, crop bonuses, and guaranteed minimum prices for farmers.

If the puppet government is not thrown out and its pro-imperialist policies not changed, this 37 percent will be further reduced to about 20 percent when debt repayments climb to 30 percent and the bureaucracy grows with the increased militarization of our politics to over 50 percent in the 1970s.

Consequently, year after year, in order to maintain social services at existing inadequate levels, more taxes will fall on the working people, and social services will be further curtailed.

Already, in the field of health, the general standard of medical treatment to the public has deteriorated. The poor cannot afford to become sick. At public hospitals, such as the one at Suddie, Essequibo, patients have to pay before they can see a doctor. Many specialists find all kinds of ruses to treat patients privately but not to attend to patients at government hospitals.

There are serious shortages of drugs and equipment. Three of the 24 health centres built by the PPP government remain closed.

Only \$413,000 has been set aside for capital development. The building of a reference hospital has been postponed. There has been no mention of a new Georgetown Hospital (PHG). The 900 beds at PHG are inadequate as large numbers in need of hospitalisation are being turned away; 2500 beds are urgently needed to meet present requirements.

And only a small percentage of children are vaccinated against polio, diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough and smallpox, as the government has no vaccination programme.

In the field of education, only 35,000 of the 140,000 children attending primary school get secondary education. Free secondary education in all-age schools has been reduced from the GCE to the College of Preceptors (CP) level. The plan for taking over private aided secondary schools has been shelved and children are forced to pay exorbitant fees. Less than a third of the primary school teachers are properly trained. Yet, in-service teaching training centres have been reduced from seven to two. And two of the three pre-service training centres have been closed. Thus, the Nunes plan to get all teachers trained by 1970 will not be achieved. The grant to the University of Guyana is also inadequate.

Thousands of Guyanese, particularly Amerindians, are not granted old-age pensions. And those who have been awarded are sometimes not paid for several months. Recently at the Waramuri Mission, it was disclosed that the additional \$2 agreed to by the National Assembly in January 1968 had not been paid.

The coalition has failed to tackle the problems of urban housing for the working class. It has not started in any significant way, through self-help or otherwise, to build the 40,000 houses needed by the working class. The highly publicised TUC housing scheme has turned out to be a scheme for the middle, and not the working class. Only those with a monthly income of \$170 and above can apply. The down-payment for the cheapest, a two-bedroom house, has jumped from \$475 in 1967 to \$1,546; and the monthly payment from \$44 to \$62. The original cash price was \$4,753; now it is \$7,409. For the three-bedroom house, the monthly payment will be \$77. Clearly, neither the government nor the TUC is really concerned with the plight of the working class.

Nor has the coalition brought about effective control over the rapacious landlords. Each year it promises to introduce a new rent control bill, but nothing is done.

Meanwhile tenants are at the mercy of the courts. Evictions are common-place. And search for accommodation has now become a daily routine for thousands of working-class families. So desperate has the position become that not too long ago one family dumped six of its children

at Congress Place, PNC headquarters, and disappeared. And our shanty town is beginning to take shape.

MORE SLUMS

Every Latin American country has its slums and shanty towns surrounding magnificent capitals with beautiful skyscrapers and modern architecture. This has resulted largely from inadequate low-rent housing and from a drift of the population from the countryside to the cities.

In these predominantly agricultural countries, agricultural production as in Guyana has not kept pace with the growing population. There has been declining agricultural production and increase of imports of foods from abroad.

With prices of provisions — cassava, eddoes, tannias, and plantains — now retailing at 14 to 20 cents per pound in Georgetown, as compared with prices of 2 to 6 cents per pound during the PPP regime, city, sugar estate, mine, quarry and forest workers will turn to cheaper foreign substitutes. This in turn will cause a loss of markets for local farmers, a further drop in agricultural production, and a drift from the countryside to the city.

With no employment and no money to pay increasing rentals, the slums will grow and shanty towns will develop as in Trinidad and Jamaica. In Jamaica, the government, maintaining that the slums were an eyesore and were particularly bad for the tourist trade, on several occasions bulldozed different parts of the slum areas.

BALANCE OF PAYMENTS GAP

Almost every major capitalist country is today plagued with balance of payments problems. Jamaica's balance of payments difficulties have compounded in recent years due to the outflow of profits earned by foreign companies and debt repayments. These problems have been temporarily solved by income from a large tourist trade and savings sent to dependent relatives by Jamaicans who emigrated to Britain. These two factors, tourist income and savings, are unreliable and fickle factors which cannot be expected to continue forever to provide the necessary financial stability.

Guyana has neither of these favourable factors. Her overall balance of payments became unfavourable since the coalition parties assumed power. From a surplus of \$16 million in 1962, \$20 million in 1963, and \$7 million in 1964, it has declined to a deficit of \$7 million in 1965 and \$12 million in 1966. In 1967, the balance of payments was in surplus by \$6 million (overall surplus of \$14 million less \$8 million for disposal of foreign assets) because of a large inflow of private investments, particularly in the bauxite industry. However, from now on, with the investment programme of the major industries completed, the balance of payments will again become a deficit particularly in view of larger outflow of profits and debt repayments.

MORE PROPAGANDA

The worsening conditions of the Guyanese people have led to growing disillusionment, dissatisfaction and frustration.

Even "Lucian", a strong government supporter, in the Sunday Graphic of July 16, 1967, commented:

Many people — Guyanese and non-Guyanese — are disgusted with the present state of affairs in this country. Some are packing up to leave out of sheer frustration, while others are dejected from unbearable disgust.

In the face of this disgust the coalition government has embarked on a big propaganda campaign. Propagandists are busy at home and abroad painting a rosy picture.

A Ministry of Information has been created to peddle lies and half-truths. Government's budgeted expenditure on propaganda and brainwashing operations has shown an increase of over 225 percent in 1968 as compared with 1964.

A US publicity firm has been engaged in the USA for propaganda work in North America. And a rabid anti-communist, associated with the Conservative Party, carries out publicity work in Britain. This explains why the Tory Daily Telegraph showered praise on the coalition government and recommended that Guyana's economic plan should be a model for Africa.

In an editorial in June 1967, the Telegraph stated:

This Caribbean country in the first financial year of independence has increased its gross domestic product by eight percent and doubled private investments from abroad. Its Prime Minister, Mr. Forbes Burnham, has called for trade "not aid". . . African leaders could well learn something from Guyana. . . The moral is that investments increase in measure as emergent states treat them sensibly and fairly.

And we have been attacked by the coalition for being prophets of gloom at home and abroad. Because we challenge and criticise, we have been dubbed anti-national and anti-patriotic. Actually, the facts prove that we are right, that Guyana is no model for Africa or anywhere else.

The 8 percent growth rate is largely fictitious. The Bank of Guyana Report for 1966 reduced this to a net figure of 3 percent after making a deduction of 5 percent – 2 percent for price increases and 3 percent for population increase. On page 10, it stated:

The increase in Gross Domestic Product in 1966 was to a very small extent nominal; price increases contributed probably less than two per cent to the rate mentioned and real growth was about double the percentage increase in population. Real GDP per capita can therefore be estimated to have risen in 1966 by about 3 percent.

For 1967, the GDP figure was 6 percent. But with prices increasing by 4 percent, and population by 3 percent, the net growth rate was minus 1 percent.

Besides, the GDP figures are not indicative of real growth. They are high largely as a result of government expenditure in the unproductive infrastructure sector, the concentration of roads, sea defences, airport, airstrips, and stellingen. And since the GDP "was attributable largely to bauxite and the government", the Bank Report concluded that "Guyana's economic growth in 1966 was thus not as broadly based as might have been desirable."

Actually, production of real material wealth has been negligible. On page 7 of the Economic Survey of Guyana, 1966, it is noted:

In general the productive sectors, that is, those producing tangible goods, are expected in 1966 to provide an increase in net output of 4 percent. The services sector including construction would probably generate an increase in incomes of approximately 12 percent, while as it has already been noted in the previous paragraph, incomes arising from the current spending by Government — central and local will probably increase by 13 percent.

And much of the real wealth has been produced in the bauxite sector, not in manufacturing and agriculture, the Survey on page 20 says: "Thus with the failure of other productive sectors to achieve any substantial real growth, it was the mining sector, particularly bauxite mining and processing, that accounted for some 22 percent of the growth in the economy during 1966."

The Guyana model of economic planning and development is based on Operation Bootstrap of Puerto Rico, which has certain distinct advantages over other so-called third world countries — US runaway capitalists have the advantage of low wages in Puerto Rico; goods produced in Puerto Rico enter duty free into the United States; Puerto Ricans can migrate without restrictions into the USA; millions of dollars collected from duties on rum are returned to Puerto Rico.

Yet, Puerto Rico is still plagued with poverty and unemployment and all the ills of a colonial society. Despite the ballyhoo and the US attempt to make Puerto Rico into a showpiece, the national income per head of population is lower than that of the poorest US State.

According to the UWI economist, Dr. Owen Jefferson:

The Puerto Rican programme got underway in 1947. During the first 10 years, 446 new plants were established and 35,000 jobs were created. But despite this degree of success and the added factor of emigration of 500,000 persons to the United States, unemployment still amounted to 14 percent of the labour force at the end of the period.

Other third world territories which have followed the Puerto Rican model at US dictation are also in deep trouble.

Jamaica, like Guyana, boasts of a wonderful performance of the economy — an increase in the gross domestic product between 1950 and 1965 at an annual rate of 7.2 percent. But for the three successive five-year periods, there was a progressive decline in per capita national income — 7 percent for 1950-55; 3.7 percent for 1955-60; 3 percent for 1960-65.

Jamaica and the other British Commonwealth countries which have adopted the Puerto Rican model of economic development are plagued with growing tensions and problems, chief among which are unemployment, inequality of income and balance of payments deficits.

Between 1950-1960, it was expected that the unemployment problem in the British Islands would be solved with the creation of 413,000 jobs. But this was not achieved. According to economist Lloyd Best, “the unemployment rate — even in the most successful cases of industrialisation — has been approaching 15 percent.”

In Jamaica at the last recorded count, unemployment was 19 percent in the urban areas, and 10 percent in the rural sector. And the problem is growing. Although the 149 factories built in 14 years up to 1966 under the various incentive laws provided about 9000 jobs, more than 10,000 jobs were lost in the sugar industry alone through mechanisation. At the same time, the labour force was growing by at least 20,000 annually.

Commenting on the grave unemployment situation in Trinidad, the Trinidad Guardian on August 9, 1967, wrote:

One hundred jobs in Canada. The possibility of three hundred in Puerto Rico. A steady trickle of domestics to North America. A fairly large flow of skilled and professional people to Canada. These are the avenues being used or explored in a society where the rate of unemployment may not be the worst in the world, but is nonetheless unbearable.

Disgust and frustration in Guyana are manifested in various forms:

1. Emigration: Guyanese have emigrated, and are emigrating, in numbers larger than even in the worst days of the CIA-financed and fomented disturbances and racial clashes.

2. Crime and delinquency: Crime, mainly in the form of choke-and-rob, has reached the point where there is fear of walking the streets of Georgetown. It has become so rampant and violent that many, including members of the judiciary, without looking at root causes, are calling for more severe methods of punishment. And praedial larceny has grown so prevalent in the countryside, that many farmers are abandoning their provision farms or converting them to rice and sugarcane.

3. Increasing number of strikes: Strikes reached a record number of 146 in 1965. This record was broken with 172 strikes in 1966 and 170 in 1967.

CHANGES IN THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

The militancy of the working class in defence of living standards has led to a qualitative change in the labour movement during the past three and a half years. There is a growing divergence between the interests of the trade union bureaucrats and those of the workers.

In the majority of strikes, it is the workers who are taking the initiative, who are giving the lead. In some cases, the trade union bosses are forced, in order to maintain their position, to rubber-stamp the decisions of the rank-and-file.

But, in other cases, the leadership dampens the ardour and militancy of the workers. The sawmill workers' wildcat strike in Georgetown was called off by the Guyana Labour Union. In July 1968, the MEU urged the Federation of Unions of Government Employees (FUGE) to drop its claim for an interim payment relief in view of the Venezuelan threat of aggression.

The contradiction between the rank-and-file and the collaborationist leadership exploded when in 1967 the Bookers waterfront workers declared that they wanted the Clerical and Commercial Workers Union (CCWU), and not the Guyana Labour Union (GLU) to represent them.

A special sub-committee appointed by the TUC to resolve this jurisdictional dispute declared by a 2 to 1 majority in favour of the CCWU. This created confusion in the TUC leadership as the top brass, which was backing the GLU, refused to implement the decision.

The most significant development in this fracas was the rank-and-file pressure on the secretary of the CCWU. Normally, De Peana is pro-PNC and pro-USA. Yet pressure from the workers forced him to stand up against Burnham and the GLU.

Similarly, the NUPSE, which was the base of the CIA agent, Howard MacCabe, during the 80-day strike in 1963, is standing up to the government for a \$5 minimum wage and against retrenchment. This led to an unsuccessful attempt by an AIFLD adviser to the union, Mr. Hackshaw, to unseat the President, Egbert Bolton. Bolton himself was strongly anti-PPP, and a candidate of the United Force at the 1964 election.

The rift between the rank-and-file and the collaborationist section of the TUC leadership will widen further with the government's introduction of anti-strike legislation in the form of compulsory arbitration and of the fraudulent wages and incomes policy.

POLITICAL EXCUSES

With the growing dissatisfaction and discontent of the masses, the PNC and the UF have resorted to sniping at each other. Each one blames the other for failures and lack of accomplishment.

Peter D'Aguiar early in 1967 charged that \$1.5 million was illegally spent on the East Coast road, that the Director of Audit had questioned the expenditure. Later in 1967 he resigned as Minister of Finance, giving the impression that he was dissatisfied with the squandermania and the conduct of government affairs.

His resignation did not, however, follow a principled course; his other ministers continued in the coalition government until they were virtually kicked out.

This being-out and being-in position is clearly opportunistic. The United Force wants to "eat its cake and have it too". This was shown up in the 1968 budget debate. Both D'Aguiar personally and the Executive Committee of the United Force declared that they were opposed to the budget proposals. But at the time of voting in the National Assembly, D'Aguiar abstained, and the UF ministers voted with the government.

Peter D'Aguiar's dual, schizophrenic political personality and behaviour is a reflection of the antagonism between the UF leadership and the rank-and-file.

The leadership is representative of the local big business "comprador" capitalist class which is closely associated with imperialism. That explains, firstly, why the UF has not broken with the coalition and, secondly, why John Jardim, managing director of J.P. Santos, had in an open letter in early 1968 urged D'Aguiar to wind up the UF and join the PNC. Jardim has now joined the PNC. This is in sharp contrast to a speech made by him in 1965 as past president of the powerful Georgetown Chamber of Commerce in which he said that local businessmen were watching, waiting and "holding their hands" until the course of the government was clearly determined.

The tax and other concessions made since 1965 to big business, foreign and local, have assured those of the ilk of John Jardim that they have nothing to fear from a Burnham-led government, as Burnham's "socialism" and "nationalism" are born of the same demagoguery as Hitler's and Mussolini's national socialism.

D'Aguiar's opposition to the PNC-led coalition government is not to its overall domestic and foreign policies, but to its personnel practices. With the employment machinery from the top to the bottom firmly under the control of the PNC, and the PNC overtly and covertly pursuing corruption, nepotism, favouritism and discrimination, the UF rank-and-file are bypassed and discriminated against.

Peter D'Aguiar's resignation as Minister of Finance was unprincipled political manoeuvring. D'Aguiar's resignation and the UF charges and suggestions of squandermania, bribery and corruption are intended to create the impression that there are deep-seated ideological and policy differences between the PNC and UF. Actually, there are no real differences on questions of principle, policy and programme; there are only differences on methods.

The small-time pilfering and jobs-for-the-boys, resorted to by the PNC and criticised by the UF, cannot be condoned. But this holier-than-thou attitude of the UF must not be taken to mean that UF hands are clean. They get richer not by petty pilfering but by high-class legal thievery. By laws and regulations, millions of dollars are filched and amassed annually.

What is crucial for the Guyanese people to understand is that even with a complete UF government, the position of the people would be no better; fiscal, trade, monetary, industrial, agricultural and foreign policies would be the same as under the PNC-UF coalition.

What about the PNC? Here again, a growing antagonism is developing between the elitist leadership and the rank-and-file. The PNC's capitalist and landlord elements, as represented by Eugene Correia, Deeroop Maraj, Mohammed Kassim, etc., are satisfied with the coalition's economic policies. Its middle class intelligentsia have been bribed into conformism and silence through a huge bureaucracy with big salaries and big allowances. Part of the rank-and-file is being bribed and kept quiet by a policy of discrimination in employment practices.

But to majority, which have been hard hit and are under increasing pressure from inflation, unemployment, and underemployment, are being told that their lot would have been better had it not been for the UF, which has been a drag on the PNC. Had the PNC not been held back by UF reactionary policies, so the PNC propaganda line argues, the PNC would have been free to implement its progressive policies! Thus the PNC electoral line — give us a majority; let us be rid of the obstruction of the UF!

It is true that the PNC in its 1964 election manifesto declared in favour of socialism and non-alignment. But as events have proved, the PNC ruling elite is neither ideologically nor psychologically committed to anti-imperialism, without which there can be no non-aligned, socialist course. The majority of the PNC elite — Rudy Kendall, John Carter, Lionel Luckhoo, Claude Merriman, Llewellyn John, Robert Jordon — are neither socialist nor capitalist (some are on the way of becoming capitalists and landlords). Up to 1957 when they were allied with Big Business in the National Democratic Party (NDP) and the United Democratic Party (UDP), they were dubbed by Burnham as traitors.

They are capitalist-bureaucrats, who as ministers and legislators manage the political system at lucrative salaries and allowances for the imperialists and capitalists just as a few — Winifred Gaskin, P. Reid, Martin Carter, Henry Thomas — as directors managed business, finance, publicity and propaganda for Bookers. They have not changed side — the side of the capitalist class for the working class. They have only changed to positions which are more prestigious and lucrative.

PNC-USA DEAL

The PNC elite are also psychologically committed to imperialism. They are among those who wrongly subscribe to the fatalistic theory that the USA is invincible, that anyone or any movement in the Western Hemisphere opposing the USA will be crushed.

Burnham as long as 1955, when "licks were sharing like peas" with imprisonment, restrictions, detention and victimisation, decided to renounce struggle, and to collaborate with imperialism. That is why the British described Burnham as an opportunist, racist and demagogue, as is noted by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., Special Assistant to the late President J.F. Kennedy, in his book, *A Thousand Days - John F. Kennedy in the White House*, after Burnham's visit to Washington in May 1962. On page 668, Schlesinger wrote:

Thus far our policy had been based on the assumption that Forbes Burnham was, as the British described him, an opportunist, racist and demagogue intent only on personal power.

Actually, majority or no majority, the PNC cannot depart from pro-imperialist policies. As Burnham once said, politics is the art of deals. And the PNC made a deal with imperialist USA. Arthur Schlesinger Jr., continued:

Burnham's visit left the feeling, as I reported to the President, that 'an independent British Guiana under Burnham (if Burnham will commit himself to a multi-racial policy) would cause us many fewer problems than an independent British Guiana under Jagan.' And the way was open to bring it about, because Jagan's parliamentary strength was larger than his popular strength: he had won 57 per cent of the seats on the basis of 42.7 per cent of the vote. An obvious solution would be to establish a system of proportional representation.

It was the PNC-USA deal which led to:

1. Pressure on the British government by the US government and the renegeing by the British government on undertakings given at the 1960 Constitutional Conference in London. That Conference, in rejecting the PNC demand for proportional representation (PR) and the PPP demand for independence, had made it clear that the victors of the 1961 election would lead the country to independence.
2. CIA-fomented and -financed strike and racial strife in Guyana. Racial clashes became necessary to provide the excuse to the British to go back on their 1960 promises.
3. The signing of the Geneva Agreement by the Venezuelan, British and Guyana (coalition) government and the appointment of a Mixed Guyana-Venezuelan Commission to investigate the claim. This was in sharp contrast to the position during our regime when the Guyana and British governments held the view that the issue had long ago been signed, settled and closed. Between 1958 and 1960, all the Venezuelan political parties assured me that they would neither renounce nor raise the claim on Guyana's territory. The claim was raised in the United Nations only after the Venezuelan government in late 1960 had, under US pressure, reversed its previous pro-Cuba policy to an anti-Cuba policy.

The Geneva Agreement was signed because US imperialism wanted to keep the border question open and alive, to be used conveniently for diversionary and intimidatory purposes, not only against a PPP government, but any government, which might pursue anti-imperialist policies.

In July, when civil servants, teachers, policemen and government subordinate workers were demanding interim relief and threatening to go on a general strike, the Venezuelan Decree was proclaimed threatening aggression. The Medical Employees Union (MEU) immediately called on the Federation of Unions of Government Employees (FUGE) to withdraw its claim for interim relief. And overnight, the Guyana Patriotic Committee was constituted, and it toured the country rallying support for the government.

Threat from Surinam served a similar diversionary role in January 1968, when the coalition government was under attack for devaluation and an anti-working class budget.

As a diversionary measure, the border issues have also been helpful to the colonialist and neo-colonialist regimes in Suriname and Venezuela. The Venezuelan leading party, *Accion Democratica*, which dropped in popular support from 47 percent of the votes in the 1958 to 33

percent in the 1963 election, and is further split by the resignation of its chairman for the December 1968 general election, needs the jingoistic emotionalism of the land claim to rally support.

The land claim is used also as psychological aggression against the Guyanese people. The message the imperialists want to put across is this — if you elect the PPP, there will be trouble; if you want to avoid war, bloodshed, loss of property, etc., let Burnham and the PNC continue in the government.

This is the explanation for the fact that the Guyana government has failed to take the occupation of Ankoko and the threat of aggression by the Venezuelan Decree to the UN Security Council. US imperialism not only does not want the border issue to be settled. It also does not want to be forced to take a public stand. Its Ambassadors in Caracas and Georgetown stated that the USA would be neutral. A showdown at the United Nations would find the USA not wanting to oppose and vote against Venezuela because of her huge investments in that country.

MILITARIZATION OF POLITICS

The conspiracy between the United States, Great Britain, Venezuela and Guyana also serve the purpose of militarising our politics. This is the general pattern in Latin America. As the imperialist puppets become more and more unpopular, they resort to electoral fraud. And when even fraud does not suffice, they resort to force, to the "Big Stick". There were 8 military coups in Latin America between 1961 and 1963.

In Guyana, military and police officers not considered 100 percent loyal to the Guyana government have been purged.

A military Youth Corps is drawn largely from PNC supporters. And the government has decided to take the opportunity to train volunteers at Atkinson Field. No doubt the trainees, as in the case of the Youth Corps and the previous Volunteer Force, will be drawn chiefly from PNC activists and supporters.

We must recognise these manoeuvres. We must also not be fooled by the latest offer of friendship and support from Brazil.

The Brazilian regime is a dictatorship, established and supported by the USA, which has banned all political parties and democratic political life. It is doing for the USA what the USA cannot publicly do; that is, criticise and restrain Venezuela, and later, if necessary land Brazilian troops, as in the Dominican Republic, to prevent the so-called "Cubanisation" of the country.

An Associated Press (AP) dispatch on November 21, 1968, quoted Alfredo Tarro Murzi, chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber of Deputies, as saying that the promised highway from Boa Vista to Georgetown "will be a road of political, economic, technical, cultural and military penetration into the heart of Guyana" which will be "enormously useful" to Brazil's "aspiration of domination and control over the northeast flank of the South American continent".

For the time being, the Suriname and Venezuela border issues have been de-escalated. This is how the imperialists and their puppets want it. But escalation and de-escalation will be like a recurring decimal in our affairs. We must adjust ourselves to them, recognise them for the conspiracies that they are, and prepare ourselves for a many-sided struggle for national liberation.

IDEOLOGICAL AGGRESSION

To prevent the widening rift and alienation between the ruling elite and the masses, the imperialists and their puppets are resorting to ideological aggression on the working class. Through the CIA-controlled and -financed Critchlow Labour College, trade unionists are trained to divorce the trade union movement from political struggles. Like the AFL-CIO, which

supports capitalism in the USA, and the CIA-backed American Institute for Free Labour Development (AIFLD) which train pro-imperialist foreign trade unionists, the Critchlow Labour College peddles the line that trade unionists must concentrate on bread and butter issues (wages and working conditions) and not concern themselves with political ideology — imperialism, neo-colonialism, capitalism and socialism.

Of course, by refusing to democratise the trade union movement, and by bribing and corrupting the top trade union leadership, the imperialists ensure that there is no effective struggle for better wages and improved working conditions.

We must counter this ideology. We must make the workers understand that their standard of living depends as much upon fighting the bosses for improved wages and working conditions as upon rejecting the government's fiscal, trade, monetary and foreign policies. We must remind the workers of Critchlow's famous dictum: "whether you like it or not, politics dey [remain] with you from the cradle to the grave."

But ideological aggression is mounted not only on the trade union front. On every other front — academic, cultural, religious, economic, political — the people are bombarded daily with half-truths and lies. The intention is to perpetuate the status quo by confusion, and to project blame for failure away from the government to others.

The people are dubbed lazy. Thus Burnham's slogan — eat less, sleep less, and work harder. Quite a sharp contrast from the 1961 electioneering promise — when the PNC assumed power, no one would go to bed hungry and there would be free distribution of milk and cassava.

The people are told that they lack skills, that they are inefficient and unproductive. Thus Burnham's dubbing of 1968 as "Efficiency Year". Sir Arthur Lewis, the Chancellor of the University of Guyana, in his inaugural address, declared that the underdeveloped countries are poor because they do not have as many skilled people as in the developed countries! According to Sir Arthur, who has sold the Puerto Rican model of economic development to the British Caribbean, poverty and backwardness have nothing to do with foreign ownership and control of our economy and country!

Little wonder that a university circular nearly went out stating that if the University of Guyana was to attract money from imperialist foundations abroad, its image must be changed.

The circular was withdrawn, but the same objective was achieved by administrative action. Stuart Bowes was relieved of his post in the Sociology department. And Professor Horace Davis, with a doctorate degree (PhD) from Harvard University, was removed as dean of the Social Sciences Faculty, and eventually "smoked out" of his job as head of the Department of Economics.

The University of Guyana, our high schools and ministries are all today infiltrated with CIA spies, who pose as advisers and experts, and Peace Corps personnel. Their purpose is to sell the American way of life, the American free enterprise or capitalist system, to gather intelligence, and to attack the PPP and socialism.

Meanwhile, Guyana is having an ever-increasing stream of American evangelist crusaders, no doubt also financed by the CIA, like Billy Graham's Latin American Crusade. The main enemy, these Christian crusaders declare, is communism. Now and then, for good measure they will attack some of the ills of capitalism — not the system itself. All systems are bad, they add. Politics and politicians cannot help the people — all the politicians have failed the people; only Jesus Christ, they say, can save the people. No wonder Karl Marx declared that religion in the hands of these "Sunday Christians" was made into an opiate for the people — an opiate to withdraw them from the path of struggle.

The objective of the imperialists are threefold: to cast blame on the working class for the failure of the ruling capitalist class; to dangle fresh "carrots"; to extend US hegemony — political economic and military — over territories where Britain and other European competitors once held sway.

The vehicle by which these objectives are to be attained is the Organisation of American States (OAS) and Caribbean unity — a Caribbean Free Trade Area (CARIFTA) or a Common Market.

Entry into the OAS is touted as a means of cashing in on aid from the Alliance for Progress and the Inter-American Development Bank. Caribbean unity is held out as the only hope for viability and progress.

CARIBBEAN UNITY

Unity and integration are essential if the purpose is to break with imperialism and neo-colonialism. But this is not the kind of unity contemplated. What is projected is the strengthening of the position of foreign capital, particularly US capital.

The big drive for common markets and free trade areas in different parts of the world is motivated mainly by the desire of US big business to gain world economic hegemony. This is to be achieved by surmounting tariff walls of nation-states.

Note the candid observation of Mr. George Ball, former Undersecretary of State and Chairman of the big investment ranking firm, Lehman Bros. International Ltd., and now US Ambassador to the United Nations. Addressing the New York Chamber of Commerce, he said:

The multi-national US corporation is ahead of, and in conflict with, existing world political organisations represented by the nation-state. Major obstacles to the multinational corporation are evident in Western Europe, Canada and a good part of the developing world.

Observe this comment about the European Common Market from a newsletter circulated by the private West German banks, Merck, Fink and Co. and Waldthausen:

When Britain becomes a member of the EEC, several thousand US companies which are already established with their own British subsidiaries in the UK will also enjoy the benefits of this continental market. They will be able to mesh and synchronise their investments and operations in Britain and on the continent so as to quickly develop an all-European plan for their production and sales. In view of the size of their direct investment . . . generally speaking the Americans are in a better position than their British or European competitors immediately to exploit the advantage of an expanded Common Market.

US multinational corporations will like not only to take over Europe, but also to cement the chains of neo-colonialism in the Caribbean and at the same time to displace their British, French and Dutch competitors.

That no fundamental change is intended in the Caribbean was clearly pointed out by the Incorporated Commonwealth Chambers of Industry and Commerce after their delegation met the Trinidad Prime Minister and other experts and advisors. Throwing in the red herring of communism, the delegation wrote:

Communist infiltration. It was felt that the danger of communist infiltration in the area should not be regarded lightly and the earlier situation in Guyana was referred to. The delegation was asked to bear the problem in mind and to emphasise in their talks the importance of preserving the traditional system of free enterprise.

Neither the kind of Caribbean unity contemplated nor the OAS (the US ministry of colonies) and the Alliance for Progress will cure the ills of Caribbean society or bring salvation to the people of this region.

ALLIANCE FOR PROGRESS

Latin American countries which are members of the OAS and the Alliance for Progress and the Inter-American Bank are in continuous trouble.

As long ago as 1961, at the Punta del Este conference, when the Alliance for Progress was inaugurated, the objective was to eradicate poverty, illiteracy and backwardness. An economic

growth rate of 2.6 percent was projected at a time when the average figure for Western Europe was 3 to 5 percent and for the socialist bloc 7 to 9 percent.

But even the limited expectations have not materialised. In fact, there has been a steady decline. The average figure for 1960 to 1965 was 1.6 percent as compared with 1.7 percent for the period 1955-1960 and 2.2 percent for the period 1950 to 1955. Argentina, one of the most developed countries in Latin America, suffered a decline of 2.7 percent in the gross product for 1966.

Little wonder that Archbishop Dom Holder Camera said some time again that the Alliance was dead.

Even in the fields of housing, health and education in which the Alliance was supposed to concentrate, there has been failure. In 1961, the housing deficiency was estimated to be 15 million houses. According to the Inter-American Development Bank, the need in 1966 was 19 million houses, four million more than at the start of the plan.

There are also balance of payments problems, runaway inflation and devaluation of currency. In 1961, in Argentina, the official rate was 250 pesos; in the black market, it was 290 pesos. In Brazil and Chile, inflationary rise was greater than in Argentina. The currency of Uruguay lost 90 per cent of its value during 1965 and 1966.

US aid alone is not the answer. South American countries received \$500 million in 1962 under the Alliance, but lost exactly the same amount in that year because of falling prices.

More capital flows out of than comes into South America. According to figures of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA), for every dollar invested by North Americans in the period 1946 to 1956, there was an outflow of \$3.17. Between 1950 and 1965, there was a net drain of US\$7.5 billion from US investment in Latin America.

In Guyana, profits of \$50 to \$60 million are made annually by foreign investors. For Jamaica, net outgoing profits for 1964 were \$52 million (WI) while new investments were a mere \$22 million; for 1965, the outflow increased to about \$80 million. And in Trinidad foreign companies earned an average of \$118 million (WI) annually for the three-year period, 1964 to 1966.

And we know from our own experience that more than 80 cents out of every dollar of US aid is tied to purchases of goods and services from the USA.

This kind of conditional aid also has other strings. Recipient countries are forced to tailor their monetary, fiscal and exchange policies to suit the US Treasury and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

For instance, under an Agreement signed in November 1965, the US Treasury and the IMF had what amounted to virtual control of Columbia's policies. Even the pro-imperialist President, Carlos Lloras Restrepo, when asked to renew the agreement, to repeal the recently imposed exchange restrictions and to devalue the peso, refused charging that the IMF's demands "overstepped the limits of national sovereignty".

Countries like Guyana receiving US aid are also forced to concentrate on development of infrastructure. About three-quarters of Guyana's \$300 million D-Plan is allocated for construction of roads, sea defences, airport, airstrips, stellingen, dredging of rivers, etc. This in time leads to crushing debt burdens.

The answer to the economic ills facing Guyana, the Commonwealth Caribbean territories, Latin America and other "third world" countries is not to chase after rainbows.

The OAS must be recognised for what it is — a Cold War military alliance, founded in 1948 and based upon the economic foreign policy objectives of the Truman Doctrine of 1947.

This doctrine aimed not only at the destruction of socialism, but at the maintenance of the economic status quo of colonialism and neo-colonialism. It opposed planned economies and government control of foreign trade, and equated democracy and freedom with the free enterprise capitalist system, the "American way of life", which could "survive in America only if it became a world system".

Under this doctrine, and its predecessors from the time of the Munroe Doctrine, the Latin American economy has been placed in a straitjacket. Its economy is in imbalance with a de-

formed type of capitalism and a backward agrarian structure. US strategy is to maintain Latin America as a raw material producer with dependence on one crop or one mineral.

What is needed in Guyana, Latin America and other "third world" countries is the ending of foreign political, military and economic domination and the restructuring of the economy in the interests of the people.

REVOLUTIONARY CHANGES NECESSARY

To expose the imperialists and to counter their ideological aggression, we must arm the Guyanese people with the facts. We must let them become aware of the progress in the camp of socialism. We must compare the social and economic progress of Cuba with other Latin American countries; of China with India and other south-east Asian countries; and of Uzbekistan with Afghanistan and Iran.

As against the progressive decline in Latin America, Cuba is moving ahead. As long ago as December 31, 1963, the New York Times commented:

"The Castro regime is certainly strong and possibly stronger than ever. . . There is no apparent weakening of Premier Castro's appeal inside Cuba or of his stature as a world figure. . . All children are getting some education; the great bulk are being well fed and taken care of, however poor their parents. The Negro and mulatto population is getting genuine equality. The Government leaders are untainted by any fiscal scandals. . . . To have survived five years was a remarkable feat whose explanation is far more complicated than attributing it solely to Soviet-bloc help".

More recently, David Smithers, writing for the Trinidad Guardian of October 18, 1967, said of Cuba:

Seldom has any country tried to lift itself by its own bootlaces with such uninhibited enthusiasm. Fantastic achievements mark the eight years of Fidel Castro's Government. Already Cuba has over 7,000,000 head of cattle — almost as many cows as people. The artificial insemination centre will serve 1.7 million cows this year. Egg production has been boosted to 10,000,000 a week. The sugar crop, just reaped, netted 6,000,000 tons — the world's largest. Few doubt that it will reach the target set by Castro of 10,000,000 tons a year by 1970.

Free services in education, health and social assistance provided to 484,400 Cubans in 1965 will increase to the 890,370 in 1968. As against 158,000 tons of fertilisers imported in 1957, 726,000 tons were bought in 1966 for agricultural advancement. From 1966 to 1967, 29,478 tractors were imported.

Those who propound the view that inefficiency, low level of technical skill, shortage of capital, "population explosions", and small size of population and territory are the main factors responsible for backwardness and poverty, have evidently not examined China and India.

India became politically free in 1947; the Chinese Communist Party assumed power in 1949. The "population explosion" in both countries is about the same. In terms of geography and size of population, both are huge. Both started out with about the same level of technical skill. In fact, at the outset, it could be said that India was technologically ahead. She had a sound university system and a good administrative machine. China from 1927 to 1949 was rent by internal disorder — civil war and Japanese occupation.

Yet India, which received more foreign aid than China, is today on the verge of starvation and bankruptcy; hundreds of thousands of people will die from hunger. The devaluation of the Indian rupee by 33.3 percent has not helped the situation. So desperate has the financial position become that India was unable to meet her debt payments of US\$400 million which fell due in 1967, a position long ago reached by Latin American countries.

The Bank of Baroda in its Weekly Review of August 21, 1967, wrote:

The Indian economy has now been passing through a very critical period. While the agricultural sector is in a perilous state thanks to two successive droughts, industrial economy is afflicted with recession on a scale unknown hitherto.

The declaration of the growth of industrial production in the last two years may be termed as stagnation. Recession, on the other hand, is a recent phenomenon which represents a climate of chronic stagnation in the past few years and has proved to be more far-reaching in terms of its undesirable economic consequences.

China, on the other hand, despite her internal political turmoil, has been making rapid strides. Little wonder that the Washington Post, editorialising on July 3, 1967, on the Congressional Joint Economic Committee's special study of the Chinese economy, stated:

Far from being the land of total chaos and conflict, China is . . . a country which has made considerable progress in the past and which continues to tackle major economic concerns.

The Committee's study is the most comprehensive and timely one available. Its central conclusion summarised in Chairman Prexmire's report, are that China is a 'reasonably satisfactory food situation with no indication of stringency'; that 'remarkable gains' in education is limited not by its economic resources but by its technical know-how (itself 'not inconsiderable and expanding'). China's recent explosion of its thermonuclear bomb underscores this assessment of its nuclear progress.

Kurt Mendelssohn, F.R.S., a reader in physics at Oxford University declared in a BBC broadcast:

I am fully conscious of having used the word "prosperous" because it is the only way in which I can describe the truly miraculous economic advance which China has made in only seventeen years. The progress in agriculture and, above all, in industry which I have seen since my first visit to China early in 1960 is hardly believable. Then, people were struggling with the beginning of industrialisation; now, there is practically nothing which the West can produce and China cannot; from merchant ships to motor-cars, from computers to electron microscopes, and from high-grade metal alloys to synthetic insulin. And here, incidentally, is a case where they outpaced us.

The reason for China's advance is rooted in the basic fact that the Chinese Communist Party in capturing state power in 1949 expelled the foreign exploiters, nationalised the mines, factories, plantations, banks, insurance companies and trade firms owned by the imperialists and their Chinese collaborators, the "comprador" capitalists, and took away the land from the warlords and big, unpatriotic landlords and gave them to the exploited landless peasants.

India, on the other hand, although carrying out domestic and foreign politics more forward-looking than those of Guyana, the Caribbean and Latin America, suffered a decline. This was because, from the time of independence up to this day, not only the big foreign exploiters, but also the big local capitalists, zamindars and taluhdars reigned supreme. Besides, she carried on her back a huge burden of defence, a legacy of the Cold War and partition.

Note the following comparison of development under socialism and capitalism. Professors W. K. Hedlin and W. M. Cave, writing in the Comparative Education Review, published by Teacher's College of Columbia University, for October 1964, declared:

The transition of Uzbekistan from an overwhelmingly agrarian, technologically undeveloped society to a rapidly industrialising one with dynamic programmes for change must be classified as a major achievement of the Soviet system. To gain some perspective on the enormity of this accomplishment, one need look no further than those countries contiguous to the Uzbek Republic, Afghanistan and Iran. While they cannot be compared uncritically with Uzbek society, both have a great deal in common with Uzbekistan, particularly with regard to religious ideology, ethnic composition, and cultural history. Yet, for the most part, they remain comparatively backward societies with a high percentage of illiteracy and a persistent philosophical orientation toward the past. Conventional explanations such as lack of economic investment and technical assistance, etc., do not suffice, for both Iran and Afghanistan have been the recipients of huge sums or foreign capital. Still, pastoral economies and traditional social structure persist.

NEW DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY NEEDED

There is an obvious need for an agonising reappraisal of our development plan and strategy. If Guyana is to make social and economic progress, there must be a scientific approach to economic planning and the adoption of a revolutionary policy and programme, which should include:

- 1) Nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy — all imperialist and local “comprador” capitalist-owned factories, mines, plantations, banks and telegraph, insurance and foreign trade companies;
- 2) Drastic land reform;
- 3) Rigid system of exchange, rent and price controls;
- 4) Simultaneous expansion of industry and agriculture chiefly in the public and cooperative sectors;
- 5) Trade with, and aid from, all countries, both East and West;
- 6) Genuine democracy and involvement of the masses at all levels.

Socialist countries, with centrally planned economies which have carried out such a programme, have shown higher rates of growth than developed countries with the free enterprise, capitalist system. Compare the following figures for the average annual percentage increase in industrial production between 1958 and 1968:

East		West	
Bulgaria	13.7	Austria	5.3
Hungary	8.3	Britain	3.6
GDR	6.8	Belgium	5.2
Poland	8.8	Italy	8.8
Romania	13.6	France	5.2
USSR	9.1	Federal German Republic	6.1
Czechoslovakia	7.1	Sweden	4.9

Incidentally, these statistics debunk the propaganda about Soviet imperialism! The US satellites in Latin America would have been happy to have developed as the so-called Soviet satellites in Eastern Europe.

Of course, “third world” countries which embark on a radical course will be opposed by the imperialists and neo-colonialists who are wedded to the free enterprise system, to the Truman Doctrine of “containment”, and to the Johnson Doctrine of “liberation” and “massive intervention”.

Whenever the free enterprise, capitalist system is threatened, the US government will use the chosen instrument of its foreign policy, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), for covert subversion and violence. And when it becomes necessary, marines will overtly land as in the Dominican Republic and Vietnam.

To the American ruling class and the industrial-military complex, political science has been reduced from ballots to bullets, to simple gangsterism. Between January 1961 and November 1963, eight military coups were staged against governments of representative democracy or regimes of bourgeois semi-legality in Latin America alone. Later, the non-aligned progressive regimes of Mrs. Bandaranaike in Ceylon, Dr. Nkrumah of Ghana, Dr. Sukarno of Indonesia, Joao Goulart of Brazil, and Juan Bosch of Dominican Republic, to mention a few, were overthrown.

PROPAGANDA AND THE BIG LIE

In this atmosphere of counter-revolutionary successes, the big lie is sedulously fostered that the USA and its puppets are invincible; that they cannot be defeated.

In the face of these developments, some comrades tend to despair. They see the future as hopeless. But this is no time for despair. This is only a temporary phase. We must not allow our vision to be blurred, to see only failures and not successes.

History, like the tide, moves in waves, ebbing and flowing. Actually, over the past 25 years, socialism and national liberation have made overall net gains.

From 1938 to 1943, imperialism-turned-fascism seemed invincible. The fascist dictator, Franco, destroyed democracy in Spain in 1936. Hitler overran Europe within a few years. But the revolutionary movement came out on top. From one country, the USSR, socialism spread to the whole of Eastern Europe.

This revolutionary tide was stemmed in the late 1940s and early 1950s by the Churchill-Truman Axis, the Truman Doctrine of "containment of communism", McCarthyist red witch-hunting in the USA, and imprisonment in the colonial territories — the jailing of Nkrumah, Banda, Kenyatta, Makarios and, not forgetting, the suspension of our constitution, and the jailing of our leaders.

But the revolutionary tide could not be stopped. By 1947, India, Burma and Ceylon became free. The Indonesian revolutionaries succeeded in expelling the Dutch from Indonesia. China was liberated by the Chinese Communist Party in 1949. The corrupt King Farouk was dethroned in 1952, and the British military base in the Suez Canal Zone was terminated. The Chinese and North Koreans turned back the Americans and the Sygman Rhee military clique to the 18th parallel. The Vietnamese disastrously defeated the French at Dien-Bien-Phu in 1954. The Anglo-French-Israeli attack on Egypt was repulsed in 1956. Sekou Toure opted out of the French community in 1958. And in the Iraq revolution of 1958, the hated US puppet dictator, Nur-es-Said was murdered. The Castro revolution in Cuba removed the ruthless dictator, Batista. France conceded defeat in Algeria in 1961.

This revolutionary tide clearly put into shambles the policy of containment of communism — socialist influence was now felt in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The Anglo-French imperialists adopting new tactics hastily conceded independence, with the hope as in India of preserving their spoils, and at the same time of preventing American subversion and penetration.

Today the USA is the bastion of imperialism. But those who say that the US is invincible are misreading reality. Today, imperialism, in general, and US imperialism, in particular, are in serious crisis.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND AUTOMATION

Unemployment, the Achilles heel of imperialism, is growing. New Zealand, according to Time magazine (July 28, 1967), "the most complete welfare state in the more or less capitalistic world is having economic trouble. Protest marchers with banners ("We Demand Guaranteed Employment") were out demonstrating in cities and towns throughout New Zealand last week. So far, only some 6,600 people (out of labour base of 1,000,000) are looking for work, but to New Zealanders, who had known to employment for decades, this was matter for deep concern. Union leaders darkly predicted that there would be 20,000 jobless before long".

The position is growing worse in Europe also. In Britain, there were 496,000 unemployed in July 1967, the highest in 27 years. In France, the number of unemployed in early 1967 was about 370,000, of whom about 90,000 were below the age of 25. It is expected that by 1970 France's unemployed population will be about 600,000. In Holland, there are more than 100,000 unemployed. In Belgium, unemployment is becoming particularly marked in the mines and in the steel industry. In Western Germany, nearly one million workers are unemployed or on short time. The metal workers' automation expert, Dr. Gunther Fredericks, estimated that even if overall production rose by 40 percent between 1963 and 1975, there would then be two million people unemployed. In Italy, the number of those unemployed or on short time runs into millions.

The situation in Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece is particularly aggravated because workers from these countries usually emigrate to the more advanced Western European countries.

With economic recession in the latter countries, this free movement is stopped and the safety value shut off.

The position in the United States of America is by no means different. Senator Robert Kennedy recently said: "Unemployment was one of the gravest problems", particularly among Negroes, and "its solution demands a joint effort on the part of the government and business While since 1960 the average family income in America has gone up 14 percent, in the Los Angeles ghetto of Watts it has gone down 8 percent. . ."

The dilemma of America is that it is an imperialist state and imperialism is not concerned with solving the problems of the people. Profit is the dynamo of the imperialist system. And under the law of capitalist development, rationalisation, mechanisation and automation are inevitable regardless of how many are thrown into the streets. It is to be noted, for instance, that as a result of rationalisation and automation in the railways of the United States, the labour force has been cut over the past 40 years from two million to a little over 600,000 workers, despite an increase in traffic of some 70 percent.

In 1955, the output of cars per worker was 10.3; in 1962, it was 13.9. Between 1955 and 1962, half-a-million more cars were produced with 162,000 less workers.

Little wonder that even George Meany, the lover of capitalism and the defender of US imperialist foreign policy, at the 1963 convention of the AFL/CIO declared:

There is no element of blessing in it. It is rapidly becoming a real curse of this society. When you study what's happening you realise that there is a real threat. This could bring us a national catastrophe. Every big corporation in America is in a mad race to produce more and more with less and less labour without any feelings as to what it may mean to the whole national economy.

BIG FISH EAT SMALL FISH

While automation is continually operating to create job insecurity, state-monopoly capitalism is leading to greater and greater monopolisation and concentration. The bigger capitalists swallow up or cause to go bankrupt the smaller capitalists. There are more and more takeovers or mergers and small business failures and bankruptcies.

In Japan, 1,172 firms went bankrupt in 1960, representing a 65,000 million yen turnover. In 1964, there were 4,212, amounting to 463,100 million yen turnover; that is, three-and-a-half times more. At the end of October, the number of bankrupt firms had reached 5,021 and their total turnover amounted to 475,600 million yen (1,013 yen = £1).

The total value of takeovers and amalgamations in Britain for 1968 is likely to be around £3,000 million as compared with about £100 million in 1967, £535 million in 1966 and £121 million in 1958.

In the USA, there were 2,361 mergers in 1963. By 1967, they reached 2,975 "the biggest, wildest merger year over", according to Fortune magazine's annual Special Reports issue (June). Along with mergers, the tendency of corporations is to conglomeration — to diversify into entirely new lines of business, which helps capital working intensely.

"Total net income for the 500 (top industrial corporations) dropped from an all-time record high of \$22,078,800,000 posted in 1966 to \$21,400,445,000" which is still the second highest in history.

Of the total profits of the approximately 200,000 industrial corporations in the US, the 500 largest accounted for 72.8 percent in 1967, up from 70.5 percent in 1961. More than half of the profits of the 500 were earned by the top 50 companies and almost 15 percent of the top fifty's profits, in turn, were provided by General Motors".

Gardner Ackley, Chairman of the US President's Council of Economic Advisers, told businessmen that the main reason for some of the tension in the USA was the increasing profits gained from the working class by the monopoly capitalists. Profits after taxes jumped 88 percent between early 1961 and late 1965. The 1965 net profits of US monopolies aggregated US\$45 billion, about four times as much as the annual average during the Second World War.

Second-quarter earnings in 1966 set new records. The Wall Street Journal reported the earnings of 498 companies as 10.9 percent above the same period in 1965. Ackley warned: "It is time to ask whether a further rise in the share of profits in the national income is in the interest of business itself". He said that in the last five years of the US boom profits had climbed twice as fast as the gross national product, personal income and wages, and they should not continue to do so. "I think prices have been raised more than cost, or prices have not been reduced where costs have fallen", he said, and warned that if businessmen continued to raise prices to increase their profit margin, labour would make demands and inflation would take off unfettered.

CLASS STRUGGLE SHARPENS

High profits and inflation have resulted in a lowering of the standard of living of the working class. On May 2, 1966, the US Department of Labor produced figures showing a decline in the workers standard of living. A worker with three dependents in the New York-New Jersey Metropolitan Area took home \$84.26 per week during March in terms of 1957-59 dollars. A year before his pay was \$84.67. The Department of Labor attributed wage losses to "higher social security tax and 3.2 percent increase in area and consumer prices".

Poverty is now a serious question that is plaguing the US policy makers. Even Time magazine in its issue of May 13, 1966, devoted space to what it calls "Poverty - A War Within A War". It stated:

More than 7,500,000 Americans live in rat-infested tenements or tumbledown shacks that are officially and euphemistically classified as dilapidated; 1,500 US citizens still die yearly from disease caused by malnutrition; 6,000,000 subsist on free Government surpluses. In today's society, the nation's 11 million functional illiterates are relegated for life to the precarious ranks of the poor. Paradoxically, it is the neediest who are helped least by the welfare state. The majority of the poor reap no benefits from the social security, unemployment insurance, or the right to unionize. Farm subsidies mostly enrich the prosperous; the poorest farmers, with 40 percent of the working spreads in the US, account for a scant 7 percent of farm income. Public housing has brought the poor more eviction notices than new apartments and slum dwellers scornfully refer to urban renewal as urban removal. While Washington lavishes \$18 billion a year on a galaxy of welfare programmes - to which the state and local governments and private philanthropies add another \$15 billion - only the crumbs reach the bottom of the heap.

According to another authority, Michael Harrington, the estimated 32 million Americans who live in poverty "exist beyond history, beyond progress, sunk in a paralysing, maiming routine".

Job insecurity and lowering living standards have brought about a sharpening of the class struggle. As in Guyana, there have been an increasing number of strikes. The average number of strikes in the developed capitalist countries rose from 11,484 during the period 1946-52 to 12,855 between 1953-58, and 13,900 between 1959-64.

In Canada, during the first six months of 1966, there were 359 strikes with 1,505,200 man-days lost. In July 1966 alone, there were 93,000 dissatisfied Canadians on strike. On July 27, close to three hundred farmers stormed the Queen's Park Parliament Building in Toronto, Province of Ontario, to put their grievances to Premier John Roberts and Agriculture Minister William Stewart. This was the culmination of a farmers' campaign of demonstrations and road-blocks with tractors.

Henry Ford II, in a speech in the National Association of Purchasing Agents in Detroit, in early 1966, gloomily surveying the situation in the USA, said: "I am troubled by the growth of violence, by the riots, vandalism, irresponsible demonstrations, the tendency toward rebellion for its own sake".

BLACK REBELLION

People like Henry Ford will never understand. Take the ease of the Black people of America, who have suffered from nearly three centuries of abuse, humiliation, discrimination and segregation. They are in open revolt. The ghettos and slums are exploding and going up in flames.

Blacks are in revolt because they are the most oppressed of the US working class, with about half their numbers living in poverty, in overcrowded, rat infested slums and ghettos. Although they are only 10 percent of total US population, their children constitute 44 percent of those in receipt of welfare relief.

Some moderate Black leaders have called for crash programmes. A Phillip Randolph proposed two years ago a "Freedom Budget" of US\$185 billion over a ten-year period for wiping out the ghettos, a guaranteed annual income, increased spending on education, housing, vocational training and health services. Whitney Young called for a "Domestic Marshall Plan" of \$145 billion over ten years.

But Congress is in no mood to "reward the rioters". Indeed it seems bent on a course of revenge and retaliation. The House of Representatives has passed a bill providing \$300 million to aid cities to improve riot-control techniques. And a new measure aimed at the Black militants has been enacted, making incitement to violence a crime punishable by both a 5-year jail sentence, and a \$10,000 fine. Meanwhile, the Senate has voted to reduce the appropriation for the Teachers Corps from \$33 million to \$18 million.

What moderate leaders like Randolph and Young must realise is that slums, ghettos, unemployment, illiteracy, ignorance, crime, etc. are part of the system of monopoly capitalism (imperialism), that the imperialist power-elite can no more eradicate them, than they can refrain from aggressive limited wars as in Vietnam in defence of vested interests. (US investments in the Far East have grown from \$309 million in 1960 to \$2,000 million in 1965).

US imperialism will find less and less for butter and more and more for guns and subversion.

In order to solve its growing financial and economic problems, to conduct its so-called War Against Poverty" at home, to finance the vast military expenditure in Vietnam of about thirty thousand million dollars [\$30 billion] annually, to prop up US puppets elsewhere, the USA has taken action which has aggravated the difficulties of its allies.

In order to re-finance part of the national debt (\$3,200 billion), the Treasury Department offered to the public \$8,000 million worth of notes at 5.25 percent, the highest interest rate since 1921. This, of course, will be an additional burden on US taxpayers later.

Increase of the bank rate in the USA meant to prevent the flow of capital abroad, has put pressure on the pound sterling. Bank rates had to be raised also in the United Kingdom. And making money dear and tight is affecting investments and employment. Indeed, unemployment looms as one of the biggest problems facing the Labour government in its "policy of restraints" – wages and incomes freeze.

Faced with balance of payments deficits, the US administration has also issued guidelines to Big Business to get US subsidiaries abroad to repatriate liquid assets and to purchase supplies, know-how, etc. from parent companies in the USA.

This is part of the explanation for sale by the Demerara Tobacco Company, a subsidiary of the giant British-American Tobacco Company Ltd., of 300,000 of its \$1 shares for \$1.75 each. The sale of \$1 million of shares by another lucrative foreign subsidiary company, Diamond Liquors, must be viewed against the background of Britain's balance of payments difficulties.

These measures have resulted in difficulties for countries such as Switzerland, France, Britain, West Germany, Japan and Canada where US investments and influence have been increasing since the war.

During 1946-1961, US capital abroad amounted to \$32,895 million. Investments of US companies between 1959-64 amounted to 52 percent of investments in West European capitalist countries. In 1965 alone, US investments abroad stood at \$7,400 million.

US private investments in the UK jumped from £300 million in 1950 to £2,500 million in 1968. These investments comprise one-fifth of all US investments abroad, and are utilised for purchasing direct ownership of former British-owned companies or to establish US branch concerns.

Britain is also increasingly dependent on US loans. This amounted to \$1,639 million — (70 percent of all foreign loans to the UK) — in 1953 and to £1,462 million (81 percent) in 1964. Consequently, Britain is tending to become increasingly an appendage of the USA.

US private capital amounted in 1964 to 45 percent of all investments in France (\$2,250 million out of a total of \$5,000 million) and in 1963 to about 34 percent in West Germany. In Canada, US investments amounted to nearly \$25 billion with control of industry ranging from over 50 percent to 90 percent as follows:

Auto	97%
Electrical	66%
Chemicals	54%
Farm Equipment	52%
Total manufacturing	Over 50%
Oil and Gas	60%
Mining and Smelting	52%
Food canning	90%

Canada's economy is coming increasingly under US control. In 1965, there were 90 percent sales of Canadian-owned companies to foreign investors. The year before, there were only thirty such takeovers. More recently, the Canadian government had to enact a Bank Act in order to prevent the takeover of Canadian by US banks. The latter have been growing at an alarming rate overseas. In 1964, it was 26; in 1965 it was 38. (Chase Manhattan Bank has broken into monopoly of Barclays Bank and the Royal Bank of Canada in Guyana).

Faced with increasing difficulties in recent times, particularly with balance of payments deficits, Canadians are voicing criticism about US domination of their economy. Formerly, the campaign was led by communists, socialists and radicals. Now, even liberals and conservatives have joined.

Eric Kierans, the Liberal Quebec Minister of Health, speaking in February 1966 to the Toronto Society of Financial Analysts, openly attacked US dictation in economic matters:

Canada has passed in the last decades out of inherited political colonialism into a new economic colonialism, and we are . . . the only developed nation in the world, with no 'economic autonomy' . . . The guidelines . . . will have the effect . . . of the US Government increasingly influencing various segments of capital development in Canada. They represent, in my opinion, a tightening of the American grip on our economy that threatens the attainment of our own economic objectives and are an infringement of our political sovereignty. The guidelines will accentuate the structural distortion in our economy, weaken further our competitive position and increase our deficits on current account.

Under these guidelines issued by President Johnson to US big business, Canadian subsidiaries are forced to buy from parent companies in the USA goods and services which are obtainable in Canada.

Another Canadian, Walter L. Gordon, until a year ago Minister of Finance in the Liberal government, in a recently published book, *A Choice For Canada*, wrote: "Canadians ask themselves whether they have become free of Britain's colonial influence only to fall under the spell of the US economic imperialism." More than half of the 500 corporations in Canada, with taxable incomes of at least \$1 million, are controlled by foreigners. And more than one-third are wholly-owned subsidiaries in which Canada has no financial interest whatsoever.

Gordon went on: "Too much of Canadian industry is controlled abroad. Foreigners, with the aid of Canadian friends and agents, wield far too great an influence on public policy in Canada."

In another section of the book, he quoted John Foster Dulles, the brinkmanship man of the Eisenhower cabinet, as saying: "There are two ways of conquering a foreign nation — one is to gain control of its economy by financial means."

Later, he pointed out: "There is, as you know, in Europe a growing fear of massive US investment, a growing determination, as one European official somewhat exaggeratedly put it to Bernard Nossitor of the New Republic, 'not to become another Canada with our economic destiny determined in Detroit, Chicago and New York'."

President de Gaulle attacked the encroachment of United States capital in the French economy. The French Minister of Finance said that France did not object to foreign investments, "but only to excessive investments in certain crucial sectors of the economy."

Professor Duverger, in an article in *Le Monde*, spoke even more forcibly. He said: "These investments are so many Trojan horses sent here by the United States and the outcome will be that the power of decision will be transferred to large American groups which today are more or less in control of the United States themselves."

Why this fear and resentment? Because US monopoly companies make and take out fantastic profits and royalties. This was recently exposed in the case of the US monopoly Proctor and Gamble. Writing about this monopoly in the magazine *Dimension* (March/April 1966), C.W. Gonick said:

Its capital outflow from the US was \$11 million. Its income from subsidiaries over the same period was \$290 million. The bulk of this income came in the form of sales of raw materials and equipment and now products to the subsidiaries (\$243 million); only \$47 million was received in the form of dividends. And as the Chairman of Proctor and Gamble, Neil McElroy, pointed out, net export of capital from the US comprised only a small portion of the investment of the foreign branch plants. The subsidiaries re-invested out of profits and borrowed from local financial institutions \$67 million. This is over six times the contribution made by capital exported by the parent company.

The British Minister of Technology at a recent Conference in Europe warned that unless serious attention was given to the development of science and technology in Europe it will soon become a technological colony of the United States. United States corporations collected about US\$1.5 billion yearly from West Europeans and other foreigners as royalties and fees for the use of American patents and know-how.

These contradictions are resulting in increasing rivalry between imperialist USA, the "colossus of the North", and other smaller imperialist nations.

President Charles de Gaulle who came to power in France with the help of the rightist French Colons has become the "bad old man" of the West. He has recognised and established diplomatic relations with China and asked Latin Americans to follow a course of non-alignment and independence from the USA. He has caused NATO to pull out of France and has publicly urged the USA to withdraw from Vietnam. He has told French Canadians that they must struggle for their national status, free from second-class Canadian citizenship.

The West German so-called economic "miracle" has faded and the economic "wizard", former Chancellor Erhard, has fallen. The West German coalition government hopefully looks for an economic growth rate of 2 percent in 1967 as compared with 7 percent previously. The expectation in non-government circles is a figure of minus 2 percent. Early this year, the new West German Chancellor had to postpone his official visit to the United States because of a budget crisis. Now there is increasing pressure in West Germany for the scaling down of military expenditure for its large standing army. However, the United States is against such a move.

The US position is the same for Britain. It opposes the cuts in the British "East and Suez" military apparatus in the Middle and Far East, which have come about because of growing balance of payments problems, unemployment, Labour back-bench opposition, and unrest.

Of the 80,000 military men and civilians in the Far East, about 10,000 were sent back in 1967. Another 20,000 are to leave by the end of 1968, and by the middle of the 1970s complete evacuation is planned. The Aden Base is also to be evacuated by 1968.

The British government has come around to the view, expressed by the British Communist Party for many years, that it would not be possible to maintain a healthy level of industrial growth or to pay for major social reforms without a massive cutback in defence. Britain no doubt has watched with envy France's success after she had decided on the futility and costliness of colonial wars in Indo-China and Algeria and the NATO "defence" system.

In keeping with Britain's national interests, even the Conservative government of Lord Hume did not succumb to US pressure not to trade buses with Cuba. Similarly, the Canadian government rejected US pressure not to trade wheat with Cuba and China. In keeping with this same mood of defiance, the Canadian Minister of Mines, Mr. George Wardrope, recently expressed satisfaction that less and less Canadian ores were being shipped abroad and more and more of them were being smelted and manufactured in Canada itself. He said that large iron ore mines were finding a market "within our own country."

Incidentally, we must remind the Canadian minister and government that we too would like to smelt our bauxite in Guyana, and not have all of it shipped abroad. We are opposed to Canadian imperialist control of our bauxite industry, just as they are opposed to US imperialist economic domination of their country.

THIRD WORLD REVOLT

In the "third world" countries, the most aggravated world front, living standards are deteriorating and the liberation and class struggle is sharpening. The US genocidal war in Vietnam has become the US graveyard. It is the first war which America has not been able to win, although it has committed about a half million men. High casualties are reaching the proportions of the Korean War. Losses, particularly in planes and pilots, have been extremely heavy. The New York Times last year reported that fighter and attack aircraft "losses had actually exceeded new production" in the fiscal year 1966-1967. And the cost of the war jumped from US\$2,000 million annually in the early 1960s to over \$2,000 million monthly.

The USA despite its vast resources cannot have a "guns" and "butter" policy at the same time. The war against poverty programme has been virtually scuttled. The head of the anti-poverty programme, Sargent Shriver, in early 1967 wailed: "We were just about to put the bottle in the baby's mouth, and we find that there is damned little milk to give."

The Vietnam war is making a huge dent in US public finance. The budget deficit for fiscal 1966-67 was \$9.9 billion. For 1967-68, President Johnson has proposed an increase in taxation amounting to 10 percent on company personnel income taxes. But this surcharge which is expected to bring in about \$6.3 billion will only reduce, according to Time magazine, "the national budget deficit from a crushing \$29 billion to between \$14 and \$18 billion."

Another casualty is President Johnson popularity. From a landslide victory less than two years ago, Johnson's rating in the latest public opinion polls has slumped to 43 percent.

But Vietnam is not the only US graveyard. In other "third world" countries, the US imperialists are faced with new dilemmas.

In Chile, President Eduardo Frei, who won the last presidential election with the help of US dollars and Castro's renegade sister, is in deep trouble. As a result of the growing militancy of the Chilean people, the Congress was forced to pass a radical land reform measure which was for a long time opposed by many conservative landlords and many of Frei's own Christian Democrats who are owners of big estates. The new land reform act, according to Time magazine (July 31, 1967), "authorizes the Chilean Agrarian Reform Corporation (CORA) to seize property from anyone who owns more than 200 acres in the fertile valley or an equivalent amount in

drier lands. In compensation, the owner gets 10 percent of the value in cash, the rest in 30-year bonds. . . . And rebel left-wingers have won control of Frei's own Christian Democratic Party. The Party's national committee recently endorsed the formation of a new Chilean branch of Fidel Castro's Latin American Solidarity Organization and further suggested that guerrilla warfare is a legitimate tool against arbitrary governments."

In India, following the severe defeat of the Congress Party in the recent general election, the Party's recent convention called for a swift movement to the left with nationalisation of banks, the non-payment of tribute to former princes and maharajahs, and drastic land reform.

SOCIALIST GAINS

Meanwhile, in spite of the ideological division in the socialist camp, significant gains are being made. In the Soviet Union in the past seven years, gross industrial output rose 84 percent including, a 96 percent gain in producer goods, and 60 percent in consumer goods; gross agricultural output increased 14 percent (from 48,500 million roubles in 1958 to 55,300 million in 1965).

Social benefits to the Soviet working people increased. Benefits out of public consumption funds (free education, pensions, free and reduced-price accommodations in sanatoriums, holiday homes, etc.), increased from 23,800 million roubles in 1958 to 41,500 million in 1965.

New homes built from the time of the Revolution in 1918-1965 totalled 1,191 million square metres of which about half was built in the period 1959-1965. Twenty and one-quarter million new homes were built on collective farms.

The working day was reduced to seven hours, and for some brackets of workers to six hours. Soon there will be a five-day working week.

For the five-year period ahead, Soviet production is to increase significantly. The national incomes will go up by 47.5 percent and agriculture by 25 percent more than the average for the past five years. Real incomes will increase by 30 percent; that is, roughly 6 percent per year. This should be compared with the wages and income freeze in the UK, and with official advice in the USA to trade unions that the "guidepost" for wage increases should not be more than 3.2 percent, which does not exclude direct and indirect taxes and rising prices.

Greater wage and other benefits are to be given to the people in the countryside in the Soviet Union so as to bring about an equalisation in their cultural and material well-being with those in the towns. While salaries and wages will grow 20 percent, monetary incomes and incomes in kind received by collective farmers will grow by 34-40 percent (not including benefits and services — health, housing, education, pensions etc. — offered free by the government from public consumption funds). This is in marked contrast to the West where there is growing pauperisation in the countryside, a widening gap between town and country, and a population drift from country to town.

In order to produce more grains, livestock and other agricultural products and to bring about the necessary equalisation in standards of living between town and country, state capital investment in agriculture is to be doubled, amounting to £16,400 million.

These who are critical of Soviet agriculture should note that in 1954-1961, Soviet agricultural production increased at an annual rate higher than in the United States. The ultimate aim is to remove shortcomings and obstacles, technical and otherwise, and to raise it to 9-10 percent annually, the same as for industry.

Another objective in the 5-year plan is to aim at the abolition of the distinction between mental and physical labour. This is to be achieved in an all-round advance in culture and education. In the next five years, free universal secondary education will be completed. About 7 million specialists will be trained with a higher and specialised secondary education, about 65 percent more than in 1961-1965.

An important feature in the new plan is the distribution of production in such a way that the interests of the Republic, which were formerly "colonies" of Czarist Russia, would not be jeopardised. In marked contrast to the capitalist West and the politically dominated and subju-

gated countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, where the gap in living standards is widening, there is to be in the USSR a steep upsurge of the productive forces and a rise in the living standards of the people in all Union Republics.

For the people of the non-socialist world who are suffering from capitalist, imperialist, colonialist and neo-colonialist subjugation, exploitation and oppression, the Soviet Union is a shining example of what can be achieved when the system of capitalism — the exploitation and despoliation of man by man — is abolished.

Gunnar Myrdal, the famous Swedish economist, in his book, *The Challenge of Affluence*, writes:

It is enough to take as established that the present rate of economic growth is considerably higher in the Soviet Union than in the United States — at least double or perhaps more . . . the magic of compound interest is such that if the United States should fail to overcome its relative stagnation very soon, the Soviet Union would within a not too distant future, approach, reach and eventually surpass the United States in important fields.

Although US industrial production increased considerably, particularly, in 1964 and 1965, its growth rate of 32 percent between 1960 and 1965 was still far behind the USSR output of 51 percent in the same period. The British increase in the same period was about 17 percent. Soviet science research and technology have posted some remarkable achievements, including:

1. World's first atomic reactor.
2. World's first batch of jet airliners.
3. World's biggest synchrotron.
4. World's first inter-continental ballistic missiles.
5. World's first atomic-powered ice-breaker.
6. First and second powered satellites.
7. First linking and de-linking of sputniks in space.
8. First supersonic commercial jet airliner.

The growing military and economic might of the socialist camp is a source of strength to the people of the world, particularly those in the colonies and semi-colonial territories. The defeat of the imperialist invasion of Egypt in 1956 and the subsequent resignation of the Eden government was primarily due to world democratic opinion particularly of Asia and Africa backed by the military might of the socialist bloc. This was a turning point in the history of imperialism — a supremacy of people's right against imperialist might. Imperialism can no longer win by naked brute force. This has become all too clear in Vietnam.

The economic strength of the Soviet Union and the socialist camp is also a source of concern to the camp of imperialism. As long ago as May 21, 1956, the then British Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd, declared:

The Russian steamroller of today is not likely to be a military one. It consists of a great mass of technicians, technologists, teachers, business and other experts, all intended to export communism at the same time as they export their goods and services.

Similarly, the *Times* on June 4, 1956, wrote:

If the expected rise in the Communist world's standard of living comes about it must have a vast impact elsewhere, both by direct example and by the additional opportunities it will give for aid to other countries. This is the formidable prospect which the West has to face.

This accounts for the vicious counter-offensive of the past decade by imperialism. To contain and defeat national liberation and socialism, the USA deployed a vast worldwide subversive apparatus. A partial list of CIA-financed organisations exposed in 1967 include the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, and its affiliates in Argentina, Peru,

Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad, and Tobago; Retail Clerks International Association; American Newspaper Guild; Communication Workers of America; Institute of International Research; International Labour Training Programme; World Confederation of Organisations of the Teaching Profession; International Confederation of Journalists; International Federation of Petroleum and Chemical Workers; Congress for Cultural Freedom; American Council for the International Commission of Jurists; African-American Institutes; American Friends of the Middle East; Institute of International Education; American Society of African Culture; Institute of Public Administration; Atwater Research Programme in North Africa; American National Student Association; International Development Foundation of New York; University of Pennsylvania; National Education Association; International Student Conference of Leyden; US Youth Council of New York; World Assembly of Youth; Brussels; International Market Institute; Independent Research Service; India Committee Trust; Asian Students Press Bureau; Council for International Programme for Youth Leaders and Social Workers; Crossroads Africa; Gambia National Youth Council; Guyana Assembly for Youth; International Union of Young Christian Democrats; International Youth Centre, New Delhi; National Newsmen Club Federation; National Student Press Council of India; North American Secretariat of Pax Romana; National Federation of Canadian University Students; Synod of Bishops of the Russian Church outside Russia; National Council of Churches; Billy Graham Spanish-American Crusade; Young Women's Christian Association; Radio Free Europe; Center for International Studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; League of International and Social Development; etc.

These disclosures have put millions the world over on guard. They have also exposed the US power-elite as completely venal and immoral.

Those who are critical of the Warsaw Pact countries, and more particularly, the USSR, for intervention in Czechoslovakia must remember that it was the objective of imperialism under the Truman doctrine not only to "contain communism" but also to liberate the "captive States" of Eastern Europe. Under the Johnson Doctrine, the US ruling class assumed the "right" to intervene with military forces in any country of the Western Hemisphere to prevent "subversive activity".

COMBAT DESPAIR

There is no reason, therefore, for despair. We must combat attitudes of defeatism, based on the invincibility of the USA. Those who propound the theory of fatalism, that in no circumstances will the USA, the dominant power in the Western Hemisphere, permit the PPP to win power, have failed to grasp recent events. The USA is becoming increasingly isolated. The revolutionary forces of the world are on the upsurge. Western imperialism is today beleaguered. It is definitely on the defensive.

But this does not mean that we must become over-confident. We must face realities. We must not live in a dream world and merely hope for the best. We must take it for granted that the puppets, having been put into office by force and fraud, will use the same means to perpetuate themselves in power. They will rig the general election by manipulating the voters list, by registering Guyanese abroad, and by many other corrupt means. We must be aware of this. We must also be aware of the definite possibility of a coup d'état in case we win even a rigged election. Such consciousness and awareness will prepare us psychologically and otherwise for action in the future.

If the next election were fairly conducted, we can be confident of strong support and of winning. For not only are we already the largest single party in the country. Each day brings us new support. Each day, the government loses support.

We are taking every step to expose the rigging of the election. But we must not stop there. We must work relentlessly to frustrate their intentions.

At this point, let me sound a note of warning and advice. By and large, our supporters are too election-oriented. Many have little concept of what power means and involves. To many, power means elections and being in Parliament. As such, they do not involve themselves in

day-to-day activities and struggles, but await voting day to show their support for the party. And after voting day, they lapse into lethargy.

To invigorate our increment, we must rejuvenate it and infuse it with new blood. While retaining those with experience, we must bring in youthful, new blood full of vigour, militancy and idealism. To facilitate this move, we must enlarge our General Council.

There must be struggle in parliament and out of parliament. We must engage in political work, in mass activity. We must involve the people day by day in activity, however small and apparently insignificant — strikes, demonstrations, rallies, marches, picketing, vigils, fasts, petitions, resolutions.

It must be realised that power does not mean only people in the countryside, but also in Georgetown and in strategic places, such as the civil service, police, army, waterfront, electricity, telephone and cable, airport, etc. Although we are numerically stronger, our opponents are strategically stronger. Our aim must be to win more support in these strategic areas.

We cannot hope to win power without achieving decisive shifts in political support. This is already taking place, as anyone can see. Our aim should be to win over a third of opposition support, to neutralise another third, and to leave with them the remaining third who are emotionally committed and bigoted.

COMBAT RACISM

We must combat racism. We must resolutely weed out from our ranks any one who consciously or unconsciously peddles racism. There are many in our ranks who in public take a non-racial stand, but who in private crawl into their racial skins.

Unity of the working class regardless of race is vital. If we are to move forward, the party must have the backing of the working class, the peasantry and the intelligentsia, not of one race, but of all races. Indeed, not only the following but also the leadership of the party must increasingly come from these sections — the intelligentsia who is armed with the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism, other cadres who come from or work among the workers and farmers in trade union and farmers organisations.

And while we are talking about unity, we must not forget international unity and solidarity. We must strive for the unity of the international communist, working class movement. Disunity and wrangling among Chinese, Cubans, Russians have only served to embolden the camp of imperialism. We must see our struggle as part and parcel of the wider Latin American, continental struggle. We must view our "war" as a protracted one, with not one but a series of battles. We must recognise the necessity for solidarity and coordination with the socialist states, with other liberation movements, and with the working class movements in the capitalist states.

We salute the heroic struggle of the Vietnamese people. We pledge our whole-hearted support for the Negro people in the United States who have decided not to crawl and beg, but to fight. We welcome the launching of guerrilla activities in Rhodesia against the fascist and racist Smith regime, and extend our solidarity with the Africans and others who have been forced to resort to armed struggle against the fascists in Portuguese African territories and elsewhere. The Portuguese Salazar regime has been forced to increase its allocation for the colonial war from US\$130 million in 1966 to \$180 million in 1967, nearly 40 percent of the whole Portuguese budget.

As the largest progressive movement in the Caribbean outside of Cuba, we must take the initiative to mobilise and unite the progressive forces throughout the Caribbean with the aim of realising the long cherished dream of the Caribbean peoples — to have a new social order, to be completely free.

It is necessary for all peoples in Guyana and other poor "third world" countries to realise that the cause of our poverty is national oppression by imperialism. We need to develop among the masses, our supporters and non-supporters alike, fuller understanding that it is necessary to have a Marxist, and not a racist, approach to our problems; to fight for a genuine democracy

and an anti-imperialist programme based on the public ownership of the commanding heights of the economy.

BUILD SOUND PARTY

We need to develop understanding not only of the social and economic forces at play in our society, and the world at large, but also of strategy and tactics of counter-revolution. Recently in Africa and Asia, military coups d'etat have taken place not only against progressive leftist leaders, but also against puppets. When the latter can no longer serve imperialism by holding the allegiance of the people, they are eliminated and replaced by other stooges.

Bribing the young intelligentsia through the creation of a large bureaucracy is another device. CIA-financed front organisations operating under the guise of religious, cultural and social activities will be set up to splinter our support and to prevent the discontented from joining our ranks.

And we must be on guard against imperialist agents who will be planted inside our movement. The US Federal Bureau of Investigation once admitted that a large part of the membership of the Communist Party of the USA was infiltrated with US agents. Agents will be planted not only for intelligence purposes, but to act as agents provocateurs, and to change the anti-imperialist line of our party.

Such all-round vigilance and understanding must come about by intensive study, work and struggle. We must concentrate on our ideological work at Accabre College, at constituency and regional seminars, at study groups and, whenever possible, studies abroad.

In the past, we concentrated on quantity. Now we must concentrate on quality. We must develop sufficient ideological understanding to withstand the wiles and machinations of the imperialists and their puppets. We must not only talk to the Guyanese people about their suffering. We must tell them why conditions are so bad and what needs to be done to get Guyana moving forward again.

We must build an ideologically sound and well disciplined party, and constantly promote into leading positions comrades armed with the ideology, with the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism.

We must at the same time guard against deviations to the right and the left. Both right opportunism and left adventurism must be combated. Any adventurism will only give an excuse to the puppet government to suppress our party. Equally disastrous will be any opportunistic right-wing deviationism which seeks to make an accommodation with imperialism. If we are to make an accommodation, it must be with the PNC, who still hold the allegiance of large sections of the working class and peasantry. But this accommodation must be made on the basis of principle, unity and struggle — unity with those progressive elements in the leadership and in the rank-and-file, and struggle against the pro-imperialist leadership which now dominates the party. Such unity and struggle must be based on a dynamic anti-imperialist programme.

Our slogan must be: Things were never so bad. Workers, unite! You have nothing to lose but your American chains.

Forward with the PPP to Peace, Progress and Prosperity.

Down with imperialism!

Long live national liberation!

Long live socialism!

-5-

The Sixteenth Congress

Report of the General Council to the 16th Congress, presented
by Dr. Cheddi Jagan, Leader of the PPP — Anna Regina,
Essequibo Coast, 5-6 September 1970

This Sixteenth Congress of the People's Progressive Party is taking place at a time when the class struggle both at the national and international levels is sharpening.

The situation holds grave dangers for the people — posed by imperialism and its puppets. At the same time new opportunities are arising for intensifying and widening the struggle for peace, democracy, national liberation and socialism.

The whole trend of events since the Fifteenth Congress (1968) and the Special Conference (1969) has borne out the correctness of the party's analysis.

The situation does not stand still. Developments are taking place both of a positive and negative character. The PPP, as the vanguard of the Guyanese people's struggle against imperialism, for genuine independence and socialism, is called upon to shoulder greater responsibilities and to more effectively guide the people in the tasks to which the whole party directs its energies.

THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

We are living in the epoch of the revolutionary transition from capitalism to socialism. Already, within the relatively short span of half a century, one-third of mankind has made the breakthrough to the new social order of socialism. Great significance attaches to the fact that the socialist revolutions that have already taken place embrace far flung areas — Europe, Asia, America — and involve peoples of varying cultures, historical backgrounds, levels of economic development and even psychologies. Thus life itself proves the correctness of the Marxist analysis and theory of social development, and the all-embracing, worldwide nature of this theory.

Furthermore, this process of revolutionary transition to socialism has by no means ceased. The sharpening of the class struggle throughout practically the whole of the non-socialist world heralds further changes and victories for the working class.

Never before have the ideas of socialism — and particularly of Marxism-Leninism — become so attractive to such wide sections of the people.

Imperialism — headed by US imperialism — is the worldwide enemy of the peoples. But for imperialism, the main problems of our day could be solved. All progressive and democratic forces, in whatever field of action they may be engaged, come up inevitably, sooner or later, against the naked face of imperialism. In the struggle against racism, for democracy, for better social and economic conditions of life, in the fight for peace and freedom, people everywhere encounter the obstacle of imperialism's stubborn resistance.

Imperialism is the enemy of all peoples everywhere — not only of the socialist states and communism, but of democracy, peace, freedom, of all progressive forces and trends.

In our day, to secure real progress in any field, one has to combat imperialism. This fact creates the objective conditions for the broadest unity of action in the anti-imperialist struggle, in the fight against the common enemy.

The three main anti-imperialist, revolutionary forces of our time are: the socialist world system, the national liberation movement, and the working class and democratic movement of the developed capitalist countries.

The imperialists and their ideologists spare no pains to split these forces, as part of their strategy to weaken the anti-imperialist front, to prevent these revolutionary streams from coming together into a mighty torrent that would wipe out the system of imperialism.

But these forces are moving closer together and forcing closer links in the course of the anti-imperialist struggle. Life itself is showing the need for even greater, more conscious efforts in this direction.

Ever since the formation of the world's first socialist state — the Soviet Union — and since then the emergence of the world socialist system, the main contradiction has been that between imperialism and socialism. That is the position today, notwithstanding attempts by the ideologists of reaction to mislead the masses by their talk of "convergence" between capitalism and the more developed socialist countries.

The world socialist system is the highest creation and greatest asset of the international working class. Its very existence and growing strength provide more and more favourable opportunities for success in the struggle for freedom, peace, democracy and socialism.

The successes of the socialist countries — in economic, social, cultural and scientific advances — and in competition with the capitalist world are a powerful stimulus to the peoples elsewhere, showing them in practice the superiority of socialism over capitalism.

Added to this is the increasing ability of the socialist countries to render effective and substantial assistance to peoples struggling for liberation, and to the newly independent but underdeveloped states to enable them to become economically independent and break the ties of imperialism.

The world socialist system is the leading revolutionary force and the bastion of the anti-imperialist movement.

The growing might of socialism is reflected in the fact that the socialist countries account for about 38 percent of world industrial production.

Taking the member countries of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, with 18 percent of the world's territory and 10 percent of the world's population, they now account for one-third of the world's industrial output.

The Soviet Union has been steadily closing the economic gap between itself and the richest country in the capitalist world — the United States. In 1960, Soviet industrial output was 55 percent of the American, while today it has reached 70 percent. And although the developed capitalist countries still have the capacity for economic growth, the faster rates of growth of the socialist world mean that socialism will catch up with and surpass capitalism economically. The growing success of socialist Cuba provides inspiration and stimulation especially for the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean.

The national liberation movement is another mighty force comprising an active and powerful front in the anti-imperialist struggle.

Imperialism has become aggressive, using diverse means to retard its own decline and to hamper the advance of the world revolutionary movement.

Brutal, unpopular wars of aggression are unleashed against the peoples struggling for national liberation, together with more indirect methods, to try to stem the tide of the liberation movement.

Facing defeat in Vietnam, the US rulers have escalated the fighting in Cambodia and thus embroiled the whole of Indo-China in their vain effort to snatch at victory. This new venture has not produced the desired results, but reveals completely the moral, political, and military bankruptcy of the US imperialists in their war of aggression against the people of Indo-China. The Vietnamese people's struggle for national liberation against the most powerful imperialist power in the world — using the most barbarous methods of extermination — shows that a united and determined people, in close alliance with the socialist world, and possessing the support and sympathy of democratic world opinion, can succeed. Vietnam bears testimony to

the fact that imperialism can no longer determine with a free hand the fate of the world. It has to reckon with the world revolutionary forces and with the growing might of the socialist world.

The imperialists are using various techniques to suppress the national liberation movements and to keep the newly independent states within the framework of capitalism and imperialist domination. Neo-colonialism, propped up by puppet regimes, is one of the main methods. Reactionary coups directed by imperialist secret agencies such as the CIA are used to oust progressive leaders and governments where possible. Such coups have the best chances of succeeding where progressive regimes have not involved the masses and where vacillation takes place with respect to firm alliance with the main socialist countries.

While the imperialists can claim some successes in recent times against the liberation movement, such as the reactionary coups in Ghana and Cambodia, in Indonesia, and the Israeli military victory against the progressive Arab countries in June 1967, imperialist policies are on the whole facing defeat. For example, the Israeli military victory did not achieve the aims of imperialism in that region, that is, the overthrow of the progressive regimes in Egypt and Syria. The reverse has happened. The Arab states have become stronger politically, morally, socially, and now militarily, and are on the path of social progress.

New developments have also taken place in Sudan and Libya which placed in power regimes that are taking a progressive, anti-imperialist stand. Even in Latin America, where US imperialism is doing everything possible to prevent another Cuba, we are witnessing developments in Peru which indicate that US imperialism no longer has a free hand in that country.

The progressive left forces in Ceylon have also achieved a signal victory, thus adding new impetus and possibilities to the anti-imperialist struggle.

The democratic working class movements in the developed capitalist countries constitute the third main anti-imperialist, revolutionary stream. Fighting against the monopolies for the rights of the masses of -working people, for democracy, for world peace, they are a strong force in the anti-imperialist struggle.

Imperialism blocks the advance to progress not only of the peoples of underdeveloped countries. It seeks to undermine the socialist countries. And not least, it restricts and damages the interests of the people within its metropolitan borders. It is a mistake to see the policies of imperialism directed only outside, towards other peoples. The bourgeoisie of the imperialist countries exploit the working people of their own countries.

This accounts for the tremendous class battles, the growth of the strike movement in the advanced capitalist countries. Big political demonstrations in support of Vietnam and against US aggression are mounted by the progressive, democratic, and working class movement, not least of all, in the United States itself.

The international working class, led by the Communist Parties, is fulfilling a valuable role in the struggle for peace, democracy and socialism.

On balance, it can be said that the main lines of world development are determined by the forces of revolution and socialism, by the peace forces and the national liberation movement.

The PPP sees the necessity for the greatest unity of all the revolutionary, anti-imperialist forces. We believe in the power of international working class solidarity, and will strive to develop in the Guyanese working masses the spirit of proletarian internationalism which is vital to the success of Guyana's struggle for economic independence and socialism. We do not uphold policies of national separation or exclusiveness which only help imperialism to weaken the liberation movement and retain its domination.

GUYANA — A NEO-COLONIAL STATE

Guyana's political independence is merely nominal. The "Golden Arrowhead" barely conceals the "Stars and Stripes" while the jaguars adorning our national emblem fall easy prey to the voracious Yankee eagle. Guyana has achieved statehood, but the Guyanese nation is not free.

The 1964 PNC election manifesto fairly accurately foretold the neo-colonial status to which Guyana would find itself subjected. Although the PNC then attributed these mischievous designs to others, it really mirrored its own intentions.

This is what the PNC said at that time:

Pressure of world opinion has led to the present policy of conceding independence to colonies. A colony, however, can achieve formal political independence and still be a colony. Its economy can continue to be dominated and controlled by and for foreign nations and interests; its society can continue to be stagnant and riddled with false values and discrimination.

There is no Guyanese whose sanity is beyond doubt, who will not express at least verbal support for independence. But many a misguided and brainwashed Guyanese sees independence in terms merely of the replacement of the old rulers by locally born but foreign-oriented rulers — the institutionalizing of a new elite and privileged class, while the general mass of people continue to subsist without hope and in poverty, disinherited and the objects of scorn and sometimes charity.

Some other Guyanese are militant and noisy in their demand for independence from Britain, but consciously would immediately pawn Guyana the moment after independence to some other foreign power. Such persons are colonial charlatans or at best infants, the witting or unwitting tools and agents of new masters. Theirs is the concept of new servitude not independence.

The imperialists, being forced to concede nominal independence, have installed a new native (local-born) puppet elite, the agents of new masters — the United States imperialists. The people's conditions get worse. Bribery, nepotism, corruption fatten the new elite, while the imperialists own and control the economy.

With every passing day the PNC government demonstrates its subservience to US imperialists. This is plunging Guyana deeper and deeper into the vortex of foreign domination.

The main sectors of the economy are still in foreign hands, and no genuine efforts are made to change this. A government bent on achieving economic independence would give this matter top priority. Only lip service is paid to economic independence. In reality, we are sinking deeper into dependence.

The Guyanese people's precious heritage — our land — is being given away to foreign interests. One quarter of a million acres of rich bauxite land was handed over on a platter to the American Reynolds Company. The Commonwealth Development Corporation has received from the PNC government additional thousands of acres of good timber and forest lands in the Mazaruni, Northwest and Pomeroon districts. Other United States companies have acquired leases over extensive timber lands in the Demerara and Essequibo riverain areas. In this process of sell-out to foreign interests, hundreds of Guyanese timber dealers and loggers, including the Amerindians at Santa Mission, have been deprived of their means of livelihood because their permissions and leases — which they had held for many years — were cancelled by the government and handed over to the American companies.

The Guyanese nation will indict the PNC puppets for this sell-out of our national heritage to foreign big business. On this vital issue the PNC stands condemned as a government of national betrayal. The Guyanese people must put and end to this policy of betrayal and take back their land.

The power to embark on a programme of industrialisation now resides in the hands of the government. However, no such programme is being implemented or even formulated. The state sector is not being expanded to embrace the important extractive and manufacturing industries. Neither is the state going into the productive sector in new fields. What we have been witnessing recently is government takeover and participation in certain trading organisations and propaganda media, such as the participation in Guyana-Gajraj, the buy-up of one of the two radio stations and of the Chronicle premises and printing plant, and participation in the East Coast bus service. In the case of Gajraj, the radio station and the Chronicle, it is clear that these ventures were entered into to enhance ruling PNC's financial and propaganda position, rather than with a view to strengthening the public sector of the economy.

The lopsided pattern of mainly infrastructural development conforms to the neo-colonial pattern of Guyana's economy. This is in keeping with the imperialists' designs for Guyana under the PNC regime — loans for infrastructure, restricting the expansion of the public sector, facilitating private foreign operations, increasing the drain of our natural resources and profits and interests abroad.

The government's neo-colonial policy internally is closely tied up with its foreign policy. Guyana's foreign policy is characterised by complete servility to US imperialism. The US rulers call the tune and the Guyana puppets jump to it. There is no spirit of independence in this sphere.

One has only to examine the countries with which Guyana under the PNC has established diplomatic relations to see the reality of the government's attachment to "non-alignment" — the Chiang Kai-Shek clique in Taiwan, the bloody puppets in South Korea, the brutal torture-regime in Brazil. And only recently Prime Minister Burnham paid a visit to Haiti which was shrouded in secrecy as to its purpose and implications. The US government drives its puppets to join hands in a fraternity of reaction.

The government's espousal of non-alignment is but an unsuccessful attempt to place a fig-leaf over its naked policy of total alignment with US imperialism. An aggressive and illegal war of American imperialism against the people of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos completely exposes the Guyana government's pretensions of non-alignment. Not a word of condemnation, not even of concern over flagrant US aggression has escaped the lips of the Guyana government.

One would expect that a genuinely non-aligned government, pursuing a policy of good relations with all countries which treat Guyana with respect and on the basis of mutual benefit, would seek to establish diplomatic, trade, and aid, and cultural relations with countries of the socialist world system. Guyana already has diplomatic and other relations with the main capitalist-imperialist countries of the West, including the United States, Canada, Britain, West Germany. The government is however stubbornly refusing to establish similar relations with the main countries of socialism. The Soviet Union's request to set up an embassy in Guyana is still on the shelf. It will remain there until the American rulers give their approval.

Under pressure to prove its non-aligned pronouncements, the government has eventually established relations with Yugoslavia. While we welcome such a move, it can only be regarded as a feeble gesture, since Yugoslavia itself regards its own policy as non-aligned. Up to now, therefore, the Guyana government has made no real move to vary its total alignment with western imperialism.

The PPP will continue to press the government — in Parliament and outside — to move towards genuine non-alignment by establishing relations with the main countries of the socialist world, including the Soviet Union, China, and particularly Cuba whose experience in social transformation is of special significance to us in Guyana.

Similarly, in the sphere of trade and aid, scientific and cultural contacts, the PPP will press for such relations with the socialist world system. Other underdeveloped countries which have such relations are benefiting tremendously. They are by such means putting their national economies on a firm footing on the way to real economic independence. The public sector, in particular, gains strength from such contacts and aid. The PPP will also strive to get the government to change its US-dictated policy of denying Guyanese students the right to go to socialist countries to acquire higher and technical education. Such policies are clearly contrary to Guyana's national interests, and belie the pretensions of non-alignment.

Militarily, too, and in the field of police and security, the PNC government is closely tied in a neo-colonial relationship with imperialism. US advisers, training courses, equipment, and strategic policy subordinate Guyana to the over-all strategy of imperialism in the western hemisphere. This policy is aimed at the suppression of even the mildest movements for social reform and genuine independence. The Williams government's appeal to the United States, Britain and Venezuela for military assistance to suppress the anti-imperialist movement in Trinidad and the quick response by these governments testify to the part played by the puppet local governments in the over-all scheme of imperialism.

The PPP, which speaks with the support of the majority of the Guyanese people, is totally opposed to the OAS and to any involvement of the Guyanese State with the OAS, either openly or secretly.

The Venezuelan border claim and the way it has been handled by the Guyana government once again puts the stamp of national betrayal on the PNC leaders. The Protocol of Port of Spain which merely shelved the matter for twelve years was dictated by the US government to its puppets in both Guyana and Venezuela. The Guyana government meekly and speedily bowed to this dictation without consulting the Opposition or the Guyanese people as a whole. The Venezuelan claim is held as a threat to any progressive, national democratic government that attempts to break with imperialism. The PPP repudiates the Port-of-Spain Protocol and condemns the PNC government for its betrayal of the nation.

The People's Progressive Party will continue to educate and mobilise the Guyanese people for a genuinely anti-imperialist programme of action.

A BANKRUPT ECONOMY

Today Guyana faces grave economic problems. Capitalist-oriented, the economy gropes in the dark, with the balance of payments in growing deficit, rising debt charges, a growing bureaucracy that increases expenditure, and the continued outflow of huge profits.

The much-touted \$300 million 7-year Development Plan has grounded to a halt and collapsed, as predicted by the party. This was inevitable as it was designed to suit the imperialist nations. In place of planned proportional development of the economy with emphasis on industry and agriculture, the government concentrates on infrastructural works — roads, sea defences, airport and airstrips, stellings, etc., — which are indirect subsidies to foreign capital. More than two-thirds of the current budget has to be set aside as first charges for debt payments and an ever-expanding governmental machine. The remainder is inadequate to finance essential services — health, housing, subsidies, crop bonuses, guaranteed minimum process — and to provide surplus capital for our own development. The end result is a continued dependence on foreign investment, grants and loans. And these have not materialised to the extent that was expected by the PNC puppet regime from its imperialist masters. Even local loans have dried up.

The Caribbean Free Trade Area (CARIFTA) has placed Guyana in the backwoods of the imperialist-designed system — an agricultural producer. As we predicted, CARIFTA is proving that it was designed to help the foreign, mainly US multinational corporations and their branch-plant factories in the region. Trade figures on the second anniversary of CARIFTA showed that Jamaica increased her trade by over 60 percent, Trinidad by 30 percent, and Guyana by a mere 5 percent.

Under the imperialist strategic scheme for the area, Guyana's industrialisation has come to a dead stop. And under the inept and corrupt PNC government, even agriculture which was flourishing under the PPP government is progressively declining. Guyana has to import and increasing quantity of foodstuffs to feed itself.

All that the government can show for six years of misrule are two major roads, one of which — the Timehri-Mackenzie highway — was built for the strategic interests of the bauxite industry. The economy is more than ever dependent. The foreign owned and controlled bauxite and sugar industries continue to expand while the local productive sector declines or stagnates.

The PNC government covers up the unhealthy state of Guyana's economy by referring to the increase in the gross domestic product. What is not brought out is the distribution of the GDP and the fact that because the economy is foreign-based, most earnings go outside of the country in the form of dividends, interest and service charges.

Guyana's development has been more apparent than real. Even Dr. Wilfred David, the economic adviser to the PNC government, recently wrote: "We have had growth without development. This problem has been exemplified by a high level of unemployment and foreign dependency."

Trinidad has recently demonstrated that apparent growth and the highest national income per head of population for the area are not synonymous with development and wellbeing. Seething mass discontent eventually erupted in revolt.

Guyana is heading in the same direction. For the people today, the reality is a vicious circle of poverty. Mass unemployment is aggravated by a soaring cost of living which will worsen. Increasing debt charges coupled with bribery, corruption and squandermania will mean more taxation and/or cuts in social services. This will result in more discontent which will be met not only by rigged central and local government elections, but also by more propaganda and a bigger and bigger police and military trampling on the rights of the people.

While trampling on popular rights, the PNC neo-fascist regime reassures the people that under the cooperative republic and the new 10-year development plan, "the small man will become the real man." But the new D-Plan will die the same premature death as the last 7-year plan because the strategic objectives are the same. The only difference in that Dr. Wilfred David and Canadian advisers will replace Sir Arthur Lewis and US and West German advisers.

Economic planning will have meaning for the Guyanese people only when a new team with new ideas for revolutionary changes is put power.

EFFECTS ON THE PEOPLE

The PNC government's bankrupt economic policies are having disastrous effects on the broad masses of the Guyanese population. The burden of mismanagement, corruption, squandermania, jobs for the boys, bribery and nepotism falls heavily on wide sections of the people, but most heavily on the workers, the farmers, and the unemployed.

The bulk of the working class can hardly eke out an existence on their miserable wages. The rosy promises of \$5 to \$10 a day minimum wages have given way to a policy of wage-freeze combined with calls from government, capitalists, and right-wing labour bureaucrats to the workers, the producers of material values. Their standard of living is constantly falling by virtue of rising prices. And if the worker's succumb to the bourgeois propaganda of "class collaboration" their standards will drop even more.

Agriculture, which was on the upgrade during the PPP period in the government, has been put on a course of steady decline by the PNC. Although the PNC has changed its tune by giving verbal recognition to the role of agriculture and the importance of the farming community in Guyana, its practical policies have the effect of down-grading agriculture.

Farmers, generally speaking, are having a hard time of it under this regime. The small and medium scale farmers in particular — the vast majority of all farmers — are hardly compensated for the labour they and their families put in. They are merely eking out a bare existence. Growing numbers can hardly even subsist. The net balance of expenditure and income leaves many farmers in deficit, unable to pay rents to government, and other charges. For such farmers it is virtually impossible to make heavier outlays to improve their farming, the quality and quantity of their crops. But the government, unconcerned for the well-being of poor people, is bent on a policy of ruthless elimination of small producers who cannot meet up with higher expenditures. This is having a disastrous effect not only on the poor farmers and their families, but also on the economy as a whole.

The deliberate cutting down on prices paid for rice, the alteration of grades, removal of many subsidies, etc., have all had the effect of bringing impoverishment to more and more farmers. Provision and other farmers find themselves in the same predicament.

The end result of these policies and the present trend toward the development at large farms run on capitalist lines will be the reduction of Guyana, like many Latin American countries, to a net importer of foods.

The spiralling cost of living is a heavy burden on the people. High rents and constantly rising food prices eat heavily into family budgets. The recently introduced National Insurance Scheme (NIS) imposed another burden on workers' pay packets without the reward of adequate

social benefits. The unemployed, large numbers of underemployed and lower-income people lead a precarious existence.

Many small businesses are also feeling the effects. Sales of items which the masses generally purchase have been falling. This is a reflection of the lowered purchasing power of the people. Many complain now that business was never this bad when the PPP was in office.

Large numbers of professionals, technically trained personnel, and other intellectuals are becoming more and more frustrated because of nepotism and discrimination in appointments and promotion. Many of them are seeking their fortunes abroad. By a policy of bribery and "jobs for the boys" the regime is trying to buy off some intellectuals. But there are others who resent such practices which often result in square pegs being put into round holes.

Students and youth are another casualty of this government's policies. Many with GCE qualifications cannot find employment, while political and racial discrimination favours those with lesser qualifications. Unemployment, high as it is generally, is higher among the young people who are leaving school in increasing numbers. Many of Guyana most enterprising and energetic young men and women have left and are continuing to leave for foreign countries, not only to study but to seek work. Our underdeveloped country cannot afford the luxury of such waste.

Never before have such large numbers of Guyanese sought to emigrate. Fear of the future in Guyana along with high unemployment and lack of opportunities are the main factors. And while so many Guyanese are leaving or seeking to leave, the government is pursuing a big publicity campaign to try to encourage people from the Commonwealth Caribbean to come to Guyana to settle. A more lop-sided policy could hardly be imagined, unless one takes account of the PNC's political motives.

Squandermania, neo-colonial economic policies and the build-up of a top-heavy bureaucracy leave very little for the social service. The much-touted National Insurance Scheme falls far short of the real needs of the masses. The pensionable age of 65 is unrealistic and will benefit few workers in Guyana. The health services have deteriorated to such an extent that only those who can afford to pay can normally expect proper care and treatment.

All the social ills of the society are being aggravated in this period. Rising dissatisfaction and complaints are characteristic of most people's political expression. Strikes by workers are at a relatively high level.

Nevertheless, the PNC regime has managed by election rigging to thwart the true expression of the majority's disapproval of the government. Guyana has a government with minority support among the population. But because the ruling party controls the whole election apparatus — from registration of voters to counting of the votes — it is determined to hold on to power regardless of its diminishing popularity and actual support. The smaller the number of people supporting the PNC the larger the number of votes it gives itself, through the by now well-known means of extensive proxy voting, padding of the electoral list with non-existent voters, striking out of non-supporters' names from the list, voting for the dead, tampering with ballot boxes and overseas voting in the case of the national elections.

The first phase of local government elections for municipal and district councils proved again that the PNC rulers are not prepared to hold fair elections in Guyana. These local elections were rigged more thoroughly than the 1968 general election, even with the absence of overseas votes. It is an indication that the PNC will rig all the other areas also to present a false image of electoral support. Open intimidation of candidates to withdraw from the lists of the opposition PPP and UF was added to the bag of electoral fraud.

The PNC government is steadily moving to suppress all other political freedoms to try to stifle all dissent. This is being carried through step by step. Civil liberties are being effectively removed under the cover of an outwardly "democratic" system. The outward trappings of democracy, including "elections", are being retained, but in essence a dictatorship is being built up — the dictatorship of a small elite preying upon racial prejudice and enriching itself at the expense of the masses, while serving imperialism.

The situation developing in Guyana sets the immediate tasks of the day. The PPP considers that the workers and farmers, other working people and all those affected by the pro-imperialist, anti-democratic, anti-working class policies of the government must be mobilized to offer effective opposition to these policies. They must more clearly understand the reasons for their problems and the ways to solve them. The broad masses must become conscious of their strength in order to use that strength to struggle for better conditions, higher wages, higher prices for farm products, more opportunities for education, better health standards, jobs for the jobless, appointment and promotion on the basis of merit. They must be made aware of the danger of a one-party minority dictatorship, and be prepared to fight in defence of democratic rights.

Many fronts of struggle are developing and becoming sharper. The PPP will work more energetically among the people, helping to develop their understanding, consciousness, unity and struggle in defence of their rights and well-being.

NEW GIMMICKS

The PNC is relying not only on open electoral fraud and the apparatus of repression. It is dishing out new gimmicks, one after the other. The ruling elite are aware of the worsening conditions of the masses, including its own supporters. It is therefore concerned to retain such support through propaganda techniques which hold out some hope to those who want to believe in the PNC, even though they can see and feel that things are getting worse.

Such slogans as "hold on, things will change", "eat less, sleep less, work harder" have outlived their usefulness. Free cassava bread and milk have not materialised. PNC supporters also want tangible benefits. Many have been growing restless. Furthermore, the UF can no longer be blamed for the lack of progress for the rank-and-file PNC supporters. The PNC rulers cannot and will not move in an anti-imperialist direction to carry out the policies that can bring real benefits for the working masses. They are bound to their imperialist masters.

In such a situation, they are striving to find alternatives with which to fool their supporters, but which do not in any real sense threaten the positions of the imperialist monopolies and their interests.

The gimmick of the "Cooperative Republic" is being zealously pushed by the government's entire propaganda machinery to dazzle its supporters with the prospect of a bright future for the "small man". The cooperative is claimed to be the means for achieving socialism in Guyana. The fact that the PNC is now giving lip service to socialism is itself an indication that openly reactionary policies cannot find favour with the Guyanese working class.

Actually, while playing with progressive terminology, the regime is seeking to head off the mass struggle for genuine economic independence and socialism. "Cooperative socialism" is in fact akin to the "national socialism" of Hitlerite Germany. The regime is supported by imperialism and big business, and demagoguery about the "small man" becoming a "real man" is used to give the PNC rulers a popular base. It is quite obvious — from what has taken place so far — that the assault is not against the main enemy of the Guyanese people — imperialism and its foreign monopolies. It is directed rather against the scapegoats — small local business. Racism is a powerful plank in the "cooperative" approach of the PNC, and attests to the bankruptcy of its policies. Under the umbrella of the cooperative, a few, including some in high places, are enriching themselves at the expense of the masses. It is significant that the big capitalists and imperialists are not at all worried "cooperative socialism". They applaud the tomfoolery.

The PPP is interested in genuine working people's cooperatives. These can assist the people to a certain extent, if they are properly run and are free from corruption. They can also be a training ground for working people to learn to manage and administer the country's economy which is what they — not bureaucrats — will have to do in the socialist society envisaged. But the PPP is totally opposed to misleading the workers with the false idea that the cooperative sector will ultimately and painlessly, without class struggle, become the dominant sector in the economy, while the commanding heights are left in foreign, private hands. The PPP regards this

idea as an attempt to divert the working class from the class struggle and from the anti-imperialist struggle. The PNC offers economic independence without struggle against imperialist interests, and social justice without class struggle. These false ideas must be exposed. Experience itself will help this exposure. The party has to show the people that nationalisation, with workers' control of the "commanding heights" of the economy — the foreign, imperialist-owned sectors — is a must, first for winning economic independence and then for constructing a socialist society. Only then will all the useful producers come into their own, wielding both political and economic power.

The cumulative effect of the PPP's work of condemnation and exposure of imperialist exploitation, together with international pressures, and now even with discontent within the ranks of the PNC, has caused the PNC leaders to resort to mouthing pseudo-progressive, pseudo-anti-imperialist sentiments. For example, the last conference of heads of Commonwealth Caribbean governments, held under the auspices of their imperialist masters, spoke of national ownership of the commanding heights of the economy. Fair words! But in terms of practical implementation, the Guyanese people are told about "meaningful participation", "51 percent government ownership" in certain undertakings. On the surface, all this appears to be orientation in the right direction.

In fact, it is nothing revolutionary — even if it is pursued consistently. The imperialists themselves have been putting forward such schemes to their puppets. The 51 percent formula has been tried elsewhere, as in Mexico. And yet, the imperialists dominate, extract their profits, while the living conditions of the masses get worse and only a few manage to get richer. This is the new imperialist strategy. It is not a case of the Guyana government putting pressure on the imperialists and getting concessions. Rather, the imperialists are prepared to offer such "concessions" — ever a period of years. And the PNC government is made to appear "revolutionary" by "demanding" them from willing masters. The only revolutionary strategy is to bring the vital economic sectors under 100 percent social ownership.

The PNC leaders have been assiduously creating the illusion among some of their supporters — particularly among the youth of the YSM — that they are moving stealthily, imperceptibly towards socialism. Some members of the YSM are convinced of this. The argument runs like this: The PPP went about things too openly and rashly. The PPP was not diplomatic enough when in the government, and broadcast to the imperialists beforehand what it intended to do. So the PPP was ousted. The Burnham government, on the other hand, is moving cleverly against the imperialists to build a peculiarly Guyanese brand of socialism. The imperialists will suddenly wake up one day and find that they no longer have economic power. The clever Burnham will have won without a struggle.

There is need for consistent struggle against bourgeois (capitalist) reformism. The PPP fights for reforms, but is against reformism which restricts itself to reforms within capitalism and does not basically change the capitalist system. Reformism keeps workers tied to capitalist politics and capitalist exploitation, whereas our fight for reforms is an integral part of a radical reconstruction of society through a socialist revolution.

The situation in Guyana calls for radical, revolutionary change. More and more people are coming to realise this. The things the PPP said several years ago such as the bankruptcy of the Puerto Rican "Bootstrap" model of economic planning are suddenly coming home to them as true. Workers, students, intellectuals of a left frame of mind are moving over to accept some of the concepts which they were reluctant to accept only recently. Thus, the ruling party finds it increasingly necessary to play with revolutionary sounding slogans — cultural revolution, etc. All these changes are on the surface. The essence remains the same — characterised by neo-colonialism, subservience to imperialism, and attacks upon the living standards of the working people.

The working class supporters of the PNC are being fooled into believing that they have political power and that it is only economic power that is left for them to acquire. In reality they do not yet have political power. With the blessings of imperialism, a petty-bourgeois, intellectual elite is entrenching itself on the backs of the working masses under the guise of "revolu-

tionary” slogans. The word “revolution” itself is gaining currency in the mouths of the puppets — the “green revolution”, “cultural revolution” — but only to divert the working class from the real struggle for emancipation.

They talk glibly of psychological changes, of getting rid of the colonial mentality. But the new elite is afraid of the real thing, afraid of genuine social revolution. Having been placed into position by imperialism, they are fearful of the “small man” (working class) becoming a “real man” (coming to power) and are determined to prevent this, because their privileges and acquired way of life could not fit in with the new society. So they are prepared to sit tight at the top — or near the top — and to divert the working-class revolution into “safe channels”, safe for them and for the imperialists.

This accounts for the fact that although the youth section of the PNC is styled Young Socialist Movement, there is absolutely no socialist education of the youth. They are fed on airy-fairy substitutes. They are instilled with a brand of “national socialism”, a la Hitler, with its racial bigotry and position seeking.

Instead of imparting sound social knowledge and training minds, the PNC misuses education for socially evil purposes — to condition minds to the requirements of imperialism, to reconcile all Guyanese to continued exploitation.

Our party, on the other hand, will lay greater emphasis on education because it is necessary for all workers — skilled and unskilled, employed and unemployed, of brain and brawn, in the field, mines, factories, office, schools, stores, hospitals, and all other industries and services in the land — to know what is wrong with capitalism and imperialism before they can be got rid of, and also to know what real socialism is before they can build it.

GUYANA NEEDS NEW POLICY

The problems confronting the Guyanese people are many. The imperialists and their spokesmen pose the problems of underdevelopment and poverty as one of shortages of capital and skill. The puppets talk of utilising our own resources and call on the people to make more sacrifices, while they live it up in luxury and show.

But it is imperialist domination of Guyana’s economy and politics that must first be ended. Without achieving this, there can be no real progress; there can be no opening up of the path of constructing a just, democratic, socialist Guyana. For the PPP, the struggle against the imperialist stranglehold and against those who support and prop up imperialist interests takes priority at this stage.

The PPP’s programme calls for:

- a) Nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy — foreign and local “comprador”, capitalist owned and controlled factories, mines, plantations, banks, insurance companies, and foreign trade.
- b) Strict system of foreign exchange control.
- c) Emphasis on simultaneous industrial and agricultural development, mainly in the public and cooperative sectors.
- d) Effective rent and price controls.
- e) Land reform.
- f) Trade with, and aid from, countries in both East and West.
- g) Full democracy and workers’ participation and control at all levels.

This programme meets the needs of the overwhelming majority of the Guyanese people.

Workers, farmers, students, intellectuals, local businessmen — all can rally around such a basically anti-imperialist, democratic programme. Mass support is needed to carry through such a programme. It is the task of the PPP to work towards building up a climate within which this programme will find not only acceptance but will be seen as a matter of urgency by the broad masses.

The PNC rank and file and followers, in particular, must be helped to see the solution in such terms. Their leaders encourage them to believe that their enemy is the PPP. We must show them that the main enemy of the Guyanese nation is imperialism, and utilise the newly awakening appreciation of imperialism to drive home the truth that imperialist domination and exploitation harms us all, regardless of race or religion.

Our own members and supporters who, generally speaking, accept this anti-imperialist, democratic programme, must not be neglected. They, too, must fully understand it, in order to champion it consciously, and not respond to PNC-inspired racism and discrimination by seeing the main enemy as PNC supporters, thus losing sight of the chief culprit — imperialism.

Means will have to be found to bring the PPP's programme to the most diverse elements in the population.

The struggle for democracy is fast becoming one of the major battle-fronts in Guyana. Fearful of an anti-imperialist programme gaining acceptance by the masses, the agents of imperialism in Guyana will resort to even more dictatorial measures. The fight for elementary democracy, therefore, becomes part and parcel of the anti-imperialist struggle, and for the true interests of the Guyanese nation.

So far as allies in this struggle are concerned, the PPP states its position clearly. We welcome all who are prepared to struggle against imperialism and its puppets. The PPP makes no ideological preconditions and does not ask for ideological concessions for unanimity from those so prepared to conduct the national liberation struggle.

The situation facing the broad democratic movement in Guyana is grave. It calls for resolute united action on the part of all who cherish democracy and freedom. Let all such persons and groups mobilise against the common enemy now. Let not ideological differences pose barriers in the way of united action. The enemy — imperialism and its Guyanese agents — is strong, cunning and ruthless. But he can be defeated.

WORKING CLASS UNITY

Working class unity remains the key question in the struggle for national and social liberation, that is, for genuine independence and socialism.

Conditions in Guyana are such that the national liberation struggle cannot be led by any other class, certainly not by the local bourgeoisie (capitalist class). In alliance with the peasantry, the working class must strive to lead, and draw in all other sections such as the patriotic intellectuals, students and small business people.

Leadership by the working class of the democratic, anti-imperialist struggle will make the transition to socialism that much easier and secure.

In order to lead, the workers, or the doers, or the producers of wealth, must be united and class conscious.

What is meant by working class unity? And how can working class unity come about amidst the pressures of racial emotionalism?

The idea of working class unity does not mean that every single worker will be united under one banner. This will never happen. What is meant is that a considerable proportion of the working class in town and country should be won over to the ideas of struggle for their immediate, short-term interests — better wages and conditions of work — so they could be mobilised for the struggle for their ultimate aim — socialism.

Among the working class, there will be found many backward elements, apathetic to the struggle. There can be expected another section whose consciousness is at a level where they will not move into action by themselves, unless urged by the more conscious workers. It is these latter, say one-third, of the working class that constitutes the vanguard, the most class-conscious section. Thus it would be wrong to see the entire working class as a single mass, and to expect the same level of conscious activity and response from all. But in terms of developing the class struggle to its highest level, it is essential to have the active support of at least the top one-third of the working class.

In our country the fight for working class unity is hampered not only by ideological factors. It is rendered immensely difficult by virtue of racial division and antagonism engineered and maintained by imperialism and its puppets. There is no point in minimising the problem. Neither is there reason to exaggerate the problem to the point of hopelessness. The difficulties are there, but they must be faced and tackled.

Specifically, then, the task is to win over broad sections of present-day PNC supporters among the industrial working class and to radicalise their thinking along the lines of the democratic, anti-imperialist programme of the PPP.

The PPP draws strong support from the workers in the sugar industry — both politically and in the trade union field. However, in industry in the city and elsewhere, including transport, the PNC can still claim political support. It is in these areas, therefore, that much has to be done to build support for the anti-imperialist of the PPP and its class approach to socialism.

The demagogic and pseudo-socialist propaganda of the PNC leaders, combined with racist orientation, has up to now prevented most of these workers from becoming conscious of their real interests. Nevertheless, life has shown already that the economic interests of the workers are powerful factors working against emotional allegiance to the PNC government. Time after time, the ruling bureaucracy has been hard put to stifle or smooth over manifestations of the class struggle among workers in Mackenzie, Kwakwani, Georgetown; among bauxite workers, transport workers, government employees, etc.

Although racial feelings still run high, economic pressures and the class struggle are asserting themselves more and more. Experience has shown that Indian and African workers can come together to wage joint struggles in defence of their rights. And such struggles usually end in victory for the united workers. The strike of sugar workers at Rose Hall, Canje, can be cited as such an example of victorious united action.

African workers have everything in common with Indian workers, and vice versa. Both, as well as the workers of all other ethnic groups, are members of the working class, regardless of their colour differences, and regardless of the prejudices that have been aroused in them by the divisive tactics of imperialism and its political agents. Recognising this fact, and also the fact of the class struggle (which the fraudulent socialist and labour organisations in Guyana reject) would be a major step towards social transformation.

Unity does not grow automatically. It is true that objective conditions — deteriorating living standards, wage freeze, anti-working class legislation, etc., create the opportunities for building unity and understanding. But a determined struggle has to be waged, persistently, and at all levels to secure the realisation of such understanding and united action.

Consequently, the PPP will exert much greater effort to inculcate in its cadres in the first place the necessity to see the solutions of this problem of working class unity as a matter of the greatest priority.

Greater attention needs to be placed on our work in the industrial, trade union front. It is at the workplace that the worker comes face to face with the power of capital, and it is here that the class struggle assumes sharpness. Cadres and party members have to be trained to do organisational, propaganda, and political work among the workers at the point where exploitation is the greatest, where the class struggle is the sharpest, at the moment. Not only is it necessary to expose exploitation by the capitalist bosses. It is also necessary to develop the political consciousness of the workers so that they can see that the PNC government is part and parcel of the machinery of exploitation and oppression.

How can working class unity be built up? There is no short cut, no simple solution. Techniques and methods of work must be improved. But a lot of it depends on the extent to which the party's activists are convinced that such unity can be forged and that it is worthwhile and necessary to work patiently towards that aim. If some of our Indo-Guyanese cadres vacillate theoretically and give way to moods of despair at ever winning such unity, or to emotional and racial sentiments as a reaction to PNC and ASCRIA racism and discrimination, this will set back our cause.

This is a serious danger which the party must contend with at all times, and patiently try to combat by inculcating the class approach. Indian racist groups have already arisen, and the imperialists will continue to use such groups and persons more openly as time goes by, with a view to diverting the Indian working people into the blind alley of racial solutions to Guyana's problems. What is more, the activities of the PNC leadership lend credibility to those who demagogically "champion" the cause of the "Indian people".

Working class understanding and unity will come not merely from lecturing and propaganda. It will develop out of united struggles for the workers' interests. The PPP must be seen and felt at all levels as the genuine champion of the working people's cause. Unity in the course of struggle is what the party aims at. Wherever the working people are threatened, there the PPP, through its active members, will stand and fight alongside the people, regardless of race, religion, or political allegiance.

THE PARTY

The PPP has served the Guyanese people well. It played the leading role in the struggle for independence. It awakened the masses to the need for radical changes and to the possibility of such changes. It brought political awareness to the people and gave a sense of purpose in the political struggle. It has always championed the causes of the workers and farmers from whom it has drawn strength and earned the people's confidence.

Today, the party is called upon to bear even greater responsibility and to give more effective leadership to the masses in the struggle for democracy, national liberation and socialism.

The party is the key to the development of the mass movement against imperialism and its puppets today and for a bright socialist future tomorrow. There can be no guarantee of a people's victory without the vanguard role — organisationally, ideologically, politically — of the party. The recent experience of Trinidad bears testimony to this central fact of political life. With a strong, militant party of the working people, the result of the anti-imperialist movement in Trinidad might have been much different.

The loose, mass party has served its purpose. It grew up in the historical conditions of the time mainly as an electioneering party. The conditions of the struggle today and in the future demand a more effective vanguard such as can be provided only by a Marxist-Leninist party.

The main elements of such a party are made up of Marxist-Leninist ideology, democratic centralism in party life and work, an experienced body of cadres closely linked with the people and their struggle.

Last year's Special Conference affirmed the need to transform the party into a disciplined Marxist-Leninist party. That Conference also took certain decisions with a view to restructuring the party. These changes are for the first time being implemented at this Congress.

The task is by no means an easy one. We are not starting from scratch to form a Marxist party. We have the heritage and burdens of old methods of work, of diverse outlooks to contend with. And the process of transformation does not consist merely in proclaiming this transformation, nor even in making structural changes. These can be regarded as necessary prerequisites, but cannot be looked upon as the essence of transformation. To build up a militant, disciplined, revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party is a painstaking process of ideological work, development of cadres in the course of struggle, promotion of cadres to leading positions, and instilling in the membership the rudiments of working class ideology and methods of party work.

The scientific, revolutionary theory of Marxism-Leninism is acknowledged as the guiding ideology of the party. In the context of the present efforts at transforming the party, this theory must be spread through all levels of the party, from top to bottom. Ideological work is of prime importance at this stage in particular. The party's ideological training apparatus has to be developed at all costs. The existing centres and methods include courses at Accabre College, district weekly classes, area seminars and day schools. While present methods have produced some positive results, it is necessary to develop new means and methods for cadre training,

and to find the most suitable ways of combining party educational training with practical political activity.

The occasion of the Lenin Centenary has been utilised for popularising the ideas of Marxism-Leninism, and particularly for developing ideological study within the party. And this drive is continuing throughout the year 1970. It is a fact that the Lenin Centenary has heightened interest among many party members in scientific socialism. This interest must be kept up and intensified, even after the Lenin year, and on a permanent basis.

At the same time, it must be acknowledged that there are still too few comrades attending party classes and study circles, or devoting time to home study. There is still too much lip service being paid to theory. This attitude springs no doubt from an underestimation of theoretical understanding among our members. Of particular importance is the need for the party leadership at all levels — executive, regional, constituency, group, members of parliament, members of local authorities, committees, and other organisations — to persistently undertake the study Marxism-Leninism and to apply these teachings in the course of their practical work. Congress directs with all its authority that such comrades, including Congress delegates, should try to find time — despite pressures of day-to-day activities — for personal reading and study of the treasury of Marxism-Leninism, the ideological weapon of the working class.

The party is a voluntary association of the most politically developed and class-conscious persons, uniting their energies, will, resources, and knowledge to educate, organise, unite and lead the people to political power and social transformation. As such, there is no room for self-seeking; there are no material rewards to gain by being a member of the party; there is only the satisfaction of knowing that energy is being expended in creating something worthwhile — a better, more humane and social order.

The party is not a social club or mutual benefit society which one joins in the expectation of personal benefit. It is an organisation for struggle, united in thought and action. It fights not for its own interests or for the personal benefit of its members, but for the benefit of the Guyanese working people which corresponds to the interests of the whole society. The PPP has no special interest to serve, no particular axe to grind other than that of the Guyanese nation.

The principles of democratic centralism are the means for achieving unity of thought and action. Freedom of discussion in decision-making at all-levels, the right to criticise and be criticised in the interest of the party and in a comradely, constructive spirit; the democratic right of members to elect all constituent bodies of the party and to have such bodies report back to the members — these are properly combined with centralised, collective leadership and majority decision. To be effective and to avoid mistakes, these basic principles of democratic centralism must be thoroughly applied within the party. Leaders and rank-and-file members must strive constantly and consciously to honour these principles.

The party achieves its leading position not merely by proclaiming itself the vanguard. It must be recognised by the masses as the vanguard. The party's effectiveness is tested not just by its pronouncements but by action, by the work of its active members among the people, championing their interest and exposing the misleaders, in the trade unions, among the farmers and in their organisations, among the students, women, youth, and in other organisations and sections of the people. The prospects of party growth will be brighter if the party's activists link up the struggle for immediate demands with the socialist perspective.

The party, therefore, has to strengthen and guide the work of its active members in the mass organisations, championing the people's right wherever these are threatened.

Such work calls for a higher level of members, for greater consciousness and understanding, and for more suitable methods of work. The party will devote more attention to the training of such cadres. Means must be found to do this thoroughly and systematically, rather than leaving it to chance and general exhortations.

The party will have to work under conditions of increasing restrictions and persecution, as the PNC regime moves toward establishing a one-party dictatorship with a minority base among the people, serving the interest of reaction and imperialism, and buttressed by intimidation, bribery and corruption.

It is the PPP's work of enlightening and organising the masses that the PNC puppet rulers fear the most. Consequently, they are bent on destroying the party of the people. They wish to deprive the masses of the tribune, bastion, and leadership of the PPP. That is their aim, for as long as the PPP exists, it poses the danger of exposure of the nefarious, anti-national, anti-working class practices of the puppets.

The attack on the party can be expected to take many different forms and come from different directions — but all with the same purpose.

Open governmental restrictions on the party will be combined with intimidation of party supporters. Every effort will be made to demoralise supporters spreading the idea that the PPP is losing support, is finished, is dead, cannot come back, etc. And the deliberate rigging of elections at all levels is the plausible basis for such propaganda devices built up to the fullest by the massive propaganda media in the hands of the PNC government.

Subtle ways of psychological warfare will be practised. Agents and pseudo-supporters will be seeking to discredit the leadership of the party in various ways, in an attempt to divert the party from its course, and to make it collaborate with imperialism. Our members will have to learn to identify such attacks, to distinguish imperialist-inspired attacks to discredit the leadership from genuine criticism and self-criticism in the interests of improving the party's functioning and development.

A high degree of vigilance will be called for. Our members and supporters must be made aware of the wiles of the imperialists and their agents, of the plans and designs against the party. The members and supporters must be prepared for such manoeuvrings and machinations in order to become steeled against them.

Organisationally, the party has much to do to develop a well functioning body at all levels, capable of independent work, within the areas of responsibility.

Regional committees, constituency committees and group leadership have more and more to work out the functional approach to their work. This applies in particular to the regional and constituency bodies. These committees should not function only as collective bodies passively receiving reports from organisers, making recommendations, and so on. They need also, and mainly, to become the bodies for supervising, directing, and developing the overall work of the party within their respective spheres of operation. This includes the party's membership and fund raising drives propaganda and agitation, sales of the *Mirror*, *Thunder*, and other publications, educational work, training of cadres, work in the mass organisations or workers and farmers, of students, and so on.

Collective decision-making and leadership must be combined with individual responsibility for specific areas of work. This is tied up with the proper selection and training of suitable comrades for particular branches of work. Time and effort spent on such individual training will be well worthwhile in terms of the future. Largely because of the pressure of activities on many fronts, the party leadership finds time for personal attention to the training and guidance of leading activists. It is sometimes taken for granted that party activists, organisers, and so on, are fully trained and should be able to handle themselves effectively. The party leadership needs to give more time to the personal development and guidance of these comrades. While periodic conferences, seminars, and checking up meetings are valuable, the personal touch is needed.

The highest standing bodies of the party, that is, the General Council and the Executive Committee, are not excluded from some of the observations made with respect to the other committees. With the changes being implemented at this Congress, it is expected that these bodies too will improve their methods of work and will concentrate on the essential tasks.

Shortcomings with respect to the membership in the party and recruiting of new members are not always carried out systematically. This aspect has to be thoroughly reviewed. Quite often supporters who are not prepared to contribute to the work of the party are enrolled by virtue of paying a dollar as the membership dues for one year. For example, in house to house membership campaign, thoroughly conducted, and in areas of PPP support, many persons are found who contribute the membership fee but who subsequently never attend a party group

meeting. The question is whether such an approach is appropriate to the aim of developing a more disciplined Marxist-Leninist party.

The view is now being put forward within the party that a changed approach is needed to party membership. This view holds that only those who consciously appreciate the rights and duties of a party member and show a desire to participate in party activity, even of the lowest level, should be enrolled as members. Others who sympathise with the party and its aims, but who are unwilling to participate, should be asked to contribute, without necessarily feeling they have to hold a party card because of their financial contribution. They can buy the party literature and help in other ways if they so desire. At the same time, the party can increase its membership from time to time from this reservoir of sympathisers if correct work is carried on by the party group in the area. The result of this approach will be that the party will have a smaller but more active and cohesive membership, and at the same time not lose the contributions of its supporters.

The point is not just to reduce membership for the sake of having a smaller party as such. Rather, it is highly desirable to have as large a membership as possible, consistent with a high percentage of conscious, more active members. We must reckon with the fact that a mass membership of card-holders with very little or no ideological understanding and even with some backward ideas can also be a drag on the party's development. With a smaller, though sound, core of more or less active and class-conscious members in the party group, new members joining and attending the group meetings will have a better chance of being inspired and developed in the party spirit. It is at the group level that self-discipline has to be acquired in the case of most party members.

The party conducts its propaganda and education by means of the newspaper (*Mirror*), *Thunder*, special pamphlets and leaflets, and public meetings. Stepping up the sales of *Thunder* and *Mirror* is now a task of all activists. *Mirror* is the only daily paper in Guyana that consistently champions the cause of the broad masses of workers and farmers, of all people who are being squeezed by the policies and practices of the PNC regime. It alone, with the new quarterly *Thunder*, spreads understanding of the causes of the social evils facing the Guyanese people, and propagates the spirit of proletarian internationalism. These publications are a powerful weapon in the hands of the working people, helping them in their struggles for their immediate day-to-day interests and also pointing to the ultimate solution of socialism. It must be said, however, that the paper and journal are not reaching the widest public that they are capable of reaching. Steps have to be taken to correct this shortcoming.

The party's propaganda work needs to be improved. New means must be found to get the party's message and analysis across. Particularly important is to be able to reach the workers, especially during periods of heightened class struggle, at their work places, such as during strikes and periods of increased agitation on the specific problems they face. That is the time when workers are more receptive to socialist ideas, particularly if these ideas are linked with their own difficulties.

The question of party finance and fund-raising is an important one. The party of the working class is fulfilling political tasks. Money is required for carrying on its work. Raising funds is thus one of the political tasks of the party. But it should not become the main goal of party functionaries and activists. Some areas maintain a relatively high level of political activity but fall down on fund-raising, while others carry out a lot of fund-raising activities but lack political and educational work. The best combination is realised in those areas where high political and educational activity is accompanied by fruitful fund-raising.

Yet another side of this question is the need to husband the financial resources of the party. An adequate income from membership, donations and fund-raising programmes can easily be nullified by thoughtless and extravagant expenditure. Party functionaries have to give careful consideration to this aspect. This is not to be "penny wise and pound foolish". But sometimes hard-earned funds can be frittered away through the thoughtless attitude that "the party will find the money".

THE IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE

With the sharpening of the class struggle internationally and locally, the ideological struggle is assuming a greater importance. The ideological struggle is one of the forms of the working-class struggle. It has to be used to the fullest in order to defeat bourgeois ideology.

The imperialists and their spokesmen have very powerful and widespread means for disseminating their propaganda, for prejudicing the minds of the people, including the working class, against the progressive ideas of scientific socialism.

They make use of these means to dull the consciousness of the masses, to keep them in mental servitude. Despite the spread of literacy and education, the bourgeoisie and their agents try to keep the people politically illiterate. As the great leader of the revolutionary Vietnamese people, Ho Chi Minh, has said: "Ignorance is one of the chief mainstays of capitalism."

Never before has there been in Guyana such interest in scientific socialism, in Marxism-Leninism. The Lenin Centenary celebrations have contributed much to awakening this interest. International developments are also contributing to this process. The heroic fight of the Vietnamese people, the Cuban people's revolutionary victory and successes in the face of Yankee imperialism, the heightened role of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries in international affairs, the development of the national liberation movement in a number of countries and the experience of the necessity of having strong backing from the socialist world — all these have undoubtedly added lustre to the teachings of Marxism-Leninism in the minds of progressive-thinking Guyanese.

The PPP's constant efforts to propagate the ideas of scientific socialism have certainly contributed to this change in the ideological climate that is taking place.

More and more people are searching for solutions to the basic problems of Guyana, looking for a way out. But the imperialists and their agents are not asleep. They are always seeking ways to divert the masses and to trap the awakening intellectuals with false ideas. The main purpose of bourgeois ideology is to maintain the system of capitalism, to preserve the system whereby the majority are exploited by the minority.

The government tries strenuously to convince the workers that there is no need, now that they have a "small man's government", to struggle against the bosses, to strike. Strikes are frowned upon, and the PNC has been threatening to introduce legislation to effectively restrict the right to strike. The capitalists naturally applaud such "statesmanlike", "patriotic" behaviour. Workers are exhorted not to rock the boat, not to harm the national interest by unnecessary strikes.

But these points have had no tangible effect, because intensified exploitation has forced the workers to take industrial action to protect and improve their conditions.

Nevertheless, institutions like the Crichtlow Labour College constantly seek to impress on their trade union leaders that they must think not only of their own interests but also of the interests of the whole nation, meaning, of course, the interests of the imperialists and capitalists and their agents in the government.

Such ideas have to be countered. The workers have to be shown that the improvement of their wages and living conditions depends not on class collaboration but on the intensification of the class struggle, which includes strike action. Only thus will they be able to prevent a more rapid fall in their standard of living. They must be shown too that only with real working class power and socialism will exploitation come to an end.

Another aspect of bourgeois ideology directed at the workers is the theory that with increasing workers' participation in private industry (becoming shareholders) they too will become owners. There will thus be no need for class struggle. Class collaboration will lead painlessly to the transformation of capitalism into a new society which is neither bad old capitalism nor "bloody socialism".

The attractiveness of socialist ideas, and particularly of Marxism-Leninism, becomes greater with the development and successes of the countries of triumphant socialism. Guyanese, in various walks of life, are becoming conscious of these developments, in the fields of science,

culture, health, education, as shown by the growing prosperity of the people of socialist countries. The imperialist smoke-screen of lies and slander cannot entirely conceal this progress. And so they try to distort the picture of socialist achievements. While having to admit many of these achievements, they try to fool people by saying there is no “democracy” in the socialist countries. And since the Soviet Union is the decisive force in the anti-imperialist struggle, the propagandists of imperialism are busy propagating anti-Sovietism. Various methods are used — crude as well as refined and subtle.

For example, although maintaining the stock-in-trade slanders against the Soviet Union, the imperialists are turning their attention to the many young people who are now emerging into the area of revolutionary thought and action. For them, the anti-Soviet line takes a different slant: “The Soviet Union and the United States are coming close together — their systems are converging. The Soviet Union is no longer on the revolutionary path; it does not care about the national liberation struggles; it is cooperating with the American imperialists to dominate the world”, and so on.

The bourgeois attack on Marxism-Leninism takes different forms. Realising its power in the hands of the working class and progressive intellectuals, the upholders of bourgeois ideology deliberately set out to discredit Marxism. They do not necessarily say that Marx was wrong or that Lenin was mistaken. They begin by admitting that Marx’s criticism of capitalism was correct “in many respects” But that was the “old” capitalism. Modern capitalism is “reformed” capitalism, capitalism with a human conscience that respects human dignity and the worth of the individual. The capitalists are no longer exploiters, according to this theory. The worker, however, knows otherwise from his daily experience.

Then there is the other line peddled that Marxism-Leninism has had its usefulness for certain peoples in other areas of the world. But for Guyana it is a foreign ideology. Some progressive intellectuals honestly believe this. They avoid like the plague and open espousal of Marxism-Leninism, and tortuously try to find an alternative that can be dubbed a peculiarly “Guyanese ideology”. The PNC leaders deliberately foster such illusions.

And there is a very good reason for fostering such beliefs. This line is in keeping with the imperialist strategy of splitting away the national liberation movement in as many countries as possible from their natural allies, the world socialist system and the democratic working-class movement in the developed capitalist countries. A movement that tries to stand aside from these allies, that tries to go it alone, cannot escape from the imperialist orbit of domination and exploitation.

The experience we have had of Stokely Carmichael and the close embrace he received from the PNC and ASCRIA shows the extent to which imperialism is prepared to go to encourage even anti-imperialist and anti-White sentiments, provided those personalities or movements also spread distrust for the natural allies of the liberation movement — the Soviet Union and the “White” international working class.

The PPP stands for the closest unity of all the anti-imperialist and revolutionary forces in the world. The PPP is a firmly Guyanese party. It fights for the best interests of the Guyanese people. And it recognises that the interests of the Guyanese nation will best be served by combining patriotism with proletarian internationalism in the fight for democracy, freedom, and socialism. Artificially aroused nationalistic exclusiveness is harmful to the Guyanese cause. It merely plays into the hands of imperialism.

We recognise at the same time that there are persons in the community who are not supporters of imperialism, but who hold some of these views. We are prepared to have friendly discussion with such persons, to freely exchange opinions with them on the pressing needs of the time. We hold that certain differences in ideological positions are perhaps inevitable in our circumstances. But we should not wait to resolve those differences before embarking on action against imperialism and the rapidly emerging minority dictatorship. The PPP sets up no pre-requisites for unity of action.

At the same time the PPP strives to create unity in ideology within the party. Without ideological unity there can be no effective unity of action as a party. At the present stage in the

party's transformation, ideological unity is not created by directive or rule. We consider that a policy of patient ideological education and practical work among the members will bring about ideological unity.

Nevertheless, we state categorically that the party can make no compromises in its Marxist-Leninist ideology. In politics there is room for flexibility and compromises. But in ideology compromises are impermissible.

Opportunism, both of the right and the left variety, must be combated. When things are difficult, when the movement is undergoing difficult times, moods of frustration lead to tendencies within the party which seek for "quick" solutions. Such tendencies have their roots in petty-bourgeois vacillation, moving now to the right, then to the ultra-left, and vice-versa.

Right opportunism overestimates the strength of the enemy, gives up hope of ever defeating him, and seeks a way out by making compromises with him, being content with "reforms" which then become an end in itself. In terms of the concrete situation in Guyana, the issue centres on the racial question. Right opportunism overestimates the strength of racial factors as against economic and class factors. It does not see the situation dialectically in the process of change and development, but as something static and there for all time. So, in frustration, right opportunism reveals itself in the demand that the party should be prepared to make compromises with American imperialism in order to come to power or at least to share the government.

Such a course is out of the question. Should the PPP take that course, reverse its anti-imperialist socialist policy, it will be in no better position to help the people than the PNC is at the moment. It will be a betrayal of the people's interests. Furthermore, it is not possible, as some may believe, to fool the imperialists, to get into governmental position, and then switch to anti-imperialism and socialism. This is a naive or mischievous policy in terms of Guyana's position.

The same frustration gives rise, on the other hand, to revolutionary impatience. Some, particularly among the militant-minded youth, in the face of the frustrating experience of electoral fraud, the mockery of justice and democracy and of the essence of parliamentary process, give way to "ultra-revolutionary" moods, demanding quick action to solve all problems.

Such comrades underestimate the strength of racial feeling, do not properly appreciate the factors necessary for revolutionary changes, and particularly the need for greater working class unity. This attitude is adopted to a large extent because of political and ideological immaturity, and absence of deep practical experience in the political movement. Revolutionary policies cannot be based on such fleeting moods. Patient explanatory and educational work is necessary to correct such a tendency.

Such comrades also tend to dislike the everyday, routine, "simple" tasks that are necessary to develop the political consciousness of the people. They tend to look upon such work as useless, as not getting anywhere, not getting to grips with revolutionary transformation.

It must be pointed out that such tendencies toward deviationism both to the right and the ultra-left are nothing new or peculiar to our situation. The whole working class, revolutionary movement the world over has had and still has to contend with them. They, crop up anew at different places, but the essence is the same.

In their time, Marx and Engels wrote that Bakunin and his followers were inclined "to parade their impatience as a theoretical argument." In reality, they were engaged in "disorganising the revolution."

Both "right" and "ultra-left" tendencies must be combated at the same time. But the main danger within the movement at the present time springs from "right" opportunism. "Left" opportunism, in the majority of cases, can be more readily corrected by patient explanation and discussion. But right opportunism is more dangerous at the present time since it coincides with the imperialist plans to subvert and undermine the anti-imperialist drive and the struggle for socialism in Guyana.

The ideological battle is becoming fierce. The bourgeois and their helpmates are using every weapon in their ideological armoury to assault the ideas of scientific socialism. Our comrades

have to prepare themselves ideologically in order to give battle on this front and win. Our comrades must be able to distinguish the false "socialists" from the genuine socialists, and bourgeois ideology dressed up in socialist clothes from Marxism-Leninism. And there is only one way this can be done — by study combined with practical party work.

CONCLUSION

This Congress document presents, among other things, an analysis of Guyanese society; an exposure of the unpatriotic and treacherous role of the political and trade union agents of imperialism; and an outline of the main tasks of the party (now about to be placed on a firm Marxist basis) for the achievement of radical social change in this period of increasing capitalist reaction that may further degenerate into open fascism.

The present economic organisation of Guyana is rightly condemned. Even the ruling puppets of imperialism express some displeasure, but not with any revolutionary change in mind; only with the object of patching up the system by means of reforms in the hope of placating and thereby preserving their misled minority mass support.

The foregoing analysis emphasises the urgent need to get rid of capitalism and imperialism in Guyana, and to institute a better social order — socialism — more suited to human needs. Socialism is a logical development that cannot be halted if all working people possess a sound knowledge of the operation of the capitalist-imperialist system and of the means to eradicate the evils of that system. Such enlightenment is disseminated only by the PPP, which seeks not only to educate but also to unite and organise all workers for the revolutionary task of building a Socialist Republic of Guyana.

Capitalism is not the terminal stage of society, as imperialist propaganda asserts. Its permanence is attested to by the growth in strength and number of the states that have abandoned capitalism and advanced to a higher rung on the social ladder. Guyana, too, can make this advance, provided its working class — the agent of revolutionary change — is well organised and conscious of its interests and power. Our party continues to provide the political leadership and the organizational framework to bring about the transfer of power from the minority capitalist-imperialist class and its political hirelings to the Guyanese people.

The party stands unalterably for the complete dispossession of the imperialists. Only that would remove the source of their economic power, by virtue of which they exercise political power that is delegated — by means of electoral fraud — to Guyanese puppets who operate the economy in their interests.

Once the source of the economic power of the imperialists — the ownership of land, mines, factories, banks, other financial institutions, etc. — is transferred to the Guyanese people, the cause of exploitation, poverty, crime and countless other evils will be abolished.

Public or social ownership, in this context, does not mean nominal ownership by the people. It means control and administration of the industries and services by the people actually engaged in them.

This document also emphasises the great need for more education of all workers from the manual labourer to the intellectual and professional worker, in their own class interests, and also the need for self-enforced discipline. The latter, however, is an essential concomitant of class consciousness.

Genuine trade unions are the places where all workers — Africans, Indians, and others — can unite and become conscious of their working-class status rather than of their race or imagined social status. Nearly all of the existing unions, with their phoney leaders, reject the fact of the class struggle as have the AFL-CIO and the British TUC). They therefore fail to develop the required unity and class-consciousness to make workers intelligently concerned about their collective welfare in the same way as the capitalists are. (One never finds race, religion, or even nationality dividing the capitalist class).

Even though they reject the class struggle and are subservient to capitalism and imperialism, the fraudulent unions, no matter how corrupt, would not exist unless there was a class

struggle. Acting as middlemen in the continuing and sharpening struggle, the "labour" bosses undersell the workers' labour power, deny them real social knowledge by polluting their minds (as at Critchlow Labour College and elsewhere), sell their votes to capitalist and fake socialist politicians and parties, and betray them in numerous other ways. In order to escape from the exploiters' trap and be free to accomplish the socialist reconstruction of Guyana, enslaved workers must repudiate their false leaders and organise themselves into genuine unions.

This party does not believe that "Black power" "Indian power" or any other inadequate concept is capable of solving the manifold problems of the Guyanese working people. Its major concern is with class, with the abolition of class-divided society. Real socialists want workers' power, the power of black, brown, white and all other workers, united and organised, firstly, for political action to outlaw capitalism and authorise the building of socialism; and, secondly, for industrial action to take hold, administer and operate all industries and services vital to their national welfare.

The achievement of these goals depends in continued agitation, education and organisation, which the PPP is pledged to carry out. The working class must be united on both the political and industrial fields, with a firm determination to work for the socialist transformation of Guyana. Such determination will come from knowledge of Marxian economics derived from genuine socialist sources, and from an understanding of the socialist solution of the class struggle, which rejects the false theory of the "brotherhood of capital and labour".

Capitalists and imperialists are ever mindful of the class struggle, the termination of which can only result in their undoing. They, however, attempt to keep this fact secret, while instinctively acting upon their recognition of the class struggle. That is why this criminal minority class spends millions every year to bribe and corrupt, to plan and execute subversion and violence, whenever and wherever their selfish interests are threatened. The PPP is convinced that when all workers recognise, as their exploiters do, the fact of the class struggle (which is over the division of their product), they will truly understand what capitalism is. They will then speedily rid their unions, which are spontaneous outgrowths of the class struggle between capitalists and workers, of the pro-capitalist leaders and parasites and convert their organisations into genuine instruments for social change.

The principles and implications of the class struggle enunciated by Marx, Engels and Lenin are the unfailing guide of the party in all its tactical and policy decisions. No compromise for temporary or transient gain is ever permitted. The class struggle will only end when the felon minority class is outlawed by the political action of a united and enlightened working class.

Only then will the false image, projected by capitalist propaganda, of a united society without antagonistic classes or conflicting class interests, become real; only then will the vast majority of useful producers (from the common labourer to the intellectual and professional,) economically organised as workers, be able to take bold of all they produce; only then will the socialist society of peace, freedom, and abundance for all be realised in Guyana.

This is the goal toward which the PPP dedicates its service. There is none greater that is worth striving for on this planet, either by the Guyanese people, or by all mankind.

Long live the PPP!

-6-

The Seventeenth Congress

Report of the Central Committee to the 17th Congress,
delivered by Dr. Cheddi Jagan, General Secretary of
the PPP — No. 64 Village, Corentyne, Berbice,
September 2-3, 1972

Comrades,

In the name of our great Party, I bring you, delegates, observers and special invited guests, greetings.

Since our last Congress, there have been many significant developments, international, regional and national.

In the international field, there were such outstanding events as the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of Soviet Union with its bold perspectives for consolidating socialism and laying the foundations for communism; further steps towards détente in Europe by the ratification of the USSR-German and Polish-German treaties, the treaty between the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and the Federal German Republic (FDR), and the Berlin settlement, which brought recognition of the GDR as a state; the accord between Moscow and Washington; the limited agreement on strategic arms control; the approaching possibility of a European Security Conference; the 20-year Treaty of Friendship between the Soviet Union and India; the liberation of Bangladesh from Pakistan and the withdrawal of Pakistan from SEATO; the failure of "Vietnamisation" and the desperate gamble by US imperialism in its mass bombing of North Vietnam and the mining of its harbours and waterways; the growing strength of the liberation struggles in Africa, the Middle East and Latin America; the anti-imperialist successes in Chile and Peru, and the breach in the US blockade of Cuba; the isolation of the imperialists and the seating of People's China at the United Nations; the release of Angela Davis; the winning of the Democratic Party nomination by Senator George McGovern, a definite victory for the democratic and popular forces against the "hawkish" party machine; the support given by the World Council of Churches to the Vietnamese and African liberation movements; the aid of the social-democratic governments of Sweden and Finland to the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam; the withdrawal of Italy from the imperialist "Mombassa" scheme in Africa; the seating of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam and the Royal Government of the National Union of Cambodia at the meeting of Foreign Ministers of non-aligned states in August 1972; the expulsion of Rhodesia from the Olympic games.

All of these positive developments have been marred by setbacks in the Sudan and Bolivia. In sum, they represent a definite advance in favour of socialism, national liberation and democracy.

They are bringing to an end the "big-stick" methods and blatant Cold War practices initiated by Anglo-American imperialism at the end of World War II. They sound the death-knell of imperialism.

We can proudly say that what we stand for is winning out. Victory is on our side!

The policy of "containment of communism", of brinkmanship and pre-emptive warfare, of liberation of the so-called "captive states" in Eastern Europe under the Truman doctrine has failed.

The Hallstein doctrine of the Federal Republic of Germany based on the non-recognition of the GDR and all States which recognise it, and the non-recognition of the post-war boundaries between the USSR and FRG, and Poland and the FRG, stands in ruin. It was the excuse for the militarization of West Germany as the main prop of the western alliance, and a source for propaganda, subversion and friction directed against the European socialist states.

With the Berlin settlement and the signing of the Soviet-German and the Polish-German treaties, there is beginning a new chapter in East-West relations. Not only will tensions ease. Conditions are also being created for the West European states to assert their independence against US domination.

The tense situation in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent was resolved with the help of the Soviet Union. In December 1970, the Yayha Khan military regime of Pakistan, then a member of both the South-East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO) and the Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO), refused to respect the verdict of the ballot box. To have accepted the decisive victory of Mujib Rahaman's Awami League was to recognise Pakistan as a pro-democratic, anti-imperialist, pro-socialist, non-aligned state, out of the control of the western Cold War alliance. Faced with this dilemma, the imperialists and their puppets answered in their accustomed manner — force, the slaughter of over half a million people, and the military occupation and martial rule of Bangladesh. Millions of refugees on Indian soil would have created grave social, economic and political problems for the progressive government of Indira Gandhi. Positive action by the Indian government not only resolved a potential crisis but also brought about the liberation of Bangladesh.

In this effort, India was largely helped by the Soviet Union with the 20-year Treaty of Friendship, the presence of the Soviet fleet in the Indian Ocean, and the Soviet veto in the UN Security Council. Had the Soviet Union not used the veto, it is quite possible that India, like the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in 1951, would have been branded an aggressor and US troops under the umbrella of the United Nations would have intervened in the guise of neutrality, but in reality to help Pakistan to maintain the status quo.

Socialist Cuba with its clear-cut, dynamic and uncompromising stand on Vietnam and other issues of liberation was a beacon of light cutting through the fog of imperialist manoeuvre, semantics and demagogy at the non-aligned Conference of Foreign Ministers.

Her lead, supported by other progressive states, forced the Conference into seating the Royal Government of the National Union of Cambodia led by Prince Sihanouk, and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam. Long live the Cuban revolution!

The decision was revolutionary, a move away from a mere legalistic to a more fundamental approach in international relations. Ideologically, it was a step forward — a recognition of the fundamental question of the content of sovereignty rather than the general principles which govern state relations: non-intervention, self-determination, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Because these principles have been consistently violated by imperialism, the Conference gave notice that the client-states set up under puppets through subversion by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and imperialist bayonets and bombs would be isolated and attacked in the future.

This was a historic decision. It placed non-alignment firmly back on the rails where the founding fathers had placed it against colonialism, neo-colonialism and imperialism. We salute those founders and those who follow in their footsteps.

The decision caused a polarisation which unmasked some of the puppet states — Indonesia, Malaysia and Laos — leading to their walkout and the declaration of Malaysia that it would not take part in the next summit conference in Algeria in 1973.

On the whole, we can safely conclude that the thesis of our Sixteenth Congress that the main lines of world development are determined by the forces of revolution and socialism, by the peace forces and the national liberation movement, has been shown to be correct.

AD HOC MEASURES

Despite certain new features and claims, the basic structure and direction of the strategy of the PNC regime have not altered; the strategy continues on its anti-working class, pro-imperialist course.

The new developments include:

- 1) Nationalization of Demba, Guyana Timbers and Wreford Limited, and the formation of Guyana Marine Foods Limited;
- 2) The setting up of the External Trade Bureau;
- 3) The Grenada Declaration and the creation of a new West Indian political union;
- 4) "Non-alignment";
- 5) Relations in varying degrees with socialist countries – Yugoslavia, China, Soviet Union.

By taking these ad hoc measures, the PNC government hopes demagogically to improve its image.

But the PNC's approach is reformist, not revolutionary. Under pressure from our party and the objective situation, it is forced to make certain moves, but they are not really meant to destroy imperialist domination. These reforms are calculated to preserve imperialist relationships, even to strengthen them, and at the same time to lull the Guyanese working people into a false sense of security.

Mere nationalisation is not socialism; what is being witnessed is state capitalism under a corrupt PNC bureaucratic capitalist elite. Pas Estensoro, whose reformist regime nationalised the tin mines and carried out a land reform in Bolivia, is now collaborating with the military, fascist clique put in power by Brazil and the USA.

The PNC government's external relations with the socialist countries — closest relations with China but ostracism of the Soviet Union — is in keeping with the new divide and rule strategy of US imperialism.

There is also an element of Machiavellian blackmail. This is resorted to because imperialist aid has not been flowing as freely as before. There is in operation a kind of squeeze-play.

The USA has been using its financial leash to hold the PNC "dog" in line. This has come about because it is not too happy about developments in Guyana. There was the unceremonious forcing out of the United Force from the government. And what is worse, the PNC regime is unable to control the political situation. Consequently, it is hoping to use China and Cuba to blackmail the USA.

The non-aligned movement provides the PNC with an opportunity for radical posturing while it simultaneously pursues pro-imperialist policies and does the dirty work of imperialism.

Both the Burnham regime of Guyana and Tunku Abdul Razak regime of Malaysia peddle the same imperialist "two super powers" line. Malaysia unmasked itself by walking out of the non-aligned conference in Georgetown, but Guyana remains unmasked.

To create an anti-imperialist image, the PNC resorts to demagogy. In his opening address to the Foreign Ministers Non-aligned Conference, L.F.S. Burnham called for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from South Vietnam.

This appears revolutionary. But actually, his government has parroted consistently the line of the USA; namely, the USA will withdraw its troops from South Vietnam after North Vietnam has agreed to withdraw its troops.

This position is inconsistent with international law as Vietnam is one country only temporarily demarcated in 1954 at the 17th parallel for the preparation of elections in 1956 to unify the country. The North Vietnamese have a legal right to be in South Vietnam.

Guyana was also opposed to the seating of the PRG of South Vietnam and Sihanouk's Cambodian government in exile. But more cleverly, unlike the other US client states, Laos and Indonesian, it remained silent and hid behind a consensus.

We condemn the PNC puppet regime! We salute the heroic Indochinese peoples.

NEW IMPERIALIST STRATEGY

Now that the Puerto Rican model of planning for economic development and social transformation, which was introduced in the Caribbean in the 1950s and formed the basis for the PNC's \$300 million 7-year (1966-72) D-plan, is totally discredited, the imperialists are pushing their puppets in Guyana and the Caribbean to embrace the ECLA (Economic Commission for Latin America) model.

This model is based on four main props — import substituting industrialisation, regional integration, land reform and foreign capital.

The rationale behind this model is that the international terms of trade (the ratio of import prices to export prices) have operated against the primary producing, one crop and/or one-mineral economies of the Latin American countries; that import substitution would bring about industrialisation; that industrialisation would make for local decision-making and create a national bourgeoisie which would weaken the traditional oligarchies based on land ownership (*latifundio*) and import-export trading (*comprador* capitalism tied to imperialism); that industrialisation would require foreign investment and foreign aid; and that import substitution coupled with land reform would stimulate the economy and cause income redistribution.

While industrialisation greatly expanded in Latin America, it was a deformed, dependent type which came more and more under foreign, mainly US, domination.

Later, regional integration was propagated. This was advocated on the ground that all those who shared the same ideals, freedom and democracy — the euphemism for state monopoly-capitalism, must coordinate their efforts economically, politically and even militarily.

The idea of "geographical frontiers", tied to the concept of national sovereignty and self-determination, was declared to be obsolete; it must give way to "ideological frontiers"

Regional integration, it was argued, would permit joint efforts and economies of scale. But actually, it merely helped the foreign multinational corporation to subjugate more easily the economies of the Latin American countries and to extract greater profits.

Later still, "equal partnership" under the Nixon administration was grafted on to Kennedy's "Alliance for Progress" and Johnson's "ideological frontiers".

Partnership seeks to overcome the growing hatred of foreign economic domination by the participation in joint ventures of local private or governmental capital with foreign capital.

Such "joint ventures" and even nationalisation within the framework of imperialism are providing the opportunities for state capitalism and the creation of a bureaucratic capitalist elite of politicians, managers, technicians, professionals and intellectuals, who amass great wealth through high salaries, big allowances and corrupt deals, and, despite slogans to the contrary, ultimately defend foreign rather than national interests and reinforce foreign domination.

The ECLA model will fail in Guyana and the Caribbean as it has failed in Latin America. Here, too, regional integration (CARIFTA) and import substitution (banning of \$12 million of imports by the PNC government) is favouring the foreign multinational corporations which have established branch-plants in Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad.

Other progressives are now, from experience, coming to realise the correctness of our position stated from the very beginning; namely, that the Burnham-led PNC regime in both its advocacy of CARIFTA and import substitution is acting under orders from imperialist USA. In Guyana, where our vanguard Party leads, others inevitably follow.

ECONOMICS AND POLITICS

Meanwhile, the conditions of the people worsen. This is inevitable so long as overall policies are formulated to satisfy not national, but foreign interests.

A corrupt, ever-expanding bureaucratic-capitalist elite with big salaries and allowances and shady deals add to the burdens of the people. Further, with a huge national debt which in-

creased from \$127.8 million in 1964 to \$509.3 million in 1972, debt service payments (interest and capital amortisation) jump year after year.

These increased charges for the state machine and debt repayments were first met by indirect taxation, mainly on imported consumer goods, including a 3 percent defence levy on all imports. This is led to inflation and higher prices. In turn, these resulted in disillusionment and discontent.

Discontent led to unpopularity at the polls. Thus, the PNC regime resorted to extensive fraud at the 1968 general elections, 1970 local government elections, and the 1971 Amerindian elections.

At the fiscal level, the government resorted to manoeuvre. From 1970 onwards, it announced tax-free budgets, but separately increased electricity, telephone and postage rates, local authority rates and taxes and land rentals. At the same time, expenditure on social services was cut from 47 percent of the budget in 1960 to 34 percent in 1972.

Current budget expenditure on health dropped from 12.7 percent in 1969 to 9.4 percent in 1971 and 8.4 percent in 1972. For current and capital (development) expenditure on education, the percentage allocation dropped from 16.2 percent under our PPP government in 1964 to 12 percent under the puppet PNC regime in 1971.

Various other benefits were withdrawn in keeping with the proposals set out in the government's White Paper of 1966 which stipulated cuts in benefits and subsidies amounting to 14 million per year.

This included subsidy on edible oil, duty-free gasoline to rice farmers and loggers, and crop bonuses to farmers. The railway on the East Coast of Demerara, which provided subsidised travelling facilities to workers and school children, was closed. And the whole PPP guaranteed minimum price-support scheme for farmers is likely to be abandoned.

These cuts on social services were made because the personnel emoluments votes jumped from 41 percent in 1960 to 46 per cent in 1972, and debt repayments from 12 percent (\$5 million) to 20 percent (\$21.5 million) in the same period.

There is bound to be further deterioration in living standards. With increasing crime, more money will have to be paid in salaries for policemen, magistrates, judges and prison officers. Also an unpopular PNC regime will rely more and more on the army. And as 5-year or 10-year moratorium (grace period) comes to an end, bigger debt payments will have to be made.

These additional payments will come from more taxation and/or cuts in social services, which in turn would lead to greater hardships and dissatisfaction. We must put a stop to this erosion of our people's living standards!

These developments are not peculiar to Guyana. They occur elsewhere in the Caribbean, resulting in a sea of discontent and a general upsurge throughout the region.

In the face of this new situation, and the failure of CARIFTA, the call has been made with the Grenada Declaration for a new West Indian political union.

Arguments in favour of this union are a common cultural identity, the smallness of size of our individual territories and, as L.F.S. Burnham preaches, the necessity for ownership and control of West Indian resources. S.S. Ramphal says that "an urgency for change is our mandate for unity."

These misleaders and demagogues advocate unity to own and control resources and to carry out change. Yet in Guyana, they fail to embark on an anti-imperialist course despite the fact that in any eventual showdown they can rely on the active cooperation and support of our party. Instead, they resort to demagogy, sloganeering, reformism and state capitalism.

Some progressives support the political union as a means of breaking down insularity and attaining regional solidarity. They argue that it is a step in the right direction like the West Indies Federation and CARIFTA. They are wrong.

The West Indies Federation failed largely because the prerequisites for success — political independence and an anti-imperialist programme — were missing.

CARIFTA was to be the first step leading to an economic and political community. But on almost every fundamental issue — a common external tariff; regional industries or the location

of industries; regional carrier of the Caribbean; harmonisation of fiscal incentives — there has been disagreement and deadlock. There has been a failure to ensure the effective operation of the Agricultural Marketing Protocol. Benefits from CARIFTA have been unevenly distributed. An attempt at joint foreign representation at the diplomatic and trade levels between Barbados and Guyana has been disrupted.

A latest display of disunity was on the question of the valuation of currencies consequent to the devaluation of the US dollar. Barbados and the Associated States, which are tied to the pound sterling, and Trinidad and Jamaica did not devalue. Guyana alone decided on devaluation.

Disagreements on vital issues are an obstacle to further economic cooperation. And so long as they exist, there will either be no political union, or if forced, the union will suffer the same fate as the collapsed West Indian Federation.

These differences are real and cannot be brushed aside. They can and must be resolved. But this cannot be achieved by mere manoeuvring for narrow selfish motives — Burnham getting West Indian voters in order to stay in power; Bradshaw using Guyanese police and army to contain discontent and revolt; Anglo-American imperialists using a West Indian armed force instead of British and American troops to maintain their clients in power.

Disagreements will be resolved through commitment to an ideology and struggle. And this must not be merely an “ideology-of regionalism” as S.S. Ramphal quantitatively sees it. Rather, there must be a qualitative distinction — regional unity on the basis of an anti-imperialist ideology. Failure to make this distinction could only lead to a debacle similar to the defunct federation. This must be avoided at all costs.

The PPP does not see any sound basis for the launching out now of a new Caribbean political union. But this does not mean that we write off Caribbean integration. Nor do we agree with the arguments of the rightist elements like Eric Gairy of Grenada and John Compton of St. Lucia, who signed the Grenada Declaration on July 1971, but soon opted out.

Compton justified his withdrawal on the ground that without the participation of another large territory like Trinidad & Tobago, Guyana would dominate the small islands “like a shark swallowing sardines.” He also expressed another fear: “If there were a general election in Guyana and self-vowed Marxist Cheddi Jagan assumed power, the Associated States would easily become satellites not only of Guyana but also of the Soviet Union and other communist countries.”

There lies the great dilemma. It’s a question of perspectives. The fundamental question in the region is the recognition and the demand for change. People like Compton want the benefits which can come only from change — radical revolutionary change — but because of their limited ideological horizons, they are unwilling to make the changes which objectively are required.

These people are still obsessed by Cold War thinking. They are unable or unwilling to recognise that colonial and neo-colonial rule coupled with Cold War policies are largely responsible for the plight of the Caribbean peoples — high unemployment; inflation and high cost of living; growing crime and delinquency. Not having a working class, Marxist-Leninist, internationalist outlook, they are unable to reconcile national, patriotic interests with regional and international interests. They see, rather, subjugation and domination, and thus come out in favour of a narrow, chauvinistic nationalism. Their commitment to some form of regional integration is consequently merely emotional and opportunistic.

Opposition to the union thus comes from two quarters — from the right, who do not want fundamental change and who fear becoming a permanent opposition and not sharing in the spoils of office; from the left, who see greater obstacles to winning power for revolutionary change.

Working class power — yes! Imperialist unity and power — no!

The imperialist would like their man in Guyana, L.F.S. Burnham, to head the political union. He is not as discredited as Eric Williams and is more demagogic, using left rhetoric and even Marxist phraseology to carry out rightist, reformist policies. Such an individual is more

useful to imperialism in this historical period than the outright defenders of capitalism. This is why Lenin warned about the dangers of reformism, which confers certain benefits, but sows dangerous illusions.

The withdrawal of Grenada and St. Lucia from the proposed West Indies political union was a severe setback for Burnham and Nixon.

The imperialists and their puppets were thus forced to resort to new manoeuvres. A group of eleven "prominent" West Indians and Guyanese signed an appeal for the union. This included Sir Arthur Lewis, leading bourgeois ideologist in the socio-economic field, and Richard Ishmael, US-man-of-business in the Caribbean labour movement who works hand-in-glove with the CIA, and the pro-imperialist head of AFL-CIO, George Meany.

The PNM minority regime, headed by Dr. Eric Williams, appointed a special "task force" to explore the question. This is only the window dressing for Trinidad's participation.

With a commitment on the part of Trinidad, the way will be cleared for Grenada and St. Lucia to rejoin the fold.

In Guyana, the main obstacle is constitutional. The PNC does not have a two-thirds majority in the National Assembly. Therefore it cannot commit us. It will have to get a fresh mandate wither through a referendum or a general election. Carifesta been staged as a psychological booster for a favourable response.

Because of the basic unpopularity of the PNC regime, however, these manoeuvres of the political manipulators will not help. Seven and a half years of misrule, pro-imperialist and anti-working class policies have placed the PNC in a weakened position. And despite efforts to refurbish its image by the granting of aid to the African liberation movement, the staging of shows like the Non-Aligned Conference and Carifesta, the use of gimmicks and slogans like "feed, house and clothe ourselves", its position will deteriorate further and more cracks will develop within its ranks.

It will resort to extensive fraud, even greater than in 1968. We must, therefore, redouble our efforts to get a free and fair election. Let me warn that this will not be any easy task. Quite a few are still fooled by the PNC's demagoguery. And by bribery and political and racial discrimination, it has by and large succeeded in controlling the state machinery, including its coercive arms, the army and the police.

To attain success, we have to win over more and more people to our side. During the past two years, we have achieved much in the mobilisation of the people in defence of their interests.

Sugar workers demonstrated great militancy, particularly during the first crop in 1972. Party support went to the bauxite, timber, waterfront and other categories of workers. Rice farmers carried out a boycott in 1972 which was partially successful. During the disastrous floods in 1972 which brought ruin to so many farmers, the party exposed the bankrupt agricultural policies of the government and called for an emergency vote of \$5 million for short and long term relief.

A decision was taken to strengthen mass organisational work and to adopt a new approach to organisation — changing emphasis from locality to interest; that is, organising and mobilising people according to their interests (sugar, bauxite, waterfront, sawmill, rice, cattle, milk, cane farming, white collar, etc.)

Three areas — unemployment, cost of living, free and fair elections — were selected for concentrated activity in 1972.

Unfortunately, our campaign for free and fair elections, for one reason or another mainly during the long rainy season, somewhat faltered, and did not maintain the schedule we had planned.

Let us redouble our efforts! Down with fraud!

Fortunately, however, objective conditions, plus our party's firm stand, have paved the way for bringing together various elements in a united stand for the defence of civil liberties, including free and fair elections.

We must intensify our campaign. We can and must win over more people — workers, farmers, intellectuals, policemen, soldiers, etc. — to our cause.

Objective factors — high unemployment and high cost of living, wage freeze, etc. — are conducive to change. But change will not come about by itself. It is necessary to move people from passive critics and grumblers to active participants and fighters.

To do so, we have to raise the level of consciousness and at the same time to involve the masses in active struggle — struggle for industrial as well as political demands. The masses will not move unless firstly they see the necessity for action; and, secondly, unless they are organised and given leadership. Starvation and suffering alone do not cause people to rebel. It is necessary for them to understand why they are suffering and why their conditions will worsen.

The strategic line of our party is, therefore, to win the masses for a policy of basic socio-economic change, for an anti-imperialist, pro-democratic and pro-socialist programme. Such a programme must include:

- 1) Nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy — foreign and comprador capitalist owned and controlled mines, plantations, factories, banks, insurance and foreign trade;
- 2) Planned proportional development of the economy with simultaneous concentration on industry and agriculture rather than on infra-structure; expansion of the public and cooperative sectors; transformation of the economy from primary to integrated production, e.g. transform the sugar industry as in Cuba and the bauxite industry into industrial complexes;
- 3) Development of a sound all-embracing agricultural policy with land reform and an end to all forms of discrimination; diversification of agriculture to shift from the precarious dependency on sugar; an increase in the production of rice, corn, bananas, ground provisions, cattle, poultry, dairy products, etc., for domestic consumption and export. A large scale fishing industry with a fishing fleet and factory ship;
- 4) An almost total centralised planning and control, putting the total resources within the hands of the architects of the new society;
- 5) Re-assessment of our role as the producer of raw materials for the metropolitan centres of industrial development; establishment of industries at home to replace imports as far as practicable and feasible; a war on conspicuous consumption and corruption;
- 6) Full democracy, workers' participation and control, and involvement of the people at all levels;
- 7) Fullest development of our human resources educationally, ideologically and culturally;
- 8) A policy of genuine non-alignment and the closest relations with the socialist world and the progressive "third world".
- 9) Strict system of foreign exchange, rent and price controls;
- 10) Establishment of a truly national health service for all;
- 11) A national house-building programme which would solve the grave housing shortage.

This anti-imperialist programme must be viewed as an integrated whole. All the various measures are closely linked and inter-related. Any attempt at implementation of the programme in an ad hoc manner without careful coordination as a whole is bound to end in failure. This is why the PNC regime, despite its expansion of the public sector is heading our country to bankruptcy.

Our duty is to make the masses understand that only with our programme can Guyana once again move forward.

Down with the PNC racist, anti-working class, pro-imperialist programme!

In this critical period, all efforts must be made to strengthen the party ideologically, politically and organisationally. Members must be recruited on the basis of consciousness and conviction that only our programme offers the road to salvation.

We must redouble our efforts to raise the political-ideological level of understanding of all members. More and more entrants must be recruited for our party's ideological centre, Accabre College of Social Science.

Thunder and Mirror are invaluable weapons in the struggle for liberation. They help to raise consciousness, combat despair, expose the government, and highlight the problems of the people. Their circulation must be doubled in the coming year. Let all comrades pledge to fulfil this important political task.

Let us also pledge to work to achieve the broadest possible unity for our country's liberation from puppet rule. In the pursuit of this objective, we must be flexible in tactics, in ways and means, but firm in ideology, in principle.

Our party must struggle consistently against the right opportunists inside and outside the party, who would like to lead us into the path of unprincipled compromise with imperialism.

While we base ourselves on the masses, we must master all forms of struggle — legal and underground, peaceful and non-peaceful, parliamentary and extra-parliamentary. We must be prepared to move swiftly if necessary from one form to another. What form the struggle will take, of course, will largely depend on the actions of the puppets and their imperial masters.

Because the puppets resort to electoral fraud, terror, victimisation and force, the general strategic line for the attainment of political power in the "third world" countries of the western hemisphere is armed, revolutionary struggle to counter imperialist violence. But because of the changing balance of forces nationally, regionally and internationally, the electoral road must not be ruled out dogmatically. Chile has demonstrated that a revolutionary alliance can come to power through the constitutional process.

In Guyana, our campaign has not yet developed sufficiently to force the PNC regime to accept our 6-point demands for free and fair elections. One government minister, in fact, has blatantly declared that there would be no changes in the fraudulent methods. What are we to do? Must we contest or not?

The main arguments against contesting are:

- 1) Contesting will give legitimacy to the PNC minority regime.
- 2) The National Assembly is a corrupting influence on some PPP members.
- 3) The party cannot tell the electorate that it is fighting to win.
- 4) Electoral fraud is already well-known and accepted as a fact by almost everyone; we do not have to expose it further.
- 5) Contesting under conditions of fraud will reinforce the allegation that we are only an electioneering party.
- 6) We have not achieved our six demands for free and fair elections.
- 7) It is demoralising for Party supporters to see the rigged results.
- 8) If we do not contest, we will be obliged to take stronger action; this will bring about a confrontation.

The arguments for contesting the elections are:

- 1) Use parliament as a forum; if we are not there, we lose a platform.
- 2) All forms of struggle are necessary, including the parliamentary.
- 3) If we do not contest, puppet groups will move in and take on the role of opposition.
- 4) The Trinidad boycott alone has not proved successful; the government has carried on without an opposition; it has not strengthened the progressive forces.
- 5) The boycott, no matter how successful, will not show in the returns, which will also be rigged by widespread use of proxies.
- 6) If we boycott and then do not proceed to real confrontation, the people will be disillusioned.
- 7) The boycott may lead to a one party state; we should not play into the PNC's hands on this point.
- 8) Parliament is one of the fronts of struggle and propaganda, limited though it is, and should be used as long as possible.

- 9) The PNC will use the propaganda that the PPP is boycotting only to cover up its weakness because it knows it will lose the elections.

There are good arguments for and against contesting the elections. It would seem, however, that it would not be prudent to make a decision now. Events today are moving with extreme rapidity. We can only know what decision to take when we are face to face with an election date, with reality when we can properly assess the political situation and the balance of forces nationally, regionally and internationally.

Consequently, the General Council is of the view that this Congress should authorise the future General Council to make the decision after consultation at the appropriate time, whether or not to contest.

The prospects for successfully opposing and bringing pressure to bear on the PNC puppet regime are bright.

Let us pledge to struggle steadfastly for Guyana's genuine independence.

Long live the PPP!

Long live Marxism-Leninism!

Long live proletarian internationalism!

Victory is inevitable!

-7-

The Eighteenth Congress

Report of the Central Committee to the 18th Congress by Dr.
Cheddi Jagan, General Secretary of the PPP — Good Hope,
East Coast Demerara, 6-8 September 1974

Comrades,

On behalf of the General Council of the People's Progressive Party, I bring you, delegates, observers and guests, revolutionary greetings.

THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

The International Meeting of Communist and Workers Parties in which we took part in Moscow in 1969 noted that "Ours was an epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism."

Since 1969, the world socialist system has grown stronger economically, politically and ideologically. By contrast, the world capitalist system has grown weaker, plagued by a deepening structural crisis.

The socialist countries in 1972 accounted for less than 26 percent of the world territory and less than 55 percent of world population, but produced about 59 percent of world industrial output.

Their industrial expansion is characterised by long-term dynamism and stable high growth rates.

Taking 1950 as the base year at 100, their industrial growth rate increased to 501 in 1965, 725 in 1970 and 842 in 1972.

For the developed capitalist countries, the corresponding figures were 215 in 1965, 284 in 1970 and 505 in 1972.

A survey of economic development in Europe for 1950-69 by the UN Economic Commission for Europe, published in 1971, showed that the rate growth of the gross social product of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries averaged 7 percent annually as against 4.6 percent of the developed capitalist countries.

According to the London journal, *The Economist*, in twenty of the largest industrialised countries, "growth has been grinding towards a stop" since March 1973.

Later, the Economic Commission for Europe stated that "real economic growth in the Community (European Economic Community) as a whole could well reach only two to three percent in 1974."

In the USA, the gross national product which had increased by 5.5 percent in the first six months of 1973, dropped to 5.6 percent in the third quarter and to only 2 percent in the fourth quarter.

Stagnation or slump has been coupled with rampant inflation in the economic life of capitalist society — a phenomenon referred to as "stagflation" or "slumpflation".

The USA, Japan and most of the West European states suffer from "double digit" inflation; that is, more than 10 percent.

Consequently, as the New York Times on February 2, 1974 noted: "What the worker could buy with his weekly take-home pay after allowing for higher prices and taxes left him 3 percent worse off than at the start of 1973.

Unemployment is also increasing in the developed capitalist states. In 1973, there were three million more unemployed than in 1970.

In the USA, the unemployment rate rose from 4.8 percent in December 1973 to 5.2 percent in January 1974, with a prediction of 6 to 7 percent for the rest of the year.

By contrast, socialist countries do not face such crises. In the Soviet Union for instance, all prices are stable, while real incomes rise by some 5 percent annually. Medical services and education are free. House rent amounts to about 5 percent of the wage and taxes about 8 percent. There is no unemployment. And the retirement age for pensions is 60 for men, 55 for women and still lower for workers in harmful occupations.

Between 1950-69, public and private consumption in the Soviet Union and the Eastern European states increased by 6.3 percent as compared with only 4 percent in the European capitalist states. The overall increase per capita in the socialist countries which comprise the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) was roughly 2.33 times over.

To socialism has passed the historical initiative. Its moral prestige has grown and the world balance has shifted in its favour.

No longer can imperialism willy-nilly use global diplomacy and economic aggression to maintain the status quo.

The 1969 Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties correctly asserted that the "world socialist system is the decisive force in the anti-imperialist struggle. Each liberation struggle receives indispensable aid from the world socialist system, above all from the Soviet Union."

Because of the growing strength and moral prestige of the world socialist system since 1969, and particularly during the past two years since our last Congress, there have been positive developments on the world front in the struggle between socialism and imperialism, between national liberation and imperialism and between the forces of peace and war.

Imperialism has been forced to restrict its aggressive policy and to abandon its outright violence. Its circles in the United States were also forced to change their Cold War policy of "containment of communism" and liberation of "captive states" (meaning the socialist states of East Europe) and to accept the Leninist policy of peaceful coexistence, which they long regarded as an insidious communist plot", and "the Trojan horse" of communism.

In 1973, the Soviet Union and the United States of America put into practical application the "Basic Principles of Mutual Relations between the USSR and USA" by recognizing that "in the nuclear age, there is no alternative to conducting their mutual relations on the basis of peaceful coexistence."

In place of the previous imperialist policy of "nuclear blackmail" and bargaining from "positions of strength", President Nixon and Comrade Leonid Brezhnev signed in June 1973 the Agreement on the Prevention of Nuclear War, the basic principles of negotiations on the further limitation of strategic and technical cooperation in the field of peaceful uses of atomic energy.

In place of Cold War and economic blockade, there are now competition and economic agreements.

Peter Peterson, US Commerce Department Secretary, in a special study titled "US-Soviet Commercial Relationships in a New Era", wrote:

With the industrial and technological development of other major economies, the US no longer has the monopoly it once enjoyed. . . Our over-all trade balance is a melancholy reminder of these changed circumstances. The increased availability of high technology products elsewhere rendered some of our original curbs on exports to the Soviet Union increasingly anachronistic. The real loser . . . would have increasingly been the US producer and workers, not the Soviet consumer or the Soviet economy. There comes a point at which we must face the fact that business is business, and, if it is going to go on in any event, we might as well get a piece of the action.

Twenty-five years ago "peace" was regarded as subversive. When the world peace forces tried to assemble in Paris at the Salle de Pleyel in April 1949, many were denied passports; a second emergency meeting had to be arranged hastily in Czechoslovakia for all those who could not go to France.

But in May 1974, there were no barriers; all the delegates were able to meet in the same Salle de Pleyel to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the World Peace Movement.

In our own case, the British Guiana Peace Committee, organised in 1952, was used as justification for the suspension of the constitution and the removal of our party from the government in 1953.

For nine years after the Anglo-American-backed ouster of our party from the government in 1964, party leaders were refused visas to enter the United States. That they have been able to do so in 1974 is largely due to the policy of peaceful coexistence and detente relentlessly pursued by the Soviet and other peace-loving states.

Detente has been ushered into European relations as a result of the signing of the 4-Powers Agreement on West Berlin, and agreements by the Soviet Union, Poland and the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany.

Detente and peaceful coexistence have led to the admission of the two Germanys in the United Nations.

They have led also to the withdrawal, after several years of brutal aggression, of US troops from Vietnam. This was a victory not only for the liberation forces but also for the peace forces throughout the world.

In Laos in February 1975, with the imminent failure of the puppet troops, peace was restored; and in August 1975, the United States was compelled to end the bombing of Cambodia.

Hostilities have ceased and ceasefire has come to the Middle East. The myth of Israeli "military superiority" has been shattered and imperialist-backed Zionist expansionism has been checked. The Suez Canal is to be reopened. Some territory in the Golan Heights area occupied by Israeli troops has been returned to Syria. And the Israeli aggressors have been forced to the conference table at Geneva.

Recognition for the just demands of the Arab liberation movement broadened. The tenth OAU Summit denounced the Israeli aggression and called for a settlement based on the UN Security Council resolutions, and the Algiers meeting of non-aligned states boldly called for the unconditional restoration of the rights of the Palestinian people and further recognised the Palestine Liberation Organisation as their true representative. By the time the decisive military operations by Egypt and Syria during October of last year ended, 25 African countries unprecedentedly broke off diplomatic relations with Israel, thus making it extremely uncomfortable for the United States' policy in that area.

Important to note are the far-reaching measures taken by some other Arab countries which definitely indicate an anti-imperialist direction. The Libyan, Iraqi and Syrian governments have extensively nationalised foreign petroleum monopolies and the latter two countries even have communists within their administration.

On the African continent, significant advances have been registered. Whilst the 10th OAU meeting unanimously condemned NATO's aid to colonial and racist regimes, the armed and political struggles of the peoples of Guinea-Bissau, Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa have been gaining momentum and steadily progressing. The founding of the sovereign Republic of Guinea-Bissau in September 1973 has been a signal victory for the national liberation struggles.

The struggles in the Portuguese African territories no doubt have greatly influenced the military coup in Portugal, which has brought an end to decades of hated, fascist rule. The change of the regime in Portugal will have a chain reaction effect. It will better the prospects for the people of the Portuguese colonies; it will have an impact on the liberation struggles in Rhodesia, South Africa and the long term effect even in our own continent.

The Portuguese military coup brought an end to several decades of fascist rule. It must be remembered that Portugal, Brazil, Rhodesia and South Africa had established a South Atlantic

alliance of reactionary, fascist states to contain national liberation and socialism not only in Africa but also in Latin America.

And we cannot forget Brazil, the “gendarme” of imperialism in Latin America, is flanking our southern and part of our western borders.

Nearer home, we find that many Latin American countries are unitedly defending their national interests and sovereignty.

Despite the grave, though temporary, setback in Chile with the overthrow of the Unidad Popular government, the continent has, nevertheless, made notable strides forward.

Even the OAS has become outspoken against US policy of domination over the system of inter-American relations. Earlier this year there was even a demand by Argentina and Panama for the reorganisation of this system.

But the situation calls for continuous vigilance. Let us not forget that while a section of the imperialist ruling class now embrace detente and peaceful coexistence, another section has not given up its Cold War aims. In this period of so-called “nuclear stalemate”, it adheres to the strategy of “limited response”. It continues with its subversive activities and, where necessary, its “limited” or “local” wars to arrest the onward march of the revolutionary forces as in Vietnam, the Middle East and Africa.

In Chile, imperialism with the help of its local lackeys staged a military coup and established a bloody junta. Democratic practice of long standing has been brought abruptly to an end and fascist terror stalks the land. The blood of patriots has been spilled, and torture is commonplace.

In Uruguay on June 27, 1975, after almost 75 years of bourgeois democratic development, the Bordaberry regime had established a Brazilian-type dictatorship. The progressive trade union movement has been outlawed, Congress has been closed and militants have been thrown in jail. The internationally-known Communist leader, Rodney Arismendi, and the popular leader of the democratic anti-imperialist Broad Front, General Liber Seregni, have been imprisoned.

We must continue to agitate for the release of Luis Corvalan, Rodney Arismendi, General Seregni and other political prisoners.

And we must not forget the latest violation of international law. In Cyprus, the Greek fascists have staged a military coup and displaced the popular and progressive government of Archbishop Makarios. This is a flagrant intervention which has its roots in the 1947 Cold War declaration of the Truman Doctrine. Then, when the containment of communism and revolution was proclaimed, US military aid to the reactionary forces in Greece was seen as the only way to stem the democratic and revolutionary forces. Later in the early 1960s, when it became clear that the democratic left under the leadership of Andreas Papandreu would win the elections, the army seized power.

Greece, like Chile and Brazil, has many similarities to Guyana.

We must continue to fight for the restoration of economic and political democracy in Chile, Uruguay, Brazil, Paraguay, Bolivia and elsewhere where the gorillas have established fascist rule.

Down with fascism!

Fascism in these countries, especially in Brazil, poses a constant threat to the peace and security of the freedom-loving states and peoples, particularly in our hemisphere. President Nixon’s remark that “the whole continent will follow where Brazil leads” is ominous.

Chile must be a lesson never to be forgotten. We must never forget that while there are “doves” in the imperialist camp, there are also “hawks”. And even the “doves” of today can become the “hawks” of tomorrow.

In our own country, we have seen, step by step, the outcome of intervention by “doves” turned into “hawks” — the denial of human rights and civil liberties, fraud and force in elections, and clear and unmistakable signs towards fascism.

Not long ago, a leading spokesman of the PNC regime declared that “freedom is a living reality in Guyana.” But a year ago, when the PNC misused the army to intervene in the general

election, it demonstrated that it would not only deny the right to vote but also kill, if necessary, to maintain power. And soon after that infamous day, it re-enacted the National Security Act.

This draconian measure provides for preventive detention and restriction of movement of persons, control of firearms and ammunition, powers of search without warrants, increased powers of policemen, and so on. Furthermore, the government is armed with powers to make regulations — in situations deemed as “periods of war, threatened subversion and other emergency — which are even more sweeping and all-embracing. Among these are provisions for “censorship and the control and suppression of publications, writings, maps, plans, photographs, communications and means of communication”, and sequestration of property.

The penalties provided are extremely harsh. Section 22(1) states: “Subject to the provisions of section 30, any person who, without lawful authority, the burden of proof of which shall lie upon him, purchases, acquires or has in his possession any firearm, ammunition or explosive shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years or to both such fine and imprisonment and, on conviction on indictment, to imprisonment for life.”

Another sub-section states that “any person who is proved to have had in his possession or under his control anything whatsoever in or on which is found any firearm, ammunition or explosive shall, until the contrary is proved, be deemed to have been in possession of such firearm, ammunition or explosive.”

This violates a fundamental principle, a “sacred cow”, of civilised jurisprudence; namely, that the accused is presumed to be innocent until proved guilty.

Under the neo-fascist PNC regime, the accused is presumed to be guilty until he can prove himself innocent.

There is also the odious provision of guilt by association. Section 22(2) stipulates: “Any person who consorts with or is found in the company of another who, without lawful authority, has in his possession any firearm, ammunition or explosive in circumstances which raise a reasonable presumption that he intends or is about to act or has recently acted with such other person in a manner prejudicial to public order or public safety, shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable . . .”

The Guyana Act is more vicious than its US namesake, the National Security Act of 1947, which “spawned” McCarthyism and eventually led to abuse of executive power in Indochina and Watergate.

This same kind of abuse and misuse of executive power is growing alarmingly in Guyana.

In place of normal democratic methods of political struggle, the PNC regime has imposed administrative methods. And the army, police and judiciary are subverted to crush political opponents.

Police harassment of our comrades continues unabated. Reminiscent of the Hitler youth, PNC and YSM youth thugs are with impunity, in full view of the police, allowed to try to break up our meetings and those of other opposition forces. And the blatant partiality of the police is demonstrated when not the thugs but our supporters are arrested and charged.

Under these conditions, freedom of assembly is merely nominal.

Press freedom is also in jeopardy. Pious declarations have been made from time to time. L.F.S. Burnham told parliament in November 1971 that his government had passed “no legislation or done anything to prevent the publication of any newspaper in this country and has no intention of doing so.

But soon after that utterance, the regime in February 1972 assumed powers to control the importation of newsprint, printing equipment and materials.

Because of that control, import licence has been refused the New Guyana Company Limited, publishers of the Mirror, to import equipment on which a down-payment had been made. And because of delays in issuing licenses for the importation of newsprint, the Mirror was forced to cease publication on three occasions for a period of about two months in 1972-73 and for six weeks in 1974.

Now, the regime is planning to go one step further, to censorship and suppression. Addressing the Rotary Club in June 1974, Kit Nascimento, Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office said: "A newspaper or broadcaster that persistently and deliberately sets out to frustrate and sabotage Government's development efforts, in my view, would have no more right to publish than a citizen to cry fire in a cinema where there is no fire."

They tell the world that in Guyana the rule of law is observed. But an election petition brought by the People's Democratic Movement one year ago has not yet been listed for hearing! And, no doubt, it will never be brought up.

Let us pledge to stand firm against the erosion and destruction of our rights and liberties. The fight for democracy is an indispensable ingredient of the struggle for national liberation and socialism. It is no mere accident that there is a definite tendency towards fascism.

Because there is a connection and interaction between the economic base and the political superstructure, this political development must be seen as the outcome of the economic collapse, the deterioration of living conditions, and the growing dissatisfaction among practically all sections of the people.

THE ECONOMIC SITUATION

After nearly a decade of PNC rule, the economy is facing collapse. The glib promises have not been fulfilled. In the preface to the Development Programme (1966-1972), Mr. L.F.S. Burnham wrote:

The Plan aims at increasing the gap between the percentage annual population increase (just over 3 percent and the percentage annual growth (4 percent in 1964) so that by 1972 the economy, on a modest estimate, should be growing at the rate of 5 to 6 percent per annum, reducing the unemployment figure steadily and substantially until there is full employment.

Again, on page viii, the Prime Minister reiterated, "within seven years we shall be able to reduce employment, increase our national productivity and income more than significantly and establish the economy of Guyana on a firm basis."

Later, in 1970, Dr. P. A. Reid, as the then Minister of Finance, in his budget speech talked about redistributive justice. He pointed out that "development is revolution" and "revolution means a radical change in the values and structures of society. Our political independence can only be meaningful if the objective is to acquire power in order to establish institutions and policies that will lead to a better quality of life for all Guyanese."

Has the economy been established "on a firm basis?" Has the unemployment been reduced?

Dr. Wilfred David, one-time Economic Adviser to the PNC regime, disclosed, just prior to his sudden departure in early 1971 that "we have had growth without development. The problem has been exemplified by the high level of unemployment and foreign dependency."

By 1974, the crisis has deepened. The Deputy Prime Minister warned of a calamity not felt since the depression years of the 1930s. And in an understatement of the year during the 1974 budget debate in the bogus National Assembly, Dr. Kenneth King, Minister of Economic Development, stated: "I do not wish to minimise the seriousness of the state of the economy."

He too has "run away" from the sinking ship of state.

The "foreign dependency" alluded to by Dr. David has been further consolidated.

Guyana with political independence is tied now even more securely to imperialism than in the days of colonialism. This is being achieved through financial and other controls. So-called accelerated development, based on deficit financing, has been carried out by extensive borrowing — overseas loans mainly from the USA, Britain and Canada, and internal loans from the banking system.

By the end of 1973, the public debt was estimated at \$539 million as compared with only \$128 million in 1964. \$421 million of the 1973 public debt was external as compared with \$105 million in 1964.

At the end of 1973, outstanding short-term Treasury Bills were \$150 million. These were first issued in 1965 and are held mostly by the 7 commercial banks, only one of which is local.

Debt charges have increased from about 15 percent of current budgetary expenditure in 1964 to 23 percent in 1974. Should the regime succeed in borrowing the \$200 million now sought, foreign dependency and thus foreign political control will greatly increase. Guyana's sovereignty, like that of many third-world countries, particularly in Latin America, would be further jeopardised.

Equally, if not more important than the financial controls are those exerted at other levels through experts and advisers in the economic planning, security and ideological educational fields.

It was not accidental that Sir Arthur Lewis was wade the Chancellor of the University of Guyana, from which leftists and progressives like Dr. Horace Davis, Stuart Bowes, Kathleen Drayton and Mohammed Insanally had been dismissed or "smoked out"; that the West German Dr. Horst Bocklemann and not Dr. Clive Thomas was given the strategic post of Governor of the Bank of Guyana; that economist W. Davenport was appointed economic adviser to the Prime Minister and Sir Arthur Lewis was asked to frame the first \$300 million, 7-year (1966-72) economic development plan; that after the collapse of that plan based on the pro-imperialist Puerto Rican model, there was announced, at the time of the 1973 general election the new \$1,150 million 5-year (1972-76) development plan based on the reformist-imperialist Alliance for Progress and ECLA model, already discredited in Latin America, particularly under Eduardo Frei's government in Chile between 1964 and 1970; that the US administration trains our police, army officers and also senior civil servants, and gives aid to the police and security forces.

These steps were taken to buttress foreign domination. That's why services — shipping, banking, insurance, import-export trade — are still predominantly in foreign hands; why the sugar industry, which employs the largest labour force continues to be foreign-owned and controlled; why Guyana Mines Limited, the bauxite subsidiary of the US Reynolds Metals Company, has not been nationalised even though it had been announced that the nationalisation would have taken place by December 1973; why nationalised Guyana Bauxite Company has as its selling agent, Philipp Bros., the US subsidiary of the giant Anglo-American Corporation of South Africa, and as its financiers, the US-government Import-Export Bank, Chase Manhattan and other imperialist banks.

Our PPP government, though with restricted power, was criticised for not diversifying the economy. Today, a decade later, the PNC with unlimited power, admits failure. During the 1974 budget debate, Dr. Kenneth King was forced to say: "I do not wish to deny the undoubted importance, indeed the pivotal nature of rice, sugar and bauxite on the economy."

The sugar and bauxite industries are still primary producers.

Guyanese were told in 1967 that the Aluminium Company of Canada (ALCAN) would have built a smelter in Guyana. Now we are told that one would be built in Trinidad by 1975 under the strategic control of the imperialists, and Guyana would have one by 1980!

Like so many other plans and promises, this too will hardly be fulfilled.

In the vital agricultural sector, the regime has failed during the past two years to meet the contractual rice requirements of the West Indian territories. Our PPP government not only met the West Indian bulk rice needs; we had displaced US packaged rice from the area, and opened the door of the Cuban market.

Despite bans and restrictions, our food imports continue to rise in an economy which is predominantly agricultural. In 1964, food imports, including feeding stuffs, were \$30 million; in 1973, they were about \$58 million.

Foreign dependency is also characterised by a growing and dominant US influence. This is symbolised by Chase Manhattan Bank and Pan American Airways straddling the two wings of the Central Bank of Guyana Building facing the Avenue of the Republic, and the American Life Building towering over its rivals, even the "mighty" Bookers, in the business centre.

The bulk of Guyana's loans comes from the USA.

And its import trade, about 95 percent of which originates from the capitalist world, despite the claim of non-alignment, is more and more being oriented toward the USA directly and indirectly.

Flour imports have shifted from Canada to the USA. And from the countries of the Caribbean Free Trade Area (CARIFTA), now replaced by the Caribbean Common Market (Caricom) initiated on imperialist dictation by the PNC-UF regime, goods produced by branch-plants of US corporations now displace British goods.

Foreign dependency, foreign ownership and control have led to political control and clientele neo-colonial rule. Our political independence has been traded for privileges for the ruling PNC elite.

This is the root cause of the crisis in Guyana and not the so-called world crisis, fuel crisis, hoarders and black-marketers, and lazy and irresponsible workers, as the corrupt PNC would have us believe.

As has been already shown, the socialist world is not in crisis. It is the capitalist world, to which the PNC regime has deliberately tied Guyana, that is in crisis.

The so-called oil crisis is only a part of the deepening crisis of capitalism-imperialism. It has been precipitated by the lust of the oil monopolists for profits.

The "seven sisters" which monopolise gas and oil made exorbitant profits. These went up in the 3rd quarter of 1973 as compared with the same period in 1972 as follows: EXXON by 80.9 percent, Gulf 56 percent, Standard Oil of California 50.6 percent, Mobil Oil 58.5 percent, Texaco 47.2 per cent, British Petroleum 285 percent and Royal Dutch Shell 275 percent.

Profits were much greater in 1973 despite the oil crisis and the price increases by the oil-producing (OPEC) countries.

British Petroleum (BP) made £295.5 million pre-tax profit for the first quarter of 1974 compared with £47.1 million for the first quarter of 1973. Of the £295.5 million, £175 million was on stocks in hand before the price went up.

Shell made £319 million pre-tax profit for the first 3 months of 1974, nearly 3 times the figure for the same period in 1973.

Little wonder that BP's Chairman, Sir Eric Drake, gets a salary of £66,270 a year, and Shell's chairman, F.S. McFadzien gets £37,807.

The oil barons are doing well because they have developed a good working relationship with the ruling elites.

Tesoro Petroleum Corporation, whose net profits were US\$13.4 million for the first quarter of 1974 as compared with \$4.4 million in the same period in 1973 (per share earnings exceeded 30 percent per year), in an advertisement claiming to be "the fastest growing energy company in America" said:

The Company's continuing confidence in Trinidad and Tobago is based on the abundance of talent and resources there; and from experience — on the unquestionable integrity and stability of the Trinidad government with whom Tesoro's relations are excellent.

Mr. S.S. Ramphal, Guyana's Foreign Minister, at the recent special session of the General Assembly bitterly complained about the effect of oil on the Guyana economy. He said:

In Guyana for example, which has a total dependence on imported petroleum and petroleum based products there will be a net increment of over 400 percent to our import bill for these products for 1974 over 1972. Even with increased earnings from some of our agricultural exports, payments for petroleum imports this year will absorb 27 percent of our total export earnings as compared with 8 percent in 1972.

What he failed to mention was that the petroleum comes from Trinidad, a member of the Caribbean Common Market, the bastard child of the ruling People's National Congress and imperialism.

Caricom ties Guyana to the purchase of Trinidad oil and gas whether or not these products could be purchased cheaper elsewhere. It should be noted that in 1964, the last year of the PPP government, Cuba was awarded a contract by the Guyana Electricity Corporation for the supply of Bunker C fuel at a price of about \$50,000 less than the lowest offer of Esso, Texaco and Shell.

No doubt Cuba was able to do so because it was purchasing crude oil from the Soviet Union at about 30 percent less than the oil companies controlled by Standard Oil of New Jersey, Texaco, and the Anglo-Dutch Shell had been charging previously.

Their monopoly of the Caribbean market has resulted in the retail price of cooking gas being increased from \$5.78 to \$8.40 per 20 pounds and \$23.90 to \$39.50 per 100 pounds, and gas oil from about 46 cents to \$1.26 per gallon between November 1973 and April 1974. During the same period, gasoline retail price increased by 147 percent as compared with 28 percent in the USA, and Bunker C fuel from approximately \$23 during 1972 to about \$45 in October 1973 and \$140 per ton in 1974.

The present near collapse of the economy is due not mainly to the oil crisis; the latter has merely aggravated it.

The oil crisis is not the cause of the record-breaking balance of payments deficit of \$100 million (\$85 million in trading account and \$15 million in capital account) and the all-time low in foreign reserves of about \$20 million at the end of 1973.

The balance of payments deficit is the result of an excess of imports over exports, and capital outflows (mainly profits and debt payments) exceeding inflows (mainly loans and grants).

Conspicuous consumption facilitated through banking credit to commercial firms and the creation of a huge governmental-bureaucratic machine (personal emoluments — salaries — increased salaries and allowances) has led to a sharp increase in imports from \$262 million in 1970 to about \$352-364 million (estimated) in 1973.

Export income for the same period increased from \$265 million in 1970 to \$285 million (estimated) in 1973. But this was largely due to increased prices. Production of the main export products — bauxite, sugar and rice — actually declined.

This unfavourable position is due to the fact that the PNC's \$300 million 7-year plan (1966-72) concentrated not on industry and agriculture, but on infrastructure.

Very few factories have been set up. The PNC regime's attempts to get private investors to invest in industries have also failed; under CARIFTA and Caricom, they prefer to set up in Jamaica, Trinidad and to a lesser degree in Barbados.

To add insult to injury, the PNC regime has decided to locate a jointly-owned government (Guyana, Trinidad and Jamaica) aluminium smelter in Trinidad, and a jointly-owned (Guyana and Barbados) cement factory in Barbados.

Agricultural production has been curtailed because of the sabotage of the PPP's progressive agricultural policies.

As militant Chairman of the PPP, L.F.S. Burnham in *Thunder* of July 1952 wrote: "Our Party holds that priority must be given to the Hutchinson drainage and irrigation schemes which will bring immediate agricultural development and prosperity — supplying at the same time power for hydro-electricity. With or without the World Bank, we Guianese shall have them."

But as puppet Prime Minister, his government shifted infrastructural emphasis on drainage and irrigation to roads, sea defences, public buildings, airport and airstrips.

The PPP's 1960-64 Development Plan had allocated 30 percent for drainage and irrigation. By contrast, the PNC in its first D-Plan allocated only 17 percent but expended only about 5 percent.

And now they blame the weather! They removed crop bonuses and subsidies such as duty-free gasoline, free anti-rabies injections, acushi-ants drugs, and so on, which we had instituted.

Credits were also curtailed by the Credit Corporation to the agricultural sector.

Commercial hire purchase credit dropped from 51 percent in 1965 to 30 percent in January 1972 for industrial and agricultural equipment and vehicles.

During the same period, credit for motor cars increased from 13 percent to 26 percent, and consumer durables from 37 percent to 44 percent.

New registration of motor cars increased from 6,267 for the 3-year period 1962-64 to 12,748 for the 1969-71 period. For tractors, for the corresponding periods, the figures were 1,289 and 1,073.

That rice production fell from 165,000 tons in 1964 to about 100,000 tons in 1973 is clearly a consequence of unsound policies, bureaucratic mismanagement and harassment of the Rice Producers Association.

Sugar production in 1973 was the lowest in 11 years. Poor industrial relations and the continuous refusal by the PNC regime and the Sugar Producers Association to recognise the Guyana Agricultural Workers Union were contributory factors.

And there has been little success in diversification of agriculture away from rice and sugar. In the key meat and dairy sector — beef, pork, mutton, ham, pickled pork, lard, cracklings, milk — increases in production were smaller than the growth of population.

Bauxite production has fallen not because of production problems, but largely because of marketing difficulties. According to the Minister of Finance in his 1974 budget speech, "aluminium has experienced the weakest market conditions over the past two or three years."

That excuse is not good enough. Had the PNC not adopted a hostile attitude to the Soviet Union, much of the marketing and transformation problems of the Guyana Bauxite Company (GUYBAU) could have been solved.

It is quite probable that with a PPP government in power during the past ten years, a hydro-electric plant and an aluminium smelter would already have become a reality with the help of the world socialist community.

We must point out loudly and clearly — had the PNC pursued overall the course charted by the PPP, there would have been no crisis today.

Payment of debts (\$50 million in 1974 — 22.5 percent of the budget — as compared with only \$10 million in 1964) would have been met by increased production and not by increased taxation, as presently.

Guyana is among the world's countries with the highest rate of taxation. Taxes on goods (indirect taxation) averaged \$55 million per year under the PNC during the period 1965 to 1973 as compared with only \$24 million under the PPP for the period 1957 to 1964.

And direct taxes, which also hit the small man through the pay-as-you-earn system, averaged \$49 million under the PNC as compared with only \$21 million under the PPP.

The tax squeeze of \$19 million in the 1974 budget is the biggest in the history of Guyana. It has been imposed by the same PNC, which with the United Force, the Trades Union Congress and the Chamber of Commerce engineered violence and arson (which burned down part of Georgetown) against the PPP 1962 (Kaldor) Budget. Guyanese who were then misled would do well to remember that taxes then amounted to only \$10 million on the budget introduction and \$7 million on its revision.

On one PNC tax alone, a Defence Levy of 5 percent on all imports, the regime obtained \$5 million per year, almost the whole amount obtained under the PPP's 1962 budget proposals.

In 1974, it imposed a surtax of 5 percent on all chargeable income above \$500 per year, which it has euphemistically described as a "National Development Surtax."

The same PNC had opposed a PPP's National Development Savings Scheme in 1962, which applied to income earners of over \$500 per month and provided for interest payment of 4 percent per year!

Since the 1974 budget, other taxes and impositions are being enacted with a vengeance — an increase in fuel charge by the Guyana Electricity Corporation of 25 percent for Tariff 1, and 96 percent for Tariffs 2,3, and 4; increase of steamer fares from 15 to 20 cents; increased tax on gasoline to 79 cents per gallon, equivalent to the retail price in October 1975; increase of tax on gas oil from 0.7 cents to 5 cents per gallon; withdrawing subsidy on public transport by

abandonment of the railways; proposed imposition of road tolls; and proposed removal of subsidy on flour.

Had the PNC concentrated on industry and agriculture, as proposed by the PPP, increased production would also have helped in the balance of payments problem — there would have been an inflow of income from increased exports to compensate for debt payments outflow.

The PNC's answer to the present crisis is to go around in a vicious circle — like a dog chasing its own tail.

Because of the huge balance of payments deficit and low foreign reserves, the regime has embarked on import restrictions, qualitatively and quantitatively.

Luxuries and semi-luxuries such as whiskey, rugs, carpets and large motor cars have been banned. And licensing now limit purchases to only about 60-70 percent of 1973 imports. This has had several unfavourable consequences for the people.

Customs duties (taxes) previously collected from the rich from luxuries and semi-luxuries, which are now banned, are passed on to the poor. Bans and restrictions will also reduce profits of private business, and thus loss of income tax. This loss too will be passed on to the poor consumers.

That's why consumption tax has increased from \$5 million in 1970 to \$53 in 1974.

Prices are increasing not only because about 95 percent of our imports come from capitalist countries ravaged by inflation, but also because of additional taxation. And shortages created because of government-imposed bans and import restrictions are leading to black-market prices.

And since taxation alone could not raise all the revenues required to pay salaries and debt payments and to maintain social services, the latter have been cut.

The share of the budget for the people's welfare declined from 45 percent in 1964 to 33 percent in 1974. The budget allocation was as follows:

	1964	1974
Personal emoluments	40.7%	42.3%
Debt charges	14.7%	22.5%
Social services, subsidies, etc.	44.6%	35.2%

Simultaneously, because of a shortage of revenue and the need to balance the budget, dismissal of workers has begun at the lower levels of the public service. This will also be resorted to by the private sector, as commercial houses will suffer from reduced turnover and profits as a result of import bans and restrictions.

Fearing outbursts because of resentment arising out of increasing prices, cuts in social services and subsidies, and retrenchment, the regime is trying desperately to borrow \$200 million. But this will only buy some time — it will be only a palliative, not a cure.

A \$200 million short-term, high interest loan will mean an additional debt payment of about \$50 million per annum. This means that debt payments alone will consume more than one-third of the budget.

This will only exacerbate the present vicious circle of shortages, taxation, higher prices, cuts in social services and retrenchment.

Living conditions have greatly deteriorated due to soaring prices. In 1972, the rate of increase in price (5.2 percent) was more than twice the annual average increase (2.3 percent) for the 11-year period (1960-71); in the first 8 months of 1973, the increase was three times the 1960-1971 increase.

During the past 9 years (1965-1973), the cost of living (COL) index figure rose to 40 points compared with only 11 points during the 7-year (1958-64) term of office of the PPP. But more recently, because of rampant inflation, it has been increasing by geometric progression. In the last 3 months (September 15 to December 15) of 1973 alone, the COL index figure jumped by 8 points as compared with 11 points during our 7-year term of office.

In the food sector, the picture was the most alarming. During the same 3-month period of 1974, the food index figure rose by 12 points, almost the same (11 points) for the 7-year period of the PPP government. As a consequence, between January 1972 and August 1973, the domestic purchasing power of the Guyana dollar declined by nearly 3 percent, and later, even more rapidly.

In recent years, per capita income has not been keeping pace with the growth of population, estimated to be 2.8 percent. The result is poverty and malnutrition on a wide scale.

The Mayor, Mrs. Beryl Simon, in recent broadcasts highlighted the problem of poverty in her attempts to chastise the citizens of Georgetown for raiding dump trucks with contaminated potatoes and for rummaging through garbage heaps for food and clothing.

In one broadcast she stated:

I received complaints about children and adults rummaging through the garbage thrown at the dump near Roxanne Burnham Gardens and taking away old clothes and items of food, etc. I have already spoken of this practice, since it is not only injurious to health but interferes with the work of the department responsible for dumping. There was an occasion when a child was nearly run over by the bulldozer when the vehicle was in the process of pushing and rolling the refuse dumped by one of our trucks. The refuse is sent to the dumps for disposal and, in all cases, any items of foodstuffs found would be unfit for human consumption. I must warn all citizens to discontinue this dangerous practice as the consequences can be very detrimental.

In another radio broadcast, the Mayor said: "An unusually large number of persons raided the lorries and took as many bags (of condemned potatoes) as they possibly could with the result that only a very small portion of bags were finally buried at the dump."

The good lady should not be chastising the citizens and warning the children. They are all too aware of the danger of consuming contaminated foods. She should attack her party and government for forcing the people to live under such conditions.

A recent report by the Medical Officer of Health of the municipality of Georgetown disclosed that 215 or 72 percent of the 299 persons treated at the Georgetown clinic in June 1974 were suffering from "calcium vitamin deficiency."

Nutritional deficiencies have increased largely because of the non-availability of essential foodstuffs, mainly proteins, and the exorbitant prices which are out of reach of the ordinary wage earner.

Two years ago the regime stupidly banned \$12 million worth of foods included among which were fish and meat. That was for the people a disastrous decision as local production was inadequate to meet the basic needs of the population.

A breakdown of government statistics showed that for 1972 production represented a very low weekly per capita consumption level of 3-4 ounces for beef, 3 ounces for pork and four-fifths of one pint for milk. Eggs were about 35 per person per year. Taken together, production of all types of meat was 13 ounces per person per week.

The removal of the subsidy on flour will greatly affect nutritional standards as bread and roti are substantial items of the diet of the average Guyanese.

In the meantime, while the government created conditions which pre-disposed to malnutrition and disease, medical care is becoming out of reach for the average Guyanese. The major health institution, the Georgetown Public Hospital, is ill-staffed; there is no radiologist, anaesthetist, or pathologist. Because of shortages of nursing and other staff and drugs, private medical consultants have withdrawn their services. Two persons in one bed continue as before despite the exposure by the press.

The free milk and school feeding scheme inaugurated by our PPP government has been withdrawn. Schools are overcrowded, under-staffed and ill-equipped. As a result two-thirds of the children leaving primary school are unable to read properly, as was disclosed recently by the Minister of Education. There are also inadequate places at secondary and university levels. The principal of the Guyana School of Agriculture disclosed in his 1972 report that only 10 places could have been provided for 600 applicants.

The limit to the number of graduates permitted to be employed by government-aided secondary schools is affecting the standard of education.

In housing, the situation remains alarming. The government has failed to embark on a programme of slum clearance and the building of low-rental houses for the lower income group.

Because of the shortage of houses, overcrowding is a major problem. The majority of households in Georgetown have a one-room combination of a bedroom, a kitchen and a living room; 49 percent of all households in 1970 had five and more persons; and about 39 percent of households share their toilet facilities.

This overcrowding will be intensified as more and more persons, estimated to be 25,000 annually, trek from the rural areas to Georgetown.

And as the pressure for housing increases, rents which now consume about one-third of the wages of the worker will increase, despite the government's talk of a rent freeze.

Old persons are especially hard-hit. The callous PNC elite reduces the pensionable age for parliamentarians and ministers from 50 to 40, and increases salaries, but refuses to abolish the means test of \$16 per month and to increase pensions of \$10 and \$12 per month respectively in rural and urban areas. At the same time it has failed, despite promises, to lower the pensionable age from 65 to 60 under the National Insurance Scheme.

Down with the anti-working class corrupt PNC regime!

We must intensify our struggle to attest this decline in living standards. In this regard, our Women's Progressive Organisation especially plays an increasing role.

In the 1960's, the PNC women started the broom campaign to sweep the PPP out of office. In the early 1970's, the middle-class women started a campaign of banging of pots and pans in Chile to bring down the Allende government. In Guyana, our women too must come out in the streets. We must fight for the re-introduction of the school-feeding programme, subsidisation and standardisation of school books, subsidisation of essential commodities, removal of bans and restrictions on the importation of food, better medical care, abolition of the means test, reduction of the qualifying age under the NIS, increase of pensions, lowering of taxes, cuts in the ministerial apparatus, the army and police, increased wages and fair and realistic prices to the farmers.

We must fight to bring about the egalitarian society which the PNC had talked about.

In 1970, the Minister of Finance in his budget statement said it was the aim of the PNC to have "re-distributive justice". But what is the end result? Instead of the gap between the super-rich and the poor narrowing, it is widening every day, every month. A larger and larger portion of the Guyanese cake is going to the PNC elite. Personal emoluments for the government machine have increased from \$27 million under the PPP in 1964 to \$94 million under the corrupt PNC in 1974.

Social services sector which aids the poor has been cut. As a result, the percentage for health has decreased. For education, the percentage of the national budget decreased from 16 in 1970 to 11 in 1974. The amount spent on pensions and social assistance has hardly increased, but salaries and allowances for the PNC elite have sky-rocketed.

At a lavish function on his 50th birthday, L.F.S. Burnham called for sacrifices; he declared that Guyana had to be built "over the sacrifices of many of us and this means giving up many of the things we have grown accustomed to having." But soon after the fraudulent July 16 [1973] elections, the bogus National Assembly doubled the pay of ministers and parliamentarians. The Prime Minister's salary and allowances now amount to an average of about \$5,000 per month; senior minister's monthly take is over \$3,000 and parliamentarians have a 100 percent increase from \$250 to \$500.

The new pension law revision will also give them a handsome windfall. The new rates are as follows: for not less than 4 years of service, a quarter of one year's salary; for not less than 6 years, one-third of salary; for not less than 8 years, half of salary; for not less than 10 years, two-thirds of salary; for not less than 12 years, three-quarters of salary.

The new proposals reduce the minimum qualifying period from 6 years to 4 years; and increase the maximum pension (service of 12 years and above) from two-thirds to three-quarters of a year's salary.

Apart from increases in salaries and pensions, the PNC has further swindled the nation by appointing 5 of the 13 non-elected technocrat ministers who were on the PNC list of 53 candidates for the 1973 elections. Why were they not selected and put as elected members in the Parliament? By appointing them as technocrat non-elected ministers, the PNC corruptly made it possible for additional political hacks to sit in the parliament and to be paid handsomely by the hard-pressed taxpayers.

As a result of this swindling and extravagance, the expenditure for the so-called parliament has been increased from \$258,196 in 1964 to \$1,576,628 in 1974.

The PNC is sinking the nation deeper and deeper into the mire of moral depravity.

The belated reports of the Director of Audit for 1968 and 1969 have amply demonstrated how the PNC regime has made corruption the way of life in Guyana.

If there is an increasing trend towards waywardness and crime, the answer is not to be-moan the fact as the Mayor of Georgetown has done by referring to the Guyanese society as "a tug-of-war, each one pulling the other way" and wondering "what our society will be in the next decade." It is not enough to teach moral lessons about the role of parents in conditioning their young and to call on the Church, the schools and women's organisations "to come forward and save Guyana."

What is essential is to bring an end of corruption. Only when the governmental leadership lives a life consistent with frugality and sets the example will there be a positive response to the call for sacrifices and good behaviour. The PNC must practice what it preaches. Practice is better than precept.

We demand the enactment of laws and the implementation measures to bring an end to corruption in our fair land. Why haven't promises made in this regard been fulfilled? The Prime Minister in December 1971 had told the nation that there was already in draft proposals for a code of conduct for ministers and parliamentarians. That has not yet seen the light of day.

The Ombudsman's powers were also to be enlarged to include investigating corruption. A parliamentary committee was appointed to look into this question. Three years have passed and nothing has been done. Our nation deserves better.

ASCRIA had brought a complaint to the Ombudsman about corruption in connection with two ministers. But after nearly 3 years, no report has been published.

Jamaica must be praised for taking the lead in the Caribbean in enacting legislation to bring an end to corruption in public life. This is a lead which is worth emulating. We must press for implementation of measures along the lines of Jamaica. We must bring an end to corruption. We must fight to save our nation's honour.

UNEMPLOYMENT

As has already been pointed out, growth rates are not keeping pace with the growth of the population. This is a disgrace as population growth rate is only 2.87 percent, less than the "over 3 percent" Burnham wrote about in 1966.

And unemployment instead of steadily decreasing is increasing. Instead of a substantial increase, there has been a substantial increase. This in turn has led to serious increase in juvenile delinquency, crime and prostitution.

The government claims that the unemployment rate is about 15 percent. But the actual figure is nearer 30 percent. Among youths, as a survey in Georgetown and New Amsterdam disclosed, the position is worse — one-third of the youths were unemployed and another third under-employed. And annually, thousands of school leavers enter the labour market with no hope of employment.

Attempts by the PNC to move urban dwellers into agriculture, either in the rural areas or in the interior, have been a dismal failure. Land settlements started by the PPP at Brandwagt Sari

and elsewhere have, under the PNC mismanagement, collapsed. And many started by the PNC have also failed.

Meanwhile, millions of dollars are poured into places like Kibilibiri with little return. At Matthews Ridge also huge sums are being spent to prevent the trek of residents from that one-time industrial area to Georgetown; the agricultural cooperatives which were ballyhooed at the beginning have largely failed.

The trek from the countryside of about 25,000 annually is aggravating the unemployment problem.

And then there is the retrenchment (dismissal) of workers by the government and the private sector. The warning of the Minister of Economic Development in early 1974 that in view of the grave crisis there would be massive retrenchment in mid-1974 unless there was increased production has come to pass — retrenchment has been taking place in different government departments.

Because of the grave financial situation and the inability of the government to meet its bills, there is also the likelihood of a freeze in employment in the future. This means that thousands of school leavers will find no opportunities for gainful work open to them. No doubt, this was one of the main reasons why the government has embarked on the National Service Scheme. Unable to employ youths and pay them, it plans to employ them without pay.

The regime hopes to solve the dilemma facing it — increasing unemployment leading to increasing crime — by removing the youths from the streets in the urban areas and taking them into National Service in the interior.

Apart from free labour which is tantamount to forced labour, the PNC hopes to achieve other even more sinister objectives; firstly, the brainwashing of the young people; secondly, the making of entry to the University of Guyana and other institutions of higher learning conditional on National Service; thirdly, the creation of the military reserve.

The government is cognisant of the fact that there is grave discontent which can explode at any time. It is aware that the Youth Corps and its “ideological teacher”, the YSM, have failed to control the youths who are highly idealistic and militant and are becoming more and more critical.

It is conscious that the PYO's control of the University of Guyana Student Society frustrates its designs for “thought control” at the University and for a complete regimented, robot-like state bureaucratic apparatus.

It knows that although expenditure on the police and army has increased from \$16 million in 1972 to \$28 million in 1974, the security forces are insufficient to contain an angry Guyanese people. The Pioneer Corps under the National Service Scheme will thus enable the PNC to build cheaply a reservoir of militarily-trained young people.

What is needed is not forced labour. What is needed is not a larger army and police or a reserve army. What are needed are more jobs.

We must take a firm stand on the question of unemployment and under-employment. The youths of Guyana face a difficult future. Our Progressive Youth Organisation must give the fighting lead to end the scourge of unemployment. It must demand unemployment relief, special emergency works programmes and adequate educational facilities, including grants and loans, for the acquisition of technical, vocational and professional skills.

Above all, the militant PYO must let the young people understand that unemployment will only worsen under the reformist-imperialist economic planning strategy of the PNC; that only under our economic programme will the economy be stimulated and the situation transformed.

At our two past Congresses, we outlined our programme, what we consider the main lines along which policies should be directed. We wish to reiterate them now at this time of grave crisis.

An anti-imperialist, democratic and pro-socialist programme must include:

- 1) Nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy — foreign and comprador capitalist-owned and controlled mines, plantations, factories, banks, insurance and foreign trade;

- 2) Planned proportional development of the economy under centralised planning and control with emphasis simultaneously on industry and agriculture instead of infrastructure; expansion of the public and cooperative sectors; transformation of the economy from primary to integrated production by making the sugar industry as in Cuba, and the timber and bauxite industries into complexes;
- 3) Development of a sound all-embracing agricultural policy with land reform and an end to all forms of discrimination; diversification of agriculture to shift from the precarious dependency of sugar; an increase in the production of rice, corn, bananas, ground provisions, cattle, poultry, dairy products, etc., for domestic consumption and export. A large-scale fishing industry with a fishing fleet and factory ship;
- 4) Re-assessment of membership of the imperialist-dominated Caribbean Common Market which relegates Guyana to the role of a producer of food and raw materials and the market for manufactured goods produced mainly in Trinidad, Barbados and Jamaica;
- 5) Establishment and protection of industries to replace exports wherever practicable and feasible, based on a policy of import substitution;
- 6) Measures to curb conspicuous consumption;
- 7) Full democracy, workers' participation and control, and involvement of the people at all levels;
- 8) Training of administrative, diplomatic, technical and professional personnel in socialist states; ending the policy of refusing employment to students who have graduated in socialist countries;
- 9) Imbuing the people with the revolutionary scientific socialist (Marxist-Leninist) ideology and involving them meaningfully in the process of socio-economic reconstruction;
- 10) Revising the National Insurance Scheme to provide for unemployment relief, reduced age for pension and a national health service;
- 11) A national house-building programme which would solve the grave housing shortage;
- 12) Settlement of the border issues so that they cannot be used for launching attacks against Guyana;
- 13) Ending corruption, nepotism and favouritism; fighting and taking strict measures against all forms of racial discrimination; providing special opportunities to all depressed groups, particularly the Amerindians, for development.

The PNC advocates cooperative socialism which falsely stipulates that cooperatives will be the means to bring about socialism. This demagogic revisionist position has been taken because it does not want to, and cannot, break up the imperialist structure.

The PPP's socialism, based on the science of Marxism-Leninism, holds that nothing fundamental can be achieved without a revolutionary change. It advocates nationalisation.

The PNC implies that it is for nationalisation, but really practises participation with imperialism.

Hubert Jack, the Minister of Mines, is reported to have told the New York Times (November 31, 1972) correspondent, Richard Severe: "Our position was always one of participation not nationalisation".

And Sridath Ramphal, Foreign Minister, referring to the nationalisation of the Demerara Bauxite Company is reported to have said: "We have got to disabuse the investors' mind about Alcan. Enlightened businessmen should be more happy than fearful at what we are doing. What we want are relationships on an agreed partnership. This is what provides security for the investor."

It is not strange that Ramphal and "Watergate" Nixon speak the same language.

In his message to Congress on February 25, 1971, Nixon stated that "the core of our new foreign policy is a partnership . . . its necessary adjuncts are strength to secure our interests."

The PNC talks about control of our natural resources. We say ownership and control of all resources, including financial.

The PNC concentrates on infrastructure. We say emphasis must be put on the simultaneous development of industry and agriculture. Our priorities will not only increase national income, but also provide more employment.

Money borrowed and spent on infrastructure provides employment mainly for construction workers. Industry and agriculture provide not only temporary work for construction workers but also permanent work for factory workers and farm hands. And every person employed in industry or agriculture provides regular employment to 5 or 6 other persons.

It is not surprising that under the PNC our national income per head of population has fallen. Whereas before, under the PPP, Guyana was equated with the MDC's (more developed countries) of the Caribbean, we are equated now under the PNC with the LDC's (less developed countries).

Guyana is now grouped with St. Kitts and not Trinidad, Barbados or Jamaica. Such is the progress under the PNC.

The PNC claims that Guyana is non-aligned. But this is a blatant lie shown up by the fact that the great bulk of our imports and so-called aid originate in the capitalist world.

Guyana is hitched not only to the capitalist states, but also to the sub-imperialist Caribbean Economic Community. Factories which should be built in Guyana are being set up in the Caribbean.

We believe that the deepening of state relations with the socialist world will help to industrialise our country and develop our agriculture.

We also believe that if we are to build socialism, we must have people versed in the theory and practice of Marxism. It is impossible to create a socialist society with civilian and military bureaucrat trained in Taiwan, Greece, Brazil, USA, Korea and Malaysia.

The PNC mouths the importance of our human resource. But everything it does frustrates its development, from the resort to fraud at central and local elections to the refusal to put into practice workers' and farmers' participation and control.

We believe that only genuinely democratic institutions can give a government the kind of support it needs to cope with foreign and local reaction. The working people must be given representation commensurate with their contribution to national development.

Unlike the PNC, the PPP holds that corruption saps the moral fibre of the nation. It must be brought speedily to an end.

Under the PNC, Guyana's motto has become a joke. "One Nation, One People, One Destiny" has become "One Nation, Several People, No Destiny" as the editor of the West Indian World observed after a recent visit to Guyana.

Under the PPP, equality will be guaranteed. And there would also be special opportunities for all depressed groups, particularly the Amerindians, for development.

In early 1974, the Economic Development Minister told a conference for indigenous peoples held in Guyana that the PNC regime totally supported the aspirations of the indigenous peoples, which included: reducing the possibility of physical and cultural genocide; combat racism; ensuring political, economic and social justice; establishing and strengthening the concept of indigenous and cultural rights.

The PNC's stand is hypocritical. It is an established fact that the rights of the Amerindians are violated and they are by-passed and are treated as second-class citizens.

Amerindians, like East Indians, are discriminated against. They cannot get jobs unless they become PNC members.

This same kind of discrimination is practised with respect to the granting of land, loans and social assistance. Thousands of Amerindians who qualify for old-age pensions and social assistance (poor relief) do not get them.

Communal land titles had been promised since 1965 but have not yet been, and will not be, granted.

The recommendation by a former Amerindian Field Officer, P.J.S. Peberdy, that the 2,400 square miles of land in the South Rupununi leased to the Rupununi Development Company, should be handed to the Amerindians has not been implemented.

Amerindians are landless in the region and continue to work as cowhands for the cattle company.

The cost (rent and survey fee) for a 10-acre plot of land has been increased from \$22 under the PPP government to about \$120 under the PNC, a sum the poor Amerindians cannot afford. Land rent has also increased from 25 cents to \$2 (first 5 years) and \$4 (second 5 years) per acre.

Very little money was allocated and spent during the last 9 years for Amerindian development. Projects — bridges, wells — claimed to have been completed by PNC propaganda had not been done.

Facilities granted to PNC members in the interior — free food, loans, seedlings — are denied Amerindians.

Malnutrition is rife among Amerindians. Their livelihood is threatened by the denial to them of guns, which they have traditionally used to protect their crops and to hunt for food. Guns are given only to PNC supporters.

The credit claimed by the PNC government for the improvement in health and the high birth rate among Amerindians belongs to the PPP, which had launched the anti-malaria and other medical inoculation schemes. Under the PPP government, there were monthly supplies of drugs to interior villages, and monthly visits by doctors, dispensers and nurses.

These visits are now rare. Not too long ago, a ranger (dispenser) told residents at an Amerindian village that he had drugs only for children, that the medicine for adults was paiwari (cassava beverage).

In the Berbice River, health centres are closed. The Amerindian captain in one village claimed that he was tired of making representations. One individual disclosed at a public meeting that his reputed pregnant wife died for lack of medical care.

No attempt has been made by the PNC to develop and strengthen the languages and culture of the Amerindian people.

Amerindians are denied their political rights. Captains are hand-picked and elections are fraudulent.

They are not free to hold political meetings with the parties of their choice. On numerous occasions permission has been denied the PPP to visit Amerindian settlements.

The PPP will bring to an end the vindictive PNC treatment and callous disregard of the Amerindians.

PARTY AND WORKING-CLASS UNITY

During the next two years and before our next congress we must gear our party into a better fighting force, organisationally and ideologically. Our success is dependent upon how much mass pressure we can exert on the regime in power. Whatever the form of the struggle, it is vital that more and more of the Guyanese people should embrace our party seeing in it the only salvation for the country's future.

To achieve this aim, we must strengthen our party by improving the quality of our work, by extending our work especially among those who at one time supported the PNC, by improving our work in mass organisations, by fighting for democracy including fair and free elections, by struggling for anti-imperialist unity at home and abroad particularly in the Caribbean, by working for the consolidation of peace forces, and for international proletarian solidarity.

We have achieved a great deal in the ideological-educational work in the last four years. But much still remains to be done.

Many communist parties in our area have little mass support but a theoretically and ideologically developed leadership. Our party, on the other hand, has a firm foundation on the masses but a weakness ideologically.

We must therefore concentrate our efforts in the coming months to correct this shortcoming. Cadre development, study groups in the different parts of the country, attendance at Acadre College and study abroad must be intensified.

All comrades who have had the opportunity of studying abroad on long and short-term courses should make a special effort to organise study groups in their respective areas to heighten the ideological consciousness, particularly of our activists.

While some areas have made great strides in this direction, other areas, it is regrettable to say, have not achieved very much. This work cannot be over-emphasised.

Today, more than ever, the imperialists and their lackeys are concentrating their attacks on the ideological front. This is so particularly because of their setbacks in the military field in Indochina, Africa, the Middle East and elsewhere.

In the universities in the capitalist countries, especially in Canada and the United States, great emphasis is now being placed on ideological indoctrination. Attempts are being made particularly because of the militant struggles of students and academics in the late 1960s, to revise Marxism, to brainwash and confuse, and to create disunity in the anti-monopoly anti-imperialist front.

Maoism, neo-Trotskyism, neo-Pan Africanism, Black capitalism, Marcussism, "socialism with a human face", "national communism" — these are the main ideological currents which are being used to sow confusion. It is not accidental that from three separate political positions — the ultra-leftist Maoist group of China, the revisionist PNC group of Guyana, and the rightist Razak group in Malaysia — the same ideological view is being perpetrated; namely, the so-called "two superpowers" or "two imperialisms" line which equates socialist USSR with imperialist USA.

This line is clearly intended to isolate the liberation movements in the "third world", particularly from working with their natural allies, the world socialist system headed by the Soviet Union. Though appearing to be revolutionary in theory, it actually aids imperialism.

The Maoist group has shown its true colours not only with respect to the Soviet Union but also as regards several national liberation issues.

The Soviet Union is regarded as the greater of the two enemies — the USA and the USSR. Peaceful co-existence, at one time violently opposed by the Maoists as a sell-out to imperialism, is now embraced but only with the USA, not with the USSR. The Peking leadership pictures the Soviet Union as "an enemy with whom China cannot live under one sky."

Peking is working for a strong European Economic Community (EEC) as a bulwark against the Soviet Union. That's why it gave former British Tory Prime Minister [Edward Heath] on his recent visit to China a rousing and pompous reception which is normally accorded only to heads of state or "close political allies." This was done because Heath's party, unlike the British Labour Government, is firmly committed to the EEC, which the Chinese leaders hope would become a "kind of barrier" to detente in Europe and growing cooperation with Western Europe and the socialist states.

As noted by the Norwegian news agency correspondent in Peking, "it is the consensus of opinion among observers that the demonstratively positive attitude to Heath and his visit is connected with the constant warnings of the leader of the Conservative Party against too fast detente in Europe."

The Peking leadership no longer sees the world polarised in class terms. Less than two years ago, there was in vogue the Maoist concept of the "intermediate zones" — Asia, Africa and Latin America in the "first zone", and the developed capitalist states in between the USSR and the USA on the one hand and the socialist countries, from Peking's point of view, on the other.

Now it is said there are three worlds — USSR and the USA in the "first world"; Asia, Africa and Latin America in the "third world", and the in-between developed countries, the "second world".

And the Mao leadership has been assiduously trying to be identified with the "third world" to gain hegemony of it in satisfaction of its narrow nationalist chauvinist ambitions.

But it has been rebuffed because of its actions on questions such as disarmament, economic assistance, and so on. In recent debates at the United Nations, on the question of disarmament, China's delegation, according to the Indian weekly Link (15 April 1973), spoke more than ten times against the non-aligned countries.

And for the first time in the United Nations, the Chinese representative did not mention Peking's "readiness" to render assistance in the economic development of "third world countries by concrete actions."

In the case of Bangladesh, People's China voted at first against its being seated at the United Nations. When the revolutionaries were being slaughtered in Chile by the military coup of 1973, little help was forthcoming from China; instead, the Mao group recognised with alacrity the fascist junta.

The Chinese news agency regularly tries to create an image of the PNC regime as revolutionary, anti-imperialist and pro-socialist. Nothing is said about the demagogic and revisionist ideology of "cooperative socialism" and Burnhamism, the so-called special brand of Marxism-Leninism.

We must take a firm stand against the "two super powers" line. Fortunately, it was vehemently attacked at the Algiers Summit Meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement in September 1973 by the leader of the Cuban delegation, Prime Minister Fidel Castro. He correctly pointed out that it was absurd to equate the Soviet Union with the USA, that "inventing a false enemy can have only one aim: to evade the real enemy"; that the Soviet Union had given, and continues to give, disinterested aid to Cuba and other liberation movements; that the USA remains the principal imperialist country in the world.

Mr. L.F.S. Burnham, the leader of the Guyana delegation to the Algiers Summit Meeting, although travelling in the same plane with Dr. Castro, did not follow his lead. It seems that he avoided the question by agreeing to Mr. Michael Manley, the leader of the Jamaican delegation, speaking for Guyana and Jamaica.

Other spokesmen of the PNC regime, however, continue to peddle the erroneous "two super powers" line. This is because it accords with its junior clientele status and its service to imperialism.

The Mao-Burnham-Razak line serves the same purpose as that of the evangelists, namely, the preservation of the status quo.

In their regular visits to Guyana, these flying and roving "sky pilots" declare that politics cannot save the Guyanese people, that neither the PNC nor the PPP can help; rather, only trust in God and the return of Jesus Christ will save the people. Clearly, while ostensibly criticising the PNC, the evangelists' aim is to disarm the people, to prevent them from struggling against the anti-working class regime and thus preserving the status quo of PNC neo-colonial rule. Little wonder that the CIA finances not only trade unionists and politicians, but also evangelists like the Billy Graham's Latin American crusade.

There are also variations on the "two super powers" theme. Some ideologies would admit that the Soviet Union has made tremendous strides and has gone a long way to satisfy the material needs. But, it has failed, they say, to confer freedom. They say that there is no democracy in the USSR. They want "socialism with a human face."

These people fail to interpret objective reality dialectically. They refuse to admit the great changes which have taken place from the days of Stalin to the present time. They fail to view freedom in the context of the necessity to maintain working class power in the face of ruthless class enemies at home and abroad, as have been seen in the case of Chile.

In accordance with their judgements, Cuba is totalitarian, but Guyana and the Commonwealth Caribbean are free. They obviously mistake form for content. Cuba now has basic grassroots socialist democracy as compared with fascism under Batista and colonial and neo-colonialist authoritarianism in Guyana and the Commonwealth Caribbean.

The Black Power struggle, which has an impact in the Caribbean, also has certain aberrations. The weapon of the imperialists is the "skin strategy" of Black capitalism and neo-Pan Africanism. The aim is to separate the Black working class struggle in the USA from the workers struggle in general and the African Liberation Movement from the socialist world. By posing colour — Black against White — the imperialists hope to divide and weaken the anti-monopoly struggle in the United States. By fostering Black capitalism, they hope to create a Black bour-

geoisie which will eventually side with capitalism in general and not the Blacks who suffer from triple oppression.

Pan Africanism, concerned with a united and socialist Africa, had two definite streams — Dr. W.E.B. Dubois, the famous Marxist scholar, who was chosen by Dr. Nkrumah during his latter term as President of Ghana to embark on the monumental project, the African Encyclopaedia, led the trend towards a united Africa going to socialism in close cooperation and alliance with the socialist world. George Padmore and C.L.R. James, on the other hand, who for several years took a strong anti-Soviet position, led the trend towards isolationism from the socialist world.

In recent times, neo-Pan Africanism has been given a boost by Stokely Carmichael, the advocate of Black capitalism in the USA and separate organisation of Africans, Indians, Portuguese, Chinese, Amerindians, etc., in Guyana. For his advocacy of separate ethnic organisation in Guyana, he was condemned by our party and others.

In the same way we felt that it would be harmful to organise on the basis of ethnic lines, we hold that Black capitalism and neo-Pan Africanism are inimical to the Black liberation movement in America and in Africa.

C.L.R. James also has been a leading light of the neo-Pan African movement. Some years ago, he worked closely with the Williams' regime in Trinidad as editor of the PNM paper, *The Nation*, and as councillor to the Prime Minister. At that time, he was also sympathetic to the PNC and hostile to the PPP. But after his break with Eric Williams, he took a more and more hostile position. And his influence grew among West Indians who were attending universities in the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada, leading to the development of the New Beginning Movement, a neo-Trotskyite organisation.

Many of the returned students established groups in the Caribbean islands with a similar orientation.

In Guyana, that movement was linked up with ASCRIA after its break with the PNC regime.

Throughout the West Indies, therefore, the main forces in the neo-Pan African movement were hostile to the governments of the various territories. This was shown up to a marked degree at the second preparatory meeting of the Pan African Conference, held at Bishop's High School in Guyana.

It became clear to imperialism after that meeting that either the conference in Tanzania had to be called off or that the neo-Trotskyite group should not be allowed to attend. Eventually, the establishment "boys" prevailed, and C.L.R. James, Eusi Kwayana, Tim Hector, Geddes Granger and others were refused permission to attend.

Faced with the dilemma — on the one hand, the need for Caribbean Black Power support for the Tanzania conference objective of united Black (USA, Caribbean and Africa) isolation of the Soviet Union, and on the other, attacks by Caribbean Black power advocates against US client Caribbean states, the imperialist-controlled planners decided not to allow the West Indian hostile groups to attend.

It should be observed that Maoist China which violently opposes the Soviet Union and gives unqualified support to the Caribbean regimes, has a powerful relationship with Tanzania, one of the sponsors of the conference. Like the Nyerere and Burnham regimes, it too propagates the idea of self-reliance, which also objectively serves the purpose also of isolating Guyana, the Caribbean and Africa from the socialist world, and thus aiding imperialism.

Imperialism could not allow their presence in Tanzania where they would have exposed the Caribbean regimes which through demagoguery had created a good image in Africa.

Progressives and anti-imperialists in the Caribbean and elsewhere must learn from this lesson. Short cuts and deviations do not succeed in the end. It is necessary to take a principled position as the leader of the Cuban delegation, Dr. Fidel Castro did at the Algiers summit meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Dr. Castro attacked the "two imperialisms" line. He made it clear that those who take this position, knowingly and unknowingly, side with imperialism.

Incidentally, in the universities of the United States, deliberate attempts are made to revise Marxism-Leninism now that it has become more and more attractive to students. One hears, for instance, of a fundamental difference between the “young Marx” and the “old Marx”, that the former was humane, that the latter was bitter. All the revisionist ideas are basically a special brand of anti-communism, anti-Sovietism.

The Black Studies programme is infiltrated by neo-Trotskyites and CIA agents. Angela Davis, a member of the executive committee of the Communist Party, is unable to get a teaching job. But Maoists, Trotskyites and others are not only allowed entry into the USA but also access to American institutions of higher learning.

We are regarded in some quarters as revisionist and non-revolutionary. But persons like C.L.R. James and Jan Carew, whose “Moscow is not my Mecca” was circulated in tens of thousands by the CIA in a cheap 20 cents edition, are allowed to enter the USA and to teach in the Black Studies programme.

Clearly, Stokley Carmichael, C.L.R. James and others who peddle “the skin strategy” of neo-Pan Africanism and Black capitalism, and who work to frustrate the political line of the international communist movement for the unity of the three revolutionary streams — the world socialist system, the national liberation movements and the progressive working class and peace forces of the capitalist world — objectively aid imperialism.

The case of the downfall of the Dr. Mossadegh in Iran in 1953 must be remembered and digested. After his government nationalised the British-owned Anglo-Iranian Oil Company in 1951, Mossadegh’s nationalist government, unlike the Fidel Castro government in Cuba, refused because of its anti-communist position to trade with the Soviet Union. Unable to sell its oil through a tanker blockade by the international oil companies, CIA subversion, strikes and riots as in Guyana in the 1962-64 period, led to its overthrow.

This did not happen, however, in Cuba, Vietnam, the Middle East and in the Portuguese African colonies. Success was achieved by the liberation movements in these countries largely because of the closest relations which were established with, and the economic and military assistance received from, the socialist countries.

Those who forget this do so at their peril. Shortcuts and expediencies do not bear fruit. Practical political work will succeed only when based on the correct theories and ideas.

Long live Marxism-Leninism!

Long live the-mighty socialist world!

Let us work to make the socialist world an even mightier bastion!

At this point, it should also be observed that one of the leading figures of the neo-Pan African movement, a Trinidadian now domiciled in the USA, also heads an organisation for the training of technocrats to serve in Africa. A current view expressed by some imperialist ideologies is that there is nothing wrong with the capitalist system, that all that is required is to manage it properly with well-trained managers and technocrats.

This idea is current in Guyana where 12e of the 24 ministers are technocrats. Imperialism sees the need, especially since the Peace Corps came under attack, to train Black Americans for service in Africa. The image of the “ugly American” will be vastly improved when he is Black, whether serving as ambassador, technician or manager.

While we seek to improve our Party theoretically and ideologically, and engage in principled ideological struggle, we must at the same time improve our practical political work. We must achieve a larger mass following representing a broad cross-section of our country’s population. As at the beginning of our Party’s history, we must get down and work among the people at the grass roots, especially in the urban and interior areas. Today, the political climate is very receptive. The PNC is rapidly losing support. This was shown in the elections when a large number of its supporters stayed away from the polls. Since then with the further deterioration of living standards, there is great discontent. People are looking for answers. We must supply them. We must point the way forward. It must be our duty to carry out house to house work to explain in detail why things are bad and how they would continue to worsen under the PNC and to point out the difference between our policies and those of the PNC.

I wish to sound a note of warning at this time. While it is our wish to increase our membership, we must take care that we are doing so not just as a statistical exercise or to get more money from membership dues.

Above all, what we need are active participants. A member must be recruited only after he or she is satisfied that our programme offers a way forward.

And while we work with zest to make new recruits, we must also become security-conscious and vigilant. Now that the PNC is losing support rapidly and relying more and more on repression, it will strengthen its secret police apparatus and even infiltrate our ranks. The principal task of the security police, which is guided by experts from the imperialist countries, is to get intelligence about what we are planning and doing. Infiltrating our ranks is the best way to attain this objective.

Utmost caution is therefore required in ensuring that those who join us are genuinely interested in our party and in the cause of national liberation. We must rigidly enforce the procedure that anyone applying for membership must be sponsored by at least two members, who have personal knowledge of the prospective member.

While we are recruiting new members in our party, we must at the same time strengthen the mass organisations. We must ensure that workers of all strata of the Guyanese population are organised.

In this regard, work should be done not only in organisations which are sympathetic to us, but especially also in those trade unions which are neutral or even backing the PNC.

Work at the rank and file level, the fight for better wages and improved living and working conditions will eventually secure respect for our comrades who work in mass organisations, and thus respect for our party.

An important breakthrough has been made at the University of Guyana. There is need not only for the PYO to win a victory at the UG. There is also the need for a breakthrough in other institutions of learning. A national students' organisation fighting militantly for better education generally and university grants and other benefits must be our goal in the coming months.

Trade union work must be intensified. The Guyana Agricultural Workers' Union (GAWU) must be strengthened.

We must take advantage of the growing contradictions between the TUC and the PNC. The first major contradiction developed when the TUC opposed the PNC in its expressed wish to enact an anti-strike measure, the Labour Disputes Bill. Because of the opposition of the TUC that measure was shelved.

Since then and especially during the last twelve months, the TUC leadership has found itself the horns of a dilemma. Their support for the PNC is causing concern among their rank and file supporters. Pressure from the workers is causing some vacillation.

This was shown recently during the May Day procession the President of the TUC, Richard Ishmael, issued a strong statement condemnatory of the PNC. He declared that "many promises have been made that our resolutions would be given priority, but I do not recall one promise or even one resolution which has been kept. What has happened to the assurances given by the Minister of Labour?"

The President of the TUC then listed several important measures of interest to the working class on which commitments have been made from time to time by the PNC but which had not been fulfilled. Mr. Ishmael ended his critical remarks by observing that there would be more May Day resolutions passed with promises "that our resolutions will be acted upon but that will be the end of the matter."

Mr. Ishmael was, of course, peeved that the Minister of Labour has been taking pot shot at the Man Power Citizens Association (MPCA). This was the result of another contradiction — the PNC regime, unable to prevent strikes in the sugar industry without a Labour Disputes Bill, was forced to deal with the Guyana Agricultural Workers Union and to criticise openly the MPCA's shortcomings.

Unfortunately, the TUC leadership was not consistent in its attitude towards the PNC. At the May Day meeting at the Critchlow Labour College, the secretary of the TUC, Mr. Joseph

Pollydore, praised the Prime Minister but attacked the Minister of Labour. And the Assistant General Secretary, Mr. George DePeana moved a resolution expressing confidence in the government.

Such vacillation and double talk cannot enhance the credibility of the TUC leadership in this crisis and is not in the interest of the working class.

However, we must view the situation dialectically and work patiently, if necessary, to bring the TUC leadership into a position where they will fulfil their responsibility to the workers.

Experience with the TUC in the past has shown that this is possible. In 1945, the Secretary and President of the TUC attended the founding conference of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) in Paris in 1945. But after the Cold War started in 1947 resulting in the split of the WFTU, the TUC participated in the formation of the breakaway International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). From 1949 to 1951, it took a hostile attitude towards the PPP and its leadership. But from 1951 to 1953 its position gradually began to change, and by 1953 it was fully backing the PPP.

We have faith in the working class. We are confident that it will exert increasing pressure on the TUC leadership for a change in its present vacillating role.

We do not subscribe to the thesis of those revisionists who claim that the working class is no longer revolutionary. Like Prof. Henry Marcusse from the United States of America, they have come to that position, especially because they have seen the labour aristocrats and bureaucrats betraying the working class over a long period of time.

They cling to this false idea because they do not view the situation dialectically.

Imperialism is getting into deeper and deeper crisis. About half of the world's population today suffer from malnutrition. Roughly 100 million workers are unemployed, about 800 million are illiterate, and 100 million lose their lives every year from accidents at work. This toll on working humanity is resulting in increasing militancy and more and more strikes. In the 20-year period, 1926-1946, for instance, there were only 50 million strikes. The number increased from 1946 to 1960 to 160 million, and in the 10-year period, 1961-1971, to 500 million. In 1972, 60 million workers went on strike, of which 40 million were in the developed capitalist countries.

In Britain, the situation in the labour movement has completely changed. The trade unions in the 1950s and early 1960s represented the right wing of the Labour Party. Through their "bloc vote", they managed to secure Labour Party leadership in the hands of the rightist Clement Attlee and Hugh Gaitskell.

It was the TUC which issued a ban against our meetings in 1953 when our party's leaders had embarked on a speaking tour in the United Kingdom.

But the position has changed dramatically recently. The militancy of the workers prevented the previous Wilson-led Labour Government from enacting an anti-labour measure. The trade unions defied the Tory anti-strike Industrial Relations Act and brought down the Tory Heath Government.

Those like Marcusse who try to revise Marxism-Leninism and spread false theories will only expose themselves in the end. Marxism-Leninism is a scientific ideology. It will endure. Our Party too will endure provided we set our course on this scientific ideology.

We must fight also for democracy including free and fair elections. Our party has been in the forefront in the fight for democracy. We must remind our critics that it was we who first championed the case for a fundamental rights section in our constitution. Those who then criticised us for wanting to destroy fundamental rights are today the chief perpetrators of such acts.

The Civil Liberties Action Council (CLAC), with which we were associated from its inception, has done a great job in exposing the PNC regime for violations of civil liberties including the right to vote at free and fair election, and political and racial discrimination. Because of its work, Guyana was one of the eight countries named by the United Nations Human Rights Commission for violations of human rights.

We must continue to lend our support to CLAC and to intensify its activities. The fight for democracy is an indispensable ingredient of the struggle for national liberation and socialism.

Although some criticised us for contesting the last elections in July 16, 1973, a few now admit quietly that our decision to participate was correct. Had we not done so, it would not have been possible to expose the fraud particularly in the way the Granada Television Company did overseas with the making of its film "Mr. Burnham has done it again", the follow-up of the 1968 films, "The Trail of the Vanishing Voters" and "The Making of a Prime Minister."

Secondly, the people's political consciousness has clearly developed as a result of participation. Based on the tremendous support which our Party generated, many of our supporters believed that we could have won the election. But in 1968 for the first time, they experienced extensive fraud. And in 1973, when they were ready to combat fraud, they experienced again for the first time, military intervention and the use of force in elections. Now the people understand the realities of political struggle in Guyana.

Had we not contested the election, many of our supporters would have blamed us for virtually throwing away the government. The PNC would have won a majority of seats and a right wing, collaborationist group of opportunists would have held sway in the parliament as an opposition.

Besides, many of our supporters would have still held illusions about winning by elections. Now they have no such illusions. Now they understand from their own experience that if their fundamental rights laid down in the constitution are to be respected, they will have not just to vote, not just to mark an "X" on a ballot paper on voting day, but to work day after day in active political struggle to confront the PNC regime for the observance of those rights. It is our task to equip the masses in every possible way — ideologically, organisationally, etc. — so that they can successfully confront and bring down the corrupt PNC elite.

While fighting to enlarge our support, we must at the same time struggle for anti-imperialist unity, both at home and overseas; objective conditions more and more predispose to such developments.

Because of the anti-working class, pro-imperialist and corrupt practices of the government, the PNC rank and file supporters have become disillusioned and dissatisfied. Other groups and strata who formerly were hostile to the PPP now take a more sympathetic position.

The small businessmen whose position has worsened, who were made to feel that under the PPP and its Marxist ideology, they would lose everything, have now changed. They have done so based on personal experience. Constant frustrations with bans and restrictions, the inability to get fair treatment in the award of contracts, the practice of the PNC to demand exorbitant contributions to party coffers — these and other things have forced the petty bourgeoisie to re-examine their whole political position. From "Burnham is the lesser of the two evils," they have changed to "Jagan has proved to be right, after all."

Some intellectuals also who had previously embraced the Maoist ideology and attacked the PPP, are now working in association with us in CLAC and the Guyana Peace Council. They have learnt from practical experience in Guyana and elsewhere that Maoism leads to a blind alley and the road to collaboration with imperialism.

We must appreciate however, that we are fighting not only the corrupt PNC. Despite its disguises, its anti-imperialist appearance and pro-socialist ideological demagogy, we must never forget that the PNC is an instrument of imperialism. We must therefore strive for international anti-imperialist unity and solidarity.

The PNC does not follow a principled course but moves pragmatically and opportunistically. Its anti-imperialist pose is the result of a variety of factors — constant ideological pressure from our vanguard party, from other social groups and from its own rank and file. There is also the subjectivism of the PNC leader, who aspires for regional, if not "third-world" leadership. Pressed by these objective and subjective factors, the PNC elite is forced to make certain forward moves which bring it under pressure from imperialism. It then vacillates and retreats. This has been shown up on many occasions.

This was shown up most clearly in the case of the break of diplomatic relations with Israel. L.F.S. Burnham travelled in the same plane with Comrade Fidel Castro to Algiers for the Non-Aligned Conference in September. The Cuban leader, as a matter of principle, not only denounced the "two super powers" line but also broke off relations with Israel.

The PNC leader, on the other hand, remained silent on the first question and did not follow the lead of Cuba on the second.

Subsequently, when the PNC regime went abegging for a \$200 million loan and must have come under pressure from the Arab world, then only the break with Israel was announced.

In the case of Vietnam, the impression was created that the PNC had supported the decision of the Foreign Ministers meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement in Georgetown in August 1972 for the seating of the delegations from the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam (PRG). Documentary films brought by the PPP General Secretary from Hanoi showing US bombing of schools, hospitals and dykes were seized and never released.

As regards diplomatic relations with Cuba, it must not be forgotten that it was the PNC who had broken off trade and cultural relations which had been developed by the PPP government from 1960 to 1964. That the PNC did so recently must be looked at with great suspicion. It must be seen in the same vein as its vacillating position at the United Nations in the case of the seating of the People's Republic of China.

The Guyana delegation voted against the seating of China in 1967 and 1968, abstained in 1969 and voted for in 1970. Its position was merely a reflection of the twists and turns of US foreign policy.

During that period, more and more countries had been voting for the seating of People's China. The US position was becoming untenable.

Secondly, polarisation was taking place at the UN with the Soviet Union and the progressive "third world" countries on the one hand, and the United States and other imperialist and "third world" puppet states on the other. China's presence in the UN created ideological confusion there and tended to create confusion in the anti-imperialist camp, thus helping US strategy of divide and rule.

Thirdly, the objective situation then obtaining necessitated a change in the US political line and the acceptance of the policy of peaceful co-existence towards the socialist world as a whole for the purpose of enhancing American trade and resolving its balance of payments difficulties.

The PNC's position on Cuba should be seen in the context of US economic and financial difficulties and recent developments in our hemisphere. Note that the hemispheric isolation of Cuba was an OAS, and not a US, decision, and if the countries of the hemisphere decided to change their policy, the United States would go along. Not too long after, American subsidiaries operating in Argentina were allowed to sell trucks, motor cars and other equipment to Cuba when, only a few years before, extreme pressure had been applied on the governments of Great Britain and Canada and US subsidiaries operating in Canada not to trade with Cuba and China.

The PNC regime was obviously given the "green light" on China and Cuba by its US boss. Having accepted peaceful co-existence with the USSR and China, US foreign policy could gain little from the continued blockade of Cuba. Besides, with CARIFTA and Caricom outgrowing its limited market of 4 million population, Cuba with a population of 8 million looms large as an attractive trading partner. That is why even the West Indian Incorporated Chambers of Commerce and Industry now wants Cuba in Caricom.

The PNC's foreign policy must be seen therefore as a product of countervailing pressures. Basically it operates after consultation with imperialism and in accordance with imperialism's changing strategies and tactics.

No one must be fooled by its pseudo anti-imperialist and revolutionary positions at home and abroad, its Burnhamist brand of Marxism-Leninism. Here it is merely reflecting the changed strategies and tactics of imperialism. With military setbacks in Vietnam, the East and Africa, with a deepening structural crisis and an inability to use the "big stick" and "gunboat diplomacy" of some years ago, it is adopting more flexible methods and is prepared to accept

“partnership” or even nationalisation provided adequate compensation is paid and the raw materials, for instance aluminium if not bauxite, continue to become available.

It is prepared even to accept “national communism” of the PNC type of Marxism- Leninism, which does not shift the world balance of forces towards socialism.

In struggling against the PNC, we must therefore understand clearly that we are not only fighting the corrupt PNC regime but also its backers abroad.

We must not be lulled into a false sense of security because visas are now issued to us and criticisms are heard that the United States is displeased with the PNC regime. Displeasure comes about basically not because the PNC is stepping out of line; it is voiced largely because of the extent of the corruption, because of the blackmail techniques of the PNC and, most important, because the PNC is unable to manipulate and control the political situation. In this era of detente and peaceful coexistence, imperialism would like its puppets to win at democratic elections. It is embarrassed in Guyana that its puppets can maintain power only through the intervention of the army and the raiding of ballot boxes.

We must therefore also strengthen our work overseas, particularly in the Caribbean area, Latin America and the United States of America. Basically, the peoples of these countries have a common cause and a common enemy, the military-industrial complex and the giant multinational corporations. The latter’s interventionist policies during the past two decades have caused untold suffering to millions of people the world over, including Guyana and the USA itself. They have also wrought havoc with basic human rights.

It was a short step from political corruption and terror abroad to corruption, surveillance and bugging at home. The habit once put into practice abroad was bound to penetrate domestic politics.

Fortunately, the great people of the United States with a grand tradition for fair-play and freedom have brought to justice Nixon and his corrupt Watergate gang.

We also have suffered from similar US practices. The American people, therefore, must fulfil their responsibility right the wrongs which had been done in their name in Guyana.

We must also strengthen our links with the Caribbean people.

Unfortunately, the founding conference of the Anti-Imperialist Front which was projected to be held about this time could not be summoned because of the failure to secure a suitable venue. Every effort must be made to see that this conference is held before the end of 1974.

Further afield, we extend our hand of international solidarity to freedom fighters in Africa, the Middle East, Chile, Vietnam, Uruguay and elsewhere.

We also believe that it is likely that the international communist movement will hold another meeting to assess developments since 1969 — the new strategies and tactics of imperialism, and the new measures that are to be taken to develop working class unity in furtherance of the struggle against imperialism, neo-colonialism and colonialism.

Fascist tyranny cannot endure forever. In Pakistan, Thailand, Argentina, Portugal and Greece, military dictators were forced out because of growing contradictions and mass pressures from determined peoples.

It is our party’s belief that at this point of time in the history of the world, forces working for the liberation of mankind from poverty, ignorance and social and moral degradation are near the peak of their power; that man’s long, uphill climb towards the fulfilment of his needs is nearing its end and that what is wanted now to bring about the necessary, radical break with the old order is sustained united effort; and that to this end we must pledge our lives and our liberties as a debt we owe to posterity and to those who have gone before us.

So will the imperialist ramparts be breached, and the tyranny of the owning class over the working class be ended, and a new era born.

It is our belief that in the Caribbean and Latin America, day by day, week by week, the people are more and more, through the efforts of vanguard parties such as the PPP, and with the shining example of Cuba ever before their eyes, beginning to understand that poverty and disease are man-made scourges and need not be if mankind so wills it, and more and more, like

the slumbering giants that were Asia and Africa, we too, in this region, will be awoken, and break the bonds that have shackled us so long to the imperialist yoke.

And it is our belief that we in Guyana are in the forefront of the struggle and that we have a leading role to play in the birth-pangs of the new era that will usher in a better life for our children.

Long live the forces of peace, national liberation and socialism!

Long live the PPP!

Power to the people!

-8-

Statement on Critical Support

Address on “Critical Support” by Dr. Cheddi Jagan, General Secretary, to the 25th Anniversary Conference of the PPP — Annandale, East Coast Demerara, 3 August 1975

Comrade Chairman, Distinguished Guests, Comrade Delegates and Observers:

We meet on a very auspicious occasion — the 25th anniversary of the founding of our party. During this period, the PPP has become a household word; we can proudly say that we have made an indelible imprint on our land. There can be no history of Guyana without the history of the PPP.

An, more than that, it was we who, so to speak, first placed Guyana on the map of the world. Though our country is small, by our deeds it became known throughout the world — deeds which were honourable because they were rooted in struggle and based on patriotism and working class internationalism.

At the very beginning the PPP formed a vital link with the world revolutionary, national and social liberation movements. We wrote socialism in our banner, inspired as we had been by the sacrifice and great achievements of the heroic Soviet people. It is not surprising that in the same year that we celebrate our 25 years, the world celebrated the 30th anniversary of the defeat of fascism.

Long live the glorious Soviet Union!

The PPP was born in struggle and rooted in the working class. The bullets which snuffed out the lives of the Enmore martyrs acted as a catalyst agent. And the betrayal of the workers by the opportunists and bandwagoners of the Labour Party set the seal for the birth of the PPP 25 years ago in 1950.

Three trade unions — the Guiana Industrial Workers Union, the British Guiana Labour Union and the Sawmill and Forest Workers Trade Union — were the powerful roots which sustained the party, and the blood of the Enmore martyrs fertilised the soil on which it grew.

We fought for freedom, democracy, human rights, and socialism.

We strove untiringly for national independence. At the very beginning we declared that our people would never be able to exercise their humanity unless our country was free from colonial rule and foreign domination. Today, the brainwashers of the National Service Scheme are trying to rewrite and distort history; they are teaching the youth that the PPP (as well as the United Force) were against independence. Here is a blatant attempt by the guilty PNC to cast its own sin on the PPP. But let me say this quite clearly: no amount of PNC “soap and detergents” will succeed in washing away our record; all Guyanese know, indeed the whole world knows, that the PPP was the only genuine, consistent force fighting for independence. We, not the PNC, the record will show, are the real patriots.

But ours is not just a struggle in abstraction. We combined the long-term with the immediate. If we were to realise our goals of independence and socialism, we must have democracy, we declared.

For us, the first blow for democracy was the fight for universal adult suffrage. Today, many take for granted that everyone is entitled to vote. But still there are quite a few who are unaware that it was the PPP which first called, before the Waddington Constitution Commission

in 1951, for the right of everyone to vote without qualification, and. for the voting age to be reduced to age 18.

And a determined move was made to block us from propagating revolutionary ideas. Lionel Luckhoo's "subversive literature" thought control motion in the colonial Legislative Council and the hysteria it generated led to the seizure and. burning of nine crates of books and pamphlets imported from England in 1951. Many of our comrades were harassed by the police and some served jail sentences for being in possession of banned literature, deemed subversive by the colonial rulers and the Indo-Saxon and Afro-Saxon collaborators.

But we advocated not only the free dissemination of ideas. We opposed restrictions on the free movement of Guyanese. For four years, from 1953 to 1957, many PPP leaders were restricted to the areas where they lived and could not move about freely.

And we removed the bans placed on the entry into Guyana of progressive West Indians and others at the first opportunity during our 133 days in government in 1953.

Our concern about human rights was also shown by our firm stand against the hated doctrine of apartheid practised by the fascist South African government.

Another strong plank of the PPP was freedom of association particularly as it affected the right of workers to belong to trade unions, and to have recognised the unions of their choice. Unfortunately, our attempts to make this into law failed on two occasions, in 1953 and 1963. This year, the sugar workers must make a determined, all-out stand for recognition of GAWU. If they cannot obtain it by law or administrative procedure, they must get it by militant action.

And we took the lead in enshrining these and other rights in the Fundamental Rights section of our constitution. The Guyanese people will not easily forget that those who at one time attacked us as Marxists intent on the denial of freedoms are today themselves step by step eroding the constitutional guarantees. We must make a determined stand to preserve the liberties we fought for and achieved.

By its dynamic and forceful struggle, the PPP did its duty to the Guyanese and international working class.

It is true to say that in Guyana today there is no important facet of life which the PPP did not pioneer: education, health, agriculture, banking, etc.

The achievement in 1951 of one of the most "advanced" colonial constitutions was in itself an indirect help to freedom fighters elsewhere. Another PPP contribution was its opening of the door in 1961 as the first petitioner to the United Nations Decolonisation Committee.

Standing steadfast to principle, the PPP was the only party in the Caribbean which did not join the US Cold War bandwagon. It did not tack and turn and make deals with imperialism. It did not assume an opportunist position even in the face of grave difficulties. It established links with, and lent support to, national liberation movements everywhere.

It is not without significance to note that when the constitution was suspended in October 1953, the British Tory ruling class in a White Paper declared that we had been supporting "terrorists" in Malaya and Kenya. The Yankee imperialists in the early 1960s attacked the PPP government because it did not join the wolf-pack in blockading Cuba.

But time has vindicated our stand. We are proud that we played a role, however small, in bringing independence to many colonies, and socialism to Cuba. Today, when we see so many flocking to Cuba and embracing the Cuban revolution and the great Cuban leader, Comrade Fidel Castro, when we see the USA and many Latin American countries lifting the criminal OAS blockade on Cuba, we can proudly say this has proved that we were right; we were the pioneers.

In the eyes of the PPP, genuine proletarian internationalism is an essential aspect of true patriotism.

One of the PPP's greatest achievements was the forging of unity between the two major ethnic groups - Black and Indian. When that unity resulted in its victory of 18 out of 24 seats at the 1953 elections, the imperialist cold warriors used the weapon of anti-communism to destroy the first PPP government. Later, after engineering a split in the party, racial division and

animosity was used as the excuse for manipulating the electoral system to remove the PPP from the government in 1964.

In many other ways, the PPP fulfilled its role as the vanguard. We were the first in the Caribbean to attack the Puerto Rican economic planning model, which was held up in the late 1950s as the panacea of all the ills facing the Guyanese and Caribbean peoples. Today, all those who embraced it and criticised us have been forced to recognise its inadequacy.

When we pointed out the weaknesses of the Caribbean Federation as a glorified Crown colony and refused to join it, we were attacked. Because we welcomed the then progressive turn in politics in Venezuela and Brazil, we were accused of turning our backs on the Caribbean (actually it was the English-speaking Caribbean leaders who had turned their backs on us) and embracing "continental destiny". We are pleased to see that many are now treading 'the path we blazed in seeing the essential identity of the Caribbean and Latin America.

Many of the shortcomings of CARIFTA and Caricom, which the PPP from the very beginning exposed because of its world view, are now coming to light. Our critics are now forced to move in the direction we pointed out.

Even on the question of dress reform, we were the first to introduce the shirt-jac!

We pioneered the way in emphasising our own history and culture. The PPP government cancelled the lease to the Golf Club (now the National Park), one of the bastions of colonial privilege.

And above all, we were the first to propagate the ideology of Marxism-Leninism. Today, the erstwhile anti-communists have suddenly taken on this mantle. It is not without amusement that policemen, who not too long ago were instructed to seize Marxist books such as Lenin's *State and Revolution* in their raids of homes and to harass their PPP owners, are now exhorted to study Marxism-Leninism. This is a welcome development.

But we must be forgiven if we question the sincerity of some of the new converts like Kit Nascimento who not too long ago were rabid anti-communists. Too many opportunist bootlickers are bandying the name of "comrade". Remember the biblical warning: "Not all who shout Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." We too can say: "Not all who shout Comrade, Comrade, shall enter into the kingdom of socialism." Down with the sophists!

This new development, however can initiate a process which even the PNC will find difficult in halting. It opens the door for a dialogue with PNC rank and filers. It must be our task to raise their understanding and consciousness of the theory and practice of scientific socialism, of Marxism-Leninism.

But let us not be lulled into a false sense of security because of this positive possibility. We must be on guard. We must remember that with the intensification of the international class struggle and the balance of world forces shifting in favour of socialism, imperialism is becoming more flexible and cunning; it is devising new tactics and strategies. As Marxism-Leninism grips the masses, imperialism will try to distort and derail it.

This 25th anniversary is a good time to assess the whole complex but fluid situation, to take stock of our own position — our strength and weaknesses — and to determine how we should continue to influence the situation in a positive way. With a view to splitting our ranks and weakening our party and its influence, some idiots and opportunists are constantly harping on the mistakes we made. It is necessary to observe that only fools who do nothing make no mistakes.

The main burden of their attack is that we should not have openly espoused Marxism and given support to the Cuban Revolution. What they fail to note is that had we not taken a firm patriotic position, a world view and resorted to militant action, we would not have been able to win over the masses from the traitors and collaborators. Instead of attacking us, they should direct their guns against those who in the name of tactics betrayed the revolution by splitting and weakening its forces. That would be a correct historical perspective.

The mistake we made was not the espousal of Marxism; it was that we did not fully implement it in practice.

The PPP was a party geared to winning elections; it was not geared to counter subversion, conspiracy and sabotage. It was only in 1961 that we established an ideological school, and only in 1969 that we took a decision to transform our loose mass party into a disciplined Marxist-Leninist party.

One of the difficulties encountered was that with the “rightist” and “leftist” opportunist splits and betrayals, there were not enough personnel to man both the government and party administration at the same time. The result was that party work suffered while we were marking time in government without power and being sabotaged at the same time.

The mistake we made was to have given priority to government rather than the party, staying in the government too long without independence, assuming responsibility without real power, and thereby undermining our influence, cutting the ground under our feet, at the same time.

Now that the process of party transformation is in train, we must move as rapidly as possible to correct past mistakes and to build a strong party, ideologically and organisationally united, so as to continue to give positive leadership to the Guyanese working class and to influence the situation in the direction of peace, democracy and socialism.

To continue to play our vanguard role, we must properly assess the situation. Up to 1970, because of the government’s obvious anti-working class and pro-imperialist policies, it was easy to criticise, expose and oppose the PNC. Today, the position is not so clear-cut. It is complex and has led to some confusion.

Some moves which for years we have been agitating for or would have supported have been made — recognition of the Soviet Union, China, Cuba, German Democratic Republic and other socialist states; membership of the Non-Aligned Movement; support for the African liberation movements; national ownership and control of natural resources; membership in the International Bauxite Association; nationalisation of Demba, Reynolds and Jessels; attack on capitalism and defence of socialism; support of SELA for Latin American and Caribbean economic co-operation; advocacy of Marxism-Leninism.

The PNC would like the Guyanese people to believe that all this is part of, and the unfolding of, a grand design formulated years ago by the master brain of its leadership. This is far from the truth. The fact is the PNC has no principled position. For it, politics is the art of making deals, even with imperialism. Being opportunistic and pragmatic, its moves are largely determined by countervailing pressures.

Several factors, external and internal, objective and subjective, have influenced developments in Guyana. And certain antagonistic contradictions had to be resolved. The acceptance, however reluctantly, of peaceful coexistence and detente by US imperialism consequent on the grave fiscal and economic situation, including the devaluation of the US dollar in the early 1970’s opened the door for the PNC regime to modify its outright pro-imperialist, Cold War foreign policies. This was clearly shown in its voting record in the United Nations on the question of the seating of China in that body — opposition in 1966 and 1967; abstention in 1968, 1969 and 1970; support in 1971.

Also the burning ambition of the PNC publicity-conscious leader to become world renowned, to achieve “a more rewarding position” in world politics, (remember his leader-or-nothing demand in 1953 when he was chairman of the party) is acting as a constant pressure on the government to keep pace with the states in the Non-Aligned Movement like Cuba with a firm anti-imperialist position and even to go beyond the permissible limits imposed by imperialism.

On the home front, certain contradictions have developed between the PNC regime and imperialism, which had brought it to power. This was because in Guyana as elsewhere in the “third world”, neo-colonial rule and foreign dictated policies led to a widening gap in living standards between the imperialist states and the imperialist-dominated states. For instance, the much-touted \$300 million Development Plan (1966-72), which was supposed to have ushered in the PNC utopia, prematurely collapsed in 1969-70. And for the masses, living conditions deteriorated.

With general discontent even among its own rank and file, and political and ideological pressure from the PPP, the PNC was forced to talk about socialism. But not wishing to make a radical break and to dismantle the imperialist socio-economic structure, it advocated the false ideology of "cooperative socialism;" namely, that cooperatives would be the means by which socialism would be brought to Guyana.

However, as conditions continued to worsen, the PNC was forced to follow the lead of the progressive "third world" countries in the United Nations and elsewhere and advocate measures such as the national ownership and control of natural resources. And with the near collapse of the economy in early 1974 as a result firstly of the accumulated adverse affects of nearly a decade of pro-imperialist policies, and secondly, of the imported inflation from the capitalist world, the PNC government was forced to take some steps against imperialism.

The PNC leadership, perhaps more than anyone else, realised from the hijacking and tampering of ballot boxes in the 1968 and especially the 1973 general elections where it stood with the masses. Particularly shocking to it, no doubt, was the very low turnout of voters in 1973 in its former stronghold, Georgetown. It knew that it could not continue in the old way.

With the country facing bankruptcy, the government suspended shipment in the latter part of 1974 of sugar to the United Kingdom until the price was raised. In search of Arab petrodollar loans, it broke diplomatic relations with Israel, the base of US imperialism in the Middle East.

Desperately in need of, cash, and exposed and attacked by the PPP for vacillating on the nationalisation of Guyana Mines Limited, the bauxite subsidiary of Reynolds. Metals Company, and for not even following Jamaica's lead in putting a levy on bauxite because of the 25-year tax-freeze secret deal made with the company in 1965, the PNC government was forced to move. It imposed a levy, but the Company refused to pay and challenged it in court.

Not too long after, it was announced that a settlement had been reached; the case was withdrawn and the company was nationalised. The fact that Reynolds paid the levy in Jamaica but refused to do so in Guyana would indicate that it found the terms of nationalisation so favourable that it preferred nationalisation to taxation. Nevertheless, nationalisation, though late, (it should have come soon after, within months of the takeover of the Demerara Bauxite Company in 1971) is welcome. Imperialism is thereby weakened in Guyana. The opportunity is now provided to break down the social structure which would have been impossible without nationalisation.

But it must be noted that while the PNC has been formed to take some steps against imperialism, it does not have a consistent, firm anti-imperialist position. Witness that the Booker's monopoly remains intact, and the PNC has declared its intention of working in partnership with it. The foreign banks and insurance companies still have a great influence in the field of finance and credit.

How does imperialism view and respond to the developing situation? Clearly, it is not very happy. Its discomfiture is all the greater, firstly, because of its failure through the years to build with the National Labour Front, United Force, Guiana United Muslim Party, the Justice Party and others as a viable alternative to the PPP; and secondly, because of its realisation that the PPP is gaining political support at the expense of the PNC.

Consequently, despite some contradictions between the regime and Anglo-American imperialism, the latter is forced to continue to support the PNC. However, it is playing a hold-me-loose-me political game, lending the government support but at the same time trying to compromise and contain it.

Imperialism is aware of the strength and weaknesses of the PNC and the contradictions within its structure — its basic opportunism; and its leader presiding over a largely grasping petty-bourgeois middle class elite, on the one hand, and a dispossessed worker-peasant rank and file on the other. In the former, imperialism sees a continuing ally; in the latter, an eventual class enemy.

One group of the PNC elite, particularly with a United Democratic Party or United Force background, constitutes bureaucratic capitalist climbers with ambitions to becoming industrial

and commercial capitalists. They are opposed to change. But because they are wedded to capitalism and imperialism, they would support those measures which are in keeping with the changing tactics and strategies of imperialism.

In this regard, it must be noted that with the intensification of the international class struggle, the strengthening of the camp of socialism and the weakening of the camp of capitalism, the failure of limited military intervention in and economic blockade of Cuba and massive armed intervention in Vietnam, the imperialists have been forced to substitute for "big stick" methods more subtle forms of domination such as regional integration, joint enterprises, multi-lateral aid, etc. And these are adapted flexibly to suit each particular situation.

For instance, while unity and cooperation among developing countries are essential for development and progress, regional integration of a certain type — Latin American Free Trade Association (LAFTA) and the Central American Common Market (CACM) — also favour the transnational corporations. That was why the PNC regime pushed to bring into being CARIFTA, now Caricom, in 1968.

And because of the general and growing hostility to the transnational corporations, and the threat of nationalisation consequent on the worsening position of the underdeveloped world, imperialism has advocated and supported partnership in the form of "joint enterprises" so as to create a social base for capitalism-imperialism.

Because tied aid, "aid with strings, created grave debt and balance of payments problems for many developing countries and thus became unpopular (for instance in Guyana, the PNC in the early 1970s began describing aid as raid), the US strategists shifted emphasis from bilateral to multilateral aid through international and regional lending agencies such as the World Bank, the International Development Association, the Latin American Development Bank, etc.; they have even put in a sizeable amount of money in the Caribbean Development Bank.

Economic consideration also forced a change from a policy of Cold War to detente, "from containment to engagement". But a section of the US ruling class hopes to use detente to build bridges with socialist states, not for lasting world peace, but for subversion in the service of imperialism.

In an address to the Council of Foreign Relations at New York in September 1972, William Rogers, former US Secretary of State, speaking about the new strategy, wrote:

First, we have sought to encourage governments — friendly or unfriendly, partners or competitors — to talk to each other . . . Throughout the world, governments are talking to each other to a degree perhaps unknown since the war. . . This week a Japanese Prime Minister has visited China, and the establishment of diplomatic relations seems only a matter of time. We welcome this process in all parts of the world and are glad to have contributed to it by example and encouragement.

Leading US ideologue, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Director of the Research Institute on Communist Affairs and professor of law and government at Columbia University, in an article in *Span* (July, 1973) wrote that in the past when there was confrontation and confusion, fear and apprehension, two syntheses, liberalism and Marxism, emerged and "the American system was saved by creatively adapting both . . . to the American context: the Rooseveltian 'New Deal'." He observed that "the United States . . . has no choice but to remain actively involved in the world . . . a move either to pacificism, or to protectionism, or to isolationism would lead to global anarchy."

How does this US imperialist strategist see the United States maintaining its domination and global influence in this period of growing alienation and crisis of confidence? Firstly, by creating "a community of the developed nations spanning the Atlantic and the Pacific"; secondly, by engaging "the Communist countries, when they are ready, in globally cooperative undertakings . . . what I once called "peaceful engagement with the East"; thirdly, "by providing conceptual leadership not personal leadership. . . charismatic appeal, real or manufactured by mass media, is not the historical need for the moment. The need is for conceptual leadership..."

There we have it from the mouth of the establishment. The "Atlantic" concept, based on the bankrupt Cold War policy of "containment of communism" of the 1950s and 1960s must give way to a broader global concept with the aim of liberalising and reforming capitalism and revising scientific socialism. According to this and other advocates of the convergence theory, there is no longer any need for the class struggle, a basic cornerstone of Marxism-Leninism; capitalism will become liberalised and the present-day socialism of the socialist states will be transformed into "socialism with a human face".

It is against this background, and this development; that some of the PNC policy moves must be viewed.

Another group of the PNC elite wants reform but not revolution. They opportunistically support change, but of a limited character. They support nationalisation and expansion of the public sector and the military-bureaucratic state apparatus as that means more opportunities for personal advancement and, in some cases, replacement of Anglo-Saxons by and large by Afro-Saxons in top positions with fantastic salaries and allowances. They want state capitalism and "cooperative capitalism", not socialism.

And because of the intense political and ideological struggle in Guyana, imperialism is prepared flexibly to adjust even to nationalisation provided generous compensation is paid, contracts are awarded such as for sales agency for the Guyana Bauxite Company to Philipp Bros., the US subsidiary of the giant Anglo-American Corporation of South Africa, raw materials are secured, and nationalisation is not used to lay the basis for socialism but is shunted to capitalism.

Experience has taught it in Bolivia and elsewhere that even nationalisation can be contained. In Bolivia, with aid and other means, imperialism was able to compromise and eventually overthrow the petty-bourgeois nationalist regime led by Pas Estensoro which had nationalised the tin mines and carried out a radical land reform.

What about the PNC worker-peasant rank and file supporters whose conditions have rapidly deteriorated over the past 3 years? They have seen state capitalism in practice at the nationalised Guyana Bauxite Company (GUYBAU) and they do not like it. No doubt, that was why the PNC had to divert 24 buses from the coast to take their supporters to Linden (the bauxite township) on the 4th anniversary of vesting day (July 15, 1975).

The PNC rank and filers want fundamental change which will bring an end to unemployment and declining living standards. For 25 years they have been hearing from the PPP that only socialism holds the answer. And no doubt they have been influenced by the positive gains made by the working people in the Soviet Union, Cuba and other socialist states. They may know little or nothing about the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism (it cannot be otherwise in view of the previous, outright anti-Marxist, anti-Communist PNC stand). But they realise that in more than one-third of the world where that philosophy is embraced and scientific socialist ideas have been put into practice, an end has been brought to unemployment, backwardness, hunger and misery.

The PNC leader and the few socialists in the PNC hierarchy (they can be counted on the fingers of one hand) are therefore forced to attack capitalism and advocate socialism and Marxism-Leninism.

But imperialism is not unduly worried about talk unless it is translated into action.

In the United States, the liberal bourgeoisie is also now talking about socialism. And it must not be forgotten that the CIA paid \$US1 million to the Socialist Party of America, whose leader admitted setting up 17 socialist parties in Latin America to fight communism. And even so-called Marxists — Trotskyites, Maoists, Marcussists, "New Leftists" — are, consciously or unconsciously, used by imperialism to fight against scientific socialism.

Imperialism therefore sees as its principal tasks, firstly, the keeping of Guyana within the imperialist orbit through multilateral if not bilateral aid and such other means as the distortion and revisionism of Marxism-Leninism and the cultivation of "nationalist socialism" or "national communism", so-called "socialism with a human face", divorced from the revolutionary world socialist system; secondly, the strengthening of its influence among the PNC middle class

through scholarships, technical assistance, seminars, sponsored no-expense-borne tours to distort and contain the process in Guyana; and if later this proves impossible, through the training and indoctrination of police and military personnel to subvert the regime; fourthly, changing of the political line and programme of the PPP through infiltration and even assassination; and fifthly, the strengthening of the ultra-rightist forces, especially the racist elements in the Indian community, who, taking advantage of the discriminatory policies of the PNC, utilise emotive and reactionary slogans for their counter-revolutionary ends.

What about the PNC? Two courses are open to it: firstly, to halt the anti-imperialist process and make a compromise with imperialism; secondly, to opt for the non-capitalist path by taking a firm stand against imperialism, by-passing capitalist development and moving rapidly to socialism.

A compromise with imperialism will mean the continuation of the present policy of placating both sectors of the PNC at the expense of the nation — the petty bourgeois middle class with bigger jobs and astronomical salaries through nationalisation, expansion of the public sector and the military-bureaucratic state apparatus, state capitalism and cooperative capitalism; the rank and file with preferential treatment for lower-level jobs, land and loans and through National Service.

Such a short-sighted PNC policy will further mean:

1. The continued training of military and police personnel in capitalist states and the strengthening of the military-bureaucratic state apparatus to hold down the people and maintain minority rule;
2. The strengthening within the PNC of the petty-bourgeois middle-class and the muzzling of the workers and farmers through PNC-controlled trade unions like the GLU and the AAWU, and hand-picked farmers' bodies like Rice Action Committees, Cane Farmers Committees, Farmers Congresses, etc., thus placing structural obstacles to the construction of democracy and socialism;
3. The perpetuation of political and racial discriminatory practices in order to maintain its dwindling support;
4. A step by step move towards, firstly, a de facto, and later, a de jure authoritarian dictatorship. This will be called demagogically a dictatorship of the proletariat, but it will bear no resemblance to a people's democracy or a socialist democracy. Instead, it will be a minority party holding down the people from above through military-bureaucratic rule with all organisations and institutions party-and-state controlled.

This is not the way to develop a nation. Rule by edict, however well-intentioned, patronage and discrimination cannot build socialism.

Alternatively, the possibilities exist for a real breakthrough in Guyana, of really going rapidly through anti-imperialism to socialism. The PPP, the majority party, is constantly exerting pressure in this direction. And conditions are very favourable, better perhaps than any other country in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Guyana has the possibilities of truly becoming a second Cuba.

If the PNC is sincere about its socialist declarations and intends to take a firm, anti-imperialist course, then in anticipation of possible attack from within and without by reactionary forces, it is duty bound to work out a political solution at home and develop the strongest links with the socialist states, particularly the Soviet Union.

Cuba's ability to deter external aggression, to survive and to build a socialist society was to a large extent dependent on internal unity and the forging of such links.

The PNC should therefore drop the "two super powers", the "two imperialisms" line which equates socialist USSR with imperialist USA, and its discriminatory practices such as the surcharge on goods originating in the socialist countries. It must halt the dangerous practice of sending for training and indoctrination military police and other personnel in the United Kingdom, United States and Brazil, the US gendarme in Latin America. History has shown that

when leaders like Nkrumah, Sukarno and others tried to confront imperialism, they were attacked by their own generals.

The PNC government must also abrogate the secret agreement of 1966 which permits US aircraft to overfly Guyana and the United States to station its personnel, store equipment and supplies, operate communication services and service and maintain aircraft at Atkinson Field (now Timehri Airport); further, "to install additional or improve existing equipment at Atkinson Field for navigation, traffic control, or other agreed purposes."

Since anti-imperialism is the road to socialism, this imperialist dagger pointed at the heart of Guyana must be removed.

Also, if the PNC proposes genuinely to tread the progressive path, it must realise that its discriminatory practices play into the hands of the ultra-right reactionary forces in creating a possible fifth column. It must therefore forthwith end the policy of political and racial discrimination.

And it must at the same time implement the pledges made in parliament in 1971 and termed "peace plan" by the Guyana Graphic. Those pledges to ensure and safeguard democratic practices and procedure and fairplay were made after the PPP had given to the PNC government parliamentary support for the nationalisation of the Demerara Bauxite Company. Unfortunately, those pledges have not been fulfilled. Instead, there has been harassment, victimisation and discrimination.

If a political solution is achieved, the nation can be united, and practically the whole people involved and mobilised not only in deterring any moves by the reactionary forces, but also in building socialism.

What should be our position? How should we view and act in the present situation?

Since we are so directly involved in the political drama, we have to be careful not to be guilty of subjectivism and dogmatism. As Marxists-Leninists, we must be scientific and dialectical. This means taking an objective view, seeing things not on the basis of how we feel but how they really are. This means not being dogmatic, rigid and inflexible. If the situation demands it, then we must be fearless in changing our political line.

Up to 1970, the PPP was correct in strongly criticising and opposing the PNC regime because of its outright anti-working class, pro-imperialist, undemocratic, corrupt and discriminatory policies.

Because of the failure of the PNC to implement the "peace plan" of 1971, the army hijacking of ballot boxes and the electoral fraud of 1973, and the shooting and killing of our comrades, we were justified in our campaign of non-cooperation and civil resistance.

Today, many evils like the Booker's monopoly, erosion of fundamental rights, absence of democracy, discrimination, corruption and squandermania still persist.

But the PPP cannot close its eyes to the changes brought about especially since its last congress in September 1974. Have these changes been made against or in cooperation with imperialism in accordance with its changing tactics and strategies? Considering the past deals of the PNC with imperialism, one cannot be too sure; doubts linger. But let us be charitable and give the PNC the benefit of the doubt.

True, the changes have been seriously compromised. But we must remember that the PNC is not the PPP — we cannot expect it to proceed in the same way we would.

The fact is that the changes, though compromised, have the effect of weakening imperialism. If we are to arrive at our goal of socialism, imperialism must first be destroyed. And whoever helps must be praised. We must continue to apply pressure on the PNC government and also take our own initiatives in this direction.

The situation now therefore demands a more flexible approach on the part of the PPP. The party had previously declared that it does not have a monopoly on socialism; that it is prepared regardless of ideological and tactical differences to work with others if they are interested in building a socialist Guyana. And this includes the PNC.

Our political line should be changed from non-cooperation and civil resistance to critical support. This can lay the basis for a political solution in our country. It will also help to frustrate the PNC's attempts to isolate the party.

If we continue with the old line, we face the danger in the new situation of opposing for the sake of opposing and thus playing into the hands of the reactionaries. As revolutionaries, we cannot oppose any and every move just because we are opposed to the PNC. For instance, some conservatives oppose nationalisation because it might lead to discrimination. This cannot be our position. We must press for nationalisation and at the same time fight the monster of discrimination with all our might; we must put much more emphasis on this aspect of our work.

Critical support does not mean unconditional support. It means just what it says: giving support for any progressive measure, opposing any reactionary moves, and criticising all shortcomings.

We, and particularly our friends in the socialist states, have a great duty and historical role to play. In this regard, we must note the positive role the Soviet Union and other socialist states play directly and indirectly in the struggle against imperialism and for socialism in Guyana and other countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. By their policy of peaceful coexistence, disarmament, European security and detente, they are ensuring world peace, the greatest safeguard for humanity everywhere.

But the duty of the socialist states is not only to preserve world peace. They must also constantly strive to weaken imperialism and to change the balance of world forces in favour of socialism.

Through peaceful coexistence and peaceful competition, the socialist states can construct socialism (from each according to his ability, to each according to his labour) in an atmosphere of peace and develop faster in the direction of communism (from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs).

By satisfying man's material and spiritual wants and at the same time creating a new type of man, socialism demonstrates that it is a superior system to capitalism. This permits us more easily to "sell" socialism to the masses and to win them away from the influence of the anti-communists.

The Soviet Union and other socialist states have consistently worked to bring about detente, which has contributed to a relaxation of tensions. This, coupled with their diplomatic presence, has helped to break down anti-communism as a political force in Guyana.

Remember that our fight was not against just the PNC and the UF; our main enemy was Anglo-American imperialism. Anti-communism, anti-Sovietism and anti-Castroism were the biggest weapons used against us. The PPP government was subverted in 1962-64 because of the hysteria created that an independent Guyana under the PPP would become a second Cuba. We cannot forget the removal of Marxist Professor Horace Davis and others from the University of Guyana, the refusal of the administration to permit a series of lecturers on Marxism and the deliberate attempt made to change the image of the University. We are glad that the PNC has been forced to swallow its anti-communist and anti-Cuban sentiments and to advocate Marxism-Leninism.

Socialist states have the duty also through diplomatic and other means to exert influence on "third world" countries like Guyana to break from the capitalist world and cooperate with or join the socialist camp. We must not forget that if imperialism is weakened on the world scene, it makes our struggle for national liberation and socialism easier.

Apart from the positive role played at the state level by socialist countries on the basis of peaceful coexistence, communist and workers parties also aid the revolutionary struggle through solidarity and support at the party level on the basis of proletarian internationalism.

This support has been demonstrated by the many messages of solidarity we have received from fraternal parties and the presence here with us of the delegation of the Communist Party of Cuba.

We must assiduously work to strengthen our links with fraternal parties, and to uphold the principles of peaceful coexistence and proletarian internationalism. Nothing must be done to hamper or imperil the observance of these principles.

Socialist states also have a responsibility to make sure that petty-bourgeois nationalist governments like the PNC do not exploit the relations between them and make it appear that their parties are the vanguard parties to the detriment of the revolutionary process.

The PNC is carrying out insidious propaganda that there is no difference between the PPP and the PNC. No doubt this is being done to justify for itself the vanguard role and psychologically to prepare the ground for establishing de facto if not a de jure minority, authoritarian one-party dictatorship.

We must maintain our identity as the PPP. We must vigorously fight against any or all attempts to liquidate our party.

We must make clear the many differences between the PPP and the PNC. From a principled position, that party must continue to expose all the distortions and deviations of Marxism-Leninism.

Socialism means public ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange. While supporting the cooperative movement, it must continue to expose and oppose the false ideology that cooperatives will be the means by which socialism will come to Guyana; that the cooperative sector will become the dominant sector. Turning over nationalised enterprises into cooperatives is not the way to build socialism. Rather, it is the way to construct a new form of capitalism, what one PNC minister recently dubbed "people's capitalism".

Further, we do not see the attainment of socialism without first completing the anti-imperialist process by the nationalisation of the Booker's monopoly, the banks and the insurance companies.

Apologists for the PNC try to explain away the government's inaction in this regard by reference Allende's downfall. They state that if it moved resolutely against the foreign sharks, it would suffer the same fate as that of Allende's Popular Unity government.

This excuse is not justified by the facts. Allende's Popular Unity had no control of the state apparatus and the army; it did not even have a majority in the National Assembly. And there was an entrenched local capitalist-landlord class with well-financed and strong parties and control of the mass media.

In Guyana, the situation is quite different. The PNC has control of the whole state machine, including the police and army; it has a two-thirds majority, although stolen, in the National Assembly. And it is blessed with a situation in which the opposition PPP, representing about 55-60 percent of the people, has a principled and firm anti-imperialist, pro-socialist position. The United Force which had only 12 percent support of the electorate in 1964 is now a spent force.

In this sense, Guyana is somewhat unique. Not only the general, but also the particular, must be seen.

The situation is very different from many "third world" countries with petty-bourgeois nationalist governments, where certain positive steps have been taken which have the effect of weakening imperialism. The internal balance of forces in Guyana is far more favourable for revolution.

For instance, if a comparison is made of Guyana and Venezuela, it will be found that in both countries the governments have taken more or less the same steps in domestic and foreign policies. But there are big differences.

In Venezuela, there are the traditional military and strong rightist political forces; and thus the grave danger of rightist subversion and/or an imperialist inspired military coup as in Chile.

In Guyana, on the other hand, the PNC can take a firm stand against imperialism as there is not the same danger of the overthrow of the government by ultra-rightist subversion and/or military coup. But political opportunism prevents it from so doing. It wants to maintain one foot in the imperialist camp, while reaching out half-heartedly with the other to the socialist camp.

In Venezuela, the Communist Party is permitted to function democratically to grow and to influence the political process. And in turn, it gives critical support to the government especially in view of dangers forcing the country from the reactionary forces.

In Guyana, the minority regime is ruling autocratically and using administrative, psychological and other means to restrict and hamstring the majority PPP, to prevent it from playing its vanguard role.

This must be combated with all the force at our control. Without the PPP, the process against imperialism and for socialism would be halted. It is not by accident that Guyanese are the most politically class-conscious and forward-looking in the whole English-speaking Caribbean. For this achievement credit belongs to the PPP.

In further elaboration of the differences between the PPP and the PNC, we must point out clearly that socialism cannot be attained by military bureaucratic minority rule from above. Without majority involvement, without people's democracy, there can be no socialism. There must be democracy at all levels — central and local government, trade union, industrial.

In Guyana, the road to socialism is being built from the top by an integrated party-state military bureaucratic apparatus and party-state handpicked and controlled organisations.

On the other hand, in Cuba for instance, socialism is being built on three foundations — the party (the Communist Party of Cuba as the vanguard of the working class), the government and the people, each playing its independent role. The Committees for the Defence of the Revolution and the democratically-run mass organisations like the trade unions, the small farmers association (ANAP), the women's organisations, etc., are some of the grass-roots bodies free from government control through which the people speak.

We must make it clear that it is not enough to send students to learn about fisheries, and others to observe work-study in Cuba. What is needed is to see socialist Cuba as an integrated whole — the theory and practice, philosophy and political economy of scientific socialism, of Marxism-Leninism.

An end must be put to corruption and extravagance. A corrupt, extravagant regime will not succeed in inspiring the people. A code of conduct supervised personally by the leader of the PNC is not sufficient; there must be a law, a national anti-corruption board and "watch-dog committees" everywhere.

And the PPP must launch a vigorous campaign against political and racial discrimination. Apart from being a denial of basic human rights, it is a curse which hampers national development; it places obstacles to the fullest mobilisation of human resources. We must press for Equal Opportunity and Fair Employment Practices legislation and for substantial representations in public service commissions and employment exchanges. We must document all cases of discrimination and relentlessly pursue them at all levels until this vicious practice is ended.

While there are many pitfalls ahead which must be avoided, there is also clearly a new, broad vista opening up — a stretch of firm, common ground on which the PPP can build and go forward with the working masses. It is with these masses that the party, as the vanguard of the revolutionary struggle in Guyana, must ever more closely and intimately identify itself, without itself losing its identity, its patriotic commitment to the fullest realisation of the potential of our people and our country.

What we believe in and have fought for is winning out. In Portugal, Greece, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, and elsewhere, our brothers who faced great odds, have achieved spectacular successes.

Day after day more and more victories roll in. A few days ago the criminal OAS blockade against socialist Cuba was lifted. Hot on its heels has come the signing of the code of behaviour by 35 European and North American states at the Helsinki European Security Conference — an achievement which the Soviet Union has steadily worked for. This will deepen detente, improve the chances of peace and security in Europe, and have far-reaching influences everywhere for peace, freedom and socialism.

A great future is before us. Let us move forward with confidence.

In the words of our party song, let us keep the red flag flying.

Long live the working class!
Long live proletarian internationalism!
Long live the PPP!

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The Nineteenth Congress

Report of the Central Committee to the 19th Congress of the
PPP, delivered by the General Secretary, Dr. Cheddi Jagan
— Tain, Corentyne, Berbice, 31 July-2 August 1976

Dear Comrades,

Our 18th Congress enunciated and endorsed the theme that “to socialism has passed the historical initiative. Its moral prestige has grown and the world balance has shifted in its favour.”

Today, we are more than ever convinced that events since then have confirmed this view, and that we are now experiencing a further shift in the balance of power in favour of peace, democracy and socialism. There is, both here in Guyana and in the wider world, an even greater awareness and understanding of the dynamic processes of revolutionary change that are taking place.

The explanation for this shift, this awareness and this understanding is to be found partly in the demonstration effect of the spectacular economic and social progress the socialist countries continue to make; it is to be found partly in mankind’s will to peace and rejection of war as an instrument of change; and it is also to be found in the emergence and exposure of the inherent contradictions and incapacity of capitalist society to fulfil the needs of the people it has traditionally held in bondage.

Since the victory of the Great October Revolution in 1917, socialism has become increasingly a world system exercising a new and decisive influence for progressive change. It has demonstrated, in moral and material terms, its superiority over capitalism and its ability to hold the imagination of people and to inspire their day to day activities; it has forged bonds of brotherhood, mutual trust and respect and sown the seeds of progress as no other value-system has done in the history of the world.

In the land of Lenin, perfectly in accordance with the vision of the founders of the Soviet Union, prices are stable while incomes are rising; education and medical services are free, rent amounts to about 5 percent of the worker’s wage, there is no unemployment, there is security in old age and hope for the youth.

Today more than one-fifth of all goods manufactured in the world come from the Soviet Union. Industrial output has shown rapid advance, bearing in mind the destruction wrought during the war against fascism and the consequential distortion of the Soviet economy. In 1929, output by the USSR and the USA was of the ratio 5:100; in 1950, the ratio was 28:100 and in 1975 it was 80:100. The Soviet Union now ranks first in the world in production of steel. We proudly hail the land of Lenin. Marxism-Leninism is invincible.

The Comecon countries comprise the world’s most dynamic economic region having the highest and most stable growth rates. From 1971 to 1975, industrial production increased by 45 percent. With only 9 percent of the world’s population and 18.5 percent of its land territory, these countries had as their share about 34 percent of the total world industrial output at the end of 1975.

In the German Democratic Republic, to take one leading example of the successful construction of socialism, national income increased by 30 percent between 1970 and 1975.

Manufacturing output rose from 172,000 million marks in 1970 to 235,400 million marks in 1975; 609,000 housing units were completed between 1970-1975.

These achievements in only two of the countries devastated by war — the Soviet Union and the GDR — make nonsense of the allegations of warlike intentions or preparations by the former and other countries of the Warsaw Pact. In a world in which men have accumulated the nuclear capacity to blow themselves and the habitable globe to smithereens, peace is seen as an indispensable pre-requisite to the construction of socialism. Throughout all the years of tension, the will to peace of people all over the world has shone through brighter each passing year, dispelling the war-clouds assiduously built up by the capitalist war-profiteers. The socialist countries and communist parties have always been in the vanguard of the quest for peace, because the victories won for peace can only redound to the benefit of socialism and the further dissemination of socialist ideas.

Since 1973, when the Soviet Union and the USA put into practical application the “Basic Principles of Mutual Relations between the USSR and the USA” by recognising that “in the nuclear age there is no alternative to conducting their mutual relations on the basis of peaceful coexistence”, the previous imperialist policy of nuclear blackmail has been defeated.

The growing economic and military strength of the Soviet Union has forced imperialism to reconsider its policies of Cold War adventurism. Gone are the days of “rolling back” communism of the Truman Doctrine and the Johnson Doctrine. Gone are the days when imperialism can willy-nilly intervene in a country where a struggle for social change is challenging the status quo.

The process of detente between the Soviet Union and the USA has proceeded apace with the committal made by the signing of several new agreements which limit the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Cooperation on various matters such as space exploration, energy, medical research and trade has been established. The Helsinki Conference on Peace and Security attended by all the countries of Europe, the United States and Canada has set a permanent seal on the existence of socialist Europe and has drawn up the principles of peaceful coexistence and security in that continent. However, at the same time, reactionary forces, especially in the USA are sparing no pains to attack the policy of detente and to reverse the process of peaceful coexistence embarked upon. It can be seen, therefore, that the forces for peace must be vigilant, and the process of detente must be accelerated. Much more remains to be done.

The proposal of the Soviet Union for the simultaneous disbandment of NATO and the Warsaw Pact must be acted upon. Disarmament must become an attainable goal. This is the only way by which the enemies of peace can be given a firm rebuff. Political detente must be followed by military detente. Let us fight to make detente irreversible.

Capitalism, on the other hand, thrives on war and the creation of tensions. In the era of giant international corporations and financial consortia, crises are bound to develop. However, the present persistent crisis of capitalism is qualitatively of a somewhat different nature than in the past, even up to the immediate post-war years, with the emergence and spread of the national liberation movements in the former colonial dependencies. Today, the liberated territories and those still to be liberated are not willing for this relationship of dependency to continue; and in the industrialised countries themselves, socialists and communists reject the continuation of plunder and exploitation as a pre-condition for national prosperity. It is the intensity of the liberation and class struggles, and the battle for men’s minds, which have brought about the qualitative change.

But the pre-requisites for capitalism’s survival are still the maximisation of profits and the expansion of spheres of influence, which they are no longer able to satisfy with impunity, or without stresses and strains in the system. One of the end-results of this situation is inflation and permanent crisis. This deepened in 1973 and has spared no major capitalist country and shows little signs of easing.

Industrial output has fallen by an average 15 percent, unemployment has soared, and trade has decreased by 7 percent. The economies of some countries (Britain and Italy, for instance), are experiencing tremendous difficulties if not actually retrogressing; stagnation and rampant

inflation are continuing facts of life in others. At present, there is no capitalist country which predicts anything but continuing high unemployment and inflation and a low level of purchasing power.

In the United States, according to the predictions of the Argus Research Corporation, "an optimistic growth rate of 7.1 percent in 1976 will decline to less than 5 percent in 1977 and only 2.4 percent in 1978. 'By this scenario', says Business Week (March 22, 1976) 'unemployment will not average less than 6 percent for any year for the rest of the decade — and be 8 percent in the final year which will be another recession year'."

Capitalism is doomed. Let us pledge to make our own contribution towards hastening its death.

THE "THIRD WORLD" COUNTRIES

In the developing and underdeveloped, so-called "Third World" countries momentous events have taken place since our last congress, particularly in the politico-military sphere.

The victory of the MPLA in Angola has brought closer the day when all people of Southern Africa will be free. It has facilitated the sharpening of the guerrilla campaign in Zimbabwe which has already shown that racist Ian Smith and his regime will not last for very long. It has given encouragement to national liberation movements all over the world. However, particularly in Southern Africa, apartheid allied to imperialism by myriad economic, political and cultural ties, has shown that it has absolutely no intention of relinquishing its stranglehold over the wealth and lives of the Black population. The bestial face of apartheid again revealed itself in the Soweto massacre.

Soweto brought forth scarcely a ripple of protest from the western countries. The cold-blooded murder of some 150 Black men, women and children by the White supremacists was and is proof to many that the Nazi cult of the master race is still very much alive in Southern Africa; that the minority racist regime and its trigger-happy henchmen are prepared to go to any lengths to retain power in order to continue to exploit the majority Black population in their greed for the gold and diamonds and untold wealth of the country; and it also means that such is the nature of the international economic, financial and military tie-up of the western industrial powers with South Africa that the governments of these countries will continue to be complacent about the barbarity of Soweto, however much they may mouth grand sentiments in forums like the United Nations.

This being the case, justice and brotherhood demands that efforts must be intensified to concert new plans, new strategies and tactics with the oppressed masses in Southern Africa, to destroy by all the means available the practitioners of the loathsome system of apartheid, and to identify and deal appropriately with those who support the system in other parts of the world. This is the immediate and urgent task before us, and this congress must make known its abhorrence of the Soweto massacre and condemnation of the Vorster regime. Let us pledge to work to bring down the fascist Smith and Vorster regimes.

The significant victory of the Angolan people under the leadership of Agostinho Neto, President of the MPLA government of Angola, was achieved against formidable odds, first against the Portuguese colonialists and then against the FNLA and UNITA, and mercenaries. These two right-wing splinter forces were supported by US imperialism. Holden Roberto, who led the FNLA, was a long-term hireling of the CIA with headquarters in Zaire, while UNITA was led by Jonas Savimbi, a collaborator of fascist South Africa, and both groups received help from South Africa and Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and China. The legitimate MPLA-led government was backed by the Soviet Union and Cuba, steadfast upholders of proletarian internationalism.

This outstanding example of fraternal assistance and solidarity has nettled imperialism in general and US imperialism in particular. The US Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, has uttered dire threats against Cuba, including the threat of invasion, if there are any more similar "adventures"; and Washington has said that the Soviet Union's help to Angola could impair the relaxation of tensions in Europe.

But this congress salutes the victory of the People's Republic of Angola under the leadership of the MPLA headed by Agostinho Neto. We also praise the Soviet Union and Cuba for their internationalist solidarity. Long live communist solidarity.

Also freed since the revolution in Portugal which overthrew Dr. Caetano are Guinea-Bissau, the Cape Verde Islands and Mozambique, and the peoples of these countries have begun the arduous task of constructing just societies after years of exploitation and neglect by the Portuguese colonialists.

The ancient semi-feudal, semi-capitalist monarchy of Ethiopia has been overthrown and a revolutionary government, which has declared socialism to be its aim, has come to power and has moved vigorously to stamp out corruption and carry out a land reform programme.

The winds of change blowing across Africa can thus be seen to have achieved near-hurricane strength and to have ushered in, except in South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe (Rhodesia), the beginnings of a new era for the Black majority in that continent.

In the Middle East, although hostilities between Israel and Arab countries have ceased, the myth of Israeli "military superiority" has been shattered; but the imperialist-backed Zionist occupation of Arab lands continues and the Palestinian people still cannot return to their homeland.

Israeli militarism continues, with spasmodic raids against Palestinian villages or alleged hide-outs for PLO forces in the neighbourhood of Israel. The latest has been the flagrant violation of Ugandan territory at Entebbe Airport and the killing of Ugandan soldiers. We condemn the constant and unjustified resort to arms and terror by Israel and the aggression against Uganda.

We demand that Israel implements Resolution 242 of the United Nations and vacate Arab lands illegally occupied, and respects the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

In Lebanon, however, the situation seems to be deteriorating and gives cause for concern, while American warships hover in the Mediterranean a few miles off-shore. The civil war in Lebanon shows clearly what happens when people suffer continuous and prolonged discrimination and denial of political rights. With the Christian and Arab forces ranged against each other, the situation is extremely dangerous. Its most obvious effect, apart from the tragic loss of civilian life and the destruction of Beirut, the capital, is the deepening of the already sharp cleavage in the Arab camp throughout the Middle East and North Africa.

This congress demands the withdrawal of Syrian forces from Lebanon, an immediate cessation of hostilities, and the establishment of free and democratic institutions in the country. We condemn the right-wing aggression against the progressive forces and population of Lebanon.

In the Mediterranean, Turkey continues to occupy by force the northern half of Cyprus, creating a massive refugee problem for the Greek Cypriots who have been uprooted from their homes. This congress supports repeated UN demands for respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Cyprus, for the withdrawal of all Turkish occupying forces and the return of the refugees to their homes in safety.

In the Iberian peninsula, major changes have taken place in Portugal since the Portuguese dictator Caetano was ousted, and in Spain since the death of General Franco. For the people of these countries, so long deprived of their human rights and liberties under these ruthless dictatorships, the changes must surely seem like a bright light at the end of a dark tunnel.

In Western Europe, progressives, communists and other left and democratic forces are gaining in strength and popular support. We hail these developments which confirm the "swing to the left" and the shift in the balance of power which we have already noted.

At the same time, we cannot ignore the fact that imperialism will never willingly relinquish its power and that it will continue to change its strategies and tactics in its struggle to retain its hegemony and dwindling ability to direct and control the lives of peoples all over the world. Its arsenal of weapons range from assassination or attempted assassination of "dangerous" or dispensable political leaders (e.g. Fidel Castro, Nkrumah of Ghana, Sukarno of Indonesia, Ngo Din Diem of South Vietnam, Trujillo of Santo Domingo and others — the list is long), military

coups (e.g. in Chile) and “destabilisation” — the new word for the attempt to overthrow legitimate governments — and bribery and corruption.

In all these activities, US imperialism has been in the forefront using its Central Intelligence Agency, which has been honed to perfection for its varied tasks of murder, subversion and intervention in the internal affairs of other countries. In the process, attempts are made, often successfully, to silence or cow governments into acquiescence, using various pretexts such as “manifest destiny” or “over-riding national interests”.

It is also necessary to note that Maoist China has been objectively aiding imperialism in many crucial issues. In Angola, for instance, Maoist China played a most reactionary role. China sided with US imperialism in backing the traitor, Holden Roberto, and the FNLA; it sided with the opponents of the Mujibur Rahman in the wholly justifiable breakaway from Pakistan and the establishment of the new state of Bangladesh, and now with the military regime that murdered Mujibur; in Europe, it sides with the NATO powers and in its propaganda attacks the Soviet Union’s sponsorship of peaceful coexistence and detente; and it maintains diplomatic relations with and gives aid and comfort to the savage Pinochet regime in Chile.

In south-east Asia, the victory of the peoples of Laos, Cambodia and especially Vietnam, after years of brutal aggression, has finally expelled US imperialism from this region. The historic victory of the Vietnamese people, who have now unified the northern and southern portions of their country, is a classic example of national determination and international solidarity. The Vietnamese people have shown that imperialism cannot automatically hold sway and successfully resort to automatic armed intervention against national liberation movements. The historic victory of the peoples of Indo-China now opens up the road to construction of socialism for the entire people. We hail the victory and unification of the Vietnamese fatherland. Not only has socialism become stronger but it has also expanded. We express our congratulations to the heroic Vietnamese and Indo-Chinese peoples.

In the early 1970s, the anti-imperialist popular movement took a powerful upsurge in Latin America, once the backyard of US imperialism. The Popular Unity Government emerged in Chile, Peronism gained ascendancy in Argentina, Peru began to adopt an anti-imperialist course, Panama claimed sovereignty over the Panama Canal, the OAS became outspoken against US domination, and the progressive movement gained support from wider sections of the people. Today, despite the fascist military dictatorship in Chile, Uruguay and Argentina, supported by that of Brazil (established by domestic and foreign monopoly capital) which may have temporarily suppressed the aspirations of the peoples of those countries, their will is unbroken. It is becoming ever more obvious that capitalism is completely incapable of solving the economic and social problems of the peoples of Latin America. New revolutionary battles are maturing on the entire continent, whose peoples are looking towards Cuba, the first socialist country in America, as a shining example. The collapse of the political, economic and military blockade by imperialism against Cuba indicates the change that has taken place in the balance of forces.

From this congress we say: Hands off Cuba! From this congress we declare our active and unreserved solidarity with the communist and all other anti-imperialist and democratic forces in Latin America. We demand the immediate release of Comrade Luis Corvalan and all other patriots imprisoned in the fascist dungeons in Chile, Uruguay, Brazil and other countries in Latin America. Our greetings and solidarity go out to our comrades in Latin America.

“Destabilisation” is also being attempted in the English-speaking Caribbean. The situation in Jamaica gives cause for grave concern. The Manley government is under siege (or has been until the declaration recently of a state of emergency) by local reaction supported by US imperialism. Daily killings and arson, reminiscent of the situation in Guyana in the early 1960s, were the order of the day. The bullet is replacing the ballot. Imperialism regards the Caribbean and the aspirations of its people with studied contempt and cannot contemplate with equanimity the Manley government even thinking of an anti-imperialist policy.

The capitalist states hope to solve their difficulties by placing the burdens of the permanent crisis on the backs of the peoples of the countries of Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean.

Imports by the developing countries from the industrialised countries continue to rise in price. In 1975, there was a decline of nearly 13 percent in the purchasing power of the exports of the developing countries. During that year the world's non-oil producing developing countries experienced a combined current account deficit in the balance of payments of US\$30 billion. The repayment of loans and interest are also posing increasing difficulties.

Consequently, social and economic conditions are worsening in the developing countries. More than 500 million people live in misery and the majority of them suffer from malnutrition. Illiteracy is growing; it has increased from 700 million in 1960 to 760 million in 1970. And there are 300 million unemployed and under-employed.

In early 1976, the Secretary General Alistair McIntyre told the summit meeting of the Caribbean Economic Community that the region was faced with "unprecedented difficulties" including a 20 percent inflation rate, the "scandalous" food importation bill of \$1,000 million [\$1 billion], a worsening balance of payments problem, and an unemployment figure of 150,000. He stressed that there was the need to create 500,000 jobs for full employment by 1980. And he lamented the shortage of funds for the public sector and "startling increases" in the consumption expenditure.

Of the \$1 billion food import bill approximately \$95 million was for the purchase of imported wheat and wheaten flour. The area has a capacity to produce substitutes such as rice, breadfruit, potato, cassava, etc., and even if a 10 percent reduction in flour imports were made this would amount to a saving in foreign currency of about \$9.5 million which would not only improve the balance of payments but also provide jobs.

For 1975, there was little, if any, overall growth in output in the Caribbean territories. The volume of production of the major agricultural crops — sugar and banana — fell. There was also a decline in the production of bauxite and alumina in the region as a whole.

Poverty in the Caribbean is demonstrated by low nutritional levels resulting in stunting of growth, high infant mortality and general debility.

There are significant deficiencies not only of calories, protein and iron but also of calcium, thiamine (B1), riboflavin (B2), niacin and vitamin A.

In one of the larger Caricom countries, 39 percent of families suffer from calorie deficiency; 30 percent fail to meet adequate protein requirement (meat and fish); 30 percent lack sufficient iron; and more than 50 percent are deficient in their intake of the B-vitamin, riboflavin.

The most vulnerable groups from the nutritional point of view in protein-calorie malnutrition are the pregnant nursing mothers and children under 5.

For children under 5, the mortality rate is twice that in the North American countries; and for the 1-4 age group, the mortality rate is five times as high.

Anaemia, which is mostly due to iron deficiency, is also common among children before age 5 and adult women. There can be complications to mother and child because about 50 percent of pregnant women are anaemic.

Stunting of growth is also evident in the age group 5-15. This is largely due to malnutrition in early childhood, and aggravated by chronic under-nourishment in later years.

Under-nourishment is the result of a disproportionately large intake of carbohydrates in the diet. The consumption of meat and fish, which are rich in proteins, is low, largely because higher prices generally put these items out of reach of low-income families.

According to a report presented to the 10th West Indies Agricultural Economic Conference in 1975, Guyana had the lowest consumption of meat per person in the developed Caricom countries: Guyana — 28.08 lbs.; Trinidad — 42.42 lbs.; Barbados — 67.25 lbs.; Jamaica — 41.63 lbs. per person for the year 1967. "This", Dr. John Dukhia commented, "is rather paradoxical since it was generally argued that Guyana has the potential of being the food basket of the Caribbean."

ECONOMIC SITUATION

The lowest consumption of meat in the developed Caricom territories is an indicator of the general state of the Guyana economy. Other indicators are firstly the classification of Guyana not any longer with the Caribbean MDC's (More Developed Countries) but the LDC's (Less Developed Countries) in terms of income per head of population; secondly, the rise in food imports' cost, despite the severe restrictions on the importation of tinned meat and fish, salted fish, grapes and apples, etc., from \$26.8 million in 1966 to about \$44.8 million in 1975.

Guyana is now reaping the terrible dividends as a result of the "western model" of economic planning strategy imposed in the mid-1960s.

The priorities established by the PPP government were changed from agriculture and industry to infrastructure. Very little has been achieved by this government in industrialisation; and agriculture and drainage and irrigation have been downgraded.

The PPP government in its Development Plan (1960-64) had put 30 percent for drainage and irrigation as compared with an allocation of only 17 percent (actual expenditure about 5 percent) in the PNC government's first Development Plan (1966-72).

No doubt because of our persistent criticisms and agitation on this point, the Minister of Cooperatives and Mass Mobilisation, Hamilton Green, in January 1976, at an annual staff conference of his Ministry declared: "We will be de-emphasising the physical building projects and concentrate on the development of skills and the potential of the people."

But as before, priorities are given for non-agricultural schemes, and millions of dollars are being spent for telephone (\$14.6 million); Canje bridge (\$13 million); Demerara River bridge, sea defences, road approaches to Georgetown, and for the straightening of deviations on the main highways in Demerara.

For example, the expenditure in the capital (development) budget in 1975 for agriculture (which includes not only drainage and irrigation and land development but also the very expensive sea defences now being done) was 18.44 percent, as compared with 55.05 per cent in 1964; for the 1965-75 period of PNC government, the average was 19.38 percent as compared with 43.55 percent for the 1958-64 period of the PPP government.

There is still only talk about the Tapakuma Extension Project and the Mahaica-Mahaicony-Abary schemes. Had the PPP continued in government, these drainage and irrigation schemes would have been completed already.

Consequently, floods and to a lesser extent drought regularly cause tremendous losses to the economy and the farmers. This is shown up in production of our basic agricultural commodities and the impoverishment of the farmers.

In 1972, sugar and rice production declined as compared with the previous year by 15 and 20 percent respectively (bauxite-alumina also declined by 15 percent).

According to the Bank of Guyana in 1973, the "value of exports of goods and services fell further from the depressed level of 1972 by about 4 percent, despite an increase in the average price of exports by about one-twelfth."

In 1974, the output of sugar increased by 75,000 tons, nearly 28 percent over 1973, and rice by some 60,000 tons, about 60 percent over the 1973 output; there was no increase in crops other than sugar and rice; and livestock output decreased by about 2 percent below the 1973 level.

However, when looked at over a long-term period, the situation in the sugar and rice industries, the main agricultural crops, has hardly improved.

Despite the turmoil arising out of CIA-fomented and financed "destabilisation" attempts of the 1962-64 period (80 days strike and shipping and fuel blockade in 1963 and a 5-month strike in the sugar industry in 1964), sugar production, as can be seen in Table 1 below, was 1,226,283 tons in the 1961-64 period of the PPP government, with a yearly average of 306,571 tons. By comparison, production during the period 1971-74 of the PNC government was 1,289,962 tons, with an average annual production of 322,491 tons.

Sugar production increased by 33 percent in the decade 1954-64, but increased by only 5 percent in the first decade of PNC rule.

Table 1 — Sugar Production

PPP in office		PNC in government	
Year	Tons	Year	Tons
1961	324,745	1971	368,843
1962	326,023	1972	314,600
1963	317,137	1973	265,704
1964	258,378	1974	340,815
Total	1,226,283	Total	1,289,962
Average Annual Production			
1961-1964		1971-1974	
306,571 tons		322,491 tons	

In 1975, sugar production was projected at 360,000 tons, but reached only 300,350 tons.

The rice industry has been brought to a sad state. Production doubled between 1954 and 1964, but in the decade of PNC rule from 1965 to 1975, it practically stood still. For the first four years of this decade (1971-74) under PNC rule with peaceful conditions, it was 508,447 tons, only 92 percent of that (550,122 tons) of the comparative period a decade ago (1961-64) when the PPP was in office under conditions of politically instigated turmoil. The average annual production in the respective 4-year periods was: PPP — 137,531 tons; PNC — 127,112 tons.

Indicative of the low level of production of rice is the level of exports at 48,651 tons in 1973-74 and 73,269 tons in 1974-75 as compared with 84,787 tons in 1963-64 and 101,424 tons in 1964-65. As a result, Commonwealth Caribbean governments were forced in 1973-74 to buy rice from the USA, Venezuela and elsewhere. This is likely to happen again. For the "spring" of 1976, a crop of 70,000 tons was expected, but only 48,000 tons was reaped. And about one-third of the "autumn" crop is not likely to be planted not only because of the excessive rainfall, but also because of neglect by the central and local governments to embark on drainage and irrigation schemes and internal "agricultural" roads, and to maintain dams and trenches.

Table 2 — Rice Production

PPP in office		PNC in government	
Year	Tons	Year	Tons
1961/62	128,347	1971/72	118,440
1962/63	139,495	1972/73	101,433
1963/64	118,349	1973/74	107,415
1964/65	163,929	1974/75	181,159
Total	550,122	Total	508,447
Average Annual Production			
1961/62-1964/65		1971/72-1974/75	
137,531 tons		127,112 tons	

Agricultural production is affected not only because of the government's wrong priorities and neglect. There is also the question of wage-price policies and relations with the producers.

Wage rates are lowest in the agricultural sector. The hourly wage rate for an adult unskilled male worker is \$1.46 in the bauxite industry, \$0.688 in the public sector, and \$0.626 in the sugar industry. What is more, the majority of sugar workers work on a job-rate basis.

Rice farmers receive about half the price that the Guyana Rice Board (GRB) secures in the export market. In 1975, the GRB increased its revenue by \$59 million but the rice farmers received a pittance as an increase; they are also cheated in the grades they receive.

Thousands of rice and other farmers in the face of escalating costs of production suffer almost annually losses with no crop insurance schemes or compensation arrangements. And credit to agriculture is restricted. The Guyana Agricultural Cooperative Development Bank disbursed over the past 2-year period only \$13 million in loans. And so lopsided is the government's credit policy that the numbers of registered tractors declined from 511 in 1964 to 120 in 1975, while the numbers for motor cars nearly doubled from 819 in 1964 to 1515 in 1975.

Sugar workers for years could not get the union of their choice recognised for the purpose of collective bargaining. Only after their militancy resulted in two crippling strikes in 1975 with a loss to the economy of \$100 million in foreign exchange and \$50 million in government revenue, was a poll taken which led to the recognition of the Guyana Agricultural and General Workers Union.

The rice farmers' organisation, the Guyana Rice Producers Association, has been removed from the Guyana Rice Board, and is not recognised. In its place are hand-picked Rice Action Committees. Similarly, other farmers' organisations are propped up by the regime in place of the genuine farmers' organisations like the Guyana Cane Farmers Association and the Guyana Agricultural Producers Association.

The other main productive sector of the economy, bauxite-alumina production fell by 15 percent in 1972 as compared with 1971. In 1973, the value of exports increased by about \$5 million or 4 percent, but there was a fall in the output of dried bauxite of about 18 percent. Mining and quarrying other than bauxite-alumina products increased by only 2 percent, and manufacturing, other than sugar and rice milling, by about 4 percent.

From January to August 1975, export quantities of bauxite-alumina fell on average by nearly a twelfth and dried bauxite by 15 percent.

According to the Bank of Guyana Report for 1974: "Real growth of production has recovered from the depressed levels of 1972 and 1973 and averaged about 4 percent over the last five years."

For a country like Guyana with immense natural resources — minerals, water, timber, land and idle manpower — a real growth rate of only 4 percent is an indictment of the PNC's economic planning strategy and policies. Down with reformism!

What saved the economy from collapse were high prices for main products, bauxite-alumina, rice and particularly sugar.

There was an unprecedented and unexpected increase in the export price of sugar from which the Government collected through a levy the sum of \$131 million in 1974 (without which there would have been a deficit of \$52 million, equivalent to 20 percent of the current budget expenditure) and about \$250 million in 1975. The price of sugar has now declined sharply in the face of increased costs of production, estimated by the Caribbean sugar producers to be in the vicinity of 30 percent.

Commenting on the high level of prices in 1974 and 1975, the Bank of Guyana Report for 1975 stated: "While quantum growth in 1974 resulted from both high output and better prices, the 1975 expansion has derived entirely from a further improvement in the terms of trade of almost two-fifths."

Virtually admitting the precarious state of our economy, the Minister of Finance in his budget speech for 1976 declared:

International inflation as it affects developing countries like Guyana is not expected to show marked reduction; in fact the trend may even be intensified, reflecting itself in higher import prices. These trends — high development expenditure, rising import prices and not too significant gains in export prices — if they materialise could seriously affect or even reverse our balance of payments position, and swing the terms of trade against this country.

Another serious defect in the economic structure is the very high proportion of the labour force employed in the service sector. Employment proportions are: services, including Government — two-fifths; agriculture — one-third; and industry including mining and construction — one-quarter.

The government services have grown fantastically, with the personal emoluments for the bureaucracy costing \$130.8 million in 1976 as compared with \$27 million in 1964. Over the 1969-73 period, the output of government services rose from 13 percent of the GDP to 20 percent, while that of agriculture and industry declined from 60 percent to 53 percent.

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is therefore not a true indicator of the nation's economic viability. This was why a former government economic adviser had stated that we had growth without development.

The large services sector and huge bureaucracy with a propensity to consume imported goods contributed to total imports increasing from \$567 million in 1974 to nearly \$780 million for 1975, an increase by 38 percent.

High imports and relatively low level of exports have caused almost every year a trade and current account deficit and a decrease in our foreign reserves. Only extraordinary high prices in 1975 caused a trade surplus of some \$25 million on the current account of the balance of payments.

"Consequently," said the Minister of Finance, no doubt in anticipation of the fall in the price of sugar in 1976, "unless export prices improve very significantly it is expected that the country's external account after net capital inflows are taken into account would record an overall external payments gap."

What the PNC regime has been doing is to prop up the ailing economy with its massive injections of foreign loans, and huge internal taxation.

The national debt has increased from \$128 million in 1964 to \$823 million (estimated) at the end of 1975 (this does not include debt of \$102 million for compensation for the properties of Booker Bros. McConnell & Co., nationalised in May 1976).

And the servicing of this debt is becoming a burden on the people. Debt charges have jumped from \$10.5 million in 1964 to \$100.8 million in 1976; from an equivalent of 15 percent of revenue in 1964 to 28 percent in 1976.

To meet the payments for the national debt, the huge administrative and police-military bureaucratic apparatus, the para-military National Service, exorbitant super-scale salaries and allowances and extravagance in public spending, tremendous burdens have been placed on the backs of the working people.

Income tax increased from \$22,417,000 in 1964 to \$104,425,000 in 1975 (estimated), an increase of 366 percent.

Import duty, excise duty and other forms of revenue amounted to \$40,356,000 in 1964; they were estimated at \$351,925,000 in 1975. This is equivalent to an increase of 772 percent: when passed on to the consumers, it represents heavy indirect taxation.

The Prime Minister in the Preface to the \$300 million Development Programme (1966-72) had stated: "We aim at building a vigorous economic democracy which is not a copy of either Eastern communism or Western capitalism. . . within seven years, we shall be able to reduce unemployment, increase our national productivity and income more than significantly and establish the economy of Guyana on a firm basis."

Brave words! But the hodgepodge reformism has failed to produce tangible results. The first programme collapsed prematurely and the second one (1972-76) with its objective to "feed, clothe and house the nation by 1976" was still-born. According to Robert Nathan Association, a US consultant, that objective would not be achieved by 1976, but possibly by 1981! The government could have saved the taxpayers the expense of the sum of over \$400,000 paid to the firm; we had said the same thing long before.

In his 1976 budget speech, the Minister of Finance declared that "a policy of trade diversification would be pursued with vigour, particularly with socialist states, in order to ensure that

imports are bought at best prices available, and more of our export commodities are sold at reasonable prices.”

But still there are restrictions on imports of goods from the socialist states with service and other discriminatory charges.

So far, despite the stance of non-alignment since 1970, Guyana's trade is with the capitalist world, from which over 90 percent of our imports originate.

The only shift which has taken place is increased imports of goods from the Caricom area, from \$29,416,000 in 1968 to \$150,001,000 in 1975.

But this is largely goods which are produced mainly by US companies operating in the Caribbean. In most cases, they are, apart from petroleum products, goods which are packaged, tinned or bottled from bulk supplies shipped from the USA. Caricom thus undermines our industrial development. In 1974, manufacturing, apart from rice and sugar milling, increased by only 4 percent. Thus, Guyanese are deprived of jobs and higher living standards.

The Guyana government in October 1975 followed the lead of the Barbados government in severing links with the pound sterling. But while Barbados established a rate of US\$1= B\$2, Guyana fixed a rate of US\$1=G\$2.55.

During the past ten years the Guyana dollar (currency) had been devalued systematically to the detriment of the Guyanese working class. Devaluation in 1967 and 1971 led to the working class having to pay more for imported goods while the capitalist class as a whole pocketed about \$10 million per year in excess profits. The suggestion by the PPP for the imposition of a special tax on the capitalist class to recover the \$10 million for subsidisation of essential goods was not entertained by the PNC government.

In December 1971, after the USA devalued its dollar, the PNC government devalued by 8 percent the Guyana dollar with respect to the pound sterling. Consequently, the pound sterling jumped in value from G\$4.80 to G\$5.21. As a result the Guyanese consumers paid about \$15 million more in 1972 for an equivalent amount of goods imported the previous year.

The devaluation in 1971 was intended to help the lagging export to the USA. At that time, the Guyana dollar was fixed at the rate of G\$2 for US\$1; now, when exports have shifted relatively from the UK to the USA, the government has fixed the rate at G\$2.55 for US\$1. Our dollar is now devalued also even with respect to the currencies of the Caricom countries — Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad. This will mean dearer imports from these territories.

The PNC government claimed that its monetary decisions were based on “the balance of economic advantage” to Guyana. But the fact is that so long as Guyana is tied to the trading and monetary policies of the world capitalist system, which is in a state of permanent crisis, the Guyanese working class will suffer while state-monopoly capitalism will reap the harvest.

Extravagance in public spending has becoming endemic. Administration costs increased from \$16,511,000 in 1964 to \$83,651,000, equivalent to 407 percent increase. But expenditure for economic development in the current estimates increased from \$4,564,000 in 1964 to \$14,006,000, equivalent to 207 percent increase. For the 10th independence anniversary celebrations, \$3 million was spent. Included in that was an expense for 500,000 balloons with the effigy of the Prime Minister. Guyana does not need to inflate the ego of the Prime Minister. What it needs is to raise living standards.

DETERIORATION OF LIVING CONDITIONS

The Cost of Living

A frequent propaganda ploy of government spokesmen is that the rise in the cost of living is not blameable on the government; that it is due to external forces over which it has no control: the inflationary spiral associated with the oil or “energy” crisis.

But as has been shown, soaring prices and perpetual shortages are the end result of the government's faulty economic planning strategy, fiscal, monetary, trade and foreign policies, and an extravagant life style that left much to be desired.

A big contributory factor was the significant shift in trade with the countries of the Caribbean Common Market to which Guyana was hitched as a result of imperialist pressure in 1968. Under the Caribbean Free Trade Area and the Caribbean Common Market, Guyana pays higher than world prices for Caribbean manufactured goods and fuel (the retail price for gasoline from Trinidad, produced mainly by Texaco, increased between November 1973 and March 1974, was 147 percent as compared with 28 percent in the USA); and Guyana gets less than world prices for its exports of rice.

During the period of the second and third terms of office of the PPP government (1957 to December 1964), prices were stable, essential foods were available in abundance, and the cost of living rose only by 11 index points in the 7-year period. We shall continue to take credit for the fact that, at a time when we were still a colony of Britain (and when the British Governor still exercised reserved powers) we were able to keep the cost of living to an average annual rise of less than 1.6 percent.

By contrast, under the PNC, the cost of living rose 41.6 points during the 9-year period from 1965 to 1973 — 4.6 points per year. In 1972, the rate of increase in price (5.4 percent) was more than twice the annual average increase (2.3 percent) for the 11-year period — 1960-1971. In the first 8 months of 1973, well before the brief Arab-Israeli war, the commencement of the oil squeeze and the so-called “energy crisis”, the increase was three times the 1960-71 average increase.

In 1974, the domestic inflation rate was 20 percent. In the one-year period, February 15, 1975 to February 15, 1976, the cost of living increased by 9.7 points; in the same period, the food, beverage and tobacco items increased 15.8 points, and clothing 6.6 points.

But despite the increase in the domestic inflation rate, the government has refused to grant an automatic cost of living increase. We must put up a strong fight to see that this is implemented.

Wages have been virtually frozen and have not kept pace with the sharp increase in taxation and the steep rise in the cost of living. Whereas indirect taxation — import duty, excise and other forms of revenue other than income tax — which falls heaviest on the poor increased by 772 percent between 1964 and 1975, wages for the lowest paid unskilled worker increased from \$4.04 per day in 1964 to \$6.26 per day in 1974-76, an increase equivalent to 55 percent.

The minimum wage has not even kept pace with increased productivity. Using 1960 as the base year at index figure of 100, real wages increased in 1974 to 106 and productivity to 124.

The government likes to refer to its generosity in providing subsidies on essential commodities totalling \$36.6 million in 1975 and an estimated \$39 million in 1976.

But what is not mentioned is a consumption tax which brought in \$5 million to the government coffers in 1970, increased to \$41 million in 1975 and is estimated to bring in \$44 million in 1976. The National Development Surtax netted \$5.7 million in 1975; this year it is estimated at \$7.5 million. The sugar levy yielded \$131 million in 1974 and about \$250 million in 1975. Consumers pay nearly 80 cents a gallon on consumption tax on gasoline, which is more than the price plus tax in September 1973, just before the “fuel crisis”. This in turn has had its effect on local food production because farmers have to pay more for fuel to travel to their farms in boats and tractors and in conveying produce out. Local food prices have also risen because of the increased charges in drainage and irrigation rates, and in transport fares. Electricity charges have gone up astronomically and several devaluations of the Guyana dollar have sent up further the cost of consumer goods. A 5 percent External Trade Bureau service charge is also passed on to the consumer.

As a result of the steep increase in expenditure for the payment of debts and salaries and allowances of personnel in the state apparatus, the percentage of the budget allocated to social services and the people’s welfare have declined by 8 to 10 percent per year recently. Consequently, there has been marked deterioration in education, health, housing and other social amenities.

Education

The Minister of Education in 1974 admitted that “three-quarters of the children coming out of primary schools could not read properly.”

Not many Guyanese were surprised to learn this, for parents who take an interest in what is happening are aware of the overcrowded, under-staffed, and generally unedifying conditions of the schools their children attend.

Part of the problem is poverty. Many parents cannot afford to buy books, clothing and food for their children. Consequently, large numbers of children are now increasingly found begging or hawking pencils and other cheap consumer goods in the streets.

The decision of the government to provide free school books to all children from the preparatory class upwards from September 1975 is therefore most welcome.

Unfortunately through massive administrative bungling, there were hardly any books for the year 1975-76. The government had neither imported a sufficient quantity nor given import licenses to the booksellers.

Not only are the majority of children leaving school unable to read, properly. A high proportion also cannot write legibly and are even ignorant of the basic mathematical principles. This is traceable in part to the fact that the standard of the teaching personnel has declined. During the 1973-74 school year, 65.5 percent of teachers were untrained. There is great need for more qualified personnel and for the discontinuation of the imposition of PNC misfits, some without the minimum qualifications, on some schools as interim teachers, and of discrimination against other better qualified teachers.

The need for more trained teachers is apparent when we consider that the pre-service training college at Turkeyen and the in-service centres at Georgetown, New Amsterdam and Linden produce less than 300 trained teachers annually.

The ratio of trained teachers to students is:

Primary schools	—	1 to 81 students
Secondary schools	—	1 to 62 students

There should never have been the need for the Minister of Education to seek to recruit 400 teachers in the UK, as has recently happened. Instead of cutting down from three to one the number of teacher training colleges the PPP established, the PNC government should have built on this foundation.

There is, as already mentioned, severe overcrowding or shortage of school places: 45,000 children are not able to go to primary schools; 94,000 primary school leavers cannot obtain free secondary education; 90 percent of applicants failed to gain admission to the Guyana Technical Institute — in 1972, 600 applied but only 10 were admitted; in 1976, there were 8,000 applicants, but only 80 were enrolled and 50 graduated; only 1 out of every 17 pupils attending primary schools is able to get secondary education.

Apart from the need for more training centres in different parts of Guyana, there is urgent need for the implementation of a rapid school-building programme and the dropping of the age of entry to 5 years. The implementation of this suggestion plus the remedying of all other ills — time-wasting, resulting from children being forced to attend PNC junkets, truancy, poor and expensive transportation, discrimination — will go a long way to reducing the number of school leavers unable to express themselves properly.

Discrimination must be ended not only at the level of primary teachers, but also at the top level. Everyone is aware of the case of Dr. Walter Rodney, a Guyanese professor of History in Jamaica and Tanzania a few years ago, who had applied and been approved for appointment to a post at the University of Guyana by the Appointments Committee of the Academic Board. However, the PNC-dominated Board of Governors quashed the appointment and despite considerable pressure, Dr. Rodney, who is eminently qualified, cannot get a job in his field in his own country. Earlier, Mohamed Insanally and others also had their services dispensed with by

the simple expedient of the University not renewing their contracts. Guyana cannot afford the loss of such highly-skilled Guyanese. This vicious practice must come to an end.

We also need teachers with a socialist orientation. At this stage of development, the content of education from kindergarten to university is of vital importance. To achieve a socialist society, socialism, not cooperative but scientific, must be taught in schools. Ideological orientation must begin with the very young, and must continue uninterrupted, graduated to the age-group being taught.

Every child leaving school or university must have a grasp of what socialism is and what it involves.

Comrades, let us make sure that there are socialists to carry on the fight to final victory!
Socialism cannot be built without socialists!

Health

In addition to "Education Year", there is also "Health Year". But no one would think so from the small proportion (5.3 percent) of the 1976 Budget allocated for health.

Recent reports by Medical Officers of Health of the children's ward of the Georgetown Public Hospital and the Georgetown City Council disclose the existence of grave malnutrition through lack of sufficient protein, minerals and vitamins in the diet.

Dr. Clive Thomas, in his 1973 Preliminary Report to the Trades Union Congress on Inflation, Shortages and the Working-Class Interests in Guyana, indicated the low levels of production and intake of major meat and dairy products. He said that "calculations using the government estimates show that beef production represents an average of 12 lbs. per head per year for the entire population, i.e., a consumption level of 3-4 ozs. per person per week. Pork production represents a consumption level of about one and a half ozs. per person per week. Poultry production represents a consumption level of about 3 ozs. per person per week. Milk production represents a consumption level of only four-fifths of one pint per person per week, and eggs about 35 per person per year. Even when totalled together the production of all types of meat was equal to only 43 lbs per person per year or only 13 ozs. per person per week."

This is a far cry from the PNC boasts before it was hoisted into power. Where is the free milk and cassava? What has happened to all the boasts about "no one will go to bed hungry under the PNC"?

While conditions have been created which predispose to malnutrition and disease, medical care is becoming out of reach for the average Guyanese. The major health institution, the Georgetown Public Hospital, is obsolete and ill-equipped. Since 1964, the regime had programmed for a new hospital. During the 1973 election campaign, a model of it was displayed at William Fogarty Ltd., but it has not been built. Was that intended only as an election gimmick? The hospital is also understaffed. There are shortages of beds with two patients in one small bed a common practice. And there is a perpetual shortage of drugs. Poor patients have to queue up for long hours at the dispensary, only to be told in a majority of cases that the drugs prescribed are not available.

There are not enough medical personnel — health visitors, dispensers, midwives, doctors — in the rural and particularly the riverine and interior parts of the country. Health centres in places like the Berbice River area are closed for lack of trained personnel.

The government has said that it will set up a military college. Clearly its priorities are misplaced. The need of the hour is a medical college.

Only a week ago, we read in the Mirror of the sad case related by a comrade from the West Bank Demerara whose wife delivered her child at the home of a friend, where she had been taken with the hope of getting medical attention or transportation to the Georgetown Hospital. Such situations should not occur in any civilised society.

The PNC claims that it has established a socialist government. But we are still far away from socialised medicine. We need to get our priorities right. Unless there is a cut-back on ex-

travagance and ingrained habits of seeking to “keep up with the Jones”, the care of the sick and mothers-to-be will always take second place.

Comrades, this is a disgraceful situation. There must be an end to two mothers-to-be in a bed. The PPP says: more beds for our mothers, not Burnham’s face on balloons, costing \$127,500!

Housing

Under the 1972-76 Development Programme, the nation was to have been fed, clothed and housed by 1976.

As for “feeding”, during the two terms of the PPP government (1957-64) local foods were plentiful and cheap. Every year there were gluts of plantains, cassava and other root crops. Now foods are scarce and expensive. Root crops which used to sell for 2 to 8 cents per pound in our time now sell for 20 to 75 cents per pound.

The construction of the textile mill which was to have clothed us by the end of this year has not yet begun. And cotton production would probably collapse without unpaid labour through National Service.

But it is in the area of housing that there has been the greatest failure. Under the programme announced, 65,000 houses and dwelling units were to have been erected in the period as follows: 1972 — 5,000; 1973 — 8,000; 1974 — 13,000; 1975 — 17,000; 1976 — 22,000.

Over a year ago, the Minister of Works and Housing announced that the plan was “too ambitious”. Indeed, we had said in 1973 that the whole thing was an underhand election manoeuvre. Further, he said that the figure would be revised to 3,500 a year.

But what are the results?

Official figures now disclose that the number of houses and dwelling units built were as follows: 1972 — 1,061; 1973 — 1,128; 1974 — 1,037; 1975 (first three quarters) — 941. At this rate it is unlikely that 6,000 will be built by the end of 1976 — a far cry from the 65,000.

The fact is that despite the ballyhoo, little attention is being given to housing, especially for the low-income groups. Only \$7.7 million was allocated in the 1976 budget, equivalent to 1.1 percent.

The working class suffers most from the acute housing shortage. Before the 1972-76 targets of 65,000 housing units was set, there had already been a backlog of 44,000 houses at the end of 1971. The situation in Georgetown is further aggravated by the trek of about 25,000 per year from the countryside.

The housing problems of the workers, who have to pay about one-third or more of their wages for rent, have become compounded because of the government’s failure to build houses for rental. Further, because of low wages and high costs of houses and thus inability to pay future instalments, generally unskilled workers are excluded from the government’s self-help housing programme.

Unemployment, Crime and Prostitution

The unemployment and underemployment rate remains high at around 25 percent. It is higher among the youth.

Every year, some 11,000 school leavers, including students from the commercial and business schools, the Government Technical Institute and the University of Guyana are thrown on to the labour market, acutely worsening an already bad unemployment situation. The recent claim that 10,000 have found jobs each year is fictitious. And there is no provision for unemployment relief under the National Insurance Scheme.

Increases in old-age pensions from \$12 to \$15 per month remain pitifully small, whereas the increases in the salaries and allowances of the elite have been scandalously high.

There has been what amounts to a mass exodus of Guyanese seeking permanent residence overseas. Writing in the Sunday Chronicle on July 4, 1976, Dr. Fred Sookdeo stated:

The increase in net migration of Guyanese to foreign countries is a loss of valuable human resources to the country. In 1960, net migration was represented by 3,198 persons which increased to 8,301 persons in 1970 and, then averaged 8,000 between 1971 and 1975.

Emigration of skilled and professional Guyanese is a loss of valuable human resources. In 1970, a total of 296 professional and technical permanent emigrants left Guyana. There were also 448 persons in the administrative, management and clerical category who left the country. It is estimated that more Guyanese with university qualifications leave the country than are graduated from the University of Guyana.

There is also a loss of trained apprentices. Among the 226 persons who were trained by Bookers at Port Mourant between 1957-64 about half left for foreign countries. Furthermore, between 1968-72 from 1,147 students admitted to be trained as professional nurses only 267 graduated. Between 1968 and 1972, while 267 nurses were graduated, 323 left the country.

The brain drain phenomenon of qualified and skilled Guyanese subverts the socialist development of the country. Tens of millions of dollars are spent annually for the education of these immigrants who emigrate to create wealth in foreign countries.

What Dr. Sookdeo failed to mention was that a very large percentage left because of discrimination. Others left because the life style of the ruling elite has failed to inspire them.

Prostitution and the crime rate have increased. The number of crimes of all types recorded in 1967 was 113,593; in 1973 it was 124,207 and is on the increase. The total in a seven-year period was 814,103 — about one crime per person in the country! This takes no account of the thousands that are not recorded: for instance, choke-and-rob attacks, the Guyanese “specialty”, are everyday occurrences in Georgetown — so much so that victims scarcely bother to report them.

In the face of the alarming situation, insult is added to injury by the evident extravagance of the ruling elite, and the large amount of about \$90 million or 15 percent of the budget devoted to security, primarily for maintaining the elite in power. Our nation can be better secured at far less cost by a real national people's militia, which the regime is dragging its feet to establish.

The situation is grave. This congress will be asked to approve a programme and to pass a number of resolutions designed to set right the distressful state of affairs.

POLITICAL SITUATION

Deterioration of living conditions and failure to realise promises and slogans made from time to time — “free milk and cassava”, “not a soul would go to bed hungry” (1961-1964), “the small man will become the real man” under cooperative socialism (1970), “feed, clothe and house the nation by 1976” under the 1972-1976 \$1,150 million development plan which had been brought for the election in 1973 and set aside in 1974 — led to grave dissatisfaction and an aggravation of the situation at the industrial, political and ideological levels.

On the industrial front, the struggle intensified. In 1974, there were 571,000 more man-days lost on account of strikes than in 1973. And in 1975, because of imported inflation and high taxation, the number of man-days lost considerably increased.

In the 1974 budget, the government imposed a record-breaking \$19 million taxation, and in mid-1974, a sugar levy which was expected to yield \$30 million in that year but in fact yielded \$131 million, and about \$250 million in 1976.

The levy was far in excess of that exacted by West Indian governments. It not only robbed the workers of their fair share of profits under the profit-sharing scheme established since 1968, but also provided the sugar bosses with an excuse to pay the sugar workers less than half the wages and salaries sugar workers in the English-speaking Caribbean territories were earning.

The sugar workers struggled magnificently in a 7-weeks strike in the “spring” crop and a 6-weeks strike in the “autumn” crop of 1975. They made tremendous sacrifices, and in the end gained a partial, but none-the-less important victory. The government was forced, as a result of

loss to the economy of nearly \$150 million in foreign exchange and \$50 million in revenue, to set up machinery for a poll, a measure which it had consistently refused to do in the past.

In the poll, the militant workers voted overwhelmingly for the Guyana Agricultural and General Workers Union (GAWU) giving it 98 percent of the votes cast.

The poll, at which 83 percent of the workers turned out to vote, demonstrated two facts: firstly, that GAWU had the confidence of the majority of sugar workers, as it had always claimed; secondly, the PNC's claim that it had made inroads into PPP strongholds was spurious — a claim based on the 71 percent votes which it took at the 1973 general elections with the help of the army.

Now that sugar workers have won recognition for the union of their choice, they must continue the struggle for improved wages and working and living conditions. We wish to assure all workers: have no fear; the PPP will always be behind you!

At the Guyana Bauxite Company, the most important development of nationalisation was the replacement of the expatriate Canadian and American managerial group by a PNC elite. As a result of the growing confrontation between the elitist management and the workers, the number of man-hours lost by strikes increased from 21,609 in 1972 to 34,348 in 1974; the rebel workers' movement which had been suppressed in 1971 with force — tear-gassing of workers on strike on May Day and the arrest of 26 of the strike leaders — erupted again in 1975. To defeat the rebels at union elections, resort was made to harassment, intimidation, rigging and fraud. And the government was forced to set up a commission of inquiry.

Other categories of workers — timber, waterfront, office, government — also crushed under the burden of escalating prices, increased transportation costs, and the government's refusal to make automatic wage readjustments to cope with the increased cost of living, have become more and more vociferous. They have been giving expression to their dissatisfaction by unauthorised, strikes, go-slows and other means. They call for the implementation of promises and pledges. The President of the Clerical and Commercial Workers Union, Gordon Todd, addressing the union's Twelfth Annual Delegates Conference on August 12, 1974, stated: "We continue to support the objectives as set out by the External Trade Bureau (ETB), but I am not convinced that the Bureau has been able to achieve its objectives."

The Secretary of the Federation of Unions of Government Employees noted recently that his union was concerned about "price rises, reduced purchasing power of the dollar and unemployment", and the Federation has called for a minimum wage of \$10 per day for unskilled workers.

The farmers continually suffer from loss of crops due to floods and the government's unsympathetic attitude generally. Very little is being done for this category of hard-pressed Guyanese working people. Farmers are not allowed to voice their discontent by peaceful demonstrations. Their truly representative organisations are being by-passed. Unrepresentative and bureaucratically run bodies, affiliated to or associated with the ruling party, have been recognised. They squander the farmers' money and build up a system of patronage. And coercive methods are employed to force the farmers to join and support them.

Ideological struggle also raised the political consciousness of the masses. We had consistently attacked the pro-imperialist and reformist "western models" of economic planning, and constructively pointed out the alternative way forward. We condemned the anti-Marxist, anti-communist position of the PNC, and the reactionary and utopian ideas of "democratic socialism" and "cooperative socialism," and counter-posed scientific socialism.

Failure on the part of the government to satisfy the people's basic needs and to realise their aspirations increased their awareness of the necessity for revolutionary change and their confidence in our party.

A new development at the political level had an impact on the situation. In late 1974, our party established relations with the Working People's Alliance (WPA) which had been constituted by four small groups — Ratoon, African Society for Cultural Relations with Independent Africa (ASCRIA); Indian Political Revolutionary Associates (IPRA); and Working People's Vanguard Party (WPVP). Up to the July 1973 general elections, these groups had a hostile attitude

to our party, deeming it revisionist and non-revolutionary. In early 1975, the PPP and the WPA jointly issued a statement on the PNC's announcement of impending constitutional changes.

Previously in 1970, Eusi Kwayana of ASCRIA had broken away from the PNC and had brought two ministers before the Ombudsman on charges of corruption. Later in 1972, IPRA was formed on the basis that Indians needed a revolutionary organisation. Starting from the false premise that the PPP and the PNC were the same, non-revolutionary and reactionary racial blocs, ASCRIA and IPRA declared that they would work in close cooperation but separately at the beginning to forge later a revolutionary alliance of Indians and Africans — IPRA working among the Indians and ASCRIA among the Africans. This objective was not realised particularly in so far as the PPP supporters were concerned.

Three other factors caused an abandonment of that political position. Firstly, lacking mass support, the Ratoon Group, despite its revolutionary utterances, could not take any positive action after the attempted assassination of Dr. Joshua Ramsammy. Up to that time, they were still attacking, and isolating themselves from the PPP, the only organisation apart from the PNC with a mass following.

Secondly, disillusionment with Maoist China. All these groups had more or less a Maoist orientation and were perturbed about China's fulsome praise of the PNC government when it did not have an anti-imperialist position.

Thirdly, the refusal by the Board of governors of the University of Guyana to confirm the appointment of Dr. Walter Rodney, as head of the History Department. This led to an invitation by ASCRIA to the PPP to take part in joint protest meetings (previously ASCRIA and PPP had engaged in squatting on Booker's land for house-lots). Attempts were made by the PNC to break up these meetings which attracted huge crowds, reminiscent of 1953.

No doubt, the PNC saw this new development as having the potential for the creation of a broad united front linking together not only the different ethnic groups, but also the workers, farmers and intelligentsia.

At the same time, contradictions deepened within the PNC petty-bourgeois and radical intelligentsia leadership, and also between the leadership and its working class members and followers.

Objective conditions and subjective factors thus forced the regime in an anti-imperialist direction — nationalisation; progressive role in the Non-Aligned Movement; trade and diplomatic relations with the socialist countries; participation in the Latin American cooperation organisation (SELA); break of diplomatic relations with Israel.

In consideration of these moves and in anticipation of "destabilisation" attempts, attacks and even counter-revolutionary intervention by the reactionary forces, our party at its 25th anniversary conference in August 1975 enunciated a change from our post-1973 general election line of "non-cooperation and civil resistance" to "critical support". We considered this our patriotic duty in the national interest. We want all Guyanese to know: when it comes to defending our national interests, the PPP as always, will be up front.

This does not mean that the PPP has joined with the PNC, that we are supporting the government completely. It means giving support for any progressive measure, opposing any reactionary moves and criticising all shortcomings. Above all, it means giving a firm message to imperialism and its lackeys that we will not tolerate any meddling in our domestic affairs; that despite the differences between the PPP and the government, we are prepared to unite our forces with the PNC forces to fight against intervention so as to safeguard our national independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The PNC regime further opposed the US package deal proposal on the entry of both South Korea and Vietnam in the United Nations, condemned Zionism as racism, came out in support of UN resolutions on the Middle East and the cause of the Palestinian people, supported after some vacillation the MPLA in Angola, and nationalised the transnational monopoly, Booker Bros., McConnell and Co. Ltd.

How does imperialism view the developing but complex process in Guyana? How does it view the PNC regime?

Clearly, it is not happy about developments and the position of the PNC. The imperialists feel that they have been betrayed. They view the PNC as a “Frankenstein” monster, a “dog which has bitten the hand that fed it”.

However, this does not mean that they will give up the PNC and support the PPP. Our party still is, and will remain, imperialism’s implacable enemy. This was made clear by Nelson Rockefeller, who is regarded as one of the liberals in the system of state-monopoly capitalism. In the report of the special Mission he headed in Latin America, it is stated:

Guyana is not a politically stable nation. Its political sphere reflects both the strength of a communist party and the depth of racial tension. A communist victory would completely change Guyana’s foreign policy. It is therefore of crucial concern to the United States and other nations of the western hemisphere as well as Great Britain. Brazil in particular has indicated its concern in this area.

The imperialists will still work with the PNC especially the entrenched right wing, hoping to control, if not halt and reverse, the present process.

Imperialism is concerned about the increasing tendency of developing countries to take control through nationalisation of their natural and other resources, which has contributed to the deepening crisis of capitalism. At the same time, because of its voracious appetite and dependence on the underdeveloped countries for raw materials (US consumption of raw materials from foreign sources, mainly underdeveloped countries, are: diamonds, coffee, platinum, mercury, natural rubber — 100 percent, cobalt — 99 percent, manganese — 98 percent, cocoa — 97 percent, chrome — 95 percent and aluminium — 94 percent), it would like to maintain its grip on them. Consequently, it is devising new methods and manoeuvres in order to keep the poor countries within the orbit of world capitalism, to channel internal development in a capitalist direction, and to develop a new social base for neo-colonialism and capitalism.

Regional integration like the Caribbean Common Market opens the internal market to foreign economic penetration and exploitation and inhibits the development of the economy.

“Equal partnership” (foreign and local capitalists; foreign and state capital) permits imperialist penetration, technological dependence, “development” (growth not development) of newly independent countries into industrial raw material appendages of the capitalist states, and enrichment of the bourgeoisie and state bureaucracy connected with neo-colonialism.

The foreign monopolies are interested not only in increasing the output of raw materials, but also their more direct participation in industrial production — an industrialisation which is aimed not at balanced industrial-agricultural growth, but “to build factories in order to exercise greater control”; namely “intermediate products shops” for the export markets in the industrially developed states, which will concentrate on the most technologically “modern” and capital-intensive industries requiring highly skilled labour.

In jointly owned and nationalised industries, the foreign monopolists hope to maintain control through management and marketing contracts, technical and research services, etc.

It is necessary to guard that nationalisation of foreign enterprises does not result in the growth of a new group of bourgeois parasites — the bureaucratic bourgeoisie consisting of the highly paid top officials of the state apparatus who lend money, buy land and shares in cooperatives and foreign companies and set up small businesses; the “mediatory bourgeoisie” made up of all kinds of brokers, dealers and profiteers, who boss the state sector and gain by supplying the state enterprises with raw materials and equipment; wholesale traders, builders contracting with the state, and others. In other words, a whole class of “nouveaux riches” (the new rich), part of which, according to historian G. Mirsky “can be called a kind of ‘neo-comprador bourgeoisie’, a modern social support of neo-colonialism.”

The imperialists have accumulated a wealth of experience in a number of countries which at one time were in the same state of development as Guyana is today.

In Bolivia, for instance, the Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (MNR) led by Pas Estensoro, which came to power in 1952, had nationalised the tin mines (equivalent in importance to sugar and bauxite in Guyana) and carried through a radical land reform. The imperialists at

first bided their time and two years later, in 1954, succeeded in overthrowing the MNR regime. When the MNR had taken power, there was hardly a local bourgeoisie. But through aid and other more subtle and devious means, "development", it created a new bourgeoisie, which eventually toppled the government through a military coup.

Another example is Peru. To this country the same treatment was not meted out as in the case of Cuba. Against this first free territory in the Americas, US imperialism launched military and economic aggression. Concluding that it was this "treatment" which drove Cuba into the socialist camp, sections of the American ruling class did not apply the sanctions under the Hickenlooper Amendment and the Sugar Act after the government of Peru had seized US trawlers and nationalised without compensation US oil and sugar companies. The Peruvian "treatment" finally resulted in the overthrow of the revolutionary Velasco Alvarez government and its replacement by a right wing Burmudez regime.

These methods are more likely to be adopted in Guyana rather than outright military aggression from outside which the PNC regime has been suggesting. Direct and even indirect aggression is not today acceptable by international, even US public opinion. Nor do they always provide satisfactory results. Indirect aggression proved a success in Guatemala in 1954, but a failure in Cuba in 1961. Direct aggression was successful in the Dominican Republic in 1965, but an abysmal fiasco in Vietnam. So traumatic had been the Vietnamese experience to the average American that Congressmen refused to agree to the Ford-Kissinger pleas and plans for involvement in Angola.

From Venezuela, despite the border problem, there is unlikely to be any intervention. The Perez government is highly nationalistic, and with the nationalisation of oil and iron ore, and as a member of OPEC, it has its own difficulties with imperialism. The danger to Guyana from Venezuela may arise if there was a rightist military coup in that country.

Brazil as a gendarme of US imperialism has played a counter-revolutionary role in Latin America. Intervention in Guyana cannot be entirely ruled out despite the recent friendship agreement between Brazil and Guyana. Remember that Hitler signed such agreements and later broke them. However, it must be noted that Brazil in recent times is faced with many problems — the failure of the "Brazilian miracle"; a huge external debt; refusal of the United States to reschedule debt repayments; unfavourable international publicity and attacks on the Geisel military dictatorship for torture and denial of civil liberties; growing internal political opposition; the need for financial assistance from other countries. These factors may act as a restraining influence, and perhaps were instrumental in the Brazilian regime signing a treaty of friendship with Guyana.

Imperialism, however, might use Suriname which has a border claim on our territory in the New River triangle in the upper reaches of the Corentyne River. Here, the United States has, through the huge Alcoa monopoly, extensive bauxite interests. It can use its considerable political influence to persuade the Suriname government with the connivance and support of Brazil to make the border claim a pretext for invading Guyana. Such an aggression would not appear as if a big bully was committing aggression against a small territory. Imperialism has used this technique elsewhere in its little, limited wars — Israel in the Middle East, Nicaragua and El Salvador in Central America, and Turkey in Cyprus.

The imperialists will thus have a many-sided policy towards Guyana — support and strengthen the right wing petty-bourgeois section of the PNC; work to "contain" the leftist trend by threats and psychological warfare as with the present naval manoeuvres in the Caribbean; apply diplomatic and other pressures on the government; do everything possible to disrupt the PPP, the main force influencing the process; give not only firm support to the rightist, reactionary forces, but also encouragement to "leftist" elements which claim to be Marxists and have defected from our party from time to time.

Imperialism is the main enemy of the Guyanese people. Let us redouble our efforts to destroy its root and branch.

The imperialists and their lackeys have mounted a vicious campaign of slander and confusion in this period of intense political struggle. Their aim, as in the early 1950s and 1960s, is to weaken the PPP.

The rightist forces, particularly the Indian petty-bourgeois professionals, landlords and capitalists, launched their campaign on a slogan of "PPP sell-out". They fear socialism, and see with "critical support" Guyana becoming "communist" and a "second Cuba". Their main weapon is racial and religious incitement, and their call is for the partition of the country.

Now that the PNC is claiming that its ideas are based on Marx, Engels and Lenin, the reactionaries see "red", as in the 1961-64 period when the propaganda line was that an independent Guyana with the PPP in government would be a "second Cuba" and "a gateway for international communist penetration of Latin America", and are attempting to capitalise on the religious feelings of the people.

At the racial level, they claim that we are aware that the government is discriminating against Indians, reducing them to second-class citizens and is using National Service to destroy "Indian race and culture", yet the party is supporting the government.

This is a deliberate distortion. "Critical support" does not mean joining the PNC or giving unconditional support to the government. It means unity and struggle — unity in defence of our independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity; struggle against shortcomings and wrong-doings; for the well-being, rights and liberties of the working people; for the removal of all obstacles to national unity, such as discrimination and victimisation, and the creation of the economic, political, ideological, social and cultural pre-requisites for the building of socialism.

The rightists fear socialism, so they slander and attack us with the hope that they can confuse and mislead our supporters, and make Guyana another Ireland or Lebanon. These are traitors. Let's fight to eliminate their political influence!

We are fully aware of denial of rights, the vicious practice of political and racial discrimination and the various forms it takes — employment and promotion, land allocation, credit, relief, etc. We have consistently fought against them and, we will never stop fighting against them.

Specifically, our party programme commits us to fight to:

- Ensure the observance of the Fundamental Rights laid down in the constitution; freedom of speech, freedom of press and association, freedom of assembly and demonstration, freedom of creed; freedom of association, freedom to form political parties, freedom of trade unions.
- Provide for equal opportunity and punishment by fines and imprisonment for racial discrimination in housing, hiring or job training and promotion or in the exercise of social and political activities.

As regards compulsory National Service, our party was the first to launch an attack against it in 1973. We saw it as a vehicle to distort the political history of Guyana, to brainwash the youth that ours is an anti-national, anti-patriotic party which had fought against independence, and that the PNC is the only true patriotic and revolutionary party.

We saw National Service also as a PNC para-military force to back up the coercive apparatus of the state in maintaining a minority party in power.

National Service through its teaching manuals and instructors is also spreading the reactionary and utopian ideas of the PNC.

The claims made by the government for National Service — orientation of the youth; familiarisation with the interior; discipline; work ethic; different racial groups sharing common experience — are exaggerated.

National Service is not the only means for orientation. This can and should be done through our school system, youth work and adult education. In any case, teaching manuals and instructors are actually spreading downright reactionary ideas and carrying out anti-PPP indoctrination.

Living in a camp in the interior with all the amenities and foods for one year is not necessarily the same as settling in the interior. If the government wants settlements in the interior, it must establish there state and cooperative farms. Or is it because of the failure of the interior and even coastal settlements — Brandwagt Sari in the Berbice River; Butenabu in the Mahai-cony River; Matthews Ridge in the North West District where the agricultural cooperatives collapsed, etc. — that resort is being made to National Service type of regimentation in the name of discipline?

The sharing of common experiences — working together and playing together — by different racial groups is good. But we must not fool ourselves that a year in a National Service camp will solve the racial problems of Guyana. Whatever good may be achieved in this regard in camp will soon be lost in real life built on discrimination and inequality. It's like the malnourished child who is cured in hospital only to be made ill again at the poor family house. In any case, on this score, despite the racial differences, Guyana is not a deeply racially divided and stratified society as, say, South Africa. The solution to our racial problems lies elsewhere.

As regards inculcating the work ethic in our youths, no one can seriously quarrel with this. But does it have to be done in camps in the interior? In any case, most of our youths come from a rural background. And Cuba has shown through the work-study system of education that the work ethic and socialist orientation can be attained through the regular schools.

In Guyana, the government is resorting to compulsion and coercion. It has made National Service compulsory for university education; no doubt secondary and technical schools will soon be included.

In November 1975, after the elections for the UG Student Society which had been rigged to permit the Young Socialist Movement (YSM), the youth arm of the PNC, to win. Sixty-three (63) students were informed that they must report to National Service headquarters. This was a blatant case of discrimination and victimisation — discrimination, because of the 63 students, 53 were Indians of whom 25 were girls; victimisation, because during the elections, supporters of the Progressive Youth Organisation (PYO) had been threatened that if they did not vote for the YSM they would be sent to National Service camps.

Further proof of victimisation was the fact that a sub-committee of the Academic Board, headed by the Vice Chancellor, had been appointed to determine what form National Service for the students would take. But the sub-committee had not yet reported, and was not expected to report until March 1976. And at the same time, the Vice Chancellor had been selected to head a team to examine work-study in Cuba but had not yet gone there. When informed about these facts, one chief government spokesman arrogantly replied that the government is not ruled by committees.

Because the majority of the students did not report in November, a warning was issued to them to report in December. As a result, some students voluntarily retired from the University. And over a dozen girls who refused to report to National Service headquarters were informed to vacate the University.

This is a disgraceful episode in the history of our country, and particularly the history of the University which the PPP government founded.

Socialism cannot be built with compulsion!

Down with regimentation!

Our party is opposed to compulsory National Service for women. We understand that this practice is applicable in only two countries in the world, one of them Israel. Women can make their contribution to national development in various ways; it does not have to be in camps in the interior. This offends particularly the mores and customs of the Indian community.

We would support National Service for men only if the harmful features are eradicated. In this regard, we propose:

- the establishment of a Committee made up of equal numbers of government and opposition members to review all educational, manuals, books, and other publications for use at National Service camps;

- the setting up of committees made up of government and opposition members at each camp site, which can look into all complaints and grievances;
- physical culture and military training for all, irrespective of political affiliation or race.

If National Service is to be made compulsory for men, in addition to the points just enunciated, we demand:

- a fair system of recruitment on a lottery basis,
- equal opportunity legislation and an independent commission to administer the Act with equal representation for government and the opposition.

If our members and supporters must give free labour to build the nation, they must in turn receive equal treatment. National oppression must end. All Guyanese must be treated alike. We will never accept second-class citizenship status for any Guyanese. We have fought against colonial slavery. We will never tolerate any other form of slavery! Down with inequality and coercion!

Opposition to our new political line also comes from the “Marxists” who are divided into two categories. One group says that the PNC is not socialist and attack the PPP for being revisionist, for taking orders from Moscow and Cuba, and for disarming the people by offering “critical support” to the government; the second group says that the PPP is not Marxist, that the PNC is the only genuine party of socialism. Clearly, these people are confused.

The confusion of the first group is compounded by the fact that some PNC ideologists and government spokesmen talk as if Guyana is already a socialist state. They do not view reality scientifically and dialectically; they fail to see development in motion.

They do not make a distinction between national liberation and socialist revolutions; they do not see that anti-imperialism and socialism are two phases of the same process, that anti-imperialism is the gateway to socialism. And because they do not make this distinction, they see nothing progressive in the PNC government. In relation to imperialism, the regime is progressive; it is only in relation to socialism that it is not progressive.

The ultra-leftists have learnt nothing. In many countries, regimes with more or less similar positions to the PNC have been overthrown, and fascist or semi-fascist dictatorships established.

Historical experience has shown that imperialism, which is weakening, is like an enraged wounded tiger. Whenever it succeeds with its counter-revolutionary blows, the first target is the Communist Party; it knows that such parties as ours do not make deals with it; that they are uncompromising, principled and consistent fighters against exploitation and oppression. For this reason, when the reactionary forces succeed with their counter-revolutionary coups, they strike at the “branch and root” of socialism and communism.

In Indonesia after the overthrow of the Sukarno government, and in Chile after the murder of Salvador Allende in 1973, hundreds of thousands of socialists and communists were killed and/or imprisoned. The First Secretary of the Communist Party of Chile and many of his comrades are still in fascist Pinochet’s concentration camps.

In Brazil, under the fascist military regime, all political parties except one with a right wing orientation (even this opposition Movimento Democrático Brasileiro is being restricted) are banned and constitutional liberties are suspended. The Communist Party of Brazil has been forced underground and its First Secretary lives in exile. Any communist caught in Brazil is either killed or imprisoned. Torture is an everyday occurrence. Even Catholic priests and nuns who have challenged and exposed the excesses of the fascist regime have been tortured. And the Brazilian state has become a sub-imperialism, a gendarme of US imperialism. It is playing a reactionary role in the South American continent and has influenced fascist trends in neighbouring Uruguay, Chile, Bolivia and Paraguay.

It is this possible danger that the PPP sees in the Guyana situation. Our concern is not to save the PNC but to safeguard the interests of the Guyanese nation and people and the lives of

the PPP leaders, activists, members and supporters. We are patriots. Guyanese can confidently look to the PPP to defend their interests.

It is necessary to see the enemy clearly in all its forms. The situation in Guyana is bad with violations of civil liberties, harassment, discrimination, lack of democracy, electoral fraud, etc. But it is immeasurably worse in Brazil, Indonesia, Chile and Bangladesh. While fighting for the preservation and implementation of our constitutional fundamental rights, we cannot by deed or default permit the development of a fascist state in Guyana.

The PNC's response to our new line was typical; it attempted at first to make cheap political propaganda. Judging us by its own pragmatic outlook and standards — "politics is the art of making deals" — it suggested that our party was weakening and was trying to find a way to get on the PNC bandwagon. Obviously, such a party cannot understand how one like ours can take a patriotic stand without conditions in defence of national independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Subsequently, it began to complain that "critical support" was not support, but only criticism. What the PNC would prefer is for the PPP to cease criticising and struggling against it so that it could continue to talk about socialism, while carrying on in a capitalist way, albeit in a changed form.

The PNC lays claim to being the vanguard of the working class and refers to the government as socialist. Speaking on July 18, 1976 at the "Think-In" organised by the Clerical and Commercial Workers' Union, Desmond Hoyte, Minister of Economic Development, declared:

Guyana has, by overwhelming national consensus, opted for the socialist system. It has a Government rooted in the working class, whose authority springs from the working class; whose commitment is to the working class. It has a Government which is implacably anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist. It has a Government which is socialist.

It is far from true to say that the government's authority springs from the working class. The army intervention in the 1973 elections when two of our comrades were shot and killed is still too fresh in the minds of Guyanese for them to swallow that assertion.

As to commitment to the working class, let us hope that tear-gassing of workers, the use of dogs, armed police and soldiers against them when on strike, and the attempted enactment in 1970 of an anti-strike law are things of the past. We fail to see such commitment when a working class stalwart, Comrade Isahak Basir, is shot down and his assailant goes scot-free.

As regards socialism, what Guyanese want are not mere assertions, but implementation; not just precept, but performance.

At the ideological level, the PNC has had a hodgepodge, eclectic position — "democratic socialism" when the PNC was in opposition, and in government up to 1970; "cooperative socialism" in 1970 when Guyana became a "cooperative republic"; "national socialism" in 1974, as enunciated at the seminar in Yugoslavia. And in late 1975, for a number of reasons — rebellion in PNC ranks as evidenced by the bauxite strike at the nationalised Guyana Bauxite Company and low turnout of voters in Georgetown in the 1973 elections; the near collapse of the economy in 1974; the failure of cooperative socialism "to make the small man into the real man" and "to feed, clothe and house the nation"; the emergence of opposition Black intellectuals moving from a "Black power" position towards Marxism and developing relations with the PPP — the PNC declared that its ideas were based on Marx, Engels and Lenin.

We welcome this development. However, it is not enough for the PNC to claim to be Marxist-Leninist. Far more important is the formulation of the scientific theory, and the creative application of the tenets of Marxism-Leninism.

Today, even Marxism-Leninism is used in the service of imperialism. There are various brands — Maoism, Trotskyism, Marcussism, New Leftism, etc. — which confuse, mislead and disunite the revolutionary and progressive forces in their struggles for national and social liberation. Despite their revolutionary garb and militant slogans, they work objectively on the side of imperialism.

Maoism is based on the cult of the personality and denial of collective leadership; substitution of military-bureaucratic methods of rule from above for the leading and guiding role of the party, and of national chauvinism for patriotism and proletarian internationalism.

The declaration of the Communist and Workers' Parties of Latin America and the Caribbean was emphatic in its condemnation of the reactionary role of Maoist China. It stated:

This Conference emphatically condemns the foreign policy of the Chinese Communist Party leadership, which flirts with US imperialism, declares for its presence in Asia and Europe, justifies the existence of NATO, encourages West German imperialism and revanchism, assails and slanders the Soviet Union with the same duty as the most vicious spokesmen of international reaction, tries to incite the aggressive militarism of the world bourgeoisie against it and follows a reckless Cold War policy against the heroic Soviet people. The most disastrous expression of this policy of the Chinese leadership in Latin America is its shameless collusion with the Chilean military junta, which it supports politically in spite of the fact that thousands of communists, socialists and other patriots were atrociously tortured to death by the fascist tyranny. Furthermore, the Chinese leadership backs everywhere groups of pseudo-revolutionaries posing as "radicals", who split left wing forces, attack Communist parties, raise obstacles to progressive processes, and often act as enemy agents in the revolutionary movement.

We consider it our duty "to fight against this policy of betraying the cause of unity and solidarity and the finest traditions of the world revolutionary movement."

Trotskyite, anarchist, extreme "left" and other sectarian elements of Marxism attempt to solve all problems in a doctrinaire manner.

Trotskyism is ultra-leftism based on world revolution and export of revolution. It denies the Marxist tenets that favourable objective and subjective factors are necessary prerequisites for revolution, that relations between states with different socio-economic systems should be based on peaceful coexistence, and that working class solidarity must be based on proletarian internationalism.

Marcussism denies the Marxist tenets that the working class is the most revolutionary force, and bases itself on the intellectuals and the lumpen-proletariat as the leading forces in the socialist revolution.

Georgi Dimitrov in his famous speech "The united front against fascism" said: "Sectarianism finds expression particularly in over-estimating the revolutionisation of the masses, in over-estimating the speed at which they are abandoning the positions of reformism, in attempts to leap over difficult stages and over complicated tasks of the movement. Methods of leading the masses have in practice been frequently replaced by the methods of leading a narrow party group."

The pseudo-Marxists and "leftists" who attack us should note and digest this statement from the great and famous fighter against Bulgarian (pre-1945) and Hitlerite fascism.

What is the PNC brand of Marxism-Leninism?

Firstly, it is anti-communist and reactionary, claiming that under "communist systems, the workers are mere servants under state monopolies." In a Manual for special training of corpsmen of the Guyana National Service, prepared and published by the Material Productions Unit of the Ministry of Education and Social Development, it is stated:

Our cooperative philosophy is in marked contrast to both the capitalist and communist systems in at least two important respects.

1. Whether they exist in the East or the West, cooperatives only constitute a small part of the economic structures in relation to the major form of economic organisation. Whether free enterprise or state-owned, cooperatives have not come to occupy positions of major significance. It is the Guyana government's intention to make the cooperative movement the corner-stone of the nation's economic life, not merely surviving, but flourishing, expanding and profiting.

2. It is argued that both the capitalist and communist systems have at least one important thing in common: at the top of the bureaucratic ladder, a few powerful people make the important economic decisions and enjoy virtual absolute control of the economy, while the workers' participation at policy

level is minimal, if not imaginary. Under communist systems, the workers are mere servants of state monopolies. In theory the workers own the state, but in practice the state is controlled by a few privileged persons. In Guyana, however, it is envisaged that the mass of the people will be provided with the opportunity for a real, not imagined, share in the economic pie of the nation. The people will control the nation's economic life because the cooperative sector, owned and controlled by the small man, becomes the major source of the nation's wealth.

The PNC's anti-communism also takes the form of anti-Sovietism. The same Manual points out:

The Government of Guyana places great emphasis on political and economic independence, not wanting to be pawns controlled by the USA, Russia, China or any other nation,

Non-alignment is vital if we, in the developing world, are not to become political and economic satellites of the super powers in the East or the West.

On the same theme, Kit Nascimento, Minister of State in the Office of the Prime Minister, at a youth leadership training seminar on August 10, 1975 stated: "Guyana is a small, still poor, virtually militarily defenceless nation in a world in which two super powers seek to control and manipulate small nations for their own purpose and to their own ends."

According to Hsinhua, the official Chinese News Agency, the news item headlined: "Guyana Minister Exposes Super Powers Plot of Sham Detente", Cammie Ramsaroop, PNC Chairman and Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, is reported to have told the regional conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in June 1976 that the "rhetoric of peace must not be confused with the reality of a global power struggle. . . the old techniques of power politics prevail and there is a sustained attempt to divide the world into spheres of interest and influence over which hegemonic power is exercised."

This is unadulterated, Maoist anti-Sovietism.

Proletarian internationalism, another basic principle of Marxism-Leninism comes in for attack by the PNC. Narrow nationalism, used as an excuse for Burnham's splitting of the national movement in 1955, comes in for praise in the National Service Manual:

The enactments carried out by the British Government led to the need for careful thought, on the part of the PPP. At this point in time, Burnham — though no anti-communist — could, however, no longer close his eyes to the fact that Cheddi Jagan's adventurist ambition to posture as an international communist transcended his commitment to his own country. From this time, differences developed within the PPP between those who put Guyanese nationalism first and those whose major concern was to conform to the standards set by international communism.

Further, the National Service Manual states:

The British Government had recognised the ideological differences between the two leaders of the original People's Progressive Party. Dr. Jagan had announced he believed that socialism would "itself evolve into the higher communist state of society. . ." On the other hand, Forbes Burnham had declared his concern that the changes to take place in Guyana "have the true socialist and realistic outlook. . ."

Paraphrasing this, a young PNC ideologue, writing in the government-owned Sunday Chronicle in early 1976, stated that what Guyana needed was not "to quote unreservedly from philosophers and thinkers like Marx, Engels, Lenin and Ho Chi Minh, but perhaps a group of local and original pragmatists who, using the broad objectives and intentions of the Government, could design means and approaches for their fulfilment, and the establishment of a brand of socialism suited to local circumstances."

Pragmatism which is akin to opportunism has resulted in many forms of socialism — fabian, democratic, cooperative, national, African, Arab, socialism with a human face, etc. — but not scientific socialism. It is important to note that many parties and movements claiming to be

socialist have failed even when in power to bring about socialism. Only in the countries where parties are based on Marxism-Leninism have socialist societies been built.

The British Labour Party has its roots in “fabian” and “democratic” socialism, but though many terms in power did not establish a socialist society; indeed, Britain under the Labour Government is nearer to capitalism-imperialism than to socialism; it has become the managers of state-monopoly capitalism.

Hitler fooled the workers with his special brand of “national socialism” while he was establishing a fascist state.

The Arab Socialist Union of Egypt advocated “Arab socialism”, but President Sadat at the crucial OAU meeting in Ethiopia voted with others who were peddling the imperialist line for Angola — a joint government of the revolutionary MPLA, the FNLA headed by the CIA agent, Holden Roberto, and the pro-capitalist and pro-South African UNITA. Internally, one of the first acts of Anwar Sadat, after coming to power on Nasser’s death, was to jail the communists and later to cause Egypt to revert to capitalism.

President Senghor of Senegal who talks about negritude (cultural nationalism) and “African socialism”, also like Sadat, sided with the pro-imperialist states at the OAU meeting.

Then there is “socialism with a human face”, advocated by those who falsely claim that there is no democracy and freedom in the socialist countries.

Reformers like Prof. K. Galbraith, while now condemning some of the excesses of monopoly capitalism, confuses state-monopoly capitalism and state intervention in the economy with socialism, saying “the world socialism is one we can no longer suppress. That socialism already exists.”

And it must not be forgotten that Norman Thomas, Leader of the Socialist Party of the USA, admitted receiving US\$1 million from the CIA which was used for setting up 17 socialist parties in Latin America to fight communism.

Under the utopian cooperative socialism, “suited to local circumstances” like “Arab socialism” and “African socialism”, nationalised companies are registered as private companies and are to be turned into cooperatives, and workers will own shares.

According to Hugh Saul, head of the Guyana Marketing Corporation, “weekly and monthly employees should be allowed to purchase shares to the tune of \$1 a week or \$5 a month as a positive movement towards ownership, and these funds could then be used for further development of the corporation and relieve the central government of the task of having to pump the scarce public resources into corporations.” He observed: “After all, the Prime Minister, Cde. Forbes Burnham, has already said that all corporations and companies are eventually to be owned by the people. The sooner a start is made the better.”

In the same vein, Kit Nascimento, speaking at the youth leadership training seminar, already referred to, said: “In the immediate terms, the people will have to take control of our natural resources through the state, but eventually this ownership must pass directly into the hands of the people through cooperative ownership and enterprise.”

And he added: “In this way the distribution of the wealth obtained from the development of our natural resources will flow into the hands of the people.”

He emphasised that the masses of the people should become truly involved in the economic ownership of the nation through cooperatives, which would become the dominant sector of the nation’s economic life. “Economic nationalisation”, he declared, “without economic justice is not the aim of the People’s National Congress. . . The ideology of socialism through cooperative ownership, pursued by the People’s National Congress in Government, demands mass ownership of the nation’s economic resources, productive, distributive and monetary.”

Whatever this is, it is not socialism according to Marx Engels and Lenin. Little wonder that one PNC ex-Regional Minister called it “people’s capitalism.”

Cooperatives are permitted to become shareholders in what should be fully-owned state enterprises — the Guyana National Cooperative Bank, Guyana Agricultural Cooperative Development Bank, Guyana Cooperative Mortgage Finance Bank — and to enrich themselves through state patronage and at the expense of the people.

At the same time, monies invested in cooperatives are free from taxation and also from control under the Code of Conduct through which all PNC leaders must report their holdings and assets to the Prime Minister personally. And some cooperatives have established themselves as contractors and have succeeded in getting lucrative contracts from the Ministry of Works and Housing.

We must fight for the cleanup of the pseudo-cooperatives, which under the umbrella of cooperative socialism, are breeding a new form of capitalist — cooperative-capitalist —, exploitation and oppression.

Our party must also intensify the ideological struggle against cooperative socialism under which the cooperative sector will become the dominant sector, and fight for scientific socialism. Socialism cannot be built on distortions of Marxist-Leninist tenets; socialism cannot be constructed without scientific socialists.

We too say like President Mohamed Siad Barre, President of the Supreme Revolutionary Council of Somali Democratic Republic: "There is only one socialism, namely, scientific socialism. Anyone who gives it other names is only deceiving himself and others". He further pointed out: "Our socialism cannot be called Somali socialism, African socialism or Islamic socialism. Our socialism is scientific socialism founded by the great Marx and Engels, i.e., Marxism-Leninism."

The PNC lays claim to being the vanguard party of the working class. The role of vanguard is not a self-appointed position. Nor is it conferred by anyone like the titles conferred annually by the Honours Committee. Only the people can confer this recognition, and this only after the party has demonstrated its commitment to the ideology of the working class, and persistent and continuous struggle for national and social liberation.

The PNC is not a vanguard, Marxist-Leninist party; it is a nationalist party. Its leadership is basically right wing, largely petty-bourgeois, bureaucratic-bourgeois and professional.

It must be recalled that the PNC, when formally constituted in 1958, had a leadership drawn mainly from the rightist faction which had defected from the PPP, and the conservative and reactionary United Democratic Party, the main force allied to colonialism and opposed to the PPP between 1953 and 1957. Closely allied to the United Democratic Party, which sided with imperialism in the destruction of the national movement in the early 1950's, was the racist and reactionary League of Coloured People.

The past is a drag on present and future development. While we confidently look to the future, we can ignore the past only at our peril.

Out of this "right wing" is emerging a "left wing" trend as a result of the intensification of the political and ideological struggle, the confrontations between the opposition forces and the government, and also the contradictions between the PNC elitist leadership and its rank-and-file membership.

The "right wing" is desirous of keeping Guyana on the capitalist path, albeit in a changed form. This reactionary petty-bourgeoisie and bureaucratic-bourgeoisie is not willing to surrender privileges — salaries and allowances, and other perquisites and advantages — acquired during the past eleven and a half years; it is desirous of turning state ownership and public sector enterprises to its own advantage.

The PNC leadership with a left trend recognises the bankruptcy of the capitalist path. But it is caught in a real dilemma: how to pursue a socialist-oriented course and at the same time maintain elitist privileges?

The PNC government has the power to make profound changes. And the objective situation is uniquely favourable. Virtually no country in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean is as favourably placed for completing the anti-imperialist stage and rapidly advancing to socialism.

The duality in the character of the PNC leadership is reflected in its policies and its approach to the PPP. Because of it, it cannot take a firm, principled position. Instead, it vacillates and manoeuvres pragmatically, hoping to get the best of all possible worlds.

Towards the PPP it has a confused attitude. Conscious that we have the support of the majority of the population, and since Guyana cannot be defended without the PPP, and socialism cannot be built without the PPP, it wants cooperation with us. But at the same time, it wants us out of the way; it would like to see the PPP liquidated, as our party is a defender of the people's rights and a constant critic of PNC's political and ideological weaknesses, its extravagance and erratic ways.

In this regard, the PNC regime has resorted to underhand practices, utilising coercion and bribery to induce some opportunists to defect from the party. It is using them to sow discord among our activists and cadres, at the same time trying to get them to defect through the offer of jobs with lucrative salaries.

This is a dangerous game. Utilising state funds and facilities to get PPP renegades to do the PNC's dirt work is no way to build national unity. Already a leading comrade of our Central Committee, Isahak Basir, was gunned down by a policeman. We hail his rapid recovery and presence in our midst and demand punishment of his assailant. They can no more kill Comrade Basir than they can destroy our party.

PPP — THE VANGUARD OF THE WORKING CLASS

The PPP is the revolutionary vanguard of the working class and is constantly and persistently championing the cause of the Guyanese working people for economic progress and social justice.

Last year we proudly celebrated our "silver jubilee" — 25 years of devoted and pioneering service to our nation and people.

On that historic occasion, we stated:

We fought for freedom, democracy, human rights and socialism. We strove untiringly for independence. . . we advocated . . . the free dissemination of ideas . . . we removed the bans placed on the entry into Guyana of progressive West Indians and others . . . we did not join the US Cold War bandwagon.

It is true to say that in Guyana today, there is no important facet of life which the PPP did not pioneer: education: education, health, agriculture, banking, etc. Our critics are forced to move in the direction we pointed out. Even on the question of dress reform, we were the first to introduce the shirt-jac! We pioneered the way in emphasising our history and culture. The PPP government cancelled the lease to the Golf Club (now the National Park), one of the bastions of colonial privilege. And above all, were the first to propagate the ideology of Marxism-Leninism.

Marxism-Leninism is central to our creative, revolutionary work. We consider as our principal task its defence and the conduct of ideological struggle. Today, more than ever, this form of struggle is most essential.

Our Party fights against pragmatism, sectarianism, deviationism and opportunism. It has condemned Maoism and has carried on an unceasing battle against the utopianism and revisionism of the PNC and its ideologues.

One PNC ideologist recently said: "A communist ideology advocates that the society returns to the primitive stage where it is classless. . ." Such is the nature of the vanguard position of the PNC! Apparently, there is no awareness of the distinction between primitive and scientific communism, and the role of the scientific and technological revolution.

Another observed:

. . . the two major political parties, the leading pressure groups consisting of university lecturers and former political activists, are agreed that scientific socialism based on the Marxist-Leninist model is the most appropriate remedy for achieving economic independence.

There is however considerable differences of opinion about the brand of socialism that would best suit the country. The present PNC administration is concentrating on a concept of cooperative socialism to obtain an egalitarian society that is intended to make "the small man a real man."

The main opposition party, the PPP, holds the view that a system of cooperative socialism is too conservative for revolutionary changes; and there should instead be a duplication of Russian processes of socialist transformation.

There is either confusion about, or deliberate distortion of our position. From the very beginning, in 1970, when Guyana assumed the status not just of a republic but a “cooperative republic”, and when the ruling PNC advocated “cooperative socialism” and declared that cooperatives would be the means by which socialism would be built, the PPP refuted that false idea. We stated that anti-imperialism was the gateway to socialism, and reiterated our previous call for the nationalisation of the “commanding heights” of the economy.

PNC’s ideology is a revisionism of Marxism-Leninism and its cooperative socialism is not just “too conservative for revolutionary changes”, it is utopian. Frederick Engels, long ago in his *Socialism — Utopian and Scientific*, praised Robert Owen, Fourier and Saint Simon for their humanitarian qualities in advocating cooperative socialism, but condemned them for their wrong methodology, for being day-dreamers and renouncing the class struggle as the way to socialism.

The PNC ideologue went on to say that “the PPP holds the view that. . . there should be a duplication of Russian processes of socialist transformation”. This is in keeping with the old propaganda line that the PPP takes orders from Moscow.

Let there be no doubt of our position. We are members of the International Communist and Workers Movement, and we are proud of it. Together we formulate the general political line of the movement and are guided by it. Marxism is not a dogma but a guide to action; as a living science, it involves a concrete analysis of a concrete situation — national and international.

There are general laws of scientific socialism which, like the law of gravity, cannot be ignored. In observing the application of these laws, the Communist International in its early days was able to guard against sectarian and right-opportunist tendencies among young communist parties, which arguing on the basis of “particularism” and “exceptionalism”, fell easy prey to bourgeois nationalism.

At the same time, there are specific conditions, national peculiarities, which also cannot be ignored. V.I. Lenin, in his *Left Wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder*, specifically warned against one directing centre or a centralised international organisation. He pointed out: “We must clearly realise that such a leading centre cannot under any circumstances be built upon stereotyped, mechanically equalised and identical tactical rules of struggle.”

Comrade Leonid Brezhnev made this clear to the 25th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union when he declared:

In their struggle, communists proceed from the general laws governing the development of the revolution and the building of socialism and communism. Reflected in the theory of Marxism-Leninism and confirmed in practice, these laws were collectively and comprehensively formulated at international conferences of fraternal parties. A deep understanding of these general laws, and reliance on them, in combination with a creative approach and with consideration for the concrete conditions in each separate country, have been and remain the inalienable and distinctive feature of a Marxist-Leninist. And we say this with assurance: a concession to opportunism may sometimes yield a temporary advantage, but will ultimately do damage to the party.

In keeping with these principles, the PPP works out its strategy and tactics, policies and programme from a patriotic and working class internationalist position and only after a deep-going analysis of the national and international situation.

Whatever our enemies and detractors say, we will remain steadfastly loyal to the tenets of Marxism-Leninism.

The PPP’s position with respect to the Soviet Union is influenced by two considerations. Firstly, the USSR has demonstrated that it is a consistent champion for the liberation of the exploited and oppressed peoples everywhere, in particular in the developing countries. Secondly, events in countries of Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and the Caribbean,

such as Cuba, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Angola, etc., have shown that in the struggle against imperialism for necessary deep-going economic and social transformations, the help of the socialist community headed by the Soviet Union is vital. To take any other position is not only stupid but dangerous.

Consequently, we categorically reject the slanderous attacks made by the right-opportunist "Marxists" who have recently defected from our party. Jumping on the PNC bandwagon, these renegades claim that the PNC is the only party genuinely interested in socialism, that our party and its leadership is dominated by rightists and ultra-leftists, that we have assumed the position of the Trotskyites after the Great October Socialist Revolution and are not serious about party transformation.

They lend weight to the false claim of the PNC that it is based on the ideas of Marx, Engels and Lenin, and that Guyana has a socialist government.

How can the PNC regime be deemed a socialist government, as claimed by the renegades and high government ministers, when it has not completed the anti-imperialist process, and has not created the basic economic, political, ideological, social and cultural prerequisites for the building of socialism? A socialist-oriented path requires the consolidation of national independence, economic emancipation from imperialist domination, a revolutionary land reform to end semi-feudalism, democratisation of social life, improvement in living standards and the pursuit of an independent foreign policy and the closest links with the socialist world. These are objective necessities for our country's successful advance from the anti-imperialist, national liberation revolution to a socialist revolution, and they have not been met.

It was only as recent as early 1975 at a lecture that the principal defector noted the "distorting influence of the PNC's interpretation of socialism, with all its vagueness and superficiality, its eclectic hodgepodge of bits of Marx and Lenin linked with the outright anti-democratic and anti-socialist practices." He referred to the fact that almost everyone is now publicly a "socialist — estate managers, bureaucratic capitalists, corrupt politicians, the lot. Almost everyone seems to be hustling to get into the act — and such persons, it may be noted, not only get into the act, but at the same time strive to get as large a piece of the action for themselves as they possibly can — under the umbrella of 'cooperative socialism', whatever that means."

But now there is a complete somersault; he himself has got into the act. The PNC is put in a position of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the great party of Lenin, and we are accused of behaving like the Trotskyites after the Great October Socialist Revolution. The fact is our Party has been and continues to be in the forefront of the struggle against Trotskyism, Maoism and other forms of ultra-leftist dogmatism and sectarianism.

To hide their opportunism, the defectors assume a posture of high socialist rectitude. They charge that we are not serious about party transformation, that we are exhibitionists merely trying to create favourable impressions, that our party is not a Leninist type party and is dominated by rightists and ultra-leftists, and thus is incapable of taking a correct political line and of adopting correct strategy and tactics.

These charges are spurious. Marxists have always played the leading role in our party. As such, the PPP is different from the other mass-based political parties of the English-speaking Caribbean — a fact which has contributed to the Guyanese working people being the most politically and ideologically developed in the region, and Guyana today playing the leading and guiding political role in the English-speaking Caribbean.

Considering the history of our party and the fact that the process of transformation into a Leninist-type of party began only in 1969, there must be traces of other than Marxist tendencies. But they are very weak; they have never determined, and do not now determine, the main political line, the strategy and tactics of the Party. Indeed, they support the revolutionary position of the party.

The proposal by the Central Committee of the strategic line of "critical support" is a clear indication that the Marxists lead the PPP; indeed, the very terminology, support not unconditional but critical, came from the lips of the chief defector.

If as is alleged that ultra-leftists and rightists dominate our party, how is it that those same elements outside the party attack us for our proposed new line of “critical support”?

The latter see unity and support but conveniently fail to observe opposition, criticisms and struggles. One fact alone — our unstinting support for the sugar workers in their “autumn” crop strike in late 1975 after our new line was enunciated in August — gives the lie to their charge of “PPP sell-out.”

The defectors on the other hand want unity and no struggle: like the PNC, they want us to take a position of uncritical support, and to give unconditional support to compulsory National Service.

Reference has already been made to the use by the PNC of National Service to brainwash the youth, to spread reactionary ideas, to attack the PPP and to distort the political history of our country and party.

In a National Service booklet, it is further stated:

In 1955, Burnham defeated Jagan for the leadership of the People's Progressive Party at internal party elections. Jagan, denouncing the decision, walked out of the meeting and for two years hence, British Guiana had two People's Progressive Parties — one led by Cheddi Jagan, and the other by Forbes Burnham. . . . The electoral boundaries set by the 1957 constitution had in view of the racial approach which had seeped into local politics, given the advantage to the rural-based PPP-Jaganite, as against the urban-based PPP-Burnhamite.

This is a complete distortion of historical fact and an insinuation that we were responsible for the split and that the imperialists favoured us.

Actually, a detailed account of the split was given at the time in a booklet, *The Great Betrayal*, which the poet, Martin Carter, had helped to produce. The right wingers took their cue from the British imperialists who, in a document, divided the PPP leadership into communists and socialists, suggested a socialist takeover and threatened that if there was no change in leadership and policies of the PPP there would be a perpetual period of marking time. The rightists unconstitutionally transformed a conference, called to review the political situation, into a congress “to throw out the communists” based on a campaign which they had mounted.

As regards electoral boundaries, the distribution into 14 seats of 1957 was a reversion to the position in 1947 before the introduction of universal adult suffrage. It was not an equitable distribution of the voting population as had been done in 1953 when 24 boundaries had been demarcated.

Actually, this manoeuvre had been put into practice to help the Burnham faction of the PPP. For example, in the Greater Georgetown area where Burnham was entrenched, five seats of the 1953 election were combined by this “gerrymandering” into three, whilst in our area of strength in Eastern Berbice three and a half seats were combined into one. This Berbice constituency had 31,947 voters as compared with 5,879 for the town of New Amsterdam.

As a result of this blatant political dishonesty on the part of the British government, the votes polled by the PPP candidate in Eastern Berbice were more than those polled by all five opposition members!

Our comrades, particularly the youths, would do well to refresh their memories about this early history, and particularly about the split of our Party. *The West On Trial* (pp. 160-187) and *The Great Betrayal* are invaluable in this respect.

This knowledge will help our comrades to understand the role of the recent defectors. Had we followed their line of giving virtually unconditional support to the PNC government and particularly to compulsory National Service, together with their advice that the sugar workers should have appeared before the compulsory arbitration tribunal and not resume the strike in the autumn crop, then the “rightists” and “leftists” false charge of sell-out would have been true.

The charge of the renegades that we are mere exhibitionists and do things merely to impress is ridiculous and has no basis in fact. Our party has always taken, and is taking, a prin-

ciplined position on national and international issues. We do not say one thing and do something else: we do not renege on promises or pledges. Our position is based on patriotism and proletarian internationalism. Like others, we do not make deals with imperialist and other reactionary forces for narrow short-term partisan gains. Indeed, with our new political line, we demonstrated our patriotism in a principled and responsible manner.

Our patriotic duty is to defend our nation — its national independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. On this, we did not equivocate; we did not bargain.

We also discharged our internationalist duty, namely, to weaken imperialism. For instance, we had stated that it was foolish to mount a slogan "Towards a Socialist Revolution", as the PNC did at its biennial congress in August 1975, without first completing the anti-imperialist revolution, and our party reiterated its call for the nationalisation of the Booker's octopus. This was not done until May 26, 1976. Unfortunately, our call for an excess profits tax went unheeded; the British monopoly was thus permitted to reap fantastic profits for over two years at the expense of the nation and the sugar workers. Now, we are pressing for the nationalisation of the banks and insurance companies, also under the control by the imperialists.

As regards transformation of our party, we have been moving steadily in this direction. Now we have a new system of recruitment of members. No longer is there the previous system of loose mass membership. A person desirous of becoming a member must agree with the aims and programme of our party, and must regularly attend meetings of the group, the primary organisation of the party at grass-roots level. And when there is a card exchange, the member must fulfil the attendance, as well as other requirements for the renewal of his/her membership.

Our party also recognises that its strength and fighting capacity is largely dependent on the level of political and ideological consciousness of its members, activists and leaders. Towards this end, we lay great stress on ideological-educational work and the training of cadres. At every group meeting, there is an "educational". Weekend and one-to-two week seminars are held in the districts, and two-week to two-month courses are given at the party's ideological school, the Accabre College of Social Sciences. And every year, a number of our students go overseas to the socialist countries, particularly to the Soviet Union, for political economy and trade union courses. Those who have been so trained make up the great majority of our functionaries working in the political and trade union fields and among the farmers. They are also well represented in our highest policy making bodies. In this way, we are methodically transforming the party.

Through the Michael Forde Bookshop and its branches, we distribute Marxist and other revolutionary and progressive literature. And the daily Mirror has become an invaluable medium not only for information and agitation but also for education.

The charges of the opportunistic defectors, who are now advisers and paid hirelings of the PNC government, are therefore without substance. They stem from the warped minds of the tiny minority who did not get its way in the Central Committee and was not prepared to accept the views of the majority; namely, democratic centralism, a basic tenet of Marxism-Leninism.

The opportunists who defected from our party must be isolated. To have followed their unscientific and adventurist lead would have meant our party divorcing itself from the masses and virtually liquidating itself, something the imperialists and their lackeys have failed to achieve. Let us not forget that it is the mass support of our party, and the mass action it generates, which are largely responsible for influencing the situation in a positive manner. It is not accidental that Guyana is today, unlike the late 1940s and early 1950s, ahead politically of the other English-speaking Caribbean territories. The fact is that in no other country is there an ideologically developed and organisationally strong party like ours. While we cannot "tail" the masses, and let minor weaknesses and prejudices of our supporters influence our decisions, we cannot be so far ahead of our supporters that we are divorced from them. History is full of examples where, with communist parties liquidated or emasculated, the revolutionary process has been halted or turned backwards.

In Mexico, prominent trade unionists, artists and intellectuals weakened the Communist Party by leaving it and joining the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI); they thought that it would take the country forward to socialism because of its utterances and revolutionary past (peasant revolutions in this early part of the century; nationalisation of oil companies in 1956). Today, the PRI has become institutionalised with the army and mass organisations integrated with it. Yet, because of the entrenched positions, power and prestige of the capitalists and landlords (Mexican capitalists are associated with US monopolists in joint enterprises and the land has gone back to the landlords), and the relative weakness of the Communist Party, the ruling party fails to make an anti-imperialist, pro-socialist revolution so as to bring an end to grave poverty (10 percent at the top earns as much as 50 percent at the bottom). The PNC has ambitions of becoming the PRI of Guyana. Ours must be the role to ensure that the revolution does not stop and continuously advances.

Another example is Egypt. President Nasser, who had a firm anti-imperialist, pro-socialist orientation forced the Communist Party to disband. Those communists who refused to agree were jailed. Those who agreed to liquidate the party were incorporated in the only party, the Arab Socialist Union. On Nasser's death, Anwar Sadat took over and moved the Union to the right, broke the Treaty of Friendship with the Soviet Union and put Egypt on a capitalist course. We have already stated that one of his first acts was to jail the communists and leftists; later to make a deal (the Sinai Agreement) with the USA and Israel for which he was attacked by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO); and he supports the US imperialist line on Angola.

To combat the dangers of liquidationism, the Communist Party of the USA expelled soon after World War II its General Secretary, Earl Browder and others, for "Browderism", a rightist deviationism which identified New Deal reformism with revolution.

Political and ideological struggle must go on. We must maintain our identity and independence, and continue to play our vanguard role.

Our criticisms, however, must be principled and not based on invectives, name-calling, gossip and slander. Principled, constructive criticism can prepare the way for a political solution.

The draft political programme of our party has been circulated to all our groups for study. Tomorrow we shall discuss it. In it, we analyse the domestic and international situation in the context of completing the anti-imperialist process and building the foundations of socialism; show the basic features of this stage of development; point out the basic laws and tendencies of this period; show what are our main tasks and how we must solve them.

As Guyana moves more and more against imperialism, the political struggle will sharpen. We feel, therefore, that the first task is to save the nation. We have done our patriotic duty by the change of our political line in order to bring about national anti-imperialist unity. The PNC regime must now discharge its responsibility towards the same end by removing all obstacles to national unity. It must end discrimination and victimisation in all forms and provide equal opportunity for all. We must fight for an "equal opportunity" law and an independent Commission to administer the law, and adequate representation in the service commissions (Public Service Commission, Police Service Commission, etc.) and employment exchanges.

The PNC should stop hiding its head in the sand and being complacent about this. Referring to emigration, the Prime Minister last month said: "Many of them ran away because there was no equality of opportunity in Guyana at that time; but there was such opportunity now."

This assertion is not borne out by the facts which we have already referred to from the recent article in the Sunday Chronicle (July 4, 1976) by Dr. Fred Sookdeo.

Guyanese must be united, not only for the direct defence of the nation, but also for the building of a sound economy, also necessary for defence.

Patriotic and popular armed forces must be built up. In this regards we call for a genuine people's militia, not a PNC militia. The establishment of such a militia in every city bloc, village, sugar estate and settlement, is the acid test of the genuineness of the PNC's claim to being revolutionary, anti-imperialist and socialist.

At the same time, it is our duty to develop the patriotic, internationalist and ideological consciousness of the masses.

We must work assiduously for the establishment of a broad, popular, national revolutionary socialist oriented democracy. This must be an alliance of workers, farmers, progressive small businessmen and the intelligentsia, under the leadership of the working class.

Our Party must expand our work among all categories of workers. Large numbers of workers are still unorganised and are subjected to severe exploitation. We must ensure that they become unionised.

And our Party must aim at establishing itself in factories, stores and other work places. This is a vital necessity if the working class is to discharge its revolutionary duty through its vanguard, the PPP.

At the same time, we must fight for the unity and independence of the trade union movement. Because of the machinations of imperialism, the unity achieved in the early 1950s was destroyed. The movement became emasculated and controlled by the CIA for counter-revolutionary purposes. Today, with GAWU in the TUC, and with the help of other progressive unions, we must struggle to keep the movement free from political domination by the PNC. Elements of the TUC have shown progressive tendencies recently, and it is they who, supported by like-minded progressive unions, must ensure that the parent body once again becomes affiliated to the World Federation of Trade Unions, and takes a definite revolutionary course.

Our Party also has an important role to play in re-orienting the workers who fell under the reactionary influence of the CIA, the AIFLD, ICFTU and ORIT. Lenin pointed out that "without revolutionary theory, there can be no revolutionary movement." We must fully discharge this responsibility so that the trade unions, as the most important of the mass organisations, can play their roles in removing all traces of imperialist influence, improving living standards and creating the prerequisites for building the foundations of socialism.

We must also strengthen the alliance of the farmers and the revolutionary working class. The farmers have a great revolutionary potential; they are being pauperised by high cost inputs, oppressive landlordism and an unsympathetic government. As a result, large numbers, estimated to be 25,000, are migrating annually from the countryside to the city. A close link must be developed between the Guyana Agricultural & General Workers Union (GAWU), Guyana Rice Producers Association (GRPA), Guyana Agricultural Producers Association (GAPA) and the Guyana Cane Farmers Association (GCFA) for coordination and solidarity for mutual benefits.

We must work with the progressive sections of small businessmen, intelligentsia and the clergy. And above all, we must work in a principled manner for broad left unity while at the same time fighting against sectarian and opportunist tendencies, both of the right and the left. We must fight to isolate the right and to strengthen the left trend of the PNC leadership. We must work with the revolutionary section of the Working People's Alliance, and fight against the "ultra-left" section which, by its unprincipled attacks against us, aids imperialism and the PNC right wing.

The fight for democratic liberties and rights is an essential part of the struggle for socialism. Without democracy, socialism cannot be built. Nor can the nation be successfully defended without the people's involvement at all levels.

We must fight for, respect for, and observance of, the fundamental rights laid down in the constitution; abandonment of bureaucratic-administrative, police-military coercive methods of political struggle and substitution of peaceful, democratic methods; separation of party, state and mass organisations, and the rejection of an authoritarian one-party state; cessation of harassment and victimisation of members and supporters of our party, and removal of all obstacles to its normal democratic functioning; recognition of truly representative mass organisations (workers, farmers, social, cultural, religious, professional, sports, etc.). We must immediately mount a campaign for free and fair elections this year at the local government level and for more power through devolution and decentralisation to town, district and regional councils.

A socialist society cannot be built without an independent, dynamic economy. We must fight for a complete breakaway from the "western models" of economic planning to a revolutionary, socialist-oriented model based on the elimination of the remaining foreign-owned and controlled sectors of the economy, expansion of the state and cooperative sectors, central planning with emphasis simultaneously on industry and agriculture, and close links with the socialist countries.

Workers, and wherever applicable, farmers, must exercise control in all enterprises.

The people's need for land must be met. A comprehensive, revolutionary land reform must be carried out, ensuring that rapacious landlordism is wiped out, and the land is given to the tillers.

Our party must fight to ensure that our people's social aspirations are met, that unemployment is speedily brought to an end, and until such time as this is accomplished, unemployment relief must be granted.

We must make sure that medical care is made available to all, that the workers' standard of living is constantly improving. Our old people have a right to live in peace in their old age. The "means test" must be abolished, pensions raised, and age limit reduced.

There is great room for improvement in the administration of justice. Our party must ensure that there is an efficient, independent and fair system of justice.

Many people are being misled about Marxism and religion. Our party like all communist parties is opposed to religious idealism. But it does not, and will not, make religion an urgent or central issue. And we advocate that the state should be neutral to religion and guarantee freedom of religion.

We must work for a progressive, people's culture at the grass-roots level.

Last year was Women's International Year. Many declarations and pronouncements were made in favour of women. We must ensure that they are implemented, that there is real equality between man and woman. And mothers and children must be protected.

The Amerindians have been neglected. Our party must see to it that provision is made for their accelerated development so that they can play their role in the building of a free, independent, socialist-oriented and prosperous Guyana.

We must maintain, strengthen and expand our links with communist and workers' parties, and revolutionary-democratic movements and parties all over the world. We will assiduously work for the unity of the Communist and Workers Movement, recognising it as a great source of strength for the exploited and oppressed everywhere.

Since our last congress, many comrades, most prominent among them Paul Robeson and Marshall Grekho, have passed away. Their deaths are great losses for the cause of national and social liberation. We salute them and pay a tribute to their great contributions.

Thousands of political prisoners are still held in fascist prisons and dungeons. We must exert more solidarity campaigns for their release.

Our struggles have now an additional dimension. We have re-entered Parliament, and shall utilise it in a revolutionary manner. It is important to note that, while after the 1973 elections, salaries of Members of Parliament, Ministers, the Speaker and others had been raised fantastically, and recent defectors are riding in posh cars with bodyguards, our MPs have assigned their salaries to the party, and disbursements are being made to them as the party had decided.

Favourable conditions are developing. So far, as our vanguard party is concerned, the interests of the imperialists, the PNC right-wing, the rightists and ultra-leftists coincide; they move from different directions, but they all have one common aim — the liquidation of the PPP. In this sinister objective, they will not succeed.

Our youth, constituting a tremendous reserve, are our shock forces on all the battle-fronts of Guyana. Together with the workers and farmers, they have scored significant victories. As one journal, *Latin America*, recently noted: "Jagan used to say in the fifties and sixties that he was in office but not in power. He could now claim that through his dogged influence and opposition and Burnham's need for national unity, he is finally in power but not in office."

We must now fight for office and power. From a principled Marxist position, let us advance to revolutionary democracy and socialism.

Long Live Anti-Imperialist Unity!

Long Live Socialism!

Long Live Proletarian Internationalism!

Long Live the PPP!

- 10 -

Proposal for a National Front Government

“For A National Front Government”
 (Document presented to the Guyanese Nation by the
 PPP on 9 August 1977, with an Addendum to the
 original, published in December 1977)

Guyana is in a state of severe and mounting economic, social and political crisis.

The extent of the economic crisis was first indicated by the Prime Minister towards the end of 1976 when he disclosed that sugar would break even, rice production would drop by 40 percent and bauxite profits would be reduced by 50 percent.

But decline and stagnation in production is nothing new; it has been a long term phenomenon. Despite the turmoil arising out of CIA-fomented and financed “destabilisation” attempts of the 1962-64 period (80 days strike and shipping and fuel blockade in 1963 and a 5-month strike in the sugar industry in 1964), sugar production as can be seen in Table I below was 1,226,283 tons in the 1961-64 period of the PPP government, with a yearly average of 306,571 tons. By comparison, production during the period 1971-74 of the PNC government was 1,289,962 tons, with an average annual production of 322, 491 tons.

Sugar production increased by 33 percent in the decade 1954-64, but increased by only 5 percent in the first decade of PNC rule.

TABLE I

SUGAR PRODUCTION

PPP GOVERNMENT

1961 - 324,745 tons
 1962 - 326,023 tons
 1963 - 317,137 tons
 1964 - 258,378 tons
 Total: 1,226,283 tons

PNC GOVERNMENT

1971 - 368,843 tons
 1972 - 314,600 tons
 1973 - 265,704 tons
 1974 - 340,815 tons
 Total: 1,289,962 tons

AVERAGE ANNUAL PRODUCTION

1961-1964 - 306,571 tons
 1971-1974 - 322,491 tons

The production of rice for the 7-year period (1968/69-1974/75) was 879,358 tons as compared with 878,742 tons for the 7-year period (1958/59-1964-65), and 507,984 tons for the 7-year period (1948/49-1954/55). In other words, rice production increased under the PNC Government by a mere 0.6 per cent, whilst under the PPP Government by 74 percent, for corresponding 7-year periods.

TABLE II

RICE PRODUCTION

COLONIAL GOVERNMENT

1948/49 - 1954/55

1948-49	61,462
1949-50	64,722
1950-51	66,420
1951-52	66,667
1952-53	76,038
1953-54	79,875
1954-55	86,750
Total	501,934

PPP GOVERNMENT

1958/59 - 1964/65

1958-59	089,696
1959-60	112,369
1960-61	121,559
1961-62	128,347
1962-63	139,495
1963-64	118,349
1964-65	163,927
Total	873,742

PNC GOVERNMENT

1968 69 - 1974/75

1968-69	113,000
1969 70	123,745
3970-71	124,150
1971-72	118,440
1972-73	101,450
1973-74	107,415
1974-75	181,159
Total	879,359

Correspondingly, exports of rice declined from 84,787 tons in 1963/64 and 102,424 tons in 1964/65 to 48,651 tons in 1973/74 and 78,269 tons in 1974/75.

With respect to the other food sectors, the "Summary Record" of the representations made by the Joint Delegation of Four Unions (Guyana Agricultural and General Workers' Union; National Association of Agricultural, Commercial and Industrial Employees; Clerical and Commercial Workers' Union; University of Guyana Staff Association), pointed out:

In the 1972-76 Development Plan the Government projected wildly optimistic targets of agricultural output. The result was inevitable. Government estimates show that at the end of 1976 ground provision output was 9 million pounds below the target. Vegetable production was nearly 2 million pounds below the target. Fruit production was 14 million pounds below the target. Pulses and nuts production were 6 million pounds below the target and oil crops (mainly coconuts) were nearly 5 million pounds below the target. This gives a total shortfall of three crops of nearly 36 million pounds!

Referring to the fact that by 1976, the nation was supposed to have been fed from local production under the "Feed, Clothe and House the Nation" programme (1972-76), the Summary Record further disclosed:

. . . In 1976, using the Government's own ridiculously inflated estimates, the country produced 25 lbs. of poultry per head. This was equal to 8 ounces of poultry per person per week. Remember this was before the present rise in chicken prices came into effect. In eggs the country produced one egg for every person every 8 days. That is less than one egg per person per week. Fish production despite all the highly publicised "sales", amounted to 14 ounces per person per week. The output of milk was only four-fifths of one pint per person per week. Beef production was also equal to only 3-4 ounces per person per week. Even in the ease of the traditional ground provision, we only produced 1¼ pounds per person per week.

Taken as a whole, the combined sales of the extractive bauxite industry, despite nationalisation, showed only a slight increase from \$317 million to \$325 million, while surpluses declined from \$32.7 million to \$24.5 million.

Chairman of the Guyana Bauxite Company, Mr. Pat Thompson, disclosed on June 13, 1976, in the Guyana Chronicle, that "metal grade bauxite production fell from 814,000 tons to 301,000 tons. Calcined bauxite fell from 691,000 to 662,000 tons. Alumina output fell from 294,000 tons to 247,000 tons."

THE NATURE OF THE CRISIS

The "production crisis" is largely structural. As in colonial times, the economy is still based on three primary commodities — bauxite, sugar and rice — which today account for 38 percent of the gross value of output and 87 percent of the value of all exports.

Stagnation in production has its roots in:

1. Pro-imperialist economic planning strategy and domestic and foreign policies;
2. Lack of democracy and people's meaningful involvement;
3. Political and racial discrimination;
4. National and cultural oppression;
5. Exploitation of the real producers for the benefit of the conspicuous consuming elite;
6. Shortage of land and inadequate drainage and irrigation;
7. High unemployment and under-employment;
8. Praedial larceny.

In the period of December 1964 to early 1971, both the economic base and the political, institutional, ideological and cultural superstructure were geared to serve imperialism and the ruling elite.

The first \$800 million 7-year (1966-72) Development Plan was based on the pro-imperialist

Puerto Rican economic planning strategy with nearly three-quarters of the expenditure devoted not to industry and agriculture but to infrastructure — highways, sea walls, airport and airstrips, public buildings, telephones, etc. There was largely the same emphasis under the 1972-76 Development Plan.

During the past 5 years, and more particularly in 1975-76, primarily as a result of intense political and ideological struggles, there have been positive changes in foreign policy and at the economic base thorough the nationalisation of the foreign-owned sugar and bauxite companies and some sectors of foreign trade. But at the super-structural level, there has been no corresponding positive change.

Largely because of the fact that the PNC is a minority party (it had polled 40 per cent of the votes in the 1964 general election and today has only about 30 per cent popular support), it cannot establish a democracy. There is little or no democracy at the political, industrial and social levels, and no genuine people's involvement.

At the central and local government levels, there are minority rule and administrative-police methods. With nationalisation has not come workers' participation and control in management and decision-making. Many genuine mass organisations are not recognised. Those which the regime cannot control, it tries to destroy by withholding recognition and creating parallel, bureaucratically-run bodies. For instance, the democratically-elected Rice Producers' Association (RPA) and its 13 District Committees, established by law, have not been accorded recognition and have been replaced by appointed Rice Action Committees which are bureaucratically managed.

Denial of democratic freedoms and human rights adversely affect production.

It has been admitted that negligence of local authorities, which were improperly elected in 1970 (since then elections have been postponed successively in 1972, 1974 and 1976), contributed to the non-reaping in Berbice of a portion of "spring" crop rice, and the ploughing and planting of only 27,000 acres out of a potential 75,000 acres of "autumn" crop rice land in 1976.

Excessive rainfall and flooding of the bauxite mines were the official explanation given for the drop in production of bauxite and 50 percent decline in profits. What was not mentioned was the simmering discontent caused by the way union elections in early 1976 were conducted and the non-implementation of workers' participation promised since nationalisation, which exploded in a general strike at Guyana Bauxite Company (GUYBAU) in December 1976. In this regard, Joseph Pollydore, General Secretary of the Guyana Trades Union Congress in his Annual Report for the 1976 Conference stated:

It is a matter of concern to the TUC that workers' participation in management has not been implemented at GUYBAU. This is one of the firm undertakings given by the Government to the workers at the time of the nationalisation of the Demerara Bauxite Company.

At the institutional level, state bodies like the police, army, judiciary and the Public Service Commission, Police Service Commission, Judicial Service Commission and Employment Exchanges, which are supposed to function independently under the Constitution have, under the doctrine of "paramountcy of the party", been made to serve not national but narrow party interests. A PNC party card is necessary for jobs, promotion, training, scholarships, land, loans and houses.

As a result of the politics of patronage and political and racial discrimination, there has been a high percentage of failures at examinations, and an exodus of skilled and semi-skilled personnel particularly to North America. Between 1968-1972, because of political favouritism in admissions, from 1,147 students admitted to be trained as nurses, only 267 graduated. Net migration increased from 3,198 persons in 1960 to 8,301 in 1970, and averaged 8,000 between 1970 and 1975.

In 1970, 296 professional and technical, and 448 administrative, managerial and clerical emigrants left Guyana. About half of the 226 persons trained by Bookers Bros. McConnell & Co. under their apprentice training scheme at Pln. Port Mourant between 1957-64 (PPP's 2nd term in government) have left the country.

Consequently, political and racial discrimination has resulted not only in a grave shortage of skilled and semi-skilled personnel in the face of a very high level of unemployment and under-employment, but also in “square pegs in round holes”, inefficiency, loss of production, and high cost of administration. According to University of Guyana senior lecturer, Dr. Fred Sukdeo (*Sunday Chronicle*, December 1976):

The public sector is not producing the goods and services that is (sic) compatible with their resources. Many of the public utilities such as bus transport, telephones, electricity and water along with service enterprises such as the Guyana Marketing Corporation and many established Government departments have declining performances. One of the solutions to this pathetic situation is public accountability of the bureaucracy. Management in the public sector seems to be reduced from a science to a manipulative art with an entrenched crimplene shirt-jac and long and wide side-burn mentality. The functioning of this elite group is not compatible with socialism.

Along with national oppression, there is cultural suppression. And at the ideological level, there is still talk about cooperative socialism, despite the fact that the PNC sometimes claims that its ideas are based on Marx, Engels and Lenin.

Another structural problem is the relationship of Guyana with the Caribbean Common Market (CARICOM). Imperialism’s design is not balanced industrial-agricultural development, but a deformed, dependent type of industrialisation in the Caribbean (industrialisation by invitation and through branch plants) with Guyana at best being an agricultural appendage.

Under this arrangement, the branch-plant and assembly-type factories are sited mainly in Jamaica, Trinidad and Barbados and the generally inferior-quality and higher-priced goods are allowed to enter duty-free into Guyana. Guyana is not only excluded from buying goods outside the region so long as they are available within the region, it also is not given aid by the capitalist states to establish state-owned industries.

This poses a real problem for PNC supporters who generally shun agriculture and prefer wage employment. Unable to satisfy them with industrial jobs, the PNC regime has attempted to entice them into agricultural settlements such as Brandwagt Sari (Berbice River), Butenabu (Mahaicony River), Aliko (Essequibo River), Matthews Ridge (Northwest District). But these have been colossal failures. Discriminatory treatment also in agriculture in favour of PNC supporters (for instance at Zambia in Black Bush Polder and in the interior), has caused grave dissatisfaction among Indian and Amerindian peasant farmers.

These failures have caused the PNC to create service jobs and to expand the state bureaucratic apparatus. Thus, over the period 1969-73, the output of Government services had risen from 13 percent to 20 percent, while the output of agriculture and industry had together declined from 60 percent to 53 percent.

Bureaucratic expansion is coupled with extravagance and elitist living standards. Despite talk about socialism and egalitarianism, the income inequality gap, the ratio between the top and bottom 10 percent of the population in Guyana is unlike that of the socialist countries with an average of about 3, and nearer that of the capitalist states ranging from 7 to 16. Senior Ministers of the Government receive in salary and allowances about 20 times, and the Prime Minister over 30 times, more than the lowest paid worker!

The productive sectors — bauxite, sugar, rice, agriculture other than rice, timber — are being heavily taxed to maintain the top-heavy bureaucratic apparatus (\$128 million in 1976 as compared with only \$27 million in 1964) and to make ever-rising debt payments (\$119 million in 1976 as compared with only \$10 million in 1964).

A sugar levy, the most onerous in the Caribbean, denies sugar workers adequate wages and proper working conditions. Consequently, they receive about half the wages of West Indian sugar workers. It also robs them of their just share of profits under the profit-sharing scheme instituted since 1969.

Rice farmers are paid less than half the price the Guyana Rice Board receives for the sale of rice in the Caribbean market; i.e., less than the cost of production.

No effective steps have been taken to curb corruption, nepotism and favouritism. This has resulted in widespread disillusionment with the PNC government and its inability to come to terms with the deepening crisis. Consequently, people are not inspired and cannot be mobilised to greater effort.

SOCIAL CRISIS

The "crisis of production" is manifested on the one hand in the shortage of revenues and budgetary deficits, and on the other hand in stagnation or fall in exports, balance of payments deficits and shortage of foreign exchange. These have repercussions at the social levels.

Because foreign aid was tied to infrastructural, rather than to balanced industrial and agricultural development, payments for debts and for the state apparatus are being financed not from increased production, but from increased taxation and/or cuts in social services and subsidies.

Income tax increased from G\$22 million in 1964 to G\$104 million in 1975, an increase by 336 percent; import duty, excise duty and other forms of revenue jumped from G\$40 million in 1964 to \$352 million in 1975, an increase by 774 percent.

The allocation for social services, including contribution for economic development, declined from 45 percent of current budget expenditure in 1964 to 35 percent in 1974; in 1977, a sum of G\$26 million in subsidies to consumers was withdrawn.

Consequently, the price of flour rose by 50 percent, electricity by 25 percent and steamer fares by 75 percent. Stockfeed prices for poultry were also raised resulting in the increase in the price of chicken from \$1.56 to \$2.24 per pound, and one egg for 21 cents! The present retail price of gasoline of \$2.50 per gallon includes a tax of about 79 cents, which was the price of gasoline including tax of 31 cents in September 1973. The rise in prices of gasoline and diesel oil has led to steep increases in transportation costs.

High taxation and deficit financing have brought about rampant inflation. Under the PNC regime, the cost of living index increased by 62 per cent in the 7-year period (1970-76) as compared with 11.8 points during the 7-year period (1958-64). And from the end of December 1976 to March 15, 1977, the increase was 9.9 per cent.

But wages increased by only 38 per cent in the twelve-and-a-half year period, 1965 to June 30, 1977. Consequently, serious erosion of living standards has resulted. According to the Summary Record of the Representations made by the Joint Delegation of Four Unions (GAWU, NAACIE, CCWU and UGSA) to the TUC on January 19, 1977:

Using the Government's own data in its statistical digest we find that between 1970 and 1975 average earnings in the sugar fields and factories increased by 45 percent. In bauxite mining and quarrying, the increase was 20 percent. In the distribution sector, earnings actually fell by 2 percent. Only on the wharves did actual earning increase by 60 percent. We must remember these data refer to earnings, which means a great deal of it has been earned by forcing the working class to work longer hours at overtime rates. Because the increases in earnings were largely wiped out by rising prices, the working class could not improve its standard of living although worker productivity in all these industries has been increasing.

The rising prices have therefore helped to reduce the standard of living of the working people. It has exposed them to the brutalities of foreign and local capitalism because a great deal of the price increases has occurred through rising import prices. Instead of more food, clothing and housing, the masses of Guyana as a whole have been made relatively worse off. In conclusion, let us consider the Government's minimum wage. In 1964, this was \$4 per day. Today it is \$5.50. This is an increase of about 38 percent over the past twelve years. Yet price increases, as we have already indicated, were over 60 per cent between 1970 and 1976.

The extent of the fall in living standards was indicated by steep price increases. In a feature article in the Sunday Chronicle (December 19, 1976), Eileen Cox of the Guyana Consumers Associa-

tion stated:

White snapper was 94 cents per pound in 1972; grey snapper is now \$1.65 per pound. Soup bones four years ago sold for about 20 cents per pound: today one supermarket sells at 80 cents per pound. Some add a small quantity of beef and sell it for far more.

In 1972, consumers threw their hands up when the price of yams rose to 16 cents per pound, twice the 1971 price. Today yams are selling at prices ranging between 80 cents and \$1.20 per pound. Plantains are quoted at 50 cents per pound, eddoes at 40 cents and sweet potatoes at 90 cents per pound.

Earlier in the Sunday Chronicle (March 3, 1976) Ms. Cox had written:

If you would wish to see how desperate the situation is becoming, take a leisurely stroll in one of the markets and note the prices of essential items. A kettle fairly large — \$12.95; a ladle — \$1.95; an enamel pint cup — \$2.50; an enamel plate — \$2.50. Can you picture the predicament of the household managed by a pensioner or an unemployed mother when replacements are to be made. . . ?

And if the new minimum price for fruit, nothing at less than 50 cents hits you, think of those who cannot afford fruit at any price.

This is a far cry from the PNC electoral slogan of 1961 and 1964 of “Free Milk and Cassava” and “Not a Soul Would go to Bed Hungry Under a PNC Government.”

Shortage of commodities due to restrictions and bans of imports of essential foods, and consequently blackmarket prices, have added to the housewife’s headaches.

The already high rate of employment (about 25 percent and much higher among youths) is further aggravated by retrenchment and a short work week due to the cut by nearly 50 percent in the development (capital) budget and shortages of essential imported raw materials. Lyons Knitwear temporarily laid off nearly half of its work force of over 1,000 workers because it could not get raw materials. Over 50 workers had been retrenched by Friendship Marine Company and more are likely to be laid off each week because of the company’s inability to get steel plates.

Medical services are deteriorating with shortages of doctors, other trained medical personnel and drugs.

Schools are overcrowded, under-staffed and ill equipped, and entrance to university and other levels of higher education is determined by the completion of training in National Service.

In housing, the situation is worsening with the bulldozing, and threats of bulldozing, of workers’ houses in squatting areas. And as more and more persons trek from the countryside to Georgetown in search of jobs, the housing problem becomes more and more acute.

There is also widespread corruption and squandering of public funds. Not only has the bureaucratic bourgeoisie greatly expanded, but also a new mediatory bourgeoisie is rapidly developing. Under the patronage of the state and the influence of the ruling party many private firms, some masquerading as cooperatives — construction, trading, accounting, legal, architectural — are providing goods and services to the state corporations.

Added to the growing crime and delinquency rate is praedial larceny. As a result, the police is establishing community crime fighting committees throughout the country.

Meanwhile, with so many disincentives to production, the trek from countryside to city, and from Guyana to North America and England, which give the promise of opportunities, continues to increase.

PNC EXCUSES

PNC’s response to the grave economic and social crisis is characteristic of a petty-bourgeois nationalist party. If, as it claims, its ideas are based on Marx, Engels and Lenin, it would have used the weapon of criticism and self-criticism to grapple with the objective realities of the situation. Instead, it is resorting to excuses.

For the dismal financial and economic situation — curtailment of production; reduction in surpluses of state corporations; balance of payments and budgetary deficits, cuts in capital (develop-

ment) expenditure; cuts in imports and subsidies — blame was put on the weather (excessive rainfall in 1976), “destabilisation”, economic recession and inflation in the capitalist world, rising prices for imports and fall in the world price of sugar.

Similar excuses had been given before in early 1974 when the economy was collapsing and a record-breaking taxation of \$19 million was imposed. Then, it was the so-called oil crisis of late 1973. But long before the “oil crisis” the economy had already been showing signs of stagnation.

As early as 1971, Dr. Wilfred David, the then Economic Adviser of the PNC government, stated that “we have had growth without development. The problem has been exemplified by a high level of unemployment and foreign dependency.”

In 1972, there was a decline in the output as compared with 1971. The Summary of the Central Bank of Guyana Report for 1972 referred to the “disappointing performance of the export industries. . . . In physical terms, sugar declined by 15 percent, rice by 20 percent and bauxite-alumina by 25 percent. And the real growth of production in 1972, was evidently well below the average (4 percent) of the past five years.”

According to the Bank of Guyana Report of 1973, “the value of the exports of goods and services fell further from the depressed level of 1972 — by about 4 percent, despite an increase in the average price of exports by about one-twelfth.”

The Report further disclosed that what was growing were services, not industry and agriculture.

As regards the weather, it was claimed that there was a record rainfall in 1976, and that no Government was expected to plan for such an eventuality. Actually, the government did not plan even for normal rainfall. It deliberately shifted infrastructural emphasis from drainage and irrigation to highways, sea defence, public buildings, airport and airstrips, telephones and bridges.

The PPP’s 1960-64 Development Plan had allocated 30 percent for drainage and irrigation. In contrast, the PNC Government in its first D-Plan allocated only 17 percent but expended about 5 percent. It has not embarked and completed one major water control scheme. Only G\$9 million has been spent on the Mahaica-Mahaicony-Abary drainage and irrigation project during the past 12 years. Estimated in early 1960’s to cost G\$32 million, it will now require \$90 million.

More recently, the PNC has been finding other scapegoats. Asked in an interview early this year what he thought of the PPP’s position of “critical support”, the Prime Minister said that he saw little support and only criticism. From the month of June there has been an intensification of anti-PPP propaganda blaming the social unrest of various sections of the working class on manipulation by the PPP. The response of the PNC has been near hysterical and the viciousness of the propaganda only stirs up disunity and more frustration among the masses of the people.

In the last cabinet reshuffle, four Ministers were replaced. And now with elections approaching, it has become expedient to castigate civil servants. This action on their part differs not at all from the North American Governments’ reaction to the economic crisis — the root of the problem is not the system of capitalism but the bureaucracy; a purely mechanical problem that can be easily resolved!

All in all, everyone and everything, except the PNC leadership and policies, is to be blamed.

PNC’S “SOLUTION”

The Government has been trying to solve the financial and economic crisis by appeals to patriotism and resorts to more borrowing. On the ground that the country was being “destabilised”, the people were being asked to “tighten their belts”, to make more sacrifices, to tolerate the cuts in subsidies of flour, electricity, steamer fares and poultry feed, and to buy \$30 million defence bonds.

At the same time, frequent trips have been made particularly to the capitalist states and also to the oil producing states like Kuwait, Nigeria and Libya to borrow more money.

The PPP does not believe that further “shots in the arm” alone will cure the ailing economy. Indeed, some of the current problems are largely due to the fact that the PNC government has heavily

burdened the country with debt. From \$128 million in 1964, the national debt today stands at over \$1,200 million. Last year the debt payments were \$119 million, almost equal to the present balance of payments deficit of nearly \$125 million. Loans were tied to infrastructure "development". About three quarters of the money for the first \$300 million Development Plan (1966-72) was allocated to infrastructural projects. Vast sums had been spent for the building, straightening and widening of highways, while little was done for agricultural roads. A former Economic Development Minister, J. Henry Thomas, publicly criticised the lavish expenditure for the Timehri-Linden highway, claiming that a modest but good road could have cost only about \$5 million. At the same time, no feeder roads to the highway had been planned and constructed to serve the farmers along the Demerara River. The same pattern has continued to this day. Road approaches to Georgetown now being constructed will cost nearly \$15 million. On bridges across the Demerara and Canje rivers, about \$45 million will be expended. For telephone communications, a contract for G\$14.6 million was recently signed with Plessey Telecommunications for distant dialling equipment when a modest but satisfactory system still used in most of Europe costing about \$4 million would have sufficed. A sum of nearly \$35 million was spent for the construction of silos, which is not justified in view of the stagnation in rice production.

More borrowing will only compound the problem of debt payment and aggravate the crisis of foreign exchange and shortages of consumption goods and essential raw materials for production like fertilisers, textiles, steel plates, etc.

There are some in ruling circles who justify further borrowing by comparing Guyana with the socialist countries. The fact is one cannot compare two unlike situations. Our situation is more akin to Brazil where the much-touted economic planning model, the so-called "Brazilian miracle", has petered out, with the country faced with a current account deficit of US\$7 billion, a total foreign debt of US\$22 billion, default on debt payments concomitant with the refusal of the USA to reschedule debts, and an obligation to pay 51.7 per cent of its debt by 1979.

IMPERIALISM'S POSITION

A love-hate relationship has developed between local and imperialist ruling circles. At first from December 1964 to early 1971, it was all love. Economic planning strategy and domestic and foreign policies had been geared to serve imperialism. From mid-1971, one or the other side of the relationship was emphasised depending on the intensity of the national liberation and class struggles, and the pressures and counter-pressures on the Government.

In June 1971, as a response to public pressure and intense political and ideological struggles, an anti-imperialist move was made from "meaningful participation in bauxite" to nationalisation of the Demerara Bauxite Company (DEMBA).

To intimidate the Government against further nationalisation (the subsidiary of the Reynolds Metal Co., Guyana Mines Limited, was to have been nationalised shortly after the nationalisation of DEMBA), the US representative abstained in a World Bank vote on a \$10,800,000 loan application from Guyana.

After 1971, US aid was substantially reduced. Loans averaged G\$10,406,200 per year in the period 1967-71 and grants of G\$1,689,333 per year in the period 1965-71. But after the nationalisation of the Demerara Bauxite Company in mid-1971, economic pressure was exerted, and

loans fell to G\$6,172,200 per year in the period 1972-76 and grants to a mere G\$356,000 per year in 1972-73.

As Dr. Ralph Gonsalves in *The Spectre of Imperialism: The Case of the Caribbean*, put it:

As regards the Caribbean a few interesting features emerge from AID's operations. . . . In 1969 Guyana received over 50 per cent of AID's commitments to the entire Caribbean and 94.3 per cent of those to the English-speaking Caribbean. In fact 76 per cent of all AID's Development Loan Funds in 1969 went to eight countries: Chile, Colombia, India, Indonesia, Korea, Pakistan, Turkey and Guyana. By 1971, Guyana's share of AID's commitments had fallen to 3.2 per cent of the total for the Caribbean as a whole and 5.6 per cent of the total for the Anglo-phone Caribbean. It is worth considering in this regard that Guy-

ana's move to the left under Prime Minister Burnham began substantially in 1971 with the nationalisation of Alcan and the announced intention to rid the economy of foreign economic interests.

As a result of imperialist counter-pressures, compensation terms for DEMBA were revised upwards — from \$100 million to \$107 million; from no interest to 6 percent, less 1½ percent withholding tax; from a repayment period of 40 years and over to 20 years. Philipp Bros., the subsidiary of the giant Anglo-American Corporation of South Africa, was appointed as sales agent for the state-owned Guyana Bauxite Company. And the nationalisation of Guyana Mines Limited, the subsidiary of Reynolds Metal Company was deferred until the end of 1975.

As a result of these concessions, the imperialist banks, headed by Chase Manhattan, provided working capital to the state-owned Guyana Bauxite Company.

After the Government had established together with Jamaica, Trinidad and Barbados, diplomatic links with Cuba in 1972, severed diplomatic relations with Israel, voted in favour of a UN resolution deeming Zionism as racism, and responded to internal and external pressures to permit

Cuban planes bound for Angola to pass through Guyana, the US administration exerted diplomatic pressure. This was in keeping with Kissinger's threats that the US government would take action against those states which voted against its vital interests in the United Nations.

The pressure reached its climax at the time of the nationalisation of the Booker's octopus. On the basis that Booker McConnell & Co. had built its empire on profits earned in Guyana, the Government under opposition pressure had offered compensation of \$1. A "destabilisation" campaign was launched, no doubt to force the Government to retreat from its position. In the end the latter agreed to pay \$102 million at 6 percent interest in 20 years!

The next step in the love-hate relationship was a bomb explosion in the Guyana Consular Office in Port-of Spain, Trinidad, and the sabotage of the Cubana airliner in which 73 persons, including 11 Guyanese, lost their lives.

In response, the Leader of the PNC, at a party rally at Cuffy Square, accused the CIA of involvement.

The US State Department responded by calling him "a bald-faced liar", and withdrew the US Charge d'Affaires from Georgetown.

In the face of these pressures and the grave financial and economic crisis which became apparent towards the last quarter of 1976, the Government wanted to patch up its relations with the USA. Thus, while some Ministers were journeying to the socialist states and applying for association with COMECON, others were making pilgrimages to Washington and other capitals in the capitalist world.

In June 1977, US Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, Terrence Todman, in a statement before the Sub-Committee on Inter-American Affairs of the House International Relations Committee, said:

Guyana is seeking a different path to social and economic development, one with which we have no quarrel and which we have no reason to fear.

Despite its different political philosophy, and our differences of the past, Guyana looks to us for understanding and co-operation. By co-operating with Guyana we can emphasise once again our readiness to respect different ways of political and social development.

We have thought in terms of a co-ordinated donor effort for the region. Such an effort is already in the formative stage in the case of Haiti.

We may also want to consider what could be done in this way for emerging mini-states of the region. We are working closely with the major international financial institutions (IDB, the World Bank and the IMF), as well as such regional bodies as the Caribbean Development Bank. They want to help and stand ready to take into consideration requests for financial assistance.

Mr. Todman also pointed out that Guyana can eventually attain the kind of economic viability which can contribute to the region as a whole and allow it to assist its Caribbean neighbours in

their development as well.

Imperialism is obviously concerned about the anti-colonialist; anti-neo-colonialist and anti-imperialist trend in Guyana and the Caribbean, which can have far-reaching consequences, particularly in Latin America. It now intends to use its economic power and the financial institutions

which it controls to arrest or reverse the process.

In Guyana, it has two main strategic objectives: firstly, to halt the anti-imperialist process; secondly, to ensure that the national liberation revolution does not lead to a social liberation revolution; that the anti-imperialist process does not proceed on a socialist-oriented or non-capitalist path to socialism but is channelled to a capitalist course; that anti-imperialism does not become the gateway to socialism.

Imperialism will therefore make its aid conditional on the following:

1. No further nationalisations — the banks, insurance companies and other foreign-owned enterprises.
2. Guyana must proceed not on a socialist-oriented or non-capitalist but on a capitalist path of development.
3. An "open door" to foreign private capital.
4. Not balanced industrial-agricultural, but infrastructural, development as in the past like highways, bridges, sea defence, communications, etc.
5. State capitalism and a capitalist type of agriculture with joint or mixed companies involving the state and foreign transnational monopolies, particularly through the Caribbean Food Corporation.
6. Strengthening the CARICOM link at the expense of association with COMECON.
7. Pressure and attacks on the working class to weaken it vis-à-vis the capitalist class.
8. Harassment of the left and democratic forces.

PNC MOVES TO THE RIGHT

The PNC regime has already shown signs of succumbing to imperialist pressures and of moving to the right.

1. It has shelved the nationalisation of foreign banks and insurance companies which had been contemplated for the end of 1976.

2. It is opening "the door" to private foreign investment.

Dr. Fred Sukdeo, Economic Adviser to the Government, on Guyana's 11th independence anniversary in the *Guyana Chronicle* (26 May 1977), wrote:

The dialectics of this period requires a temporary shift to selected capitalist strategies of development. The state sector is not an efficient producer of wealth and is likely to experience complex traditional problems. Foreign private capital should be encouraged to invest with incentives more favourable than similar developing countries. The local capitalists and the petty-bourgeois class should also be provided with opportunities to enhance the developmental process.

Sukdeo's views clearly have official blessing. Mr. Alexander Nicolas Keyserlingh, a director of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the private investment arm of the World Bank, disclosed that he had been invited by Minister of Finance Frank Hope to look at the possibilities of the IFC giving assistance to the private sector; according to the *Guyana Chronicle* (22 July 1977), "he told businessmen that from the discussion he had with Cde. Hope, it was clear that the Government was interested in promoting private sector investments."

During his one week visit to Guyana, Mr. Keyserlingh had talks with Guyanese businessmen about seven projects covering agriculture, agro-industries, manufacturing, forestry and logging, and another in which the state will have minority equity. On the eve of his departure, the *Guyana Chronicle* (30 July 1977) reported that he had pronounced: "private enterprise is alive and well in Guyana."

Sukdeo's proposals for giving encouragement to foreign private capital fit into the long term strategy of imperialism — build up a new big bourgeoisie and a reactionary petty bourgeoisie which can arrest the revolutionary process as in Mexico or destroy it as in Bolivia in 1952-64. In the latter country, the Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (MNR) took over the Government in 1952. According to NACLA (February 1974):

Arms still in hand, the proletarian and peasant sectors of the new Government pushed through some fundamental measures within a short period. Of these, the most important were: (1) nationalisation of the Tin Barons' properties and the creation of a state mining corporation (CONBIBOL) to administer them; (2) basic agrarian reforms for the altiplano, the high plateau where two-thirds of the population lived; (3) universal suffrage; (4) dismemberment of the bourgeois armed forces; (5) initiation of "co-government" (the coalition rule of the petit-bourgeoisie/bourgeoisie and the working class) with the naming of worker and peasant cabinet officials; (6) implementation of workers' control (control obrero) in COMBIBOL mines as workers won veto power over all decisions; and (7) creation of the Central Obrera Boliviana (COB), a national labour federation under the leadership of Juan Lechin, one of the miners' top representatives. These measures naturally produce some splits within the ranks of the governing MNR but, for the moment, the armed workers in alliance with other oppressed sectors held more power than any other single sector.

But in 1964, the Government was overthrown by a military coup. During the 12-year interval, there had been no intervention. US strategy was to "buy time" until a "shift in the balance of power" could be affected. This was done through economic assistance and the development of a whole new region along capitalist lines through agriculture and agro-industries.

Three crucial manipulations took place before imperialism gained victory. These were:

- a) the division and demoralisation of the working class;
- b) the destruction of the petit bourgeoisie-proletarian alliance by the creation of a reactionary petty-bourgeoisie;
- c) the creation of a new bourgeoisie to replace the one-travelling down-hill since 1929.

3. It has begun re-emphasising "cooperative socialism", under which workers and others including cooperatives would be permitted to purchase shares in state enterprises, so that eventually, the cooperative sector would become the dominant sector. Recently, the Minister of Agriculture Gavin Kennard told employees of the Guyana Liquor Corporation that it was the intention of the Government to continue the partnership in joint ventures between Government and private enterprise. As in the case of the Guyana Liquor Corporation with 3,354 private shareholders in which, according to the Guyana Chronicle (18 July 1977), "the relationship has proven to be healthy and harmonious. It is a successful experience and one which should inspire confidence among private investors, notably workers who may wish to join with the Government in joint ventures to promote the economic development of our nation."

4. It has elevated Kit Nascimento, a one-time principal lieutenant of anti-communist Peter D'Aguiar and his United Force, and put him in charge of the Mazaruni Highway Project which is tied to a future hydro-electric scheme.

5. It has approved of Brazil's Amazon basin "development" plan. The Brazilian rightist-fascist regime embarked on a policy of denationalisation from the time the military seized power in 1964. It is selling out land in the huge Amazon area to American companies and speculators at dirt-cheap prices. At the same time, it has been pursuing a policy of extermination of the Indian (Amerindians) people who inhabit the area.

6. During the Angolan crisis when China was on the same side with South Africa, Zaire and the CIA, there was a cooling down of relations between Guyana and China. But recently, the Government has strengthened ties with China (whose foreign policies objectively aid imperialism) through the visit of President Arthur Chung and Minister of Economic Development, Desmond Hoyte to that

country.

7. It has strengthened ties with the British, Canadian and US military. Following on the heels of visits from Canadian and British military missions, a US mission comprising of three officers from the US Air Force, one from the Army and a civilian official from the US Agency for International Development came to Guyana because, according to the *Guyana Chronicle* (14 May 1977), it "is an interesting country to visit".

8. It has mended the diplomatic breaches with Washington through visits of Foreign Minister Fred Wills and Finance Minister Frank Hope. The ground for this was prepared during the debate in the National Assembly on the sabotage of the Cuban airliner soon after the State Department had recalled US Charge d'Affaires, John Blacken. It attacked the Soviet Union, enunciated a philosophy of pragmatism ("we must know our geographic position in the hemisphere") and voted against a PPP amendment which sought the approval of the National Assembly for "unequivocal support to all the states in the Caribbean which are fighting against colonialism, neo-colonialism and imperialism, and also to the Cuban Government in its decision to renounce the agreement with the US Government on air and maritime piracy and other crimes."

9. Through its loan application of \$100 million to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, the PNC is mortgaging the independence and sovereignty of Guyana by tying the country more securely to the imperialist-dominated CARICOM and the transnational corporations like Texaco, W.R. Grace's Federation Chemicals, Unilever, Nestle's, etc., which have been exploiting the Guyanese consumers. Experience of Jamaica shows that a high price had to be paid for a loan from Trinidad; she was forced to buy cars and other vehicles assembled in Trinidad, which could have been purchased elsewhere at prices 50 percent lower. Already our trade deficit with the CARICOM countries has increased from \$5.6 million in 1968 to \$67.3 million in 1975 and an estimated \$74.4 million in 1976.

10. It has followed the formula of the US-controlled International Monetary Fund (IMF) for solving the financial crisis not by curtailing the privileges of the bureaucratic and other bourgeoisie, but by imposing further burdens on the workers through the reduction of essential subsidies. It has already devalued our currency in relation to US currency by over 25 per cent by changing the rate from US\$1 equivalent to G\$2.55 instead of G\$2.00.

11. It has strengthened the capitalist class vis-à-vis the working class by the adoption of a get-tough policy of threatening workers on strike with dismissal and using soldiers from the Guyana Defence Force, People's Militiamen and National Servicemen as scabs as in the strikes of bauxite workers at Linden and municipal workers in Georgetown.

12. It has weakened the unity and strength of the working class by disrupting the talks with the PPP and embarking on a campaign of harassment. In this regard, it should be noted that when the cold-war was started by Winston Churchill and President Harry Truman in 1946-47, a condition for the receipt of US "Marshall Aid" by France, Italy and Belgium was the expulsion of communists and left socialists from united front Governments in those countries. (Churchill's conservative Government had also destroyed by force the first PPP government in 1953 and engineered the split in the Party in 1955). More recently, Dr. Henry Kissinger, former US Secretary of State, had warned about incorporating communist parties into West European Governments as in Italy and France.

IMPERIALISM BACKING THE PNC

The PNC regime's move to the right has resulted in political and economic support from imperialism.

In March 1977, the conservative Senator Daniel Moynihan listed Guyana among the six nations (India, Sri Lanka, Guyana, Barbados, Jamaica and Gambia) which "have been able to change their governments through free elections." No doubt, the Senator was referring not to the 1968 and 1973 elections, but to the 1964 election. Surely, he was aware that the PPP had been ousted from office by an electoral system which was manipulated by Anglo-American imperialism and referred to by Harold Wilson as "a fiddled constitutional arrangement."

Despite President Carter's emphasis on human rights and the blatant violation of democratic freedoms and fundamental rights in Guyana, the State Department sees no problem concerning human rights in Guyana. At the end of a short visit to Guyana in June 1977, US Under Secretary of

State, Philip C. Habib, stated as regards human rights: "This is not, in our view, a problem in Guyana. . ."

In 1971, at the time of the nationalisation of the Demerara Bauxite Company (DEMBA) the US representative in the World Bank had abstained on a vote for a G\$10.8 million for a second sea defence loan; in mid-1972, the Prime Minister in a speech at Wismar complained that there was "a slowing down in the processing of applications for foreign loans." This was in relation to a second loan of G\$4.4 million from the US Export-Import Bank for irrigation pumps (Guyana Graphic editorial, 13 July 1972). This pressure was intended to get better compensation terms for DEMBA, owned by the Canadian Aluminium Company in which at that time Americans had majority shares; to have appointed as sales agent Philip Bros., the US subsidiary of the giant South African Anglo-American Corporation; and to have dropped the nationalisation of Guyana Mines Limited, the bauxite subsidiary of the US Reynolds Metal Company, which was to have taken place "within a matter of months."

But on July 16, 1977, the Minister of Finance, Frank Hoped announced that the USA had approved a loan of G\$2.5 million. The Guyana Chronicle reported Frank Hope to say that the loan application had started four years ago but had been put in cold storage because of "a difference of

Views"; there had been a "closing of the gap in views" when the new Administration took over and this had led to the successful conclusion of the agreement. Charge d'Affaires in the US Embassy, John D. Blacken, felt that the loan was "evidence of the Carter administration's desire to foster development both here and in other developing countries."

On July 26, 1977, the Guyana Chronicle reported that Mr. Peter Kolar, director of USAID, in handing over a cheque for G\$500,000 to the Ministry of Finance for the 4-lane lower East Coast highway, "explained that in the past they made disbursements to the Government; that is, after work

was done, money was handed over. Because of the present economic situation in Guyana, we have decided to change the system and make advances'."

On January 8, 1977, Minister of Agriculture Gavin Kennard told parliament that a loan of \$10 million is possible from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) which is under the control of the United States of America, for improved collection, storage and distribution facilities of food crops. Later, it was disclosed that the IDB is also likely to grant a loan of G\$162.5 million (US\$65 million) to the Mahaica-Mahaicony-Abary drainage project. According to the Guyana Chronicle, February 12, 1977 issue, IDB President Antonio Ortiz Mena said that the IDB hoped to approve the loan before May and that it would be on soft terms, repayable over 40 years, of which there would be a ten-year moratorium with a 1 percent interest rate, and repayment over 30 years at 2 percent.

And in June, the Government disclosed that the reconstruction of the Georgetown sea wall defences was financed with the help from the World Bank with some technical assistance being given by the consultants, Netherlands Engineering Company (NEDECO).

British imperialism has also stepped up its loans to the PNC regime. The British Government authorised the offer of a \$44 million development loan to the Guyana government. At a press conference on June 15, 1977, (Guyana Chronicle, June 16, 1977), Mr. Frank Dunnill, leader of the visiting British Project Mission, disclosed that the greater part of the aid had been previously allocated for three priority projects; essentially maintenance, repair of machinery, improved water transport, and rehabilitating sea defences at Tapakuma. The balance of the aid would be allocated after appropriate discussions for agreed projects. According to Mr. Dunnill, the technical cooperation would be provided on grant terms "and our capital aid, as at present at 3 percent interest with 25 years maturity and a four-year grace period." Pointing out that Guyana was a country with great potential, the British official said the Guyana government's "Feed, Clothe and House" pro-

gramme was very much in keeping with the British Government's policy.

Imperialism is clearly putting into practice its new more subtle methods of domination as outlined by the [PPP] Central Committee in its report to our 19th Congress in August, 1976. It had then warned:

How does imperialism view the developing but complex process in Guyana? How does it view the PNC regime? Clearly it is not happy about developments and the position of the PNC. The imperialists feel that they have been betrayed. They view the PNC as a "Frankenstein" monster, a "dog which has bitten the hand that fed it". However, this does not mean that they will give up the PNC and support the PPP. Our Party still is, and will remain, imperialism's implacable enemy. This was made clear by Nelson Rockefeller who is regarded as one of the liberals in the system of state-monopoly capitalism. In the report of the special Mission he headed in Latin America, it is stated: "Guyana is not a politically stable nation. Its political sphere reflects both the strength of a Communist Party and the depth of racial tension. A Communist victory would completely change Guyana's foreign policy. It is therefore of crucial concern to the United States and other nations of the Western Hemisphere as well as Great Britain. . . Brazil in particular has indicated its concern in this area."

The imperialists will still work with the PNC, especially the entrenched right-wing, hoping to control, if not halt and reverse, the present process. . . .

The imperialists have accumulated a wealth of experience in a number of countries which at one time were in the same state of development as Guyana is today.

In Bolivia, for instance, the Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (MNR) led by Paz Estenssoro, which came to power in 1952, had nationalised the tin mines (equivalent in importance to sugar and bauxite in Guyana) and carried through a radical land reform. The imperialists at first bided their time, and 12 years later in 1964, succeeded in overthrowing the MNR regime. . . .

When the MNR had taken power, there was hardly a local bourgeoisie. But through aid and other more subtle and devious means, "development", it created a new bourgeoisie, which eventually toppled the Government through a military coup.

Another example is Peru. To this country the same treatment was not meted out as in the case of Cuba. Against this first free territory in the Americas, US imperialism launched military and economic aggression. Concluding that it was this "treatment" which drove Cuba into the socialist camp, sections of the American ruling class did not apply the sanctions under the Hickenlooper Amendment and the Sugar Act after the Government of Peru had seized US trawlers and nationalised without compensation US oil and sugar companies. The Peruvian "treatment" finally resulted in the overthrow of the revolutionary Velasco Alvarez Government and its replacement by the right-wing Bemedez regime.

These methods are more likely to be accepted in Guyana rather than outright military aggression from outside which the PNC regime has been suggesting. Direct and even indirect aggression is not today acceptable by international, even US public opinion. Nor do they always provide satisfactory results. Indirect aggression proved a success in Guatemala in 1954, but a failure in Cuba in 1961. Direct aggression was successful in the Dominican Republic in 1965, but an abysmal fiasco in Vietnam. So traumatic had been the Vietnamese experience to the average American that Congressmen refused to agree to the Ford-Kissinger pleas and plans for involvement in Angola.

Dr. Henry Kissinger has been replaced by ex-Professor Zbigniew Brzezinski as US National Security Adviser. He believes in a "low profile", quiet diplomacy. In his article in Foreign Policy magazine a year ago, titled "America in a Hostile World", he pointed out that "military power by itself will no longer dictate the ability of a nation to influence political, social and cultural development", and calls for a "new international economic order".

Does this mean that the US administration will support national and social liberation revolutions? Not at all. In a previous book (1965) *Alternative to Partition*, subtitled, "For a Broader Conception of America's Role in Europe", Brzezinski spelled out plainly his "goal of returning East Europe and Russia to European civilization." While under the Truman Doctrine (1947), the "captive states" of Eastern Europe were to be liberated by force, if necessary, he saw "dismantling the iron curtain" already going forward under increased economic and cultural relations, and wanted them pushed further. "West Germany", he said (page 51), "has succeeded in establishing extensive con-

tacts, particularly with Czechoslovakia, but also with Poland, and, to a lesser extent with the other East European states.” And West Germany must take over the whole of Germany: “Stability in Europe is not possible as long as a leading European nation has one-fourth of its people under foreign domination and as long as half of European civilization is artificially cordoned off from the West.”

As regards US policies towards socialist Eastern Europe, Brzezinski proposed:

The basic assumption of the new approach was that mere verbal hostility would not overthrow the communist regimes and that events in East Germany and Hungary had demonstrated that the West did not have the will to use force. Instead of waiting for the communist regimes to collapse, the United States would henceforth bank on promoting evolutionary changes within them and within the bloc as a whole.

To achieve his objectives, the new National Security Adviser had stated that “everything to weaken the security of the socialist bloc and dependence on the socialist bloc should be rewarded.”

Terrence Todman, speaking specifically about the Caribbean, outlined how this US policy relates to our region (Guyana Chronicle, July 2, 1977):

We used to see Caribbean mainly in security terms. Our interventions there were often largely motivated by security considerations, and we sometimes referred to the Caribbean as “our lake”.

We still have security interests in the Caribbean. It is our “third border”. . . But we no longer see the Caribbean in quite the same stark military security context that we once viewed it. Rather, our security concerns in the Caribbean are increasingly political in nature. The threat is not simply foreign military bases on our doorstep. It is possibly an even more troublesome prospect: proliferation of impoverished third world states, whose economic and political problems blend with our own. A militant anti-US posture could appear to them as the only way to get our attention and realize their ambitions.

I do not believe that this new “security” concern is a chimera. If the present adverse trends in the region continue, and we take no effective action, I think we can count on unfortunate developments.

Clearly, Guyana is being rewarded in order to keep it in the camp of capitalism, so-called Western Civilisation. It is in this context that the patent hypocrisy of their position on the existence of human rights violations in the socialist countries, but none in Guyana, is exposed.

DANGER TO GUYANA

Apart from placing more reliance on foreign loans, the PNC will:

1. Resort to demagoguery -

(a) Put blame on others for the grave crisis — the weather, “destabilisation”, external factors such as inflation, ministers, bureaucrats, etc. The Cabinet reshuffle and the “meet-the-people” tours are intended to cast blame on others and refurbish the PNC’s image.

(b) Talk about socialism and the claim that its ideas are based on Marx, Engels and Lenin without taking the necessary political, economic, social and cultural measures which will lay the foundations for socialism.

However, it is possible to talk about socialism and still work with imperialism. Egypt has an Arab Socialist Union Party and proclaims “Arab Socialism”. Yet on President Nasser’s death, the rightist Vice-President assumed power, jailed the leftist Vice-President and moved the party and Government to the right towards imperialism and capitalism. According to K. Brutents in *The Liberation Struggle of the Asian and African Peoples at the Present Stage and Revolutionary Democracy*:

Over the past few years the Egyptian Government has radically changed its policy towards foreign capital to expand the framework of its activity. A new foreign-investment code came into force in 1971. Its purpose is to stimulate the inflow of investment. The programme of the Government, formed in the spring of 1973, calls for additional steps to attract foreign investments. During the debate on the Government policy statement in the People's Assembly some of the speakers expressed misgivings that these measures as well as the steps envisaged in the statement, meeting the interests of the private sector, might damage the main principles of Egypt's development. Subsequent Egyptian Governments have adhered to the same line.

During the Angolan crisis, "Arab Socialist" Egypt and "African Socialist" Senegal voted in the meeting of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) against the MPLA which was being backed by the Soviet Union and Cuba. The People's Republic of China has also shown that it is quite possible to claim to be the standard-bearer of Marxism-Leninism and yet objectively stand on the same side with imperialism. This is a departure from proletarian internationalism, one of the cardinal principles of Marxism-Leninism. It should be observed that not only have relations between Guyana and the imperialist states been strengthened; the 'relations between Guyana and China have also been warmed up since its cooling down during the Angolan crisis.

2. Change of the Constitution to include a declaration about a socialist Guyana but a structure aimed at legalising the present unconstitutional practices for a virtual one party state as in Mexico. A rigged referendum to adopt the constitutional changes, including the postponement of the elections as in India.

3. Hold a rigged election instead of a rigged referendum.

4. Attack the PPP at home and try to isolate it at the international level. Overseas, it is trying to create the false impression that the PNC is revolutionary, anti-imperialist and socialist, and the PPP is counter-revolutionary, working with the rightist and ultra-left forces to cause industrial unrest and economic chaos. This accounts for the forged letter allegedly written by Cde. Narbada Persaud and published in the Guyana Chronicle, with references to strikes in the sugar and bauxite industries and a secret PPP plan, "Mobilization Strategy No. 7", for creating turmoil and violence.

The PNC is now faced with growing contradictions; firstly, between the rank and file and the leadership; secondly, between the very large reactionary petty-bourgeois and the very small, unorganised revolutionary petty-bourgeois leadership.

The contradiction between the mass of followers and the leaders was first demonstrated in the strike of GUYBAU workers at Linden soon after the nationalisation of DEMBA in 1971, and during the 1973 general election when there was a very low turnout of voters in Georgetown, estimated at about 60-65 percent as compared with 90-95 percent elsewhere. The "smoke" of discontent turned into "fire" in the strike at Linden in December 1976 when the bauxite workers were threatened with dismissal and the leaders were arrested and tear gassed, and again on May Day 1977 when the leader of the PNC and Prime Minister was loudly heckled and booed by his erstwhile firmest supporters for the first time since coming to power twelve years ago. On the same occasion at the National Park, Basil Blair, who had been placed in power as President of the TUC by the PNC, could not even address the rally. And Labour Minister Hamilton Green met a virtual boycott at Linden, when on May Day a handful of persons attended, including police, National Service and security personnel.

A special confidential report "In Service of People" exposed by the Mirror (22 May 1977) corroborated this erosion of support for the PNC in its former two strongholds, Linden and Georgetown. It pointed out:

An acute shortage of food supplies, unequal distribution of foodstuffs, services, bad transportation, infrequent refuse collection, the apparent malfunctioning of some Government agencies with which regu-

lar contact was made, a deplorable health and sanitation situation where only small, if any, improvements were being observed. Comrades became disillusioned by the apparel mal-administration of some co-operatives. Unemployment, under-employment, rising living costs, all of which were blamed on the party and Government . . . Sudden apparent affluence of some party functionaries, while the majority of people existed below the minimum line . . .

Considering its past history, the preponderance of strength in the PNC is with the reactionary petty bourgeoisie, which has been built up particularly during the past twelve years with big salaries, allowances and other privileges.

So long as the Government would not be toppled, the PNC elite under pressure was prepared to move against imperialism as this step offered even more lucrative positions, salaries and perquisites. GUYBAU is a case in point.

But to take the steps leading from national liberation to social liberation, from anti-imperialism to socialism, would mean denial of certain privileges of this elite, and any political solution involving the PPP, a surrender of certain positions.

Thus, the PNC has moved to resolve the contradictions at the expense of the working class, the peasantry and the weak revolutionary tendency in the party, and in favour of the reactionary-bureaucratic, petty-bourgeois elite and the emerging “mediatory” bourgeoisie. This accounts for the rupture of the talks with us and the new danger now facing the nation.

The course chosen by the PNC is bound to lead to alienation and confrontation. It will use the carrot and club methods — threatening workers on strike with dismissal and using armed police, troops, militiamen and National Service-men as strike breakers; meeting pressure for increased wage demands by giving a wage increase to “buy time” before an election or a referendum. To this end, talks are now taking place with the TUC about a minimum wage for Government employees.

Since increased wages and salaries, about \$40 million, would not be met by additional revenues from increased production, resort will be made to further taxation and to the “printing press” (putting more currency in circulation). Both will lead to further inflation and deterioration in living standards. Minister of Finance Frank Hope has recently warned about an extended period of austerity and possibly more cuts in subsidies. This will lead to an intensification of the struggle with demonstrations, strikes, etc.

The struggle will take place on two fronts:

1. Industrial for maintaining living conditions;
2. Political for democratic freedoms, majority rule and elections which are free and fair.

THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY

Prior to 1971, the PNC regime regularly resorted to “big stick” methods — the National Security Act and detention without trial; use of police dogs, armed police and soldiers against workers on strike; attempted anti-strike law. Now that it is moving to the right and closer to imperialism, it will again use the military and paramilitary forces to suppress the workers and at the same to try to crush the PPP. The more the military gets involved in socio-economic life, the more it will “smell power” and the greater the danger of a military coup and the establishment of a rightist military dictatorship.

The Guyana Defence Force and the Police, because of a deliberate recruitment policy of keeping out members and supporters of the PPP, have become virtual arms of the PNC. As such, they reflect the same classes, strata and contradictions within the PNC. The same division — reactionary and revolutionary petty bourgeoisie — in the political leadership of the ruling party is reflected in the army and police. Consequently, from a class point of view, they cannot be said to be neutral.

Chile is a classic example which shows that the army does not live and act in a vacuum, that it is influenced by society and the class struggle. Despite several decades of so-called army neutrality, the military overthrew the Unidad Popular Government and murdered President Salvador Allende.

In the process, the reactionary military murdered also the loyalist Generals Schneider and Pratts.

In Bolivia, after the military regime of General Ovando had been forced to nationalise the properties of the Gulf Oil Corporation, an attempt was made by the extreme rightist section of the military to depose him. In the ensuing clash, the leftist General Juan Jose Torres came to power. A year later, he was overthrown and soon after he was murdered in Argentina, while the reactionary military headed by General Hugo Banzer established a fascist dictatorship.

In Indonesia, when President Sukarno became ill, a clash developed between the rightist and leftist forces inside and outside the Government. For one day, the leftist forces supported by the air forces held power. But they were removed by the reactionary military forces headed by General Suharto. The leadership of the Indonesian Communist Party (the largest Communist Party in the "third world") was wiped out; about 2 million were killed or imprisoned; President Sukarno was put under house arrest where he died; and the anti-imperialist Foreign Minister Subandrio was thrown in prison.

That the army is not neutral has been evidenced by the fact that over the past 15 years, about 40 military coups have taken place in more than 30 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. In Latin America alone, of the 45 military coups since 1930, more than 30 were rightist or extreme rightist.

Can an army coup occur in Guyana? Why did it not take place before? If it does take place in the future, under what conditions will it occur?

A coup d'etat has not been staged before, despite the anti-imperialist direction of the Government particularly in the 1974-76 period, because of certain specific considerations which counter-acted this development:

1. Unlike many Latin American armies, the Guyana Defence Force is relatively new, a creation of the ruling PNC. And it is largely made up of Afro-Guyanese, the ethnic group from which the PNC draws its main support.
2. The contradiction between the PNC leadership and the rank and file support had not yet developed; up to mid-1976 the popularity of the PNC leader was still relatively high both at the political and security levels.
3. The rightist forces outside the PNC, unlike in Chile and Jamaica, are weak.
4. The pronouncement by the PPP that its political line of critical support meant struggle against shortcomings and wrongdoings of the PNC, but unity of PPP forces with PNC forces against any foreign reactionary interventionist force and/or an internal rightist military coup.

The position, however, during the past year has dramatically changed. As already shown, there is now greater discontent and growing alienation. And with the use of more and more force, the gap between the regime and the people will widen. This can embolden the reactionary forces at the political and military levels to resort to a military "solution".

The imperialists and the local reactionaries are not happy about the developing situation in Guyana: firstly, the contradictions within the ruling PNC; and secondly, the growing unity at the workers', trade union and political levels outside the Government. They see Guyana as having the greatest potential in the Caribbean and Latin America of "becoming another Cuba". Thus, they would like a "solution" aimed at emasculating the working class, muzzling the trade unions, liquidating the PPP and its leadership and other left and democratic forces, and containing or destroying the weak left in the ruling party, the army and the police.

To attain these strategic objectives, a military "solution" would appear to be the best as they do not have the options open to them as in some other places. In Jamaica, for instance, with a strong rightist opposition party, the Jamaican Labour Party, they can look to an electoral "solution". Having failed with "destabilisation" methods to dislodge the Manley Government, they can work for an Indian or a Sri Lankan type of solution. This means the application of enough political pressure so that the Government does not move far enough and fast enough on a socialist-oriented path, thus losing its popular support and suffering defeat as in India and Sri Lanka at the next general elec-

tion.

In Guyana, the rightist forces outside the Government are weak. They would not win an election even if it was free and fair. Thus, the electoral "solution" is not feasible.

Nor is the Mexican political system with the big and petty bourgeoisie allied to the foreign monopoly bourgeoisie likely to be a lasting "solution" in Guyana. Already there is a semi-military dictatorship of the Mexican type; attempts have been made over the past 3 years to build up a political system as in Mexico with mass organisations affiliated to the ruling party, and the party and army integrated. The main difference is that in Mexico, the PRI party grew out of the military; in Guyana, the reverse is the case. And the left is much stronger here than in Mexico.

Experience has shown in the Dominican Republic at the time of the popularly-elected Bosch Government that imperialism will resort to force 'when the left is permitted democratic freedoms and is growing. In Chile, the imperialists and the reactionaries resorted to a military "solution" after they saw that the Unidad Popular led by Salvador Allende, despite all the intrigues against it, had increased its electoral strength from 36 percent during the presidential elections in 1970 to 43 percent during the congressional elections in April 1973.

Imperialism would also prefer an outright rightist military dictatorship because it does not completely trust the PNC, the history of which in and out of Government is well known. They want a completely reliable ruling party — a party which regardless of its pronouncements, would so conduct its domestic and foreign affairs as would keep Guyana within the capitalist orbit and not change the world balance in favour of the socialist camp, especially in relation to Latin America with a majority of rightist military dictatorships.

A military "solution" can be realised over a long period as in Bolivia (1952-64) or in a short period through class or racial confrontation.

Pro-imperialist, pro-capitalist and anti-working class policies and measures like threatening workers with dismissal and using military and paramilitary forces as strike-breakers can precipitate clashes and lead to serious confrontation. That can then provide the rationalisation for a military coup. The reactionary section of the army can pose as the saviour of the nation.

In Argentina, for instance, after the death of Juan Peron, his wife Isabella Peron took over as President and moved to the right. In the ensuing fierce struggle between the left and the right inside and outside the Peronist movement, the army moved in to "save the nation" and set up a rightist dictatorship.

Confrontation in Uruguay, especially between the urban guerrillas led by the Tupamaros and the ruling oligarchy, gave the excuse to the military to seize power, to demolish one of the few bourgeois democracies in Latin America, and to impose a fascist dictatorship.

In Pakistan, the military held power in the period 1958-68, and recently seized power in the confrontation between the Bhutto and anti-Bhutto forces.

Apart from the danger facing the nation from imperialism and the reactionary petty-bourgeois section of the PNC leadership, there is also the danger from the reactionary petty-bourgeoisie outside of the PNC. These are the successors of the Justice Party, the Guyana United Muslim Party (GUMP), and the virtually defunct Guyana Council of Indian Organisations (GCIO). They propose either to form a new party or to resurrect one or more defunct parties. They cleverly exploit race and religion to oppose socialism and to serve their petty-bourgeois interests. They claim that under communism, there is no place for religion. They charge correctly the PNC regime with making Indians through racial discrimination into second-class citizens. But at the same time, they falsely accuse the PPP, through distortions of the meaning of "critical support" of joining with the PNC to destroy Indian race and culture. The claim by the PNC that it has established a socialist Government, and that its ideas are based on Marx, Engels and Lenin (Marxism-Leninism), in the face of lack of democracy, political and racial discrimination, national oppression and declining living standards, adds fuel to their anti-socialist and anti-communist propaganda. They call for partition, having been given a ready-made weapon through the discriminatory (political and racial) policies of the PNC regime.

But partition of Guyana is not the solution. It has not offered an answer to the problems of the people of India and Pakistan. In Guyana, it would lead to racial strife and provide the excuse for army intervention, and a reactionary rightist military dictatorship.

Our Party must carefully explain our position of "critical support", that it does not mean "sell-out" as is claimed by the rightist and ultra-leftist detractors of our Party. Critical support means unity and struggle. That we have struggled consistently and principally for the working people has been the reason for criticisms and attacks by the PNC.

In this regard, the experience in India is valuable. Because the Indira Gandhi Congress Government did not proceed far enough and fast enough on the road to socialism, and abused emergency powers, the people turned not only against the ruling party, but also against the Communist Party (CPI). In practice, the latter's policy of unity and struggle caused it to become indistinguishable from the Indian National Congress. Consequently, its votes were reduced from 4.73 percent in 1971 to 2.82 percent and in the Lok Sabha, from 23 seats to 7 seats. In the post-election analysis, it admitted:

It was a serious mistake for our Party not to have called for the lifting of the Emergency once its negative features had begun to come to the fore. A proper understanding was lacking that vast emergency powers could not be allowed to remain in the hands of the bourgeois state and its bureaucracy for a long time. There was the mistaken understanding that the Emergency could be used to bring about progressive shifts in the state power in a national democratic direction. The progressive potentiality of the national bourgeoisie and of its representatives in the Congress headed by Smt. Indira Gandhi was overestimated. It was insufficiently realised that the fight against the increasingly anti-people and anti-democratic aspects of internal policies of the Congress Government had to be given priority by our Party even while supporting its anti-imperialist foreign policy, as well as progressive internal measures. It was insufficiently realised that a progressive foreign policy cannot be eventually safeguarded and carried forward except on the basis of a corresponding internal base in terms of progressive and democratic home policies. Because of our wrong understanding, in our practical day-to-day work regarding struggle against anti-people aspects of Government policies, our Party underplayed this struggle in order to avoid confrontation with the Indira Gandhi Government.

The National Council is of the opinion that it was insufficient to have merely opposed the abuses of the Emergency when the Emergency itself had become the most important obstacle for the mobilisation and action of the masses and all democratic forces. Our Party under-estimated the sense of suffocation and fear that the continuation of the emergency was creating among the vast sections of our people.

In the mind of large sections of the masses our demarcation from the Congress became blurred. The independent image of our Party was eroded.

A serious error of our Party in this period was its failure to effectively implement a new grassroots style of work which would have brought us closer to the masses and enabled us to take our policies to them more concretely and effectively. The correct initiatives of the padayatra campaign were not followed up.

Our Party also failed to work out in time appropriate forms of mass movement and struggle.

This self-critical analysis by the CPI should be a sound lesson for the rightist-opportunist defectors who, unable creatively to translate theory into practice, launched an attack against the PPP.

WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

Dependence on foreign capital, attacks on the working people and a rigged referendum for postponement of the elections or a rigged election will neither bring the country out of the crisis nor avert the danger facing the nation of a military coup, a greater shift to the right, and denial as in Indonesia, Argentina and Uruguay of even the limited freedoms Guyanese now enjoy.

Our Party must now take new initiatives. In August 1975, we changed our political line from "non-cooperation and civil resistance" to "critical support". This was in keeping with a change in the policies of the government from pro-imperialist to anti-imperialist.

The correctness of the PPP line became clear in early 1976. When on the eve of the nationalisa-

tion of the Bookers empire — the group of companies in sugar, trading, insurance, printing and manufacturing -- a concerted campaign was launched against Guyana particularly in North America and Brazil. The Brazilian press wrote about disorder in Georgetown, that white and Amerindian people were being molested in the streets. The North American press carried tales of the presence of Cuban and Chinese troops in Guyana concentrated in the interior on the borders of Brazil and Venezuela.

The aim of this propaganda campaign was no doubt to influence the Government to abandon its announced plans for nationalising the Booker's monopoly or to get more favourable terms of compensation than the one dollar which was offered at the beginning of the talks.

Our Party's decision to take part in the May Day celebrations together with Prime Minister L.F.S. Burnham, and our decision to re-enter Parliament no doubt strengthened the resolve to go ahead with the nationalisation. At the same time, the ensuing unity of the working class frustrated the plans, if any, of the imperialists to attack the country.

Our initiatives led to formal talks between our Party and the PNC with the possibility of "critical support" leading to a political solution. At the very beginning we took the position that the talks should deal with the situation comprehensively. The PNC, however, had limited objectives. Because its approach was narrow, partisan and based on self-interest, its position was to proceed with issues step by step, one at a time.

The talks collapsed on December 3, 1976, without any agreement on questions like local government elections, People's Militia, National Service, discrimination and appointment of PPP representatives to the Public Service Commission and the Police Service Commission.

The occasion for the collapse was an ultimatum by the PNC leader that we must retract an editorial in the *Mirror*, November 28, captioned "Guns Instead of Bread". We had opposed the mini-budget in October 1976 which has since placed further burdens on the people — nearly \$15 million for military, paramilitary and security forces, cuts in the subsidy of poultry feed which had caused the price of chicken and eggs to rise. There were also suggestions of further cuts in subsidies.

Because of that, we went to the street corners in Georgetown with a programme of meetings calling on the people to oppose the cuts. By trying to force us to retract the editorial, the PNC was hoping to silence us, so that we would not oppose the cuts in subsidies in the 1977 budget. No doubt, our refusal to retract the statement and our public meetings forced the PNC not to remove all the subsidies.

What is now required is a political solution based on the creation of a National Patriotic Front and a National Patriotic Front Government, including all parties and groups which are progressive, anti-imperialist and wish to see Guyana take a socialist-oriented or non-capitalist path of development. Such a front should bring about a revolutionary alliance of the working class, the peasant farmers, the revolutionary intellectuals and the progressive businessmen and middle strata. It will exclude all reactionary, pro-imperialist, racialist parties or groups.

A national Government must be based on democracy — political, economic and social. At the political level, there should be full exercise of democratic freedoms and free and fair elections for the central, regional and district governments. At the economic level, there should be workers' control with the fullest involvement of the workers in management, and decision-making. At the social level, the people must have the right not only to form associations — trade union, cultural, religious, sports, etc. — but also to have due recognition and respect.

In keeping with the realities of Guyana, it is necessary to devise a system where "winner does not take all" and the two major parties and their allies are involved in the process of governing.

The Constitution should provide for an executive President, a Prime Minister and a National Assembly elected every five years. To ensure that elections are free and fair, new voters' lists should be compiled by house to house enumeration under the impartial supervision of representatives of the ruling and opposition parties; proxy, postal and overseas voting should be abolished; and ballots should be counted at the place of poll.

The President shall be elected by the people as in the United States and France or by the members of the National Assembly. He shall have the right to send messages and proposals to, and to address, the National Assembly, and to exercise the right of veto. The National Assembly will have the right to override the veto by a two-thirds majority vote, after which the measure would automatically become law.

The Prime Minister will be drawn from the party or parties which have majority support in the National Assembly. He will preside over a Cabinet or Council of Ministers drawn from each party (which is revolutionary and agrees to a socialist-oriented programme) in proportion to its strength in the National Assembly.

Whichever party wins the election should not oppose the candidature for the Presidency from the other major party.

At the local level, district councils should be directly elected and be based on small historically evolved, culturally-homogeneous communities. Regional Councils, indirectly elected through the district councils, should be given a substantial degree of autonomy.

The minimum programme of the revolutionary National Front Government should be based on the following:

1. State ownership of the commanding heights of the economy including the banks and insurance companies.
2. Central planning and planned proportional development of the economy with emphasis on industry and agriculture.
3. Expansion of the state and cooperative sectors.
4. A land reform aimed at ending rapacious landlordism.
5. Free medicine, free education, and adequate pensions.
6. Workers' control and meaningful involvement of the people in all aspects of socio-economic reconstruction.
7. Development of strong relations with the socialist world.
8. Firm measures to end corruption, nepotism, favouritism, black-marketing, racial and political discrimination.
9. Special facilities to all depressed groups, particularly the Amerindian, for development.
10. Salaries, allowances, etc., for Ministers, parliamentarians and public servants and others to be so fixed as to narrow the present wide gap between the highest-paid and the lowest paid; [and] one person to earn only one salary.
11. The creation of a democratically-run and people-managed national People's Militia with branches in every city block, village and settlement.
12. Imbuing the people with a revolutionary, scientific socialist (Marxist-Leninist) ideological consciousness.
13. Effective rent and price control.
14. Respect for, and observance of, the fundamental rights laid down in the Constitution.
15. Enactment of integrity legislation and a Commission with "watchdog" committees to probe corruption and theft of public property.

The PPP feels that its proposals for a solution to the political impasse which has bedevilled this nation for more than two decades is fair and reasonable. It is confident that all patriotic Guyanese will recognise that it offers a way out of the present crisis.

With a political solution and a policy based on genuine self-determination and national independence, Guyana with all the human and other available resources, can confidently look to the future with sympathy and support throughout the world, and more particularly the socialist world.

ADDENDUM

On Tuesday, August 9, 1977, the PPP called a press conference at which it put forward its call for a National Patriotic Front and a National Patriotic Front Government to the people of Guyana.

At the second Biennial Congress of the People's National Congress, held from August 12 to 20, the leadership launched an attack on the PPP and categorically rejected its proposal for the formation of a National Patriotic Front and Government.

The Leader of the PNC, L.F.S. Burnham, at this Congress, rejected the idea of a National Front Government describing "an understanding and coalition between leaders as superficially attractive". (Guyana Chronicle, 14 August 1977). He went on to state that as a vanguard party, it was the duty of the PNC, "to achieve unity in the socialist sense."

The New Nation, the organ of the PNC, in its September 4 issue, spells it out even more clearly:

The real purpose behind the so-called "line of critical support" was revealed when Jagan proposed a National Front Government. The (PNC) Party has no interest in this proposal. Discussions with Jagan at the inter-party meetings proved conclusively that "critical support" was a mere ruse, a policy to obtain a share of political power.

There existed no basis — and none still exists — upon which such a Government could be founded. For the (PNC) Party, the real issue is national unity.

This cannot be achieved by a mere power-sharing deal by political leaders. Jagan showed no interest in promoting national cohesion on a class basis.

It is significant that the PNC formed a coalition Government (1964-1968) with the reactionary United Force to serve capitalism and imperialism, but is unwilling to enter into a Patriotic Front Government with left and democratic forces to build a socialist Guyana and to serve the interests of the working people.

The PNC leader went on to say that "if the Bolsheviks had sought unity with the Mensheviks on coalition terms the history of the Soviet Union would have been differently written."

Firstly, it should be clearly understood that the PNC is not a vanguard party of the working class based on Marxism-Leninism; its "co-operative socialism" is not scientific socialism but utopian socialism. Secondly, it is almost a sacrilege to compare the bureaucratic and petty-bourgeois nationalist PNC with the Bolsheviks (communists) both ideologically and numerically. The Bolsheviks represented the majority and were revolutionaries; the Mensheviks represented the minority and were reactionaries. The PNC's position is not unlike that of the Mensheviks.

Earlier the Chairman of the PNC, referring to the break-up of the talks between the PPP and the PNC in December 1976, stated:

We made it clear in that release that we were at all times willing to work out a basis for co-operation but not to subvert the electoral process by handing over in this way to the PPP the task of governing the nation. From the talks it was clear that the PPP was more interested in sharing power, than in showing a genuine concern for national unity. (Guyana Chronicle, 25 July 1977).

It is indeed strange that the PNC which intensively rigged elections in 1968 and 1973 should talk about subverting the electoral process. No doubt it would like the world to believe that it really has the 71 percent support which it stole at the last general election.

In fact, the PNC constantly mouths the call for "national unity" in order to boost its own national and international image. But "national unity" cannot exist in a vacuum, i.e., abstractly; it has to be implemented by actions which will unite the people. National unity for the ruling party is only viewed in terms of its own narrow, petty-bourgeois and bureaucratic-bourgeois interests, not in terms of what is best for the entire people. One cannot, on the one hand, talk about national unity and spread it in big headlines in the newspapers and radio, and, on the other hand, rig the electoral process at all levels, pass detention laws and set workers from one sector and region against those of another sector and region. The majority of people in Guyana are aware that this type of "national unity" which the PNC calls for is nothing but a ruse.

Actually, it is precisely because the constitutional formula proposed by the PPP for a National

Front Government is based on a democratic foundation and free and fair elections that the minority PNC has rejected the proposal.

One thing that our proposal has clearly demonstrated to the people is who are the ones who are really concerned about solving the mounting social and economic crisis.

Despite the PNC's rejection, the PPP continues to call on the Guyanese people to fight for a political solution as the only way to solve the crisis and avert the danger facing the nation.

Their rejection is indicative that the right-wing within the PNC in this period is in full control of the Party. This right-wing represents the more privileged section of the ruling party which wants to maintain all the privileges that it now enjoys and fears any measure which may in any way reduce or remove them. It also wants the opportunities which will be provided by state-capitalist development in Guyana.

Although the PPP has been the one attacked as anti-national and anti-patriotic, the real nature of the right-wing of the PNC is anti-national. This section of the ruling class is not interested in the suffering masses who are enduring untold hardships under constantly deteriorating socio-economic conditions. The economic crisis in Guyana does not affect the bureaucratic elite immediately, but it certainly has wreaked havoc on the working people. This includes, as well as the majority of Guyanese people who do not support the ruling party, the PNC's own rank and file.

The PNC's decision to "go it alone" is totally unrealistic in view of its meagre support. This move on its part clearly illustrated its myopia and class allegiance. Despite a lot of rhetoric concerning "economic liberation through socialism", the theme of the PNC's Biennial Congress, the PNC Government is a minority Government, and without the democratic involvement of the people at all levels, it is doomed to failure.

The way out of the present impasse, according to the PNC, is to try to obtain more loans for survival from the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Inter-American Development Bank and Caribbean Development Bank. But this will only compound the problems later.

Already, the weak left in the PNC is being isolated and pushed to the right. Fred Wills, Minister of Foreign Affairs, in the August 29, 1977 Guyana Chronicle issue, pointed out:

Guyana accepts all kinds of investment. . . . it must be managed partnership. . . it was within that frame-work that questions of fears of nationalisation, or non-fears would be dealt with. . . the problem with private investment was that it was interested in production of goods and not in services or infrastructure. . . The need of Guyana today is for infrastructure.

This is somewhat analogous to the situation in 1972, after the Government had been forced to move from "meaningful participation" in bauxite to nationalisation of the Demerara Bauxite Company (DEMBA) due to constant political and ideological pressure from the PPP and other democratic forces. The then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Shridath Ramphal, referring to the nationalisation of DEMBA, is reported to have stated:

We have got to disabuse the investors mind about ALCAN. Enlightened businessmen should be more happy than fearful at what we are doing. . . What we want are relationships on an agreed partnership. This is what provides security for the investor.

The present "open door" shift to foreign capital partnership means the strengthening of the alliance between the foreign monopoly bourgeoisie and the reactionary bureaucratic-bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie of the PNC elitist leadership, while at the same time building state and bureaucratic capitalism.

Imperialism will use this shift profitably by exacting certain conditions — preventing further nationalisations (banks, insurance companies and other foreign-owned enterprises) in order to halt the anti-imperialist gains already achieved and to prevent Guyana taking a socialist road. In order to do so it will be necessary to control and subdue the working class.

The foundation for a "military" solution in Guyana is being advanced, particularly since the PNC Congress in August. In response to the growing unity of the working class, its allies and its

organisations, the reactionary section in the ruling party is rapidly moving in the direction to implement its past plans for the creation of an authoritarian one-party state — a one-party state in which the largest percentage of people would have no confidence in that ruling party.

At the Congress itself, recommendations were made which revealed intentions of the ruling party to subvert the interests of workers and their trade unions by the imposition of anti-labour methods and the establishment of another union in the sugar industry.

The extracts from the PNC Report are as follows:

That an industrial court be set up by Government to revise the Labour Laws governing industrial workers and that penalties be devised for dealing with industrial malpractices, particularly those perpetrated by trade unions. In this context a specific recommendation was made that government should authorise the formation of another union in the sugar industry as a means of allowing sugar workers the opportunity of benefiting from a trade union along socialist lines.

This is a threat not only to sugar workers, but to the whole trade union movement. It is contrary to the TUC's policy of unification and consolidation of the trade union movement.

Another series of recommendations called for the formation of a co-operative society to contract labour as a means of combating strikes, and for a regionalised structure of the sugar industry, no doubt to place it under the existing regional PNC structure.

The report stated:

That in relation to the sugar industry there is need: (a) for a regionalised structure of this industry so that the implementation of the Party's policies might be guaranteed; (b) for the formation by the Party's comrades of an Agricultural Workers Co-operatives Society which can contract labour as a means of combating the strike situation.

These recommendations by the PNC's Biennial Congress were made before GAWU called the present strike in the sugar industry and are an indication of the regressive shift taking place within the PNC and, therefore, the Government.

Between 1967 and 1970, an attempt was made to impose compulsory arbitration legislation with an anti-strike feature. However, the vehement opposition of the PPP and the TUC forced them to withdraw.

In early 1975, during the strike called by the GAWU, the Government hurriedly passed in Parliament, without consulting the TUC, a compulsory arbitration law.

The TUC Secretary, J.H. Pollydore, in a letter to the Minister of Labour on March 17, 1975, criticising the government for its action on this question, stated:

The TUC has not up to now received a copy of the draft legislation which the Government intends to introduce in Parliament today.

According to information received today from the Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Fielden Singh, and later confirmed by a news item on the radio, the legislation would be taken through all its stages in Parliament today.

There has been no consultation with the TUC on the provisions of the proposed legislation. This is certainly a departure from the understanding reached with the previous Government as one of the conditions to end the 80 days' strike — an understanding which the present Government's decision has endorsed, that the TUC and CAGI would be consulted on all legislation to be enacted which affects the interests of those represented by TUC and CAGI.

May I remind you that legislation in connection with the Industrial Stabilisation Act similarly rushed through Parliament in Trinidad a few years ago did not help substantially to improve the industrial relations situation in that country.

While the TUC like the Government is greatly concerned over the strike situation in the sugar industry and possible serious economic consequences, the TUC nevertheless considers it important to state its

disappointment over the fact that the present Government should decide to proceed with legislation carrying such far-reaching implications without adequate consultation with the TUC, the body recognised by Government as being representative of the workers in Guyana.

Having regards to the foregoing, it has been considered necessary to request the Government to give consideration to the postponement of final legislative action on the bill to allow for adequate consultation with the TUC on the detailed provisions of the bill.

Despite this letter from the General Secretary of the TUC, there was no postponement. To the critics the Government pointed out that the compulsory arbitration law did not prevent the right to strike.

Now, as proposed by the PNC Congress, the Government will no doubt move to establish compulsory arbitration without the right to strike, if not de jure then de facto, by declaring any strike political and recruiting civil servants, military and paramilitary forces as strike-breakers. This is why the majority of the Guyanese people who have no association with the PNC expressed grave concern when at the PNC Congress the head of the Guyana Defence Force pledged support to the "paramount party."

The army and the security forces are public servants in the pay of the Government and are expected, of course, to work according to the policies and directions of the Government. But this should never be construed to mean that it must give allegiance to a party, particularly a party which has not gained office by fair and honest means.

Guyanese were not happy over announcements earlier last year that there would be PNC groups within the army. It is entirely wrong for the Guyana Defence Force to become an army of the ruling party. It means then that only PNC members or persons willing to join the PNC can become a soldier in the GDF. It reduces the GDF from a national army to a partisan army, something that is totally unacceptable to the majority of Guyanese and harmful to the nation.

The army is guilty of being used as an instrument for the present [ruling] party to remain in Government. Without the army intervention in the 1973 general elections, it is certain that, despite the wide-scale rigging, it could not have given itself the number of votes needed to get into power.

Gradually, Guyana is moving forward to becoming a police state. If the security forces pledge allegiance to the minority PNC, then it will become an instrument for division and oppression rather than a force to create unity and protect the sovereignty and national independence of Guyana.

On Tuesday, August 23, a strike in the sugar belt was called by the Guyana Agricultural and General Workers' Union in relation to the denial of profit-sharing to the workers. Within a week following the strike call, a meeting of the National Assembly was hastily summoned.

The indecent haste with which the Government brought two repressive bills before the National Assembly on September 1, 1977, suspended the standing rules, and rushed them through all stages, is cause for alarm.

Although the Government claimed that the Summary Jurisdiction (Appeals) (Amendment) Bill was for the purpose of preventing hardened criminals from abusing the use of the right of appeal to stay out of prison, it is quite clear that an entirely different motive was intended. The very fact that this bill was rushed through parliament with such haste that it abused the rights of opposition members to have time for consideration and ample examination gives the clue to the reason why the camouflaged bill was introduced and passed by the PNC's majority earned through the confiscation of the ballot boxes by the army in 1973.

The two bills, now the law of the land, give the Government the right to abrogate the basic rights of the people enshrined in both the Constitution of Guyana and the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.

The purpose of reactivating Part II of the National Security Act, which gives the Government the right to detain without trial, restrict the movements of citizens and institute curfews, is mainly for the purpose of intimidation. Whether this will be used in the present strike is uncertain. It is more likely that the ruling party, in order to avoid criticism both locally and internationally, may not wish to use the powers under this Act to arbitrarily detain trade union and political activists and

leaders.

The other bill, much more sinister in character, will be used to cover up repressive acts against striking workers and their leaders, by giving the window dressing of legality. By preventing persons sentenced to imprisonment from being free after an appeal is lodged, many will be picked

up and given crude "cowboy justice" in the lower courts. Although there are provisions for bail, it would be unrealistic to expect that this would be given under the circumstances of wholesale arrests, in efforts to break the strike.

There has been widespread police harassment. More than 100 activists of GAWU have been arrested on flimsy excuses. Most have been charged for intimidation.

One striker, Lokie Narine, was charged for "public terror". After five weeks in prison, he was put on bail for \$10,000. In many cases bail has been excessive, from \$5,000 to \$12,000 for simple offences. In West Berbice, Mansaran Persaud and S. Sakichand were arrested and each placed on bail of \$1,000 (cash) or \$2,000 (transport); they were held for 36 hours, and asked to report once every week to the police station even though no charges have been laid.

In West Demerara, one cane-scale representative, Goolgar, was arrested four times. A GAWU Field Secretary, Jeewan Persaud, was arrested, held for 24 hours, released and re-arrested as he set foot on the road after release.

A GAWU motor car was impounded in New Amsterdam on three occasions within six weeks, two times for "fitness", and the third on October 13, for suspicion of having stolen parts when the police was aware that it was being used by the Honorary President of GAWU and Leader of the Opposition.

Two workers on strike, Amernauth and S. Prem of Blairmont, on charge of intimidation, were granted bail at \$5,000 (each) or \$10,000 (transport) on the condition that they give a verbal assurance that they would return to work.

A van-load of food for West Demerara was seized by the police. Three separate quantities of foodstuffs for workers on strike were also seized in New Amsterdam and East Berbice as well as 39 bags of rice at Enmore.

If one is to judge the chinking of the PNC by its scurrilous pamphlets now being circulated, it is clear that it is trying to accuse GAWU and the PPP with arson at the Burma Rice Hill, Guyana Timbers and Guyana Rice Board, as well as for the burning of sugar cane fields. These preposterous allegations evidently form the basis of the punitive action it has in mind.

The two repressive Acts passed by the false PNC majority in the National Assembly constitute the lowest level yet reached by the ruling party in its assaults on the rights of the people.

Daily the objectives of the PNC are being exposed. These are to:

- (a) integrate the party and Government as inseparable;
- (b) integrate the party with the armed forces and police;
- (c) create PNC-controlled unions;
- (d) make strikes virtually illegal.

To maintain the privileges of the civil and military bureaucratic elite, (exorbitant salaries and allowances and other prerequisites), the semi-military state has become an instrument for working class exploitation, and what is more, ethnic expropriation and national oppression.

For the attainment of this objective, the PNC regime must emasculate the trade union movement and muzzle the working class. Consequently, it has embarked on a policy of controlling the trade union movement by rigging trade union elections, and/or ousting the recognised trade unions.

The PNC used underhand methods in the mine workers' elections. The Guyana Labour Union (GLU) which generally supports the PNC, undermined and displaced NUPSE No. 2 at the Georgetown municipality. (A poll was quickly arranged then, but when GAWU is challenging the GLU at Sterling Products, the Ministry of Labour, Health and Housing is dragging its feet although the TUC had sanctioned the poll since January 1977).

Now the regime is hoping to use the 6,132 permanent scabs which it has recruited during the sugar strike as the nucleus for the creation of a PNC-controlled union to displace the GAWU.

With the PNC-controlled unions and the resort to the "agency shop", a trade union "aristocracy" will develop paralleling those at the political and bureaucratic levels. Such a "labour aristocracy" will muzzle the workers, and if by chance the workers strike, the military and paramilitary forces, public servants and other Government employees will be mobilised as strike-breakers.

In the case of the sugar strike, it was expedient for the Government to declare that it was political so as to embark on total counter-mobilisation. But it must not be forgotten that in the December 1976 strike at the Guyana Bauxite Company, threats of dismissal were made, armed police and soldiers were mobilised, and 40 of the strike leaders were tear-gassed after they had been arrested and locked up in a small prison cell.

And in the strikes in 1977 in the Georgetown Municipality, called not officially by the GLU, but by the City Council workers themselves, the Guyana Defence Force and the People's Militia were used as strike-breakers (in the first strike which elicited a condemnation by TUC General Secretary, Joseph Pollydore) and notices of dismissal were served (during the second strike).

It can be clearly seen that, although the PNC took an anti-imperialist shift in 1975-76, it is again changing direction and reverting to its former pro-imperialist position and anti-labour methods. It is not concerned with unity; it is concerned with power. It talks about being the "vanguard" party and about its aims of building socialism. But socialism cannot be built without genuine democracy. Lenin said that there can be no victorious socialism that does not practise full democracy.

We cannot say that we are very surprised by this shift on the part of the PNC as the nature of nationalist parties is one of vacillation and opportunism.

Recent events attest to the correctness of the conclusions drawn by our Party leadership and its membership. The only solution to the grave social and economic crisis, other than that sought by the imperialists, which can come to terms with the situation, avert the danger facing our country and its people, advance the struggle of the working class and all democratic-minded people and maintain Guyana's sovereignty is that of a National Patriotic Front and National Patriotic Front Government.

The PPP calls on all loyal Guyanese to work for anti-imperialist unity and a National Patriotic Front Government with a socialist-oriented policy.

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The Twentieth Congress

Report of the Central Committee to the 20th Congress, by Dr.
Cheddi Jagan, General Secretary of the PPP — Annandale,
East Coast Demerara, 4-6 August 1979

Dear Comrades,

We are meeting at a time of profound change. Events since our last congress have confirmed the view that the balance of power is with the forces of peace, democracy and socialism.

The cause for the forward march of peoples and nations toward socialism is the increasing awareness engendered by the spectacular economic and social progress of the socialist countries headed by the Soviet Union; the increasing and more successful class battles manifesting and exposing the contradictions of capitalism and its inherent incapacity to satisfy the needs of the broad masses of people; the successful onslaught of the national liberation movement against imperialism; the rejection of war as a political instrument of imperialism; and the worldwide, resounding demand for peace which has created favourable conditions for socialist concepts and socialist construction.

The Great October Socialist Revolution in 1917, the most important historical event, placed socialism on the world's political agenda. Its demonstrable success and the extension of socialism into a world system after World War II are exercising the decisive influence in the struggles of the exploited and oppressed. The socialist countries have demonstrated their complete superiority over capitalism in satisfying the needs of the broad masses and in firing their imagination; they have created new generations whose sense of brotherhood, patriotism and internationalism are impossible to realise under any other system.

In the Soviet Union where communist foundations are being laid, the Soviet people, party and state are realising the vision of the great genius Vladimir Lenin. There is no unemployment; education and medical services are free and highly advanced; prices are stable and incomes are increasing; inflation, stagflation and zero growth are unknown; there is security for the aged; wide vistas of opportunity for the youth; and cultural development is second to none.

The magnificent achievements of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries, in spite of brutal imperialist and fascist intervention, are the most eloquent expression of socialism's superiority to capitalism.

World peace is seen by the socialist states and communists everywhere as indispensable to victory of national liberation and the successful construction of socialism and communism. The decades of tension and threats of war fostered by imperialism during the "Cold War" did not deter the fighters for peace, and the peaceful aspirations of mankind gradually overshadowed the clouds of war.

Today, the official "Cold War" policies have been defeated, by the growing strength and influence of the Soviet Union and other socialist states and the broadening movement for peace. The eventual signing of the SALT II agreement is another great victory. However, influential reactionary forces in the capitalist world and China with powerful support from the military-industrial complex are actively trying to sabotage the aims of detente and peaceful co-existence.

Nevertheless, the forces for peace have broad worldwide support and can block attempts further to endanger mankind by the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The Soviet Union has the capacity to produce the neutron bomb but refrained from doing so. The US proposed not only to produce this heinous weapon but to deploy it in Western Europe. This devilish plan was stalled by the combined might of hundreds of millions of voices for peace.

Despite this, a formidable task awaits progressive and peace-loving mankind. The proposals of the Soviet Union for the disbandment of NATO and the Warsaw Pact remain to be acted upon. Disarmament must become a realisable goal. The armoury of imperialism with its hollow and disingenuous human rights campaign against the socialist countries and its anti-communism must be defused and destroyed. Its overt military intervention through its client states and covert intervention by its intelligence agencies and mercenaries to prop up dictatorships and destroy progressive governments must cease. Our united voices must resound still further against the crumbling wall of imperialist intransigence.

Capitalism cannot exist without war and the creation and maintenance of areas of tension in the world. In an era of ever increasing contradictions, crises are expected to multiply.

A decisive factor in ensuring further victories for world peace and social progress is the unity and consolidation of the three revolutionary streams; namely, the socialist countries with the Soviet Union in the forefront, the national liberation movement and the working class and democratic movements in the capitalist countries, whose relationships must be based on the tried and tested principle of proletarian internationalism.

The success and influence of the national liberation movements, which are a direct result of the growing influence of the socialist countries, mean that newly-independent countries, and even some which are not independent, are not willing to permit the continuation of the relationship of dependency. And in the industrialised countries, communists, socialists and other progressive forces reject the continuation of the plunder of the developing countries while waging increasingly intense class battles exposing the contradictions of capitalism. These developments reflect the intensity of the political and ideological struggles which have resulted from a sharpening of the class struggles on a world scale.

In contrast to the economic and political stability of the socialist countries, financial, monetary and economic crises are the order of the day in most of the major capitalist countries, which have a disastrous effect on dependent capitalist countries. Inflation, stagflation and recession follow each other without respite, and the burden of each crisis is placed on the working people. The result is staggering unemployment and increasing social upheaval which show no signs of abating.

The crisis which grips imperialism results not only from its economic decline but also from its political decline. Both are closely bound up. The political crisis is reflected in the momentous events which have occurred in the third world.

In the Caribbean area, the long and arduous struggles of the peoples against colonialism have largely been won even though pockets of colonialism still exist. The struggle for genuine political and economic independence from the shackles of neo-colonialism and imperialism has sharpened. We are proud to claim that our Party has fully discharged its duties since 1950 in the struggle against colonialism and that we continue to play the role which history and our circumstances dictate in the struggle against neo-colonialism and imperialism.

The Caribbean area has not remained insulated from the world revolutionary process and is today moving away from the direction charted by imperialism. The leaders chosen by the British to maintain the former colonies as appendages of imperialism have gone or are on their way out. The ideas of anti-imperialism, non-alignment, economic independence and socialism have taken root and are motivating the Caribbean people.

The brutal and reactionary Gairy regime in Grenada has been overthrown. Eric Gairy had close relations with the Mafia and with Pinochet's regime in Chile, trampled upon the rights of the people of Grenada and the opposition New Jewel Movement by using his MongOOSE Squad to terrorise and murder. He finalised plans for the physical elimination of his opponents before leaving for the US. Fortunately, at that stage the revolutionary forces led by Maurice Bishop

seized power. We hail the victory of our Grenadian brothers and extend to them once more our wholehearted solidarity.

In Dominica, the government of "Little Caesar" Patrick John was forced to resign after a general strike lasting for more than three weeks. The cause of the strike was the government's link with South Africa, the passing in Parliament of two repressive pieces of legislation making it illegal for certain sections of workers to strike and circumscribing the press, which were the last in a series of anti-working class measures over many years. During the strike, the John regime brutally shot down and tear-gassed workers and children. The outcome was, first, the resignation of all of John's ministers and finally of John himself, thus laying the foundation for a democratic broad-based government.

The government of St. Lucia was also swept away in the general elections held recently. The Compton regime was reactionary and viciously anti-communist. It made a giveaway deal with the transnational monopoly, Emerada Hess, and was transforming St. Lucia into an imperialist economic base in the LDC's (less developed countries) of Caricom.

The experiences of Grenada, Dominica and St. Lucia are a clear warning to the ruling classes of the Caribbean that the day of dictatorships is over. No longer will the people of this region tolerate unending burdens placed upon them by unrepresentative regimes tied to foreign capital and unsavoury foreign elements such as the Mafia, gunrunners, Jim Jones and the People's Temple, Rabbi Washington and the House of Israel. Our oppressors in Guyana should take note of these events, which will certainly inspire our own people to redouble their efforts for the establishment of a genuine people's revolutionary government.

In Jamaica, the left and progressive forces are playing an important role to defend the democratic and progressive steps of the Manley government, which has moved Jamaica away from its previous position as a servile tool of imperialism to one of non-alignment and support for national liberation movements. To our comrades in Jamaica, we extend our solidarity.

The Cuban revolution has withstood the whole gamut of imperialist subversion and intervention. It is an inspiration to all who are fighting against oppression and exploitation. Today, socialist Cuba is a bastion of peace, democracy and progress in an area ridden with crises. We must defend the Cuban Revolution as a principled duty, and as a prerequisite for the attainment of our freedom and the freedom of all peoples fighting against imperialism.

Latin America, with its intense contradictions, reflects imperialist domination in its most naked form. Political repression of not only communists and progressives but also of bourgeois liberals takes place in the most heinous and repulsive manner. It has the worst record for violations of human rights.

At the beginning of this decade, important gains were made in Latin America. But, unfortunately, there have been some setbacks. In Panama, however, the US ruling class was forced to recognise the right of the Panamanian people to their territory. And despite the existence of military dictatorships in Chile, Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, Paraguay, Guatemala and El Salvador, to name a few, valiant struggles are continuing in Latin America. This was demonstrated by the recent magnificent victory of the Sandinista liberation forces in Nicaragua with broad support among the population. US imperialism suffered a major defeat. When challenging the rule of the bloodthirsty murderer, Anastasio Somoza, the US administration proposed the intervention of an OAS "peace force" to prevent a Sandinista military victory and to install Somoza without Somoza and a regime favourable to foreign capital. This was categorically rejected by the Sandinista representative at the OAS meeting. And for the first time, the OAS, pressured by Panama, Costa Rica and the Andean Pact countries, did not play its traditional role as a tool of US imperialism.

Today, the people of Nicaragua, inspired by their immortal hero, Sandino, are free and independent. We rejoice with them. We wish them well in their monumental task of reconstruction.

Communists are in the frontline in the struggle in Latin America, and wherever possible are attempting to build united fronts in the struggles against the dictatorships. They are subjected to the most frightful tortures and repression. Trade unionists, democrats and liberals also do

not escape assassination, imprisonment and torture. We demand the release of all patriots from imprisonment and the end of political repression. We hail the courage and support the struggles of all fighters for democracy in Latin America.

In Africa, many significant victories against imperialism have been scored. While the patriotic forces in Zimbabwe have not taken power, they have achieved successful expansion of the guerrilla war and a gradual weakening of the racist Smith regime. The farcical plot that the racists hatched with tacit approval and encouragement of the West to implement a new constitution, which enables the whites to retain effective powers indefinitely while replacing the white face of Ian Smith with the black face of Muzorewa, has backfired. The very nature of the charade and imperialism's other substantial interests in other African countries, which oppose racism, have forced the West to maintain sanctions and to withhold official recognition of their puppet regime. Meanwhile, the patriotic forces grow from strength to strength with the active assistance of the socialist countries.

In South Africa, the profound contradictions of the apartheid system continue to intensify and this system of super-exploitation is bound to crumble. The spirit of Soweto cannot be destroyed, and daily more and more South Africans are joining the struggle led by the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party. A victory of the patriotic forces in Zimbabwe led by the Patriotic Front and a victory by the SWAPO forces in Namibia will hasten the liberation of South Africa. So too will the strengthening of the frontline states against which barbaric crimes of aggression are being committed.

We demand the release of all political prisoners in South Africa and the end of police murder of African prisoners. And we extend our full solidarity to the forces in Southern Africa struggling for freedom.

The system of apartheid in South Africa, racism in Zimbabwe and exploitation of other African countries cannot exist without the support and active connivance of imperialism, which is content, for the moment merely to provide arms and financial backing. However, when the situation threatens imperialist interests, the iron fists are bared of their silken gloves. This was clearly demonstrated in Zaire where imperialism intervened openly to prop up the dictatorial regime of Mobutu. Despite imperialism's defeat in many parts of the world, it remains poised to intervene either directly or through its surrogates to maintain political control and economic exploitation.

Recently, the Carter administration announced the formation of a well-equipped task force to move rapidly to any part of the world to protect US interests.

We note the double standards in relation to the overthrow of the insanely murderous Pol Pot and Amin regimes. Vietnam rendered fraternal solidarity to Kampuchea as did Tanzania to Uganda. US imperialism reacted with frenzy towards Vietnam, refuses to recognise the new Kampuchean government and implicitly supported China's invasion of Vietnam. On the other hand, it rightly welcomed the overthrow of the Ugandan regime with the active participation of Tanzanian troops. The simple reason is that it seeks to place as many hurdles and burdens on countries following the socialist path while it welcomes those governments, however installed, which it hopes or expects will allow their countries to be exploited by the multinational corporations.

The renewed attention of the Carter administration to Africa with the chief spokesman on African affairs being the black UN representative, Andrew Young, was not prompted by considerations for the well-being of Africans but by the fear of the spreading wildfire of socialism. The collapse of the Portuguese empire, the routing of the South African army in Angola with generous and selfless fraternal assistance from Cuba, the victory of the Ethiopia revolution over the imperialist-inspired invasion by Somalia, and the increasingly independent position of many African countries pose a threat to the positions of imperialism which can no longer avoid the burning issues facing African countries, especially that of racism. We hail the struggles of the Patriotic Front, the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party, the South West African People's Organisation, and we are confident that racism and imperialist domination will be defeated in Africa.

The political situation in Asia gives cause for grave alarm. The People's Republic of China is objectively on the side of imperialism. The leaders of China generously give material aid and support to imperialism in many areas of the world. They advocate the strengthening of NATO and support the most aggressive cold war positions in Europe. They oppose the withdrawal of US troops from South Korea. They give aid to reactionaries with South African connections fighting against progressive countries in Africa. They support the most barbaric fascist dictatorships in Latin America, such as Pinochet's Chile. Above all, along with NATO, USA and Japan, they form a new alignment of forces hostile to the Soviet Union, the other socialist countries and all progressive mankind. In return for economic, financial and military assistance, the leaders of China have bartered the welfare of the Chinese people and socialism and are the most vociferous exponents of war with the Soviet Union. All the while imperialism looks on with tacit support at China's hegemonistic designs in Asia.

The invasion of Vietnam by China cannot but arouse the conscience of mankind against the perpetrators of this criminal threat to world peace. After decades of struggle for their independence, the Vietnamese people, who have made such an outstanding contribution to the world revolutionary process with the blood of millions of their sons and daughters, have peacefully embarked upon the massive task of reconstruction, only to be harassed and provoked by Pol Pot's Kampuchea at the instigation of China. The overthrow of the Kampuchean regime was a severe blow to China's designs of domination in Asia, and her leaders thus embarked on a campaign to "punish" Vietnam. The leaders of China will not succeed against either Vietnam or the Soviet Union. Their efforts to create tension and war will fail. And so will their efforts to stem the revolutionary tide to socialism.

We express our unswerving support to Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea. With their national determination, already amply demonstrated, and with full international solidarity, we are confident that they will overcome all the odds against them.

The situation in the Middle East remains one of tension and conflict. The aggressive designs of Israel have now been further strengthened by the peace agreement between Egypt and Israel under which Palestinian rights have been sold out and which virtually guarantees Israeli autonomy over Gaza and the West Bank. The core of the conflict — the just grievances of the Palestinian people who have been deprived of their homeland by Israel — remains unresolved. The Israelis feel that the agreement has given them a free hand further to decimate the Palestinian people. Their increased attacks on Lebanon and the continuation of settlements on Arab lands seized during the Six-Day War clearly demonstrate that they have no intention of relinquishing the lands they have stolen from the Palestinians.

The problems of the Middle East lie essentially in the efforts of imperialism to stem the democratic and progressive advance of the Arab peoples. The greed of Israel for Arab lands and the strategic and economic importance of the Middle East are further complicating factors.

A permanent solution to the Middle East crisis can only be found in the return of all Arab lands presently occupied by Israel and a solution to the Palestinian question.

The fall of the Shah of Iran, another murdering butcher, has sent shock waves throughout the West. After the slaughter of tens of thousands of Iranians, about which the West remained silent, and many years of savage repression, the people of Iran rose up in a democratic revolution, overthrew the Shah and are in the process of establishing a democratic and progressive state.

The victory of the progressive movement in Afghanistan has been a severe blow to imperialism. It is no surprise therefore that imperialism is actively pursuing the destruction of the Afghani revolution, both directly and through hostile activities by Pakistan. We declare our solidarity with our Afghani comrades.

The Polisario Front has scored significant successes in their campaign. We expect to see within a short while the complete liberation of the Western Sahara.

The Non-Aligned Movement has grown from strength to strength, despite imperialism's struggle against its development and continuing efforts to divide it. The struggle against racism, colonialism and imperialism would not have developed to the pitch it has today without

the existence of this movement. We must fight to strengthen it. Efforts have been made to expel revolutionary Cuba and to prevent the holding of the Summit Meeting in Havana. Fortunately, these have failed. We must continue to be vigilant.

The developments which have occurred in the world political situation over the past few years have demonstrated that we, the communists, are moving with the tide of history. Our ideas are inspiring millions of people in a just struggle for economic and social advancement and for freedom from all forms of exploitation. We have absolutely no doubt that whatever the setbacks, whatever the price, the mighty forces for progress will eventually prevail.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CRISIS

The PNC regime has brought the country to a state of severe and mounting economic, financial, social and political crisis, and a position of near bankruptcy.

The crisis was first manifested in early 1974. But the economy was saved from collapse by the fortuitous increase in the world price of sugar in the period from mid-1974 to mid-1976. In 1973, Guyana exported sugar at an average price of \$337 per ton, whereas in 1974-78, the price varied from \$942 to \$1,452. Beginning in 1977, the country faced its worst ever crisis — budget and balance of payments deficits; shortage of foreign exchange; cuts in imports; cuts in development expenditure; removal of subsidies; steep taxation; redeployment and dismissal of workers.

The deficit on current account of Guyana's balance of payments rose from less than 4 percent of the Gross National Product (GNP) in 1975 to 34 percent in 1976 and 24 percent in 1977. International reserves of G\$197.7 million at the end of 1975 had dropped in 1976 and 1977 to minus \$25.2 million and minus G\$99.8 million respectively. At the end of 1977, the gross official reserves of the Central Bank of Guyana were reduced to a level equivalent to less than one month of imports, and net international reserves became strongly negative.

Despite a significant tightening of restrictions on imports of goods and services and substantial recourse to foreign borrowing, Guyana incurred a sizeable amount of commercial arrears to finance the balance of payments deficits of 1976 and 1977.

The balance of payments crisis is due not only to falling or stagnant prices of exports and inflated prices of imports, but also to financial mismanagement, remittances overseas of huge debt and compensation payments, profits and depreciation allowances, and stagnation or fall in production and exports.

The foreign debt payments on the nationalised industries exceed the current surpluses earned by these industries.

The foreign banks still take a large portion of their profits out of the country. In the 1978 Barclays Bank International Limited Report, it is stated: "Apart from having some 3,000 of its branches in England and Wales, the Bank's most obvious strengths lay in those areas which historically had been Britain's centres of influence."

Our foreign reserves were squandered. The Minister of Finance, in his 1976 budget speech declared that "after two successive years of reserves accumulation, 1976 would see substantial use being made of these reserves to finance the capital imports that are implicit in the large development programme being proposed for 1976."

The sum of \$60 million was expended on the Mazaruni highway leading to the proposed hydro-electric smelter project for which no financing had been arranged and which is not included in the 1978-81 development plan.

The overall budget deficit of the Central Government in 1977 was \$190 million out of a projected current and capital expenditure of G\$565 million (a sharp reduction from the \$795 million in 1976), and \$93 million in 1978, The deficit on current budget for 1979 will be \$186 million. It is no exaggeration to say that these balance of payments and budget deficits will continue over the four years of the new development plan (1978-81).

The budget deficit is largely due to a burgeoning PNC political and bureaucratic apparatus and to rapidly increasing debt and compensation payments.

The PPP government had 10 ministers and 3 parliamentary secretaries; the PNC has 26 ministers and 5 parliamentary secretaries. Thus, 1979's budget allocation is \$186 million for personal emoluments as compared with only \$27 million in 1964. Debt payments take \$234 million. Together, these two heads, excluding social services, were allocated \$420 million; in other words, \$19 million more than the current revenue of \$401 million, which is being collected through the "tears, sweat and blood" of the working people.

Expansion of the bureaucracy is coupled with extravagant and elitist standards and no effective steps have been taken to curb nepotism, favouritism and corruption. Since 1971, when to the Ombudsman, charges of corruption had been brought against two ministers, the Prime Minister had said that he had in draft a Bill against corruption. But up to now, no "integrity legislation" had been enacted as in Jamaica and Trinidad. In December 1974, he announced a "Code of Conduct" for PNC leaders. Reports were to have been submitted to him by April 1975 and published. Although the date for submission was changed on several occasions, nothing has materialised. On May 21, 1978, when asked about the reports, he said he had received them, but "I have no particular intention of publishing them. . . I am satisfied that everyone is in order". Consequently, there is widespread disillusionment. People are not inspired and cannot be mobilised to greater effort.

Stagnation or decline in production has been a long-term phenomenon. Long before the "oil crisis" of 1974, the economy was already showing signs of stagnation. As early as 1971, Dr. Wilfred David, the then Economic Adviser of the government, commenting on the prematurely-collapsed first Development Plan (1966-72), stated that "we have had growth without development. The problem has been exemplified by a high level of unemployment and foreign dependency."

The 1977 World Bank Atlas on population, per capita product and growth rates listed Guyana GNP per capital (real) at 1.5 percent for the 1960-75 period, and a mere 1.1 percent during 1970-75.

The Bank of Guyana Report disclosed that the GNP figures at market prices showed a growth rate of minus 7.2 percent in 1976 and minus 0.4 percent in 1977. In real terms, when consideration is taken of inflation and population increase, the growth was considerably more negative.

Rice production increased under the PNC government by 0.6 percent, as compared with 74 percent under the PPP government, for corresponding 7-year periods (1958/9-1964/5 and 1968/9-1974/5).

Sugar production increased by 6 percent under the IPNC government as compared with 44 percent under the PPP government for the same corresponding 7-year periods. The increase of 6 percent is reduced to only 2 percent of the average annual production if the 13-year (1965-77) period of the PNC is considered.

The second "Feed, Clothe and House the Nation" development plan (1972-76) was an abysmal failure. Economic and social targets were not achieved.

Mining and quarrying recorded no growth in physical output. In the bauxite industry, there has been a downward trend in production as follows:

Year	Dried Bauxite	Calcined Bauxite	Alumina
1975	1,400,000 tons	778,000 tons	313,000 tons
1976	1,100,000 tons	741,000 tons	274,000 tons
1977	780,000 tons	737,000 tons	305,000 tons

Output on the manufacturing and processing sector was only 1.2 times the 1971 level, as compared with the projected increase of 1.4 times.

Production in the agricultural sector as a whole (crops and livestock) was far short of the projected growth rate of 8.5 percent per annum. Performance in sugar and rice, which constitute 70 percent of the output of this sector, was disappointing. Sugar production averaged 311,000 tons during the D-Plan period (1972-76); the highest output was 340,000 tons. Thus,

it failed to reach the 369,000 tons of 1971 or the projected 490,000 tons target for 1976. Crops other than sugar and rice increased 1.25 times the 1971 level instead of the 1.51 times forecast for the plan. For the forestry sector, output was projected to double. But an annual growth rate of only 3 percent was achieved, and output increased by 1.2 times the 1971 level.

The new (1978-81) Development Plan projects real economic growth rates of 4-5 percent in 1978-79 and 5 percent or more in 1980-81. But the Minister of Economic Development in his budget statement for 1979 admitted that "far from achieving the 5 percent growth, there was absolutely no real growth in the economy in 1978." Actually, the real growth was minus 1 percent.

Apart from stagnation or decline in production or productivity, the economy, as in colonial times, is still based on three primary commodities — bauxite, sugar and rice — which account for about 85 percent of the value of all exports. And our external trade has not been diversified. Only a negligible amount of trade is with the socialist countries, where prices are more stable and goods are generally cheaper. In 1977, imports from these countries were only G\$9.6 million out of a total of G\$804.3 million. Imports from Caricom countries were G\$206.4 million in 1977, as compared with only G\$29.4 million in 1968. Exports to the CMEA socialist states were only G\$4 million out of a total of G\$652.5 million.

To extricate itself from the economic morass the PNC regime made a deal with imperialism. On June 12, 1978, it signed a secret stand-by agreement with the IMF which has a broad identity of views with the World Bank and the USAID and promotes US objectives — non-discrimination against US exports, removal of restrictions on trade, control of inflation, and stable exchange rates. In conditions of crisis as in Guyana, it takes a technical approach to balance of payments problems and generally proposes a so-called stabilisation programme including deflation (anti-inflation measures), devaluation, increased inflow of foreign capital, and cuts in public expenditure especially for social services.

This Agreement for a \$43 million credit, which was to have expired on August 14, 1979, has been prolonged by an "Extended Arrangement" for a further credit of \$206.4 million.

Under the new "Extended Arrangement", IMF dictated targets are:

1. that the economy grows in real terms by a minimum of 4.5 percent;
2. that the current gap of balance of payments should not exceed 10 percent of the Gross National Product;
3. that the surplus generated in the state sector be increased from 6 percent in 1978 to 8 percent of the Gross National Product in 1979;
4. that the external payments arrears be reduced from the level of \$57 million at the end of 1978 to \$20 million on June 26, 1980;
5. that the gross foreign assets of the Bank of Guyana be increased from \$150 million at the beginning of 1978 to \$200 million at the beginning of the year.

To cope with the situation, Guyana is borrowing more and more from external sources, thus going deeper and deeper into the "debt trap", putting more burdens on the people and making further concessions to imperialism.

The government is boasting that the stiff IMF terms under the first Standby Arrangement have been met. What is to be noted is that this was done through fiscal measures, including high taxes, wage freeze, credit squeeze and arbitrary increases for services by the state corporations. In the key area of production, while the IMF condition that the economy should grow in real terms by 5 percent over 1977 was met, the fact is that there is still stagnation in the key area of production. In 1978, real economic growth was minus 1 percent compared with minus 6.2 percent in 1977, and output of the state sector in 1978 was 5 percent below that of 1976.

In February 1979, the government announced under the "New Investment Code", an "open door" policy to foreign capital. This is a complete somersault of the socio-economic guidelines of the Sophia Declaration of December 1974. Then the Prime Minister had stated:

As we move to control land in the interest of the nation, we will also take control over all foreign trade — import and export. . . We are frequently asked about our policy in relation to foreign private investment. The time has come now to give, indeed to repeat, the answer once and for all. Private investment from abroad is welcome in specific fields in consortium with government and/or cooperatives, provided that in each case Government and/or the cooperatives hold majority equity and real control. . .

Now foreign investors will be free to enter alone or in partnership in any proportion with the state, cooperatives, private companies or individuals.

In keeping with this new policy, a West German company and a French company were granted concessions for uranium exploitation and mining, and two North American companies (US and Canadian) were given oil concessions.

According to the Investment Code, the “strategic activities” which will be reserved for the state will be mining, processing and exportation of specific grades of bauxite (this does not include the production or smelting of alumina); power generation for general public distribution; public transportation (excluding feeder and supplementary services); telecommunication; education at nursery, primary, secondary or university levels (but excluding special training institutions such as secretarial schools); importation of specific items for purposes of trading.

This means that the regime will pursue the same pro-capitalist, pro-imperialist development strategy which underlined the first Development Plan (1966-72). Then, the state concentrated on infrastructure and reserved industrialisation to private enterprise.

The new indicative 1978-81 Development Plan earmarks only 3.9 percent for manufacturing, 6.5 percent for power (conventional not hydro) and 26 percent for drainage and irrigation infrastructure. This is a clear indication that the PNC intends to carry out a neo-colonial economic policy without a balanced industrial-agricultural development.

With the restriction of state expenditure for manufacturing, the extremely high interest rates and the free entry of manufactured goods under the Caricom treaty, the industrialisation of Guyana will be arrested.

The Mazaruni hydro-electric aluminium smelter project has been shelved; it is not included in the new Plan. For four reasons, the imperialists are not enamoured with the project; firstly, as a state project; secondly, the high cost; thirdly, the project is in the area claimed by Venezuela, and fourthly since the 1950s after the nationalisation of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, including oil wells and refinery, the foreign monopolists have studiously located the separate phases of any industry in different countries. If direct investments are made in the bauxite industry, it will most likely be in alumina production for smelters in countries such as Japan, Brazil, Venezuela and Trinidad and Tobago. In the remote possibility of the establishment of an aluminium smelter, it will probably be on a basis of Guyana setting up the hydro-project with loan capital and the foreign monopolists owning the smelter.

Guyana will become the supplier of cheap raw materials and services as was done in Britain after the nationalisation in the late 1940s of electricity, coal, steel, road and rail transport.

In the new Development Plan, emphasis is placed on water control schemes. We are not against adequate financial allocation for drainage and irrigation projects which had been suspended since 1965. Water control is essential for successful farming. But agriculture alone will not generate sufficient income to bear the huge debt service charges for the costly agricultural-infrastructure drainage and irrigation schemes. For example, the first phase of the Mahaica-Mahaicony-Abary water control project, which was estimated at G\$32 million in the early 1960s, will now cost G\$185 million. In 1976, it was estimated that \$200 million had been invested during the previous 15 years in infrastructural works for promoting agriculture, but the output had grown to less than 1 percent per annum, which was slower than the 2.8 percent population growth.

There must be balanced industrial-agricultural development. Industry generates profits and capital more rapidly than agriculture. These will help to carry the high debt charges for drainage and irrigation. If there is not simultaneous industrial-agricultural development the econ-

omy will be faced in the future with balance of payments and budgetary deficits even worse than at the present time.

With extensive borrowing in 1978 and escalation of our national debt to \$2,000 million [\$2 billion] at the end of 1978 as compared with \$1,500 million [\$1.5 billion] in 1977 and only \$128 million in 1964, debt payments are increasing by geometric progression. In 1979, debt charges amount to \$234 million (58 percent of current revenue) as compared with \$10 million in 1964 (15 percent of current revenue); they are estimated to be 27.7 percent of exports in 1979 as compared with 20.6 percent in 1977 and 12 percent in 1976, but most likely will be higher with the shortfall in production and exports this year.

For years, we have warned about extensive borrowing tied to improper allocation, but to no avail. In mid-December 1976, Prime Minister Burnham had boasted that with a debt service rates (debt payment as a percentage of exports) of 8.5 percent, Guyana was in a position to borrow. Now, the people are forced to carry the heavy burden. Already, debt payments were in excess of loans for 1976 and 1977 (mainly foreign) negotiated.

Year	Amount Borrowed	Amount Repaid
1974	\$ 86,463,386	\$56,720,000
1975	\$102,944,438	\$67,954,000
1976	\$ 93,963,726	\$118,858,000
1977	\$ 84,363,826	\$123,353,105
1978	\$173,658,460	\$154,039,105

A marked increase in production and productivity is necessary otherwise the debt payment problem will later become more acute as in Brazil and other developing countries with dependent capitalist, semi-feudal structures.

But there is every indication that the projected annual average growth rate in the new Plan period (1978-81) will not be attained. For the first year, 1979, the Minister of Economic Development in his budget speech stated:

The performance of the economy in 1978 was disappointing. The physical production targets in the main sectors of economic activity were not achieved. Sugar fell short by 36,000 tons (down 10 percent); rice by 30,000 tons (down 14 percent). For the main bauxite based products, calcined bauxite fell short by 42,000 tons (down 7 percent), alumina by 63,000 tons (down 22 percent) and metal grade bauxite by 300,000 tons (down 31 percent) — shortfalls which were only partially counterbalanced by the performance in chemical grade bauxite which exceeded projected levels by 77,000 tons (up 32 percent).

In 1979, during the first sugar crop, there was a shortfall by 46,777 tons from a projected target of 157,076 tons. Rice is in the same predicament; only 65,000 tons were produced in the first crop. This has curtailed milling operations at the Mahaicony-Abary rice mill, which normally operates on a three-shift basis until September. Shortage of paddy, however, led to reduction of milling on a one-shift basis by mid-July. And a very high percentage of the total acreage in this large rice area is unlikely to be planted for the second crop.

Without fundamental structural changes and the removal of the fetters on the productive forces, production will continue to stagnate and the economic and financial crisis will worsen. Only a genuine people's revolutionary-democratic not a pseudo-socialist PNC government, can ensure such changes. We must fight for such a government as an urgent necessity.

Social Crisis

To achieve the targets imposed by the IMF, and to secure its "stamp of approval" and credits and loans, the government placed the burden of the crisis on the backs of the working people.

The austerity package included removal of subsidies, cuts in social services, retrenchment (dismissal) of workers, steep taxation, increased prices for goods and services provided by state corporations and wages freeze.

The removal of subsidies began in a small way at the end of 1976. Then only poultry feed was hit resulting in the official price of one egg shooting up to 21 cents. The 1977 budget made further inroads. And by August 1978, practically all subsidies on essential commodities and services — electricity, telecommunications, water, air and land transport, milk, edible oil, sugar, rice, flour — have been removed or reduced. Rice and sugar nearly doubled in price.

The 1978 budget imposed a record-breaking \$44 million taxation with steep increases on gasoline, alcoholic beverages, cigarettes, furniture, refrigerators, motor vehicle and radio licences.

The mini-budget in late 1978 increased prices on a whole range of products including milk, bicycle tyres and yachting (canvas) shoes used by the “small man”. In breach of an agreement reached between the PPP government and the TUC in 1963, the PNC, without consultation with the TUC and the relevant unions, increased National Insurance contributions by 294 percent and widened the ambit of the Widows and Orphans Fund Scheme to include women, teachers, police personnel and nurses, and at the same time increased the maximum contribution to the scheme from G\$20 to G\$40 per month. Apart from a 5 percent consumption tax introduced in 1970, the government had proposed to collect a 10 percent sales tax. But this was dropped in favour of steep mark-ups of 100 percent to 300 percent on goods imported and sold by the state agencies.

Guyana under the PNC regime can truly be regarded as one of the highest-taxed countries in the world. Direct (inland revenue) and indirect (customs and excise) taxes increased from \$65 million in 1964 to \$374 million in 1978.

Devaluation, direct and indirect, also contributed to difficulties. When the Guyana dollar was switched from the pound sterling and linked with the US dollar, its value fell from G\$2 equal US\$1 to G\$2.55 equal US\$1. Since then, there has been an indirect devaluation as a result of the US dollar dropping in value by about 20 percent to 25 percent in relation to other major currencies.

A wages freeze policy is also seriously affecting the workers. The government has reneged on an agreement made since 1977 with the TUC to pay to state sector employees a minimum daily wage of \$14 for 1979. And normal increments have also been stopped; in the cases where payments had been made since January 1979, they were terminated in May.

The IMF agreement, aimed at improving the country's balance of payments problem, led to the serious curtailment of imports. This resulted in a grave shortage of essential commodities, including foodstuff. The resultant shortage breeds hoarding and black-marketing, thus aggravating an already precarious situation. To obtain necessary supplies, housewives have to spend long hours in what is today popularly known as “Guylines”, often to be told at the last moment that everything is finished; they must come another day.

Discrimination and favouritism are rampant in the distribution of foodstuff. The PNC having total control of the distribution mechanism, is channelling these scarce items through its own outlets. Often, known members of the PNC could be seen bypassing long queues and collecting large parcels already packed and awaiting their disposal.

Increases in direct and indirect taxation, deficit financing, devaluation, cuts in subsidies and hike in electricity charges (another 35 percent as from July 1979) have contributed to an astronomical rise in the cost of living. In the one-year period, December 1977 to December 1978, the cost of living index figures increased as follows: food 73.7 percent; clothing 52.8 percent; all items 49.2 percent. Between the period 1970-1979, clothing rose by 300.1 percent (3 times) food by 284.3 percent. In the rural areas, the situation is even worse, the “all items” index rose by 240.2 percent, food by 279 percent and clothing by 309 percent.

Rampant inflation, coupled with shortages of essential goods, electricity blackouts and water shortages are causing severe hardships. In addition, steep cuts in budget allocation for social services have further worsened the already miserable conditions of the working people.

The decline in medical services has reached an alarming level. In spite of the fact that the government is seeking the assistance of doctors from overseas, still it is estimated that there is only one doctor to every 10,000 of the population, one dentist to every 75,000, and only one paediatrician and one psychiatrist in the entire country. There are severe shortages of essential drugs, linen, equipment and of medical personnel generally. Poor people seeking free medical attention often have their prescriptions handed back with the advice to obtain medication at drugstores. Conditions at the hospitals and health centres have become deplorable and unbearable. There is an urgent need for more beds, equipment, drugs, and medical centres and for better services for the people particularly in the interior and riverine areas where patients have to travel long distances, sometimes for many days, to get medical attention.

The total neglect, the lack of essential foodstuffs, and worsening living conditions have resulted in increased incidence of malnutrition and tuberculosis. Children especially have been seriously affected. In 1976-77, 50 percent of the children in the age group under 5 years were malnourished — an increase from 31 percent in 1973 — and of this, 17 percent suffered from significant malnutrition and 16.5 percent (the third highest rate in the Caribbean) suffer from Gomez II and III (serious malnutrition).

According to the Inter-American Development Bank Report (1977), Guyana had an infant mortality rate of 53 per 1,000 live births, higher than Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago. The death rate of children between the ages of one and four years rose from 3.4 in every 1,000 live births in 1970 and 12.55 in 1974.

In 1979, the government allocated \$39.7 million (6.7 percent of the budget) for health, while allocation for the police, the military and paramilitary is \$78 million (over 13 percent of the budget). Considering that over 53 percent (\$21.1 million) of the total allocation for health goes for personal emoluments and that the costs of drugs and equipment are growing tremendously, \$18.6 million allocated for the latter cannot in any way improve the already miserable conditions of health.

Education is in the same plight. Schools are overcrowded, understaffed and ill-equipped. School books are not available in adequate quantities. Children and parents are constantly being asked to raise funds for one purpose or another. There are not enough places in primary schools for all children of school-going age. Less than 10 percent of those who apply can find places in the technical institutes and the School of Agriculture. The majority of those finishing schools find themselves in the army of the unemployed or are forced to seek employment abroad. The University of Guyana is also facing a crisis through the shortages of funds, teachers, text books and equipment. Discriminatory practices in enrolment are rampant, and the problem was further aggravated with the introduction of National Service.

Less than 50 percent of all teachers are trained. The results are poor performances in school and a serious decline in educational standards. In 1974, a former Minister of Education had disclosed that three-quarters of the children coming out of primary schools could not read properly. Since then, there has been a steady decline in performances at examinations.

The "Feed, Clothe, House the Nation by 1976" programme was a colossal flop. Only about one-tenth (over 6,000 units) of the housing target of 65,000 units was achieved. Given that a house would accommodate 1.5 dwelling units, the rate of building was still less than sufficient to match the rate of current increases of households. The result is that the backlog of households with inadequate housing is not only being neglected, but also being made worse. Now, the government has virtually scrapped the housing programme. For the three-year period, 1977-1979, the government allocated only \$6 million for housing compared with \$11.5 million for 1976 alone. Thus, a great proportion of working people in town and country have to continue to live in slum conditions. And in Georgetown, a quarter to one-third of a worker's wage or salary has to meet the increasing rent payment.

The failure of the government to solve the housing problem has led to thousands of workers being forced to squat, building houses out of zinc, cardboard and wood. Living conditions are appalling — poor sanitation, no potable water, improper streets, no electricity.

A sharp reduction in development (capital) expenditure in 1977 and 1978 led to the retrenchment of nearly 4,000 workers. The contraction of bank credit by the sharp increase of 4 percent in bank rates will act as a damper on investment, and can lead to recession and even business failures; thus, further aggravating the serious unemployment problem.

It is estimated that the unemployment rate runs between 30 percent to 35 percent of the work force. This is a waste of human potential. Most affected are the youths, especially in the countryside where unemployment is far higher and engulfs over 50 percent of the youths. This is leading to internal migration. Thus, the population of Georgetown increased from 160,000 to 240,000 between 1970 and 1973.

It has become the government's policy to under-employ people. In the sugar estates, for instance, 5 to 6 days work per week in the in-crop period has been reduced to 3 to 4 days; and during the out-of-crop, 3 to 4 days work has been reduced to 2 to 3 days and sometimes even less. The government's redeployment policy (tantamount to retrenchment) and employment of scabs from the time of the 1977 sugar strike have also contributed to this serious situation.

Poverty, want, unemployment have driven the youths to crime which is escalating. For the year 1976, there were 2,480 cases of burglary and breaking-in offences and 1,816 cases of larceny. In recent times, crimes have become more violent with organised armed gangs murdering some of their victims. This development has driven fear into the everyday lives of people.

Non-availability of job opportunities, coupled with racial and political discrimination, has also led to an exodus of our people mainly to North America. The consequence of such a development is that some of our best brains are forced to render their services to other nations, thus robbing Guyana and contributing to the deterioration of the level of our scientific and technical skills.

The emigration of our people is growing rapidly; everyday, long lines could be seen in front of the American, Canadian and British embassies. Estimated figures of emigration for the last five years indicate the following: 9,350 in 1974; 7,660 in 1975; 8,990 in 1976; 9,410 in 1977 and 12,820 in 1978.

Presently in neighbouring Surinam, a far less developed society than ours, about 45,000 Guyanese are working to eke out a living for themselves and upkeep their families in Guyana.

Large numbers who do not emigrate with their skills are alienated. They merely do enough to secure their job; the system has stifled their creative ability.

In this regard, the National Service, which was set up in an attempt to mobilise the youths of Guyana and quell the serious unemployment problem, has failed. Instead it has become an extension of the military.

Unemployment has driven our youths into other anti-social means of eking out a living. Prostitution has become rampant. Large numbers of small children beg daily in the streets; they can be seen looking in garbage heaps for something to eat. Such is the degradation of our children by the PNC regime in this Year of the Child. Let us fight to secure a better future for our people.

POLITICAL SITUATION

PNC MOVES TO THE RIGHT

The period in which the PNC government took progressive positions at the international level and yet carried out anti-working class and anti-democratic policies at the national level have changed qualitatively. Now, at the international level, the regime has moved to the right, to a pro-imperialist, pro-capitalist and anti-democratic position and has intensified its pressures on the working class.

How and why has the PNC, after a forward step during the 1974-1976 period, moved so manifestly back to its vacillating but pro-imperialist position in the 1970-1973 period?

Four main factors, subjective and objective, influenced the move to the right; firstly, the changed class outlook of the bureaucratic-technocratic stratum of the PNC petty-bourgeois

leadership, which was elevated from the lower and middle sections to the upper section in the State apparatus, and expanded into a mediatory, neo-comprador bourgeoisie; secondly, the PNC, having become isolated, badly needed political support; thirdly, the need of the PNC regime for financial assistance during the second manifestation of the economic crisis in late 1976; and fourthly, imperialist pressures as indicated in Henry Kissinger's directive in January 1976, when he told the Foreign Relations Committee:

The hostility of some of the Third World spokesmen and bloc voting have made constructive discussions in the UN forums between the industrial and developing world almost impossible. I have instructed each US Embassy that the factors by which we will measure the value which that government attaches to its relations with us will be its statements and its votes on that fairly limited number of issues which we indicate are of importance to us in international forums.

In the 1975-76 period, because of anti-imperialist positions in domestic and foreign policies, particularly support for the MFLA in Angola, Guyana's relations with USA and China were strained. This was also the case with Brazil in 1976 at the time of the threat of "destabilisation".

The swing to the right began in 1977. This was illustrated by the admission of the Minister of Finance. On July 16, 1977, he reported that a loan application to USAID started four years earlier, had been blocked because "of a difference in views". He went on to point out that there had been "a closing of the gap in views", since the Carter administration had taken over, and this had led to the successful conclusion of an agreement.

The "closing of the gap in views" has meant an "open door" to foreign capital and other concessions in domestic and foreign policies. The first official indication of this was the invitation in July 1977 by the Minister of Finance to Alexander Nicolas Keyserlingh, Director of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the private investment arm of the World Bank. Later, in May 1978, the Prime Minister, addressing the pro-big business West India Committee in London, made a strong appeal to private foreign capital. As reported in the Financial Times (May 5, 1978), he "called for foreign investors to join with Guyanese capital in consortia to exploit Guyana's bauxite . . . and other minerals. He also suggested joint ventures in such fields as shipping."

The Prime Minister was further quoted as saying that "nationalisation of new investment was not foreseeable in my time and generation." In Guyana, however, he claimed soon after that he had been misquoted, that if there was to be any nationalisation, it would be spelt out in any agreement made. The fact is, however, the nationalisation of the banks and insurance companies, contemplated for the end of 1976, had been shelved.

In the Sophia Declaration, he had stated that his party intended "to proceed with the implementation of the policy of ownership and control of national resources", and he called for a united effort by the government and the PNC to achieve their of-stated objective during 1975 to bring an end to foreign banks taking and investing local deposits during the next year. Some years earlier, according to the Guyana Graphic (November 18, 1971), he had stated:

The government's declared policy, which met with unanimous approval at the PNC 1970 Congress, is to miniaturise the foreign commercial banks. And if in the final analysis they want to continue operating here, they can only operate here as lenders of off-shore money — money that they bring in from abroad to lend into our economy. . . It is expected that when this policy is implemented foreign commercial banks will not be able to keep local deposits or chequeing accounts, which is the sane thing.

Today the banks, to which the country is heavily indebted, are operating without any restrictions. In 1978-79, they have been allowed to increase their rates by 4 percent, thus bringing their overdraft facilities to around 14 percent.

Interest earned by the foreign banks and financial institutions like the World Bank and the International Development Association on some loans made to the state and state corporations are tax free.

In the Letter of Intent of July 12, 1978, to the IMF, further concessions granted to foreign capital are spelt out:

The government is prepared to rescind the prohibition on transfers abroad of funds arising from depreciation allowances by foreign-based companies at an early date, but in any case prior to October 31, 1978. . . Finally, during the period of the stand-by arrangement, the government does not intend to introduce any multiple currency practice, impose new or intensify existing restrictions on payments and transfers for current international transactions, or impose new or intensify existing restrictions on imports for balance of payments reasons.

This signifies a retreat from the declarations of the regime about a centrally planned economy with exchange and other controls, and is indicative of the move towards an open market, capitalist economy.

The new Development Plan (1978-81) is also tailored in keeping with the designs of imperialism for the creation and strengthening of a reactionary petty-bourgeoisie and bourgeoisie, the ensnaring of the country into a debt trap, and the incorporation of Guyana into its geo-political web.

Our country will be tied as on agricultural appendage to a dependent capitalist West Indies with a deformed type of industrialisation sited mainly in Trinidad, imperialism's economic base.

The PNC regime's new economic planning strategy concentrates on agricultural-infrastructural development in contrast to previous strategy which emphasised the non-productive infrastructural sectors.

The development of agriculture now is of strategic importance. It will provide food for the restive population of the Caribbean territories, which have a food trade deficit of nearly G\$1,000 million [\$1 billion], and with the exception of Trinidad and Tobago, serious balance of payments problems. Through the Caribbean Food Corporation, it will permit the infiltration of the foreign transnational agro-industrial corporations. It will also create a new "agro-industrial bourgeoisie, as a social base for capitalism-imperialism. This had been done in Bolivia in the 1952-64 period after the nationalisation of the tin mines and a radical land reform, and eventually helped in the overthrow of the regime of the National Revolutionary Movement.

In the same way that Brazil is imperialism's industrial base in Latin America, under a deformed, dependent type of capitalism, so is Trinidad in the Caribbean. The foreign transnationals — Texaco, Amoco, Tesoro, W.R. Grace, Unilever, Nestle's, Tate & Lyle — are already well established. Now, a whole new area, Point Lisas, is to be "developed" jointly with a TT\$4,500 million [\$4.5 billion] industrialisation programme under the partnership model ("neither Puerto Rican nor Cuban") with the Trinidad government linked with the foreign, mainly North American monopolies.

Guyana will have to continue to buy generally inferior-quality goods at higher prices from the Caricom countries, mainly Trinidad and Barbados. In this regard it is important to note that between September 1973-April 1974, the price of gasoline from Trinidad increased by 147 percent as compared with 28 percent in the USA. In mid-1979, the oil refineries in Trinidad received \$2.27 per gallon for gasoline, an increase of 56 cents on the previous price of \$1.71. In the USA, the increase was not so high. Urea was sold by Federation Chemicals to its parent W.R. Grace Inc. in the USA for TT\$186 per ton; to Guyana, the price was TT\$330 per ton. The same applied to ammonia. Not too long ago, the government complained that soap and detergents originating in Trinidad were costing more than if they had come directly from the parent company in England. Nevertheless, we are forced to buy. Under the Caribbean Common Market (Caricom) treaty, Guyana is excluded from buying goods outside the region so long as they

are available within the region. Meanwhile, our trade deficit with Caricom states grows; it was G\$106.6 million in 1977 compared with G\$97.3 million in 1976 and G\$80.5 million in 1969.

In spite of this, under imperialist dictation, our links with Caricom are being strengthened. Although an application was made in February 1977 for association with COMECON, even the negligible trade with the socialist countries has been reduced.

In foreign policy outside the Caribbean region, the PNC regime has shifted since 1977 from its anti-imperialist stance in the 1974-76 period to its earlier vacillating position of the 1971-73 period when the balance had been in favour of imperialism. In the latter period, it was close to Maoist China, and attacked the Soviet Union with the Maoist "two super-powers, two imperialisms" line; it was silent on US aggression against Vietnam, and in response to calls for support for Vietnam, had propagated that US line that "all troops must withdraw from South Vietnam" — US and North Vietnamese!

Now, under pressure from US imperialism, there is a definite move towards China and Brazil.

On the aggression of China against Vietnam, the PNC regime took the pro-imperialist line, calling "for the end of hostilities, the withdrawal of all foreign forces and the restoration of a regime of peace in the area", namely, Chinese troops must withdraw from Vietnam, and Vietnamese troops must withdraw from Kampuchea. It pointed out that it was disturbed "that troops in the conflict are socialist states including members of the Non-Aligned Movement".

The reality is that the Chinese leadership has acted against the interest of the Chinese people, betrayed socialism and has become part of the reactionary US-EEC-China-Japan axis; and the barbarous Pol Pot regime of Kampuchea, as a puppet of China, had committed criminal acts of genocide.

The PNC regime made a veiled attack against the Soviet Union. In referring to the latter's veto in the United Nations, its statement said: "Guyana regrets that in relation to democratic Kampuchea, the Security Council was prevented from taking a decision based on the principled position put forward by its non-aligned members". More explicitly, the PNC, during the 1979 budget debate in the National Assembly accused the Soviet Union of supporting the Pol Pot regime, dictating to other countries and in the face of economic difficulties increasing prices to consumers.

As a result of the anti-working class and pro-imperialist shifts, changes have taken place at the governmental level. Winslow Carrington, with a working class background in a one-time militant Transport Workers Union, was removed as Minister of Labour. Fred Wills who personified a vigorous anti-imperialist stand at the United Nations, in the Non-Aligned Movement and elsewhere, became "ill" and resigned; Elvin McDavid, Executive Secretary of the PNC in charge of foreign affairs was "exiled" to an ambassadorship in Moscow.

At the same time, Minister of State, Kit Nascimento, with a strong anti-communist background, was given additional responsibilities for the Upper Mazaruni Development Authority linked to the hydro-electrical-aluminium smelter project. Later, he had been sent on a mission to the USA for special work in communications. No doubt, this posting was intended to improve Guyana's image; to give assurances to North American capitalists about the regime's socialist rhetoric, to placate irate Guyanese and West Indians in Canada and the USA. After his promotion to Minister, Kit Nascimento probably also monitored Guyana's stance at the United Nations.

This country was no doubt one of those which Dr. Henry Kissinger complained about in his directive to US embassies.

POLITICAL SOLUTION

To avoid the economic crisis and a move to the right, our Party has been consistently calling for a political solution. This was first done in 1974 after the rigged general elections of 1973 and the manifestation of the first economic crisis in early 1974. It is our view that there can be no solution to the social and economic crisis without a solution to the political crisis.

In August 1977, in anticipation of the PNC postponing or rigging the 1978 general elections, forging yet another alliance with imperialism and taking Guyana on a dangerous course, we called for a political solution based on the formation of a National Patriotic Front with a democratic, anti-imperialist and socialist-oriented programme, and a National Patriotic Front Government of all progressive, left and democratic parties and groups. It was intended that the PNC should be included based on its declarations from time to time that it is democratic, anti-imperialist and socialist.

The PNC leader at the second biennial congress of the ruling party, in August 1977, rejected our proposal for a National Patriotic Front Government, describing "an understanding and coalition between leaders as superficially attractive"; and he went on to state that "as a vanguard party, it was the duty of the PNC to achieve unity in the socialist sense". The PNC's organ, *New Nation*, continued in the same vein in its September 4 issue. After stating that "for the (PNC) party, the real issue is national unity", it went on: "This cannot be achieved by a mere power sharing deal by political leaders. Jagan showed no interest in promoting national cohesion on a class basis."

Also, at the same second biennial congress, the Chairman of the PNC, Cammie Ramsaroop, referring to the break-down of the talks between the PPP and the PNC in December 1976, stated:

We made it clear in that release that we were at all times willing to work out a basis for cooperation but not to subvert the electoral process by handing over in this way to the PPP the task of governing the nation. From the talks, it was clear that the PPP was more interested in sharing power than in showing a genuine concern for national unity.

Imagine a party which "wins" elections and a referendum by methods as "crooked as barbed wire" talking about out subversion of "the electoral process"!

On another occasion, the PNC, according to the *Guyana Chronicle* (April 22, 1978) claimed that "unity along the lines proposed by the PPP was tantamount to coalitions that used to take place between Chinese warlords".

These are all deliberate distortions of our position. We have made it clear that we are not interested merely in power sharing at the top and a few ministries. Central to our position is democracy at all levels of socio-political life. In the words of V.I. Lenin, we say: "Whoever wants to reach socialism by any other path than that of political democracy will inevitably arrive at conclusions that are absurd and reactionary both in the economic and political sense."

Like Rev. Randolph George, Bishop of the Anglican Church and Chairman of the Guyana Council of Churches, we believe that the need for national unity "has perhaps never been greater than at the present time". All patriotic Guyanese, and not just "a 10-14 percent government", need to be involved in the struggle against imperialism and local reaction, and in the exciting task of nation-building.

And we have spelt out the kind of unity needed. Our position on this question was set out in a press release on August 9, 1977, as follows:

. . . Such a front should bring about a revolutionary alliance of the working class, the peasant farmers, the revolutionary intellectuals and the progressive businessmen and middle strata. It will exclude all reactionary, pro-imperialist, racialist parties or groups.

A national government must be based on democracy — political, economic and social. At the political level, there should be full exercise of democratic freedoms and free and fair elections for the central, regional and district governments. At the economic level, there should be workers' control with the fullest involvement of the workers in management and decision-making. At the social level, the people must have the right not only to form associations — trade union, cultural, religious, sports, etc. — but also to have due recognition and respect.

Why have we said "winner does not take all" when we alone can win a majority at a free and fair general elections? Everyone knows that our support has increased far beyond the 46 per-

cent of popular vote our party polled at the 1964 general election. We have deliberately used the words “winner does not take all” because of the social psychology of our people. We are conscious, especially because of racial incitement by the PNC and the CIA-fomented-financed strife in the early 1960s, that there is ethnic insecurity and fear of racial domination. During its term of office, the PNC has exploited this fear in order to maintain its support. It has gone around secretly telling its disillusioned and disgruntled Afro-Guyanese members and supporters that a PPP victory would mean Indian domination.

We wish our position to be made abundantly clear. We are against any kind of racial domination or discrimination. Our objective is not race power but people’s power. We have been consistently and patiently working for working class unity and anti-imperialist unity, and we are certain that we will achieve people’s power. Any government with which we are associated will end all traces of racial and political discrimination and domination.

All our attempts at getting PNC cooperation has failed. In the early 1960s, our party had made an offer to the PNC to join the government on a basis of equality, but this was rejected. Instead, the PNC made an alliance with the CIA and the reactionary United Force. In the mid-1970s, in anticipation of “destabilisation”, we came out in August 1975 with “critical support”. And at the time of “destabilisation” in May 1976, our party shared the TUC May Day platform with the PNC; our General Secretary’s appearance with the Leader of the PNC on the same platform symbolised national unity in the face of imperialist threats. We did not, however, consider that the appearance together of the two leaders was enough. Equally important was a sound economy in the fight against imperialism. To this end, a month later, on Enmore Martyrs Day at Pln. Enmore, our party issued a 17-points Action Programme which included the following:

- 1) Completion of the anti-imperialist process by the nationalisation of foreign banks, insurance companies and other monopolies;
- 2) Ending semi-feudalism by a revolutionary land reform;
- 3) Centrally-controlled planned proportional development of the economy with emphasis on industry and agriculture;
- 4) Embarking on a non-capitalist road to socialism through the expansion of the public and cooperative sectors;
- 5) Massive education campaign at all levels for imbuing the people with revolutionary, scientific socialist (Marxist-Leninist) ideological consciousness;
- 6) Training of administrative, scientific, technical and diplomatic personnel in the socialist states;
- 7) Respect for, and observance of, the fundamental rights laid down in the constitution;
- 8) Substitution of peaceful, democratic methods in place of bureaucratic-administrative, police-military coercive methods of political struggle;
- 9) Separation of party, state and mass organisations; and maintenance of a multiparty system in place of a de facto and/or a de jure authoritarian one-party state;
- 10) Cessation of harassment and victimisation of members and supporters of the PPP, and removal of all obstacles to its normal democratic functioning;
- 11) Recognition of truly representative mass organisations (workers, farmers, social, cultural, religious, professional, sports, etc.); industrial democracy; workers and farmers control;
- 12) Implementation of legal and institutional measures to provide for equality of opportunity for all Guyanese — enactment of equal opportunity legislation and establishment of a commission to administer the Act; substantial representation in service commissions (Public Service Commission, Police Service Commission, etc.); and Employment Exchange;
- 13) Special treatment for Amerindians to permit accelerated development;
- 14) Democratisation of local government; more power (devolution and decentralisation) to district and regional councils;

- 15) The creation of a democratically-run and people-managed national People's Militia with branches in every city bloc, village and settlement;
- 16) Enactment of integrity legislation and a commission with "watchdog committees" to probe corruption and theft of public property;
- 17) Development of the closest relations in all aspects with the world socialist community, headed by the Soviet Union.

This programme was intended to remove the fetters on the productive forces, the brakes on production and productivity.

The PNC, in rejecting our call for a National Patriotic Front, used the excuse that we were not serious, that we were merely making propaganda and were not interested in national unity. They claimed that had we been serious we would have gone directly to the PNC instead of announcing our proposals at a press conference.

The fact is that our party had talks with the PNC. This was in the context of our policy of "critical support" in August 1975 and the "destabilisation" manoeuvres by imperialism in early 1976. But the discussion had revealed the unwillingness of the PNC to consider either a political solution or the creation of favourable conditions for anti-imperialist national unity. Consequently, the talks ceased towards the end of 1976 due to the fact that —

1. By May 1976, the "destabilisation" crisis was over after the government had agreed to raise its compensation offer to the Booker's monopolists from \$1 to \$1.02 million at 6 percent interest to be paid in 20 years, and with the retention of Bookers, in consultancy and other services;
2. The government proceeded to sabotage the construction of a genuine People's Militia and to build conventional police, military and paramilitary forces at an increased cost from \$16 million in 1972 to \$113 million in 1976 for the purpose of maintaining the PNC in power;
3. The decision of the government at the end of 1976 to attempt to solve the financial crisis at the expense of the masses by the removal of subsidies on essential consumer goods — a course to which the PPP expressed serious opposition.

At the last meeting in early December 1976, the PNC leader issued an ultimatum: no more talks unless there was a retraction of an editorial in the *Mirror* entitled "Money for Guns and not for Bread". Our delegation refused to be intimidated by the ultimatum. What the PNC wanted was to silence us — we had been holding street corner meetings and opposing the increase in military expenditure and the removal of subsidies. Had we agreed to the retraction, we would have been forced to remain silent on the \$44 million taxation and removal of subsidies in the 1977 budget. Let this be a lesson to those who falsely say that the PPP and the PNC are the same; that the PPP had sold out the people with "critical support". We will never sacrifice the interests of the working people.

Actually, the PNC is opposed to a political solution and the formation of a National Patriotic Front Government because of its class interests. It does not want to surrender positions and privileges, high salaries and exorbitant allowances and a corrupt way of life. During the last 14 years, the PNC petty-bourgeois nationalist leadership has been transformed; the bureaucratic stratum has been elevated from the lower and middle levels to the top.

At the same time, the bureaucratic bourgeoisie has expanded and the state is used as a vehicle for private accumulation. A mediatory, neo-compradore and industrial bourgeoisie has emerged. Through political patronage, lucrative contracts are obtained by many PNC-controlled companies and cooperatives — commission agencies, wholesale and retail distributors, legal, shipping, accountancy, architectural and other firms — which attach themselves to the state corporations and siphon off huge profits which should go to the workers and to the national treasury.

An example of the inter-locking PNC bourgeoisie is W.G. Stoll. During the PPP term of office, he was Commissioner of Inland Revenue and Chairman of the Civil Service Association. He was instrumental in calling out the civil servants during the 80-days CIA-fomented and financed strike of 1963. The PNC government appointed him as Chairman of the Public Service Commission and Police Service Commission, positions he holds up to the present time. At the same time, he established an accountancy firm, Stoll & Thomas (Thomas was the first PNC Economic Development Minister). This company does the accounting virtually for all corporations. Stoll is also a director of Guyana Refrigerators Limited, assembling refrigerators, and a director of Industrial, Domestic and Electrical Appliances Limited (IDEAL), which will soon be assembling stoves in Guyana. These companies are linked to Associated Industries, which itself is owned and controlled by Neal and Massey, a \$500 million company based in Trinidad. To the IDEAL company, a loan was granted by the International Finance Corporation, closely associated with the World Bank. In this example, we see a link between the local bureaucratic, mediatory and industrial bourgeoisie tied to the Caribbean and North American bourgeoisie.

It is the defence of this kind of interest that has led to the rejection by the PNC of our proposals for a National Patriotic Front Government

DEMAGOGY AND VIOLENCE

In rejecting our proposal for a National Patriotic Front the PNC leader said that "if the Bolsheviks had sought unity with the Mensheviks on coalition terms the history of the Soviet Union would have been differently written". This is a distortion of the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

The PNC calls itself the "paramount party" and the vanguard of the working class. It would like the Guyanese workers and revolutionaries overseas to believe that its leadership is Bolshevik and that we are Mensheviks. The fact, however, is that it formed a coalition government (1964-1968) with the reactionary United Force to serve capitalism and imperialism, but is unwilling to work with revolutionary forces to build a socialist Guyana and to serve the interests of the working people. This is a clear indication of its class origin, ideology, politics and programme.

The PNC is not a vanguard party of the working class. It violates the fundamental principles upon which such parties are based, namely, democratic centralism and collective leadership. Article 21(a) of its constitution states:

If the leader in his deliberate judgement is of the opinion that a situation of emergency has arisen in the party, he shall have power notwithstanding any provision in these rules, on giving written notice to the General Secretary of his opinion, to take all action that he may in his absolute discretion consider necessary to correct such a situation; and for this purpose he may assume and exercise any or all of the powers of the Biennial Delegates Congress, the General Council, the Central Executive Committee, any other committees, group, arm, organ, or of any officer or official of the party.

Actually, the PNC is a petty-bourgeois, nationalist-reformist party dominated by the reactionary petty-bourgeoisie. Ideologically, it has a demagogic, eclectic position — democratic socialism; cooperative socialism (1970); national socialism (1974). When opportune, it claims that its ideas are based on Marx, Engels and Lenin. In contrast to the socialist and Marxist rhetoric, L.F.S. Burnham declared in an interview in mid-1978 that he was a Marxist, a cooperative socialist and a Christian!

L.F.S. Burnham is "all things to all men" inside Guyana. To the socialist world, he is a Marxist; to the capitalist world, he is a cooperative socialist and a Christian. In a machiavellian manner, his regime opportunistically and pragmatically plays off the socialist world against the capitalist world and vice versa. During the past two and a half years of national betrayal, the PNC has been talking demagogically about socialism and re-emphasising cooperatives.

In his 1979 budget speech, the Minister of Economic Development declared. "We continue to strive for the orderly transformation of our country into a socialist state."

Prime Minister Burnham in his message in July 1979 to mark Cooperative Week stated:

When Guyana became a Republic on February 23, 1970, we deliberately inserted the word "cooperative" into the country's official title as a constant reminder of your Government's intention to use the cooperative as the principal instrument for achieving socialism and, as we said then, making the small man the real man. . . . As Guyanese, cooperators in particular, celebrate Cooperative Week, let me once again assure you that your Government and party stand firmly behind the cooperative movement and will do all that is required to ensure its rapid advance and bring the day when the cooperative sector becomes the dominant sector in our economy.

As a result of PNC demagoguery and empty talk, socialism, is being denigrated and given a bad name. Even the socialist-oriented pre-conditions for advance towards the transition to socialism have not been laid. And as we have repeatedly stated since 1970, the cooperative sector cannot be the dominant sector in a socialist Guyana. In actual fact, cooperative socialism has become cooperative capitalism and state capitalism. Many companies associated with the PNC are masquerading as cooperatives. Through political patronage they secure lucrative contracts and facilities, and as cooperatives avoid the payment of income tax.

With heightened exploitation, deterioration of living standards and aggravation of the class struggle, politics and industrial relations have become militarised. The regime is resorting more and more to harassment and victimisation. Coercion and violence have become common-place with threats of dismissal, and the use of military and paramilitary forces against workers on strike — bauxite workers in 1976, municipal workers in early 1977 and sugar workers in late 1977.

There is a definite trend towards outright dictatorship. At a rally at Black Bush Polder in December 1977, the PNC leader concluded his speech with a call for "three cheers for the destruction of the Opposition."

Plans for this sinister objective had been hatched at the PNC biennial congress held in August 1977, which made anti-worker's and anti-people's recommendations. A congress report proposed:

That an industrial court be set up by government to revise the labour laws governing industrial workers and that penalties be devised for dealing with industrial malpractices, particularly those perpetrated by trade unions. In this context, a specific recommendation was made that government should authorise the formation of another union in the sugar industry as a means of allowing sugar workers the opportunity of benefiting from a trade union along socialist lines.

There were anti-labour moves to negate collective bargaining and to counteract the recognition agreement won by the popular Guyana Agricultural and General Workers' Union (GAWU) after the government had been forced in December 1975 to take a poll in the sugar industry, which the union had won by 98 percent of the votes cast by the sugar workers.

The PNC congress report, further stated:

That in relation to the sugar industry there is need (a) for a regionalised structure of this industry so that the implementation of the party's policies might be guaranteed; (b) for the formation by the party's comrades of an agricultural workers cooperative society which can contract labour as a means of combating the strike situation.

The military and paramilitary forces are being rapidly transformed into an anti-people's weapon. All that the regime has to do is to dub a strike as political, anti-national or an act of destabilisation, and the military and paramilitary forces are turned upon the workers.

In the 135-days sugar workers strike in 1977, the whole coercive state apparatus, public servants, teachers and over 6,000 permanently recruited scabs were employed to crush the

sugar workers. The police not only harassed the workers but also seized supplies of food relief, and banned all public meetings, peaceful picketing and demonstrations. At the same time, the regime was armed with additional powers. Magistrates were given the discretion to deny bail after the lodgement of an appeal by the convicted person, a power which they did not have before. Also re-enacted was the vicious Part II of the National Security Act, which provides for detention indefinitely without trial and without bail.

To add insult to injury, the scabs who had been retained in employment by the state-owned Guyana Sugar Corporation (GUYSUCO) contrary to the principled protests of the TUC, had been given national honours and preferential treatment in obtaining employment in the sugar industry.

On May 17, 1978, after violence by PNC thugs had been unleashed at a public open-air meeting of the Committee in Defence of Democracy, the *New Nation* warned that "Our Steel is Sharper", and referring to the Opposition, it quoted on May 21 the PNC leader saying, "All we can promise them is perhaps a death less painful than that Judas Iscariot."

Immediately after the rigged referendum on July 10, 1978, thirty-eight workers who had taken strike action were summarily dismissed by Samco Industrial Enterprises, the municipal section of the state-owned Guyana Transport Services and Guyana Mining Enterprise (GUYMINE). At Samco, the workers had gone on strike for the recognition of the union of their choice, the Clerical and Commercial Workers' Union (CCWU). They had been dismissed, according to the CCWU's president, Gordon Todd, on the same day after the visit to the enterprise by the Minister of Labour! Shortly afterwards, the Guyana Labour Union, of which the Prime Minister is president-on-leave, was granted recognition by the employer. This brought a sharp protest to the TUC by the CCWU's president.

On November 1-2, the regime railroaded through the National Assembly the "Administration of Justice Bill, 1978", against the strong opposition of our party, the Guyana Bar Association and others. In protest, the lawyers carried out a one-day boycott of all sittings of all courts, and picketed the precincts of the Parliament.

This new measure will severely restrict the right of trial by jury and will place additional powers in the hands of magistrates. The changed procedures will permit political manipulation of the administration of justice. Concern has been expressed because of well-known cases of police frame-up and judicial harassment of political opponents such as Arnold Rampersaud and others.

During the 1977 sugar strike, workers were arrested and locked up in some cases without charges: in others, on flimsy grounds. One person was charged with "public terror". Some were denied bail; others were put on heavy bail — G\$10,000 for simple offences. One magistrate told a defendant that he was being put on bail provided he went back to work in the cane field!

In October 1978, another magistrate imposed sentences of 6 months and 3 months without option of a fine on two individuals who were exercising their right of peaceful picketing during the referendum campaign!

Violence escalated on May 31, 1979, at a meeting of the Working People's Alliance when thugs from the PNC and the House of Israel attacked speakers and damaged a public address system and a vehicle. And after incitement by the *New Nation* — with captions such as "This time they have gone too far"; "Exterminate the rats from our society"; "Rip them apart"; "Mobilise and don't mourn"; "War is declared — there will be weeping"; and "Our steel is sharper" — thugs armed with sticks, knives and bayonets on July 14, a day later, attacked among others a reporter of the *Catholic Standard*, murdered a Catholic priest-journalist, and severely wounded another man.

PNC'S SUPPORT WANING

The progressive aspect of PNC petty-bourgeois nationalism particularly in the 1974-76 period has definitely taken on a negative turn. Because of this dialectical development, "the majority of the working class", according to one government adviser, "are alienated from the devel-

opment process. To them the country now belongs not to imperialists, but to a new generation of shirt-jac elites whose interests are at variance with the ordinary worker". And since 1977, as a result of the acute financial difficulties, the PNC regime could not afford to bribe its supporters on the same scale as before. Consequently, it has become extremely unpopular. Its own intelligence unit disclosed that only 13.7 percent of the electorate did not heed the call of the united opposition for a boycott of the referendum on July 10, 1978.

The PNC's waning support was evidenced by the fact that despite coercion (public servants and teachers are coerced to picket, to attend rallies and to make donations to the PNC coffers), the regime failed to collect through the TUC-supported voluntary Defence Bonds Scheme \$30 million in 1977 for the so-called People's Militia; only \$2.7 million was collected. A sum of \$2 million was budgeted for in 1978, but only \$100,000 was collected.

Further evidence of its growing unpopularity comes from developments in its two former strongholds — Georgetown, the capital, and Linden, the bauxite mining town — and elsewhere. Disillusionment and discontent led to a low voters' turnout of 60-65 percent in Georgetown during the 1973 general election as compared with 90-95 percent in other parts of the country generally; as well as to the boeing of the Prime Minister during May Day (1977) celebrations.

An official PNC report for the Georgetown region showed a decline in membership for 1977 as follows: adult — 46 percent; child — 63 percent; youth (YSM) — 52 percent; and women (WRSM) — 57.4 percent. For the Eastern Berbice region, a confidential report from the Ministry of National Development, dated February 1978, disclosed that at the end of 1977, the total card-bearing membership has been progressively declining. Over the period, a total of 1,481 members had not renewed their membership. The downturn in membership has had chaotic effects on group activities, resulting in the disintegration of 95 out of a total of 162 groups.

The "serious economic crisis" was given as the background to the cracking up of PNC membership. Specifically mentioned were the "stringent actions" taken by the party in government in removing subsidies on essential foodstuffs and services, e.g., rice, milk, flour, cooking oil, electricity, transportation, etc.; and the redeployment (retrenchment) of workers as a result of "severe cuts in domestic government spending".

INTRIGUES OF PNC AND IMPERIALISM

With its popularity at rock-bottom level, the PNC was faced with the choice in early 1978 of either holding and rigging a new election or postponing it. It decided on the latter course.

After rigging the referendum on July 10, 1978, the PNC with its two-thirds majority extended the life of the government from five years to six years and three months. At the same time, a resolution was also approved incorporating the same 53 members of the National Assembly into a Constituent Assembly for the purpose of drafting a new constitution.

Having become politically isolated, and being financially weak, the PNC petty-bourgeois elite is strengthening its alliance with the big bourgeois and landlord classes, and at the same time turning to imperialism for support.

There has been a positive response. The foreign bourgeoisie now have common interests with local PNC petty-bourgeoisie and bourgeoisie in ensuring that in domestic affairs anti-imperialist nationalisation does not proceed to socialism but is channelled to a capitalist course, and that the revolutionary upsurge is contained. Imperialism also wants to modify the PNC's previous anti-imperialist posture in foreign affairs and to keep Guyana in the capitalist camp.

With setbacks and defeat in the Far East, the Middle East and Africa, the imperialists became concerned about Latin America and the Caribbean particularly in view of democratic, anti-imperialist developments in the early part of this decade. For example, after a red-carpet welcome in 1972 with police harassment and arrest of PPP demonstrators and picketers, Nelson Rockefeller, in his report on the region, had written that Guyana was not a politically stable nation, that its political sphere reflected both the strength of a communist party and the depth of racial tension, and that a communist victory would completely change Guyana's foreign policy. He went on to point out that it was therefore of crucial concern to the United States

and other nations of the western hemisphere as well as Great Britain, and that Brazil, in particular, had indicated its concern.

With some imperialist gains in Latin America, the focus of attention shifted to the Caribbean. Concern was noted by Terrence Todman, former US Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, particularly because of developments in Venezuela, Guyana and Jamaica in the 1974-76 period. Addressing the Sub-Committee on Inter-American Affairs of the House International Relations Committee in June 1977, he noted:

We used to see the Caribbean mainly in security terms. Our interventions there were often largely motivated by security considerations, and we sometimes referred to the Caribbean as "our lake".

We still have security interests in the Caribbean. It is our "third border". But we no longer see the Caribbean in quite the same stark military security content that we once viewed it. Rather, our security concerns in the Caribbean are increasingly political in nature. The threat is not simply foreign military bases on our doorsteps. It is possibly an even more troublesome prospect; proliferation of impoverished third world states, whose economic and political problems blend with our own. A militant anti-US posture could appear to them as the only way to get our attention and realise their ambitions.

I do not believe that this new "security" concern is a chimera. If the present adverse trends in the region continue, and we take no effective action, I think we can count on unfortunate developments.

Further, Todman went on:

Guyana is seeking a different path to social and economic development, one with which we have no quarrel and which we have no reason to fear. Despite its different political philosophy and our differences of the past, Guyana looks to us for understanding and cooperation. By cooperating with Guyana we can emphasise once again our readiness to respect different ways of political and social development.

Obviously, with "a closing of the gap in views", US ruling circles are not too perturbed about the PNC's "cooperative socialist" ideology or its occasional claim that its ideas are based on Marx, Engels and Lenin. Imperialism has learnt from experience not to fear socialist rhetoric: "Arab socialist" Egypt and the "African socialist" Senegal teamed up on its side in the Angolan crisis. "Socialist" Norman Thomas of the Socialist Party of the USA admitted receiving \$US1 million from the CIA which was used to set up 17 socialist parties in Latin America to fight against communism,

When Todman says "by cooperating with Guyana we can emphasise once again our readiness to respect different ways of political and social development", he is referring to the changed emphasis in US policies towards Guyana during the past thirteen years. At first, the US government gave full economic and political support in 1964-70 period when the PNC regime carried out pro-imperialist domestic and foreign policies. Later, particularly in the 1975-76 period, when the regime was forced into an anti-imperialist position, economic and political pressures were applied. Guyana-US relations reached a near breaking point in October 1976 when the US State Department called Forbes Burnham a "bald faced liar" and recalled the US Charge D'Affairs from Georgetown. This was after the Prime Minister had stated that the CIA had been involved in the Cubana airline sabotage in which 73 persons, including 11 Guyanese, perished.

In the same period, the Manley government in Jamaica was under heavy "destabilisation" pressures. The PNP regime had placed a bauxite levy on the foreign monopolies which resulted in a 400 percent increase in revenue from that dwindling asset. Simultaneously, Prime Minister Manley had not only embraced President Fidel Castro, but had also spoken in glowing terms about the Cuban revolution.

Since 1977, typical neo-colonial methods have been resorted to in Guyana and Jamaica particularly. This is in keeping with the new tactics of imperialism. The "low profile" quiet diplomacy of ex-Professor Zbigniew Brzezinski has replaced the interventionist and "shuttle" diplomacy of Dr. Henry Kissinger. The new US National Security Adviser in an article in Foreign

Policy magazine titled "America in a Hostile World", pointed out that "military power by itself will no longer dictate the ability of a nation to influence political, social and cultural development", and called for a "new international economic order (NIEO). Of course, his interpretation of the NIEO is quite different from that of the revolutionary-democratic "third world" states!

Brzesinski is fully aware that though military power succeeded in crushing the revolutionary forces in the Dominican Republic in 1965, it later failed abysmally in Vietnam; that because of US public opinion, President Gerald Ford and Henry Kissinger failed to commit military forces in Angola; that the US government succeeded in dismantling the missile base in Cuba, but failed to isolate and destroy it as a socialist bastion in the Americas. Cuba's prestige and influence has grown in the Caribbean, particularly after Trinidad, Guyana, Jamaica and Barbados broke the US-imposed OAS blockade and simultaneously established diplomatic relations with it in 1972.

For the US ruling class, more subtle means have to be found to contain national liberation and socialism. To attain imperialist objectives, the US National Security Adviser, in a previous book, *Alternative to Participation*, had stated that "everything to weaken the security of the socialist bloc and dependence on the socialist bloc should be rewarded".

The PNC regime has been rewarded. For its acts of national betrayal, it had been awarded a \$48 million standby credit which has now been increased by \$206.4 million by an Extended Arrangement with the IMF, and over \$500 million from the imperialist states and imperialist-controlled financial institutions like the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, no doubt, "to influence political, economic and cultural development". But as in the past, "aid" will be a palliative, not a cure; the growth rate in the new Plan period (1978-81) will not be attained and thus enough income will not be generated to meet mounting debt payments. Clearly, imperialism is manoeuvring to ensnare Guyana into a debt trap, and the PNC is mortgaging our country's national independence and sovereignty.

The Prime Minister has decided to forget what he had told civil servants at the Public Service Training Centre in 1970. Then, when his government was referring to aid as "raid", he had said that foreign aid and foreign investment were not capable of ensuring the maximum development of our resources.

Military missions from the United States, United Kingdom and Canada pay regular visits to our country and our soldiers go, as in the pre-1974 period, to the capitalist countries for military training where no doubt they also get political indoctrination. At the ideological-educational level, the World Bank, which financed the building of our multilateral schools, has control over curriculum planning!

Political support has also been rendered to the PNC. In the face of blatant electoral fraud and denial of human rights, Senator Daniel Moynihan in March 1977 had listed Guyana among six countries (the other five being India, Sri Lanka, Barbados, Jamaica and Gambia) which had been able, since World War II, to change their governments through free elections. Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Philip C. Habib, after a brief one-day visit to Guyana in June 1977, said concerning violations of human rights that "this is not, in our view, a problem in Guyana"; and Terrence Todman declared that Guyana was a democratic society and approved of Guyana's path as "one with which we have no quarrel and which we have no reason to fear."

Emboldened by imperialist political support, the PNC is now proceeding to rig the constitution to perpetuate itself in power, as Ian Smith did in Zimbabwe-Rhodesia. Ostensibly, the manoeuvre for the postponement of the election was the framing of a new constitution for "a socialist Guyana". But in reality, the PNC plans to rig the constitution through the addition of nominated members from PNC-controlled "mass organisations". Thus the National Assembly of 53 elected representatives will be packed with between 10 to 26 PNC-controlled members.

In other words, the PNC plans, through a combination of constitutional rigging and electoral rigging, to institutionalise itself in power indefinitely. An Executive President with supreme power will replace the present ceremonial President.

"Self-preservation is nature's first law," said Prime Minister Burnham in the National Assembly in 1971. As in Iran and Nicaragua, the PNC plans to set up a Burnham dynasty and an authoritarian dictatorship with a facade of revolution and democracy — state financed and PNC-controlled "mass" organisations represented in the National Assembly; the ruling party indistinguishable from the state and usurping all its functions and privileges (around 1970, a government minister dubbed critics of the PNC as "enemies of the state"); the police, military and par-military forces integrated with the ruling party. Unsure of the army top brass because of its various tendencies — traditional neutrality and loyalty to the government of the day; anti-imperialist orientation in the 1974-76 period; pro-imperialist indoctrination especially in the post-1976 period — the PNC carried out an army purge. Norman McLean, who headed the National Service, the PNC militarised youth corps, had been catapulted to the top.

These new moves are creating some problems for the Carter administration: how to reconcile its championing of human rights and its support for a regime which is becoming more and more totalitarian. The State Department, in its report in February 1979 to the Foreign Relations Committee of the US Senate, while white-washing the PNC regime, was forced to admit certain violations. It recognised that "there were numerous complaints regarding the government's registration procedures for the referendum, and credible allegations of manipulation of the vote". The report also confirmed that the most serious allegation of human violations voiced by the churches to opposition party leaders was "that Prime Minister Forbes Burnham's PNC has consistently rigged elections from 1968 to the referendum of July 10, 1978."

For fear of the revolutionary forces and in the absence of any credible right wing or centre alternative, the US administration continues to support the PNC. It knows, however, that the PNC is tottering. And recent experience has shown that mightily armed dictators like the Shah of Iran and Somoza of Nicaragua cannot sustain themselves against the wrath of the people. Nor can it easily send interventionist forces as it did in the Dominican Republic in 1965 or in Vietnam in the late 60s and early 70s. Its attempt to send to Nicaragua such a force under the euphemism of "peace force" failed. For the first time, on account of the change of the correlation of forces in Latin America and the world at large, the Organisation of American States did not carry out the orders of the US administration. Imperialism's tactics are therefore to build up new political forces, especially those headed by Christian and social democrats.

In Guyana, it is working to find new political forces led by the middle strata as a substitute for the Guyana United Muslim Party, the Justice Party, the United Force and the PNC. With such forces, it could even attempt a pre-emptive military coup to forestall a victory of the revolutionary forces. This was no doubt the reason for the shake-up in the army. We must continue to be vigilant. We must be fully conscious both of the manoeuvre of the reactionary PNC and the imperialists.

There are also manoeuvrings in the Caribbean. In Jamaica, an attempt was made by the CIA to destabilise the Manley government in favour of the reactionary forces. After the PNP won the 1976 general elections, the US administration changed its tactic. As in Guyana, through the IMF and other controlled agencies, imperialism hopes to halt the national liberation revolution. This will be done either by containing the democratic socialism of the Manley government as had been done in Great Britain and elsewhere, or by installing at the next general election as in India and Sri Lanka, the ultra-rightist forces represented mainly by the pro-capitalist and pro-imperialist Jamaica Labour Party.

In the imperialist scheme for the English-speaking Caribbean, Grenada under the fascist Gairy regime, with connections with the Mafia and Pinochet's Chile, had been intended as a military base. With Gairy's downfall and the establishment of the People's Revolutionary Government led by Maurice Bishop, the revolutionary upheavals and the removal of Patrick John in Dominica, the electoral defeat of John Compton in St. Lucia, the forced exile of Somoza of Nicaragua, the US administration has proposed to sell arms to Barbados and to give military support to the "Caribbean Peace Force" whose establishment has been called for after the Grenada Revolution by the less-developed territories of the English-speaking Caribbean. This

“Peace Force” is similar to the Inter-American Peace Force set up by President Nixon under his Vietnamisation policy for Latin Americans to hold down other Latin Americans.

WORKING CLASS UNITY

The PNC's call in 1977 for the destruction of the Opposition was a vain hope. Actually, the balance of forces has definitely shifted in favour of the progressive and revolutionary forces.

The July 10 referendum with cooperation among four political parties, five unions and workers organisations in key sectors of the economy, the principal bodies representing the three main religions in Guyana, and practically all the professional groups, amply demonstrated that the forces of progress were numerically much stronger in 1978 than in 1973, and even in 1953 when our national liberation movement was united.

The shift was also shown in the TUC's annual conference in September 1978. In the contest for the presidency, Gordon Todd (CCWU President) secured 90 votes, far more than he had received in the 1976 election. What is even more significant was that of the 90 votes, the four progressive unions which supported his candidature had only 55 votes; the remaining 35 votes came from delegates of PNC-controlled trade unions. What is more, had Todd received 11 more votes, he would have defeated the PNC-backed candidate, Basil Blair.

There is also growing working class, and — what is equally important — racial unity. Contributing to this are several factors: the increasing cooperation between our party and the Working People's Alliance (WPA); the close collaboration between the Guyana Agricultural and General Workers Union (GAWU), the Clerical and Commercial Workers Union (CCWU), the National Association of Agricultural, Commercial and Industrial Employees (NAACIE), the University of Guyana Staff Association (UGSA), and the Organisation of Working People (OWP) — all of which represent about half the organised labour force and unite urban and rural, Black and Indian, workers; the PNC regime's financial inability to bribe its supporters on the same scale as before 1977; its dismissal of 4,000 workers in 1977-78 and the hardships created by its state-capitalist and cooperative capitalist policies; the state as the common employer of public service, agricultural, bauxite, clerical and commercial workers; the government's refusal to pay the \$14 minimum daily wage and increments from January 1979; better communication, rural migration to Georgetown and the breakdown of the geographical isolation of the predominantly rural-based Indians and the urban-based Blacks; our proposal for a National Patriotic Front Government and “winner does not take all” electoral policy.

As working class unity grows, the contradictions between the PNC and the TUC, and within the TUC, are sharpening.

The first actual contradiction between the TUC and the PNC regime occurred in the 1967-70 period when an attempt was made to impose compulsory arbitration legislation with an anti-strike feature. The Trade Disputes Bill had to be withdrawn in 1970 due to the vehement opposition from both our party and the TUC. Later, in early 1975, during GAWU's strike, the government hurriedly, without consulting the TUC, enacted an amendment to the Labour Act to provide for compulsory arbitration.

Another major confrontation occurred in late 1977 during GAWU's 135-days strike. Apart from the many other undemocratic practices by the state, the major issue was the employment of over 6,000 scabs and the refusal of GUYSUCO to remove them at the end of the strike. On principle, the TUC supported GAWU and came out in opposition to the government and GUYSUCO.

At the TUC annual conference in September 1978, a resolution was passed calling for the removal of the 294 percent increase of the National Insurance Scheme rates as well as the increase of deductions for the Widows and Orphans Fund from the workers' already diminishing wages. A month later, the TUC Executive decided that a general strike should be called.

In the light of worsening conditions and greater violations of industrial democracy and civil rights, the TUC membership decided that a specially convened conference should be held to discuss the economic situation. Recognising the interconnection and interaction, the reciprocal

influence — stimulating or hampering as the case may be — of the economy and politics, the conference held in November 1978 unanimously passed a resolution for a political solution.

In 1979, the government refused to pay the \$14 minimum daily wage for the workers in the state sector. This led to a spectacle at the TUC May Day rally at the National Park, which was commandeered by the PNC, its women and youth sections, the military and the paramilitary forces. When the \$14-a-day resolution was put to the vote, and the PNC brainwashed, specially-positioned and tutored followers shouted “no”, the TUC General Secretary Joseph Pollydore retorted: “The workers will decide.”

But no real action has been taken by the TUC on any of the main issues. Coming under increasing pressure from both the workers and the government, the PNC-controlled bureaucracy is vacillating. In the sugar strike, it limited itself to paper and verbal support. Consequently, the regime not only retained the scabs at the end of the strike, but also honoured them. According to the state-owned *Citizen* of August 25, 1978:

The curtain came down last night on the history-making distribution of certificates to volunteers who had armed themselves with cutlasses to defend the economy during the 135-days sugar strike last year. . . Agriculture Minister Gavin Kennard referred to the volunteers as “Heroes of the Socialist Revolution in Guyana” and expressed the hope that by their example and leadership they would motivate all citizens in this battle for the economic survival of our beloved country.

The TUC has not taken any firm action on the increases for the National Insurance and Widows and Orphans Fund Schemes, on which it had decided on a general strike. Nor has it put up a fight for the \$14 daily minimum wage.

In the tense industrial and political situation, the PNC regime will tighten its grip on the bureaucracy. To maintain its control so as to keep the TUC as an instrument for holding down the workers, it will continue to rig union elections, as it has done in the bauxite industry both in 1976 and 1978; at the same time, it will not agree to a fair method of apportionment of delegates on a proportional basis.

The TUC structure is such that it can be easily controlled by the PNC and even emasculated. Delegates to its annual conference are allotted to unions not on a proportional basis according to membership, but on a sliding scale as follows: three delegates up to 200 members; above 200 to 500, two delegates; and above 500, one delegate for each 500 or part thereof.

This rule discriminates against the big unions and favours the small government-sponsored or -affiliated unions. For instance, GAWU with 15,000 members has 25 percent of the total TUC membership but only 34 delegates equivalent to 17 percent. As compared with this, 8 affiliates, with less than 1,000 members each and a combined membership of 2,814, that is, 4.7 percent of the total TUC membership, were entitled to 34 delegates, the same as GAWU. Another 5 government-sponsored or -affiliated unions with a membership of only 13,615, equivalent to 23 percent of total membership, got 45 delegates, equivalent to 23 percent.

Because of the weightage of delegates in favour of these five and other government-controlled unions, GAWU failed to get an executive post and got only three seats in the TUC Executive Committee of 26 members; in other words, 25 percent of the membership and less than 12 percent representation. By contrast, the Association of Masters and Mistresses had only 137 members, but got 2 members in the Executive Committee, one of whom holds an executive post.

Pressure from the workers will increase in the near future as a result of PNC’s national betrayal and the TUC’s sell-out. According to the PNC, the primary concern of the trade unions “will no longer be the immediate economic interests of their members”, but the safeguarding of the “economic and other interests of the state”. The TUC bureaucrats have not bothered either to question the reactionary petty-bourgeois character of the state or to fight for a workers’ state.

The progressive wing of the TUC is unwilling to go along with the sell-out policies of the bureaucracy. Recently, it constituted a coordinating committee of four main unions and the pro-

gressive sections of some other unions. At the same time, it has mounted a campaign to mobilise public opinion to pressure the TUC to fight for the interest of the workers.

Without a proper mandate, the TUC bureaucracy submitted proposals to the rigged Constituent Assembly which are in keeping with the PNC's objectives to remain in power indefinitely. As the mouthpiece of the PNC, it proposed to the Constituent Assembly a system of nominated members for the National Assembly from PNC-controlled organisations to facilitate the institutionalisation of the PNC in power. The point that needs to be stressed is that the most important legal document in the country — its constitution — is being determined by parliamentarians whose term of office had expired, and that this wholly unacceptable situation is presently being compounded by the "nomination" proposals. The TUC also indicated that the minority party or parties in Parliament would have the right to nominate ministers of the new government. This it will no doubt justify as fulfilment of the resolution of the TUC's special conference calling for a political solution, and of the PPP's call for a National Patriotic Front Government of all progressive, left and democratic forces.

While the latter might appear to meet the need for a political solution in the national interest, nevertheless, nothing has been said about the need for machinery to ensure free and fair elections. It is through rigged elections that the PNC has been able to obtain power at the local and central government levels. In the past, the TUC has always voted down any attempt to bring about a fair electoral system and procedures which would ensure free and fair elections.

The general election must be held between mid-October to mid-January unless the PNC resorts to another postponement. Whenever it is held, it will be rigged as in the past.

The political struggle must therefore be mounted against the rigging of the constitution, as well as the rigging of the elections. The decisive battles must be at the level of the organised working people.

In this regard, the coordinating committee of the progressive trade unions have a pivotal role to play. The workers and their trade union leaders must see the interconnection between the industrial and the political. The battle must be joined not only for bread and butter issues, for better wages and working conditions, but a change in government.

We must not wait on election day. We must concentrate all our forces for a continuous and militant struggle for free and fair elections, for a genuine people's revolutionary democratic government.

THE PPP — THE VANGUARD OF THE WORKING CLASS

The PPP, as the vanguard of the working class, is in the forefront of the struggle for national liberation, peace and socialism. True to the principles of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, it constantly wages a many-sided battle to realise the aspirations of the Guyanese working people. Through persistent and patient discussion, dialogue and persuasion, it establishes its leading and guiding role. It does not believe in the PNC's dictatorial concept of "paramountcy of the party".

Our Party fights simultaneously on the political and ideological fronts. In the highly specific conditions of our country, race and religion are used politically to sow confusion and to divide and rule. Internationally, at the time when the world balance of forces has shifted decisively against imperialism, when the imperialists cannot easily resort to "big stick" methods, increasing use is made of ideological warfare. Apart from casting blame for the financial and moral bankruptcy on other shoulders, the PNC ruling clique is spreading imperialist propaganda when it speaks about "interdependence", that "developing countries taking part in the North-South dialogue should forget the idea that gains for one side involved poverty and loss for the other".

We do not share the view of some who take a "no ideology" position; who state that ideology is irrelevant and merely divides, and that what is needed is merely unity against the regime. For us, unity without struggle is as barren as struggle without unity.

The PPP wages a constant and consistent battle against PNC's ideological demagoguery. Its utopian "cooperative socialism" is no different from Rev. Jim Jones "utopian communism", which led over 900 unfortunate victims to their graves. The party fights against Maoism, neo-Trotskyism, dogmatism, sectarianism and pragmatism.

Scientific socialist theory must be combined with revolutionary practice. Theory is taught by the PNC at the Cuffy Ideological Institute and at the Kuru-kuru Cooperative College, but there are distortions in theory and practice.

The PPP, despite provocation, has patiently worked for working class unity. PNC's subjectivism and intransigence resulted in the non-realisation of this objective. Cooperation with the Working People's Alliance is bringing it about. We will strive to strengthen this cooperation for left unity on a principled basis.

Despite the rejection by the PNC of our call for a National Patriotic Front (NPF) and Government, the PPP will continue to struggle for their attainment. The NPF will be a broad-based unity, not only of the left, but also of all the progressive and democratic forces. It will include the workers, farmers, radical intelligentsia and the progressive and patriotic businessmen. Its programme will be democratic, anti-imperialist and socialist oriented.

We do not see any mechanical separation between democracy, anti-imperialism and socialist orientation. They are all interlinked in the dialectical revolutionary process. Experience in Guyana has shown that imperialist domination and control led to a denial of democracy and human rights; that, despite nationalization and other anti-imperialist policies in the 1974-76 period, undemocratic practices and failure to carry out the political, economic, cultural and ideological pre-conditions for socialist orientation fettered the productive forces and undermined the economy, which in turn resulted in a new alliance between the PNC and imperialism. In spite of its posturing, the PNC cannot be divorced from imperialism. A democratic, anti-dictatorial, anti-PNC alliance must therefore also be a democratic and anti-imperialist alliance.

The PPP recognises the positive role that can and must be played by the progressive, labour-oriented section of the petty-bourgeoisie, the national-patriotic bourgeoisie, and the middle strata generally. We regard an alliance with these forces not as a temporary tactical manoeuvre, but as a strategic necessity to attain political power and make social progress. These forces can make a substantial contribution in a socialist-oriented economy. Socialist orientation is not socialism; it means preparing the conditions for a transition to socialism.

The PPP works on the basis of unity and struggle — alliance with all progressive and revolutionary forces; opposition to all opportunist, racist, demagogic and reactionary forces.

The Party does not demand ideological conformity. In the National Patriotic Front, there is a place for communists and non-communists. There is, however, no room for anti-communists, for anti-communism is a reactionary ideology, the ideology of imperialism and the CIA. As Marxist-Leninists, we are prepared to sit together with all truly democratic and progressive forces to hammer out a common minimum programme for the attainment of our national goals and our people's aspirations.

ORGANISATION

Our party organisation maintains and fosters good relations with the working people of Guyana by championing their cause.

The majority of our membership, concentrated on the coastland, is serviced by the several district party organisers and two county supervisors. They constitute a direct link between the leadership and rank and file members.

The party structure is based on the group, district and regional committees. The interior areas are not organised on a regional basis due to the many adverse factors such as transportation, communication, etc. Nevertheless, our groups, members and supporters in the Rupununi and Northwest District are serviced by full-time party organisers. In these areas, our party enjoys the support of the majority of the Amerindians.

Group meetings, seminars, district and regional conferences are some of the means through which the Party' discusses matters of importance with its membership. Through the medium of the Regional Members Conference, opportunity is provided for discussion and consultation on matters of highest importance such as the National Patriotic Front proposals and the infamous July 10 referendum.

At the mass level, public meetings, bottom-house meetings, rallies, picketing, vigils, demonstrations, etc., are used to communicate and rally public support. During the past three years, from the time of our last congress, our party organised 27 regional conferences, 304 picketing exercises, 47 rallies and demonstrations and 547 public meetings. Our work would have been more fruitful had the police not denied us permission on many occasions for meetings, particularly in the Amerindian districts. Rarely are demonstrations and marches permitted.

A significant breakthrough, especially during the past year, was our activity in the cultural field. The party's influence in traditional PNC areas is gaining ground, making possible the holding of public meetings, the establishment of groups and the sale of literature. For instance, the *Mirror* which is playing a vital role as a political agitator and vocal mouthpiece of the working class, is being circulated widely. At Linden, 600 copies of the Sunday edition of the *Mirror* are sold every weekend; arrangements are now being made to supply the mid-week edition.

Despite organised thuggery and police manoeuvres, a successful boycott was organised against the referendum.

While much has been achieved, we must admit of an organisational lag; we cling too much to our traditional areas of support and work mostly in residential areas. To produce more effective results, there is the urgent need to expand our work at the workplace, at industrial and commercial enterprises. Our organisation must concentrate more of our resources in this direction, and in traditional PNC areas. The growing dissatisfaction among PNC supporters and the population generally affords us greater opportunities for extending our influence.

We have not achieved the targets we had set in certain fields. Immediately we must fulfil the task of establishing a countrywide network of militant ratepayers and tenants associations. GALA must be exposed for the sham it is. We must also fulfil the task of setting up a vibrant parent-teachers association at every school.

As our party groups and membership expand, there is need to extend our administrative facilities also. We have bought the property west of Freedom House and we hope to expand our headquarters soon. We must also strive for each region to establish its own headquarters, equipped with facilities to meet the growing needs of the organisation.

Since its last congress, the Progressive Youth Organisation (PYO), the youth arm of our party, continues to extend its influence among the Guyanese youth. There has been a steady inflow of cadres, large numbers of whom attended Accabre College before proceeding for studies abroad. In this regard, group ideological work has been stepped up.

There were two PYO events of major national importance — the 25th anniversary conference held in September 1977, and the 10th congress in July 1978. Because of government's refusal to permit the use of schools, both events had to be held under makeshift tents.

The PYO participated with 44 members in the 11th World Festival of Youths and Students in Havana, Cuba, in July-August 1978, in spite of official attempts to limit the numbers.

The PYO has also retained its position as a member of the Executive Committee of the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY) and International Union of Students (IUS). The organisation should also be credited for establishing a Pioneer Section on International Children's Day.

The publications, the monthly paper, *Youth Advance*, and the student bulletin, *Flame*, continue their important roles in raising the consciousness of the youths and students of Guyana.

Many new and interesting developments have taken place in the Women's Progressive Organisation — the women's arm of the PPP. Its 7th Congress and its 25th anniversary celebrations were highly successful. Since its last congress, the WPO successfully organised actions on problems affecting women and children such as food shortages, black-marketing, high cost of living, shortages of drugs and medical facilities, and so on. March 6, the day Kowsillia was

murdered, was declared a National Day of Solidarity with the Struggling Women of Guyana. A National Preparatory Committee for International Children's Year was formed to expose the horrible conditions of Guyanese children, and to demand that the government take the necessary steps to alleviate the rapidly deteriorating living conditions.

The WPO, a bureau member of the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF), was actively involved in international seminars and conferences, thereby extending full solidarity and support to oppressed women throughout the world.

EDUCATION

Formal two- and three-weeks courses, centrally organised, have been put on a year-round basis. Five hundred and seventy-five (575) comrades attended the basic courses, of which approximately 79 percent were members of the PPP, PYO and WPO. Advanced courses have also been introduced for a similar duration, and 109 comrades attended these.

Since our last congress, over 55 PPP, PYO and WPO members have been sent on short-term courses abroad. Additionally, six comrades completed their university studies, have returned to Guyana and have been refused employment by the government. Another five comrades, who pursued technical courses, have also returned to the country.

To these should be added several seminars for members and non-members alike, group, district and regional educationals — discussions, classes, lectures — and specific activities in keeping with the continuing need for cadre development and raising the level of ideological and political awareness of our membership and the people.

Training tutors to assist in ideological-educational work at mass levels is at a beginning, experimental stage, and several guidance papers on various theoretical and practical questions have been prepared to give effect to this objective.

In view of the sharpening ideological debates and the growing demand for clarity in order to dispel the prevalent confusion about socialism and distortions of Marxism-Leninism, the Party has now launched a systematic programme intended to expand and intensify our ideological-educational work.

The need for a better and fully equipped party school, with the capacity to satisfy the influx of students and geared for longer and simultaneous courses, has now arisen. To this end, a property at La Bonne Intention (LBI), East Coast Demerara, has been acquired and construction work is scheduled to commence early.

The party considers that the important educational aspect of our work ought to be purposefully and more seriously carried out by all party bodies. Every member has the task to continue developing himself/herself in the spirit of the party, acquire a sound ideological foundation and promote Marxism-Leninism, at the same time relying on its principles to help him/her to understand fully the developing situation, to analyse new conditions and correctly to resolve all problems.

PROPAGANDA

The propaganda of the party, to a large extent, has been very effective, and has actually resulted in putting the regime on the defensive to explain to the people all its failures and shortcomings. This propaganda work is in the form of publications, street corner public meetings, indoor lectures, mass rallies, protests, demonstrations, marches, press releases, exposés in the *Mirror*, press conferences, etc., to name the most important aspects. In disseminating its propaganda, the party sought to staunchly defend the right of the working people from further erosion and attacks.

Since the last congress, 15 booklets have been published; 15 more are at the preparatory stage, and several are to be reprinted. Obsolete printing facilities and newsprint supplies pose a continuing problem.

The aim of the PNC is to muzzle the revolutionary working people's press. In the face of growing demand for literature, and the refusal by the government to grant licences for the importation of printing equipment and newsprint, the New Guyana Company Limited, instituted court action in 1972. After some years, the case came up for hearing in the High Court; judgement was handed down against the regime and damages awarded. However, an appeal was lodged against the decision; the Court of Appeal ruled that the government cannot guarantee newsprint supply to anyone in terms of the constitution, or the importation of printing equipment, materials, etc. Heavy costs will have to be borne by the company. And import licences for the importation of newsprint are not being granted.

The regime's propaganda seeks to portray itself as democratic, anti-imperialist and socialist, and Guyana as a bed of roses. The overseas *Mirror* tells the truth as it exists, and is able to counter the false propaganda disseminated overseas through a highly-paid public relations agency and Guyana's foreign missions. The party's theoretical and discussion journal, *Thunder*, published quarterly, is circulated widely within Guyana and overseas. The propaganda committee is currently seeking to boost its circulation, and to have *Thunder* made mandatory literature for all party members, groups and study circles.

Our propaganda at all forums is to defend the sacred principles of Marxism-Leninism. The PNC poses as a Marxist party and carries out malpractices in the name of Marxism. This tends to confuse the populace and serves as grit for the mill of the ultra-rightist forces who pose as "democrats" and "anti-communists". At the same time, the regime slanders the USSR and socialist countries and places the CMEA on the same footing as the EEC.

Great danger emanates from the fact that the PNC implements unpopular capitalistic, anti-worker and anti-farmer policies in the name of Marxism-Leninism, thereby objectively discrediting Marxism to the disgruntled masses. The abysmal failure of the nationalised industries under PNC mismanagement is also seen as paving the way for demands for the return of the said industries to private transnational ownership. The ultra-rightists are already saying that the state cannot run anything efficiently, and are building up a campaign for the denationalisation of sugar and bauxite.

During the past three years, tens of thousands of handbills and leaflets were printed on many local and international issues. These were produced in accordance with the needs of the given moments and are usually released to coincide with ad hoc situations arising in the country.

INTERNATIONALISM

As was mentioned earlier in the international section, the correlation of forces in the world today is, without any doubt, in favour of socialism, in favour of the world revolutionary forces. This is so primarily as a result of consolidated efforts and unity of all communist and workers' parties in the struggle for peace, progress and socialism; against fascism, imperialism, neo-colonialism, colonialism and racism.

The People's Progressive Party has been very active in this struggle, not only in Guyana, but also in the international arena. This was manifested by the party's attendance at many international conferences, seminars meetings and congresses of fraternal parties, and by solidarity actions in favour of the oppressed peoples of the world.

From the time of our last congress, our party made many visits to the socialist countries to attend congresses, conferences, seminars and anniversary celebrations. At the same time, fraternal visits were made to study the experiences of communist parties of these countries in the building of socialism.

Special attention was paid to promote unity of the progressive and revolutionary forces of the Caribbean. As such, the People's Progressive Party hosted a "Special Consultative Meeting of Marxist-Leninist Workers and Revolutionary-Democratic Parties and Groups of the Caribbean" in 1977. It took part in the first congress of the Workers Party of Jamaica, the 6th congress of the Communist Party of Guadeloupe, the 6th congress of the Communist Party of Mar-

tinique, the 4th Anniversary of Yulimo. Several other opportunities were taken for bilateral discussions throughout the region.

Solidarity activities were initiated by the Party in support of the peoples of Vietnam, Kampuchea, Grenada, Nicaragua, Southern Africa, Palestine, Chile and Puerto Rico, and for the release of political prisoners in Latin America.

Of special importance was the role of the party in the Guyana Peace Council and in friendship associations for the promotion of world friendship and peace.

REVOLUTIONARY-DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT

At the political level, our party's prestige and influence have grown. Forces which at one time were opposed to us are now cooperating with us. When we were in government, sections of the middle strata, fearing our economic programme and our position with respect to the foreign and local monopolies, declared that Burnham was "the lesser of the two evils" — PNC's socialism and PPP's communism. Today, with state capitalism and the emergence through state patronage of a new bourgeoisie, discrimination and corruption, these same forces are virtually saying: "better PPP than PNC".

These new developments indicate a positive shift in the balance of forces in favour of peace, democracy and social progress. At the regional level, this trend has led to successes in Grenada, Dominica and St. Lucia. In Guyana, too, we will be victorious. Forward to a genuine people's revolutionary-democratic government!

Long live the PPP!

Long live socialism!

Long live international solidarity!

Long live proletarian internationalism!

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The Twenty-First Congress

Report of the Central Committee to the 21st Congress,
presented by Dr. Cheddi Jagan, General Secretary of
the PPP — Mon Repos, 31 July-2 August 1982

THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

Comrades,

International developments over the past three years have witnessed a further consolidation and strengthening of the socialist system, significant successes by the national liberation movement and an upsurge in the struggle of the peace, democratic and working class forces in the capitalist countries. The world revolutionary process is unfolding before our very eyes.

The era of transition from capitalism to socialism was ushered in by the Great October Socialist Revolution led by the immortal Lenin and inspired by the teachings of Marx and Engels. The most profound revolutionary upheaval on earth gave birth to the mighty Soviet Union led and guided by the party of Lenin, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union stands today as a shining example of the potentialities of workers' power by the creation of a stable and united society in which peace, freedom and socialism are goals which have already been attained.

The socialist countries have demonstrated the superiority of planned economic development together with social ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange. Despite an on-going crisis in most of the major capitalist countries, the socialist economies have shown stability and continued economic growth with increasing benefits and improved standard of living for the people.

The main reports of the 26th congress of the CPSU show quite clearly that the "world economic crisis" referred to by the bourgeois press is not a crisis of socialism, but of capitalism. It is quite true that tremendous problems, which were discussed quite frankly in the reports, have to be overcome. But such problems are part and parcel of the historic task undertaken by the CPSU and the Soviet people. It is also true that certain countries such as Poland are in the throes of deep economic and social crisis caused by internal difficulties and external subversion. We say that any impartial and dispassionate view can only be that the socialist economies have made and are making substantial strides. We also say that imperialist machinations in Poland or elsewhere will not succeed. Communism and socialism are on the move; new societies free from exploitation are being built; we in the People's Progressive Party stand together with this wave of the future, a wave which will usher in a new era of liberty and justice.

The national liberation movements have registered remarkable successes over the past three years. At this congress we applaud all those countries which have bravely, though newly, joined the ranks of the anti-imperialist states.

US imperialism had dictated for Iran the role of gendarme for the Middle East and it provided an important intelligence and strategic outpost. The Shah of Iran was therefore one of the most honoured guests in Washington and was provided with billions of dollars in the latest military equipment as well as the latest torture techniques for his secret police. The loss of Iran to imperialism is no doubt a telling blow in recent times.

The Caribbean area, traditionally regarded as the quiet backyard of US imperialism has attracted the attention of the US within recent times. The reasons for this new attention are the events in El Salvador, Nicaragua, Grenada and Suriname. The successful national liberation and anti-imperialist victories in Nicaragua, Grenada and Suriname have shaken the foundations of imperialist domination of Central America and the Caribbean. The magnificent struggle of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front in El Salvador, despite massive assistance to their puppets in the effort to stop the people's struggles, will surely be victorious. These factors, together with the consolidation of the victories in Nicaragua, Grenada and Suriname and the powerful influence of Cuba are responsible for the frantic and bellicose threats of the Reaganites against the countries in the region. They are also responsible for the military manoeuvres, threats of intervention and plans to blockade Cuba. We say: Hands off the Caribbean! People's victory for El Salvador! Imperialism's plans will not succeed.

Recognising the profound economic crisis of the political instability of many of the dependent capitalist countries of the Caribbean Basin area, the US seeks to solve these problems through its Caribbean Basin Initiative which in fact is a con artist's spectacular to channel more military aid to El Salvador and to further entrench the tentacles of US monopolies into the flesh of our resources. We reject the Caribbean Basin Initiative as a genuine attempt to solve the region's problems. We have no doubt that it will fail like the Puerto Rican model of development on which it is based and like the Alliance for Progress whose high-sounding objectives it patterns.

We support the call for the declaration of the Caribbean as a zone of peace. We call for an end to imperialist intervention in Cuba, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Grenada, Suriname and all other countries of the area. We support the struggles of all our comrades, brothers and sisters in Latin America against brutal military and neo-fascist dictatorships.

In the Middle East, the major national threat to progressive states and to the national liberation movement is Israeli Zionism supported by US imperialism. Israel continually flouts world opinion and all recognised norms of international behaviour by refusing to give up Arab lands captured in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War; it further refuses to recognise the Palestinian Liberation Organisation and to discuss a settlement of the outstanding issue of a Palestinian homeland. Israeli banditry knows no bounds and the genocidal invasion of Lebanon is the most recent example. We demand immediate Israeli withdrawal from Lebanese territory.

The situation in the Middle East is fraught with danger and can lead to a confrontation between the USSR and the USA. We demand that the USA restrains Israel and that Israel returns Arab lands, which have been seized. We repeat our call for the recognition of the Palestinian people's right to life, to live in peace in their homeland.

Imperialist strategy in Africa is, as in other parts of the world, to hold back national liberation, hamper independent economic development and obstruct progressive states. Racist South Africa is the surrogate of US imperialism in Southern Africa which is the most aggravated area of struggle in Africa. With political freedom having been won and an independent, socialist oriented path of development being pursued by Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia and others, the focus of the struggle is now Namibia and South Africa.

The People's Progressive Party stands firmly behind SWAPO and the ANC. We demand an immediate end to South African colonialism in Namibia, the removal of all racist troops and free and fair elections on the basis of one man one vote. We demand the freedom of Nelson Mandela and all other political prisoners in South Africa and an end to apartheid.

In the Horn of Africa, imperialism is using Somalia as a puppet state to attack revolutionary Ethiopia. We are certain its nefarious plans will fail.

Heroic Vietnam faces special problems arising not only from imperialism's devastating war, or from the selfless assistance given by Vietnam towards the liberation of Kampuchea, but also because of the aggressive hostility of China whose hegemonistic designs and anti-Soviet postures have driven China into the arms of imperialism. China is now an objective ally of imperialism against the Soviet Union and all other socialist and progressive countries. It is in this context that China's invasion of Vietnam and continuing assistance to the Pol Pot butchers can

be seen. We stand fully and firmly with the Vietnamese and Kampuchean people. We call upon China to accept the recent proposals of the Soviet Union made by President Brezhnev for discussions leading to an improvement in relations. This will create the necessary conditions for the peaceful construction of socialism in that entire area.

In Latin America, Yankee imperialism continues to dominate the economies of the countries concerned. It gives aid and comfort to dictatorships in Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, Haiti and elsewhere. It supports oppression, torture, murder and disappearances in these countries. Recently, however, the real face of Yankee imperialism was bared for all Latin America to see when the United States supported Great Britain against the historically justified Argentine claim to the Malvinas (Falkland) Islands. This lesson and example of imperialism in action will not have been lost to those in Latin America and Central America, and indeed for all others, who see the United States as a friend. We are proud of the fact that, unlike the opportunistic PNC, we took a principled position on the Malvinas issue, and stood firmly on the side of the Argentine people in defence of their sovereignty. The British victory will prove to be pyrrhic. We are certain that eventually the Argentine people will regain the Malvinas.

For those countries in Latin and Central America and the Caribbean ruled by dictators, we demand the release of all political prisoners and an end to torture and disappearances. We have every confidence that our comrades in Latin and Central America and the Caribbean will follow the heroic examples of Cuba and Nicaragua. El Salvador will defeat all attempts to maintain it in darkness and death. The revolution will triumph.

The international working class movement is making great strides in mobilising workers and others against capitalist exploitation. This movement is playing its historic, and a truly creative, role in fulfilling its duty as an integral part of the world revolutionary process.

The major capitalist economies of the world are facing an unprecedented crisis of inflation, high interest rates and unemployment. The ballooning budget deficits in the US which are consequences of and which are undoubtedly necessary for the purpose of financing the arms race are responsible for the high interest rates and will fuel another spiral in the cycle of inflation. These will have serious effects for the economies of Western Europe. There is no projected end to the crisis which has been facing Western Europe and North America continuously for several years since the Vietnam War. We say that there can be no end to the crisis which continues indefinitely in one form or another or to one degree or another. Crisis is part and parcel of the capitalist system.

The crisis in the US and in some Western European countries is being solved in the way the bourgeois states know best, that is, at the expense of those who can least afford it — workers, farmers, employees, the unemployed and pensioners. The US administration has embarked on the most vicious onslaught within recent memory on the standard of living of the weakest sections of the population.

Together with all the factors on the world scene operating in favour of an intensification of the struggle by the international working class movement, the crisis of capitalism is bringing new forces and even increasing numbers of people in the struggle against exploitation'. Today, people are seeing the ugly face of capitalism in stark reality. The sweeping cuts in social services in the US is a timely reminder that the ruling class in the capitalist countries will not hesitate to destroy at a stroke of the pen a system of social security to protect the weak which has taken decades of struggle to achieve.

The international working class movement is in the forefront of the struggle to defeat the excesses of Reaganomics, to inculcate socialist and democratic ideals into the consciousness of the working class and to advance the struggle for democracy and socialism. It is an integral component and significant contributor of the struggle for peace. We know that this struggle, difficult and long as it may seem, is making a direct impact on the world revolutionary process.

We must express our deepest concern at the spectre of nuclear war which has been raised and continuously projected by the United States. The present US administration approaches the issue of world peace in a dangerously unbalanced manner. There is no other issue which is more important than the preservation of peace in the world. There is no alternative except that

of death and destruction of all living things on our planet. Yet President Reagan and his administration speak and behave as if nuclear war is an acceptable means of decimating the Soviet Union and perhaps much of mankind as well for the purpose of maintaining the ability of the US to continue to exploit and plunder the resources and riches of other countries. They say that nuclear war can be contained. They say that the most likely theatre of nuclear war is Europe. They deploy more and more nuclear weapons. They make the neutron bomb which destroys people but not property. They manufacture new generations of weapons on which they spend more and more billions of dollars thereby escalating the arms race. They fan the hotbeds of war. They support the killers in El Salvador. They support the genocide in Lebanon. They support Pol Pot in Kampuchea. They plan and plot the destruction of the world. But we are certain that their iniquitous plans will not succeed.

The present US administration is determined to resurrect the atmosphere of the Cold War, to build up war hysteria and to enlarge areas of conflict in various parts of the world — South East Asia, the Middle East, Southern Africa, the Horn of Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean — in order to deter the steady and inexorably advancing forces of democracy, liberation and socialism. It wants to undermine the independence particularly of the non-aligned countries which are pursuing an anti-imperialist, socialist-oriented course, and to crush the liberation movements which want to bring down feudal and reactionary regimes. Imperialist strategy is formulated on the basis that aid from the socialist countries to these movements could lead to confrontation with them, and the same time of getting the power of socialist countries far outstretched, while a massive military-nuclear build-up is made in Europe to endanger the very existence of the Soviet Union.

The gains which have been made in the world since the Great October Socialist Revolution in 1917 are permanent and will be defended with the combined and determined might of all progressive mankind. The dramatic explosion of the peace movement, which has been on the upswing for many years is a firm rebuff to the war plans of Reagan, the Pentagon and NATO Peace demonstrations, the size of which have been unprecedented, rocked the capitals of Europe and North America. Even Reagan has been forced to proclaim that he wants peace. It is clear that no longer will the peoples of the world, and especially the capitalist developed world, tolerate the mad and dangerous rush of imperialism to war.

We join hands with all peace-loving forces the world over in demanding of imperialism an end to the arms race, meaningful negotiations with the Soviet Union, a return to detente and a permanent state of peace on earth. We say no to nuclear holocaust. Long live peace and liberation!

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CRISIS

Our dear land has never in living memory found itself in such a calamitous situation. Everywhere, there are signs of collapse. The masses are at their wits' ends to find a way to survive. And the fair name of our country has been disgraced by the PNC.

Lord Avebury's highly esteemed International Team of Observers at the December 1980 general and regional elections told the world:

[O]n the basis of abundant and clear evidence. . . the election was rigged massively and flagrantly. Fortunately, however, the scale of the fraud made it impossible to conceal either from the Guyanese public or the outside world. The event we witnessed confirms all the fears of Guyanese and foreign observers about the state of the country.

Lord Avebury deemed the Elections Commission a "toothless poodle." And so blatant was the fraud that even the US State Department had been forced to admit that the charges by "international observers and many Guyanese" were "with apparent justification that the elections were conducted fraudulently and cannot be considered a free and fair test of public opinion."

The corrupt, minority PNC regime has deepened the economic and social crisis since our last congress. Instead of going forward, Guyana is going backward. In 1981, the performance of the economy "was disastrous." This year, it is "tottering on the brink of collapse." The bankrupt situation is now openly admitted by leading spokesmen of the ruling party and government. One Vice-President said that "the nation is in the red." Another pointed out that "in some countries their export insurance agencies have withdrawn cover from us. We are not deemed to be credit-worthy at this time." The Minister of Finance stated that "the total national savings stand at zero. . . Guyana has reached the stage where neither our debt at home nor abroad can be paid."

Shame on the PNC! They have wrecked our country. If they had any decency they would resign forthwith.

How can anyone have any confidence about the future under the PNC regime? Look at the picture. In the 1978-81 Draft Development Plan, they had projected a real economic growth rate of 4.5 percent in the 1978-79 period, and 5 percent or more in the 1980-81 period. But what have these incompetents achieved? The Minister of Finance said that there was a decline in real growth by 10 percent between 1976 and 1981.

Unbelievable! There is no justification for this sad state of affairs. Though our country is rich in natural and human resources, our people are getting poorer and poorer. Clearly the PNC has no right to continue in the government, especially since it has held power by the continuous rigging of elections.

The economic crisis is manifested in ever-increasing budgetary and balance of payments deficits.

The current budget deficit jumped from \$124 million from 1978 to \$190 million in 1979, \$314 million in 1980 and \$274 million in 1981. In 1982, it is estimated at \$277 million, 45 percent of current revenue. But in view of shortfall in production in the first half of this year, it is likely to be much higher.

What are the reasons for the present tragic near-bankrupt situation? There are two main factors: firstly, tribute going to the elite in the form of high salaries, and fat allowances for an over-bloated bureaucratic, military and paramilitary apparatus; and, secondly, tribute mostly to imperialist circles in the form of debt and compensation payments.

After the rigged elections in December 1980, the bureaucracy was greatly expanded. In addition to the Executive President, 5 Vice-President, 10 Senior Ministers, 8 Ministers, 3 Ministers of State and 3 Parliamentary Secretaries were created. Salaries to personnel for the governmental machinery increased to over nine times the \$27 million in 1964, largely because of massive expansion of the administrative sections and the fantastic increases in salaries given to them. In the same period, wages and salaries to workers increased by less than four times and, consequently, production has stagnated.

Debt and compensation payments increased from \$10 million in 1964 to \$119 million in 1977 and to an estimated \$462 million in 1982, equivalent to 15 percent, 33 percent, and 75 percent respectively of the current revenue.

Debt and compensation payments contribute not only to the huge budget deficits, but also to increasing balance of payments deficits. Sixteen percent of our foreign earnings, is used for the payment of foreign debts. This, coupled with production stagnation, is responsible for the crisis of foreign exchange.

In our last congress CC report, we stated: "It is no exaggeration to say that the balance of payments and budget deficits will continue over the four years of the new Development Plan (1978-81)." Our predictions have been borne out. Balance of payments deficits have jumped from \$72 million in 1978 to \$210 million in 1979, \$258 million in 1980, and a record breaking \$558 million in 1981. As a percentage of the gross national product at market prices, they have steadily increased from 5.96 percent in 1978, 16.8 percent in 1979, 21.4 percent in 1980 and 39 percent in 1981. If 1981 is an indication of the future, then we are in serious trouble in this year. Actually, an estimated deficit in 1981 of \$314 million became an actual \$558 million at the end of the year. Commenting on the 1981 deficit, the Vice-President for Economic Planning

and Finance said: "With a deficit of such magnitude, we are clearly not running a viable system."

We are not "running a viable system" because of PNC bungling. The mismanagement was openly admitted by the Vice.-President. With regard to the bauxite industry, which lost about \$100 million in 1981, he said in his 1982 budget speech:

But the most serious problem facing the industry is the fact that it has lost its near monopoly of the supply of calcined bauxite to the world market. In large measures, this is attributable to our own default. During the years 1977 to 1979, in particular, primarily because of low production, the industry was unable to satisfy the market demand for calcined bauxite, and this circumstance presented an opportunity for the entry of competitors into the refractory markets. . . .

About the Guyana Rice Board and the rice industry, he declared: "However, there still continue to be too many shortcomings in the organisation of the industry. These include weak management, poor planning, inefficient machinery deployment and maintenance systems and ineffective procedures to prevent losses through carelessness or irregularities."

And as regards to the sugar industry, he threatened: "Government cannot carry deficit corporations as a matter of course — and GUYSUICO is a deficit corporation."

Even though the PNC's *New Nation* made it clear that "the government cannot escape blame for the sorry state in which we find ourselves," the ruling party is constantly trying to exculpate itself and to find scapegoats. Blame is put on external factors, "acts of God", managers and workers. Constant reference is made to outside inflation, lack of demand for bauxite and drop in the price of sugar, and, not to forget, increase in the price of mineral oil.

But the question which must be asked is: who is responsible for hitching Guyana to, and make it totally dependent on, the capitalist world? If we have to buy mineral oil and other goods at inflated prices, the PNC must accept responsibility. If 41 percent of our foreign earnings is utilised for paying for oil imports, this is due to the blunder of the PNC; firstly, in scrapping our railway, and secondly, in not implementing at least one hydro-electric scheme.

These are just two examples of the PNC's overall policies which have led to economic collapse. Managers alone must not be blamed; they operate within the framework of government policies. And wherever there is mismanagement, it must be remembered it is the PNC which has instituted discrimination in appointments and promotion of personnel, and a bureaucratic form of management.

Workers are blamed for strikes, but what else can they do in the face of rapidly declining living standards and worsening industrial relations? The right to collective bargaining has been virtually scrapped. Recognised unions cannot bargain even for fringe benefits.

The PNC is the author of the present crisis and malaise. And it is also incapable of finding a solution.

The fact is: a vicious circle has been created. Firstly, the lack of foreign exchange not only causes severe shortages and black-marketing — shortages of basic consumer items such as oil, split peas, milk, flour, cheese, etc. It has also led to the shortage of raw materials, spare parts and capital equipment for industry agriculture, communications and transport. The few factories we have are forced to close or to work intermittently due to the shortage of raw materials. Lack of spare parts is causing a great amount of breakdowns, particularly in the sugar and bauxite industries. And there can be no increase in productivity if productive assets are worn down, and cannot be repaired or replenished. Cumulatively, they are contributing to the crisis of production and productivity.

The other main factor contributing to decline in production and productivity is discontent and low morale. Living standards, seriously attacked by the PNC, have further declined as a result of IMF pressures and additional burdens on the backs of the people. The removal of subsidies on practically all consumer goods and services; the decontrol of prices on certain commodities to bring them in line with what the market will bear; increased taxation and high

mark-ups on imported goods which have encouraged smuggling; devaluation of the currency and massive dismissal of workers.

Real per capita income dropped by 44 percent between 1976 and 1980. As a result of devaluation of the Guyana dollar by 18 percent in 1981, tax increases and removal of subsidies, the workers' purchasing power declined by nearly 30 percent. In February 1981, a technical sub-committee of the Guyana Trades Union Congress stated that an average government employee with a family of four had a take-home pay of \$250 per month after tax; however, his expenditure for the month was \$654. Items of expenditure, in fact, had been cautiously estimated — house rent for instance at \$65 and electricity at \$25 per month. Everyone knows that it is almost impossible for a working man to find a house or apartment to rent, and certainly nothing can be obtained at \$65 per month. Electricity bills have also skyrocketed. In addition, a worker is forced to waste a great deal of time in long queues for foodstuffs and other essentials and to wait for long hours on the roadside for transportation. In such circumstances, he cannot be expected to concentrate on his work and give his best.

At the same time, the worker has to support a growing number of dependants. In 1977, 3,000 workers had been dismissed. In 1981, the regime manoeuvred and succeeded in not using the axe of retrenchment — it indicated to the compliant TUC that if its demand of a 25 percent interim payment were to be met, 17,000 would have to be retrenched. In 1982, however, it not only imposed a wage freeze but also dismissed 6,000 workers from the traditional public service. The bauxite industry dismissed about 1,000 apprentices and casual and permanent workers. Because of a shortage of foreign exchange for the purchase of cotton from the United States, the state-owned Sanata Textile Mill is likely to be shut down completely with nearly 700 workers losing their jobs. The private sector is also affected. As a result of shortage of flour, several thousands lost their jobs as employees of bakeries or as self-employed who used to eke out an existence by making various types of foods with flour as the base. Owing to lack of payment by the regime, Taylor Woodrow International, a British-owned company, terminated its work on the Tapakuma Drainage and Irrigation Scheme and a high voltage electricity line at Canefield, Berbice, resulting in the dismissal of over 600 workers.

Social services have also seriously deteriorated. Whereas in 1964, the last year of the PPP government, 45.5 percent of the current expenditure was devoted to social services and other charges, this allocation dropped to 23 percent in 1982.

In education, one sees every year signs of deterioration. Schools have become dilapidated with leaking roofs, broken windows and floors, inadequate furniture, poor sanitary conditions; many are without proper toilet facilities and often many suffer from the lack of water supply. Essential aids, equipment and miscellaneous supplies are these days either unavailable or inadequate. After all these years, the problems pertaining to the availability of text and exercise books persist. The sum of \$3.5 million allocated for importation of text books this year has already been reduced to \$1.5 million, meaning certainly an aggravation rather than a reduction of this grievous problem. Overcrowding particularly in our secondary schools has acquired a new dimension and has become a burning question today.

The education system is furthermore seriously affected by the government's inability to ensure the availability of enough trained teachers, and moreover, there are good grounds to be concerned over the quality of those coming out of the teachers' training colleges.

Such developments have expectedly had serious consequences. The standard of education at all levels has dropped significantly. This is reflected in the alarming and growing failures at examinations, more particularly at the GCE and CXC levels.

Serious difficulties also affect the University of Guyana. Its problems are wide-ranging and include financial problems, staff and other personnel shortages, inadequacy of essential equipment, books and other supplies, stagnation or reduction of capital works, political interference, all of which militate against students' welfare and interests, apart from their effects to the nation.

Another shameful, though recent development, is the widespread dismissals of scores of teachers, many of whom are qualified and trained. This latest measure against the generally

aggrieved and harassed teachers will only add to their deep-seated frustrations, resulting in yet more severe problems in our system of education and for our children and country.

In the health sector, conditions continue to deteriorate.

Only 4.6 per cent of total budget expenditure has been allocated to health. Expenditure on health in Guyana is US\$15 per capita as compared with US\$70 in Barbados, US\$34 in Jamaica, and US\$63 in Trinidad.

Inadequate diagnostic facilities are available at medical institutions throughout the country.

Unavailability of basic drugs, medical and paramedical personnel, and maladministration, are the basic factors for the chaotic situation.

Malnutrition is prevalent among our young children, due basically to inadequate nutrients and poor sanitation.

Amerindian citizens from the hinterland and riverine areas are still to be provided regular medical attention.

The Feed, Clothe and House Plan (FCH), as far as housing is concerned, failed since 1976 the year when the entire country was to have been "housed, fed and clothed". In that period (1972-76) out of the 65,000 housing units promised the nation by the PNC, less than 8,000 were built in both public and private sector efforts!

The Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund has been raided, resulting in a deep drop in land preparation and house construction for sugar workers. Under these conditions workers have been forced to squat. Invariably, they are forced off State lands by armed police. Similarly, in other parts of the country families are forced to squat on idle lands. Slums and pavement dwelling are increasing in the urban areas including the city of Georgetown.

In the field of housing, the situation is critical, for the housing shortage is more acute than ever. In 1982 for instance, only 0.4 per cent of the budget expenditure is allocated for housing. It is significant that on the other hand, 9.1 per cent of the budget is allocated to the military, paramilitary and police.

This has been the trend since the PNC came to power. Now with the economic crisis worsening, the construction of low income flats is a virtually abandoned project of state initiative. In 1982, the regime has relaxed the rent-freeze laws.

Some major factors which militate against the solution of the housing crisis include: expensive building materials (price controls on lumber were lifted some two years ago); shortage and high price of cement; shortage of house lots in the rural and urban areas; lack of adequate and low interest building loans.

Under this type of situation, the real estate operators rake in huge profits. Private landlords specialise in constructing high-priced rental apartments, and are engaged in systematic evictions of tenants in low-income flats which are then renovated with high rentals in mind.

Cooperative housing is also in the doldrums, and hire purchase flats are beyond the reach of the low income bracket. As a result of these factors, working class families suffer tremendously from crowded and dangerously congested homes, lack of privacy, exorbitant rentals and evictions on one ground or the other. The court is choked with claims by landlords for possession of rented premises.

Government has taken a back seat in the housing crisis, leaving the field to private investors to construct houses. In the New Investment Code word "house" does not appear even once. The Ministry of Housing is now a mere administrative shell, while the state housing corporation, which spearheaded construction, has been scrapped. Maintenance staff in the Ministry has been reduced sharply in a series of retrenchment drives.

The deterioration of public services has become chronic. Electricity and water blackouts are frequent. The Georgetown sewerage system is in a perilous state with regular overflows onto streets and pavements. Public transport is collapsing. River steamers limp along on one engine: sometimes, they simply drift. The Parika-Adventure trip, normally three hours, now takes as long as eight hours. Flights to the interior are regularly cancelled because there is not enough money to buy spares or fuel. Things are grinding to a halt.

Rapidly deteriorating living standards and conditions and high unemployment and under-employment are leading to many anti-social tendencies. Crime has reached alarming proportions. Choke-and-rob has been superseded by armed gangs. Criminals armed with weapons invade homes and business places. They not only commit robberies, but even murder their victims. In recent years, the number of murdered victims has increased.

High taxation and high mark-ups, coupled with shortages, have led to a thriving smuggling industry and a parallel market. Here goods which are banned or restricted are sold openly at exorbitant prices. Smuggling has now become a major industry. Corruption too, like smuggling, has become a way of life from the top to the bottom. Almost anything can be obtained through bribery. The inefficient state machine functions only when it is greased with a hand-out.

Alcoholism and the use of hard drugs have grown to such an extent that one Guyanese was overheard to say if we cannot produce rice, sugar and bauxite, we must produce ganja (marijuana)."

Meanwhile facing all kinds of frustrations, dismissals, no prospects for employment, and ruination — some 16,000 small and medium rice farmers, nearly 35.5 per cent of the total, have been ruined under the PNC — Guyanese are emigrating in increasing numbers. The exodus, and with it the brain drain, continues legally and illegally to the USA and Canada, and mainly illegally across our borders to Brazil, Venezuela and Suriname. In the late 1970's, the average was about 10,000 per year. The US ambassador to Guyana disclosed that this year approximately 11,000 permanent and 6,000 visitors' visas will be issued as compared with 6,600 and 5,000, respectively, in 1981. An estimated 40,000 to 50,000 Guyanese are forced to seek a livelihood in neighbouring Suriname.

The sell-serving PNC is incapable of motivating the people. Recently, the state-owned Daily Chronicle of 30 March 1982 admitted that although every recent budget set out production targets which were "quite modest" compared with previous performance and "certainly attainable" and an "epic appeal to the nation to rise up to the prevailing challenges" was made, "neither the Vice President nor his government nor this newspaper . . . could escape the reality that those epic calls have not succeeded in getting our people to produce those modest targets."

The regime is like a dog following its tail, running around in a circle. Unable to find a solution to the grave crisis, it resorted to diversionary manoeuvres and whipped up a hysterical campaign about the Venezuelan claim and threat to our largest and richest county, Essequibo. The people were led to believe, contrary to our view, that a Venezuelan invasion would have taken place on or before June 18, the day of expiry of the Port of Spain Protocol.

The PNC capitalised on the Venezuelan threat to divert attention from the miserable conditions at home, their own failures and the IMF and World Bank pressures, to improve its image overseas, whip up support inside Guyana, deny workers' demand for wage increases, cover up its failure to implement the Mazaruni hydro-electric smelter project, sell defence bonds and beef up the military and paramilitary forces. Actually, it needs a big military apparatus to cling to power. That is why so much of the people's hard earned money is spent in the military sphere — much more per head of population than in Barbados and Jamaica. In 1970, there was a ratio of one security personnel to 300 inhabitants. However, in 1980, the ratio was 1 to 35. And expenditure this year sky-rocketed to \$116 million, \$101 more than in 1970.

At the same time, there is a further shift towards imperialism. The Carter administration with its ideological pluralism was prepared to work out an accommodation with the PNC and succeed in causing a retreat more or less to the 1971-73 period of vacillation which was balanced in favour of imperialism. The Reagan administration, however, which has criticised the Carter administration for being too soft and for pursuing policies inimical to US vital interests, is exerting pressures for a return to the completely pro-capitalist and pro-imperialist policies of the 1964-70 period.

US imperialism would like not only a total retreat in foreign policy but also a dismantling of the productive public sector; it wants the weakened, already compromised state and cooperative sectors to be replaced by the traditional free enterprise capitalism and the "freedom of the

market place”, the philosophy of the Reaganites, or a modified partnership arrangement. The hawks in Washington and London are unhappy about the PNC party and the state’s involvement in the economy, deemed cooperative socialism, because:

- 1) the traditional politico-ideological friends of imperialism, linked with the United Force and other rightists which represent bourgeois forces in the opposition, have been squeezed out of their economic positions, thus restricting the expansion of the social basis of capitalism-imperialism;
- 2) the economy is disintegrating and an explosive political situation is being created;
- 3) with a change of government and so large a percentage of the economy in the public sector, a PPP or a National Patriotic Front Government could quickly accelerate the revolutionary process and social progress.

The PNC would prefer not to have to dismantle the productive and public sector. Control of the economy is in favour of a section of the PNC which has been developing rapidly since independence and nationalisation into a parasitic bourgeoisie. Economic power also permits the exercise of political control. With the PNC-controlled state being such a large employer of labour and retrenchment hanging over the workers’ heads, the ruling party is able to keep a discontented populace in line. Also it is reluctant to make a 180-degree retreat for fear of damaging its image overseas and losing its credibility attained through its anti-imperialist postures in the 1974-76 period.

However, nothing can remain static. The PNC cannot stand still. Since there is no forward movement, circumstances are forcing it to move backward. Having consistently failed to meet the financial ceilings under the 1979 IMF 3-year extended fund facility despite favourable terms, and now finding itself after the scrapping of the agreement in desperate need for budget and balance of payments support, it sees its room for manoeuvre and blackmail becoming more and more restricted. Therefore, it is increasingly succumbing to external pressures and putting Guyana deeper and deeper into the capitalist-imperialist orbit.

In mid-1981, the World Bank and the IMF pressured the regime to put more burdens on the people (sacking of workers, increase in water rates, reduction of sugar subsidy, and increased profitability of public enterprises providing services), to free the economy from controls, and to open the door of the economy and the public corporations to foreign participation. The World Bank urged that the “Government may wish to explore areas where private sector participation in publicly-owned economic activities might increase efficiency, and provide the private sector with investment opportunities.” It called for leasing arrangements or joint ventures with the government in transport, construction and machinery services, and in certain state-owned manufacturing and processing enterprises, and agricultural distribution and marketing; it dictated for the ailing Guyana Sugar Corporation (GUYSUCO) mechanised cultivation techniques, and for the crippled Guyana Mining Enterprise (Guymine) management from an established and successful mining company for 2-3 years.

These proposals are not only in keeping with the new stringent conditions put on the World Bank by the, Reagan administration; they are also intended to derail the prospects of a socialist-oriented course in Guyana.

In consonance with the pressures from the World Bank and the IMF, an orchestrated campaign has been mounted by forces which share the philosophy of the Reaganites. The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce wants an “open market” policy with the private sector. It calls, for example, for the handing over to the private sector of many of the entities of the state-owned Guyana Pharmaceutical Corporation.

There are also clamant calls for a straight-forward capitalist course from the ultra-right within and without the ranks of the PNC. Fielden Singh, leader of the United Force, and Lionel Luckhoo, one time leader of the rightist National Labour Front which was supplanted by the United Force, have advocated the selling out of the state corporations which are losing money.

From within the ranks of the PNC, emphasis is shifting towards a free enterprise capitalist economy, but euphemistically called “market socialism”.

One PNC ideologue, in the state-owned Sunday Chronicle of June 6, 1982, made some retrograde proposals: firstly, the break-up of GUYSUCO and the lease or sale of lands in GUYSUCO to "individuals who have the financial resources", and to sugar workers for independent peasant cultivation. In other words, to accelerate the process of capitalist agriculture, and at the same time to transform sugar workers into peasant cane farmers so as to exploit them mercilessly like rice and cane farmers. Secondly, the establishment of worker-controlled companies to manage certain aspects of the bauxite industry", and where foreign "companies are invited to take up contracts", they must create subsidiaries for local participation by Guyanese workers, individuals and groups. The overall effect would be as one US State Department official put it for El Salvador, "to breed capitalists like flies."

With the ground for betrayal so well prepared, the ruling class, cap in hand and on bended knees, and with the hope of getting defaulted-loans rescheduled and additional aid to prevent a total economic collapse, informed the World Bank that it was prepared to adapt and adjust "its programmes, policies and institutions", and "to follow a pragmatic course." This means that the productive public sector will be restricted "to perform over a narrower range of activities"; no new operations will be started by government; "the corporations have been encouraged to obtain necessary management and expert services"; local and foreign private sectors will be offered "participation, which in particular cases may be majority" in Guyana Timbers Ltd., Guyana Fisheries Corporation, Glassworks Ltd., Guyana Stockfeeds Ltd. and some of the diverse activities of the Guyana Pharmaceutical Corporation; transferring from the GRB (Guyana Rice Board) to commercial importers and distributors, including private firms, the responsibility for importing, stocking and selling inputs required by farmers such as fertilisers, chemicals, and spares for tractors and combines. . . Closing the GRB's "small mills" at Belmonte, Somerset and Berks, Dundee and elsewhere, and leasing or selling the premises to private millers, cooperatives and regional organisations;" and in the case of the bauxite industry, "serious discussions are already underway with well established firms to secure managerial, technological and marketing support, as well as equity participation."

The New Investment Code of 1979, which reversed the policy enunciated in the PNC's December 1974 Sophia Declaration and created opening to foreign capital, is to be revised by the World Bank to make it more palatable to foreign and local private capital.

A pragmatic course is leading also to a reversal and vacillation in foreign policy. After the IMF agreement in 1978, it followed the US line in the China-Vietnam-Kampuchea and Afghanistan issues. More recently, abandoning principle, it sided with Britain in its conflict with Argentina over the Malvinas (Falklands) Islands, and found itself on the same side with Reagan and Seaga. Prior to that, the President, in a special charter flight, attended the Royal wedding in England, and Nigel Fisher, arch-Conservative Member of the British Parliament who helped to put the PNC in power, visited Guyana as a special guest of the President!

Pragmatism and opportunism also caused the PNC to move once again, as in the 1970-75 period, to an anti-Soviet and anti-Cuban position. In the parliament, snide attacks are regularly made against the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. Leading PNC spokesmen talk not about a world capitalist crisis, but a world crisis. "The world system becomes increasingly unmanageable," said the Vice-President for Planning and Finance in his 1982 budget speech. "Economic adversity has shown itself to be no respecter of ideology, social systems or geographical locality; it has afflicted capitalist and communist countries alike."

He went on:

The word "détente", so fashionable among the statesmen of the great powers only a few years ago, has now been quietly deleted from the diplomatic lexicon. The "game of nations", cynical and cruel at all times, has generated to the simplicity of undisguised power-plays. Astronomical sums are now being spent to develop and deploy sophisticated weapons of mass destruction. Spheres of influence arrogantly are being claimed and demarcated; and the surrogates and proxies of the big powers are being armed with weapons which many of them cannot even operate or maintain. Our own region of the Caribbean has become infected with the menace of the wider world.

One radio journalist, speaking on the same theme in a news analysis, complained that “the super-powers stockpile arms”. L.F.S. Burnham called for the Caribbean to be transformed to a zone of peace, “free from the machinations of the major powers”; in the same vein, the PNC’s youth arm, the YSM, called on the big powers to desist from all overt and covert military action in the region — no distinction is ever made between imperialist USA and socialist USSR. There is very little difference between all these utterances and President Reagan’s charge of “Soviet expansionism”; “Soviet Menace” and Cuban “terrorism”. The ruling clique is back to the days (1970-75) when it spouted the “two super-powers, two imperialisms” line and had close links with Brazil and China.

In the Non-Aligned Movement, it has also shifted to centrist position, equidistant from the USA and USSR.

The Cuffy Ideological Institute has been downgraded. Critchlow Labour College accommodates PNC lecturers who take outright anti-communist positions, and is now seeking aid from the ICFTU and AIFLD. And no doubt because the Committee of Santa Fe, the US administration’s policy advisers, deemed the PNC regime as Marxist-Leninist, there is very little talk now about Marxism-Leninism in ruling circles. Actually, one PNC ideologue proposed that “no idea, thought, or philosophy adopted in Guyana should cut across the very grain of the Guyanese people . . . of our culture or religion.” Daily on the radio and in the Chronicle more and more appeals are being made for prayers — to pray for the President and the country. At the height of the Venezuelan threat, the Guyana Chronicle carried a Guyana map with the caption “This land is ours. Lord, by your love, change their hearts”.

While we strongly believe in religious freedom and support the right of religious groups or any individual to express religious sentiments, we nevertheless reject the proposition that there can be idealist solutions to Guyana’s problems. And the Marxist-Leninist ideology mooted at times by the ruling party in the 1975-76 period is eroded in the mass media by the dominance on the government-sponsored “Analysis” and “Viewpoint” of not only idealism but also right-wing social-democratic reformism.

While clearly shifting further to the right, the PNC is resorting to demagoguery. It claims that it is sticking to socialism, that there will be no retreat and betrayal, no “ideological acrobatics”.

Anticipating working class actions, the ruling clique is priming its weapons of intimidation and harassment. The coercive apparatus of the state is being expanded. Recently was re-enacted Part II of the National Security Act of 1966, which provides for detention without trial and other violations of the rule of law, such as an accused in an ammunition case having to prove his/her innocence. And we know also that when the PNC General Council calls for the economy to be put on a “war footing”, their previous “war against poverty” will become a “war against the workers”. The grave economic situation will be used as an excuse, as even the General Secretary of the PNC-controlled TUC recently had to admit, “to undermine fundamental trade union principles, and by unilateral decisions by the Government to withdraw or deprive workers of economic benefits which they have obtained by hard struggles and sacrifices.”

Within the recent past, the human rights and civil liberties situation has deteriorated sharply. The most fundamental rights of the Guyanese people are consistently attacked and violated. The destruction of the right of the people to freely elect a government of their choice at the last general elections has been referred to. This election followed the pattern of the other elections in 1968 and 1973 and the referendum in 1978.

The right to life of political opponents of the PNC has been denied with the assassination within recent years of many young political activists starting with Jagan Ramessar and Bholanauth Parmanand in 1973 and ending with that of Walter Rodney in 1980. Apart from political assassination, the police death squad shoots on sight and in almost every case kills or tortures its victims. Criminal gangs murder with impunity.

Traditional freedoms associated with open political and trade union activity such as freedom of the press, freedom of expression, freedom of association and freedom of movement are severely restricted. The small four-page weekend edition of the Mirror and even smaller Catholic

Standard are the only newspapers which are opposed to the PNC and still being allowed to print. Freedom of expression has been drastically curtailed by the withholding of newsprint supplies and the refusal to grant licences to import newsprint. Even gifts of newsprint to the Mirror have not been permitted to enter the country!

The doctrine of party paramountcy hangs over the judiciary and the magistracy and encourages judicial hesitancy. Some favourable decisions have been given within recent months which are a result of public pressure. This pressure must now be intensified. The success of the recent cases is an appropriate answer to those who charge that judicial and even parliamentary struggle are playing into the hands of the regime.

Administrative methods are used to restrict the freedom of movement both inside and outside of Guyana. Our comrades are continually harassed at Timehri Airport and our organisers are refused permission to enter Amerindian and interior areas to service party organisations.

These and other restrictions on our freedoms emanating from lack of industrial democracy, racial and political discrimination, arbitrary searches and arrests, police thuggery, etc., must be vigorously resisted. We must intensify our struggle for a restoration of all our democratic rights.

PPP — VANGUARD OF THE WORKING CLASS

Our party can be proud of the fact that for the past 32 years it has played a vanguard role, first as revolutionary-democratic and later as Marxist-Leninist. This role of vanguard has been won; it was conferred on us by the masses as a result of our loyalty to the working class, our unflinching adherence to principles, and constant struggle against right and left opportunism, our undeviating internationalism.

As a consequence, our party has grown in stature, quantitatively and qualitatively, and our country is regarded as having one of the most politically class-conscious people in the Caribbean. And little wonder that our great revolutionary role is widely recognised, more especially in the Caribbean region.

We have influenced development nationally and regionally. At the national level, our influence has been felt at the politico-ideological and economic levels. So much so that some allege that the PNC has stolen our mantle.

Stealing our mantle? Far from it! We have an integrated programme. Nationalisation is only a part of it. For us, it is a means to an end, a means for national liberation from imperialist stranglehold, for socio-economic transformation and a gateway to a socialist future. For the petty-bourgeois PNC, nationalisation is being used as the means for wheeling and dealing, for party and personal accumulation and advancement and the building of a parasitic capitalist class.

What is more important is that our patient ideological-educational work, propaganda and agitation are bearing fruit. Sections of the work people, once close to the PNC, are no longer taken in and diverted by the ruling clique's epithets against us as "incompetent", "agents", "counter-revolutionaries", "soi-disant (self-styled) socialists", and so on. They are forced in fan out meetings to pretend to "tell it as it is".

The state-owned and PNC-controlled Daily Chronicle, referring to the non-profitable projects, on March 16, 1982, put the facts on the line. It stated: ". . . these programmes, most of them drawn up by government, have helped to plunge the economy into its deepest post world-war recession. . . Collectively, however, the national economy is in shambles. And this is no exaggeration".

The PNC's New Nation, in an editorial on February 2, 1982, admitted: "Corruption is eating like a cancer into the sinews of our society. . . blackmarketing, smuggling and open peddling of contraband goods are afflicting us. The disease calls for drastic cure."

The working people are aware that this is precisely what we have been saying for a long time. Always, unlike the PNC, we put up concrete proposals for a cure.

At our 1972 congress, after the rigged 1968 elections, we set out an 11-point anti-imperialist programme.

In 1974, after the army seizure of the ballot boxes at the 1973 elections, our party's 18th congress put out a 16-point programme and called for a political solution.

In 1975-76, when our country was faced with imperialist threats, we again in talks with the PNC proposed a political solution. And at Enmore Martyrs Day commemorations at Enmore on June 16, 1976, we called in the presence of the then Prime Minister for the implementation of a 17-point programme of action.

In 1978, we objected to the agreement with the International Monetary Fund. As we warned then, the situation definitely worsened.

What we said in the late 1970 is even more relevant today. We had then said that without a political solution, there could be no solution to the economic and social crisis.

The basis (economy) and the superstructure (politics, ideology, institutions and culture) are interlinked and inter-acting. At first, imperialist and PNC control at the superstructural level led to difficulties at the basis of the economy. That in turn has led to problems at the superstructural level, as manifested in authoritarian rule, denial of democracy and violations of human rights. The consequence is a vicious circle from which the PNC cannot extricate itself, and which is spiralling the country downwards.

This we had clearly enunciated in our party programme when we stated:

Lack of democracy, bureaucratic-administrative and police-military methods of rule, the denial of human rights and civil liberties, the militarization of politics and industrial relation, the refusal to establish democratic management of workers' control at state enterprises and to recognise truly democratic mass organisations, political and racial discrimination in the allocation of jobs, land, credit, houses and consumer goods at state outlets, political patronage, corruption, and extravagance have acted directly and indirectly as fetters on the productive forces.

Had the PNC heeded our calls and warnings, implemented our 17-points proposal and agreed to a political solution based on a National Patriotic Front Government, our economic situation would not have been in such a mess today, and our country's independence would not have been faced with the present grave dangers.

Once again, while retreating, the PNC is resorting to palliatives and pleas. A task force "to spearhead national recovery" and an anti-corruption committee have been set up. Pleas are made to the workers for "hard work, sweat, and blood", reminiscent of the former "eat less, sleep less, and work harder" slogan. And political parties are asked to face the crisis together. Said Dr. Reid: "Whether you are PPP, UF, or PNC, it is now time for all of us to join hands to overcome these difficult issues."

But the workers know that these palliatives and pleas will not produce results. Pressed by them, the General Secretary of the TUC, a body which is under the thumb of the PNC regime, in his report to the General Council meeting on March 28, 1982, stated that the progressively worsening situation "is of such magnitude today that it demands a much deeper examination and more far-reaching action than the retrenchment of a few thousand workers and the fan-out public meetings calling on the people to produce more and to prepare themselves for greater sacrifices. What further sacrifices can the people be expected to bear beyond what had already been heaped on them by the infamous revised 1981 June 2 national budget which abolished subsidies and sent prices of almost every consumer item including basic ones and essential services skyrocketing."

We say that there is a way other than surrender, retreat and sell-out; there is a viable alternative. The deep-seated, chronic malaise requires radical treatment.

To bring about immediate relief, and raise morale, we propose a shift of the burden from the backs of the poor to those who can afford it. The high-life style, extravagance and privileges of the PNC ruling class must be cut, and the tribute going to imperialist vested interests must be slashed. The national cake must be distributed in favour of the masses.

To cope with the chronic budget deficit and foreign exchange crisis, it is necessary:

1. to suspend debt and compensation payments or drastically reduce to a quarter of current payments. This means reduction from \$462 million to \$115 million in total debt payments, and from \$195 million to \$49 million in foreign debt payments. Unless forced by mass pressure, the imperialists will agree to rescheduling of debt only on condition of a surrender of our national independence.
2. to cut out the extravagance of the PNC elite:
 - a. Reduce vice-presidents from 5 to 1;
 - b. Cut number of ministers by half;
 - c. Cut ministers' and super-scale salaries by one-third;
 - d. Reduce overseas trips and allowances by half;
 - e. Stop purchase of arms, and additional recruitment of police and army personnel;
 - f. Reduce Foreign Affairs Ministry by half — expenditure increased from \$3 million in 1972 to \$16.5 million in 1982;
 - g. Abolish National Service or severely restrict it — \$186 million spent since 1974 with negligible results;
 - h. Reduce Information Services by half;
 - i. Abolish Ministry of National Development, now merged with Regional Development;
3. to take drastic steps to end corruption. The Auditor General must not be frustrated and hindered in the performance of his duties and his independence not interfered with. The Vice-President of Planning and Finance admitted that his department's "functions . . . had been neglected for some years". There must be enacted integrity legislation and established a general national all-party anti-corruption committee, instead of the recently-appointed PNC-packed committee, with "watch-dog" sub-committees at every factory, work place and institution. Public accounts must be democratised with trade unions playing an active role.

These measures, taken together, will make available to the national treasury over \$400 million in Guyana currency and about \$150 million in foreign currency. They will provide the funds for restoration of subsidies, improvement in the minimum wage and social services, the prevention of dismissals, the importation of essential goods, raw materials and spare parts, and, above all, the raising of morale for increased production and productivity.

Opposition to these measures will come from several quarters – imperialism, local rightist-reactionary forces and the reactionary petty-bourgeois and parasitic-bourgeois elements which now play the dominant role in the ruling PNC.

Imperialism will not surrender its direct tribute without a struggle. Now, it is engaged in trying to sink its tentacles deeper into our national economy as owners. Already, in various state corporations, they have established themselves by the use of more subtle neo-colonialist techniques as buying and selling agents, technical advisers, managers, etc. — Bookers as the buying and selling agents of, and technical consultants to, GUYSUCO in management; the British at the Guyana Electricity Corporation and fisheries; the West Germans at Guymine and the new forestry complex at Mabura Hills, Demerara River; the Japanese in fisheries. In the bauxite industry, the imperialists have virtually taken over — Philipp Bros, closely linked with the South African based Anglo-American Corporation, continues as sales agent since nationalisation of Demba in 1971; several other foreign companies, mostly American, are involved in different kinds of operations.

The PNC elite also will not without mass pressure agree to the alternative course proposed by us. Firstly, it does not want to give up its huge salaries, allowances, privileges and a corrupt way of life. Secondly, historically it has not shown the necessary political backbone, like the revolutionary leadership of Grenada and Cuba, to stand up to imperialism and take the political risks involved.

At the same time, the regime, being financially and politically weak, has been indicating more and more clearly a preference for an alliance as the only way out. Surreptitiously, it is making an accommodation with imperialism, while at the same time a section of the PNC postures and pontificates about cooperativism, self-reliance and socialist development and transformation. In this way, it hopes to maintain a progressive image and to placate and pacify the masses. The labour-progressive tendency in the PNC, unlike the left in the PNP of Jamaica, does not have the organisational strength or independence to challenge the rightist opportunist trend doubt. No doubt, with the cases of Basil Blair and a few other fresh in mind, the contradiction is resolved by the simple expediency: we have to eat.

Neither will cooperation come, nor workers' interests be advanced, unless there is a revolutionary democracy. In this regard, our programme stipulated:

The PPP holds that our people's revolution must be at this stage national and revolutionary-democratic with a socialist orientation. It must be national because without the assertion of sovereignty against imperialist domination, without the ending of foreign ownership and control through revolutionary changes, it is impossible to make social progress and advance to socialism.

To get Guyana moving forward again, to increase production and productivity, our party must wage a many-sided struggle for a socialist-oriented programme. In addition to what has already been stated, we must fight to:

- (1) Ensure democracy: Democracy with people's meaningful involvement at all levels is a crucial issue in Guyana today. It must be manifested at the political, social, and economic-industrial levels. Fundamental for economic recovery and a socialist-oriented course is not a sham, but a real democracy. Democratically elected bodies at the central, regional and district government levels must be linked with the mass organisations of the people's choice and worker's control at the factory or work place. The regional system which came into being with the rigged elections of December 1980 cannot be a substitute for district and municipal councils. Elections for these councils, long overdue since 1970 when they had been extensively rigged, must be held immediately. And real workers' control must replace the present sham workers' participation. Trade union elections must not be rigged by the PNC. Democratic trade unionism must be fostered and the right to collective bargaining enshrined in a Labour Code and respected. We must pressure the TUC General Secretary not only to protest as he did recently about the "utter disregard shown for the provision of collective agreements in carrying out the massive retrenchments", but also to activate the TUC and the workers against the Government.
- (2) End political and racial discrimination: For many years, we have been protesting against blatant discrimination in appointments and promotions. State institutions dealing with employment and promotion have been subverted to serve narrow party (PNC) not national ends. The placement of "square pegs in round holes" has brought about mismanagement and insubordination and taken its toll on efficiency, production and productivity; it has also led to an exodus and a brain drain. These institutions must not operate under the doctrine of "the paramountcy of the PNC" under which the PNC party and the state are indistinguishable. They must be restructured and democratised and allowed to operate independently, free from PNC coercion and control. Complaints have been made by the TUC General Secretary during the recent retrenchment about "indefensible discrimination and manifest favouritism to retain certain persons in employment". The TUC must be forced to mount a campaign to bring and end to all forms of discrimination.
- (3) Have a centrally planned economy and simultaneous emphasis on agriculture and industry: The State Planning Commission, about which so much propaganda was made, is functioning on paper only. We had said from the beginning when it was set up that

unless the principles of real Marxist-Leninist political economy were applied, nothing would come out of the concept of central planning. We had so indicated when we served for a short while on the advisory planning committee in 1976. And had our advice been heeded since the first PNC plan was drawn up in 1966, when we had warned about the over-emphasis on infrastructure not directly related to production, the economy would not have found itself in the log-jam it is in today.

- (4) Ensure a meaningful economic role to the private sector with preferential treatment to progressive small businessmen and patriotic capitalists. If in certain circumstances, private foreign capital is deemed necessary for development of the economy, strict control must be placed on it to protect the interest of the nation and the local entrepreneurs. Experience in many undeveloped countries shows that unrestricted private foreign monopoly capital, not only strangled and subjugated local private enterprise, but also deepened the status of dependent and distorted capitalist development.
- (5) Resist denationalisation in any form: While encouraging the private sector, care must be exercised that it does not become under PNC betrayal the dominant sector, especially under foreign control, for in that way lies rapacious "tooth and claw" capitalism, dependency and underdevelopment. The state and cooperative sectors must be expanded and democratised simultaneously with the growth of the private sector. This must be the emphasis and mix in the so-called tri-sector economy if we are to proceed on a non-capitalist or socialist-oriented road on our way to socialism.
- (6) Establish a national all-party committee to monitor imports and distribution commodities: PNC monopoly of trading through KSI, WRSM and YSM outlets and stooges must be abolished.
- (7) Diversify our foreign economic relations by strengthening links with the socialist world and the revolutionary-democratic states: Take up low-interest credit and trade offers from the socialist countries. Self-reliance can be dangerous when carried to extremes. The concept of "collective self-reliance" should not apply only to third world countries; it should embrace also the socialist community. Cuba and Angola, to take only two examples, would not have survived imperialist onslaught without the help of the socialist countries.
- (8) Reduce the large and costly standing army and make a truly country-wide People's Militia for national defence. Military personnel should be trained for specific jobs in productive enterprises before the reduction takes place.
- (9) Special treatment for Amerindians to permit their accelerated development. Coercion must cease and Amerindians must be allowed freely to determine their own affairs and given every help and encouragement.
- (10) Prevent the Parliament from being used as rubber-stamp to enact PNC edicts. The President in early 1982 told Parliament "The nation looks, and is entitled to look to this, the highest forum for leadership and sincerity. . ." Mass action must force him to make the National Assembly become a truly deliberative body, functioning democratically with various policy initiating committees pertaining to finance, industry, agriculture, defence, judiciary, labour employment and manpower training, race relations, Amerindian development, corruption, etc.
- (11) Permit the revolutionary and democratic forces access to the mass media (newspaper and radio) for the political-ideological education of the masses and the development of a genuine anti-imperialist, socialist-oriented people's culture.
- (12) Counter the PNC's denigration of socialism and expose the unscientific, utopian and petty-bourgeois co-operative socialism. We must wage a political-ideological struggle against all efforts to strengthen capitalist ideology, and the new threats posed by the emphasis and growth of capitalism to become the dominant sector, and to put Guyana on a capitalist course.

As a result of PNC's opportunism and acrobatics, bureaucratic methods of management, corruption and discrimination, nationalisation and socialism have been denigrated. The rightist reactionary forces inside and outside the country have been given a weapon to claim that nationalisation has failed in Guyana, that the vast majority of people do not want socialism. Some assert that the state cannot run anything efficiently and must not get involved in business. They claim that things were better before nationalisation when imperialist overlords held sway. They idealise the past and hanker for a return to the days of colonialism. They cannot see any future without foreign capital; they want an "open door" policy.

To those who denigrate state ownership and control, let us recite the history of the Guyana Rice Board (GRB). This state-controlled enterprise functioned differently under different governments. The rice farmers were exploited by the colonial regime. The PPP government changed the composition of the GRB and put the democratically-run Rice Producers' Association (RPA) in control, and both the rice farmers and millers prospered.

Similarly, the Rice Development Company (RDC) and the Guyana Electricity Corporation were run efficiently and profitably (the RDC made its first surplus under the PPP government).

The PNC regime merged the RDC with the Rice Marketing Board (RMB) to form the GRB, changed its composition, expelled the RPA, set up bureaucratic management worse than in colonial days, and wrecked the rice industry. The solution is not to dismantle the GRB, but to democratise it. Put back the RPA in control.

Clearly, what is important to look at is not the institution per se — whether it is losing or making profits or surpluses. More important is the nature of the state — which class controls it and the extent of democratisation. What is needed is a people's revolutionary democracy.

We must boldly come out in defence of nationalisation and socialism. With all the powers at our command, let our voices ring out loud and clear: they have not failed: What has failed is the PNC which is content with nationalisation without democratic control. And let us remember that even though nationalisation has been perverted and waylaid, it has succeeded in a fundamental way: it has reduced total imperialist ownership and control of key sectors of our economy and resources, raised class consciousness and sharpened the class struggle. Former PNC supporters, particularly at Linden, have come to see the PNC leadership in its true colours, not as socialist comrades, but as bosses pursuing relations typical of capitalism.

Socialism has not failed. Actually, socialism has not even been tried in Guyana; the prerequisites of socialism have not been laid.

And let us remind those who might be deluded by the reactionaries, that our colonialist past was not only associated with exploitation, plunder, under-development and backwardness, but also with a colour bar, logies in the sugar estates, a segregated river boat RH Carr and the exclusive Watooka settlement at Mackenzie, the bauxite town now called Linden.

And those who say that nationalisation in Guyana has scared the private investors and mistakenly think that foreign capital is the answer must take a close look at Jamaica. Michael Manley did exactly what the imperialists and their lackeys sometimes with their tongues in their cheeks advocate: don't nationalise, tax. His government did not nationalise the bauxite industry, but imposed a levy which increased revenue from US\$2.01 per tonne in 1973 to US\$12.21 in 1974 and added \$6 billion to the national treasury.

Imperialist opposition, pressures and CIA subversion finally in 1980 led to the destabilisation and removal of the Manley government. The new Prime Minister, Edward Seaga, became the darling of Washington; he was the first head of government President Reagan saw after his inauguration. Capital which flew out returned. The US tourists also returned. US-controlled financial institutions like the IMF and the World Bank, which had squeezed the Manley government, poured in funds. And a special Committee headed by US financial tycoon David Rockefeller was set up with the intention of making Jamaica into a Caribbean showpiece and paradise. To help out, US Defence Department agreed to establish a special 1.6 million tons stockpile of Jamaican bauxite.

What is the end result of the ballyhoo? A US journalist summed up the situation very neatly. Writing in the Washington Post, Christopher Dickey stated:

This island nation recently seems to have done just about everything right that a developing country could from the Reagan administration point of view, a kind of flagship in the Caribbean. But if it is not sinking, it is not sailing either, and the main thing keeping it afloat is precisely the kind of massive direct aid that Washington tries to de-emphasise.

After fulfilling the US bauxite stockpile, production at June 1982 was 3.2 million tons, about half of the production for the same period in 1980.

Deregulation — the removal of controls, import and price, now in progress in Guyana also — is affecting local production in agriculture and manufacturing. The Jamaica Manufacturers Association, which helped to bring Seaga to power, is now at war with him. In its annual report, it said that it was not prepared to take any more licks. The local manufacturers have to pay high interest rates and are unable to get foreign currency and licences to import raw materials and spares, but the local commercial capitalists can get them readily. The removal of controls through deregulation has led to a sudden burst of consumerism and a flood of imported consumer goods, but at the same time resulting in a 430 percent increase in the trade deficit.

The growth rate in the first year was only one percent, instead of the protected three percent. In 1981, the unemployment rate remained high at 26.2 percent, lower than the 27.9 percent for 1980, but higher than the 25 per cent of 1979. Out of the 488 teachers graduating from the Teachers Training College, only 168 will find jobs. Meanwhile, 750 in the bauxite industry and several thousands in other areas were sacked. There was a major power breakdown in June 1982, the second in six months.

Even more alarming was the contempt for Jamaica and its institutions by a major US transnational bank. It attempted to bribe its employees with increased salaries and promotions if they broke with trade unionism and their recognised Bustamante Trade Union, which is closely linked to the ruling party. This contemptuous act was met by a united protest of the whole trade union movement.

Those who see salvation in a future prominent role for foreign capital must remember our past. It was the principal spokesmen of foreign, capital, Anglo-American imperialism, which dictated economic planning strategy and domestic and foreign policies. From the very beginning, a US economist consultant-strategist, W. Davenport, among others, sat in the Prime Minister's office. And Dr. Horst Bocklemann was put in charge of the Bank of Guyana. They must also recall that when the economy seriously deteriorated, it was the prescription of the spokesmen of private foreign capital, the US-controlled IMF and World Bank, which made the situation far worse for the Guyanese masses.

Foreign monopoly capital leads to neo-colonialism and capitalist dependency. No third world country which has taken this path has achieved genuine independence and social progress. It would be puerile to think at this time of a deep and on-going crisis of world capitalism that any country tied to it would be saved from its scourges of inflation, unemployment and poverty. Recall the well-known dictum: when US sneezes, Latin America catches a cold.

THE SEARCH FOR UNITY

Little progress has been achieved in attaining formal unity with other political forces. It is well-known that the PNC rejected our call in the 1976-77 period for the formation of a National Patriotic Front Government. At one stage in 1976, they had indicated an interest and cited the Bulgarian model. But later they dropped the idea. We believe that two factors influenced them; firstly, imperialist pressures which had caused them to bow to Bookers McConnel and Company on compensation payments which they increased from \$1 (one dollar) to \$102 million; secondly, our opposition to their retreat and decision to put the burden of the economic crisis, manifested at the end of 1976, on the backs of the people, beginning with the removal of subsidies. The PNC charged that we were like a drowning man, trying to hold on to a straw — a share in the government — to save ourselves. Thereafter, it postponed the elections in 1978,

massively rigged them at the central and regional levels in 1980, and is now proposing to cancel local government elections, last held and rigged in 1970. It would very likely want to incorporate us in the government, but not on a principled basis of an agreed democratic, anti-imperialist and socialist-oriented programme. What the PNC wants is just a deal with us in a minority position holding a few ministries perhaps and without any real voice; in other words, assuming responsibility without power. In the particular circumstances of Guyana, this will amount to a betrayal of the people's vital interests and a sure way to political suicide.

The dilemma of the PNC is real. Those with even a smattering of revolutionary theory understand that in practice the problems of economy cannot be lastingly solved without fundamental democracy with genuine people's involvement at all levels. It is a well-known Marxist-Leninist tenet that without revolutionary democracy, production and productivity will be adversely affected, economic and social progress will be stunted and socialist development cannot be advanced. But, at the same time, the PNC ruling class do not want to give up their positions and privileges and their corrupt way of life. As a minority party with a history of rightist opportunism, it cannot accept a real democratic solution. Whenever the question of a National Patriotic Front Government is raised the question inevitably comes up: not what is good for the country and the people, but "what is going to happen to me."

This is unfortunate. But it must not be forgotten that rightist opportunism has been the hallmark of the PNC. Recall that the class basis of the PNC leadership was petty-bourgeois and other middle strata; that its origin was an alliance of the rightist faction of the PPP (which opportunistically split our Party in 1955 after the forcible removal of our first PPP government in 1953) and the pro-imperialist UDP, which collaborated with British colonialism. In the 1960's pragmatism-opportunism caused the PNC to reject an alliance with us and to make a deal with Anglo-American imperialism.

Some in the PNC however, have been influenced by the anti-imperialist position of the regime in the 1974-76 period and by Marxist Leninist theory and ideology. Others have a labour-progressive orientation. They see the necessity for an alliance. However, because of the way that party functions, they remain silent. They do not have the independence and political courage either to criticise or attack the parasitic neo-comprador, bureaucratic-bourgeois development and consolidation in and out of the PNC particularly after nationalisation, or to fight for a political solution and the establishment of a democratic, anti-imperialist and socialist-oriented National Patriotic Front Government.

Our relations with parties in the Opposition have had their ups and downs. This is largely due to petty-bourgeois ideology with its right and left opportunism.

The petty-bourgeois class wavers in the middle between the two main contending classes in capitalist society, the proletariat and bourgeoisie. This vacillation is manifested on the one hand to the right to petty-bourgeois reformism and to capitalist development, and on the other to the "left", to petty-bourgeois revolutionism; it generally ends up in opposition to Marxism-Leninism and its principles and in defence of capitalism.

Some times, the two tendencies are found in the same party as in the Working People's Vanguard Party (WPVP) which was formed by a few individuals after their break with our party in 1968. This party had close ideological links with the Indian Political Revolutionary Associates (IPRA) formed later in 1972. The WPVP, with a Maoist orientation, linked with the Ratoon Group of a similar ideological outlook, IPRA and ASCRIA to form in 1974 the Working People's Alliance (WPA). Subsequently, in 1976, it severed links with the WPA and came together with the rightist Liberator Party (LP) and People's Democratic Movement (PDM) to form the Vanguard for Liberation and Democracy (VLD) — a development somewhat similar to its Peking counterpart which has swung from petty-bourgeois revolutionism to a position which places it objectively on the same side with world capitalism and imperialism.

Differences in ideology have led to differences in tactics and strategy. Consequently, it has not been possible to forge real unity.

In early 1978, we attempted to bring together all democratic, progressive and revolutionary forces in a National Patriotic Front. We said that it was not a left front, and its programme was

in keeping with the stage of historical socio-economic and political development in Guyana. With particular reference to the right of centre parties, we made a clear distinction between monopoly foreign capital and local capital, pointed that there was a definite place for the private sector, and illustrated the historical role played by small businessmen and patriotic capitalists in the building of just democratic societies in the socialist countries. Citing the experience of the Unidad Popular of Chile led by Salvador Allende, we showed how communists, socialists and patriotic non-monopoly capitalists could work together in the common interest against imperialism and local reaction and for democracy and socialism.

The LP, WPVP and the PDM did not respond. However, later that year during the campaign against the referendum to postpone elections, we agreed in the interest of unity to join with all the opposition parties except the UF to form the Committee in Defence of Democracy (CDD).

In the CDD, we experienced severe limitations. The Liberator Party exploited a popular platform to spread reactionary anti-socialist and anti-communist ideas. It attacked land reform and "the land to the tiller" slogan of the PNC, and socialism claiming that it had failed in Guyana. We objected and they were stopped. But they retaliated and said that we could not on the CDD platform speak in favour of land reform and say that what had failed in Guyana was not socialism but Burnhamism. And then a storm nearly broke: at a CDD meeting in Georgetown, a LP leaflet was distributed when its leader was speaking with vicious attacks on socialism, communism and the socialist states; it stated that the PNC and socialism had failed; that communism was evil, and that the communist and workers parties in GDR, Cuba and the Soviet Union were plopping up the PNC.

The 1978 attempt at unity without struggle taught us several lessons:

- 1) The coming together of the opposition forces, though numerically large (the political parties in the CDD and the other social organisations including the Church and the Citizens Committee) was not enough to stop the referendum. All that the boycott, which was mainly passive, succeeded in demonstrating was the total isolation of the PNC and the rigging of the referendum (rigging, however, had already been thoroughly exposed in the 1968 and 1973 elections).
- 2) The right was able to take advantage of the CDD popular platform at a time of heightened political interest and activity.
- 3) The left was restricted from using that same platform to raise the consciousness of the masses for national and social liberation.

Our attempts to bring about unity with the WPA have also not borne tangible results. Our relations went through a torturous course and fluctuated from time to time largely because of:

- 1) misconceptions about our party;
- 2) attacks on us based on those misconceptions;
- 3) linking up with renegades and opportunists who slander our party;
- 4) tendency to make a rightist accommodation rather than, to defend left positions.

Our party was lumped with the PNC as two racial blocs, and IPRA and ASCRIA in 1972 stated that their objective was to destroy the PPP and PNC respectively. This view of our party was expressed from time to time and as recently as November 1981, when Eusi Kwayana in an article in the Caribbean Contact stated:

Since that date (1955) the behaviour of the two main parties resulting from the split — the PPP, led by Cheddi Jagan, and the PNC led by Forbes Burnham — has been largely determined by racial defensiveness. This has largely remained the case, regardless of the slogans the parties inscribed on their banners.

This subjective evaluation of our position and role was clearly erroneous. Were it true, how can the attitude of imperialism towards the PPP and PNC be explained? Moving from a class position in defence of capitalism, Anglo-American imperialism destabilised the PPP government

and brought to power the PNC. Certainly, for the imperialists, the PPP and PNC were and are not the same.

Not only the WPVP but also prominent pro-Maoist elements in the Ratoon Group attacked us for taking part in the 1968 and 1973 elections. We were deemed non-revolutionary; the masses were told that we were propping up the PNC government. Not armed with the correct theory of revolution and demonstrating petty-bourgeois impatience, they spoke of making revolution when there was obviously no revolutionary situation, when a sizable section of the working class was still deluded by PNC's bribery, demagoguery and manipulation of fears of racial insecurity (PNC playing the racial card: namely, that discontent with and agitation against the PNC would lead to the fall of the PNC, and the coming to power of the PPP with "coolie" rule and domination).

Despite attacks against us, we have always taken a conciliatory attitude towards the WPA. We encouraged dialogue and facilitated them in many ways, particularly in the period after Dr. Walter Rodney's return to Guyana in 1974. Our relations, however cooled in the mid-1975-mid-1976 period. This came about because one of the WPA's affiliate, the WPVP, openly attacked us on our policy of "critical support" as a sell-out. We were prepared for discussions, but these, though no fault of our own, did not materialise until August 1977, soon after which the WPVP severed links with the WPA.

In mid-1978, discussions between our party and the WPA began. In principle, they had expressed support for our idea of "winner-does-not-take-all-politics" and for the formation of a National Patriotic Front and Government. Their main reservations hinged on the exclusion of the PNC, the inclusion not only of political parties but also other social organisations, and provision for a rotating chairmanship. We presented our party's draft programme.

When their draft programme "Towards A Revolutionary Socialist Guyana" was later presented, they stated that they were "guided by the principles of Marxism-Leninism with a socialist goal" (some years earlier, the Ratoon Group had put out working papers on non-capitalist development or socialist orientation). We held two meetings at grass roots level at Buxton-Annandale and Grove. But because of lack of response on their side at the latter, at their request meetings were postponed. Meantime, both parties were working on a draft statement, "Declaration of Principles For A National Patriotic Front Government", to include democracy, anti-imperialism and socialism. But the unitary process was aborted; the statement was never issued. The WPA veered off and adopted the programmatic political platform of the Compass Group, formed by some prominent individuals, mainly drawn from the petty-bourgeois and other middle strata, and including a few prominent state officials.

The Compass Group had called for the formation of a broad-based Government of National Reconstruction, "neither left nor right" and with no ideology.

We warned the WPA about their tactics and strategy and the dangers of petty bourgeois impatience and a putschist approach which had led to tragedy in Indonesia; of the dangers of capitulation to the right — the WPA's proposed National Assembly of 50 members was weighted to the right; and, although the WPA in its programme had stated that "the struggle to overthrow the present regime must be situated within an anti-imperialist and socialist focus", it was prepared to accede to the VLD programme which was to the right of that of the PNC. We pointed out that the "neither left nor right" position of the Compass Group meant in fact a rightist government, that "no ideology" meant capitalist ideology. Actually, while the rightist forces were frontally attacking socialism and the WPVP was opportunistically claiming that socialism was irrelevant to Guyana (recall that it was Brindley Benn who when Deputy Prime Minister in the PPP government had stated that it was easier to stop tomorrow than to stop communism), the WPA was tailing them. Its attitude was: since the people do not want to hear about socialism, it is not for us an issue.

Our relations with the WPA became strained and direct contacts almost ceased for about a year. They were resumed in mid-1980, but on the eve of the December 1980 elections, they worsened. At our last meeting with the WPA and VLD before the elections, we suggested that in the interest of future cooperation, a joint statement be issued stating that there were genuine

differences in tactics regarding the participation in elections, but our commitment remained the removal of the PNC. And we warned them about the danger of the alternative course for them to attack us as in the past. Unfortunately, they chose to attack us viciously.

We utilised the campaign not only to attack the PNC but also to bring home to the masses differences between us and the other opposition parties in tactics and strategy; we discussed various theories of revolution, pointed out what constituted correct revolutionary tactics at a time of the ebb in the revolutionary tide, and cited experiences about electoral struggles in Czarist Russia from 1905 to 1917, Trinidad and Grenada, relating them to our own concrete situation. In the end, the masses showed their confidence in our revolutionary tactics.

Despite the difficulties, we must continue to work for unity. To those who say that our unity must be built on democracy alone, and we must not be anti-imperialist or anti-anything except anti-PNC, we say that we cannot ostrich-like hide our heads in the sands. Democracy is not an abstraction. In the real world around us imperialism actually is the murderer of democracy. It is not by accident that there is little democracy in Guyana, in Central and South America. One cannot be democratic and at the same time be pro-imperialist. It will be seen that as imperialism pushes the PNC more and more to the right, there will be less and less democracy.

Unfortunately, the attacks continue. In the same Caribbean Contact article already referred to, Eusi Kwayana stated that the "peace" in Guyana claimed by Burnham rests, among other things, "on the willingness of the opposition to use the dead Parliament and the dying courts more or less on the terms of the rulers." This position is not only incorrect but also inconsistent. At one time the WPA urged that the place to fight was not the parliament but the courts. Our position about parliamentary struggles is consistent with Marxist-Leninist practice — wage the struggle on all fronts without exception so long as there is no revolutionary situation. And ours is not, like the United Force, vulgar bourgeois parliamentarianism; we battle relentlessly for the people, not only inside, but also outside, parliament, on all fronts.

Some of the difficulties which we experience with the WPA no doubt spring from the fact that the party grew out of a coalition of at first 4, later 3, groups with different ideological orientations — Black and Indian cultural nationalism, Maoism, New Leftism, Marxism as distinct from Marxism-Leninism. Its links abroad were mainly with Maoist, neo-Trotskyite and Black cultural nationalist groups and parties. There was not the same kind of ideological unity which is manifested in our party. Consequently, this has led to divergences in political line within the party.

At this crucial period of our country's history, correct strategy and tactics are needed. Some opposition forces want to throw out the baby with the dirty bath water. They want the PNC out, which is also what we want. But they also want what imperialism wants; what the imperialist-controlled IMF and World Bank are pressing the PNC regime to do: a subtle, if not an outright, form of denationalisation and a capitalist course.

Our position is different. Given the fact that the local bourgeoisie is small and financially weak, a capitalist course for Guyana will inevitably mean domination by foreign monopoly capital and all the ills which we experienced under direct colonial rule. We say: do not dismantle the state sector; instead, throw out the PNC and democratise the state-owned enterprises. What is needed in Guyana is not to contract to stagnate but to expand the state and co-operative sectors, and at the same time to give the patriotic local capitalists every facility to augment the economy.

Real unity will not be achieved by superficial deals. It can only come from struggle. We must conduct ideological struggle on a principled basis. The rightist reactionary forces who do not want a revolutionary-democracy must be isolated. They must not be allowed to grow politically. Let us not forget that imperialism faces a real dilemma in our country. It is on the one hand aware that the PNC is tottering and will collapse in the not too distant future; on the other hand, it does not have a sufficiently strong rightist alternative as Seaga's Jamaica Labour Party. Thus, while still presently supporting the PNC, it is working assiduously to build and strengthen a third force in the country — in the armed forces, in the ruling party and in the

opposition forces. We must be on guard against imperialist agents who are going around the country promising the people land, loans and other facilities.

While isolating the rightist-reactionary elements, we must seek out and make an alliance with the truly democratic, labour-progressive and revolutionary forces. Let us remember that our situation has reached not only a serious economic, but also a fluid political, stage

Contradictions have sharpened everywhere – between the PNC leadership and its members and supporters; within the PNC leadership; between the PNC and the TUC; between the PNC-controlled trade union bureaucrats and careerists and the rank-and-file workers. The army, which is virtually the military arm of the PNC, is no doubt affected in the same way by back-breaking problems as the civilian section of the PNC. The Church too is not immune from the same problems facing its flock.

Our party must reach out to every social class and strata. We must show where we stand in relation to each one of them and their particular interests. In this regard, our programme is an invaluable weapon in our political-organisational work. We have good policies. These must be taken to the masses.

Dissatisfaction with the elitist leadership of the PNC has manifestly led to a drastic falling away of that party's working-class and peasant membership and support. Objective conditions are leading to what we had set as our goal years ago and for which we had been patiently working, namely, working class and peasant unity.

In mid-1979 working class unity and militancy was manifested in the strike of bauxite workers who defied the union leadership and downed tools. They were supported by the sugar workers and a section of the urban workers.

Several factors, however, have militated against similar resurgent action in the even worse conditions existing today. These include the class collaborationist role of the TUC leadership, the use of the military and the paramilitary forces against workers on strike, the arbitrary dismissal of 81 CCWU workers in 1979, the retrenchment of 6,000 workers and the threat of further retrenchment, the demoralising effect of the failure to remove the regime in 1979 and the assassination of Dr. Walter Rodney. The PNC has instituted a form of terroristic rule. Its grip on the people is exercised through its monopoly in the field of labour placement, food distribution services and credit.

Nevertheless, the storm is bound to break sooner than later. The workers want positive action. But they are held back by the collaborationist trade unions and the TUC. The General Secretary of the TUC makes what appear to be attacks against the government with references to the onslaughts of the regime against the workers and pinpointing discrimination in the manner of retrenchment which he deplors and says is unnecessary. But these truculent attitudes are not translated into action. The most charitable view which one can take is that he is bemused or hamstrung by a PNC-packed executive committee.

Clearly our task in the coming months is to step up our work at the rank and-file level at every factory, work place, office and school. We must arm the workers with our alternative solution and press for the fight to develop from the level of the factory floor and field. Trade union leaders must be forced to defend the rights of the workers or be forced out. In this regard we must remind our members and supporters to carry out their tasks in a disciplined way as active participants in their trade unions, however reactionary these unions may be. And contacts and links must be established with former PNC members who are disillusioned and discontented. At one time our goal was to neutralise a third and win over another third of PNC members. Today, far more than two-thirds are neutralised. Conditions are very favourable to win them over to our ranks.

Next to the working class, the peasantry is the most revolutionary. Our farmers, like the workers, have become victims of PNC misrule. Large numbers have become so impoverished that they have abandoned their cultivations. They live precariously. Some are engaged as occasional agricultural workers; others migrate overseas or to the urban areas in search of employment.

Our party must more militantly defend the farmers' interests. We must fight against the growth of big capitalist agriculture in the countryside at the expense of the small farmers. At the same time, we must be vigilant and warn the farmers about the work of fifth columnists. Their aim, as the paid agents of imperialism and local reaction, is to drive a wedge and break the traditional strong bond between the farmers and our party. We must step up our work through our fraternal Rice Producers' Association, Guyana Agricultural Producers' Association and the Guyana Cane Farmers' Association. And the worker-farmer alliance must be strengthened.

The intelligentsia and middle strata are influential forces in our society. They are being increasingly drawn into the struggle because of dissatisfaction with their work environment, discrimination and retrenchment. Being generally under the influence of petty-bourgeois ideology, they tend to display impatience. Our party must draw these forces nearer to us. We must work in a systematic way to influence them with Marxist-Leninist ideology. We must ensure that they get at least the *Mirror and Thunder* on a regular basis. Many are in receipt of other literature from our party. The list must be expanded. And we must follow up by personal contacts, with the hope of drawing them into activity. Here, our comrades in the professional, teaching and academic fields have much scope for purposeful work.

Small businessmen and capitalists are also terribly frustrated. They are plagued with innumerable difficulties. And even their lives are in danger with the increases in violent crime. We must not leave them to the rightist political parties which claim to represent their interests, but do not want to take an anti-imperialist position. We must reach out to them, patiently explain our position and erase from their minds some misconceptions which have been deliberately implanted by our enemies. For example, as reported by the *Guyana Chronicle* on April 1, 1979, Desmond Hoyte told the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce that the PPP leader's "argument appears to be that the government should ignore the experience and expertise of local businessmen, deny them any opportunity to contribute to the development of the country, strangle their initiative, and destroy them as a community". He then went on to say how under the PNC they had a real role to play.

This is a gross distortion. Local businessmen under the PNC regime suffer from routine "hold-up" demands for money for PNC coffers, daily hassles and frustrations, and unfair treatment with preference given to KSI, YSM, WRSM and other PNC business ventures. This was definitely not the position under the PPP government. Many businesses, for instance the Banks Brewery, the Continental paint factory, the chipboard factory, were given active support when we were in government. We had also set up an Advisory Industrial Development Committee which was headed by businessmen.

In our programme, *Guyana's Road to Socialism*, we stated that the PPP will:

Recognise the existence of a private (free enterprise) sector which is complementary to the main state and cooperative sectors and is beneficial to national construction and the people's welfare, and give due consideration to the interests of small traders, small manufacturers and handicraftsmen.

Our position must be frankly and clearly stated. We believe that foreign trade must be under the control of the state. Local trading must be tri-sectoral – state, cooperative and private – and definitely not under the ruling party exercising a monopoly as under the PNC. We favour local businessmen as manufacturers in preference to commercial agents of foreign manufacturing companies. We make a clear distinction between local entrepreneurs and foreign private capitalists, especially the transnational corporations and favour the local patriotic capitalists.

And as regards the tri-sectoral economy mooted by the PNC, here too there is need for clarity. The imperialists want the private sector to be dominant, under the control of the foreign transnational corporations, with the country taking a dependent capitalist course. The PNC now seems content to play a definite junior partner role to imperialism. In our programme for a socialist-oriented course, there will also be a tri-sectoral economy. The three sectors will expand for the purpose of economic development. However, the state and cooperative sectors will

be dominant. This will ensure that the direction towards our ultimate goal of socialism will not be subverted.

Our message to local businessmen must be clear and precise. Their assistance with their expertise and assets is necessary for the development of the economy and the building of our nation. At the same time, they must join with us to ensure that Guyana does not take a dependent capitalist course under foreign transnationals' control. This will be neither in their interest nor in the interest of our people and country.

A stratum to which attention must be paid is the lumpen-proletariat. Their ranks are growing. Generally, they are unstable, and take part in many anti-social activities. They have, however, a rebellious character, and this can be utilised either for liberation or reaction depending on its composition and the influence of the, working class movement on it, as well as on the ability of the communists to diffuse any attempt by the forces of reaction to use this particular social grouping for reactionary purposes.

Our contacts and relations with the Church must be strengthened. Although our experience with its role in the 1950s and 1960s was bitter, we must realise that as an institution in constant contact with the masses, it is being influenced by the woes of its "flock". In Latin America, particularly, liberation theology has developed and a large and growing body of Catholics are actively working with, and on, the side of the masses. In Nicaragua, priests who play an active role in socio-economic development have defied the dictum of the Pope and have continued in work with the Sandinista government.

In Guyana, the Guyana Council of Churches, particularly the Catholic Church, played a vicious role in bringing down our government. But that is the past; history moves on, and we have to keep our eyes on the future. Many people associated with the Christian Church who helped to bring the PNC to power on the slogan "lesser of two evils", found themselves discriminated against and squeezed especially in business. They are bitter, and militantly anti-PNC. Some have even developed an anti-American attitude, as a result of US support for the PNC. But their basic conservatism, idealism, traditional anti-communism and former links with the CIA cause some degree of vacillation. Therefore, they take an anti-PNC, but not an anti-imperialist pro-socialist position. Our task is to make them understand that the enemy of the Guyanese people is not just the PNC but also imperialism.

The imperialists are also working among the non-Christians, particularly the Muslims. In the past, their divide-and-rule policy fostered divisions between Blacks and Indians, and between Hindus and Muslims. Their strategic goal is to weaken our party. Recall that in the 1964 elections, imperialist and local reactionary forces financed the Justice Party (Hindu-led) and the Guyana United Muslim Party to attack us and split our votes in the service of the imperialist-backed PNC and UF alliance.

Our position vis-à-vis the Church has been explicitly stated in our programme. It has a definite role to play in a free Guyana. There will be, under a PPP or a National Patriotic Front Government, freedom of religion; the state will be neutral to religion. On ideology, we cannot make concessions. But this is no time to waste in arguing about creation, how the world came into being. Far more pressing are the grave problems facing the people. What is needed is for Christians and communists, believers and non-believers to sit around the table, establish the roots of our problems, and work out in a scientific way what action to take to remove the PNC and establish a people's government.

The security forces also require our special consideration. We sometimes fall into the error, especially after an election or a strike in which the security forces are used, to make a blanket attack on them. It is important to remember that these forces were organised as arms of the PNC in uniform; that recruits were and continue to be largely drawn from the unemployed, that the same contradictions which plague the PNC in its civilian ranks are also found in their ranks. And the same tendencies which are exhibited in the PNC civilian leadership are no doubt to be found in the top echelons of the security forces. We must not overlook the fact, too, that as has been shown particularly in Peru, Bolivia, Suriname and elsewhere, the security

forces, like the Church, are not immune from the travail of the society of which they are a part; therefore, sections of it can be won over to the cause of national liberation and social progress.

ON ORGANISATION

The enthusiasm displayed during the 1980 election campaign and the large turnout on election day demonstrated not only an effective party machine but also a mass confidence in our party. This was reassuring as we had found ourselves in a difficult situation. On the one hand, we were harassed by PNC thugs and hooligans; on the other hand, we were attacked by the WPA and VLD, no doubt with the intention of capitalising on the situation and winning over our supporters. We had to convince the masses that they must go out to vote even though we were telling them that with the rigging it was not possible to win.

The period from our last congress to now has been marked by improvement in our organisational structure. Some gaps in our organisation have been filled with the appointments of new organisers in Georgetown, Bartica, Black Bush Polder, Essequibo Islands and the Moruca District. A continuing problem is lack of transportation — a problem which we hope to solve soon so that our work can be carried out more efficiently.

The district and regional committees function according to the stipulations of our constitution. Generally, they meet regularly. But there is much room for improvement. It is not enough to make plans; even more important is the supervision and execution of the plans. And we have not achieved the level of decentralisation which we had aimed at when we set up the regional structure. We do well in organising public meetings. But the regional and district committees have to show more initiatives; they need to do more in activating the masses. We must move from publicity and agitation to deeper action.

The group, the basic unit of our party, is our foundation and source of strength. It is our closest link with the masses. Here, too, we have had some advance. In addition to the coastlands, the traditional areas of our party's strength, the riverine and interior areas show positive signs of expansion. Party groups have been established in areas such as the Upper Mazaruni, Laluni, Upper Demerara River, the Rupununi and the North West District.

Many groups function very well, while others do not due to lack of good leadership and working programmes. In certain areas, especially Berbice, emigration, resulting in a loss of many activists, also had an adverse effect. With the new challenges ahead, all party groups must become more vibrant and active. Collective and individual tasks must be given and checked to see that they are carried out.

Membership is increasing in all the regions, and special mention must be made of interior areas such as Rupununi (South Savannahs), Upper Mazaruni, Bartica, Laluni and Demerara River. Lack of permission from the regime to visit the Rupununi Savannahs places constraints on our organisational work in this area.

Making members and keeping records of membership dues is a continuous exercise. The new card system introduced in 1980, provided for dues to be collected at group level on the 25-cents per month basis, involved extra book-keeping efforts on the part of group secretaries. This process, though difficult at the beginning, is being gradually advanced. As regards other forms of fund raising, all the regions have made efforts, some doing very well. No single region, however, realised its set target in the recent past. No doubt, the deteriorating economic situation has contributed to this. We will have to explore new ways, such as corn house, concerts, cinema shows, sports events, etc., which combine entertainment with fund raising.

Target work has finally got off the ground with concentration mainly in Georgetown and selected places in the East Coast, West Coast and East Bank Demerara. From reports, the response is encouraging. However, the work is mainly agitational, limited basically to selling literature, distributing hand bills and leaflets and having discussions with workers outside their work places. In this relatively short space of time, it is difficult to measure successes in terms of winning over and organising the workers in the respective enterprises.

House to house campaigns are also carried out in places traditionally regarded as PNC areas of strength. Hostility of the past towards us has turned to friendliness, making dialogue possible. As a result of frustrations, many former PNC members look to us for a solution; our campaigners hear "Things are getting from bad to worse comrades; see what you all can do."

Now more than target work must be expanded in order to win over traditional PNC supporters to our side.

In this regard, Georgetown is a key area. Here resides the bulk of our party and we plan to mobilise the city in this important task. So far, we have successfully confronted the many political mushrooms and other elements attempting to discredit and distort our party's principled position. A more favourable situation is building up for the party to advance and intensify the struggle at all fronts and to mobilise the masses for militant action.

A new feature of our activities is work within the official regional councils. In these bodies, our regional councillors are giving valuable service to the communities in which they are located. They will soon be assigned to specific districts within the region. In this way they will develop closer links with the people and their mass organisations. At the same time, they will work in coordination with a member of parliament who will have general responsibility for the region. In this way, we will be able to fight more effectively for the people, while simultaneously developing the mass organisations. Regrettably, we have not succeeded in establishing a countrywide structure or ratepayers and tenants associations, parent-teachers associations, etc. We must correct this omission as soon as possible.

EDUCATIONAL-IDEOLOGICAL

Since our previous congress, new challenges have appeared on the ideological front. To stem the growing interest in the theory and practice of socialism, rightist/opportunist forces have mounted an offensive in recent times with a vigorous ideological campaign. This has taken many forms — distortion of socialism, denigration and belittling of developments in existing socialism, subtle as well as crude anti-communism, praise of capitalism, advocacy of the two-super-powers line, fresh calls to play down or question the role or necessity of adherence to Marxism-Leninism, and so on.

The resurgence of such false, reactionary and distorted views hostile to scientific socialism fuses and coincides today with the ideological offensive launched by imperialism world-wide. These views filter through to the Guyanese masses in diverse ways, by many agents and agencies, which are additionally carriers and sources of confusion. They, moreover, present new hurdles to the advancement of the political struggles.

The ideological struggle is clearly intensifying in Guyana. Correspondingly, the party's work in this direction must also be stepped up.

Our tasks must include a dutiful defence of our scientific ideology from the lies, half-truths, slander and attacks levelled at it. The situation demands that we go on an ideological offensive in order to counteract the confusion among the people. This must be seen as a major task. We must, therefore, utilise all possibilities and take fresh initiatives for the expansion and promotion of this aspect of our work.

Guiding our work at this time should be the broad objectives of deepening the political and ideological understanding of our membership and those belonging to the party's sections and fraternal organisations, and simultaneously of reaching out to larger and wider sections of the people with our revolutionary ideology. The realisation of these objectives would naturally require the fullest involvement of the party's organisation at every level and the determined and consistent participation of our members, cadres and activists.

We must strengthen and build on the achievements made in this field over the preceding three years.

Our school, as you know, operates year-round and caters for courses of short duration. Unfortunately, at times it is affected by low attendance. Our scholarship programme is continuing and expanding, though not without problems related primarily to the ability to get enough stu-

dents to take up all offers. Several party libraries have been set up, and assistance is being given to many other existing ones. Thousands of Guyanese from different classes and strata now have regular and easy access to socialist literature due to our work. Lectures, discussions and several types of seminars have been conducted though not exhaustively. All this work is pursued with varying degrees of success in collaboration at the educational level with a number of workers organisations, etc.

Regardless of the strides and progress made, much more remains to be done. To successfully deal with the current challenges before the party, we cannot be satisfied with the present practices of educational work which are largely centrally organised and directed. Our regions, districts, groups and party sections will have to take greater initiative and demonstrate better planning in order to implement educational programmes in coordination with the party's Education Committee. Full use should be made of our experiences and the variety of tested methods in advancing this. Special emphasis should be placed in activating where necessary and in encouraging comrades, particularly those spread throughout the country, who have pursued studies at our school and abroad, to perform more assiduously so that our party can get the benefits of their higher training. Internal party ideological work must intensify the understanding among our members such as questions of leadership, emulation, revolutionary morality, democratic centralism, criticism and self-criticism in order to eradicate the vestiges of individualism, pettiness and colonial neutrality.

In the final count, to win out in the ongoing battle of ideas would require the full and active involvement of all our members.

PROPAGANDA

The party's Propaganda Committee and its machinery work closely with other leading organs of the movement, and oversees this vital aspect of party work both at home and overseas. Much effort is being put into *Thunder* and *Mirror* in order to boost circulation, and improve the content and format of each. We need to display greater creativity, not only to make these publications attractive, but also to serve the interests of the various social classes and strata we are aiming to win over.

There has been some success in this as an increasing demand for these and other printed materials is being felt. More strenuous efforts are being made to step up the circulation, despite the constraint in limited newsprint supplies and a lack of other inputs stemming from the deliberate policy of the government.

Other aspects of propaganda work over the years include printing of booklets, posters, leaflets and handbills dealing with relevant topics, the response to which has been heartening. Special articles were also published abroad, while materials were taken by comrades to conferences overseas. Added to this are films shows, press releases and interviews with mass media journalists. Of course, public meetings are our main method of communication with the working masses.

The *Mirror* is also one of the main media of contact the party enjoys with the masses, and endeavours to project the party line in all aspects of news reporting and commentary. The editorial in fact reflects the party line in all matters. The *Thunder* deals more in depth with concrete topics analysing subjects a Marxist viewpoint. We must strive to maintain its worker-intellectual character. And at all times, we must ensure that our propaganda through the *Mirror* and other publications reflects the problems, difficulties and aspirations of the entire working people without bias.

Out Interior Bulletin is a valuable addition to our list of publications. It is highly appreciated in the interior, particularly by the Amerindians. We must aim at improving its format and content, and enlarging its influence.

We also have plans to issue bulletins and booklets pertaining to other social strata and institutions.

A concerted drive is still being undertaken by our party to get on the state radio on a regular basis. This is part of our policy to leave no stone unturned to achieve our objective of reaching the broadest section of the people in diverse and creative ways.

INTERNATIONAL

At the level of international party work, the International Committee met regularly, discussing various important issues and receiving reports from party delegations attending conferences abroad. On its initiative, the annual Chile Solidarity Week was held, the 70th anniversary of the African National Congress of South Africa was commemorated, the 100th Anniversary of the birth of Georgi Dimitrov was celebrated in several functions, and the El Salvador Solidarity Committee carried out a number of activities.

The party and its sections carried out a large number of solidarity activities including seminars, picketing, photographic exhibitions, rallies, etc., in support of El Salvador, Nicaragua, the release of Paraguayan patriot Antonio Maidana, other victims of dictatorial oppression, the Irish patriots, Puerto Rico, Suriname, Grenada, Cuba, Namibia, Palestine and many other burning issues.

The party press, including *Mirror*, handbills and posters, the National Assembly, film shows and fund raising activities have also been used as means of furthering international solidarity.

The Friendship Societies work under the Council for International Solidarity and Friendship which usually meets twice yearly to coordinate the work of the societies.

The party group and support bodies overseas in London, New York and Canada have done exceptional work for the party. They fight on all fronts for our party's positions, represent us at solidarity activities, speak at rallies and seminars, and in general, have helped to give our party a good image overseas. They also engage in fund raising activities and send various gifts to the party. In fact, our congress badges, pens and posters were sent to us by our overseas groups.

Our Guyana Information Bulletin is produced on a monthly basis. It is circulated abroad very widely and keeps overseas Guyanese and other nationals informed about developments inside the country. It is also helpful to our comrades in Canada and in the United Kingdom in producing their own publicity materials. We have made attempts to produce the Bulletin in Spanish and French. But, unfortunately, much success has not been achieved.

Included in the party's international work, of course, is the attendance at many overseas conferences and party congresses. The party also maintains a permanent representative at *World Marxist Review*, and from this vantage point helps greatly in disseminating information about the party and its policies, and making valuable contacts in keeping with our adherence to the principles of proletarian internationalism.

WOMEN'S PROGRESSIVE ORGANISATION (WPO)

With the worsening conditions in the country having an extremely adverse effect on women, the WPO maintains a firm and militant struggle on their behalf. Among the issues highlighted were the scarcity of essential foodstuffs, skyrocketing cost of living, increases in electricity charges, massive retrenchment and escalating crime, especially against women and children. Several picketing demonstrations, protest letters, petitions and vigils have been carried out on these and other issues.

Efforts have been made to assist the Amerindian people, the most oppressed section of the population, in the riverine and interior areas. The distribution of much needed clothes has been continuing on a regular and consistent basis.

Plans for the building of a crèche are near completion, and groups are involved in fund-raising efforts to finance the venture. Special activities for children have also been held regularly.

The WPO is instituting more creative organisational methods to respond to the present stage of struggle in order to reach and organise as many women as possible from all social

backgrounds, especially working women. Target work, raising important issues for the community, visits to children's institutions and "adoption" of these by members, and project work are some of the new initiatives.

Activities among groups have been extended to include classes on handicraft, domestic science, first aid and family planning. These along with leadership seminars, conferences, public meetings, literature sales, campaigns and participation in Accabre classes have greatly assisted in the development of WPO members and the women in general. The quarterly newspaper Women Unite is now a valuable asset to the WPO's activity.

Of course, the miserable conditions in the country have created several difficulties for the organisation with members having to waste time in food lines or seeking employment. Severe losses also arise from emigration especially to Suriname and North America.

Nevertheless, the WPO is progressing steadily, strengthening itself to play its crucial role in the struggle led by our party to defend the masses and liberate Guyana.

The WPO never neglected its international obligation, constantly giving solidarity to a wide range of issues including disarmament, persecution of women leaders, support for liberation movements, etc.

PROGRESSIVE YOUTH ORGANISATION (PYO)

With the deepening of the general crisis, the conditions of the Guyanese youth have worsened tremendously. The PYO has been responding to these attacks by taking varied actions on the vital issues affecting them. These include unemployment and retrenchment; lack of facilities for sports, culture, recreation and leisure; and the anti-student practices of the regime's education authorities. Among the protests carried out were picketing demonstrations, cycle rides, petitions and protest letters.

Several public seminars were held in various parts of the country dealing with youth issues. The newspaper Youth Advance also deals with matters affecting youth, and student matters are specifically dealt with in Flame and Campus Flame.

Ideological work is streamlined around what have now become regular half-yearly competitions. The response to the contest keeps improving but much more organised study needs to be done by many groups.

Sports activities have developed significantly especially in soft ball and dominoes, and at district, regional, county and national day of sports. Though rather slowly, cultural work has started to expand to the groups with the establishment of some cultural units.

The Pioneer Section, officially launched just before the last congress, has grown significantly and has produced many good recruits for the PYO.

In turn, the PYO during this period has continued to fulfil its important duty by preparing large numbers of enthusiastic and vibrant members of our party.

RACE, CLASS AND REVOLUTION

Our last congress noted a positive shift in the internal and external balance of forces in favour of peace, freedom and socialism. Since then, further advances have been made. For our region, the most notable has been Suriname.

Internally, there is steady progress towards working class and racial unity. PNC's divide-and-rule policies have failed. Since 1976-77, and more so since our last congress, it could no longer afford to bribe its members and supporters to the same degree as in the past. Licks are now sharing like peas all around, party and non-party supporters alike. We knew with Marxist-Leninist pre-vision that this day would come, that the class factor would supersede the racial factor, and become the dominant factor as a result of common struggles waged by workers regardless of their ethnic origin. Our "winner-does-not-take-all" politics, which is premised in our proposal for a National Patriotic Front Government, also undermined the PNC's exploitation of

the "racial card". All this is contributing to working class and racial unity for which we had been patiently working. Our scientific socialist approach has been vindicated.

The conditions are maturing towards a revolutionary situation. The need to coalesce all progressive and revolutionary forces and to remove the PNC regime is now the most important task. And let there be no illusions. The PNC has made it clear that it will not surrender power through the ballot box. And it will not voluntarily abdicate. The issue of the removal of the PNC regime has now become not only possible; it is also the most urgent item on the political agenda. All round preparations must be made to fulfil this task and to establish a people's revolutionary democracy.

In our search for unity, we must exercise tact and patience; we must recognise that some who differ from us in tactics and strategy nevertheless share with us a burning desire to get rid of the PNC regime. And while we are working for unity at the top, let us remember that the masses and their struggles at the bottom can advance the movement at the top.

Forward with the masses for freedom, bread and peace. Strive relentlessly and courageously to Strengthen the Party, Defend the Masses and Liberate Guyana.

Long live the PPP!

Long live socialism!

Long live Marxism-Leninism!

Long live proletarian internationalism!

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The Twenty-Second Congress

Report of the Central Committee to the 22nd Congress,
presented by Dr. Cheddi Jagan, General Secretary of
the PPP — Annandale, 3-5 August 1985

Comrades,

When we met at our 21st Party Congress to assess the international and regional situations, we arrived at certain major conclusions. These included: a further consolidation and strengthening of the socialist system; significant successes scored by the national liberation movement; and an upsurge in the struggle of the peace, democratic and working class forces in the capitalist countries. We characterized these developments as “the unfolding of the world revolutionary process before our very eyes.”

THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

Three years have passed since we analysed and assessed those events. But in that relatively short period of time, international and regional developments have moved at an unbelievable pace both in depth and scale. At the same time, there were serious setbacks which had a direct impact on the world revolutionary process; seemingly un-removable obstacles have been placed in the struggle for a world free of wars. In countries where revolutionary democratic forces have scored successes, a life and death battle is on to consolidate social and economic gains that have been accomplished. The battle also encompasses the people's determination to maintain their countries' territorial integrity and national, independence and sovereignty.

These events, however, provide no grounds whatsoever for a pessimistic outlook as regards future prospects for peace, freedom and socialism. Indeed, one important factor which serves as a source of inspiration for parties like ours is real existing socialism.

In our view, there is absolutely no doubt that the socialist community of states, during the period under review, have scored substantial new successes in their social and economic development. Evidence of this was mirrored in the results of the 39th Meeting of CMEA countries held in Havana in October last year.

We are pleased to note, for example, that the national income produced by the CMEA countries in 1983 surpassed that of 1980 by 8 percent. The volume of industrial output increased by 8 percent while gross agricultural produce went up by 7 percent. At the same time, the real incomes per capita went up by 6 percent and labour productivity in the industrial sector by 8 percent. Actually, this growth was equivalent to saving the labour of about 3.3 million industrial workers, that is, more than 6 percent of the total number of industrial and office workers presently employed in the industrial sector of the CMEA countries.

It is indeed encouraging to note that these positive tendencies continued in 1984 as well. Having launched a mass emulation drive to mark the jubilee anniversary of the formation of their socialist states and the 40th anniversary of the historic victory over the forces of fascism and militarism, the working people of the socialist community of states are achieving important results in their economic and social development.

When we contrast those successes with what obtains in the developed capitalist countries we have to note for example that Western Europe's economy has been stagnating with a high inflation (5.8 percent) and unemployment (11 percent) rate. Real GNP growth rates in the fourth quarter in 1984 and over the fourth quarter in 1983 were: West Germany — 2.5 percent, France — 1.5 percent, Britain — 1.5 percent, Italy — 2.6 percent, West Europe (Britain, France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, The Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland) — 2.6 percent.

In the United States itself, what was witnessed in the last quarter of 1984 was only a phase of the cycle — crisis, depression, recovery, boom. The real gross national product (GNP) growth rate of 5.3 percent in the last quarter of 1984 dropped to 0.7 percent in the first quarter of 1985. And there are predictions of a recession in 1986.

In the Soviet Union, real per capita increased by more than 50 percent in the 1970s. The average annual increment of industrial output was over 4 percent in 1983-1984 as against percent in 1981-1982.

For 1985, the growth rates are planned as follows: National income — 3.3 percent; industrial output — 3.9 percent, agricultural production — 6.7 percent, real per capita income — 3.3 percent; public consumption funds, which are used to finance free medical services, education, social maintenance, etc. — 5 percent.

We congratulate the Soviet Union in particular for the steady advances it had made in economic efficiency and intensification of all economic sectors, as it embarks on the road of refining developed socialism and, subsequently, moving on to reach the frontiers of direct communist construction.

Our 22nd Party Congress expresses its unequivocal support for and sincerest confidence in the peoples, parties and governments of the rest of the socialist community of states who, while scoring success after success in the building of an entirely new and just social order, are at the same time, the foremost defenders of world peace and international security.

We applaud the CPSU and the Soviet Government for the numerous initiatives advanced on their part to reverse the race towards nuclear catastrophe instigated by US imperialism. The Soviet Union must also be congratulated for its painstaking activities conducted at the political and diplomatic levels, resulting in the convening of the Soviet-American talks in Geneva.

We support the view that the objectives of these talks must be to work out effective agreements directed at preventing an arms race in outer space and ending it on earth as well; at limiting and reducing nuclear armaments and at strengthening strategic stability. Our Party also upholds the view that the Geneva talks must lay the basis for the elimination of all nuclear weapons both in the East and the West.

Unfortunately however, the Reagan administration has not displayed the kind of sincerity one would expect from an administration which makes a lot of noise about its commitment to world peace and the easing of international tensions.

We do not want to harbour any illusions about the prospects for the opening up of a new era of detente. After all, the reality of the international situation continues to be one in which two main lines dominate world politics — the line of confrontation and war pursued by US imperialism and its NATO allies on the one hand, and the line of peace and the quest for the easing of international and regional tensions pursued by the Soviet Union and the socialist community of states on the other. And while we are confident that, in the final analysis, the latter will win out, at the same time, the victory of one of these lines over the other depends on the extent to which the three revolutionary streams can increase their strength and cohesion.

These two lines in world politics are, in essence, a manifestation of the class struggle at the international level. And the struggle of the oppressed peoples around the world can be successfully facilitated in a situation of peaceful co-existence, reinforced by a climate of detente. Recent history and experience have both demonstrated that it was during the decade of detente — 1970 to 1980 — that a number of national liberation revolutions were victorious. Moreover, it was primarily because of the increase in East-West trade and commercial arrangements and the scientific and technical cooperation that took place during the decade of detente that tre-

mendous gains were made by the progressive, democratic and peace-loving forces in the developing countries as well as in the developed capitalist countries.

We uphold the view, therefore, that a climate of détente constitutes an indispensable factor for the advancement of the world revolutionary process. Naturally, détente and the maintenance of world peace are issues that have to be fought for. And in our conditions while we as communists have the priority task to fight for world peace and against the war danger, this task cannot be divorced from our national tasks. What is required of us is the synthesis of our national and international tasks. In this connection, considering the present day conditions obtaining in our country, it is important to see the inter-connection and interaction between the struggle for peace and the struggle for democracy, bread and social justice.

It is our firm belief, therefore, that the best contribution we Guyanese communists can make to the cause of world peace and international security is to step up our struggle to place Guyana on an irreversible course towards democracy, anti-imperialism and socialist orientation. Simultaneously, it rests upon us to intensify our activities on all fronts to make the Caribbean a zone of peace.

When mobilising the Guyanese working people for actions in defence of world peace, we must at all times make the issues concrete, relating them to the most pressing national issues and the day to day problems affecting our working population.

Our line of march must be that the struggle for peace is indivisible from the struggle for national liberation and social emancipation. In this way, our Party will be displaying a truly revolutionary vanguard role.

Our Party maintains the view that there is no "good or bad" side of imperialism. Imperialism by its very class nature remains the major enemy of the oppressed peoples of the world and the Guyanese people are no exception. It is imperialism, US imperialism in particular, that is solely responsible for the creation and maintenance of hot-beds of tension in different parts of the world. After failing miserably in Lebanon, and in a desperate attempt to free itself of the Vietnam syndrome, US imperialism continues to maintain a strong military presence with interventionist intentions in Central America and the Caribbean, the Arab Gulf, the Red Sea, the Arabian Peninsula, the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean.

Mention must also be made of Western Europe in the light of the deployment of Pershing II and cruise missiles which serve no other purpose but to launch a "first strike" against the socialist community of states, the Soviet Union in particular.

During the period under review, our Party has been following with deep interest political and social developments unfolding in Western Europe and the Scandinavian countries. We must confess how deeply impressed we are with the growth of the peace and anti-war movement on the continent from which two world wars originated. Without under-estimating the great contribution made by numerous social and political organisations to the development of the European peace and anti-war movement, our Party has taken note of the magnificent contribution made by the communists in this direction as well. The 40th anniversary of the victory over Hitlerite fascism provided a most fitting opportunity for the peace forces of Europe to demonstrate in even greater number their opposition to the deployment of US nuclear weapons in their respective countries and to continue to fight for world peace and, in many cases, against the forces of revanchism and neo-fascism.

Other developments in Western Europe have also attracted our attention. Most prominent among them is the betrayal of electoral promises made by the governing social and Christian democratic parties in Spain, Portugal, France, Italy and the FRG. Their surrender to the power of the monopolies and big business as well as their futile attempts to carry on with social reformism have all compounded the social and economic problems of the working men and women in these countries.

Our solidarity with the fight-back of the working people led by their trade unions and the vanguard communist parties remains as firm as ever before.

The experience of the French communists, insofar as their participation in government is concerned, has been of great importance for us. We believe that that period in the history of the

French communists, not to mention the experience of the Bolivian communists also, will undoubtedly add to the knowledge of the international communist and workers' movement as regards communist participation in governments within the context of bourgeois democracy.

Since its 21st Congress, our Party, in analysing the role of imperialism in our times, has never underrated the efforts on the part of US imperialism to change the existing balance of forces world-wide in order to gain military superiority over the USSR and to re-assert its role as the world policeman. US imperialism also seeks to undermine and openly strike against the national liberation, anti-imperialist, progressive and democratic movements and continues to do so with all the means at its disposal. The main objective of its strategy is to isolate these movements and countries from their natural and most dependable allies — the USSR and other socialist countries.

Within the backdrop of this situation, the role of the Non-Aligned Movement is assuming greater importance in the world-wide anti-imperialist struggle. The Non-Aligned Movement's struggle for a New International Economic Order and a New International Information Order is gaining increasing support from the peoples and governments both in the capitalist and socialist world.

We believe that the strength and integrity of the Movement lies in its adherence to the lofty principles on which the Movement was founded.

As regards US imperialism's attitude towards its western allies, we have noted that of late Washington has been exerting every effort to strengthen its hegemony in the capitalist world and to eliminate the existing centrifugal tendencies and differences between the Western European powers and itself. At the same time, Washington is also working to strengthen the cohesion of the NATO countries and other pro-imperialist military alliances scattered across the globe.

It is in the context of this scenario that Southern Africa and Central America are regions that have come to figure most prominently on the agenda of US imperialism's plans for destabilisation and aggression.

In the case of Southern Africa, by pursuing the collaborationist policy of "constructive engagement" with the racist South African regime, US imperialism is seeking to impose a Camp David type of agreement between Pretoria and its neighbours.

Already we have seen a concrete manifestation of this policy with the signing of the Nkomati Accord between South Africa and Mozambique. Attempts are also being made by the racist regime to enter into similar agreements with other front-line states, namely, Angola, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana, Tanzania and the Kingdom of Lesotho.

It is important to see the political objectives behind this diplomatic counter-offensive launched by Pretoria and Washington in Southern Africa. In the first place, it is aimed at isolating the ANC of South Africa and SWAPO of Namibia and liquidating the armed struggle being waged by these two national liberation movements. Secondly, the moist regime is seeking to undermine the unity of the front-line states and to use their prestige to refurbish South Africa's image internationally.

Our Party stands opposed to the collaborationist policies between the racist South African regime and US imperialism. We reiterate our commitment to expose this policy to our people and to step up our support for, and solidarity with, the fighting peoples of South Africa led by the ANC.

We hail the revolutionary alliance of the African National Congress, the South African Communist Party and the South African Congress of Trade Unions, which is headed by the ANC. We are convinced that this revolutionary alliance will carry out its historic mission of leading the South African masses to victory in the struggle for the seizure of power by the people and the consolidation of the national democratic revolution.

The same applies to SWAPO of Namibia. Our Party opposes any kind of political settlement in Namibia that excludes SWAPO as the sole legitimate representative of the Namibian people. As far as we are concerned, the South African backed interim government in Namibia is unrepresentative and seeks to perpetuate a regime which would be in no way different from the one

before its establishment. Moreover, for the imperialists and the racist South African regime to continue linking the independence of Namibia to Cuban military presence in Angola is simply another excuse to continue playing the role of coloniser of the Namibian people. The PPP stands opposed to this manoeuvre and pledges to step up its solidarity activities to expose South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia.

Mounting pressures at all levels, notwithstanding, the revolutionary democratic states on the African continent are consolidating the gains accomplished at the social and economic levels. We re-affirm our complete support for and solidarity with the peoples, parties and governments of these countries and wish them every success in fulfilling the tasks which they have taken upon themselves as they move along the path of socialist orientation.

Special mention must be made of Socialist Ethiopia whose government under the leadership of Comrade Mengistu Haile Mariam is battling against tremendous odds inherited from the legacy of the despotic rule of Haile Selassie. It was with a sense of great joy that we received the news of the establishment of the Worker's Party of Ethiopia, the first full-fledged Leninist-type of party on Ethiopian soil. This, in our view, is no small achievement by our Ethiopian comrades. We wish them every success in their lofty endeavour of building a new, just society free of exploitation of man by man, hunger and misery.

The revolutionary regimes of Afghanistan and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, even though far from us geographically, have always had our firm support and solidarity. We have followed with deep interest the progress they have made in consolidating the revolutionary process obtaining in their respective countries.

To our fighting Polisario comrades, we congratulate them on the successes they have scored thus far in the political, military and diplomatic fields. We reiterate our firm and militant solidarity with and support for their just cause and wish them future successes in the battles that lie ahead.

To our Vietnamese comrades, we reaffirm our unswerving support for and solidarity with their just and noble cause of socialist construction.

We take the opportunity to express our solidarity with the people of Kampuchea in their efforts of national reconstruction, and to the people of Laos who are making remarkable advances in laying the basis for socialist construction.

Our Party has also followed and continues to follow with great concern the transformation of Pakistan into a springboard of US imperialism for plots, interventions and aggression against the countries of the region, particularly against India and the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.

We take this opportunity to assure our Afghan comrades that we will do out utmost to bring home to the minds of our people the real story behind the barrage of lies and calumnies being manufactured by imperialism to discredit and denigrate the April Revolution, its objectives, as well as the government of Afghanistan.

We shall exert every effort to press the Guyana Government to take a stand against Pakistan's aggressive attitude towards Afghanistan and to support the DRA's proposal to the Government of Pakistan to the effect that representatives of the two countries meet to discuss questions pertaining to the commencement of negotiations with the aim of reaching an agreement to normalise relations.

Imperialism's attitude towards India well as the disruptive activities of the separatist forces in that country is a matter of great concern to all anti-imperialist and peace-loving forces. The brutal assassination of Indira Gandhi brought to the fore the real nature of these forces.

Our Party reiterates its condemnation of these forces whose sole objective is to dismember India and to bring that country to serve imperialist interests on the subcontinent and in the region as a whole.

We salute the patriotic forces of Lebanon who, with the support of the Arab and international anti-imperialist forces, scored a decisive victory with the cancellation of the Lebanese-Israeli Agreement of May, 1983, and the withdrawal of American and other NATO forces from Lebanese soil. Collectively, these forces are reinforcing their unity of action, escalating their

armed resistance against Israeli occupation and US intervention. At the same time, they are taking important steps in the direction of thwarting imperialist Zionist and reactionary plans for the Middle East.

Our Party maintains the view that the Middle East continues to be a hotbed of tension which poses a serious threat to world peace.

The continuation of the Iran-Iraq war serves only imperialism and the reactionary forces in the two countries and in the region as a whole. We believe that the immediate cessation of hostilities between the two countries is long overdue. The solution of the differences between them can and must be brought about by peaceful means on the basis of mutual respect for each other's national independence and sovereignty in accordance with rules of international law.

We firmly denounce the continued aggressive actions by the Israeli Zionists and their escalation of threats against Syria. Washington and Tel Aviv, by pursuing a policy of strategic cooperation, are determined to secure a continuation of the Camp David line and the Reagan plan, which have no objective other than the imposition of US-Israeli hegemony in the region, as well as frustration of the just cause of the Palestinian people.

Our Party supports the view, and this is nothing new, that the solution of the Middle East question and the realisation of a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in that region can only be realised with the complete withdrawal of the Israeli forces from all Arab lands occupied since 1967, the dismantling of Israeli settlements in the occupied areas, recognition and respect of the national rights of the Arab people of Palestine, and, above all, of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the establishment of their own independent national state on Palestinian territory. The solution must also include respect of all states in the region to an independent and peaceful life within secure and internationally recognised frontiers.

Our Party believes also that the latest proposals of the USSR for a solution of the Middle East crisis, through the convening of an international conference, can make a decisive contribution in this direction.

In Central America and the Caribbean, US imperialism and its regional allies still revere the pyrrhic victory scored in Grenada. The Reagan Administration in particular has been flashing danger signals for some time now in the direction of Nicaragua and El Salvador. The undeclared war unleashed against Nicaragua continues unabated. Consequently, the threat of direct and/or indirect military attack against Nicaragua remains a serious probability.

The accusation about the Sandinista Government being undemocratic, and consequently the demand for election in Nicaragua by the Reagan Administration, has been proven as totally unfounded. In fact, the November 1984 election results proved a vivid manifestation of the popular support which today's standard-bearers of Sandino and Fonseca enjoy in free Nicaragua. We believe that for many governments which claim to practice democracy and free and fair elections, the Nicaraguan electoral experience provides a good example for them to learn from and to prove their salt.

Our Party supports the peace initiatives of the Sandinista Government aimed at encouraging the reduction in tensions in Central America. Notably, among these are: the departure of one hundred Cuban military advisers from Nicaragua and the taking of practical steps to revive the Contadora peace process. We support fully the call by the Sandinista Government for the resumption of the Nicaraguan-American talks at Manzanillo, Mexico which broke off in January of this year.

Our Party reiterates its demand that the US government ceases forthwith the diplomatic, military and political pressures being exerted on the Sandinista Revolution; it must halt immediately its all-round support for the "contras" and other internal reactionary forces opposed to the Sandinista Revolution.

We categorically condemn the US imposed economic embargo and demand that it be lifted immediately. The Reagan administration must also pay adequate compensation and reparation to the Nicaraguan Government.

We strongly condemn the approval in June this year of US\$27 million for so-called humanitarian aid to the "contras" by the US Senate and House of Representatives. This step represents a marked shift in position adopted by 26 Democrats and 7 Republicans in April when they jointly opposed additional funding to the "contras".

This situation makes it incumbent upon the progressive, democratic and peace loving forces around the world to step up their support for, and solidarity with, the heroic Nicaraguan people. We in the PPP stand ready at all times to play our role in this direction, come what may.

El Salvador remains a key element in the Central American revolutionary process not only because of its strategic location in the region, but also from the point of view of logistics and what a people's victory portends for the future of the Central American and the world revolutionary process.

US policy vis-à-vis El Salvador is characterized by a "double track" approach — a policy of reform combined with a policy of war. But above all, it is based on the recommendations made by the bi-partisan Kissinger-led commission.

US imperialism's main propaganda line is to place the blame on the FDR/FMLN for not working towards a negotiated settlement, at the same time, accusing them of being subversives sponsored by Moscow, Cuba and Nicaragua. And as long as Duarte remains in power, the possibility of direct intervention by invitation cannot be discounted.

This imminent danger, notwithstanding, attention must be drawn to the fact that serious divisions exist within the Salvadorian military to the extent that they have stopped fighting in open territory and are not entering into direct confrontation with the guerrilla forces. On top of this, it is important to point out that approximately 7,600 out of a total of 21,000 square kilometres or one-third Salvadorian territory is controlled by the revolutionary guerrilla forces. And the mass influx of military and financial support notwithstanding, US imperialism has failed to break the military equilibrium which exists between the forces of reaction and the forces of liberation.

The search for a negotiated settlement by the revolutionary forces in El Salvador should not be seen as a weakening of their strength and influence internally but as an extension of the struggle at the international level. It is interesting to note that El Salvador is not unique in this respect. After all, SWAPO of Namibia, the PLO and even the ZAPU and ZANU of Zimbabwe (before independence) declared in favour of negotiated settlements.

Our Party extends its whole-hearted support for and solidarity with the heroic liberation fighters in El Salvador. We support the decision of the FMLN/FDR to defend the interests of their nation either with arms in hand or through dialogue, discussion or negotiation. More particularly, we support the proposal for a negotiated settlement to the armed conflict in El Salvador, for we believe that in the final analysis, the Salvadorian people, through their representative bodies and institutions, reserve the inalienable right to settle their internal affairs and to chart an independent course of social and economic development.

The attempts by the Duarte government to regionalise the civil war in El Salvador must be opposed by all progressive, democratic and peace-loving forces who stand for the elimination of regional conflicts.

It is in this spirit that we in the PPP support the initiatives of the Contadora Group which is aimed at establishing a climate of peaceful co-existence and non-intervention by outside forces in the internal affairs of the countries in Central America.

The Reagan administrative must stop forthwith its practice of placing obstacles in the evolution of the peace process initiated through the activities of the Contadora Group.

Three years ago when we reviewed and analysed the situation in Latin America, it was clear that up to that time, Yankee imperialism together with its militarist and fascist surrogates held sway in the overwhelming majority of countries in South America. Not so today. Indeed, after having suffered for years under military dictatorial and/or fascist rule, the popular masses and their respective social and political organisations in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia and

Uruguay are now able to breathe the air of freedom and operate with greater mobility within the confines of bourgeois democracy.

Naturally, the democratic openings now obtaining in these countries did not appear "out of the blue", so to speak; rather, they came about as a result of bitter, protracted and bloody struggles waged by the popular masses in each and every country. And we must underline the fact that the communists in these countries played a decisive role in helping to bring down the oppressors from their thrones.

A meeting of South American Communist Parties held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in July last year declared:

The activity of the popular masses is mounting. The decisive role in their actions belongs to the working class, which is continuing to make its contributions to democratic and anti-imperialist achievements. A considerable part of the peasantry and the urban and rural middle strata, and also certain sections of the national bourgeoisie, are becoming more active. The liberation struggle is given added impetus also by the notable participation in the popular movement of the religious masses and frequently of the church itself, or some of the more realistic-minded churchmen. All this shows that wide opportunities have been opened for the achievement by the participants in the struggle of unity of action and broad mutual understanding.

Unity of action in the struggle against imperialism and the oligarchic authoritarian and fascist regimes is manifesting itself increasingly and in more diverse forms in Chile, Paraguay, Honduras, the Dominican Republic and Haiti.

We note with great satisfaction the fact that in Ecuador, Venezuela and Peru, the communists in alliance with other democratic, anti-imperialist forces, have scored significant electoral gains within recent times.

We reiterate our firm support for and solidarity with the Latin American peoples, the communists in the first place, who are putting up valiant struggles against imperialist domination and local reaction, for democracy, peace and social progress.

We demand the release of all political prisoners on the continent as well as respect for the civil and political rights of the peoples.

To bolster its strength and presence in areas considered to be strategic to its "vital interests", US imperialism has masterminded the creation of local military agreements and interventionist military forces which will act as proxies on Washington's behalf. In this respect, reference can be made to the establishment of the Caribbean Defence Force which will be used as a force to intimidate the people and openly strike against the national liberation and progressive movements and countries in the Caribbean.

The Surinamese Revolution continues to be a target for all-round attacks and pressures by Dutch and American imperialism. Our Party is fully aware of the difficult conditions under which the Surinamese revolution is battling to consolidate the gains it has made at the economic and social levels. We hold in high esteem the resistance which Suriname has been and still is putting up in the face of mounting pressures and more subtle manoeuvres by forces hostile to any movement for real socio-economic transformations which correspond to the interests of the working people and poor farmers.

Our best wishes go out to the 25th February Movement and the Revolutionary Military Council of Suriname as they struggle together with the Surinamese people to consolidate their revolutionary gains and to maintain their independence and national sovereignty.

This is our first Congress since the destruction of the Grenada revolution. For us it is indeed painful to recall the tragedy of Grenada which, in our view, came about as a result of the serious divisions and errors of judgement which emerged in the leadership of the New Jewel Movement (NJM). All this, it seems, was connected with the struggle over the destiny of the political vanguard of the revolution — the NJM — and the abandonment of an agreement reached by the leadership of the organisation.

In an effort to be as objective as possible in our analysis of the events that took place in Grenada before and after the US-led invasion resulting in the demise of the revolution, our

Party has made maximum use of the practice of consultation with a wide range of organisations regional and extra-regional, as well as with individuals, both Grenadian and non-Grenadian.

It is our considered opinion that under the revolutionary leadership of Maurice Bishop, the NJM was adopting correct strategy and tactics and the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) was implementing sound domestic and foreign policies, which were bringing tremendous benefits to the Grenadian masses. Moreover, from all appearances, during the revolution's lifetime, there were no signs of any internal dispute on the question of cooperation with communists inside and outside the NJM and country.

The charge which was subsequently made by the Coard faction to the effect that the internal situation was deteriorating rapidly, and that unless stringent measures were adopted in time, the economy together with everything else would collapse, was definitely exaggerated.

It was at this point that a serious error of judgement, based on an incorrect assessment of the internal situation, was made insofar as a solution to the impending "disaster" was concerned. This was the assertion that "dual leadership" and the need to transform the NJM into a communist-type of party was the only way of averting the "collapse of the revolution".

As events eventually showed, this call, or rather demand, for the implementation of dual leadership injected elements of doubt and suspicion in the psyche of a number of NJM leaders, including Bishop himself. And this in turn blurred their objective and sober thinking in the course of events that were to follow.

We are yet to be convinced that the revolution was threatened from within since it was a popular revolution which, from all appearances, had not only the support, but also the active participation of the popular masses at all levels.

The demand for a new type of party, adhering to Leninist norms of party life and principles of organisation, raises a number of questions. We believe that while it is necessary to have a Marxist-Leninist type of party in order to consummate the socialist revolution, the stage of the revolutionary process through which Grenada was passing at that time, and the class character and cultural make-up of the NJM leadership, did not necessitate a too rapid and too rigid transformation of the NJM into a communist or worker type of party.

We also believe that not only was this demand incorrect, it was also illogical especially when we take into consideration the fact that the NJM, because of too strict regulations, had an unusually small membership. On top of this, the more politically and ideologically advanced members of the leadership, who rallied around Coard, were unrealistically hammering away for stronger discipline and for compulsory theoretical and ideological studies by all leaders. And accusations were also levelled against others for harbouring petit-bourgeois habits and ideology.

All these demands and accusations by the Coard faction seemed incompatible with a situation in which there was a party with a numerically small membership which did not have a high cultural, ideological and political level. Considering what existed, therefore, we believe that it was incorrect and untimely to call for the application of such measures within the NJM. Actually what was required of the NJM at that given stage of the process was mass membership and support. The mistake made, therefore, was instead of further developing the NJM, which had already accepted positions of Marxism-Leninism, into a mass revolutionary democratic-type of party with the relevant organisational and structural requirements, influential elements in the NJM leadership began applying strict Leninist organisational principles, not only with respect to membership, but in other areas of party life.

These inflexible positions eventually gave rise to a crisis in the leadership of the NJM and a train of events that proved disastrous for the process as a whole.

In our view, the unfortunate situation could have been avoided if the two opposing sides — one supportive of Coard and the other of Bishop — had adopted flexible positions and dealt with the differences in a dispassionate and sober manner, but the "Frankenstein monster" had already been created by the attitudes and actions of both sides. It proved too late to keep it in check.

The mistakes committed by the majority faction of the NJM leadership, at whose head stood Bernard Coard, sprung from their idealist and impatient approach in attempting to overcome, through anti-popular measures, objective reality obtaining in Grenada.

The Coard majority failed to apply the teachings of Marxism-Leninism in a creative manner. By their actions, the abstract replaced the concrete and incisive political judgement was overtaken by rash, emotional and serious miscalculations. The end result of all this could not have been otherwise, beginning with the placing of the symbol of the revolution under house arrest to the assassination of Bishop and his colleagues.

Our Party maintains the view that the assassination of Bishop and his colleagues was by its very nature a tragic and unpardonable act. Our Party from the very outset came out against placing Bishop under house arrest and against his assassination. But we remain convinced that two additional elements that contributed to Bishop's and the revolution's death were the "Frankenstein monster" earlier referred to, as well as the CIA.

The blame for what happened in Grenada cannot be placed solely on the Coard faction. Our view is that the fault lies with both sides. Bishop's main mistake was that he neglected the party and the army and concentrated most of his attention and energies on the fulfilment of state and government functions. If Bishop's better sense had prevailed as regards the decision to accept the formula for dual leadership unanimously arrived at just on the eve of his departure for Europe, there is a strong possibility that the Grenada Revolution could have survived up to this day.

In our view, it would be naive to rule out interference from outside, which had its negative effects on the revolutionary process and this in turn, helped to precipitate the unfortunate events which unfolded in the country especially after Bishop returned from his visits overseas.

If we move off from the premise that US imperialism, particularly after Reagan had assumed office, always sought to destroy the Grenada revolution and occupy the country, then we would have to admit that the way was made open for imperialism to intervene by the actions of the Revolutionary Military Council (RMC). And to make matters even worse, these actions by their very nature made it impossible to defend the territorial integrity and national sovereignty of Grenada.

The weaknesses and unpardonable mistakes committed by the Coard faction notwithstanding, we still believe that the imprisoned leadership represent an important political element in Grenadian society. It seems incorrect to dismiss them at one stroke, especially when we examine the line-up of class and political forces obtaining at present in the country. In our view, both Gairy's Grenada United Labour Party (GULP) and Blaize's New National Party (NNP) are pro-imperialist and reactionary in nature.

Experience shows that it is possible for revolutionaries to make mistakes which can result in serious setbacks for a given revolutionary process. And while it is necessary to level our criticisms against such revolutionaries for the mistakes they have committed, we must also avoid committing the error of adopting positions that place us objectively on the side of imperialism, their local as well as their regional allies.

In this connection, our Party insists on the right of the detainees to a free and fair trial and condemns the use of torture and other forms of inhuman treatment being meted out against the NJM prisoners on Richmond Hill.

Casting invectives and name-calling are no solution to resolving differences which could lay the basis for re-building the national anti-imperialist movement. In the case of Grenada, we have noticed with great concern the attacks being levelled against each other by NJM members and the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement respectively. Our Party looks forward to a cessation of these hostilities and the creation of a climate that would be conducive for the reconciliation of the anti-imperialist forces in Grenada. We believe that based on a spirit of mutual trust and adherence to the foundation principles of the NJM, the deep and seemingly irreconcilable differences between the remnants of the NJM could be overcome.

As to how realistic this position is, only time and life will tell. But we remain convinced that the Caribbean revolution is an inexorable process that must go forward, its twists and turns, set-backs and defeats notwithstanding.

Already we can discern in the course of the fight-back taking place in a number of Caribbean countries the conditions emerging for social explosions which (and this if channelled in the right direction) holds out good prospects for the future of the Caribbean revolution.

Neo-colonialism and capitalism/imperialism have long lost the historical initiative and therefore have no future in the world of which our region forms part. To those who stubbornly adhere to concepts such as geographic fatalism, regional particularism and the theory of equidistance, we say look again at the examples and experiences of Cuba and Nicaragua and see how and why revolutions can be successfully consolidated.

The rise and fall of such theories, notions and concepts in a region like ours could be viewed as natural given the geo-politics as well as the constellation of social and political forces obtaining in the Caribbean.

It was the derailing of the Grenada revolution that, to a large extent, led to the resurgence, if not reinforcement, of these concepts and notions among certain social and political forces which claim to be of the left. And even though in a number of cases the progressive, democratic and anti-imperialist forces were thrown on the defensive and even forced to embark on a period of consolidation, from all indications it now seems that such a period is coming to an end. This has come about as a result of the very pro-capitalist and pro-imperialist policies of governments (and the growing impoverishment of the working people) in those countries which were most vocal as regards the so-called threat which revolutionary Grenada posed to their national security and internal stability.

We note, for example, the failure of the Seaga regime to bring about the much touted "deliverance" which was promised to the Jamaican people since 1981. In effect, the Jamaican people have been "delivered" into the clutches of the IMF.

To those who still believe that capitalism is the panacea for their problems, we say look at the Jamaican experience. US imperialism and Jamaican reaction exerted every effort to remove the social democratic Manley government and to have it replaced by the conservative party of Edward Seaga. Now, as experience and life have demonstrated, Seaga has failed to solve Jamaica's socio-economic problems and to bring relief to the sufferings of the Jamaican working people.

The consequences of the JLP's policies have been mass lay-offs, closure of factories and plants, excruciating cost-of-living conditions, not to mention the rise in crime and other social ills.

A natural spin-off from this situation was the spontaneous social explosions which took place in Kingston and other parts of Jamaica where the erection of street barricades and other forms of protest actions were carried out by the exploited and suffering Jamaican masses.

We have to state that our Party stands solidly, in the first place, behind the struggles of the Worker's Party of Jamaica (WPJ) and other progressive democratic forces in Jamaica. We support their actions jointly or individually since they are generally aimed at bringing about social, economic and political transformations beneficial to the Jamaican working people.

Our Party has been and continues to follow with similar interest the occurrence of a more or less similar situation in the Dominican Republic. In that country, the Blanco regime, totally oblivious to the sufferings of Dominican masses, have administered heavy doses of IMF medicine in an attempt to remedy the country's ailing economy.

The response of the Dominican working people was in no way passive; rather, combining their efforts, they resorted to a national uprising without arms against the anti-popular measures which the Blanco government was forced to withdraw temporarily. To this date, the working people in the Dominican Republic are engaged in a life and death battle for an improvement in their living and working conditions, for democracy and social progress.

Our Party supports the just struggles of the working people of the Dominican Republic and we wish them best success in the battles that lie ahead.

Contrary to the impression being created by the bourgeois press about internal developments in Haiti, we know as a fact that the Haitian people, the workers in particular, are engaged in physical confrontation with the despotic and tyrannical Duvalier regime. There are increasing signs which show that the forces opposed to Duvalier are drawing closer through united action, and this, no doubt, augers well for future struggles of the popular masses in Haiti in the name of democracy, freedom and social justice.

We wish our Haitian comrades, brothers and sisters, every success in winning the final victory which they so much deserve.

In the Commonwealth of Dominica, the formation of a united electoral opposition against the Dominican Freedom Party (DFP) constitutes an important advancement for the forces opposed to the anti-people, pro-imperialist Eugenia Charles' government. And even though they did not succeed in defeating the DFP in the July elections, nevertheless, their increased representation in the Dominican parliament can be viewed as a reflection of the desire for change emerging in the ranks on the Dominican electorate.

Great prospects are now opening up for moving on a step by step basis from positions of recuperation and consolidation to positions of initiative and innovation. It is important to bear in mind, however, that the road will not be easy-going. The world-wide offensive launched by the Reagan administration at the political, diplomatic, military and ideological levels must not be under-estimated especially when we place the Caribbean, not in isolation from, but in the context of US imperialism's global designs.

In the French-speaking colonies, the socialist government of Francois Mitterand continues to pursue colonial policies which are in no way different from the policies of previous governments of France. Such policies notwithstanding, the left forces, the communists in the first place, continue to hold key administrative posts within the existing status-quo in Guadeloupe and Martinique and, at the same time, are making significant electoral gains.

Our Party fully supports the demand advanced by the fraternal parties in both Guadeloupe and Martinique "for a popular democratic autonomy as a first step towards independence with a socialist content". We wish our comrades best successes in their struggle to translate this demand into a living reality.

We note, as a case in point, the impending danger of possible fragmentation and disintegration of the Dutch Antilles in the light of the announcement by the US transnational Exxon about the closing down of its oil refinery in Aruba and a similar announcement by Shell to the effect that it will cease operations of its refinery in Curacao in five years' time.

Given the economic and social repercussions these developments are likely to have on the two islands, already certain governments with hegemonistic and annexationist designs in this hemisphere are manoeuvring to achieve these objectives vis-à-vis Curacao, Aruba and Bonaire. Meanwhile, the attitude of indifference adopted by The Hague on the matter is only helping to complicate the issue even more.

Our Party supports the anti-imperialist, anti-colonial, progressive and democratic forces in the Dutch Antilles who are carrying out a consistent struggle aimed at maintaining the unity of the islands.

Our review and analysis of the present situation obtaining in Central, Latin America and the Caribbean would be incomplete without mentioning the homeland of Marti, Gomez and Maceo, of Mella, Ché and Camilio — socialist Cuba — the proven and tested defender of the oppressed and liberated peoples of our region and of other countries the world over.

We note with a deep sense of pride and satisfaction the ever-growing success which the Cuban people have scored in the face of a continuing economic blockade, a series of natural disasters as well as epidemics introduced by imperialism. Mention must also be made of the sabotaging of sugar agreements between Cuba and other countries as a result of manoeuvrings by US imperialism. But as Comrade Fidel Castro said in his speech to the 7th session of the Cuban National Assembly of People's Power held in December last year: "They forget that they have been doing this for 25 years now and we have really become experts in turning their misdeeds to our revolution's advantage".

This revolutionary quality, combined with the steadfastness and high degree of political and ideological consciousness of the Cuban people who are standing firmly behind their vanguard Communist Party and Fidel, constitutes important elements that explain the success story of the Cuban revolution. But equally important is the cooperation between Cuba and the socialist community of states, as well as the internationalist assistance extended to Cuba primarily by the Soviet Union.

We consider it important for any developing country which has opted for a socialist-oriented path of development to study and learn from the experiences of the Cuban revolution. This of course must not be seen as an attempt to project what some refer to as the "Cuban model" for others to follow, since revolutions, "models" and the political structures obtaining in a given country can neither be imported or exported, much less imposed upon any country.

Moreover, in the same way that Lenin deemed it "absurd to set up our revolution as the ideal for all countries", it was with similar emphasis he said: "Some basic features of our revolution are not exclusively local, national, Russian but international".

Insofar as translating Lenin's opinion into practice, our Party has a proud and indisputable record of what was accomplished in socio-economic terms in the 1957 to 1964 period. Ever since that time, we have done and continue to do as much as we can to ensure that the Guyana government adopts a position of maintaining close all-round relations with the Cuban revolution.

The internationalist positions adopted by our Party are not something new. Actually, it springs from the universality of the scientific teachings of Marxism-Leninism to which we fervently adhere.

The PPP, having found its rightful place in the ranks of the World Communist and Workers' Movement to which it is proud to belong, is in its own modest way always ready to share its experiences with and lend its support for the strengthening and building up of the Movement by conducting a policy aimed at facilitating and enhancing the growth of the anti-imperialist and Marxist-Leninist forces in the English-speaking Caribbean.

In this connection, we welcome the formation of the Workers' Party of Barbados (WPB). In our view, the emergence of the WPB constitutes a significant development in the life of the Barbadian working class movement and, given the scope for its future development, will definitely offer a political alternative to right-wing social democracy which has dominated the political life of the island over the past years.

The establishment of the WPB will no doubt add to the strengthening and cohesion of the Marxist-Leninist forces Caribbean-wide. We in the PPP look forward to the consolidation and growth of this fraternal party in the years ahead.

The regional consultative meetings, convened on the initiative of our Party have, in the opinion of the participants, proved to be a worthy exercise insofar as the exchange of experiences and ensuring the cohesion of the movement.

We support fully the initiatives of other fraternal parties to convene regional meetings and conferences of fraternal parties to discuss and analyse collectively the situations obtaining in their respective regions.

Our Party takes the opportunity to reiterate its complete agreement with the view that the present international situation demands the convening of a world conference of the communist movement in order to strengthen the unity and effectiveness of this movement as well as the anti-imperialist forces as a whole.

THE ECONOMIC SITUATION

The economic situation in Guyana has considerably deteriorated since our last Congress in 1982. This fact is evidenced in the very steep increase in the cost of living, the sharp decline in the standard of living, and the collapse of almost every single social infrastructure in our country.

Year after year we are promised a silver lining, but as we move on, the economic “tunnel” gets darker and darker. Terms of trade continue to deteriorate, debt burden grows, access to credit becomes more difficult, commercial arrears increase, budget deficits get bigger, public sector losses mount, production further declines, and the burden on the backs of the workers gets heavier and heavier.

Guyana has now found itself with exhausted foreign exchange resources. International financial institutions and the related banking communities are unwilling to provide us with the necessary resources. Our bargaining position has considerably weakened. Our public corporations remain inefficient and continue to operate at huge deficits and our import capacity has been drastically reduced.

In the Central Committee report to our 21st Congress in August 1982, it was stated: “Our dear land has never in living memory found itself in such a calamitous situation. Everywhere there are signs of collapse. The masses are at their wit’s end to find a way to survive” Since then, the performance of the economy has made this statement sound rather modest. In almost all spheres of economic activity, there was marked deterioration.

In his 1984 budget speech, the Minister admitted that GDP fell by 10.6 percent in 1983 — an astronomical figure, considering that in the previous year that decline has also been “significant”. The decline in GDP came about mainly because of the poor performance of the three major sectors — rice, sugar and bauxite.

Production of Sugar, Rice and bauxite (in long tons)

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
Sugar	269,634	300,790	287,725	251,870	241,861
Rice	169,057	165,596	181,598	147,591	179,786
Bauxite	1,874,826	1,681,003	1,251,392	1,085,284	1,330,474

The PNC regime has been making heavy propaganda about the 2 percent real growth rate of the Gross Domestic Product in 1984, the first positive real growth since 1980. But this was debunked even by the Finance Minister in his 1985 budget speech, in which he stated: “as a general observation it could be said that in production terms, we did less well than planned. In value and export terms this was also the case.”

Actually in 1984, the bauxite industry incurred a loss of G\$132 million, the sugar industry a loss of G\$110 million, and total export of goods and services fell short of target by G\$181 million. And while the GDP might have grown by 2 percent in 1984, it was 16.6 percent below the 1981 level, and 26.6 percent below the 1975 level, when we take into consideration the decline by 10 percent during 1976-1981, 8 percent in 1982 and 10.6 percent in 1983.

The 1983 performance of the economy could at best be described as the worst in the history of Guyana. The economy had hit the bottom of the trough. There was a dramatic fall in production in bauxite, sugar and rice — the three main foreign exchange earners. Sugar production fell by 36,000 tons (12 percent), rice by 34,000 tons (19 percent) and mining and quarrying by 38 percent.

In 1984, the bauxite industry, the performance of which had been the most disastrous over the years and which was receiving the largest chunk of central government financial assistance, eventually improved considerably on the 1983 level and has made the main contribution to this growth. Sugar production fell by 45 percent, but rice, which at 147,591 tons recorded the lowest level of production in the 1st 15 years in 1983, improved on that performance by 22 percent. The 2 percent real growth time came about principally by the “good” performance of rice and bauxite, compared with their performance in a year (1983) when these industries recorded their worst performance in recent history.

Although rice production increased in 1984, recent current average production of 160,000-170,000 tons was well below the peak output of 212,000 in 1977, and just about the same as

in 1964 — 163,929 tons. Had the average 10.4 percent growth rate of rice in the 7-year period of the PPP government been maintained, rice production would have been trebled by 1984.

The rice export figures are even more dismal — 47,000 tons in 1984 and 60,000 tons estimated for 1985 as compared with 84,800 tons in 1963/64 and 101,400 tons in 1964/65 (a time of CIA-fomented strife and blockade).

The catastrophe in the rice industry is due to the callous treatment of the rice producers — farmers and millers. Bureaucratic mismanagement and corruption have caused the farmers to get, according to an IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development) report, only 47 cents out of every dollar earned by the Guyana Rice Board from sales of rice to the Caribbean. It has resulted in the abandonment of nearly a third of the land under rice cultivation, bottlenecks at the state-owned silos and mills, and ruination of about 36 percent of farmers. Tens of thousands of these farmers are engaged in rice cultivation in neighbouring Suriname! And recently, the West Berbice Regional Council disclosed that about 60 percent of rice lands were not being cultivated, and threatened seizure of the holdings!

Despite the increase of bauxite production in 1984, there has been a steady decline since 1970. Current output averages about 40 percent of the figure a decade earlier. In 1977, the government admitted that, through maladministration and inefficiency, it lost its near monopoly in the world market for its high-grade calcined bauxite to more reliable suppliers, despite the lower quality their product. And had the government implemented the April 1978 Guyana-USSR agreement, which it abandoned in favour of the June 1978 IMF agreement, the retrenchment in 1983 of 1,700 bauxite workers (nearly 30 percent of the workforce) could have been avoided. Again Guymine is threatening retrenchment. In a "Feedback" memo dated May 21, 1985, the Guyana Mining Enterprise (Linden Operations) said: "Financially, the second quarter is not going well, the cost of production is approximately 10 percent greater than sales revenue. All departments are asked to take a serious look at cost control. If there is no improvement, there may be another retrenchment."

Sugar production has been disastrous. Output between 1979 and 1983 averaged 280,000 tons a year, compared with 370,000 tons in 1971. There were further declines in the last 2 years: 252,000 tons in 1983; 242,000 tons in 1984. At these levels, production was about half of the government's earlier estimates for output in the 1980s. At the time of nationalisation in 1976, the government had agreed that the capacity of the industry was between 450,000 to 500,000 tons, and had charged that the transnational companies were under-producing. Bureaucratic mismanagement, lack of workers' control and extravagance, coupled with shortage of foreign exchange, have led not only to fall of output, but also to lower yield of sugar per acre.

In contrast, under real socialist construction in Cuba, both production and productivity have increased. Proof of the way work productivity has been increased is that, whereas only 12 years ago 350,000 cane cutters were employed in the harvest, today fewer than 100,000 are used in producing much more sugar without entailing any unemployment.

Other sectors of the economy have also been seriously affected. The cattle industry in the Rupununi has declined especially since the Rupununi uprising in 1969. The cattle population has dropped from 55,000 to 15,000 head. The largest producer, the Rupununi Development Company, has had its herd reduced from 15,000 head in the early 1980s to about 4,000 at the end of 1984.

With low milk production and unavailability of imported powdered milk, the Milk Pasteurisation Plant has currently ceased operations. The Mobilissa milk project is a virtual failure.

A one-time thriving chicken industry has suffered from the shortage of feed and other inputs. This has led to serious shortages and high consumer prices for chickens and eggs. In contrast, socialist Cuba, according to the FAO, has one of the highest (next to USA and Japan) per capita egg production in the world — 255.7 eggs per person in 1984.

Our forest is one of our most important resources. But according to the Forest Products Association, production is down by nearly two-thirds in the past five-year period. Export fell from 1,322,966 cubic feet in 1982 to 687,346 cubic feet in 1984.

The cassava mills are inoperative as a result of shortages of cassava. And many marketing centres, built at great expense for the purchase and storage of foodstuffs are also white elephants. The textile mill is heavily dependent on imported cotton; the glass factory is limping along; and electricity supply is a perpetual nightmare.

At the end of 1984, notwithstanding the 2 percent growth of the GDP, the economy found itself in a worse position than at the end of 1983:

- Export value of merchandise and services fell short of targets by \$67 million and \$114 million respectively.
- Sugar production fell short of target by 40,000 tons and was below the 1983 level by 10,000 tons.
- Current expenditure increased from the budgeted estimate of \$917 million to a revised estimate of \$1,269 million.
- Bank of Guyana profits decreased by 42 percent as against the 1983 level.
- Dividends from non-financial enterprises decreased by 78 percent as against the 1983 level.
- Public enterprises operating deficit was \$161 million compared with \$86 million in 1983.
- Net foreign assets deteriorated by \$630 million.
- Net banking system borrowing increased by \$772 million.
- Overdraft on the Consolidated Fund increased from \$2.8 billion at December 31, 1983 to \$3.2 billion at December 31, 1984.

As an admission of failure and hopelessness, Minister of Finance Carl Greenidge, in his 1984 budget statement said "the production sector of Guyana has undergone a marked decline over the last three years." As a reality, he further admitted that the picture of the economy, the strategies which were being recommended and the prognoses for speedy resuscitation "all appear very daunting". And concluded by saying that he "can offer no comforting solution which will allow us to survive and prosper."

This pessimistic outlook was given, despite the fact that the budget estimates in 1985 show a better picture than the previous year — lower budget deficit and debt payments. No doubt, this is due to the awareness that what is predicted at the beginning of the year is generally never realised at year-end; the position inevitably worsens.

Deficits and Debt Charges

The economic crisis is manifested in ever-increasing balance of payments and budget deficits and debt charges.

The balance of payments deficit was \$426 million in 1982, \$468 million in 1983 and \$434 million in 1984. It has ranged between 25 and 33 percent of GDP since 1975.

Budget deficits have become severe and chronic since 1976. In the 20-year period of PNC mismanagement, there was an overall budget surplus in only one year (1974). This was due to the windfall of about \$450 million from the export levy on sugar, the world price of which had increased tremendously during the 1974-75 period.

The current budget deficit has been steadily growing, as shown in the following table:

Current Budget Structure

	1964	1981	1982	1983	1984
Current expenditure	\$68.0m	\$832m	\$849m	\$990m	\$1269m
Current revenue	\$67.6m	\$558m	\$550m	\$566m	\$600m
Current budget deficit	\$0.4m	\$274m	\$299m	\$424m	\$669m

In 1984, for the first time, the current budget deficit exceeded the revenue by 12 percent.

Debt and compensation payments have grown fantastically, sinking our nation and impoverishing our people. The growth and breakdown are as follows:

Debt Charges: 1979-1984 (Million G\$)

	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
Internal principal	26.0	31.0	38.6	49.7	63.9	73.4
External principal	67.3	103.7	58.0	63.4	31.8	69.4
Total principal	93.3	134.7	96.6	113.1	95.7	142.8
Internal interest	95.8	124.2	188.6	241.7	381.1	469.0
External interest	38.1	40.4	52.5	46.8	45.0	87.4
Total interest	133.9	164.6	241.1	288.5	426.1	556.4
Total debt charges	227.2	299.3	337.7	401.6	521.8	699.2

In relation to current revenue, derived mainly from indirect taxation, which falls heaviest on the poor, debt charges were as follows:

Year	Current revenue G\$m	Debt charges G\$m	% of current revenue
1964	67.0	10.0	15.0
1965	77.0	12.0	15.5
1966	86.0	13.0	15.1
1967	93.0	14.0	15.0
1968	102.5	18.0	17.5
1969	111.0	16.5	14.8
1970	133.0	17.5	13.1
1971	127.0	18.0	14.1
1972	151.0	25.0	16.5
1973	153.0	48.0	31.3
1974	305.0	57.0	18.6
1975	487.0	64.0	13.1
1976	376.5	110.0	29.2
1977	355.0	123.0	34.6
1978	365.0	168.0	46.0
1979	395.0	225.0	56.9
1980	451.0	299.5	66.4
1981	558.0	338.0	60.5
1982	550.0	402.0	73.0
1983	566.0	521.0	92.0
1984	600.0	699.0	116.5

It must be noted that of the \$699 million paid in 1984, interest charges were \$556 million, while principal repayments represent a mere \$143 million or 20 percent of total payments. This is exactly what the debt trap is all about; you can never stop paying your debts; you almost pay only interests.

The huge current budget deficits and debt payments are inter-related. The budget deficit is met by printing money and borrowing internally from the banking system at high rates of interest. This increases the interest payments and debt charges, which in turn lead to increases in the budget deficits.

Internal borrowing increased from 3.5 percent of GDP in 1970 to 25 percent in 1980, 31.6 percent in 1982 and 52.6 percent in 1984. The government is relying increasingly on the internal financial market to obtain funds to finance its large and ever-growing budget deficit. This deficit is further worsened by the negative performance of the public enterprises. In his 1985 budget speech, Furnace Minister Greenidge admitted that "since 1981, borrowing by the state has increased because public sector savings have seen negative."

The foreign debt at the end of 1984 was US\$1,350 million, of which US\$700 million was short and medium term loans. Short term debt has grown considerably over the last few years. In 1980, they constituted 25 percent of total debt, but by 1983 they accounted for 38 percent — a significant increase largely through the growth of commercial arrears.

Short-term internal borrowing is also on the increase. Between 1980 and 1984, outstanding short-term securities increased from 34 percent to 77.9 percent of total internal debt.

The government must bear the main responsibility for the bankrupt financial situation. In its quest of quick money, it has turned a blind eye to the cost of money. Short-term money carries higher interest rates and more attractive conditions than larger term loans. These short-term securities have benefited the local banking system tremendously. They have a ready market for their money; they have attractive conditions, and the investment is low risk. What better could the local banking system ask for, especially since other avenues for investing their money have been gradually shrinking with a reduction in economic activities in the country?

In the meantime, short term loans add to the burden of the people, who will have to find that money to pay back the banking system long before any benefits from that money accrue to the government. The Finance Minister admitted, though belatedly, in his 1985 budget speech that with respect to our external debt, we are truly labouring under the burdens of the debt trap. In relation to internal borrowing, he also acknowledged that "we are borrowing short for what appears to be a long-term need".

The government's extensive and unwise borrowing was based on wrong premises. In 1977, it argued that our debt service ration (foreign debt payments in relation to foreign earnings) was low: 8 percent in 1975 and less than 10 percent in 1976. And thus in the words of the Prime Minister: "On the contrary the country still has substantial capacity to borrow, and that capacity would expand as the value of our exports increased."

The regime not only squandered the very large amount of money obtained from the sugar export levy on ill-planned schemes like the road connected to the Mazaruni hydro-electric fiasco, huge imports of cars, etc. It drained down our net international reserves, estimated at over \$300 million in 1974-75, when it was said that we "never had it so good". All this was based on continued dependence on the capitalist world and the wrong premise enunciated in the 1977 budget speech of the expectation that "the major industrialised economies would continue to show further growth, as domestic demand is stimulated by various mechanisms designed to maintain the expansionary process began in 1976."

However, the value of our exports did not increase. For neither did the capitalist world, to which our economy was firmly tied, particularly with the IMF agreements since 1978, come out of its "stagflation", nor did our production and productivity show further growth. The slogan "produce or perish" did not help.

All that happened from the increased borrowing was the growth of the public debt. From \$267 million in 1970, it grew to over \$7,000 million in 1984.

The regime not only followed a reckless borrowing policy, leading to huge debt payments, which have been compounded by the high interest rate policy of the Reagan administration. It has also built up an over-bloated and costly bureaucratic and coercive police/military apparatus. This has increased in cost by eleven times since 1964. In contrast, production has stagnated around levels reached in the early 1960's; and wages have increased less than four times since 1964.

Expenditure on the police, military and paramilitary including National Service increased from \$15 million in 1970 to \$153.7 million in 1984, and an estimated \$191.8 million in 1985. In 1977, it was estimated that one out of every 35 persons belonged to one or other state security

service. While expenditure in the coercive security forces escalates, disgracefully small allocations are made for the vital social sectors. Budgetary allocations were as follows:

	1980	1981	1982	1983	%	1984	%	1985	%
Security	103.0	123.9	133.6	141.6	10.8	153.7	8.5	190.8	12.2
Education	131.5	133.3	123.5	91.3	7.0	110.9	6.1	145.8	9.3
Health	49.4	76.9	67.8	56.2	4.3	74.7	4.1	81.1	5.2
Housing	5.2	5.0	5.8	5.4	0.4	2.2	0.1	3.0	0.1
Old-Age pension	5.8	10.0	9.5	n.a.	n.a.	4.9	0.2	4.1	0.2

(Figures for the years shown are in millions of Guyana dollars)

As seen from the table below, Guyana was spending more per head of population on the military than Barbados and Jamaica, and less on health and education than its three Caricom partners.

Per Capita Expenditure (US dollars)

	Military	Health	Education
Guyana	10	15	46
Barbados	4	70	158
Jamaica	9	34	79
Trinidad	11	63	140

Debt and compensation payments, together with the expanded state civil and military apparatus, have led to wage freeze and wage restraint, removal of subsidies, increased taxation, increased prices, foreign exchange rationing, dismissal of workers, and cuts in social spending.

The social services sector of the current budget has been decreased from 45.5 percent of current expenditure in 1964 to 22 percent in 1984, as can be seen in the table below:

Current Expenditure

	1964	1981	1982	1983	1984
Employment costs	\$27m	\$238m	\$229m	\$253m	\$295m
Debt and compensations payments	\$10m	\$337m	\$401m	\$521m	\$699m
Social services & other charges as percentage of current expenditure	45.5	30.9	26	22	22

The ruling PNC, on the one hand, does not want to reduce the salaries, allowances and high life style of the elite. Whereas in 1985, workers in the sugar and bauxite industry received an increase in wages of only 10 percent, the ruling elite received increases ranging from 100 percent to 150 percent in salaries, and also big increases in allowances. The imperialists and their backers, on the other hand, do not want a stop to the flow of tribute to them in the form of debt and compensation payments. The end result is a drastic fall in the standard of living and suffering of the workers and their families.

The wages of the workers have not kept pace with the ever-increasing cost of living. In March, 1981, after the non-payment by government of the \$14 daily minimum wage for public sector workers, the TUC pointed out that the monthly take-home pay after taxes was \$250 in 1980, but expenses for a family of six were \$654.23. Since 1981, the real wage of the urban

worker has declined by more than 43 percent, and for the rural worker by over 23 percent — a decline which has been evident since 1973.

The TUC estimated that the wage structure for a family of six should be as follows:

	Per Month	Per Day
1980	\$654.23	\$25.16
1981	\$772.11	\$29.68
1982	\$918.81	\$35.34
1983	\$988.30	\$38.01

In 1985, the government agreed to pay a minimum wage of only \$15.10 per day! And this, in the face of deteriorating services.

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

The combination of export shortfalls, drop in foreign inflows and the reluctance of the government to renegotiate our foreign debts have put tremendous strain on our country's foreign exchange earnings. Between June and December 1984, 63 percent of total foreign exchange earnings were disbursed on debt servicing, 28 percent to the IMF alone.

Under the Reagan administration, there has been a shift of the IMF not only to more stringent conditionality but also to bilateral credits, so as to exert more direct political pressure on developing countries, moreso on countries like Guyana with some anti-imperialist positions. The IMF's so-called prescription as a cure for the ills of developing countries and its so-called stabilisation programmes, aimed at achieving a better balance of payments position, have failed. Many developing countries have now openly expressed their disgust and disappointment at the IMF conditions. Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere cited "social insensitivity" in measures the IMF recommended, and said that an IMF recipe "would cause serious clashes in the streets of my country." Such clashes were already a reality in Jamaica and the Dominican Republic.

Guyana has already entered into four arrangements with the IMF. Apart from the first stand-by agreement, all the others were suspended due to the government's inability to meet the conditions laid down by the IMF, despite the heavy burden placed on the backs of the people.

Problems started with the government and the IMF in May 1983 when Guyana fell in arrears with respect to its repayments to the Fund. Discussions for a new programme took place in 1983 and also in 1984, but with the falling into arrears-payment to the Fund, no new programme was possible. By the end of 1984, arrears amounted to US\$16 million, which would increase to US\$32 million by the end of 1985. The board of the Fund met in February 1985 to consider declaring Guyana ineligible and giving publicity to Guyana's inability to meet its payments. However, instead of making such a declaration, it gave Guyana a 3-month grace period to bring its payments with the Fund up to date.

US\$4 million, equivalent to 25 percent of the earnings from sugar exports, was paid to the IMF. Guyana's inability to meet its full obligations resulted in this country being declared ineligible for loans from the IMF general fund. This, however, does not mean that talks between the government and the Fund will not continue. In fact, that point was specifically emphasised by the government, implying the government's hope yet to come to an agreement with the Fund.

It should be observed also that since the 1978 IMF agreement, there has been a build-up in the arrears of our medium and long term debt payments to an estimated US\$32 million as of 30th September, 1983, and to commercial arrears relating to payments for imported goods and services to about US\$250 million as of 31st December, 1983. The regime has defaulted in its payment also to the Caribbean Development Bank, the Caribbean clearing facility. And we have

failed to meet compensation payments for the nationalisation of Demba. New terms, including contractual deliveries of products, have been concluded.

Note must also be taken to some of the strong statements made as regards the demands which were put up by the IMF some time ago for a new arrangement. However, at the same time, we cannot help being suspicious that the ongoing devaluations, restructuring of the public corporations, dismantling of the Rice Board, withdrawal of subsidies, removal of price controls, cuts on imports and other government expenditures are all studied actions of the government to pave the way for a new IMF deal based on "modified terms".

Again we say that the IMF is not the way out of the crisis. It only deepens and compounds the problems. Guyana must completely break off all relations with the IMF.

Our Party has repeatedly called for a break in relations with the IMF. We have often stated that the IMF is not a way out of the crisis. It only compounds the problems and deepens the misery of the people. We again repeat that the government should break all relations with the IMF; it has proved incapable of managing any IMF deal, whether on favourable terms as in 1979 or "modified" as now being requested. The answer lies right here, firstly, in a political solution based on democracy, anti-imperialism and socialist orientation; and secondly, in deepened relations in all spheres with the socialist countries, particularly the Soviet Union. Had the PNC regime implemented the very favourable April 1978 agreement with the Soviet Union, which provided for unlimited credits at low interest, help to develop the gold industry, assistance to rehabilitate the bauxite industry and the purchase of bauxite, we would not have been confronted with so many problems today and found ourselves in the IMF web of a debt trap.

And while we welcome the cooperation agreements, which are now forged with the socialist countries, we also recognise the limitations of short-term ad hoc barter arrangements. The socialist countries have planned economies, based on specific five-year plans and longer perspectives. Only by framing our economic foreign policy in keeping with this reality can lasting benefits come to Guyana. The ties with the socialist community must be strengthened and put on a permanent basis.

Exports, Imports and the Parallel Market

The structure of our exports has hardly changed over the years. After nearly two decades of political independence, our economic independence remains a chimera. Bauxite, sugar and rice, which in 1976 accounted for 38 percent of our gross domestic product and 86.7 percent of our export earnings, continue to be our major exports. And we continue to be dependent on the capitalist world for markets for these products.

Local consumption of sugar and rice has not changed significantly. Our levels of export, therefore, bear a direct relationship with our levels of production. The poor performance of our major export commodities seriously affected export performance and consequently our ability to import. Export earnings in sugar, bauxite and rice have showed a downward trend as follows:

Export value in millions of Guyana dollars

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
Sugar	309.5	306.6	263.1	214.6	271.1
Bauxite	479.3	429.5	289.3	218.8	359.0
Rice	87.5	110.0	61.1	64.9	80.9

In 1982, export from bauxite earnings fell by 33 percent, sugar by 14 percent and rice by 45 percent below the 1981 level. In relation to the targets set in 1982, bauxite achieved 56 percent, sugar 84 percent and rice only 38 percent. These three major exports, taken together, earned about G\$613 million in 1982, a shortfall of G\$380 million from the 1982 budget target and a decline of G\$233 million from the actual 1981 performance.

In 1983, export earnings from bauxite fell by 24 percent, sugar by 19 percent and other merchandise by 26 percent. Export earnings for the three major commodity exports were G\$498 million, 19 percent below the 1982 level and a shortfall of G\$182 million from the 1983 budget target.

The public sector generated an overall deficit of G\$1592 million in 1982, G\$722 million in 1983 and G\$930 million in 1984. The public enterprises (the productive section of the public sector) have been constantly generating deficits despite the huge mark-ups of its trading arm and the large profits of the National Insurance Scheme. The public enterprises generated a deficit of G\$86 million in 1983 and G\$161 million in 1984. What this in fact means is that the central government has had to be transferring resources in the form of equity financing to the public enterprises. The main beneficiaries have been the Guyana Sugar Corporation (GUYSUCO) and the Guyana Mining Enterprise (Guymine).

Reviewing the 1983 financial performance of the public sector when net borrowing from the banking system turned out to be over G\$491 million, an intolerable level, Minister of Finance Carl Greenidge stated: "It needs hardly be stated that this type of programme is not sustainable and therefore not consistent with good fiscal husbandry."

As it relates to our imports, however, the size of our foreign debt payments, the prices we obtain for our exports and our imports policy all impact on the level and assortment of our imports.

Serious lack of foreign exchange has led to severe shortages of goods and basic foods. Total imports of goods fell by 30 percent from G\$1,209 million in 1981 to the inadequate level of G\$846 million in 1982, some 27 percent below the 1982 budget estimate of G\$1,152 million.

Import value of merchandise: 1981-1984 (Million G\$)

	1981	1982	1983	1984
Consumer goods	160	108	75	55
Fuels & lubricants	431	327	290	390
Other intermediate	430	258	230	260
Capital goods	182	140	144	140
Total	1203	833	739	845

Importation of consumer goods was slashed from G\$160 million 1981 to \$108 million in 1982, \$75 million in 1983 and to \$55 million in 1984. In 1983, we imported less than half in value terms compared with 1981.

In fact, when adjusted for currency and price fluctuation, the picture is even more alarming. In 1981, with the exchange rate being G\$2.56 to US\$1, the value of consumer goods imports, will read US\$62.5 million. In 1984, with the exchange rate being on the average G\$4 to US\$1, the value of consumer goods will be US\$13.75 million. This means, therefore, not adjusting for US dollar increase in the price of imports, in 1984 we imported in the form of consumer goods less than 22 percent of what we imported in 1981. The shortages have resulted in a thriving parallel market, where prices are as much as four to eight times higher than on the official market.

And it must be noted that the continuous devaluation of the Guyana dollar has pushed upwards the prices of all imported commodities. This in turn pulls the prices of other local commodities upwards. Accordingly, an individual's current money wage will progressively buy him less of the goods and services which he habitually purchases. Consequently, real wages fall, the cost of living goes up, and the individual's standard of living drops. The value of the Guyana dollar in 1982 — G\$2.56 = US\$1 — dropped by 70 percent through devaluations and stands today at G\$4.30 = US\$1.

Enterprises also are forced to close down or are operating intermittently, with social services collapsing due to the non-availability and/or severe shortages of spare parts and raw ma-

terials. Consequently, production drops, exports fall, GDP declines and the economy finds itself in a vicious downwards sliding circle.

Scapegoats

The PNC regime continues to blame external factors for the sorry state of the economy. When, it is not the external factor, it is sabotage. Reference is constantly being made to “trouble-makers” “destabilisers” and “saboteurs”.

While it is true to say that energy costs, serious price drops on the international markets for our commodity exports, high interest rates and the debilitating effects of recession in the capitalist world play a big role, it must also be equally recognised and admitted that the present economic crisis emanated also from the illegitimate nature of the political structure, serious economic mismanagement and dangerously high level of corruption.

The Economic and Research Committee of the Guyana Trades Union Congress (TUC), in a report on 18 May 1983, showed that two factors — investment and consumption — were favourable to economic growth and development. It pointed out that investment as a percentage of the gross national product rose from an average of 28.8 percent for the 1970s to 32.2 percent in the 1980s. As a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP), the investment ratio (investment to GDP) of 27.2 percent average for the 1970s was higher than in the other developing countries and even the developed countries. This is disclosed from statistics drawn from the United Nations Handbook of World Development Statistics 1980, and the International Financial Statistics, May 1983, in the following tables:

Investment as a percentage of GDP

	1960	1970	1978	1981	1982
Guyana	n.a.	27.2	n.a.	33.1	26.2
Other developing countries	18	20	27	n.a.	n.a.
USA	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	18.6	16
West Germany	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	21.9	n.a.

Due to poor planning, maladministration and incompetence, an investment (private and public) of \$1,539 million between 1965-1975 increased the GDP by only \$1,011 million; that is, the multiplier being only 0.66 approximately — a very low figure.

This poor performance was all the more disgraceful in view of the sacrifices being made by the people. Private consumption as a percentage at domestic expenditure has been falling. It dropped from 62 percent in 1969 to 53 percent in 1979 and 51 percent in 1980.

The ruling party has consistently refused to recognise that mismanagement, squandering, corruption, extravagance, lack of democracy, the rigging of elections and, most importantly, the level of alienation in the society, brought about by the openly political and racial discrimination policies of the PNC government, are all major contributory factors (more important than the external factors) for the economic crisis in which Guyana finds itself. The PNC's major preoccupation with self-perpetuation has accorded economic development and the people's welfare second priority.

Despite the obvious continuous decline in the economy, the obvious poverty and destitutions seen anywhere one turns and the continuing unpopularity of the PNC, that party and its government continue to believe that they are successfully fooling the people. Nay, they don't have to believe they are fooling the people; the PNC and its leadership just don't react to what the people think of them. They have already come to realise that their survival depends on force, fraud and fear.

The PNC has long ceased to be governed by economic principles when running the economy. Purely political considerations and, more specifically, the desires of a relative few within

the PNC circle, have been the basic principles in the allocation of resources in Guyana and in motivating government square pegs into action. It is not a question of what is desired by the economy but what certain personalities would like to see done. The end result is that the performance of the economy and the light at the end of the tunnel or the silver lining have been going in opposite directions with never any hope of meeting under the present PNC regime.

PPP's Position

The party's general position on the economy is as follows:

- 1) The Party continues to believe in a tri-sectoral economy, with the dominant sector being the state sector with efficient autonomous management and strict accountability, and an independent and consultative local private sector.
- 2) The economy must be allowed to develop independently, free from foreign diktat and domination, and centrally planned with private sector representation and involvement in the planning process institutionalised; with proportional development and simultaneous emphasis on agriculture and industry; with agro-industrial development forming the cornerstone of our development strategy.
- 3) The present parasitic development strategy must be replaced with a well coordinated socialist-oriented planning strategy.
- 4) The Party believes that economic growth should not run counter to the well-being of the people; in fact, economic growth should not be an end in itself but a means to improving the standard of living and the general well being of the masses and of obtaining our economic independence. Our economic development strategy must be informed by the desire to ensure improvements in living conditions, creation of employment opportunities, provision of price stability, balance of payments equilibrium and re-distribution of income in favour of the lower brackets.
- 5) As regards debt charges, our 1982 Congress stated: "suspend debt and compensation payments or drastically reduce to a quarter of current payments". With the economic situation worsening since then, payment of debt charges should be suspended. We must agitate for the cancellation of debts.
- 6) Foreign trade to be fully guided by the state. Maximise benefits derived from trading policies to the nation, e.g., reasonable prices and charges to consumers. Switch emphasis of trade relations from capitalist to socialist states and to countries (especially developing countries) where terms are better and mutual benefits can be derived; drastically reduce the exorbitant mark-ups on imported goods from these countries. Intensify the system of barter trade.
- 7) End extravagance by:
 - (a) reducing the ministerial, vice-presidential and deputy prime ministerial apparatus;
 - (b) reducing all super-scale salaries and allowances;
 - (c) trimming the size, frequency and expenses of delegates on overseas trips;
 - (d) reducing the size of overseas diplomatic and embassy staff;
 - (e) ensuring strict accountability of government's funds;
 - (f) ceasing the usage of state funds for the ruling party's work;
 - (g) reducing expenditure on the coercive apparatus;
 - (h) curtailing expenditure on the huge propaganda apparatus.
- (i) All state trading organisations should set realistic, economic financial targets with a view to reducing the burden on central government and the tax payers. A Parliamentary committee should be appointed to monitor the performance of these enterprises.
- (j) Within the framework of a centrally planned economy, the budgetary system must be expanded to include such vital areas as foreign exchange, materials, supplies and manpower. In this connection, technical assistance may be sought from one of the socialist countries.

- (k) Strict control must be placed on the expenditure of the central government so as to minimise the necessity for supplementary allocations.
- (l) Budget deficits should be controlled since deficits have to be financed by borrowing.

The Party maintains that unless the government moves to implement such a minimum programme and return decision-making to the people, Guyana will continue the downward slide, depressing to a country that once ranked among the leading countries in the Caribbean and Latin America as it relates to standard of living. Production targets will still not be achieved; export earnings will continue to decline; balance of payments and budget deficits will increase; state corporations and enterprises will continue to operate at heavy losses; borrowing from the banking system will soar; the overdraft on the consolidated fund will get higher; and the debt burden will get heavier.

Cutting back the importation of consumer goods and reducing welfare programmes to pay excessive interest rates are not only morally unacceptable but also economically irrational.

There is indeed a deep sense of indignation, frustration and desperation throughout the country. This is not surprising. It is entirely justifiable to question the government's continued existence in office, since its policies have created and are continuing to create poverty and hunger for thousands of working people who are not responsible for their plight. The roots of the economic crisis go deep into the economic, social and, most of all, political system of the country. Guyana must have a political solution.

SOCIAL SERVICES AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

The main social services of education, health and housing form only 14.6 percent of the total budget for 1985 while security alone takes up 12.2 percent. This is an indication of the perspective of the government, which is downgrading social services each year.

In education, the analysis made in the last Congress report remains much the same, but showing greater deterioration. School buildings are in a sorry state with toilet and water facilities worsening, with lack of furniture and more leaking roofs, while more and more larceny of equipment, fittings, etc. takes place. There are fewer trained teachers, with many trained at government expense joining the exodus abroad, due to frustration, dissatisfaction over salaries which cannot meet the rising cost of living, and unfair practices in promotion, transfers and training.

There is a marked lowering of the standards of education, with this in evidence in the poor showings at internal and external examinations. Guyana takes last place in the English-speaking Caribbean on external examination results.

There is overcrowding in the schools, a lack of school books and exercise books and inadequate equipment for teaching. The sciences are affected the most. Parents are obliged to pay high fees for tutoring in order to assist students to pass examinations.

The latter and other factors like discrimination in allocation of students to schools (favouritism in allocating some children to the best schools) have led to the continuation of elitism in the school system. The result is that children from higher income families enjoy better educational facilities leading them to do better at examinations, grab scholarships and, ultimately, to enjoy the highest paying jobs.

On the other hand, in some cases, geography tends to have its effects, with a general trend being that the rural and interior schools have the fewest educational facilities, and sometimes the least qualified teachers. At the same time, children lose too much of their school time in working on farms and being used by the ruling party to provide crowds for various state and party occasions.

With only 9.3 percent of the budget allocated to education, which is supposed to be free, parents are called upon to pay various fees and support too many fund raising projects to find the money to provide schools with the necessities which the budgetary allocation cannot meet. Parents are finding this an onerous burden, particularly those with large families and low in-

come. The drop-out rate at all levels of education is above 30 percent, with truancy growing. Poor transportation also poses a real problem for students.

We cannot overlook either the influence of foreign films, videos and canned radio programmes on students, who are being brainwashed by North American values, violence and life style.

The University of Guyana is stagnating under a tight budget that does not allow it to expand. The subvention for 1984, according to Vice Chancellor George Walcott, was "palpably inadequate". He pointed out that although a supplementary amount was given later in the year, the psychological damage had already been done. He also reported that "the quality and quantity of application for admission had fallen". Forty percent of those who enter do not complete their studies!

The intake of students has been affected not only by the poor results at GCE and CXC examinations, but also by the virtual elimination of evening classes and the compulsory requirements of one year of National Service. The latter is particularly opposed by women students.

In many countries, the universities are the centre of stimulating thought and new ideas. But the University of Guyana, by the nature of its student intake and control over student life by the ruling party, and its rigged student association elections, lacks the vigour of thought and action to give it any distinct character. Unfortunately, the university plays no real or vital role in the general life of the community.

The government has allocated 5.2 percent of the budget for health. This is slightly over the 4.6 percent provided in the 1982 budget, but accounts mainly for the increased costs of salaries, food and drugs. It does not mean any serious attempt to upgrade the health services.

Inadequate funding of health services is one of the basic causes of the poor services provided by the government. The second important reason is due to poor management and widespread corruption.

Expenditure per capita on health continues to be low in comparison to other Caribbean countries. There is a chronic shortage of essential medicines at hospitals and health centres, which is forcing patients to fill their prescriptions at outrageous prices, and thus allowing a rip-off by druggists, doctors, expensive private hospitals and traders. There is also a serious shortage of laboratory supplies, thus reducing diagnostic potentials. Drugs are dumped by developed capitalist countries; some of these drugs are banned in those countries and many are already expired. This happens in Guyana and other third world countries. If the government was providing, as it claims, free health services, then this situation of drug shortages would not exist. Also, patients have to pay for operations, specialist and other medical services.

Rural and interior health services are plagued by lack of the most basic equipment and drugs, short-staffed and suffer from transportation problems that make it impossible to give the necessary services. Due to neglect, residents of the interior, mainly Amerindians, suffer from a high rate of malnutrition, malaria and tuberculosis. The main hospitals are seriously understaffed because of the constant exodus of trained personnel due to poor conditions in hospitals, lack of equipment and drugs and poor pay. Fortunately, doctors from Cuba have helped fill the gap and have thus demonstrated their true internationalist spirit.

Overcrowding, slum conditions, social and economic factors have led to an increase in the incidence of tuberculosis, which had formerly been on the decline. In a 10-year period, 1974-1984, there has been a 32 percent increase in the disease. In Georgetown, where the number of new cases was on the decrease, by 1984 it was again on the increase.

Malnutrition is growing due to the severe economic crisis hitting the country and the very low wages of working class families, counter-posed against the sharply rising cost of living. The basic foods for children cost the most, with milk, eggs, chicken and meat, the protein foods, being the most expensive. Thus, the rate of malnutrition in children is rising. But the hospitals are not capable of coping with the problem. There is need for free or subsidised milk to be made available at all pre- and post-natal clinics and for young children. Also, some form of school-feeding programme is needed under the specific conditions in Guyana. However, the

government is not focusing on this problem and tends to sweep such social problems under the carpet by claiming that malnutrition does not exist in any serious proportions.

Other diseases than tuberculosis are increasing, rather than decreasing, as was the previous pattern. Leprosy and social diseases are growing in number. Due to poor sanitation and bad water supplies, there have been increased cases of typhoid, gastro enteritis, scabies and hepatitis. Malaria, too, is on the increase due to poor sanitation and bad drainage and irrigation which encourage breeding of mosquitoes. The poor provisions for psychiatric treatment continues to pose a serious problem and the results are that many cases that should be under treatment or in hospitals are roaming the streets.

Poor sanitation, inadequate pure water supplies and bad sewerage disposal all add to the greater incidence of disease. The deteriorating situation as regards the provision of pure water supplies is perhaps one of the greatest problems facing Guyanese. From one end of the country to the other, and in the capital city of Georgetown, there are constant water shortages. In many rural communities, there has been no pure water supply for months and resort has to be made to the use of trench water and other impure sources. This has led to the outbreak of diseases. The government has been unable to cope with this problem and, instead, is bent on shunting responsibility to the regional apparatus which is unable to find solutions. What is needed is a broad plan to improve pure water supplies and sufficient funds to implement the proposals.

For senior citizens, the government has raised the old age pension from \$45 to \$55 per month, not enough to keep old folks in any comfort. Generally, more and more persons qualified to receive pensions, are being denied their rights. This has been raised in the National Assembly time and time again, the latest being a call for a special committee to monitor applications for old age pensions and the seizure of "books" from those who were formerly getting pensions. The "means test" is unrealistically low at \$50 per month and prevents many deserving persons from obtaining pensions, while at the same time killing initiatives to supplement impossibly low incomes. Retired sugar workers are given a measly pension of \$12 per week which works out to \$52 per month, and because this is \$2 above the means test, such persons are denied their old age pensions! At the same time, old folks are prevented from supplementing their small pensions for fear of losing the pension. The "means test" must be removed.

The housing needs of Guyana are growing in almost direct proportion to the reduction of funds for public housing. Public housing is now almost at a minimum with 0.1 percent of the budget — \$3 million — being provided in the 1985 budget as compared with 0.4 percent in 1982. What little is provided is mainly for administrative purposes. Few funds are left for self-help housing, once so popular in Guyana as a means for low income families to have houses. For low families, there is no hope whatsoever for solutions to their housing problems.

Rents have become exorbitant, with landlords systematically converting low income rental buildings to higher rentals, usually renting furnished or unfurnished to escape the rent restriction laws. There is no public housing or slum clearance going on. It is possible that the landlords will eventually clear the slums for higher rentals, refusing to repair tenement buildings and forcing city dwellers into already overcrowded premises or into rural areas, where poor and costly transport raises another problem. Many of the landlords have official backing and cannot be forced to repair dwellings, etc.

There are no schemes to meet the housing requirements of the lower income groups. Those who might have savings and the means to borrow to own a house are faced with an unprecedented rise in the cost of houses soaring into the upper range of five and six figures and high interest rates. Massive profits are going to the contractors and real estate agents. Many of these contractors are heavily backed by the government. Also, housing materials building are abnormally high, mostly selling on the black market. Price controls on lumber have been removed. Paint, cement, fittings, etc. cannot be purchased at the normal prices, but have shifted almost totally to the black market, even though, paint, for example, is produced in Guyana. Shortage of reasonable priced house lots poses another problem.

Housing for Guyana's largest work force, sugar workers, is supposed to be funded by the Sager Industry Labour Welfare Fund (SILWF). The committee which governs the fund is sup-

posed to prepare lands for sugar workers and provide easily repayable loans for house building. Unfortunately, SILWF funds have been diverted towards government securities. And the government has exercised influence over spending and has induced the SILWF to expend money on pet schemes, like road building in New Amsterdam and other way-off projects which do not, in fact, benefit sugar workers, for whom the fund was established many years ago, after years of struggle by militant workers and their union.

There is need for loans for house building to be increased and the number of loans also to be increased. Steadily, over the years since the PNC has been in office, the number of loans has diminished, and correspondingly, the number of houses built for sugar workers has dropped drastically. From a total amount of \$815,500 in loans for 914 applicants in 1959, this had decreased by 1979 to \$77,500 for 145 applicants. By 1984, \$19,800 had been approved for housing loans with only six new loan applications having been approved. These figures must also be seen in the context of inflation, and skyrocketing prices of building materials. So severe have been the housing needs of sugar workers, that from time to time they have been forced to squat on nearby lands, which the SILWF should have prepared for housing sites. The squatting has led to conflicts with the administration; armed police, using violent methods, have broken down houses and thrown out occupants.

The quality of life has deteriorated considerably over the past few years. Guyana has the highest infant mortality rate and the highest incidence of malnutrition in Caricom. This is due to the fact that, while at one time it was bracketed with the most developed Caricom states, it now has the lowest per capita gross domestic product (GDP). The Caribbean Development Bank disclosed that in 1981 Guyana had a per capita GDP (US) of \$777 as compared to Trinidad - \$6,778; Jamaica - \$1,353; Barbados - \$3,701; Grenada - \$883; while the increase in cost of living for 1981 showed Guyana with 25.7 percent; Barbados 14.6 percent; Jamaica 12.5 percent; Trinidad 14.3 percent; and Grenada 19.5 percent.

The average Guyanese worker is able to buy less and less. His minimum daily wage of \$15.10 per day is far below the poverty line to provide the barest necessities of life. The government refused in 1979 to pay the agreed minimum wage at \$14 per day which was to increase progressively each year. It has not only refused to pay these rates, but also has consistently refused to index wages to cost of living. The TUC President, at the 1985 May Day rally, reiterated that the TUC is sticking to its analysis that a minimum monthly salary of \$1,357.78 for a family of six is necessary. We support the TUC's demand for a minimum wage of \$25 per day as reasonable and fair.

Among the many factors affecting the workers, inadequate and costly transportation pose a real problem. Public transport is in serious trouble, with more and more buses and ferry boats in the graveyards. As more and more are brought into the fleet, poor management and maintenance keep reducing the number.

Electricity charges continue to rise, while services deteriorate. Whole areas of the country are without electricity for long periods and frequent blackouts in the capital city affect production at factories and workplaces as well as in the home.

Although there are no available figures, most analysts put unemployment above 35 percent, with women and youths suffering a much higher ratio. Under-employment, particularly in the sugar industry, undercuts annual wages to a very low figure. Also, there is a new factor, that of child labour which is increasing.

Rapidly deteriorating living standards and conditions of high unemployment and under-employment are leading to many anti-social tendencies. Crime has reached alarming proportions. Choke-and-rob has been superseded by armed gangs. Criminals with weapons invade homes and business places, not only committing robberies, but murdering their victims. This has been increasing year by year. Armed robberies reached over one a day in 1980 and were two per day by 1983. Praedial larceny reached 383 for the year 1982 and over a four-and-a-half-year period (1979-1983) thieves made off with \$28 million in booty. In a book, *A New Book of World Rankings*, by George Kurian, with statistics from Interpol, Guyana ranked second in 10 nations with the highest crimes committed per 100,000 population. Juvenile delinquency is

growing; more destitute Guyanese are seen sleeping in the streets and child beggars, never before seen, are becoming numerous, begging mainly for food.

The high cost of living has grown due mainly to higher mark-ups, higher taxation (mainly the consumption tax and customs duties) and shortages which have triggered off the black-market, fed mainly by smuggling. Smuggling has become a major industry and flourishes at our borders with Suriname, Venezuela and Brazil. The social consequences of smuggling and buying and selling on the black-market may not now be evaluated, but they are bound to affect adversely the morality of the nation.

Corruption, too, like smuggling, has become a way of life from the top to the bottom. Almost anything can be obtained through bribery. The inefficient state machine functions when it is greased with bribe, and this attitude has permeated the national psyche with terrible results.

Theft of public funds is rampant, even in the police force. The government sets the pace by misuse of public funds, by unbelievable extravagance in the face of national poverty and by the manipulation of the courts. There is also growing traffic in drugs out of Guyana and for use inside the country. Many are now living off the proceeds of drugs. If not tackled soon, there will be an eventual explosion, as seen in Jamaica.

Meanwhile, facing all kinds of frustrations, dismissals, no prospects for employment, and discrimination and under the doctrine of party paramountcy, huge numbers of Guyanese are emigrating. Not only are workers and unemployed youths emigrating, but thousands of small and medium farmers who have been ruined by the government's practices are also departing. The exodus, and with it, the brain drain, continues legally and illegally to the USA and Canada and mainly illegally across our borders, to Brazil, Venezuela and Suriname. In the late 1970's, the average was about 10,000 per year. The US Ambassador to Guyana disclosed that this year approximately 11,000 permanent and 6,000 visitors' visas will be issued, compared with 6,600 and 5,000 respectively in 1981. An estimated 40,000 to 50,000 Guyanese are forced to seek livelihood in neighbouring Suriname.

The mass emigration of disgruntled and unhappy Guyanese provides a safety valve to the government, which thus has fewer persons opposing its rule and its policies. Also, the remittances and barrels of food and clothing which these emigrants send home offer the government another safety valve, in reducing the outcry of poverty and recurring shortages of essential goods.

The decay in our society must be halted. The deteriorating social conditions must be reversed so that Guyana can once again become a vigorous, forward moving country making positive strides towards social progress.

THE PARTY

Party development continues to be one of our priority concerns today. Our Party must become invincible if we are to effectively conduct our work and attain our lofty objectives in the present-day context. A strong, disciplined Party is indispensable in the conditions of our struggle for a socialist-oriented path of development and the accomplishment of the many related tasks. Moreover, it should be remembered that socialist construction is inconceivable in any country in the absence of a Marxist-Leninist type of Party.

A Leninist-type Party appeared, for the first time ever, at the turn of this century on the initiative of V.I. Lenin. With the passage of time, we have had the advantage of recognising and verifying the necessity of such a party. We have seen how crucially important it is in all those countries where profound struggles and fundamental social changes have taken and are taking place in our era of transition from capitalism to socialism.

During last year, in spite of the difficult times, a very momentous decision was arrived at by the Central Committee. Following a deep-going examination on the stage reached in the process of party transformation and conducted at several sessions of the Central Committee and Executive Committee, we concluded that the process was completed and the People's Progressive Party has developed in effect into a Marxist-Leninist type of Party. This conclusion was

based on an objective assessment of the norms and principles that guide and govern our Party today.

The Central Committee determined that the Party has essentially fulfilled the requirements of "a Party of a new type". Certain shortcomings, notwithstanding, it is our considered view that our Party possesses the main features of a Marxist-Leninist Party. Referring to these features, and principles of such a Party, the paper "Party Transformation", which was circulated to all Party groups for their study, elaborated:

The aforementioned general principles today form the basis and more and more guide the work and activities of the Party. . . Such principles have become integral characteristics of our Party. Increasingly, they have been adhered to with consistency and firmness. They are the over-riding principles which govern the norms of our Party's life.

The significance of this development can never be overestimated. The Central Committee came to this conclusion some 15 years after our 1969 Party Congress, by decision, had set in motion the process of transforming our Party into a vanguard Party. Today, at the occasion of our 22nd Congress, the Central Committee is happy to report to you our conclusions on the progress made in Party construction. No doubt, having carefully discussed this question in your various groups, we look forward to your further discussions and debate at this forum and then, hopefully, your approval and endorsement of the Central Committee's conclusion.

As a Party, we can surely say that we have come a long way but after many trials and errors. It will certainly be a proud moment when our Congress finally proclaims that the transformation process has drawn to a close and our Party is organised on and guided by Leninist principles and standards. This will unquestionably be a significant landmark in our history. The qualitatively higher level we would have attained will bring with it fresh demands and new tasks. What will then become necessary is to consolidate the Party, whilst, at the same time, keeping our sights on making it a mass Communist Party.

Given the present stage of the Party's development, as indicated by the Central Committee, we must now dutifully work together to overcome certain weaknesses in our structure and erase the hangovers of the past. Our methods, approach and style of Party's organisational work must be supplemented by other bold, innovative and creative measures. Leninist norms and standards of Party life must prevail at all levels and any violation or deviation from this course should be vigorously countered. Every member must now consider it obligatory to develop a rounded, scientific world outlook and constantly seek to strengthen his grasp and deepen his understanding of Marxism-Leninism. We must set in train a more considered, concentrated and conscious policy for cadre development and aim at constantly increasing the number of Party cadres. The fulfilment of these tasks and more are necessary today and are in keeping with the present character of our Party.

Following our previous Congress, the period was fraught with many difficulties and naturally these had their effects on Party building. Nevertheless, it was an eventful period marked with major developments. The various aspects of our Party's overall activities were regularly evaluated by the Executive and Central Committees and a variety of measures were taken with the intention of boosting our work and correcting our weaknesses. Consequently, our Party stood up well to the many demands placed on it during this period and ably responded to the several fresh tasks that had unexpectedly appeared and needed to be tackled.

In addition to the important conclusions on the question of Party building, a review on the various practical work of our Party will give us a general picture of our performances following the 21st Congress, held three years ago.

Organisation

Considered in its totality, we can well conclude that the Party's organisation functioned satisfactorily since we last met at such a forum. Our structure remained intact; our organisation

was not dormant. It remained alert to the developments taking place in our country and reacted always and well to those issues which affected particularly the Guyanese working people. Nevertheless, admittedly, progress was slow in terms of our growth and expansion. Many factors were responsible for this.

Although our organisation passed through a strenuous period and faced up to many, at times exasperating, problems, it showed buoyancy and ably carried out its responsibilities and tasks. This is no doubt quite an achievement for our Party when compared with other political organisations which foundered in the face of the difficult conditions. Included in the many, wide-ranging organisational activities were the regular servicing of our groups, district and regional committees, public meetings, bottom-house meetings, membership conferences at the county and regional levels, picketings and demonstrations on various specific issues as food shortages, water problems, transportation, crime, etc., literature campaigns and promotion of *Mirror* and *Thunder* sales, house-to-house campaigns, various community and representation work, public lectures, organisers' conferences, assistance to many fraternal organisations, etc.

The Central Committee, as elected at the last Congress, upheld its responsibilities as the highest forum after Congress. With the leadership of our General Secretary ably steering and managing our Party, the Central Committee unfailingly kept it on its course as directed by Congress, and maintained our Party as the flag ship of socialism.

All our nine Central Committee meetings held since the last Congress were attended by lengthy and serious discussions on the very many challenging questions of a political, economic, ideological and organisational nature.

Since then certain changes took place. There were two resignations, that of Cdes. Aeri Aesop and Rampertop; Cde. Maneer Sammy migrated and Harold Snagg was expelled. We presently mourn the death of Comrades R. Chowbay and James Dastagir.

Cdes. Ronnie Narine, C. Moriah and K. Lall, candidate members, were elevated to fill the vacancies, thus making way for other comrades to be drafted into the Central Committee such as S.P. Deola, Mike Persaud, H. Baldeo and G. Baird who served as candidate members. The exposure of the new comrades to candidate membership of our Central Committee opened new possibilities for them to serve as well as learn from and contribute to the work of the leadership of the Party.

Our Executive Council which advises the Central Committee on matters of policy of a political nature, etc., has also upheld its responsibilities with fifty-five meetings to its credit. It meets as often as the situation demands. Examination of various papers and documents, consultations and discussions of the highest political nature were only some of the many matters that entailed lengthy and resourceful meetings. The administrative body of our Party, the Secretariat, was also required to deal with numerous problems confronting the Party. Certain changes took place during the period and were reflected in the appointments of Cde. Janet Jan as Executive Secretary and Cde. Clement Rohee as International Secretary.

The Secretariat's meetings are kept on a statutory basis once every week.

In the conduct of our many-sided work, an increasingly vital role is being played by our district and regional committees. These bodies functioned appreciably well, met regularly, drafted and implemented programmes and planned and coordinated the day-to-day activities within their areas.

Seven of the nine Party regions responded effectively in carrying out Party directives. The regional committees of these seven regions did much to guide the activities of their respective regions.

Region 4 (Mahaica-Mahaicony) and Region 8 (Essequibo Islands) have not kept up the pace as the others did due to many factors: absence of organisers for a long period, natural geographical problems, communication, transportation, etc.

Over the past months, Region 4 has shown signs of improvement in organisation work. Region 8 (Essequibo Islands) has been engaging the attention of the organising committee with regular visits by the two Party organisers from Essequibo and West Coast Demerara, plus visits by other leaders of the Party from time to time. To a limited extent, the Party organisation is

maintained but a great deal of work has to be done in this region especially in Leguan, Wake-naam and Hogg Island.

Recently, there have been adjustments to the boundaries of two regions and two Party districts which will take effect after Congress. This measure is intended to strengthen organisational arrangements and to facilitate better participation in activities as well as assisting in the organisational work of the Party.

The eastern boundary of Region 5 is now extended to Cane Grove, resulting in a shortening of the boundary of Region 4 in East Coast Demerara, while on the West Coast Demerara (Region 7), the southern boundary of Vreed-en-Hoop district is now extended to include Canal No. 1 Polder, thus reducing the size of the Canals Polder district.

To raise the effectiveness of these bodies, we see the need in the future to remove any duplication by further clarifying the various responsibilities of these bodies, to encourage better planning, to avoid clashes in activities and to establish a system whereby work will be planned on a two-months roll-over basis.

Our Party groups, likewise, continue to play a vital role. As the primary units, they link the Party with the masses. Their proper functioning is of crucial importance to us. At this level, our work met with varying success in different areas.

In keeping with our own slogan "Defend the Masses" during the period from our last Congress to now, our Party groups with leaders, members and activists bravely carried out their duty to the masses by giving worthy leadership to the public. Various agitational activities took place in the form of picketings, demonstrations, leading of delegations, signing petitions, holding of bottom-house meetings. Discussions took place with the groups regularly on the many problems confronting their respective communities. We sought solutions to shortages of essential food items, black-marketing and high prices, poor medical services, frequent breakdown in pure-water supply, public transportation facilities, blackouts and increase in electricity rates, and to problems of agriculture, namely, shortage of tools and seedlings, cattle rustling, praedial larceny, bad drainage and irrigation, poor prices, lack of fertilisers and insecticides, silted-up trenches and canals, broken-up dams, etc.

A very important aspect of defending the masses was the formation and our participation in vigilante groups in several areas nation-wide. Despite the grave dangers and disadvantages, our members in every community gave selfless and creditable leadership to their respective communities in the fight against armed bandits and criminals. Tremendous sacrifices, including loss of life and serious injury have been suffered in repelling this type of social menace.

The efforts of our members and supporters have not gone in vain. In the process, many successes were scored and our Party organisation must take credit for this, but we must not be complacent. The problems of the working class are manifold and because of the social and economic crisis and the nature of the state itself, when one problem is solved several other problems surface.

Given the harsher living conditions and general deterioration of services and facilities, groups have had to demonstrate greater determination and zeal to fulfil their responsibilities. These conditions, simultaneously, affected the full functioning of many members. Our groups also suffered from emigration and, due to this, we unfortunately lost many experienced members and activists.

Despite the many obstacles and problems that beset our groups generally, experience has shown that there are tremendous possibilities for improvement, growth and expansion. In particular, we need to emphasise and pursue in a deliberate way our view that groups be formed in work places rather than primarily on a community basis.

To keep the Party functioning there is need to have an effective machinery linking leadership to groups, members, and the masses. The Group Newsletter, which is published monthly and sent to all Party groups, plays an important role in this direction. Party organisers are also an important part of this machinery. They communicate to organise, guide and lead the Party bodies and their arms in their day-to-day work.

To ensure that Party bodies benefit from proper directives and leadership, the Party pays great attention to the ideological upliftment of its cadres. Party organisers are no exception; they have to be trained, have to pass through our ideological school and to continue to participate in ideological studies for their personal development.

Organisers' courses are held regularly — the most recent one was kept in January 1985 — and it is proposed to convene another shortly after this Congress.

Organisers' courses give the Party organisers an opportunity to meet with their colleagues and hold discussion, as well as sharing personal experiences in their day-to-day assignments while they examine common problems related to their field of work.

Party organisers are now brought into the frame-work of our regional structure with their appointment as executive secretaries to the regions where they are attached. This appointment places the organiser in a position which enables him to exercise effective control of the activities of the given region to which he is responsible, to assist in the planning and execution of all plans, and to submit monthly reports giving account of all happenings of organisational matters within the region.

Monthly meetings are kept with the organisers of the three counties in order to review past activities, and plan and coordinate future ones for the effective fulfilment of all activities.

The period under review is marked with many setbacks and problems. Impediments to our organisational work have manifested themselves all along the line from seizing of our loud-speaking equipment, breaking up meetings and receiving late permission to carry out public activities. Nevertheless, we did not divert from our responsibilities. Our objectives and convictions have been fostered by determination and courage.

Despite constant denial of permission for our Party leaders to visit Amerindian areas, our Party maintained its contact with residents of the interior without sparing any effort.

The weekly *Mirror* and to a larger extent the *Interior Special* are playing a significant role in linking the interior areas with the Party headquarters. Our painstaking work over the period has today brought a new political awakening among interior residents especially Amerindian communities.

Our Party's influence is constantly growing in all the communities of the interior from the South Rupununi savannahs to the mountains of North Pakaraimas; from Orealla in the Corentyne to Kamarang in the Upper Mazaruni, not leaving out the n North West District.

We must continue to struggle for closer relationship, for the further strengthening of the Party's influence, and seek to build our Party stronger in every Amerindian and interior community.

We must constantly keep in focus the fact that Party's organisation is inseparably linked to all other aspects of the Party's work and life. A well-organised Party with an efficient machinery will certainly ensure successes in the various spheres of activities that a Party like ours is constantly engaged in. There is need to make our organisation more affective while, at the same time, seeking to increase the members' involvement. We have recently embarked on the practice of assigning specific tasks to individual members who are expected to regularly report on their progress. This practice is already in operation for Central Committee members, parliamentarians and regional councillors, and it is our intention that this should extend eventually to all regional and district leaders, activists and members at all levels of the Party. Only on the basis of the maximum effort of each member can the Party function to its fullest capacity.

Moreover, at this time at the threshold of the completion of the transformation process, greater attention must now be placed on the question of Party building. Clearer and deeper knowledge of this subject by all members will certainly be of tremendous importance in consolidating and strengthening ourselves as a Marxist-Leninist type of Party — the Party which is today essential and capable of taking us to final and complete victory.

Membership

Throughout the period of transformation keen attention was paid to the question of Party membership. A special committee was set up to look into and make recommendations on matters pertaining to this question. With our arrival at this juncture of Party building, clearly work in this direction must assume fresh importance and warrant greater emphasis. Due care and consideration must be given to the several inter-related aspects of Party membership involving recruitment, members' development, their belonging to a Party organisation, paying of Party dues, and functioning within the Party.

The Membership Committee has carried out certain functions during the period under review with the objectives of (1) ensuring a scientific approach to the recruitment of members, (2) providing for the contribution of members to Party work in accordance with their abilities and capacities, (3) perfecting the system of collecting dues, and (4) enlarging the membership of the Party.

Some gains were made in achieving these objectives especially in connection with the setting of guidelines for the recruitment of members and the contribution of members to Party work. We can say that these guidelines are becoming more and more entrenched and serve to enhance the quality of our members and their positive contribution to Party work.

However, in relation to the collection of dues and the enlarging of membership, certain problems still exist. While we cannot fault the system of collection it is clear that certain difficulties are preventing prompt payment and accurate recording of such payments. The committee hopes to continue its monitoring exercises and, if necessary, to propose changes at the appropriate time.

Party membership is not what it should be, in view of the wide and increasing support of the Party among all sections of the population. However, we believe that extensive emigration and the debilitating economic conditions are some, but perhaps not all, of the factors responsible. We need to more aggressively pursue the recruitment of members especially among the working population where the Party has widespread support.

Simultaneously, we need to establish realistic and practical measures whereby at various levels of the Party we can closely follow and in every way assist every member in his all-round development and ensure his full participation in our various activities.

Finance

The Finance Committee deals mainly with the coordination and supervision of fund-raising activities. Fund-raising has been and still is an integral part of Party life and is an entrenched activity of all Party groups. Through these activities a considerable sum of money is yearly realised to assist in defraying the heavy expenses of the Party.

The Finance Committee continued as in the past to propose financial targets for the nine Party regions and the North West District and Bartica for the years 1983, 1984 and 1985. It continued also to coordinate and supervise fund-raising activities, receive and review reports and take actions whenever and wherever it was necessary as far as lapses, disappointments and irregularities were concerned. The control of expenditure and other related financial transactions, as well as group receipt and stamp receipt books, continued since our last Congress not only at our headquarters in Georgetown, but also at our two county offices.

Since our last Congress in 1982, fund-raising activities have considerably declined and consequently the sum of money realised yearly to assist in defraying Party expenses has declined. Out of our proposed target in 1983, only 52 percent of the target was achieved. Region 9 (Essequibo Coast and the Pomeroon) and the North West District did not only achieve their targets, but surpassed same by 20 percent and 70 percent respectively.

Out of the proposed target in 1984, only 47 per cent of the target was achieved. Region 3 (West Coast Berbice) was the only region to have achieved and surpassed its target by 28 percent.

From our assessments, it was recognised that there were several contributory factors for the unsatisfactory performance and the non-fulfilment of targets. Among these, we identified

organisational difficulties, non-availability of goods and other facilities in various areas, general deteriorating economic situation in the country, and so on.

A programme has been embarked upon since 1984 whereby meetings are held with the finance secretaries of all PPP, PYO, WPO groups and districts within the regions to discuss their problems as far as fund-raising and other financial matters are concerned, and to assist in finding solutions to same. For the year 1985, it should be pointed out, the Finance Committee was forced to reduce the targets of many regions.

Special stamp-receipt books have been printed and distributed for the sole purpose of soliciting funds for the extension of the Party headquarters in Georgetown, and the construction of a Party school at L.B.I. on the East Coast Demerara. It is, however, regrettable to report that the response to the fund has not been very encouraging. We should now redouble our efforts in a serious attempt to complete the two projects identified since our last Congress.

It is the general view of the Finance Committee that fund-raising is linked with organisation. Wherever there is a well organised group, district or region, fund-raising activities are frequent and well organised. Difficult as conditions are, our organisation at all levels must pay special attention, take various initiatives, prepare careful plans to raise funds on a regular basis and to ensure successes in all financial ventures. This is naturally essential for the functioning of our Party's machinery at top gear and for the successful pursuit of our many political activities and projects.

On the other hand, many areas have failed to raise funds for the Party because of non-functioning or poor functioning of the groups, districts and regions. Let us now strengthen our organisation by ensuring that all our groups, districts and regions function well since the Finance Committee is convinced that this will also assist in raising more funds for the Party.

International Activities

During the period since the 21st Congress, the day-to-day work of the International Secretary and the International Committee has aimed at fulfilling Congress decisions concerning solidarity, maintaining friendly relations with communist and workers parties throughout the world, examining their documents, studying international developments, cooperating with Guyanese Friendship Societies and the Guyana Peace Council, circulating news and statements of our Party to overseas groups and working closely, in particular, with regional political groups and parties.

High on the list is the major issue of active solidarity and support, manifested in messages and resolutions of solidarity, with liberation movements and other worthy causes. During the period under review, the PPP and its sections demonstrated before the US Embassy on issues of peace and disarmament, against the development, deployment and use of nuclear weapons, in support of the rights of the Nicaraguan people to live in peace, and for the US to keep its hands off that country and El Salvador. There have been solidarity and support meetings for the peoples of Southern Africa, the Middle East on the Palestinian question and in support of the Suriname revolution. We have issued statements, sent cables, letters of protest, issued handbills, written articles in *Mirror* and *Thunder*, and from time to time have been given radio time on numerous issues involving Southern Africa and Chile and other countries.

One of our most popular means of informing the people about international events and seeking solidarity has been by the use of display boards with photos, articles and slogans to arouse public interest. For the past three years, we have had these boards in front of Freedom House or in other popular points in the city and elsewhere on an almost non-stop basis covering the widest range of international issues.

When Grenada was invaded, ours was one of the first protests in the world. We were able to organise a joint picketing demonstration in front of the US Embassy about three hours after the invasion, equipped with militant placards and handbills. We have used the National Assembly as a means of expressing solidarity on numerous issues, tabling motions, which, unfor-

tunately, are rarely heard. At any rate our efforts are well publicised and this in itself is a form of solidarity.

Our International Department has kept close to the Friendship Societies, offering advice and suggestions, cooperating and assisting them in their projects. Under the umbrella of the Council for International Friendship and Solidarity, there are now three full fledged Friendship Societies, for the USSR, GDR and Cuba, along with solidarity committees for the peoples of Southern Africa, (which is recognised at the UN as a non-governmental organisation and is invited to official conferences) and the peoples on Nicaragua and El Salvador. There are also special friendship committees with the peoples of Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Bulgaria.

Our Party has four support groups abroad, one in UK, one in Canada and two in New York. These groups have been very active in solidarity work and they take part in numerous activities in three of the major cities of the world: London, Toronto and New York. Besides, our groups give the Party excellent support by mobilising public opinion, disseminating information and raising funds to provide the Party with many needed things.

The International Department maintains regular contacts with all fraternal parties, sending messages, information and exchanges on a continuing basis.

The aim of the Party's international section is to express in the most profound manner our firm belief in proletarian internationalism and to help the Guyanese people understand, in a way they can appreciate, the real meaning of this. Also, a better understanding of world events and their relation too the people of this country is another aim of the work of the Party's international section. For this to be achieved, we have to study carefully events as they unfold and relate them to the people of this country.

Whenever in receipt of invitations to congresses or conferences sponsored by fraternal parties, our Party always strives to do its utmost to ensure the presence of a PPP delegation at such events. On top of this, the Party has never been found wanting as regards invitations from fraternal parties for Party to Party consultations. In this connection, we attached great importance to the visit by a PPP delegation headed by the General Secretary to Cuba on the invitation of the Cuban Communist Party in December last year.

Over the past three years, our Party continued to be very active in the political life of the Caribbean. This was reflected for example when, in March 1984, a Consultative Meeting of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organisations was held in Georgetown on the initiative of the PPP. Moreover, our Party was also instrumental in the preparations and realisation of the Consultative Meeting of Caribbean Anti-imperialist Organisations held in Havana, Cuba, in July last year. And in recognition of its maturity and experience, our Party has been entrusted with the responsibility of Coordinating Secretary of the Coordinating Committee of the Caribbean Anti-imperialist Organisations which comprises more than thirty parties and organisations in Central America and the Caribbean.

Throughout the years, our Party has maintained its representative on the Editorial Council of the World Marxist Review (WMR) which is based in Prague, Czechoslovakia. The presence of a Party representative in WMR serves as an invaluable investment through which our Party is able to develop and expand its knowledge of Marxist-Leninist theory and practice as well as of the problems, advances and prospects of the world revolutionary process. We have also gained considerably in becoming better acquainted with the general as well as the specific as regards internal developments in individual countries.

This year, much emphasis has been placed on commemorating and celebrating the 40th anniversary of the victory over Hitlerite fascism. The Party held its independent activities and, at the same time, collaborated with the Soviet and GDR Friendship Societies, as well as with the representatives from those diplomatic missions here in Guyana directly connected with the victory. Party writers featured in *Mirror* a 12-part series of articles on the highlights of the Second World War and the rout of fascism.

One of the most significant events in which our Party actively participated since our last Congress was a Meeting of South American Communist Parties held in Buenos Aires, Argen-

tina, in July last year. We also participated in follow-up meetings held in Bogota, Colombia, and in Prague, Czechoslovakia, in the course of the said year.

Our participation in these meetings has helped us considerably in deepening our relations with fraternal parties on the continent and to be better appraised with the most recent developments in each country. Now, we are in a good position insofar as interpreting future internal developments in these countries and in understanding the role of the communists in their fight against imperialism for democracy, peace and social progress.

Educational/Ideological

During our previous Congress, the call was pointedly made for the Party to conduct an ideological counter-offensive. This was necessary in the face of growing reactionary anti-communist propaganda emanating from both local and outside sources. This rightist thrust was correctly linked to the Reagan administration's crusade against the national liberation movement.

These forces have not been defeated. They still operate within our society, spreading their poisonous ideas and doing so often with impunity. The struggle against these forces of reaction and agents of capitalism/imperialism must continue and grow in intensity. This is the task of the entire Party; it is a duty of all members.

As we meet at this Congress, three years later, we can safely say that the ideological struggle in Guyana has reached a qualitatively new level. Questions about the path to socialism and socialism and related notions are being widely discussed and debated with increasing frequency and vigour. Major political and other institutions have expressed their commitment for a socialist Guyana, not least among these and importantly so, is the Trades Union Congress. Such developments are not only positive but clearly show that a healthy climate has arisen on the ideological front. This requires from us more concentrated, extensive and intense educational work. What is moreover demonstrated by such developments is that socialism is convincingly proving its superiority over the obsolete capitalist system, and socialist ideas are in the process of widening its appeal within Guyana and internationally.

The People's Progressive Party has also been proven correct. For over three decades now, we have been the only Party consistently advocating, propagating and struggling for scientific socialism in Guyana. Though great have been the odds and opposition we, nevertheless, remained unflinchingly true to this cause. In Marxism-Leninism we found the strength and confidence to go on and the ideological weapon with which to defeat the numerous adversaries whatever their hues. We can be justifiably satisfied, therefore, with the deepening interest and recognition shown nowadays to socialist thought and ideas at various levels in our society. Now that other forces, within which many were previously hostile, are openly declaring espousal of socialism, we must not just be elated but see that a new stage in the ideological struggle has been entered.

New tasks, at this level, are being thrown up before us. A successful completion of these would necessarily entail the full involvement of all members of the Party and its youth and women's sections.

In its work over the foregoing three years, the Party's Educational Committee paid special attention to our membership. Our school continued to play a pivotal role in our educational activities. Though affected by severe difficulties on many occasions, the school, nevertheless, was in operation throughout the period, and catered for workers, students, farmers, youth and women. In spite of physical and recruitment problems, hundreds passed through our 2-3 weeks basic, advanced and orientation courses. The school's work was supplemented significantly by group educationals, literature distribution to groups' activists and functionaries from time to time, area classes, study groups, discussion circles, talks on specific topics, setting up of small libraries, and seminars, which were particularly widely utilised.

An extension to our educational work was our scholarship programme open to our membership. This took primarily two forms. We were offered and accepted scholarships for univer-

sity training and for 1-year political, trade union, youth and women courses. As a result, a number of comrades had the opportunity to study and several are presently studying in the Soviet Union, Cuba and Bulgaria. Additionally, several members from various levels went abroad to attend short courses and seminars. All of these proved to be very useful for the continuing learning process, and, moreover, they afforded our comrades an exposure to the fraternal international community which in itself was beneficial in many ways.

Cumulatively, our many activities have helped in no small way in strengthening the ideological foundations of the Party. Those members who have consistently taken part in our activities have substantially developed their theoretical understanding. They have become more ideologically grounded and politically aware. In turn, this contributes to a qualitatively better Party.

Ideological work, however, was not only confined to our membership. We sought, in several ways, to reach out to the general population. On this score, propagation of socialist theory and practice was done through our free literature distribution system and through supplies to several existing libraries, including the National Library. Furthermore, we accepted invitations on a number of occasions from friendly organisations and other agencies to speak on ideologically related subjects. In this regard also, invaluable work was done by those responsible for Party propaganda and by fraternal organisations in bringing to the public's attention and in promoting the socialist ideology.

Clearly, then, comrades, in evaluating the ideological struggle in our country and the stage reached, no one can deny that our Party made and continues to make a worthy contribution on this front. In the approaching period, new demands will be made of us in this respect. And, as in the past, together we must strive not only to fulfil these demands but to live up to our people's expectations to continue to blaze the ideological trail towards the construction of a genuinely socialist Guyana.

Party Propaganda

Facing the Party over the past three years was how to evolve an effective way in which to get the Party's message through to the people amidst the welter of other ideologies and political persuasions competing for the attention of the masses.

In addition to getting the Party's message across to the masses effectively, our other major tasks could be summarised as follows: Exposing the inadequacies of capitalism and the unsuitability of the capitalist road of development for Guyana; exposing the anti-popular nature and countering the reactionary views of the pro-imperialist forces; advocating Marxism-Leninism and the principles of scientific socialism; projecting solutions as determined by the PPP to our various problems and the positions and policies of our Party.

These tasks have been accomplished with varying degrees of success. Socialism is still on the agenda and the rightist forces are being beaten back. They are still operating on the periphery of decisive political action, where the two major political forces continue to be the PPP and the PNC.

Within this context, the PPP is the ideological, political and economic vanguard detachment of the working class, setting the pace among the other political and social forces in the country or exercising a strong influence therein for progress.

The Propaganda Department has been addressing these aims and objectives in the process of which it has advised the Party centrally and has taken steps to disseminate the Party's views in the form of press releases, press conferences, articles written in the local and overseas media, giving interviews to local and overseas correspondents, public meetings, lectures, symposia, leaflets, brochures, posters, letters in the media, participating in radio programmes, seminars, film shows and video shows.

Use of video shows in our propaganda work, though a new experience, has proven to be quite popular. In the city where we often have children and weekly public shows, we have succeeded in bringing close to the Party not only children but, importantly, a cross section of mainly the city's youth who look forward to these regular shows and, in certain respects, this

facilitates our political work among them. In recent months, we have taken these shows to various areas and villages in Demerara where they were popularly received. Moreover, video equipment was sent to Berbice for the servicing of the regions in that county. Given the popularity of this medium for our propaganda and political work, there are certainly good grounds for steady expansion in this direction.

We must additionally note that over the past three years 14 special booklets on various subjects were published including one with documents of the 1982 Party Congress. Other publications which assist in our propaganda and agitation have also been regularly produced. These are *Thunder*, our theoretical journal; *Youth Advance*, produced by the PYO; *Women Unite*, produced by the WPO; *Interior Special* aimed at the Amerindian communities; *Overseas Bulletin*, aimed at our overseas readership and including Guyanese abroad. The Party's propaganda work overseas has been further enhanced by several publications by our support groups in Canada, USA, and the PPP branch in Great Britain which have been producing on a regular basis *Guyana Current*, *Guyana News*, and *Guyana Voice*.

The publication *Mirror*, a national and widely read newspaper, circulated weekly and which largely reflects the Party's views, is an important vehicle for reaching out and maintaining contact with wide cross sections of the Guyanese people and overseas subscribers. Efforts to boost the circulation of this newspaper as well as the *Thunder* and other Party booklets must be ongoing and a task better carried out by our groups and members.

Two other publications need to be mentioned. These are *Combat*, produced by a fraternal union, the Guyana Agricultural and General Workers' Union and aimed specifically at workers in the sugar industry; and *The Farmer* which replaced the *Rice Review* and which is to be a quarterly publication and aimed primarily at our farming community.

Apart from the above publications it should be noted that over the years the Propaganda Department produced a number of leaflets for mass distribution. These included handbills on: senior citizens; water problems; the IMF; crime; on Grenada; on world peace; on May Day; on food shortages; on Nicaragua; on electricity; on education problems and students; on differences between PPP and PNC.

The Department also produced a brochure (8 pages) on the 50th anniversary of the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in December 1982; another on the occasion of the 100th death anniversary of Karl Marx in May 1983; and a third on the 40th anniversary of the defeat of Hitlerite fascism in May 1985.

A special supplement was produced in *Mirror* on the occasion of the 35th anniversary of the Party, appearing in January 1985. We also held seminars pertaining to Party propaganda and agitation, and another series on the history of the Party.

For the future, the Propaganda Department hopes to take several initiatives which are intended to expand our present work. Among these are the publication of 21 booklets and brochures on various subjects; sponsoring of a training course for those comrades interested in journalism; organising work-shops to demonstrate propaganda work to our activists; making better use of our video equipment by utilising more films with a political content and of propaganda value, etc. This department further hopes to put more concentrated work on seeking to increase the circulation of *Mirror*, *Thunder* and Party booklets and resolving those difficulties that beset these publications, for which purposes a committee has already been established. However, we intend to work towards improving the related technology, content, appearances and quality of our many publications which certainly will in turn reduce production costs, make them more attractive and appealing, and facilitate wider interest and sale.

To realise our plans, one obvious factor that we must constantly pay attention to is the adequate supply of appropriate personnel. In this respect, in the final count, much depends on our membership, our groups, and on the membership of our various sections. The work of the Propaganda Department made progress in the past due to a large extent the help we received from our organisation and activists. We, likewise, look forward to this invaluable support if this aspect of Party work is to continue to make significant achievements in the coming period.

Mass Organisations

One of the more demanding areas of Party work is that connected to mass organisations. We continued, as in the past, to place emphasis on work with the Guyana Rice Producers' Association (GRPA); Guyana Cane Farmers' Association (GCFA); Guyana Agricultural Producers' Association (GAPA); Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) and the Rate Payers' and Tenants' Associations (RPTAs). In more recent times we have also shown an active interest in a newly registered trade union movement, the Tobacco and General Workers' Union (TGWU) and have taken some initial steps in contacting, mobilising and representing fishermen and cattle and dairy farmers.

By its very nature, work with mass organisations, though very important, is beset with various difficulties. We continued to be affected by a number of constraints, a major one being the shortage of experienced personnel which has resulted in some difficulties to fill vacancies at the central office.

In the field, work progressed well. This is due, in no small way, to the useful, though irregular, support of many Party functionaries in the various regions, resulting in different levels of achievements.

During the period, following the PPP's 21st Congress, continuous struggles were waged in defence of farmers. No effort was spared to secure for farmers indispensable crop inputs such as various types of fertilisers, agro-chemicals, fuel, bags and twine, tyres, radiators, batteries, and other spare parts for their machinery and equipment, and loans for farmers. Resulting from our interventions, many successes were scored with regards to drainage and irrigation. Canals were cleared of bushes, dams were levelled, there were maintenance and repairs to essential structures such as intakes, kokers, sluices, bridges, irrigators, drainage pumps, irrigation pumps, topping up of lakes and water reservoirs, etc. We also closely followed up the IDB drainage and irrigation projects at Leguan, Cane Grove and Canals Polder.

On the spot inspections were made to several farming areas affected by fire during drought, by heavy flooding during rainy seasons and by breaches in the sea and river defences. Representations were made in having flood waters relieved from farms that saved farmers from complete devastation of their crops. Every effort was made to fight for reasonable prices for farmers' produce with special emphasis on paddy and rice but with strong positions against such an increase at the expense of consumers. We further came out strongly for prompt payment to rice farmers. The struggle was conducted against illegal seizure of both paddy and rice from farmers who were legally entitled to have certain quantity of these commodities in their possession. Numerous representations were additionally made against high rates, taxes and land rents.

Neither did we lose sight of the problems of other sections of farmers such as tobacco farmers, other crops' farmers, livestock and dairy farmers. A measure of success was achieved with respect to increased prices for tobacco farmers, as well as re-possession of land from DEMTOCO by Government and allocation of plots on 25-year lease to twenty tobacco farmers. Efforts are continuing to ensure that the present virtual monopoly of tobacco by a foreign-based company be broken and the farmers' interests and rights are defended. But generally, much attention was given to guiding farmers on land matters. We also stoutly stood by the other crops' farmers, wholesalers and retailers who were regularly faced with marketing problems.

Special mention should be made of the recent attempt by the government to remove the main marketing centre at Parika THD stelling, which, if pursued, would have affected hundreds of farmers, vendors and hucksters from the Essequibo River and Essequibo Islands. We vigorously opposed this attempt and successfully forestalled this action. Thus, farmers will continue to utilise the facilities on the stelling until a new market site, now being developed, is completed. Furthermore, we had cause on several occasions to intervene on behalf of farmers and vendors around the municipal markets, who were harassed in diverse ways, including the breakage and seizure of vendors' stalls. Due to our involvement, we were able to successfully represent these vendors and, moreover, prevent the seizure of farmers' produce by the market

authorities. We also succeeded, in some measure, in arranging space and extension of time for farmers in order that they can dispose of their produce at these markets.

Another major area of interest was connected to livestock and dairy farmers. We won some concessions from the authorities of Region 5 regarding large scale cattle impounding in West Berbice and, presently, we are engaged at several levels in pressing government to take strong measures against wide-scale cattle rustling. More recently, work has begun and steadily advancing in mobilising dairy farmers to fight for pasture lands and development of pastures. So far, we have managed to secure official agreement for release of land for pastures and grass planting and materials for wire-fencing in Regions 3 and 5. We further received de-worming injections for some dairy farmers in West Berbice, Upper East Coast and West Coast Demerara.

As against the achievements recorded with respect to the farming community, our work in connection to the Parent Teachers' Associations (PTAs) and Rate Payers' and Tenants' Associations (RPTAs) has not been equally impressive. Only in a handful of the existing number of PTAs in the country is the Party's influence wielded and felt. Regarding RPTAs, there are only a few functioning at this time. Clearly, our set targets pertaining to activities at these levels have not been realised and the situation certainly requires analyses, attention and action by our various regional and district committees, functionaries and activists.

Regarding air mass organisations work, mention should also be made of the Tobacco and General Workers' Union (TGWU) which is engaged in organising workers in the tobacco industry and in other small industries in the country. As compared to the big and established unions, the TGWU faces certain disadvantages and teething problems. It would therefore require at this point all assistance if it is to assert itself eventually as a formidable union, fighting for and defending the interests of the workers it represents.

In spite of numerous problems, we have made heartening strides regarding work at the mass organisations level. Our defence of and achievements for the large majority of farmers of all categories have won their continuing support and confidence in us. These have been further strengthened by the constant work done among them, especially in the form of regular public and cottage meetings in the coastal, interior and riverine areas. Organisations like the GRPA and GAPA have also commanded greater respect from a number of government agencies which will serve us well in our continuing work and struggles for even bigger successes for our farmers. More than ever before, we must strive to make the GRPA, in particular, take its rightful place at the centre of the rice industry of this country.

Trade Union Committee

The Trade Union Committee is made up of representatives of GAWU, the Tobacco and General Workers' Union and other trade unions. It meets once monthly. It has been keeping the very important area of trade union work and developments within individual trade unions and the TUC under review.

We have stepped up our work of visits to factories and other work places to meet workers, explain our political line and sell literature. Attempts are being made to overcome certain problems, especially the shortages of volunteers.

Generally, the response from the workers is very good. Invariably, dissatisfaction is expressed with respect to the representation given by the unions affiliated to or controlled by the PNC. Requests are constantly being made to us by the workers to organise new unions or to have GAWU represent them.

There are some basic difficulties here. There is great hostility to trade unions by many employees of cinemas, restaurants, sawmills and other small establishments. Attempts to unionise workers often lead to dismissals. Consequently, workers in fear of losing their jobs are not prepared to join unions. The high unemployment situation and the lack of firmness of the government facilitate the employees in their anti-union methods.

There is also the "no poaching" rule of the TUC. GAWU therefore cannot move in to organise workers, even if they request it, once they are in any union affiliated to the TUC.

And wherever a jurisdictional dispute for union recognition arises between any union in the 7-unions movement and the PNC-affiliated unions, administrative/police methods are used in favour of the latter. The fight of the workers to have a democratic and free trade union movement against company unionism is as difficult today as it was in colonial times.

Our committee has been working for the consolidation and strengthening of the 7-unions movement. At the same time, we feel that work must be intensified inside the trade unions linked to the PNC. And towards this objective of raising the consciousness of the workers, we organised a pilot seminar. We plan to expand this work in order to reach out to workers who are not covered by the GAWU educational programme.

The experiences of the September 1984 TUC Annual Conference, when some delegates from the PNC-controlled trade unions voted in a recent ballot for the 7-unions list of candidates, is a good augury for the future.

In the coming period, the Trade Union Committee intends to place yet greater emphasis in its work among workers, trade unions and the TUC. Importantly too, there is the urgent need for us to ensure that all Party members who qualify should belong to and become active in their respective unions. As a Party rooted in the Guyanese working people, our members must always be ready to champion the workers' interests and deepen their class and political awareness. Through our members in the various trade unions, the Party's policies and programme must constantly be brought to the attention of the working class; we must let them see clearly that the interests of the Party are no different from their interests.

Progressive Youth Organisation

The Progressive Youth Organisation, as the youth section of the Party, has carried out its work during the period since the last Party Congress within the framework of the Party's Congress theme to "Strengthen the Party, Defend the Masses, Liberate Guyana".

In the month following the Party Congress the PYO held simultaneously five special county conferences to highlight its 30th anniversary, and in the following year held its 12th Congress. Special consideration was given on these occasions to the role of the PYO in its work among the Guyanese youth to assist the Party in achieving its objectives.

The work of the PYO groups, district and regional bodies progressed with varied results in different parts of the country. Certain difficulties were experienced during this period as a result of the high level of migration and the time consuming attempts of large numbers of young people including many PYO activists to obtain a job or some other means of livelihood. Transportation problems also affected the proper functioning of many of its regional committees; thus it depended more on its district committees to coordinate activities. For this reason, the work of the district committees assumed greater importance. While many district committees responded well to this situation, some others have not yet produced the expected results.

Ideological work has been guided through the semi-annual National Education Contests. While these provide a greater stimulus for studies, some groups still need to prepare more seriously through more consistent group studies. District seminars are being encouraged also on a more regular basis in order to help in the development of group leaders and also to help in the education of those who find it difficult to attend Accabre.

Youth Advance has been used to highlight matters affecting young people while Campus Flame concentrated on matters affecting the University of Guyana. Picketing, signing of petitions and direct representation were also used to deal with the problems of the youth.

Through the respective national committees, special attention was paid to the various sections of the youth, especially the working youth, young women and students.

Student work especially constituted an important aspect of PYO work during this period. The worsening conditions in the education system were exposed in several ways. A significant highlight was the massive response in the Corentyne by thousands of students to the PYO's call for a boycott of classes to emphasise some immediate demands. Although the regime suspended approximately 4,000 students, protest actions in other schools still followed.

The PYO has also taken steps in Georgetown to assist students taking the GCE and CXC examinations by providing extra lessons free of charge. This service has attracted large numbers of students who are high in praise of the standard of teaching provided by the group of dedicated teachers. It is hoped that similar projects can be carried out in other parts of the country in order to offer some relief to the hard-pressed students badly affected by the regime's neglect.

In addition to work among students, there is great need for increased efforts in the work among the other important sections of the PYO. Our Pioneer Section has also played an important role in organising the children and in championing their cause. All PYO groups need to pay more attention to this aspect of work.

Much emphasis was placed on sports which developed significantly during this period with competitions at different levels leading to the annual national sports festivals. The Michael Forde trophy for inter-county cricket was also introduced. Attention is now centred on making all PYO groups more self sufficient in sport equipment in order to maintain a continuous programme in each area. The support of Party groups will be vital to the success of this objective.

During the latter part of this period, the PYO started to focus on the International Year of the Youth (IYY) and the 12th World Festival of Youths and Students. In highlighting these two important aspects of youth life, the PYO has strengthened its international commitment while promoting the theme of anti-imperialist solidarity, peace and friendship. It participated in a number of international and regional meetings and continued its active involvement in the work of the World Federation of Democratic Youth, the International Union of Students and the Continental Organisation of Latin American Students.

At the same time, the Festival and the IYY have served to increase attention towards the conditions of the Guyanese youth. In the work of the National Preparatory Committee for the Festival, relationship deepened with some other youth organisations especially in the trade union and religious spheres. Through such developments, the PYO was able to involve broader sections of the Guyanese youth in a more intensified struggle in defence of the rights of youth, for greater access to essential foods and nutrients, for medical care, for a proper education, for appropriate jobs, for a decent living wage and for full access to sports, cultural and recreational facilities. At the same time, efforts have also been directed towards rallying the Guyanese youth in support of the struggles of the PPP for a lasting political solution based on the principles of democracy, anti-imperialism and socialist orientation.

As our youth section, it is essential for Party members to show an active interest in the development and work of the PYO. Wherever necessary, we must render all possible assistance to make this section ever more vibrant and militant. We must offer our guidance and share with our youths the worthy experiences acquired in our 35 years of struggles. In every way, we should strive to cultivate in our young people the feelings of patriotism and internationalism; imbue them with a healthy communist attitude and outlook; impart to them the teachings embodied in the Marxist-Leninist theory. The Party's interest and attention to the PYO must be purposeful, conscious of the fact that from its ranks will largely come the future members of our Party.

Women's Progressive Organisation

During the period under review, the Party has followed closely the work of the Women's Progressive Organisation which is our women's section. This section particularly shoulders tasks that are challenging given the grievous conditions under which Guyanese women live and work today.

We hold the view, in spite of Government's propaganda, that the women's question in Guyana has not been settled. Indeed, our women face mounting difficulties and heavier burdens. Although they constitute an exceptionally important force and are numerically significant, yet their basic rights are not being respected. Many barriers inhibit their development and they do not fully and equally participate in the social, economic and political, life of Guyana.

Faced with these circumstances, there is the ever present need for the WPO to intensify its work among women, paying special attention to our working women. We appreciate, at the same time, the hardships and difficulties involved in this necessary work. As much as this may be, the WPO has nevertheless asserted itself within our country as the leading, most consistent champion of women's issues and rights.

In addition to being the most militant women's organisation, the WPO is also engaged in various aspects of work specific to women. Not least among these are its regular ideological and propaganda work, practical instruction classes and organisational activities. Indeed, it has proven to be immensely helpful to us and, in turn, we must render all possible assistance to this section so that it can increase its pace and volume of work.

Regular features in the WPO's orbit of activities, and celebrated yearly, have been those connected to International Children's Day and International Women's Day and the commemoration of the death of our heroine, Kowsillia. Other activities include sponsoring of several symposia and seminars; planning and participating in various campaigns, at times jointly with the Party; mobilising students to attend the women's courses at Accabre College; accepting offers to send members on scholarships and to training courses and seminars overseas; taking part in public fora on matters pertaining to women; taking up publicly issues related to women; involvement in joint picketing exercises; publication, distribution and sale of its organ *Women Unite*"; assisting in Pioneer's work; convening of an outdoor camping exercise in Berbice; general all-round assistance to the Party and other fraternal organisations; distribution of clothing to the needy and in depressed areas, etc.

Apart from its work among its membership and efforts to constantly recruit new members into its ranks, the WPO constantly strives to extend its contacts and strengthen its relationship with other women's organisations within the country. In this regard a major step was taken in the formation of the National Preparatory Committee connected to the United Nations Decade for Women. This was a promising beginning for future work as the WPO's initiative found response from a number of trade unions' women sections and from other progressive women.

The WPO's international work has also progressed well. It maintains today contact and, active correspondence and exchange of information with over 200 women's organisations. Members of the organisation regularly attend conferences, meetings and various types of activities held abroad and, thus, at those levels were able to promote its work and to propagate and explain the existing conditions as they relate to and affect our Guyanese women. At this level too, the WPO continues to pay special attention to the women movement and to the conditions of women particularly within the Caribbean region.

The Party, as always, recognises the importance of women in our overall struggle. Their role is steadily growing and they must, more and more, make their invaluable contribution for the development of our country and for social progress. Towards these ends, the Party must assist in creating the conditions, facilitate and assist in every way the growth and on-going work of the Women's Progressive Organisation.

Parliament and Regional Democratic Councils

The PPP has been waging a perpetual battle in the Parliament and Regional Councils. In the Assembly, our Parliamentarians have attacked all measures which are inimical to the interest of the working class and country. Our MP's have been vocal against the numerous ills in the society caused by PNC misrule and have exposed, condemned and voted against the interests of the masses. In spite of the PNC's notorious record of withholding our motions and questions from the Order Paper, we continue to submit them and highlight these in the press. On international questions, the government, on many occasions, was forced to yield and debate motions initiated by us, the Nicaragua motion being the most recent.

During the period under review, the parliamentary group raised many issues as matters of urgent public importance, forcing the government to answer and debate. Among the matters raised were Government importation policy and other factors which led to shortages of essen-

tial food items, the precarious water shortages and the abominable transportation problem. The state of the country's economy, the alarming crime situation, extravagance, discrimination and corruption have been constantly hammered in the Assembly.

In addition to the struggles in the Parliament, the MP's have made representations at government and ministerial levels on a number of matters and for people and groups who seek representations from time to time.

The Party is not oblivious of the many constraints imposed on the Parliamentary process. Notwithstanding those limitations, however, PPP parliamentarians have a distinguished record of championing the cause of the people and opposing and resisting every act of the PNC, which is in discord with the masses and country's interest.

In like manner, our comrades serving in the Regional Democratic Councils have been carrying the fight therein, raising all issues which affect the community and at the regional level making representations on the many problems affecting the people.

The Party is also represented in the Georgetown and New Amsterdam municipalities and Leguan, Sheet Anchor and Bartica village councils where a similar policy is pursued.

The Party is represented on a limited number of boards and committees where our comrades strongly voice the Party's point of view. In this regard, special mention should be made about our role in the important Public Accounts Committee. In keeping with parliamentary practice, this Committee is chaired by a PPP parliamentarian with another serving in it, and, through them, we can justifiably say our Party has been doing a valuable service to the Guyanese people.

THE FUTURE

Dear Comrades,

We can look back at the period since our last Congress with a feeling of satisfaction in the progress made by our Party. Our influence has grown considerably and the developments in our country are daily proving to the masses the correctness of our political line.

Indeed, these past three years have neither been smooth nor easy. There were many difficulties and setbacks, and we did not always function at our fullest capacity. But our patient work, ideological firmness and principled positions helped to move us steadily onwards.

Now we are at a decisive moment of our country's destiny. The ruling Party has been forced to move into dialogue with our Party. At the same time, we are in close contact with important social organisations.

There is an increasing momentum and a broadening of the forces in the struggle for democracy. At the same time, there is an increasing acceptance of the need for a swing towards a socialist-oriented path.

Ours is the task to invigorate the masses and intensify the class struggle in order to force a political solution based on the pillars of democracy, anti-imperialism and socialist orientation.

Not only Guyana but our entire planet is at the crossroads. Imperialism is desperately seeking to move humanity closer to the brink of nuclear catastrophe. The demand for peace and disarmament is the most burning issue of our time. In this the year of the fortieth anniversary of the defeat of Hitlerite fascism and end of World War II, we join with millions of the world over in shouting "No to War! Forward in Peace!"

We salute the mighty Soviet Union and the socialist countries for their principled efforts to preserve peace. We hail their achievements and highly appreciate the conditions they provide in assisting countries which are striving to overcome the backwardness inherited from colonialist and imperialist plunder.

We extend our solidarity to our brothers and sisters everywhere struggling against imperialism and reaction, against fascism, authoritarian rule, racism, apartheid and Zionism, and for world peace, democracy and social progress.

We have confidence in the future, of socialism. In this the year of the 35th anniversary of our Party, we move on with great optimism that the Guyanese people will stand firmly with our Party as we go forward towards national unity for democracy and social progress.

Long live our glorious Party!

Long live Marxism-Leninism!

Long live proletarian internationalism!

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The Twenty-Third Congress

Report of the Central Committee to the 23rd Congress,
presented by Dr. Cheddi Jagan, General Secretary of
the PPP — Empire Cinema, Georgetown,
30 July-1 August 1988

Comrades,
Fraternal greetings and a warm welcome to the 23rd Congress of the People's Progressive Party!

THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

Part I: Socialism— Self Renewal, Rectification and Implications for Guyana

Since we met three years ago at our 22nd Party Congress, the world has experienced one of the most trying periods in contemporary history. It is a complex period, fraught with grave dangers on the one hand but pregnant with good prospects on the other.

Already 1988 has proven itself a watershed year. Certain political events which took place over the past months of the current year have injected new feelings of hope and optimism about mankind's future. This spirit of hope and optimism is crucial for carrying forward the struggle to win a secure and prosperous world for ourselves and future generations.

During the period under review, the world witnessed the occurrence of two significant developments. It was these developments that helped reinforce our optimism in the future.

The first development is the process of renewal that is now underway in the Socialist Community of States and more particularly, the process of reconstruction and openness now in full swing in the USSR. The latter process has had a profound impact worldwide, so much so that even the enemies of socialism have begun singing praises to the fresh set of policies now being pursued by the CPSU and Soviet government.

These policies, as we understand them, have a single aim: to strengthen socialism economically, politically and ideologically; and to make the new social system more democratic, more attractive and more vibrant for all the world to see and feel.

Today, the words "glasnost" (openness) and "perestroika" (reconstruction) are on the lips of millions of people around the world, and Guyanese are no exception. So popular have the two words become that certain politicians of varying political and ideological shades are using them to suit their own partisan and political interests.

We believe that the process of openness and reconstruction now underway in the Soviet Union is a healthy development a step in the right direction. The dynamics of the process have opened up new areas of study for investigation and debate.

While applauding the new breath of life being given to socialism in the USSR, we have been following with deep interest the rectification process initiated by the Communist Party of Cuba. And just as we welcome the new approaches being pursued by the Soviet authorities, in the same way we are confident that the rectification process in Cuba will contribute to the strengthening of socialism in that sister Caribbean country.

These national developments in the Soviet Union and Cuba, not to mention the People's Republic of China, provide us with more food for thought, insofar as the theory and practice of socialism is concerned. At the same time, they have given rise to a number of questions in respect to the political economy of socialism and the role of the subjective factor under the new social system. Questions pertaining to the self-development and renewal of socialism have assumed such topicality and importance in today's world that it would only redound to our benefit to make a study of them and their relation to Guyana in order to arrive at concrete conclusions that could help us in our struggle for socialism at home.

We cannot underestimate the impact which these developments are having on countries like ours, especially in the ideological sphere where the struggle to win the "hearts and minds" of people over to socialism has become more demanding.

At the national and international levels, the ideological struggle has become more complex, more sharp. Questions are being posed as to the reasons for the reforms in the USSR. Answers need to be given in a clear, precise and honest manner. A lot depends not only on the positions adopted by the ruling parties concerned, but on our ability to articulate those positions to our members and supporters as well as to those who do not coincide with us ideologically.

It is becoming more and more effective to take a comprehensive approach to any discussion about existing socialism and to avoid putting up one or two countries as models to follow. Emphasis should be placed on the fact that each country, socialist or non-socialist, has its own national specifics and peculiarities. It is the non-recognition of this phenomenon that has led many to draw wrong conclusions that there is one and only one way of arriving at socialism and that socialism is a uniform society incapable of rejuvenation and renewal.

There are many who still see socialism as something drab, dull, sad, a system without life, that takes more from the people than it gives to them. Some people still see authoritarianism, rationing and regimentation as synonymous with socialism. Bourgeois propagandists are the chief culprits who paint this false picture of socialism. The difficulties in overcoming these distortions are immense.

In a country like Guyana where a process of de-ideologising of the ruling party and its cadres is taking place, where important means of communications are tightly controlled by that party, where TV programmes are transmitted like canned stuff from the US, our Party is at a great disadvantage to show in concrete terms how attractive socialism is and can be in real life.

We therefore have to rely on our own creative efforts in the fields of culture, sports, politics and ideology to counter the false notions of socialism by force of example.

We also need to stress the fact that the socialist social system remains the more humane, just and ever-developing society built up by man. Unlike capitalism, which has no solution to unemployment, juvenile delinquency drug abuse, crime, etc., socialism, by its very nature, has already demonstrated its inner capacity to solve these problems.

But we also need to be realistic and refer to the fact that since socialism is no utopia, it is only natural that problems are bound to arise from time to time. On top of this, problem arising from social contradictions inherent in the new social system must surface occasionally. New experience has demonstrated that the emergence of certain problems under socialism is not consistent with the class nature of new social system; rather, they arise as a result of aberrations of socialist democracy. At the same time, it is only natural to expect that other problems of a different nature are bound to arise as a result of such aberrations.

Socialism has also proven that it has the capacity to overcome and resolve such aberrations once it relies on the creative application of the science and the unlimited potential of the working people. The complexities and sometimes difficult struggle for socialism, notwithstanding, we in the PPP have complete confidence in its future. Thirty-eight years ago, we pledged ourselves to the task of "winning a free and independent Guiana; of building a just socialist society in which the industries of the country shall be socially owned and managed for the common good; a society in which security, plenty, peace and freedom shall be the heritage of all." Our Party remains committed to this lofty objective.

Today, strong fresh winds are blowing into the sails of world socialism. And even as it weathers rough storms, we are confident that one day, by dint of our people's own struggles and sacrifices, Guyana will form part of this inexorable force of world peace and social progress.

Part II: The Struggle for Peace in the Nuclear Age; Application of New Thinking and its Relevance to Guyana

The second most important development we have witnessed during the period between our 22nd and 23rd Party Congresses is in the area of contest between the forces of war and peace.

We live in the nuclear age. It is an age that is characterised by the maddening existence and the massive stockpiling of nuclear weapons which have the capability of destroying our planet several times over.

As a Party of the working people, one of our priorities is to do whatever we can to prevent a thermo-nuclear holocaust from breaking out. Life itself has demonstrated how formidable this task is, though there is one compensatory factor that is of singular and unequalled importance: the existence of the Soviet Union and the Socialist Community of States.

It is of great benefit to mankind that socialism has created a counter-poise to the aggressive and militarist intentions of imperialism, US imperialism in particular. A new alignment of class and political forces has tied the hands of imperialism for well over three decades now, thus shielding the peoples of the world from a nuclear holocaust. How else do we explain why, since 1945 — over a period of forty-three years — a third world war has not broken out?

Fresh initiatives continue to emanate from the socialist countries and from the Soviet Union in particular. New considerations have replaced old questionable positions resulting in major breakthroughs in favour of world peace. In the long term, these breakthroughs auger well for nuclear disarmament. Yet the threat remains. The situation demands even more efforts on the part of the USA and the USSR, not to mention the peace, anti-war and democratic forces around the world.

The Soviet Union has come forward with the call for "New Thinking" in international relations. As we understand it, "New Thinking" is a multifaceted, multi-dimensional policy that addresses a number of key issues of a global nature. It takes into account inter-imperialist contradictions, contradictions within the American ruling circles, between Republicans and Democrats, and even within the Republican Party itself.

We assume that the "New Thinking" also takes into account the inevitability of the class struggle in capitalist and capitalist-oriented societies, that capitalism as a system, while "digging its own grave", will, at a certain stage of its development render itself unable to wage world wars. If our conclusion is correct, then it would seem that the main objective of the "New Thinking" is to curb the aggressive nature of imperialism and to make world peace a durable feature in the world.

The essence of the "New Thinking" lies in recognition of the fact that contradictions between the two world social systems can no longer be solved by nuclear war. The "New Thinking" recognises that in today's world, peace cannot be defended by military means alone; rather, it can be made more secure by curbing the arms race and by building mutual trust and confidence through dialogue.

While we fully coincide with the main thrust and objectives of the "New Thinking", we are yet to clarify and determine what aspects of it are applicable to our local conditions and regional realities. One thing is clear, however: in our conditions the struggle for world peace is not separate from the struggle for democracy and social justice. We sincerely believe that these struggles, when effectively combined, mutually reinforce each other. We maintain the view expressed at our 22nd Party Congress where we declared that "there is a dialectical interconnection and inter-action between the struggle to safeguard world peace and the struggle for national liberation and social emancipation."

This position of ours, notwithstanding, our Party fully supports the struggle to bring about the phased reduction of nuclear weapons until their complete elimination, the creation of nuclear free zones, an end to nuclear testing, the non-militarization of outer space, an early ban on chemical weapons and their destruction and for a substantial reduction in armed forces and conventional weapons.

At different levels, at home and abroad, our Party continues to do all that is physically possible and mentally conceivable to advance the struggle for world peace in general and for the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace in particular. On this particular question, it is about time we stop agitating on the periphery and begin to find appropriate ways and means of getting Caricom governments to adopt concrete actions. So far, only the non-governmental organisations have been waging a persistent campaign on this issue. This is not good enough. Caricom governments must be made to understand that the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace, which had been adopted by the Caribbean Community, is in their direct interest as well.

In the wider context, a new era of detente is setting in. Experience has shown that it was precisely under such conditions that tremendous successes had been scored by the world revolutionary forces.

The road that led up to what was accomplished in December 1987 in Washington was an uphill one. The struggle to reach an accord was indeed tenacious, beginning with the Summit in Geneva in 1985, then Reykjavik in 1986. But as events showed, once both sides abided by constructive commonsense and a desire to arrive at mutually acceptable solutions, it is possible to arrive at positive conclusions that could lead to real disarmament.

It was not surprising therefore that the entire world welcomed the signing of the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty in November 1987.

The INF Treaty was long overdue. The world was growing uneasy with and tired of the burdensome arms race and the horrendous nuclear weapons build-up. But the stalemate and inflexible atmosphere which prevailed between the two major nuclear powers for almost eight years compounded the situation and made any rapprochement seem impossible.

The world peace and anti-war forces put up great efforts with a view to making a breakthrough in favour of peace. At other levels, the Group of Six, the Socialist International and the Non-Aligned Movement took important initiatives to ease the prevailing tensions.

In the United States itself, the peace and democratic forces were asserting themselves even more. But it was the weight and influence of all the above-mentioned forces taken together that brought pressure to bear on the Reagan administration.

Of decisive importance, also, were the internal economic factors in the United States itself. The crushing effects of the arms race on the economy and the trillion-dollar military budget of the US began to manifest itself in the economic sphere. By mid-October 1987, Wall Street stocks plunged by 22.6 percent, a crash bigger than that of 1929. It was estimated that about US\$2,000 billion of paper wealth was wiped out world-wide.

The crash was a reflection of an ailing, US economy — a slow down of GNP growth rates, collapse of basic industries, a huge federal budget, trade and balance of payments deficits, a huge national debt, instability of the US dollar, high profits and high unemployment.

At the international level, the problems in the US economy were making themselves felt — high interest rates, protectionist measures, cuts in foreign aid, etc. The foreign debt continued to hang like a millstone around the developing countries.

Other global problems, cutting across national and class lines, began to assume serious proportions. Famine, disease, land, water and air pollution were the most prominent among them.

The world seemed fertile with the need for change — change based on a sense of realism, mutual understanding and compromise in the search for peace and social progress.

It was in the backdrop of this volatile international political climate that we witnessed the emergence of the “New Thinking” policy from the USSR which brought in its wake the “Double Zero Option” and, later, the signing of the INF Treaty between the USA and the USSR.

In our view, the accords reached in Washington constitute a fruit of the “New Thinking” pronounced by the leadership of the CPSU and Soviet Government. The objectives of this policy coincided fully with the exigencies of the situation obtaining internationally.

Part III: Imperialism Today — Contradictions anti National Security Strategy.
Neo-globalism and the Response of the Anti-imperialist Forces

US imperialism is caught up in a maze of contradictions. These contradictions are a direct result of its foreign and domestic policies. In this connection, it is interesting to note the political responses of the Nixon and Reagan administrations to economic downturns and recessions.

After the 1971-72 economic crises, which was precipitated by the Vietnam War and which caused the devaluation of the US dollar and its non-convertibility into gold, President Nixon, in the context of the Watergate scandal, by a series of measures, improved relations with the Soviet Union and contributed to detente and peaceful co-existence.

Nowadays, President Reagan, too, is moving away from the ultra-rightists like Jeanne Kirkpatrick, Richard Perle and Caspar Weinberger and towards the traditional Republicans like Secretary of State Shultz who want to build bridges with Moscow. The “evil empire” image of the Soviet Union is now being played down.

The coming elections in November of this year will take place against the backdrop of an economic slowdown or recession and is likely to lead not only to a 50 percent cut in strategic weapons but also to cuts in the defence budget and a further improvement in USA/USSR relations.

We in the PPP welcome the improvement of relations between the USA and the USSR. At the same time, we believe that a good basis now exists for a new era of detente. While upholding these views, we do not harbour any illusions about the “good intentions” of imperialism. Indeed, it is important always to bear in mind what is considered to be the national security strategy of the USA. This was clearly spelt out by President Ronald Reagan in his second report to the US Congress and the American people on January 20, 1988. Among other things President Reagan had this to say:

Every administration since World War II has endorsed the concert that the United States in partnership with its allies must prevent the Soviet Union from dominating those great concentrations of industrial power and human capacity on the Eurasian landmass.

Elaborating on the major objectives in support of US national interests, Reagan went on to add:

Specifically our principal national security objectives are to prevent the transfer of critical military technologies and resources to the Soviet block and hostile countries or groups; to encourage liberalising tendencies within the Soviet Union and client states; to neutralise the efforts of the Soviet Union to increase its influence in the world, and to weaken the links between the Soviets and their client states in the third world.

It is on the basis of these pronouncements that we find it logical to conclude that US imperialism has never and nor will ever harbour or encourage any “good intentions” towards the Soviet Union, the main bastion of socialism and world peace in the world.

At the international level, the objectives of imperialism remain the same — pursuance of aggressive foreign policies which reflect the striving for world domination. President Reagan put this quite bluntly when he said:

. . . the fundamental differences between totalitarian and democratic rule remain. We cannot gloss over, nor can we be content with accepting spheres of influence, a world half free. Thus we have sought to advance the cause of freedom where opportunities exist to do so. Sometimes this means support for liberalisation, sometimes support for liberation.

In keeping with this outlook, imperialism over the past decade or so, by exercising great skill and at great costs, has demonstrated its ability to be more flexible, accommodating and adaptable. Thus without relinquishing its drive for more profits, this "moribund" and "decaying system" has managed to prolong its existence on a world scale. Of course, this does not imply in any way that imperialism has not lost the historical initiative and that the world balance of forces has not shifted in favour of socialism. Indeed, in attempting to stage a comeback as a credible and acceptable system, and to recapture lost positions, imperialism pursues a policy aimed at stemming the advance of the liberation process and preventing the growth of socialism on a world scale. Thanks to the enormous strength of socialism as exemplified in the achievements of the USSR and rest of the socialist countries, the growing influence of the movement of Non-Aligned countries, as well as the positive positions adopted by the Organisation of African Unity and in recent times by the Organisation of American States (OAS), imperialism is not in a position to engage the world in a nuclear conflagration.

It is in recognition of this reality that imperialism has been forced to adapt and to deal with the Soviet Union with a view to resolving certain global issues and regional conflicts.

We share the view that while this is a positive development which augers well for world peace, nevertheless, the initiatives on the part of the Soviet Union and the Socialist Community of States, by themselves, are not enough to ensure a just and permanent settlement to regional conflicts. Indeed, the USA's approach is also decisive if there is to be lasting world peace and a settlement to global and regional conflicts by political means.

In assessing the role of imperialism under present day conditions, it is necessary to stress how improbable it is for imperialism to voluntarily abandon those very policies which are vital to and indispensable for its own survival as a world system. Consequently, imperialism's ability to manoeuvre, adapt and accommodate must be seen in the context of its opportunistic nature, that is to say, making peace with the USSR on the one hand but, at the same time, waging dirty, undeclared wars against newly liberated and/or socialist-oriented states on the other.

It was not by chance nor a matter of mere sloganeering that imperialism has been condemned time and again as the common enemy of mankind. We should never forget that it was imperialism that gives birth to fascism, the system of political terror and death camps, that wherever it can, imperialism wages an offensive against democratic rights and freedom. It tramples underfoot human dignity and promotes racism.

It is imperialism that is responsible for the hardships and suffering of hundreds of millions of people around the world. Imperialism is chiefly to blame for the fact that vast masses of the people in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean are compelled to live in abject poverty, disease, illiteracy and under archaic social conditions and relations.

It is because of imperialism that entire nationalities in many parts of the world are doomed to extinction. This is the legacy which today's young generation has inherited and that is why they are impelled to continue the fight against the common enemy of mankind.

Another point needs to be stressed. It was not by chance nor by "divine grace" that millions of people around the world have imbibed an enemy image of the USA; rather, it is US imperialism itself that has contributed to the creation of this image by virtue of its acts of aggression, plunder, destabilisation and interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states.

Since assuming office, the Reagan Administration has done little or nothing to improve the image of the USA politically. Rather, it has pursued a policy which can be described as an updated version of the Truman doctrine. This policy is now popularly referred to as the "Neo-globalist Doctrine".

In concrete terms the Neo-globalist Doctrine is the roll-back strategy to prevent the "spread of communism" in third world countries in general and the progressive, revolutionary democratic states in particular.

The main targets to which this policy is directed include: Cuba, Nicaragua, Mozambique, Vietnam, Libya, Algeria, People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, Ethiopia, Angola and Madagascar.

In fulfilment of this doctrine, it is apt to recall that since President Reagan assumed office, there were more than fifty attempts by the CIA to overthrow popular governments in Africa alone.

Imperialism has enlisted a number of governments around the world to help it accomplish its neo-globalist objectives. These include governments in Egypt, South Africa, Zaire, Kenya, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and the majority of ASEAN countries, not forgetting Israel which has been assigned a special strategic role in the Middle East.

The search for peace in today's world is constantly put in jeopardy due to the existence and emergence of hotbeds of tension which flare up from time to time. It is precisely these hotbeds that help create potential areas of conflict and regional conflicts in different parts of the world.

Imperialism is the root cause of regional conflicts and hotbeds of tension in the world. By stirring up religious, ethnic, racial, communal and other differences, by supporting expansionist designs, extending military and other forms of assistance to anti-popular and anti-democratic regimes, imperialism provokes and nurtures regional conflicts, inter-state clashes and hotbeds of tension.

We do not have to look far to determine who is helping to uphold the abominable system of apartheid in South Africa. Take the cases of Panama and South Africa. US imperialism did not hesitate to impose economic sanctions on Panama on the erroneous grounds that "Noreiga must go." It refuses to do the same, however, in respect of South Africa where it is a system, and not an individual, that is the bone of contention. Moreover, while US imperialism is always ready to help the Nicaraguan "contras" overthrow the legitimate Sandinista government, it turns its back on the ANC of South Africa, which, as everyone knows, is engaged in a life and death struggle to overthrow the hated and unjust apartheid system.

In the Middle East, the Israeli Zionists still continue to harbour and carry out aggressive and expansionist designs against the Arab countries in general and the progressive, democratic Arab states in particular.

Israeli occupationist forces commit with impunity their atrocities against the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Since the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza in 1967, the occupation forces have pursued a persistent policy aimed at seizing the possessions of Palestinians and expelling them from their homeland.

These blows, notwithstanding, both experience and life have demonstrated that the determination and heroism of the Palestinian people have not diminished. On the contrary, uprisings have escalated in recent times demonstrating the readiness of the Palestinian people to continue the struggle for their inalienable national rights, against occupation, for self-determination and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state under the leadership of the PLO.

Since our last Party Congress, great progress has been made towards a political settlement regarding Afghanistan. The policy of national reconciliation consistently pursued by the Afghan government has borne fruitful results. This policy has made the settlement of the situation regarding Afghanistan realisable. It also provides for an end to the fratricidal war and the establishment of a coalition government with the participation of all forces representing Afghan society, including those who are currently opposed to one another.

Just as we welcomed the process of national reconciliation in Afghanistan, in the same way we take a positive view of the signing of the April 1988 Geneva Agreement on a political settlement regarding Afghanistan. This agreement provides a good example to show how, through dialogue and negotiations in good faith, solutions to regional conflicts could be arrived at. But this should be seen as just one phase of the struggle for a peaceful solution to the conflict. The next phase of the struggle would be to ensure implementation and verification of the agreement by all the parties involved.

A good example of how difficult this phase of the struggle could be is exemplified in the obstacles now being raised to block and frustrate genuine attempts by the Nicaraguan government to implement and ensure verification of the Esquipulas II Accord. The main culprits in this respect are the Reagan administration and certain governments in Central America. On

top of this, we are now witnessing new additional difficulties being encountered by the Sandinista government in respect of the Sapoa Agreement with the contras.

While we in the PPP fully support the search for political solutions to regional conflicts, we recognise certain dangers that can arise by absolutising this approach or by mechanically applying it from one situation to another without taking into consideration the peculiarities and specifics of each region where regional conflicts exist. We fully coincide with the view that "abstract desirability is not always the same as concrete feasibility", and that political settlements and negotiation should not be elevated to a fetish.

At our last Party Congress, we referred to the Nkomati Accord between South Africa and Mozambique. Reference was also made to the dangers inherent in such an agreement.

In our view, a political solution to the regional conflict obtaining in Southern Africa depends first and foremost on the successes of the struggle waged by SWAPO of Namibia and the ANC of South Africa as well as firmness of positions adopted by the Front Line States. High on the agenda at this point in time is the need to lend added support to and solidarity with the peoples of Angola and Mozambique now threatened by Pretoria's bandit armies. All the Front Line States face regular acts of aggression from South Africa.

International support for and solidarity with SWAPO and the people of Namibia is crucial to the all-round struggle to put an end to the abominable system of apartheid.

Part IV: Unity and Solidarity; Caribbean Realities and the Response of the Anti-imperialist Forces

Since our 23rd Party Congress, Latin America has been experiencing a series of social and political convulsions which have placed a drag on the democratic wave that had began sweeping across the continent by the mid-eighties. Today Latin America is an area of great disquiet, an area that is potentially explosive with social unrest.

The democratic gains which were won at a great cost of human lives and sacrifice are now beings threatened, if not trampled upon by once popular, but now oppressive and reactionary regimes, in a number of countries which only recently emerged from the bloody and terroristic rule of fascism and militarism.

Manifestations of a desire by internal reaction to put an end to traditional expressions and institutions of bourgeois democracy and to return to authoritarian and dictatorial rule are becoming everyday occurrences.

The hard won democratic gains in these countries are being whittled down to such fragility making the possibilities of a return to fascism and militarism as in Haiti loom larger and larger.

In Colombia, for example, a political climate is being created by internal reaction to give the impression that the traditional bourgeois state institutions have lost their efficacy and should be replaced by "strong authoritarian rule." And the coup-makers, in close collaboration with their foreign counterparts, are working actively to roll back the democratic gains won by the Colombian people. All over the continent, forces of reaction are actively engaged in plots to throw Latin America back into the embrace of the fascists and internal reaction.

As we express our concern over these developments, we are, at the same time conscious of the heroic and combative struggles being waged by the progressive, democratic and revolutionary forces on the continent to block the machinations of imperialism and local reaction in their respective countries.

It is in the spirit of friendship and solidarity, therefore, that we in the PPP extend our complete support and solidarity with the just struggles of the peoples of Latin America for democracy, peace and social progress.

In contrast to other Latin American countries, Cuba's prestige continues to grow stronger and stronger.

The process of rectifying certain mistakes, and at the same time, making determined efforts to raise the revolutionary consciousness of the Cuban people, is taking place at a time when other Latin American countries are gripped by economic and social crises.

Cuba has scored significant achievements in the economic and social fields — in industrialization, the production of electric energy, the mechanisation of agricultural production, the construction of modern industries such as the nickel plant and thermo-nuclear reactor.

In the social sphere, Cuba is among the first of the socialist countries to score tremendous achievements in health and education. The level of food consumption is even higher than many countries of medium-level capitalist development.

Central America continues to be one of the major hot spots in the world. The financing; and arming of counter-revolutionary military forces, “contras”, to destabilise the Sandinista government is a concrete manifestation of the Neo-globalist Doctrine of the Reagan administration. This is the doctrine defended by Oliver North and company during the hearings on the “Iran-gate” scandal.

There are no indications that US imperialism will ever let up in its crusade against the Nicaraguan revolution. Even after shifting from granting military aid to granting of so-called “humanitarian aid” to the “contras”, US imperialism continues to encourage the dirty war. At the same time, US imperialism actively pursues a policy at the political and diplomatic levels aimed at frustrating the Esquipulas II Peace Accord. But its aggressive designs notwithstanding, US imperialism has been forced to recognise the agreement reached between the constitutional government of Nicaragua and the contras at Sapoa (Nicaragua) at the end of March 1988.

The latter move notwithstanding, we must not lose sight of the ultimate objective of US imperialism which is to destroy the Sandinista revolution and re-establish the old order in the country. In this situation, we need to maintain our vigilance and solidarity with the Nicaraguan revolution.

Modest as our contribution may be, our Party must be prepared for any eventuality arising from imperialism’s aggressive designs in respect of Nicaragua.

Central America continues to be one of the cornerstones of our Party’s international activity and foreign policy. The volatile situation obtaining in that region is a direct result of US imperialism’s efforts to regain lost ground and to block the national liberation process in the region. This is especially reflected in the case of El Salvador where at a cost of approximately US\$500 million annually, the Reagan administration is propping up a repressive and highly unpopular regime.

But life itself has demonstrated in no uncertain manner that the guerrilla fighters in the FMLN cannot be defeated. As we understand it, the huge sums of money and military assistance notwithstanding, the Duarte regime’s “Social Pact” has proven a dismal failure.

The “Social Pact” was intended to attract broad social support over to the Duarte government. However, the policy failed after the demagogic nature of the pact was revealed. In the meantime, there has been an upsurge in the popular movement. The basis for this upsurge has been the deep social and economic crisis in the country as well as the defeat of successive counter-insurgency plans imposed on the country by the Reagan administration.

Over the past three years, there has been a consolidation of the process of unification among the organisations that make up the FMLN. At the same time, there has been a broadening of the military activity within the country and consolidation in new zones of control. The FMLN is increasing its contacts with larger sections of the population and traditional zones of control have been extended.

At the international level, there has been growing support for a negotiated political settlement to the conflict in El Salvador. This policy initiated by the FMLN/FDR has helped to isolate the Duarte regime even more internationally.

Our Party is proud of the fact that we have been the only political force in Guyana to lend consistent and active support to and solidarity with the FMLN/FDR. This is consistent with the internationalist traditions of our Party which has its roots in the first days of our Party’s foundation. Since that time, our Party has made a commitment to lend active support and solidarity with the oppressed and embattled peoples of the world fighting against colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism and all manifestations of imperialist oppression and exploitation.

We shall continue along this path faithfully and steadfastly. The liberation fighters in the FMLN can rely on our Party's support and solidarity until final victory is achieved.

It was these lofty internationalist principles that guided our Party in its attitude as regards the miscarriage of justice and the thwarting of the democratic aspirations of the Haitian people earlier this year.

The Haitian experience has been and continues to be a source of great concern for us in the PPP for the simple reason that it serves as a brutal reminder of the extremes to which those who oppose the popular demands of the people are prepared to go to maintain themselves in power. On top of this, Haiti has confirmed once again the failure of the institutions of bourgeois democracy to act as a guarantee for upholding the lofty ideals of "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity", proclaimed by the founders of the second bourgeois (democratic) republic of 1848-1851 in France. Further evidence which attests to the bankruptcy of bourgeois democracy is reflected in the political thinking that "rigged elections are better than no elections at all." Thus, it is on the basis of the commonalities of farcical electoral practices, together with the lack of democracy in general in our two countries that our warm and militant support and solidarity is extended to our Haitian brothers and sisters who are engaged in a life and death struggle to win for themselves democracy, peace and social progress.

As we continue to wage our own struggle for free and fair elections here in Guyana, we shall always remember our Haitian comrades. We wish them every success in the class and political battles that lie ahead.

It is in a similar spirit of solidarity and friendship that our Party applauds the resolute stand adopted by the people of Panama and the Torrijista movement in that country against the flagrant violations by US imperialism of Panama's national sovereignty and open interference in the internal affairs of their country.

How ironic it is to witness the conspiracies and machinations put in place by a major foreign power to remove a Panamanian national not only from office but even from his country of birth on the grounds that he is not "morally fit" to hold office due to his alleged involvement in drug trafficking.

Events around Panama have demonstrated once again what is meant by imperialist diktat: the use of the "big stick" methods to accomplish its objectives.

We fully coincide with the view that what is really at stake is not Noriega, but Panama's sovereignty and independence, the Torrijos-Carter Treaty on the Panama Canal Zone and Panama's rights over the canal. The move to oust Noriega is simply a smokescreen to subvert the Torrijos national movement and destroy all obstacles to imperialist domination over Panama.

Imperialism hatches plots to displace and/or eliminate Noriega, Ortega, Fidel and others but does nothing to get rid of Pinochet, Strossener and Botha and the oppressive regimes which they uphold in their respective countries. An examination of the facts shows that it is only when the people rise up in unity and succeed in overthrowing the despots, then imperialism changes its tactics opportunistically and begins to swim with the tide, never losing sight of its main objective which is to maintain its stranglehold over the country concerned.

We in the PPP are fully conscious of the fact that what was played out in Panama was already played out in Guyana between 1961 and 1964 and in Chile between 1970 to 1973. Fully aware of these experiences, we therefore ask ourselves, how can US imperialism arrogate to itself the role of "guardian of international morality" when its record on this particular issue speaks for itself?

The PPP rejects completely all attempts by the US administration to teach other nations of the world lessons in morality and how to conduct their internal affairs.

In this connection, the Grenada tragedy is still fresh in our memories. Pyrrhic as the victory was, nevertheless experience has shown that the reverberations are still being felt throughout the region.

The sweet taste of victory experienced by the electorate in Trinidad and Tobago with the victory of the National Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR) at the end of 1986 eventually turned sour when cracks appeared in that party one year later.

For those who have been following closely the political and economic developments in that country, the split in the NAR, resulting in the expulsion of four senior cabinet ministers from government came as no surprise. This was undoubtedly a regrettable development and a source of grave disappointment for the working people of Trinidad and Tobago who had pinned great hopes on the NAR to relieve them from the heavy burdens which the PNM had imposed on the nation over the past thirty years.

It is important to bear in mind the fact that the NAR victory was a source of great inspiration for the Guyanese people who have been waging a persistent struggle for a change of government through free and fair elections. The significance of the PNM defeat lay in the fact that with free and fair elections it was possible to defeat that Party after more than thirty years in power.

For us here in Guyana, that victory re-assured us of our conviction that the PNC, like the PNM, had long become a political anachronism and all that was necessary for its removal was free and fair elections and a well organised political opposition.

It cannot be denied that the virtual split in the NAR and its betrayal of the aspirations of the people of Trinidad and Tobago transcend the borders of that country. In a way, this setback helped reinforce the sense of hopelessness and pessimism which engulfed the region in the wake of the Grenada tragedy.

The NAR has betrayed the expectations of the Trinidad electorate and has embarked on an outright pro-big business, pro-imperialist course. This policy appears to have reached the point of irreconcilability with the labour, progressive tendency within the NAR. Consequently, class contradictions within the NAR and in Trinidad society itself are bound to sharpen in the months ahead.

As to how these contradictions will manifest themselves, only time will tell. What is regrettable, however, is the absence of organised left unity within the country to fill the emerging political vacuum and to present itself as a viable and attractive political alternative for the popular masses in the country.

In our modest opinion, the urgency of dealing with this situation cannot be over-estimated. It is our Party's humble opinion that sufficient healthy and mature forces exist in Trinidad and Tobago to make a patriotic left unity become a successful reality.

Since we met at our last Congress, a new situation has emerged in Suriname. Democratic elections were held in that country and resulted in a change of government. For the PPP, one of the most significant aspects of those elections was that the army stayed out of the process and returned to the barracks after the electorate's verdict had been announced. We consider this experience relevant to our own struggle for free and fair elections.

The main tasks facing the new government are: economic reconstruction, normalizing relations with The Hague and further enhancing the process of national unity within the country.

We in the PPP are fully conscious of the many problems facing the new government of Suriname but we feel sure that so long as determination and vision prevail, these problems can be overcome.

Our Party will regard with feelings of friendship and solidarity all that is done to enhance the well-being of the Surinamese people and the relations between the peoples of our two countries.

In the Central Committee report to our last Party Congress, we dealt at length with developments in Grenada before and after the US-led invasion of that sister Caribbean country. Since then, social and economic developments inside the country have demonstrated quite clearly that all the talk about freedom and democracy for all Grenadians was a smokescreen to bring about US domination and occupation of the island. Today, the effects of that domination is manifesting itself in growing unemployment, a high crime rate and an expanding internal drug market, which are but a few of the "high rise" social ills. This gives the lie to the "Grenada Miracle".

Political instability and growing dependence on the United States are helping to compound the problems within the country. And the political forces remain divided mainly along political and ideological lines.

All the political parties in the country, with the exception of the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement and the surviving elements associated with the NJM, advocate pro-capitalist, pro-imperialist positions. It is obvious, therefore, that the political space will open more and more, allowing for a democratic political alternative to what exists in present-day Grenada. The responsibility rests with the revolutionary democratic and Marxist-Leninist forces of Grenada to fill this political vacuum in an effective and creative manner. This of course is a matter of time, maturity and compromise.

As regards the imprisonment of the NJM leaders, we maintain the view that the prisoners are political prisoners. We insist on their right to a free and fair trial and appeal case. We condemn the use of torture and other forms of inhuman treatment meted out to them from time to time by the prison authorities.

Since the tragic days of October 1983, the usual turbulence which characterise Caribbean politics has waned considerably. This development has to be viewed in a historical context. Without attempting to be schematic, contemporary Caribbean politics may be divided into three distinct periods: the mid-1930's to 1940 period which was marked by intense political battles against colonialism/imperialism and in favour of a socialist-oriented course of development for the countries of the region. Then there was the 1950 to mid-1970's which saw the region's entry into Cold War politics, joining the anti-communist crusade and consequently, betrayal of the people's trust by those who chose to sell out to imperialist interests.

Later, we saw the period of the mid-1970's to the beginning of the 1980's which was characterised by, at one time collective, at another time individual struggles by the newly-free states to own and control their natural resources and to put an end to neo-colonial and imperialist domination of the region.

An empirical view of the present situation obtaining in the Caribbean leads us to conclude that we have entered a fourth-period — a period that is much more complex. On the one hand, it is marked by a significant wane in the national liberation struggle and a slackening of the struggle against imperialism in general. On the other hand, we note the ascendance of the popular struggles for democracy and social justice. This was clearly demonstrated by the peoples of Barbados, Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago and St. Lucia.

Because of the complex nature of this situation, two specific dangers arise. The first danger is of a political/ideological nature: it is the danger of falling victim to impatience and what Lenin described as "left-wing communism". The basis for such a deviation is to be found in the assertion that the absence of mature objective and subjective factors notwithstanding, efforts should be made to return to the days when the national liberation movement was on the upsurge, as exemplified in 1979 when Nicaragua and Grenada freed themselves from imperialist domination and local reaction.

This assertion is reinforced by the fact that since the late 1970's — Manley in Jamaica, the NJM in Grenada, the overthrow of Patrick John in Dominica, the defeat of Compton in St. Lucia 1979, the assassination of Walter Rodney in Guyana and the sergeants' coup in Suriname — there have been no new people's victories in the region. Moreover, with the demise of the Grenada revolution, the liberation movement has definitely waned. And while the struggles of the ANC of South Africa and the FMLN of El Salvador continue to be the prime motivators of the solidarity movement, nevertheless, new people's victories so vital to give impetus to the struggle for social emancipation are sadly lacking.

The second danger lies in falling victim to complacency and acceptance of the status quo: to avoid "rocking the boat", so to speak, "lest the wrath of imperialism be unleashed."

To avoid falling into either of these two camps, an objective and sober analysis of the international and regional situation is crucial, especially so, if correct strategy and tactics are to be applied to chart the way forward. In this connection, of key importance is the need to have a

profound understanding of the objective and subjective factors obtaining in the region. Of the latter, priority should be given to knowing the mood of the Caribbean popular masses.

The mood of the popular masses in most Caribbean countries has been tempered by the experiences they have accumulated from political developments dating back since the 1930's up to the present point in time. The claim by some on the left that the popular masses are losing their revolutionary ardour and combativeness, that they have opted for complacency and indifference to political struggle, is superficial and fallacious. In fact, those who seek to blame the working people for "not moving" must do some "soul searching" and more "grounding with their brothers".

In our view, the popular masses in the Caribbean countries, though their actions in Barbados, Haiti and Trinidad and Tobago have demonstrated their rejection of traditional "tweedle dee tweedle dum electoral politics", they have come to recognise that Christian and social democracy are unable to solve their day to day problems. On top of this, they have not forgotten the betrayals they were subjected to in Jamaica in 1980, in St. Lucia in 1982, in Grenada in 1983 and now in Trinidad and Tobago. Neither have the Caribbean people forgotten the bitter lessons from the Union Island Uprising in 1980 and the 1970 February Revolt in Trinidad and Tobago. And like their Caribbean brothers and sisters, Guyanese have not forgotten the "Rodney Days" of 1978 to 1980, and more recently, the betrayal meted out to them by the regional "yard fowls" at their infamous meeting held in Mustique in 1985.

Consideration must also be given to the fact that the present state of affairs, together with the discontent prevailing among the working people in the countries of the region, also has to do with the Left movement and its inability to fill the political vacuum that has emerged as a result of the bankruptcy of the traditional Christian and social democratic parties.

Compounding this situation is the phenomenon peculiar to the Caribbean region. This is the control of the trade union movement by political leaders whose political and ideological convictions are rooted in that most disgraceful 1950 to 1970 period of Caribbean history.

These experiences have taught us great and unforgettable lessons. By their cumulative nature, they have impacted on and helped contribute to the downturn in the revolutionary struggles of the Caribbean popular masses.

The dominant attitude on the part of the majority of people, arising from the excruciating social and economic conditions obtaining in their respective countries, is to concentrate their energies on the need to survive economically. A notable social spin-off from this "hustle psychology" is the emergence and increasing economic activities of a new social stratum called the "traders" in some countries or "traffickers" in others. This particular stratum is wielding a decisive influence on the national economies of a number of countries in the region, especially in those where the parallel economy has outstripped the official economy.

Heavy emigration mainly to North America has also impacted negatively on Caribbean politics. According to a study: "The Caribbean Immigration", carried out by the Caribbean/America Media Studies Inc., "Caribbean immigration to the US jumped from 168,400 by the end of 1970 to 271,405 by the beginning of the 1980's", an increase by 62 percent. The Group concluded that "the immigrant Caribbean population is the third largest immigrant group in the United States and among one of the fastest growing. . ."

The presence of such a large West Indian population in the United States has had its economic, political and psychological effects on the peoples of the region as a whole. This has come about as a result of the persistent and heavy inflow of overseas remittances of US currency and barrels of consumer items from relatives in the US.

From all indications, this pattern is likely to continue up to the end of the 1980's. Is there anyway of curbing it? This is hardly likely unless radical reforms or revolution take place in those countries from which most of the immigrants come.

The growing drug market and the use of the majority of Caribbean islands as transshipment points into the US has had devastating effects in the social and economic life of a number of countries especially among the youth population. It is for this reason that persistent and methodical popular campaigns against drugs is crucial for the growth of the revolutionary move-

ment, especially when we take into consideration the fact that imperialism is now branding and associating liberation movements with drug trafficking.

The most penetrating if not destabilising factor of all has been in the area of mass communications where information imperialism using satellite TV and other means of mass communication has launched a cultural and propaganda blitzkrieg in the region. So blatant has the situation become that even conservative elements in the region are now speaking out against this phenomenon which is having a devastating impact on the social and political consciousness of the Caribbean people.

There is an urgent need to address this problem for it is crucial to the strengthening; of imperialist domination in the region. The corrupting effects of cultural imperialism must be combated on all fronts.

This situation is further compounded by the fact that the ways to happiness and prosperity promised by US imperialism in the aftermath of the Grenada tragedy has not become a reality. Indeed, what has become a living reality in the region is growing unemployment, an upswing in crime, and high incidences of drug abuse.

The palliatives offered by the US government through bilateral PL 480 Agreements and the CBI have failed to bring the desired results. And while US Congressmen are keen on having Caricom states receive real benefits from the CBI, the reality is that the CBI, as presently constituted, only benefits US monopoly capital. Moreover, it is important to stress the fact that the CBI has allocated most of the funds to El Salvador to prop up the oppressive Duarte regime.

A Congressional Study Mission and Consultation on proposals to strengthen US-Caribbean economic relations, which met in Barbados earlier this year, informed participants that the House Sub-Committee on Western Hemispheric Affairs and the Sub-Committee on International Economic Policy and Trade, agreed to "incorporate recommendations in the Gibbons' Trade Bill which would significantly amend the provisions of the existing CBI."

Arising out of these discussions and consultations, there is now talk about a new deal for the Caribbean under the "CBI Two".

Neither "CBI One" nor "CBI Two" can save the Caribbean from the economic and structural crises now gripping the majority of countries. The solution lies in effecting revolutionary social, political and economic transformations that would realise the hopes and aspirations of the region's poor. For this to come about, the ruling neo-colonial regimes in the region (the majority of which are compradore, bureaucratic and industrial by nature) must be replaced by revolutionary democratic regimes.

Life itself has demonstrated, in no uncertain terms, that the traditional right-wing social democratic parties have failed to provide viable and attractive economic and political alternatives for the Caribbean people. Even those elements who have adopted a liberal stand, have failed to take decisive actions in favour of the working people at critical moments of their countries' political life.

The ruling pro-bourgeois classes in the Eastern Caribbean countries, having recognised the fact that their days are numbered, are now seeking to "save their skins" through the establishment of a political union among themselves.

It is not by coincidence that the majority of ruling political parties advocating political unity of the OECS are members of the ultra-conservative Caribbean Democratic Union (CDU).

Our Party fully supports the conclusions arrived at by the participants in the meeting on Caribbean unity held in St. Vincent and the Grenadines in November 1987 and sponsored by the Caribbean and Central American Anti-imperialist Organisations:

Unity will be useless if it cannot confront misery, despair, hopelessness, alienation, oppression, exploitation, promote social and economic justice and guarantee human rights, democracy, cultural and intellectual sovereignty and a better quality of life for the Caribbean people.

We in the PPP firmly believe that political unity with real content can only be achieved with the establishment of revolutionary democracy. Not even radical social democracy alone will be

capable of fulfilling such a programme. The responsibility rests with the Marxist-Leninist and revolutionary democratic parties to make such a programme become a living reality.

The exigencies of the present situation obtaining in the Caribbean impels the Marxist-Leninist, revolutionary democratic organisations and left social democrats to act together in the struggle against imperialist domination, for the de-militarization of the region, for the recognition of the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace, for genuine independence, respect for human rights and the principle of ideological pluralism, for the deepening of democracy both at the representative and participatory levels and for the defence of the region's sovereignty and independence.

There is every justification for us to work towards the successful realisation of this unity since we have common positions on the main issues that affect the daily lives of our people. These issues include: the struggle for genuine democracy, the struggle against imperialist institutions such as the IMF, the CBI and the CDU. We also have common positions in respect of solidarity with Nicaragua, El Salvador, Cuba and Haiti.

Together, ways and means must be found to overcome the traces of lethargy and pessimism, that crop up from time to time. At this stage of our struggle against imperialist penetration and domination, for Caribbean nationhood, it is imperative that every effort be made on all fronts, through creative and imaginative means, to recapture and inculcate the democratic, anti-colonial and anti-imperialist elements of West Indian nationalism which were so fervently demonstrated by our people in the 1930's, 1940's and 1970's.

New generations are emerging and maturing in the countries of the region. The experiences of the pre-independence period will not be passed on to them automatically. Every generation has to go through its own school of struggle and be imbued with a sense of patriotism and Caribbean brotherhood. They must be taught about the works of men like Marrayshow, Garvey, Butler, Marti, Rodney and Bishop who did everything that was possible in their time to instil a sense of patriotism, anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism in the Caribbean people.

It is only in this way that every new generation will be able to make a contribution of its own to the strengthening of Caribbean brotherhood and nationhood based on the traditions of anti-colonialism anti-imperialism — a Caribbean nationhood that would guarantee democracy, bread and social justice.

The Marxist-Leninist parties and revolutionary democratic organisations have the responsibility of stepping up their political and ideological work among the popular masses in their respective countries. The People's Progressive Party with its limited resources is prepared to do whatever is possible to assist in this direction.

An important area of struggle is the struggle against anti-communism which helps to cultivate the psychology of dependence on imperialism and weakens the unity and solidarity among the patriotic, progressive and democratic forces of the region.

We in the PPP believe that the Caribbean and Central American Anti-imperialist Organisations must have a higher profile through more intense work at the regional and sub-regional levels. That body provides an excellent forum for open and constructive discussion on a number of pressing issues affecting the day to day life of our people.

The world today is poised on the threshold of momentous developments. Two factors will influence these developments and changes: the "New Thinking" policy now being pursued by the CPSU and the Soviet government and the results of the 1988 Presidential elections in the United States. We in the PPP are realistic enough to recognise the fact that anything the Soviet Union or the United States does, either individually or jointly, has great impact almost everywhere. Both countries also wield tremendous influence in the Third World.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to anticipate the extent to which these developments will influence the political situation in the Caribbean, but what is important is the need for the PPP to be prepared to face these impending developments and to respond by adopting appropriate policies and measures which correspond with the realities obtaining in our country and in the Caribbean region.

The science to which we adhere provides us with the necessary instruments to carry out our investigations in an objective and methodical manner and to ensure that we arrive at correct conclusions.

Given the new positive developments that are likely to emerge in the world, we are happy to note that a process of renewal and re-thinking is now taking place within the ranks of the International Communist and Workers' Movement. The PPP is neither oblivious nor immune to this process. The fact that we are an integral component of the International Communist and Workers' Movement places us in a position from which we can appreciate and learn from the experiences of fraternal parties around the world. The main thing here is to be always faithful to the principles of Marxism-Leninism and always to ensure the class character of our policy decisions, which at all times must be based on the concrete realities and specifics of our country.

We make no apologies whatsoever for being what we are. In fact, were we different, we would not be the PPP — the staunch consistent fighter and defender for the legitimate interests of the entire Guyanese working people.

Indications are that we may well be returning once again to the days of the 1930's and late 1970's when the Caribbean people will, at given moments and in different countries, seek once again to "storm the heavens" and to begin afresh, with renewed vigour and creativity, the noble task of building just and democratic societies in the region. The task will be ours to make this repetition of regional history neither a tragedy nor a farce, but a real and permanent process of social, political and economic rebirth.

ECONOMIC SITUATION

The 22nd Congress of the Party made a thorough examination of the economy. While the three years preceding the Congress were the main focus, the state of affairs obtained then was situated in a historical backdrop going as far back as 1964 when the PNC took office with the help of Anglo-American imperialism.

At that Congress, the Central Committee Report offered this conclusion:

The economic situation in Guyana has considerably deteriorated since our last Congress in 1982. This fact is evidenced in the very steep increase in the cost of living, the sharp decline in standard of living and the collapse of almost every single social infrastructure in our country.

Unfortunately, but predictably, this trend of decline continued during the three years subsequent to that Congress. The 22nd Congress, like previous Congresses, did not only record the ills of the economy but put forward constructive alternative measures to at least put a halt to the decline in the short term. The government, as it has done so persistently in the past, paid no heed to the Party's 11-point programme outlined in the Central Committee Report.

At its Congress in 1985, the PPP Central Committee Report outlined an 11-point programme and warned:

The Party maintains that unless the government moves to implement such a minimum programme and return decision-making to the people, Guyana will continue the downward slide, depressing to a country that once ranked among the leading countries in the Caribbean and Latin America as it relates to standards of living; production targets will not be achieved; export earnings will continue to decline; balance of payments and budget deficits will increase; state corporation and enterprises will continue to operate at heavy losses; borrowing from banking system will soar; the overdraft on the consolidated fund will get higher and the debt burden will get heavier.

The person to whom this warning was directed died the day after the 22nd Congress ended. Taking over from the late Forbes Burnham was Desmond Hoyte. While new to the Presidency and Party leadership, Hoyte was Burnham's chief economic administrator for many years and in many ways was as responsible as Burnham for the economic mess. The Party at that time

correctly deemed this new period as a disguised continuation of Burnhamism but without Burnham.

Economic Growth

The last three years provide an opportunity to assess the country's economic performance under Desmond Hoyte, based primarily on the three annual budgets (1986, 1987, 1988). Two of them were analysed in the General Secretary's report to the three county conferences held last year.

Statistics, even those provided officially, show that the economy stagnated. Finance Minister Carl Greenidge said in his 1987 budget speech that "economic growth since 1980, and particularly since 1982, has been sluggish. In fact since the turn of the decade apart from the last three years the economy has experienced negative economic growth."

In his budget speech on March 28th, 1988 Greenidge summarised the growth patterns under Hoyte's leadership as follows:

In 1986, the economy realised real growth of less than 1 percent. In an attempt to improve on that performance, the 1987 budget addressed the question of economic restructuring with an emphasis on imbalances and I projected a real growth in the vicinity of 3 percent. I have to report that physical production was only marginally better than that of 1986. Acute structural problems frustrated efforts to augment physical output. While it is true that encouraging output increases were recorded in the forestry and gold mining sub-sectors along with selected activities in manufacturing and agriculture, such increase could not compensate for the contraction in sugar, rice and bauxite output. Consequently, the real growth in 1987 was a modest 0.7 percent.

For a government to be in power for almost two and a half decades and describe a growth of 0.7 percent in 1987 as "modest" is ridiculous. Even the optimist would deem it as disastrous. In 1988, the real Gross Domestic Product growth is expected to be 3 percent. This is based on pure guesstimates and will prove to be a pie in the sky.

Production

It is clear that the production crisis has deepened as illustrated in the performance of the three main sectors of the economy — sugar, rice and bauxite.

Sugar production in 1986 was 249,400 tonnes (the figure has been rounded for convenience). This was less than in 1985. In 1987, the slide continued with production dropping to 224,500 tonnes or 90 percent of the 1986 level. In 1988, it is estimated that production will be 233,700 tonnes or 93 percent of that achieved in 1986. This is a far cry from the peak year achievement of 370,000 tonnes in 1971. At the time of nationalisation, the government assessed the industry's capacity at between 450,000 to 500,000 tonnes. This year's target is also below the 250,000 tonnes at which the industry was expected to stabilise under the current diversification programme. Two mills have been closed and GUYSSUCO is currently involved in other agricultural production. The diversification programme has not been discussed with sugar unions whose members face an uncertain future. The industry has suffered cuts in sugar quotas by the United States but has benefited recently from the strengthening of the pound sterling and other EC currencies.

The rice industry boasted a similar gloomy picture. In 1986, production was 171,700 tonnes. This fell to 146,000 tonnes in 1987 and it is expected that production this year will be 159,300 tonnes or 92 percent of the 1986 performance, and less than in 1964, the last year of the PPP government. Rice was expected to be the main contributor to the projected 3 percent GDP growth in 1987. This however did not materialise.

The contributions of rice and sugar to the GDP this year is expected to be about 7 percent less than in 1986.

Bauxite production has been plummeting. Each year, the government sets higher and higher targets which are not met because of the run-down state of the enterprise. For instance, the 1986 outturn of the various products of the industry was estimated at the beginning of the year to be 1,876,000 tonnes. At the end of the year, however, the actual level achieved was 1,469,700 tonnes. In 1987, the production dropped to 1,362,200 tonnes. Again this year a big target of 1,912,200 tonnes is set.

The government is hoping that the bringing back of foreign companies, such as Reynolds and limited rehabilitation works will increase the industry's performance. Despite promises of outside help, the alumina plant is still not in operation. Guyana once controlled the overseas market for the industry's high grade raw materials but lost it by becoming an unreliable supplier.

Central Government Revenue and Expenditure

Central government revenue and expenditure between 1986-88 have been growing. Bigger budgets, however, have not been accompanied by any substantial increase in economic activity. The increases mainly reflect the higher costs of running the administration and escalating debt servicing. Employment cost, for example, moved from \$385.3 million in 1986 to \$544.4 million this year. Costs for electricity, fuels, telephone, travel, etc, have almost doubled in three years. While expenditures doubled — \$1.3 billion in 1986 to \$2.8 billion in 1988 — debt servicing trebled from \$582.6 million in 1986 to \$31.6 billion in 1988.

Revenues have also been climbing mainly through direct and indirect taxation. Total revenue for 1986 was \$1,461 million. This has jumped to \$2,732.7 million this year. Taxes in areas such as income, property, production, consumption, etc., rose from \$923 million in 1986 to \$1,461 million this year. Capital revenue comes mainly from borrowing. Capital revenue for the current year is estimated at \$1,090 million, the bulk of which will come as follows: external grants, loans and credits — \$778.4 million; internal loans — \$310 million.

Deficit

What is obvious from the above is the huge budgetary deficit each year. The deficit in 1986 was \$883.6 million. It was estimated to be a whopping \$1.4 billion last year, but the actual deficit was \$505.7 million. The explanation for this drop is that the government fell short in collecting capital revenue by some \$300 million and so was saved the necessity to find counterpart funds for projects identified.

In 1988, total expenditure is billed at \$3,918 million while total revenue is expected at \$2,732 million, creating a record budgetary deficit of \$1,186 million, which is almost equal to the total budgetary expenditure in 1986. The major part of the financing of this deficit will come from borrowing; external \$274 million; internal \$619 million.

In 1986, in his budget speech, Finance Minister Carl Greenidge, said that overseas financial agencies such as the IMF, World Bank and the regional CDB, all of which have stopped assistance to the bankrupt government, "seem to be preoccupied with the size of our fiscal deficit." The government, he said, "have never been unwilling to reduce this deficit." Those words, however, have not been matched with deeds as shown above.

The gaps have been widening in other areas. The central government consolidated fund deficit has been growing. It jumped from \$4,710 million in 1986 to \$5,215 million in 1987 to an estimated \$6,401 million in 1988.

In the area of balance of payments, the deficit has become chronic. The deficit in 1986 was \$526 million and in 1987 \$480 million. This year the export of goods and services will amount to \$3,650 million and imports of goods and services to \$4,524 million. This leaves a balance of \$874 million.

Fuel alone will consume 28 percent of revenue from export and will account for 37 percent of all merchandise imports. Fuel cost this year is booked at US\$104 million, which is equiva-

lent to total sugar earnings or a little less than total bauxite earnings or six times the value of rice exports.

Debt Crisis

A study of the national debt gives a vivid illustration of the nature and seriousness of the crisis facing the country. In 1964, debt payment was \$10 million representing 15 percent of current revenue. Twenty years later, having gained independence and republican status, the PNC government brought the country to a state where wild borrowing and irresponsible spending resulted in debt payments reaching \$699 million or 116 percent of current revenue. In 1986, payments dropped to \$582.6 million largely due to unilateral rescheduling of the bulk of internal debt.

In 1986, the Finance Minister said:

It was stated that within recent years there has been a growing tendency for the short term and long term development needs of the government to be met by short term borrowing. Thus, in an economic environment characterised by what appears to be a perennial disparity between expenditures and revenues, we have been borrowing in a manner which compounds the imbalance in the accounts of the government.

The government had realised it fully too late. A vicious unending circle had been created. As if to rub salt on the PNC's own wounds, the Finance Minister, at a time when there was a scarcity of willing creditors, drove home this point:

The government's long standing inability to garner enough revenues to finance its import activities has resulted over the years in the rapid expansion of credit. Concomitant with those developments has been the almost uncontrollable increases in the state's domestic borrowing. The burden of the interest payments currently weighs very heavily on the state's revenue and one of the consequences of rapid credit creation has been an equally precipitous decline in our foreign exchange reserves.

Payment rose steeply again in 1987 reaching \$1 billion. For the current year, debt payments will amount to a huge \$1.6 billion. This amount is \$600 million more than capital revenue expected, \$600 million more than capital expenditure, and more than half of the current expenditure.

The Party has for years advocated a radical approach towards debt problem and even as late as the 1988 budget debate called the regime to cut payments to 10 percent and use the monies released for development purposes and to satisfy some of the immediate needs of the people. Should the government cut payments to 10 percent, some \$1 billion will be released for development this year alone.

Foreign debt payment this year alone amount to \$1.1 billion. In 1987 the sum of \$257.6 million was paid overseas and in 1986 the figure was \$133.5 million. In the recent past, government has been paying more to local creditors but is now taking measures such as unilateral rescheduling to limit the internal payments. More and more is being paid to overseas creditors, no doubt to try to remove itself from the list of un-creditworthy nations, despite the fact that our internal indebtedness is double that owed to external sources.

The government has not been providing to the public necessary statistics on the economy. And even when it does, the figures are in conflict with those obtained from overseas sources. The World Bank and the IMF have calculated that at the end of 1987 external payment arrears (principal and interest) stood at US\$1,039.7 million. A breakdown is as follows:

- Government and government guaranteed medium and long term debt — US\$286.0 million;
- Bank of Guyana — US\$588.3 million;

- Commercial arrears — US\$165.4 million.

The IMF is owed at total of US\$76 million. Trinidad and Tobago is owed US\$306.5 million mainly for petroleum. The Caricom Multilateral Clearing facility is owed US\$139 million.

Apart from the arrears, which include the amount the government has to pay back now and interests, the total external debt, i.e., arrears plus loans which have not yet matured, amounts to almost US\$2 billion. This means that the per capita debt is about US\$2,500.

Allocation of Resources

How does the government share the national cake? There have been strong disagreements over this for years and recently the TUC President George Daniels has taken a position that there is need for reallocation of resources in favour of production. An analysis of this year's distribution of the current expenditure shows the obvious imbalances which have been in existence for years.

Out of a total current expenditure of \$2.8 billion, the biggest slice, more than half, will be eaten up by debt payment which amounts to \$1.6 billion. The next biggest slice goes to national security — \$208.3 million. Other examples are: education (including regional spendings) — \$206 million, health (plus regional spendings) — \$164.5 million, agriculture — \$59.2 million, communication and works — \$36.8 million, culture — \$3.8 million and housing — \$3.4 million. This has been the trend, for a very long time and has contributed largely to the deepening economic depression under the PNC.

Moves Towards IMF Course

The information related above concerning the economy's performance gives a true, though sarcastic, meaning the slogan "Staying Resolutely on Course", a designation given to 1988 by President Desmond Hoyte. Under his leadership the economy has indeed steadied on a course of stagnation and decline, a situation not dissimilar to that of the Burnham years.

While in many ways there is a continuation of Burnhamism without Burnham, there are also certain evident shifts. These have been evolving since Hoyte took office and at this point it can be said with certainty that the government's ideology, politics and economics show a trend consistent with those of many third world countries, Jamaica being a hemispheric example, which have taken a course dictated by the International Monetary Fund.

The policy measures set in train under Hoyte, though breaking the trend of the last years of Burnham's rule, are not an entirely new experience. These are a playback of the 1977-1981 period during which Burnham signed the first agreement with the IMF.

Structural Adjustment

There has been much emphasis by the government on an overall strategy that is generally known as structural adjustment policies. This has become a commonplace concept pushed by international capitalism and is not confined to purely economic matters. A structural adjustment programme, according to the IMF and World Bank, becomes necessary when an economy suffers from imbalances in demand and supply resulting in inflation; sluggish economic growth aggravated by increases in interest rates of leading institutions and worsening terms of trade.

World capitalism obviously has its own aims in pursuing structural adjustment. In a way it is imperialism's response to the growing indebtedness of third world countries and a general decline in economic growth which could lead to disastrous effects on the world capitalist economy. It also aims at invigorating the private sector which has been handicapped for years, reducing or eliminating the public sector and generally creating a new alignment between local capitalism and imperialism.

Third world countries tied to the capitalist system, but existing on the periphery, are being told in no uncertain terms that there are no prospects in unfettered overseas borrowing, government controls over the economy and radical politics. According to them, the result of such policies lead to over-valuation of local currencies, loss of competitive edge in international markets, reduced growth, declining foreign reserves, increased indebtedness and price distortions. So to avoid all these ills, which are indeed manifested in many third world countries, they are forced into structural adjustment, which eventually leads to an open door for international capital to continue its exploitation of poorer nations.

Economies such as Guyana's are regarded as "closed". A stereotype prescription for curing the problems is to kill the sector, encourage privatisation and the free play of market forces as happens in industrialised capitalist centres. All controls and restrictions on prices, distribution, imports, licences, etc., must be abandoned. The dollar must be devalued. When all these things are done a country is regarded as having passed the test with flying colours and is ready for a dose of IMF injection.

The Guyana government has bought this line or trend in economics. Since 1986, the same year the IMF and World Bank set up a special Structural and Adjustment Facility (SAF) to help poor countries including Guyana, the Hoyte administration has in fact been implementing programmes desirable by the IMF. (The SAF was part of the "Baker Plan", Baker being the US Secretary of the Treasury). Some \$50 million dollars were set aside for Guyana.

Experience has shown that while third world countries must indeed make changes in keeping with the realities of the outside world, countries like Guyana are in fact adjusting not as part of an overall programme for development but are forced into such adjustments — the main reason being that the country is un-creditworthy and so it must take urgent steps to put itself in order so to become credit-worthy. The IMF promises to help such countries clean up the economic mess which will then pave the way for renewed capital inflows. Such forced adjustments have many dangers. They lead to economic, political and social upheavals. Maybe, Burnham before he died saw this situation developing and deemed another IMF deal as "a recipe for riot".

1987 Devaluation

The centre-piece of the 1987 budget and the most evident IMF-like measure taken so far was the very sharp devaluation of the Guyana dollar. Accompanying this move was the establishment for the first time in Guyana of a "free foreign exchange window" at commercial banks. The official rate moved from G\$4.40 to G\$10.00 to the US dollar. At the "open window", the rate was first fixed at G\$18.00 then stabilised at G\$21.00 to the US greenback.

The government's arguments for these measures were:

- to regain the country's competitive edge in exports to regional and international markets — a standard IMF approach;
- to improve the finance of the deficit-ridden public sector;
- to restrict the scope of the parallel market activities in a manner which will bring back within official fold many transactions.

The commercial banks were enthusiastic about this new area of business. In recent years, commercial banks have become highly liquid because of limited investment opportunities. Traditionally, the banks invested in government's debentures and treasury bills which brought quick returns. In recent years, however, the government has chopped the amount of debentures and treasury bills issued and has extended their maturity periods. Also in recent times, the government has not been honouring its debts to these banks and has been unilaterally re-scheduling part of the debt. The government has been appealing to banks to find other areas for investment such as the gold industry.

After a few months of brisk business at the "open window", there was a marked decline in the amount of foreign currency traded there. The pressures from the illegal market occasioned a rise in the "open window rate" from \$18 to \$21 dollars. The head of one commercial bank said the "open window" accounted for only between 10-20 percent of the actual amount traded in "Wall Street".

The parallel market is far from being restricted, much less killed. In fact, it is undermining the official economy in a more pronounced way. The present rate is around \$35 to the US dollar. Big businessmen have not found the "open window" beneficial and have been doing large scale buying of foreign currency in "Wall Street" to finance imports for industry and commerce.

As for the public sector deficit, the government intends to balance it through accounting tricks. The export-oriented industries such as rice, sugar and bauxite, because of the devaluation, will show increased Guyana dollar returns. The main problem of production, however, will not be solved. Government hopes that the superficial surpluses in finances of this sector will clear the decks for more borrowing.

Apart from the accounting tricks, there is little also to be gained. In fact there could even be a backlash. With the industries in a run-down state, operational costs, especially of those elements which need to be imported, will soar. The argument of competitiveness holds no water since Guyana does not have a large manufacturing sector to take advantage of market opportunities. The bulk of our sugar, rice and bauxite are sold overseas either on a contractual basis or are bartered. Very little, if any, is sold on the open market. It is not that Guyana lost its competitive edge. In bauxite for instance, Guyana lost the lucrative American market, which it monopolised for many years, because it became an unreliable supplier. The basic truth is that production is declining so the industries cannot increase exports. In the area of rice, it is known that Guyana could not keep up with exports, both in volume and quality, to Trinidad to pay fuel bills and to Cuba in exchange for cement and pharmaceuticals; similarly, with bauxite to meet GDR's requirements.

The government has put in place many other measures to stimulate financial inflows into the country. Moves are being made for Guyana to be included in the much-criticised Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI). It is clear that the benefits from the CBI lie not in the amount of money Guyana will get or other benefits in terms of trade. The dividends are more of a political nature. Inclusion in CBI brings political approval of a government by the US administration.

Other measures include a virtual wage freeze, contraction of the labour force to cut cost, removal of price controls and subsidies, relaxation of import licences restrictions, the closure or selling off of state corporations which are loss-making and the restructuring of state enterprises. To stimulate the private sector, a foreign exchange retention scheme has been devised. The government, however, has not been able to allow companies to repatriate profits. At the moment, Bank of Guyana has more than \$600 million to be sent abroad but cannot do so due to the foreign exchange crisis. This resulted in the closure of at least two overseas banks.

The President himself has visited North America and Europe selling the idea to potential investors that Guyana is a land of opportunities — namely, business opportunities. There has been an increasing number of interested persons visiting the country to "look and see". The government has also called on neighbouring Venezuela and Caricom states to participate in joint ventures in the country. Schemes are being hatched to have Caricom countries do business in Guyana as part of manoeuvres to pay our debts to these countries — especially Trinidad.

These have not resulted in much success so far. The gold industry has attracted some foreign investors. The idea of producing petroleum is uncertain in the prevailing world situation. Despite all the talks by the PNC regime, Guyana is still a far way from satisfying investors. Even with US blessings and an IMF agreement, the situation will not change much, given the disastrous state of infrastructure.

In going all out to attract investors, the Hoyte government has set aside even political platforms enunciated by Burnham. Under the Sophia Declaration, foreign capital was restricted to partnership with the state and cooperatives, the latter holding majority equity. That has been

thrown overboard. Foreign capital can now come without humbug — in partnership with the state, private sector or separately. Government has taken legal measures to satisfy these moves.

In May 1988, Government passed a Bill which liquidated the Guyana State Corporation and at the same time re-established it. In the process, however, significant changes were made, the most important being that a minister has overall control including powers to create new entities and close others.

The implied political control by this measure apart, this seems to be a move to give the government powers to create new entities which will allow for shareholdings by foreign companies. An example of this is seen in the Guyana Resource Corporation created to bring in industrial waste from overseas to incinerate here. The government has minority shares in this company — the remaining shares are held by two American firms.

The big question is what will happen to the state sector. The Party recognises the mess this sector is in because of maladministration, inefficiency, political interference, low morale and corruption. We, however, do not see the answer in denationalisation. With proper management and workers' control, these entities can increase production and have a vital role to play in the future development of the people and nation.

The ever present danger is that once an IMF agreement is signed, a snowball effect is created. It is like a drug addict. Having accustomed himself to the drug, he will do anything to get more. Guyana, hungry for outside financial assistance, and getting a first dose of the IMF medicine, will obviously want more. When caught in that trap, it is always the habit of the IMF to pressure such governments into political concessions. And as experience of the past has shown, the economy under the PNC behaves like a bottomless pit and already there are signs of the IMF pulling strings.

A good example to go by is the fact that having devalued the dollar last year, the IMF is pressing for further devaluations. President Hoyte said on Republic Day 1983, that if the Fund offers big money, he will agree to another devaluation. Jamaica has shown that Edward Seaga, having embraced the IMF, finds himself making more and more concessions to the point where the entire economy and the country's politics are controlled by the United States. Having created that scene, privatisation which is under way in Jamaica comes naturally and with ease.

Guyana has already been ensnared into the IMF trap. The President, speaking on May Day, said clearly and loudly that the IMF way is the only way. It is sometimes funny how third world nations can, virtually overnight, get "high" on the IMF medicine, extolling its virtues and becoming blind to any other reality.

Wages and Living Standards

The vast majority of the people are experiencing a rapid deterioration of their living standards. The wide gap between take home pay for fixed salary and wage earners and the skyrocketing prices of basic consumer items has widened over the past three years.

The biggest single negative effect on wage levels and the cost of living was the massive 1987 devaluation (177 percent at the Central Bank rate and 493 percent at the commercial bank rate). Before that, workers were feeling the big squeeze due to shortages and black-market prices. Even state outlets have been jacking up their profits by setting prices based on the black-market. With the devaluation, almost every conceivable item in the market is practically out of the reach of workers. And those living on and below the poverty line have grown considerably.

Imagine today with a minimum wage of around \$25, far less than US\$1 in the currency black-market, Guyanese are forced to buy meat and meat products to satisfy the body protein needs by the ounces and not by the pounds anymore. One pound of chicken costs \$33.00. One egg is being sold at between \$1.75 and \$2.00. Beef and pork are being sold at about \$23 and \$18 per pound.

The government exhibited its usual callousness at the end of 1986 and the beginning of 1987 when, during talks with the Trade Union Congress for wage increases, its representatives said absolutely nothing about the impending devaluation. Even when the government agreed to re-negotiate the 1987-88 wage package after the devaluation, the increases were paltry, giving credence to the widely held belief then that a wage freeze was in fact in operation.

The package agreed upon for 1987 was 5.5 percent across-the-board increase plus a 5.5 to 7 percent appraisal award. For 1988 there was a 5 percent across-the-board increase and merit award of 5.5 to 7 percent. Probably, to entice the TUC, the government included in the 1988 section of the package an undertaking to increase the across-the-board element by one percent for every percentage point increase in the 1987 GDP above two percent. With the economy growing by a mere 0.7 percent, nothing was added to the 5.5 percent across-the-board increase. And there has been country-wide apprehension about the implementation of the merit award scheme.

The present minimum wage in 1988 is only half of the \$52 demanded by the labour movement in 1986. It has been estimated that the worker's salary in 1987 could buy only half of what the 1986 wage bought. Last year alone, it has been calculated that between January and November, due to the devaluation and other negative policies, the real value of the wage declined by some 50 percent.

A 1985 survey showed that almost 90 percent of workers earned less than \$900 per month with 33 percent earning less than \$433.

Looking beyond the bare statistics, one can see the social consequences of the government's wage policy. Workers have to use more and more of their income on food. They eat less in terms of both quality and quantity. Their meals consist mainly of carbohydrates — namely rice and flour since it was re-imported under massive pressure. The necessary balanced diet for young children is absent and this has severe effects on their future physical and mental development. It is already a widespread phenomenon of children losing concentration after the first two hours in the class room. They either do not have the energy or because of hunger pangs think about the next meal. This is a scandalous situation.

Apart from prices of consumer goods, the cost of services has gone up tremendously. Increased fuel costs have caused practically everything to escalate. Transportation fares went up just after the devaluation. Electricity, water and general rates in municipalities have gone up.

The following figures gave an ample illustration of what is happening to workers. With his minimum wage, the worker could purchase in 1964 — 66 eggs, now, only 14; beef in 1964 — 6½ pounds, now, only 1½ pounds; chicken in 1964 — 6 pounds, now only 1 pound; cooking oil then 10½ pints, now, 1¾ pints: rice — then 3¾ gallons, now only 2½ gallons: kerosene — then 11 gallons, now only 2½ gallons: sugar — then 61½ pounds, now, only 25 pounds; salt — then 80 pounds, now, only 21½ pounds: garlic — then 10 pounds, now, only ½ pound: split peas — then 25½ pints, now only 1½ pints.

The marked deterioration in the quality of life is due to the anti-working class policies pursued by the minority and self-serving PNC regime.

SOCIAL SERVICES AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

Education

At our 22nd Congress, we noted in the Central Committee report that the main social services of education, health and housing formed only 14.6 percent of the total budget for 1985. Regrettably, we must report that the 1988 budget reduced these already low allocations for social services. For education, the 1988 budget provides 5.5 percent, health 4.5 percent, and housing a mere 0.1 percent, or a total of 10.1 percent, down 4.5 percent in three years! And while the PNC regime allocated this amount for social services, it allotted 41.7 percent for repayment of foreign debts, in the face of our Party's reasonable and practical advice to postpone or reduce the debt payments which are threatening the well-being of Guyanese.

One of the more depressing areas of social life in Guyana continues to be that of education. There is steady deterioration at all levels in this field and improvement remains a distant hope. Government's inability to arrest the decline and turn the situation around has and will have serious consequences for our school-going population as well as for the country's development.

"Free education", about which the government once boasted, has become today "fee education". Acute shortages of exercise and essential text books have resulted in exorbitant prices for the very limited copies occasionally available at the shops. It is becoming common place to find texts for the SSEE exam and other texts fetching prices ranging from \$150 to \$300 and above. The promise to provide all with free texts and exercise books, uniforms, stationery, snacks and meals at the kindergarten and primary school levels is yet to materialise. In fact, and to the contrary, costs for education have steeply mounted over the year.

Hard-pressed parents are more and more called upon to finance their children's education, their costly transportation to and from schools as well private "extra" lessons which, in the obtaining conditions, have become necessary and are widespread. Many parents can ill-afford these costs nowadays, and the young people coming from the lower rungs of our society's ladder are, expectedly, affected the most. In effect, many working people's children are deprived the full benefits of the education system. Compounding this deprivation is the continuing practice of regular interruptions of class-room work whereby students are compelled to attend various, often harassing, activities, outside the schools' curriculum.

With a drastically reduced budgetary allocation for education and a meagre, almost meaningless, grant given to certain schools, an odious practice whereby teachers and students are compelled to raise funds, even during school hours, for the daily operation of schools has been set in motion. This goes on in a situation where numerous educational institutions suffer from congested classrooms and are in a perpetual state of disrepair; where sanitary facilities and pure water supplies are, in many instances, non-existent; where furniture, library facilities, equipment and other materials exist inadequately. The Regional Democratic Councils which have largely taken over responsibility for schools appear incapable and ineffective in dealing with the problems. Indeed, there is the well-grounded view that this devolution has brought about bottlenecks in the system and may very well have led to the aggravation of certain problems.

An alarming, near crisis situation has appeared with regards to qualified and trained teachers. Forced to contend with unrealistic salaries, discouraging work conditions, discriminatory practices and political interferences, many of the able and experienced teachers, disenchanted and frustrated, are abandoning the teaching profession and often, the country. Entering the system, as a result, is a large number of untrained, under-qualified and obviously inexperienced "teachers".

All of these problems have significantly contributed to increasing absenteeism, a high drop-out rate, low standards and, most of all, to extremely poor examination results as seen in the CXC examinations.

For 1987, the CXC reports (General Proficiency) show that Guyana has retained its position of trailing behind the overall average in Grades 1, 2, and 3. In English A, when the overall average in Grade 1 was 11.43 percent, Guyana scored 4.26 percent. For Grade 2 we scored 15.20 percent when the overall average was 28.63 percent and for Grade 3 our score was 26.35 percent as against the overall average of 26.63 percent. In another subject, Geography, for instance, Guyana scored 13.54 percent at the Grade 1 level when overall, the average was 32.32 percent. In Biology, we scored 0.29 percent at the Grade 1 Level when the overall average was 50.5 percent. At the Basic Proficiency level only 28.04 percent of Guyanese students were successful at Grade 1 and 2 as compared to an overall average of 35.66 percent. And, the gloomy statistics go on. They best reflect the state and deterioration of education in our country.

Poor examination results pose obvious difficulties to the institutions of tertiary education which are required to lower qualifications level to ensure a satisfactory intake of students. The Teachers Training College provides a glaring example. And thus, one can see that inherent in

the system are the possibilities for the repetition and perpetuation of many of its weaknesses and shortcomings.

The University of Guyana, after 25 years of existence, is neither spared the telling effect of various problems. These include inadequate funding, staffing difficulties, poor library and research facilities, repairs and maintenance work, absence of a dormitory, compulsory National Service for students, and so on. Many of these problems require urgent attention and should be taken into account by the authorities when determining allocations, grants or loans from various agencies. Despite its long existence, the University is still to assert itself as a vital force in the life of our society.

From all indications, the downward trend in this social sector is likely to continue. The PNC government must shoulder full responsibility for this. It has allowed a progressing system under the PPP government to collapse. To come out of this situation we need a government which has the genuine interests of the working people and their children at heart, one that is concerned with and committed to the development and future of Guyana.

Sports

Greater encouragement is needed in the areas of culture and sports, both being adversely affected by the prohibitive prices of consumer goods and lack of support by the government. Artists, for example, are having a hard time obtaining or paying the high prices of oils, canvasses and brushes. Musical instruments sell at prices far beyond what our musicians can afford. At the practical level, there is not enough help and backing provided for cultural growth.

In sports, the same applies. The most simple sports gear now sell at prohibitive prices, making it far more difficult for sports not sponsored by any body, that is, sports at the grass root level, from flourishing. A cricket bat sells at \$2,800 and a ball at \$150.

Ever since the government took the community centres away from the control of the extra nuclear housing schemes, there has been a steady deterioration in the once useful buildings and grounds, further compounded by the unfair methods used in allocation of such centres.

Altogether, the rural communities have suffered losses in quality and availability of sports grounds since the PNC regime moved into this area of activity. School grounds and open areas used for sports have not been kept in even minimum condition. In the urban areas, youths are at a disadvantage as regards playing fields. Schools should have physical education teachers, but these are not provided.

Health

In a situation where nutritional needs cannot be met by the working people and the unemployed due to spiralling inflation brought about by devaluation and a burgeoning parallel market (or black market), health services continue to deteriorate. It is obvious that a population which cannot afford the quality of food that provides the needed vitamins, minerals and proteins will be more susceptible to disease due to lowered resistance. The scandalously high cost of living alongside the equally scandalous breakdown in pure water supplies is bound to result in an increase in certain communicable diseases, notably typhoid and other gastro-enteric conditions. In the hinterland areas, the spread of malaria and measles poses another threat to the health of the people.

The shortages of necessary medicines, both at public hospitals and at various clinics in the coastal and interior areas create a situation of danger from time to time. Many interior areas report that drugs are not available. The figures for the increase in malaria indicate that a really serious situation exists. In 1980, there were 3,184 confirmed cases. By 1985, the number had increased to 7,680; by 1986 the total of confirmed cases reached 16,388 and last year's figures were a shockingly high 34,142. Even more serious is the fact that the more dangerous type of malaria, *Plasmodium Faloiparum*, has risen from 354 cases in 1980 to 22,058 cases last year.

The medical services have clearly not been able to handle this situation. Twenty-five years ago, when the PPP was in office, it succeeded, in cooperation with the World Health Organisation in eradicating malaria, and then keeping it under control from spreading across interior borders by the use of medicated salt.

AIDS is also becoming a serious problem in Guyana. To date, there have been 36 recorded cases. Unfortunately, our laboratories are not equipped for diagnosis of the AIDS virus and insufficient health education on prevention has been introduced.

As a result of the worsening economic conditions, there has been a corresponding rise in malnutrition and infant gastro diseases. Figures on infant mortality provided by UNICEF statistics show Guyana at 44 deaths per 1,000 live births, comparing unfavourably with Caribbean countries like Trinidad with 26.4; Barbados with 25.1 and Jamaica 16.2. A Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO) report showed this figure to have climbed by 1984 to 45 deaths per 1,000 live births.

A PAHO report on "Health Conditions in the Americans (1981-84)" states that nutritional deficiencies are the 4th leading cause of death among children in Guyana; also the nutritional status of children under 5 year of age seems to have been "declining", the report states. Unfortunately, later figures are not available but indications are that they are about the same, or worse.

The PAHO report observes that a large problem in maternal health is anaemia in pregnancy. Statistics for 1984 showed that 69.9 percent of women examined had a low haemoglobin level. Of all children born in 1984, 19.5 percent were below normal birth-weight. All of these statistics prove that the lowering standard of living as a result of high prices for essential foodstuffs is having a negative effect on the health of mothers and children, not to mention what is taking place in the health of lower income adults.

Like its claim to be providing free education, the PNC government also claims that it is providing free medical services. However, the fact remains that those attending government-run medical institutions as in-patients or out-patients, frequently have to provide their own medicines and even such items as cotton, bandages, plaster of Paris, etc. Many have to obtain X-rays and various tests at private laboratories and hospitals at very high fees. Prices for drugs are exorbitant. This should not be, because many drugs come from the socialist countries, imported at cheap costs. But those selling such medicine put on mark-ups as high as 300 percent to 400 percent, and they include government outlets.

Shortages of laboratory equipment and chemicals frequently hold up diagnosis and treatment. Due to poor management of medical institutions and deplorable conditions, many trained medical personnel become frustrated and look for work elsewhere, or outside the country, many joining the growing army of emigrants, and thus further under-staffing the medical services.

Further, the exploitation by some doctors employed by the government is creating a problem whereby many patients prefer to go to a private doctor or hospital rather than pay the rapacious fees called for by doctors working in the government medical services. At the same time, due to fears about conditions at public medical institutions, many go to private hospitals, which they cannot afford, and as a result get into serious debt.

We should be grateful to the Cuban government for sending us doctors on an annual basis over a number of years to assist in the shortage of doctors and, in particular, of specialists. Without their help, it is doubtful if the hospitals could have carried on without these valuable services.

Three years ago, in our report, we advocated, to offset the rising malnutrition and lowering of nutritional standards, that there should be a programme of free or subsidised milk for children and for pre- and post-natal clinics. We had also proposed that a school feeding programme be re-introduced, but unfortunately these proposals have been brushed aside. There has been a half-hearted attempt to introduce school feeding, but this has been very restricted and is yet to show signs of being genuinely adopted.

The Party has raised discussions in the National Assembly on matters relating to health, housing and pure water supplies. As regards the latter, despite a number of promises made in Parliament, the provision of potable water remains a real problem to a great many communities in Guyana, including the capital city. Water has to be fetched long distances, frequently becomes polluted and results in diseases. There have been several epidemics of typhoid as a result. In the city, water pressure is so low, that sometime people have to fetch water as in the countryside; besides the water is frequently visibly contaminated. Shortages of spare parts and pumps, lack of maintenance and sheer lack of planning have kept the objective of a safe potable water system unattainable.

The PPP motion debated in the National Assembly urged the government to "solve the many pure water supply problems existing throughout the country and provide every community with a functioning potable water system". Very little has happened since that proposal was put and debated in June 1986. In the meantime, many pure water problems are shunted from Regional Democratic Councils to GUYWA and back again, as confusion reigns as to which body is ultimately responsible for repairs, replacements, servicing and payments.

For senior citizens without a family capable of supporting them, life is overwhelmingly difficult. The amount of pension provided by the state at \$105 per month cannot keep a person in food, much less other necessities of life. Here again, the steadily rising cost of living hits the poorest the hardest. The Party has been fighting for the rights of senior citizens over a long period, but is up against an uncaring government. The Party has again sought to remove the "means test" which at \$50 per month places unnecessary pressures on old folks. If a senior citizen has any form of income over \$50 per month, he is denied the small pension. This is unfair and unrealistic in view of present food prices, not to mention rentals, clothing, fuel, etc.

The National Insurance Scheme (NIS) has been for a long time short-changing the workers. With \$750 million in its coffers, the Scheme holds back on reasonable benefits to workers who contribute from their wages to the Scheme. One of the biggest rip-offs is the amount paid to those seeking sickness and maternity benefits which are based, not on the workers' real wages, but on what is called a "relevant" wage, the maximum sum being \$105 per week. Based on this wage, which is far below the minimum wage or the wage of the sick person, sixty percent is provided. Thus, during periods when workers have higher expenditure, their income is far below normal, not even receiving 60 percent of actual wages.

For funerals, NIS provides only \$800, which is far below the realistic figure of \$2,000. Costs for X-rays and lab tests which frequently have to be done at private institutions because of shortages of X-rays and reagents and chemicals at government hospitals, are not refunded at real cost, but a figure far below.

For daily workers, like those in the sugar industry, on the waterfront and other areas of work, the NIS clause requiring an employee to be at work the day before he applies for sick leave prevents many from receiving benefits they deserve. Many daily workers get employment only 2-3 days per week.

An Actuarial Review of NIS has recommended higher benefits for sickness, maternity and old age. The TUC's recommendations on NIS to the government, given since 1985, have not been accepted so far. In fact, the government wants to increase workers' contributions which the TUC is opposing.

Housing

Housing, is totally neglected by the regime. In our 1985 report to the 22nd Congress, it was noted that allocation of funds for housing amounted to a mere 0.1 percent of the total budget. In three years it remains the same. The Government has no plans whatsoever to solve the growing housing problem. It has even raised interest rates on housing loans to 13.5 percent.

Due to the outrageously high cost of building materials, all components for building and land costs, it is now impossible for lower and middle income groups to build their own houses, even with loans, as was done some years before. For applicants earning \$1,000 per month, far

above the average rate for a worker, a loan of \$20,000 would be the maximum provided by building and loan societies. A small, simple structure, today, costs between \$75,000 to \$100,000. As a result, private house building is now for the rich. Without any government programme of house building, working people are condemned to the slums or living in overcrowded conditions with reluctant relatives.

In the Finance Minister's budget address, 1988, he spoke of efforts to "cushion" the impact of inflation. But there are no housing cushions. Rentals spiral to \$500 to \$1000 and even above, per month, way out of the reach of working people. In the face of this severe housing crisis, the Georgetown municipality in June 1988 forcibly dismantled the houses of 81 families, whose dwellings along the railway embankment in Georgetown were their only place of abode. The reason given was "aesthetic purposes", in the face of a city smelling from massive heaps of garbage and dirty drains and trenches.

The buying and selling of houses has become part of the "get-rich-quick-syndrome", seen since the economy went to ruins and standards of living of the working people began to fall. Now one has only to examine the want-ads columns of the state-owned Chronicle to see the outrageous prices being demanded for houses. Housing has become the play-thing of the speculators who are also there to buy up the growing number of houses being put up for execution sales because of owners' inability to pay up the taxes. And at the same time, rates and taxes in Georgetown have trebled in one year.

In the National Assembly, numerous attempts to get the government to control the prices of building materials have failed. In a land of many forests and huge areas of timber, wood for building houses sells at fantastic prices, and is being grabbed up mainly by those earning hard currency by exporting or contractors, building for speculation or for rich patrons. With the PNC in office, there is no way open to solve the many social problems facing the masses.

Amerindian Matters

The Amerindian community of Guyana has been neglected by the regime, although it makes strong efforts to say that this is untrue. The PNC even goes so far as to suggest that the Amerindian population is increasing as a result of its policies, but the fact remains that population increase came with the eradication of malaria and the control of communicable diseases like tuberculosis and measles. This was a result of the emphasis put by the two PPP governments in the 50's and 60's to improve medical care for the interior, more pre-and post-natal interior clinics, visits by doctors and nurses, and better conditions of life.

In all spheres of life, the Amerindian community now faces enormous hardships. Those who live in far areas where there is only communication by air, have no facilities provided by the government to get their produce to market without being exploited. Peanuts production, for example, is made unprofitable to the producer due to the excessive rip-offs from middle men and consumer outlets, including those run by the government. River travel, too, is difficult and haphazard due to the poor condition of government river boats and lack of proper maintenance.

Transportation under the regime is an incurable problem. The air services, when in operation, are too costly, but most times the Guyana Airways Corporation does not operate. Passengers are stranded in the interior or Georgetown for long periods. Health, water supplies and education facilities are, for Amerindians, less than that provided for the coastal belt. Even their hostels on the coastlands are being closed down. They suffer additionally from rigged elections which the government carries out for the election of captains.

Unemployment is high among the Amerindian people. They are not given sufficient opportunities to learn the skills needed for better paying jobs and are thus severely exploited when they sell their labour.

There is great poverty in the Amerindian areas and disease is taking its toll. Unfortunately, many are leaving our country and moving over to Brazil or Venezuela, Disgusted with the discriminatory attitude of the PNC and its officials in the interior areas.

Social Problems

Many persons in need of legal aid cannot afford the astronomical fees being charged. A free legal aid system for those who cannot afford this service is long overdue. In the past, there is a privately sponsored legal aid scheme, but this no longer functions. It is a responsibility of the government to introduce legal aid for those who do not have the means to obtain these services from private practitioners.

Social problems like crime and juvenile delinquency are proliferating. Hundreds of school age children are seen roaming the streets in Georgetown. Many are homeless and hungry. White collar crime is growing as is violent crime. All of this is nurtured by a government which flaunts its rigged elections and manipulates local, religious and social groups as well as Caricom associates to withhold criticisms of the manner in which power has been "won". Immoral acts create immorality in a community and this along with bad social conditions, like slums, high unemployment and cultural aggression from North America — films of violence and crime — nurture delinquency. Our jails graduate juvenile delinquents into hardener criminals. These factors, along with others, add to the crime rate. The rise in violent crime also leads to an increase in emigration.

The 1986 Annual Report of the Guyana Police Force (the latest) shows that crime increased by 10.5 percent from 1985-86; robbery under arms and robbery with violence increased by 20.3 percent while robbery and related offences increased by 39.25 percent.

The sale and use of drugs is now affecting Guyana, which seems to be used as a transfer point in the multi-billion dollar smuggling that goes on in this region of the world. The use of marijuana and hard drugs has hit, in particular, our young people. Large areas of Guyana are now being used to grow marijuana. The results of drugs trafficking and drug abuse are now showing their effects on life in this country. The 1986 Report of the Guyana Police Force stated that 100,528 lbs. of marijuana were seized that year and approximately 100,229 lbs. destroyed at cultivation sites.

Transport and Electricity Services

The deteriorating social conditions in Guyana also include the decline in the efficiency of the utilities — electricity, telephone, transportation, sewerage, garbage collection and the supply of essential goods, including food and household items. Electricity black-outs are a part of life in Guyana. The government has been unable to cope with the multitude of problems related to the distribution of electricity to consumers. Its neglect of maintenance and renewal of the electricity plants for many years is now catching up. Also, the government has been unable to make use of Guyana's tremendous resources of water power. In both these respects, the PPP governments of the fifties and sixties had laid down well-prepared plans for maintenance and renewal of the electricity plants and had, as well, prepared plans for harnessing the first of the waterfalls.

Fuel for running the power plants has skyrocketed in price; supplies from Trinidad were cut off due to non-payment. Now we are purchasing supplies from Venezuela, but it is possible that a similar problem will arise. Frequent shortages of fuel along with repeated breakdowns in machinery have led to an almost permanent state of blackouts. This affects private households and industries and has taken its toll in the wreckage of machinery, refrigerators, etc. Besides, electricity charges are scandalously high.

Bad roads and an equally bad transportation system create grave hardships, particularly for workers and students who commute. Transportation costs eat out a large section of income of families. The PNC regime has failed to keep public transport going. It has wasted multi-millions in the purchase of buses from various countries, because of poor management. The bus grave yards are a national scandal. The government foolishly cut out our railway system, which was cheaper and safer and used less costly fuel. The travelling public now has to rely on private mini-buses and taxis, which cannot take off the volume and which cost more. River

and air transport are in the doldrums. We are highly dependent on air transport for the interior, but the aircraft are generally not working. Our river boats create innumerable problems, due to poor upkeep and bad management, thus creating untold hardships to those who must travel through our rivers.

Fuel for cooking, mainly gas or kerosene, is frequently hard to get, with shortages a common occurrence. Housewives have a tough time obtaining the minimum supplies they require to keep their families provided. All of these factors, too, add to the frustration and tension that families experience, with many taking the easy way out by emigrating, mainly to North America.

Our task is to fight at every level for the rights of all Guyanese. We must take up every issue and battle them through. Whether we win or lose, we must be fighting back and not accepting the government's short changing of the masses. We have to fight to halt the discrimination, the injustices and the attacks on the rights of the working people. We have to struggle to reverse the trends that are carrying our country to ruin. This is the challenge we must face.

THE POLITICAL SITUATION

The political situation during the past three years has changed significantly. New shifts and alliances have taken place.

The first major shift took place soon after our 22nd Congress with the death of former President, L.F.S. Burnham. The PPP/PNC dialogue was discontinued by the new PNC leadership, headed by Desmond Hoyte.

Rather than agreeing to continuation of the PPP/PNC talks, the new President disclosed towards the end of 1985 that he planned to go ahead with the elections due in December that year. Our attempts to convince the President that it was essential to continue the talks even if it meant a short postponement of the date of the elections proved fruitless. That made us understand that the PNC leadership was not interested in any political solution. Not only was the public misinformed that we were calling for an indefinite postponement of the elections, but electoral reforms relating to the main questions of fraudulent elections were not addressed.

The December 1985 elections were grossly rigged. A new feature was the ejection of polling agents from polling places in Georgetown, Linden and other areas. This was due largely to very low turnouts of voters in what had been PNC strongholds in the 1960's — lower than in the 1978 referendum when only about 15 percent had turned out to vote. It was indicative of the worsened conditions of the working people between 1978 and 1985, due principally to the anti-working class policies dictated by the IMF.

The electoral fraud elicited a tremendous outcry at home and overseas. In the Caribbean, governmental and non-governmental organisations, prominent individuals and the media were unanimous in recording their disgust. Some called for sanctions: others for a boycott of the Caricom summit in Guyana and the removal of Caricom headquarters from Georgetown.

This public outcry proved a great embarrassment to the PNC regime and its North American sponsors. An informal meeting of Caricom leaders was summoned at Mustique, where a deal was struck: the Caribbean leaders somersaulted and reversed their positions and the PNC joined the "club".

In our 1982 Congress we had stated that "nothing can remain static. The PNC cannot stand still. Since there is no forward movement, circumstances are forcing it to move backward." This is precisely what is taking place.

The Hoyte administration is placing its hopes on a new IMF agreement and foreign investment. To secure IMF credits and loans from the World Bank and the western governments, the PNC government is being forced to make concessions — political, economic, institutional, ideological — changes that Washington wants and to become a partner of imperialist designs for strategic control of the Caribbean region.

This means a change from dependent, bureaucratic-state, cooperative and parasitic capitalism to dependent free enterprise capitalism and the "freedom of the market place". It also means a return to the policies of the 1978-81 period.

The Burnham administration, with the IMF agreement in 1978, had (after the nationalisation of the sugar and bauxite companies in the 1974-76 period) reverted from a firm domestic and foreign anti-imperialist position to a policy of vacillation, as in the 1971-73 period with the bias towards imperialism unmistakable.

This was manifested in the PNC ruling elite, at the beginning of the 1980's, cap in hand and on bended knees, and with the hope of getting defaulted loans rescheduled and additional aid, informing the World Bank that it was prepared to adapt and adjust "its programmes, policies and institutions" and "to follow a pragmatic course" This meant that the productive public sector would be restricted "to perform over a narrower range of activities"; no new operations would be started by government; "the corporations have been encouraged to obtain necessary management and expert services"; local and foreign private sectors would be offered "participation, which in particular cases may be majority" in Guyana Timbers Ltd., Guyana Fisheries Ltd., Guyana Glassworks Ltd., Guyana Stockfeeds Ltd., and some of the diverse activities of the Guyana Pharmaceutical Corporation; "transferring from the GRB (Guyana Rice Board) to commercial importers and distributors, including private firms, the responsibility for importing, stocking and selling inputs required by farmers such as fertilisers, chemicals and spares for tractors and combines; closing the GRB's "small mills" at Belmonte, Somerset and Berks, Dundee and elsewhere, and leasing or selling the premises to private millers, cooperatives and regional organisations"; and in the case of the bauxite industry, "serious discussions are already underway with well established firms to secure managerial, technological and marketing support, as well as equity participation."

That somersault, however, did not help. By 1982, the country and people were in a worse state. It was in that year that Burnham dubbed the new IMF proposals for a steep devaluation and additional pressures on the working people, as a "recipe to riot" and called for modified IMF terms.

Sensing upheavals as in the 1978-79 period, Burnham in 1983, at the PNC's Biennial Congress, attacked the IMF and took a strong anti-American position, accusing the United States of pressuring the government for a policy of denationalisation.

Now, step by step, the new administration is retreating. Having rejected the formation of a National Patriotic Front Government, the PNC regime is genuflecting before imperialism and the transnational corporations. To secure aid (loans and grants), the country is being forced to submit to the "conditionality" of the imperialist-controlled IMF and World Bank and Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI).

The first indication of an accommodation with imperialism was the 1986 budget in which the Finance Minister indicated that everything was being done to return to "IMF eligibility". In 1985, Guyana has been declared "ineligible" for further credits from the IMF — a distinction shared by only two other countries!

To qualify for another IMF deal, the 1987 devaluation was far greater than the 66-100 percent which had been mooted in 1981-82.

The CBI, which has been approached, had been proposed by the US administration as an economic aid package for "those countries which are under economic siege". It is basically the economic aspect of an anti-communist, militarist strategy for the Caribbean.

Before a country is allowed to join the CBI club (Cuba, Nicaragua and Grenada under Bishop were excluded) and qualify for loans and duty-free entry of certain goods into the USA, it must meet certain requirements. The United States "will discuss with each of these countries their own measures of self help".

This means the imposition of political and other strings. No doubt in line with this, US Army General Fred F. Woerner, Commander-in-Chief, United States Southern Command, made an official three-day visit in July 1988. He witnessed an actual operation by units of the Guy-

ana Defence Force (GDF), involving the use of paratroopers and firepower. He suggested areas of cooperation between the GDF and the US army, especially in the field of training.

On the economic front, "self help" means "the creation of conditions under which . . . private entrepreneurship and self help can flourish"; create an investment climate for foreign capital with income tax holidays, subsidised services, etc.; guarantees against expropriation; if properties are nationalised, the payment of "prompt, adequate and effective compensation"; unrestrained repatriation of profits and other assets; no limitation on the "freedom of trade."

The Guyana government's pronouncements on privatisation and denationalisation and its "open door" policy to foreign private capital are in accord with the "conditionality" and are a complete reversal of the positive aspects of the Sophia Declaration of December 1974, which had stated that natural and national resources and foreign trade would come under the control of the state, that foreign capital would be welcome but only in partnership with the state and/or cooperatives. They are also a retreat from the New Investment Code of 1979, which reserved for the state the strategic sectors of the economy.

Today, in the context of a looming recession and a trade war, the prospects for development of Guyana with main reliance on foreign private capital are remote. Many countries in Latin America — Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Chile — which carried out and are still carrying out a policy of modernisation with foreign capital under a system of dependent capitalism are in serious trouble. According to the United Nations, about 50 percent of Latin American commodities face restrictions to entry into the USA, EEC and Japan. Several dozen Brazilian commodities were banned entry by the US government in early 1988.

The South-East Asian countries — Singapore, Taiwan, South Korea, Hong Kong (the "little tigers") — which were held out as models for third world countries, are also facing problems. Their modernisation was based on the premise that the foreign investors had the capital, the know-how (technology) and the markets. Now, they are told that they must balance their trade with the USA. Faced with protectionism, tariff and non-tariff barriers, the transnational corporations are seeking the big countries like India and China with a huge internal market.

Guyana has neither the basic infrastructure — water, gas, electricity telephone, transport — for industries, nor a sufficiency of skilled and semi-skilled workers. The major interest so far shown by foreign investors is in the extraction of gold and oil (petroleum).

Gold is a wasting asset and the country does not derive the benefit of much that is mined. And the danger exists, as experience has shown elsewhere, that in the "gold rush", the big foreign operators not only push out or swallow up the small "pork-knockers" but also engage in rampant exploitation of the workers.

And petroleum extraction alone, though important, is not a panacea for third world countries' ills, as Trinidad, Nigeria, Venezuela, Mexico and other oil-producers have demonstrated.

Our country is also to become the graveyard for industrial waste from the USA and elsewhere — waste which cannot be disposed of in the countries of origin. To the existing economic and social crises, the minority PNC regime is preparing the way for an ecological crisis. Our environment is now under threat. What an alarming picture: digging out from our soil precious metals and minerals and depositing therein poisonous waste! What Caricom countries have rejected, Guyana on the road to betrayal is accepting. We have had enough of American "garbage" from Jim Jones to Rabbi Washington, and flirtation with the con-man Chappell! The potential danger to the health and safety of our people raised by the thallium sulphate scare is enough for us to say resoundingly: "No to industrial waste!"

Apart from the economic concessions, which also include partial privatisation of state enterprises, there is also political accommodation.

The government admitted that it had changed its position on a resolution in the United Nations against Kampuchea: from a negative vote in 1985 to an abstention in 1986.

And carpet welcome was extended to the Grenadian Governor-General, Sir Paul Schoon, who had issued the invitation to the invading Americans. This was a reversal of the government's position at the time of the invasion and, no doubt, was intended to please the US government.

Schoon's visit is also in line with the Hoyte government's application to the USA to join the CBI, in other words, to fall in line with the strategic plans of imperialism to control the Caribbean region politically, economically, militarily and culturally.

These are clear indications of an accommodation with imperialist interests. Little wonder that the US State Department has spoken approvingly of the new developments. World Bank Vice-President for Latin America and the Caribbean, David Knox said: "We see good prospects now of being able to help the Guyanese Government to work (out) the kind of programme which would obtain financial support from donors". And the US Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) once again, after a decade, started giving insurance to companies wishing to invest in Guyana.

1988 has been declared the "Year of Staying Resolutely on Course". But this course is not new. It had already been proven a failure. And today, with a deeper world capitalist crisis, external conditions are not as favourable.

At the end of the IMF agreement that Linden Forbes Burnham and Desmond Hoyte concluded, the economic and social situation had deteriorated. Despite hefty assistance by the IMF, World Bank, US and other western governments, the economy was in a state worse than when the first IMF agreement was signed in mid-1978. The marked deterioration was noted by the state-owned and PNC-controlled Daily Chronicle, when on 16th March, 1982 it stated:

. . . these programmes, most of them drawn up by Government, have helped to plunge the economy into its deepest post World War recession. . . Collectively, however, the national economy is in shambles. And this is no exaggeration.

A little later, the report (October 1982) of the IMF had pointed out:

Economic activity in Guyana has been depressed for the last several years. During the 1977-81 period, real GDP (Gross Domestic Product) declined by close to 9 percent and the rate of inflation increased from less than 10 percent in 1977 to 29 per cent in 1981.

It was in this period of neo-colonialist dependency that a family budget survey, conducted by the Economic and Research Committee of the Trades Union Congress (TUC), disclosed that in 1981 the expenses of a worker's family of six were G\$654, but income was G\$250 per month. This caused TUC General Secretary Joseph Pollydore to comment that life had become unbearable for the worker: "he was eating one meal a day and his child was going to school with bare tea in the morning".

The course of unlimited access — open door — to private foreign capital, pursued by the Hoyte administration, had been tried before. In the late 1960s, a big campaign was launched under more favourable international and national conditions. Everything was done to create a favourable investment climate. The tax system which had been established on the recommendations of UN taxation expert Nicholas Kaldor was dismantled. Sir John Carter, Guyana's Ambassador to the United States, wooed industrialists in the USA. Commenting on this visit, the Guyana Journal stated:

Sir John Carter met with industrialists interested in investing in Guyana, men who manufactured products as varied as pre-fabricated houses, animal feed, ready-to-wear clothing, tycoons willing to establish a cattle industry or a shipping line. The Ambassador went on to Chicago and afterwards to New York where he met businessmen who were particularly interested in investing in hotel development and light manufacturing.

Prime Minister L.F.S. Burnham sponsored an Aid Donors' Conference in Georgetown in November 1967. The communiqué of the Conference stated ". . . there was a genuine understanding of Guyana's economic programme and . . . its fiscal policies were considered encouraging."

An advertisement by the Guyana Development Corporation in "Focus on Guyana, New Commonwealth, Supplement Number 1, 1969, said: "We are here to make sure that your in-

vestments pay you bigger dividends." Several oil companies came. But the results came to naught.

And the results will be the same in the future unless there is a political solution leading to full democracy and meaningful involvement of the Guyanese people at all levels. More than a decade ago, we had warned that lack of democracy, racial and political discrimination, extravagance, nepotism, favouritism and corruption act as fetters on the productive forces and lead to economic stagnation and decline.

In 1976, we had warned that if our 17-point programme was not implemented, Guyana would later find itself in a serious economic crisis, when, in the search for foreign aid, the anti-imperialist gains made in the 1974-75 period would be sacrificed. This is precisely what is taking place today.

And in addition, corruption has become a way of life under the system of bureaucratic-state, parasitic and cooperative capitalism. Long ago, the PNC's *New Nation*, in an editorial on 2 February 1982 had stated: "Corruption is eating like cancer into the sinews of our society ... blackmarketing, smuggling and open peddling of contraband goods are afflicting us. The disease calls for drastic cure."

Because there has been no "drastic cure" the position has worsened, as has been fully documented in the Report by the Integrity Commissioners, Ronald Luckhoo, Joseph Pollydore and Jules deCambra.

The government attempted in Parliament to use the Report in a propagandistic way. Its spokesmen claimed that the Commissioners did not indict the government as charged by the Opposition: rather that they made recommendations in keeping with the objective situation.

This argument was specious. The fact is the Report is a serious indictment of the PNC, which has brought our nation to economic, social and now confirmed moral ruin. It fully justifies the position taken by our Party for over two decades.

The Report referred to "a get-rich-quick syndrome" and "bribery and corruption . . . which has reached if not, almost, epidemic proportions", and noted that a "number of public officers seem to think that public funds are there for the taking". Hitting out against racial and political discrimination, the Commission observed that "selection and promotion on merit are sacrificed on the altar of political partisanship, party loyalty, nepotism and personal friendship".

As regards sexual harassment, the Report stated: "We have formed the impression from the evidence generally that as regards sexual gratification, public office holders show particular favour to those who submit to their urge to be sexually gratified."

In its concluding remarks, it stated:

Guyana needs a new moral vitality. A fresh flow of values must now be infused into the life-stream of society, revitalising its sinews. Indiscipline, inattention, discourtesy, all symptoms of the malaise of inertia, fraud and other corrupt, immoral and dishonest acts — the cumulative effect of all these social ills, which are so manifest in the public sector bodies, seriously hinders progress.

As to the Commissioners' observation about the need for electoral reforms and recommendation that "the government and all the political parties concerned hold urgent and constructive discussions with a view to agreeing on other provisions for further reforms to be made to the electoral laws", the government spokesmen were at pains to point out that the question of electoral reforms was outside their terms of reference.

This is ridiculous as electoral fraud in all elections since 1968 and the referendum of 1978 is the foundation of many corrupt practices. The Commissioners, noting the inter-connection and inter-play between electoral fraud and corruption generally was duty bound to recognise the need and call for electoral reforms. As they correctly put it, the government must set the example, the moral tone, if corruption is to be stamped out.

The corrupt society is the culmination of class formation within the ruling party after more than two decades of minority bureaucratic rule. The PNC started out as a petty-bourgeois-led party with mass support among a section of the working class. As time went on, the class

character of the party (in power) changed: working class support and influence waned; the lower and middle sections of the petty bourgeoisie were catapulted to the top, and a bureaucratic, neo-comprador parasitic bourgeoisie emerged.

This bourgeois development in the PNC took place at the expense, firstly, of the big foreign monopoly capitalists (sugar and bauxite) through nationalisation; secondly, the national and neo-comprador capitalists who were associated with the United Force (UF) party; and thirdly, thousands of small shopkeepers sympathetic to the PPP.

The bourgeoisie around the UF lost power politically and economically. In 1968, the UF was booted out of the government with the break-up of the 4-year (1964-68) PNC/UF coalition. With state and PNC control of foreign and local trade through the nationalisation of the trading arms of the foreign bauxite and sugar companies, the comprador commercial capitalists around the UF were squeezed out.

Thus, opposition to the PNC regime came not only from the working class vanguard, the People's Progressive Party (PPP) but also from a section of the petty bourgeoisie.

In the ensuing years, with the country brought to a state of bankruptcy, the politically weak PNC, having spurned a left unity with the PPP and demoted the Burnhamites, opted for a right unity with the big foreign and local capitalists. The latter are becoming multi-millionaires in the context of shortages, removal of price controls, smuggling, etc., and a symbiotic relationship among them.

The essential difference between the Burnham and Hoyte administrations is that the former was toying with the idea of a left unity; the latter, taking a bourgeois managerial/technocratic approach, is moving towards a right unity, *de facto* if not *de jure*.

The Burnham-led PNC had rejected in 1976-77 the call for a National Patriotic Front Government. And in 1984-85, there were no specific proposals from it. It is doubtful that any real democratic political solution would have emerged even if Burnham had not died. There was no doubt strong opposition from within the leadership from that PNC stratum which represents the interests of the capitalists/rightists, who want an accommodation with imperialism — a stratum which has become a "Frankenstein monster", and is more afraid of democratisation than imperialism.

Recall that TUC General Secretary Joseph Pollydore, at the 1985 May Day rally at the National Park, had said that Burnham could not have been serious about national unity after he had organised a separate rally at the Revolution Square.

It should also be noted that TUC President George Daniels had told the 1985 May Day rally at the National Park that, in carrying out a TUC resolution for a political solution, he would have taken the initiative to bring the socialist-oriented parties together under TUC chairmanship to form a revolutionary alliance. If the PNC had been really interested in unity, it would not have applied pressures and threats against Daniels, put up a candidate to oppose him at the PSU elections, and later, when it was clear that he could not have been defeated, resorted to court action preventing union elections from being held.

The Hoyte-led PNC is now forging an alliance of the PNC bourgeoisie with the traditional bourgeoisie. This is similar to the former PNC-UF alliance and coalition government of the 1964-68 period. It is not accidental that President Hoyte has chosen "Economic Dynamism", the former slogan of the United Force. This development, incidentally, is similar to what took place in Egypt after the death of the revolutionary-democratic Gamal Abdel Nasser, the great patriot and non-aligned leader. He was succeeded by Anwar Sadat, who reversed Nasser's policies and betrayed the Egyptian revolution and the Arab cause.

The imperialists want not just a return to the periods of vacillation, 1971-73 and 1978-81 but to the 1964-70 period of outright pro-capitalist and pro-imperialist policies. They desire a PNC alliance with the traditional bourgeoisie, because of their awareness of PNC disintegration and the failure of an outright rightist alternative to emerge.

The imperialists also want a dismantling of the state sector through denationalisation and privatisation. The PNC is reluctant to comply fully as that would deny it of possibilities for accumulation through exorbitant salaries, allowances and corrupt transactions and at the same

time to rob it of its power to dispense patronage over a very wide area and thus exercise political control. However, in view of the grave foreign exchange situation and the “debt trap” in which the nation has been placed, the PNC is bargaining from a position of weakness. It will manoeuvre with some privatisation as with the state rice entities, engage in “joint ventures” in keeping with the “partnership” strategy of US imperialism, and possibly comply with the neo-colonialist debt-for-equity swap.

There is also a growing contraction between the PNC’s ruling bureaucratic elite and the working people. Guyanese were told that the hefty devaluation would have curbed the foreign currency dealings in the streets and would have led to an improvement. Instead, the devaluation led to a steep inflation of 37 percent in 1987, as compared with only 5 percent in the Caricom countries.

This has caused a sharp deterioration in the quality of life. According to the TUC’s 1986 Economic and Research Committee Report, the real wage in that year showed “a decline of 48 percent since 1977”. And the PSU News of December 1987 reported:

The workers are faring badly, for the \$596.00 per month with a real value of \$80.76 in January 1987, had fallen to \$61.41 by July last. Considering that the rate of increase of the consumer price index is 4.7 percent per month, it is estimated that the real value of the \$596.00 at November was \$50.65. What it all means is that the living standards of the workers have fallen by approximately 37 percent since January. In other words the workers are “catching hell.”

Discontent and alienation are leading to a crisis of confidence. This is manifested in a human resources crisis and emigration. As far back as 1969, a PNC supporter writing in July 1969 in the Sunday Graphic under the pen-name of Lucian had pointed out: “Many Guyanese and non-Guyanese are disgusted with the present state of affairs in this country. Some are packing up to leave out of sheer frustration, while others are dejected from unbearable disgust.”

Today, the trickle of two decades has turned into a flood of the able-bodied, skilled and professionals. Fourteen of the twenty Guyanese footballers absconded in the USA. A minister of the government recently disclosed this alarming overseas migration profile: of the 11,850 persons leaving Guyana for permanent residence abroad each year, professional and technical personnel constituted 13 percent; skilled and semi-skilled — 30 percent; white collar workers — 47 percent. Development cannot take place when our human resources are trekking to the United States and Canada, now deemed regions 11 and 12!

Discontent leading to emigration is due not only to the sell-out policies of the ruling party, but also to the emasculated PNC-controlled TUC. Its leadership has assumed the role of “labour aristocrats”, who are prepared to pass resolutions at Annual Conference rituals, but not to take any action; to “bark”, but not to “bite”.

Regrettably, also, the 7-union combination, which had succeeded in 1984 in displacing the PNC from control of the TUC executive committee has not been acting in unison. This is due not only to PNC harassment, but also to lack of working class commitment and working class ideological consciousness. Some do not want to “rock the boat”. Others have the same ideological and philosophical outlook as the current PNC regime; they see private enterprise and private foreign capital as the panacea of the ills of the Guyanese society and not a new socio-economic order, socialism. It is said that the colonial trinity was the church, commerce and the State; today, the neo-colonial trinity is the TUC, the big bourgeoisie and the State.

Our Party must reach out to the grass-roots; we must make it clear that the TUC type of trade unionism and trade union politics have brought the workers face to face with an impossible situation. Workers must understand that the TUC’s limited call just for better wages and working conditions, what Lenin critically deemed “economism”, would not bring about the realisation of their needs and aspirations. This can be realised only with a change in government, programme and policies.

The Guyana Agricultural and General Workers Union (GAWU) and the National Association of Clerical, Commercial and Industrial Employees (NACCIE) must give the lead in forging revolutionary trade unionism. A militant struggle for trade union democracy is essential. The PNC will not permit a change of TUC rules and democratisation as it deems control of the trade union movement, as well as the security forces, essential for its maintenance of political power — the security forces for the seizure of ballot boxes, the breaking of strikes and the intimidation of workers; the TUC for the holding down of the workers in the face of the regime's anti-labour policies and practices.

The TUC has not only failed to revise its undemocratic rules. It has also failed to fight for a decent minimum wage, improved NIS benefits and pro-working class legislation for issues like severance pay, hire purchase, etc. Since 1979, it has stalled the Trade Union Recognition Bill. And it made no attempt to bring together the PNC, PPP and WPA to discuss a revolutionary alliance and an agenda embracing "the electoral process, democracy under socialism, workers' representation in political decision-making forums (workers' participation and control), the distribution of political power, how to deal with racial issues".

On these fundamental issues, the workers must force the TUC to honour its commitments.

Apart from exploitation, sections of our multi-ethnic working people suffer from national oppression; they have been reduced to second and third class status through political and racial discrimination. Electoral fraud has virtually disenfranchised large numbers and sections of Guyanese.

We must mobilise the people to fight for reforms — a Race Relations Board, an equal opportunity law, fair employment practices. The service commissions — public, police, judicial, teachers — concerned with appointments and promotion, must be completely independent and free from political control. And they should be empowered to deal with all appointments, including the state corporations. They should not be forced to function in an environment where the ruling party and the state have become indistinguishable, where under the doctrine of "paramountcy", the government is deemed as the executive arm of the Party, and critics of the ruling Party are deemed enemies of the state. This doctrine, which fostered the accentuation of political and racial discrimination in the plural multi-party political system, must be scrapped.

Reforms alone, however, as has been shown in the United Kingdom and the United States of America, are not enough to bring an end to racial and political discrimination. Only a revolutionary democracy can create the objective conditions for an end to discrimination. The basic requirements for such a democracy are a representative government and an anti-imperialist, socialist-oriented programme.

Towards this objective of democratisation, there are good prospects in the future. In Latin America and the Caribbean, political trends favour democratisation — an expression of the crisis of dependent capitalism. This process was influenced by the overthrow of the Portuguese fascist dictator Salazar in 1974 and the death of the Spanish dictator General Franco in 1975. During the past decade, 9 out of 17 Latin American and Central American states switched from military to civilian rule.

In the Caribbean, "Baby Doc" Duvalier of Haiti was forced to flee. And there have been changes in governments of several Caribbean territories and Suriname during the past two to three years. Ruling parties were overwhelmingly defeated in Trinidad and Barbados. In St. Lucia, the ruling party saw its comfortable majority in parliament reduced to a majority of one seat. And in Suriname, the Bouterse-led military regime permitted and organised free and fair elections, leading to a big victory of the 3-party coalition, the Front for Democracy and Development.

For the first time in more than 50 years, the PRI party in Mexico saw its majority reduced to a bare 50.36 percent of the votes. And opposition leaders with massive demonstrations are not accepting the results, which they claim are fraudulent.

Guyana, which under the PNC regime embraced the main aspects of the Mexican political culture, cannot be immune from these trends and developments. The position of the workers

in a short time can become unbearable with another massive devaluation which will be linked to a new IMF deal.

Our Party must give militant leadership to this struggle. We must put action behind the recommendation of the Integrity Commission for urgent and constructive discussions between "the government and all the political parties concerned" for further electoral reforms.

These reforms embrace:

- (a) an independent chairman of the Elections Commission and Chief Elections Officer;
- (b) restoration of the powers of the Elections Commission;
- (c) the counting of the ballots at the place of poll;
- (d) the exclusion of the military from the electoral process.

The campaign for electoral reforms and free and fair elections must be intensified at home and overseas. We must continue to agitate for a meeting between the President and the Patriotic Coalition for Democracy (PCD), the 5-party coalition which was constituted at the end of the 1985 fraudulent elections.

The meeting has not come about, no doubt due to a real dilemma facing the President and the ruling Party. If the meeting is held and the PCD electoral reforms agreed to, the PNC will be voted out of the government at the next free and fair election due in December 1990. On the other hand, if the meeting is held and the reform proposals are rejected, the PNC will face a hostile public opinion at home and abroad. It is known that even those in the Caribbean who politically support the Hoyte administration would not oppose the reforms. After the Mustique meeting, Prime Minister Eugenia Charles spoke in favour of the counting of ballots at the place of poll. She said that that was the system in Dominica and advocated it for all the Caricom states.

While the PNC regime has filibustered and refused to meet the PCD, Government/Opposition talks took place. This resulted when the Prime Minister after a rejection in the National Assembly of a PPP motion for the counting of ballots at the place of vote, suggested that representation could be made. A long time has elapsed since the talks started, but nothing tangible has emerged.

The PNC is mortally afraid of the PCD, particularly because of its multi-ethnic character and its potential. It sees the progressive, multi-ethnic coalition striking at its divide-and-rule strategy of maintaining political power.

Our Party is pleased that it contributed to the formation of the PCD. This development is in keeping with our alliance policy. Since 1978, we had indicated our belief in "winner-does-not-take-all" politics; namely, that even though we feel that we could win a free and fair election, the PPP alone would not form the government. For economic, ethnic/cultural and security considerations, we consider that a broad-based government of all left and democratic forces is essential for peace and social progress in Guyana. At the same time, we advocate a long-term strategic alliance which will set its sights not simply on achieving free and fair elections but on building a secure future based on equality and social justice.

Our Party is working strenuously to strengthen the unity, organisation and effectiveness of the PCD. This coalition, established to struggle for free and fair elections, human rights and democracy, is currently engaged in the formulation of a programme which will represent the aims and aspirations of the working people of Guyana. It is also considering the tactics and strategy to be adopted towards a political solution and the formation of an alternative government.

Regrettably, we did not succeed in organising a left front. We will continue our efforts in this direction. Such a front is necessary, firstly, because of the retreat of the PNC; and secondly, because the PCD, comprised of various ideological currents, has been finding it difficult to hammer out a single ideological/ political line.

This retreat has been criticised by TUC General Secretary Joseph Pollydore. In early 1988, he said:

There is a tendency to avoid any talk or reference to ideology, maybe in the belief that by observing this silence, it would encourage both local and foreign investors. Contrary to this belief, it is my view that having regard to the fact that over the years Guyana has so widely publicised its commitment to the socialist ideology, our near silence about it at this time may be seen as a contrivance to delude. A country that does not have an ideology is a country in which its people have no clear-cut political or social direction.

Some of the Burnhamites, who had been demoted, no doubt share the same views.

Unfortunately, the "commitment to the socialist ideology" was merely rhetorical. Rhetoric was not translated in reality. Burnhamism or bureaucratic/state, cooperative and parasitic capitalism was identified with socialism in general and "cooperative socialism", in particular. But because Burnhamism was essentially anti-working class, even in its positive anti-imperialist movements (1974-76 and 1983-85) and living and working conditions of the masses deteriorated, socialism was given a bad name.

Sections of the working people, especially those who, as former supporters of the PNC, had come not only under the ideological influence of the ruling party, but also the PNC trade union leaders, who had been brainwashed by anti-Marxist, anti-communist training under the AIFLD-influenced Critchlow Labour College. Consequently, they were not equipped to question the PNC's political line and rhetoric that socialism was being built in Guyana; they accepted it unconditionally. And so when by 1978-79 they were hit hard by cuts in subsidies, sharp NIS and Widows and Orphans Fund increases, wage freeze (non-payment of the agreed \$14 minimum wage) and cancellation of merit increments, they began expressing the view that socialism had failed in Guyana.

Socialism has not failed. What has failed in Guyana is dependent capitalism albeit a hybrid variety (bureaucratic/state as distinct from free enterprise, "market place" type) which has been masquerading under the guise of "cooperative socialism" as socialism.

Such frauds have occurred in other countries. Dependent capitalism masqueraded as "African socialism" in Senegal, "Arab socialism" in Egypt under Anwar Sadat, and "democratic socialism" under Tom Adams in Barbados.

The fraudulence was manifested when at a crucial Organisation of Africa Unity (OAU) meeting on Angola, Senegal and Egypt sided with the imperialists and South Africa against the revolutionary democratic MPLA Government of Angola. The Barbados Labour Party Government, then headed by Tom Adams, was also the spearhead of the imperialist isolation of, and attacks against, the socialist-oriented NJM Government of Grenada.

Socialism had not been tried in these countries, including Guyana; the basic pre-requisites (political, economic, ideological, institutional and cultural) for the advance towards socialism had not been laid. Consistently, we had been pointing this out since 1970 when the PNC came out with "cooperative socialism". And in 1979, in our Party's programme, For Socialism in Guyana, it was clearly stated:

Lack of democracy, bureaucratic administrative and police-military methods of rule, the denial of human rights and civil liberties, the militarization of politics and industrial relations, the refusal to establish democratic management and control at state enterprises and to recognise truly democratic mass organisations, political and racial discrimination in the allocation of jobs, land, credit, houses and consumer goods at state outlets, political patronage, corruption and extravagance have acted directly and indirectly as fetters on the productive forces.

We had repeatedly stated that socialism and democracy are inextricably linked. This is a basic principle of Marxism-Leninism. Years ago Lenin made it clear that socialism cannot be built without democracy. He said: "Whoever wants to reach socialism by any other path than that of political democracy will inevitably arrive at conclusions that are absurd and reactionary both in the economic and the political sense."

Western propagandists have gone on to say that socialism has failed also in the socialist community of states. This lie must also be nailed, not because we are the spokesmen and de-

fenders of the socialist countries, but because our Party and the communist and workers' parties in those countries believe in the same doctrine of Marxism-Leninism and the same goal of socialism with its high ethical and moral values — the ending of exploitation of man by man; equal opportunity and the building of a secure future for all; the creation of a new type of man, highly developed culturally and spiritually.

The proponents of the capitalist system and their propagandists use certain adverse developments to denigrate the socialist system; they deliberately confuse aberrations of the system and violations of the norms of communist party life with the system itself.

These aberrations and violations have hindered socialist development and social progress. In spite of them, however, the socialist community overall had a rate of growth which was twice that of the developed capitalist states, as the famous Nobel Prize winner, Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal, had noted. Also unemployment, the scourge of capitalism, has been eliminated. In contrast, unemployment in the major OECD capitalist states increased from 10 million in 1974 to over 32 million today. One BBC commentator recently disclosed that, with present trends, the 3-4 out of 10 unemployed today would be 7 out of 10 by the end of this century. Clearly, capitalism, not socialism, is bankrupt and moribund.

The new Soviet leadership had the courage openly to admit aberrations and violations, and to take steps to correct them. CPSU General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev has been stressing many of the points from the excerpt of our Programme which we have quoted in this Report. In a recent speech in July 1988 in Poland, he said:

We are convinced that it is only through democratisation that we can achieve vigorous advance, tap the tremendous possibilities of the socialist system and the entire wealth of the human personality, and build a society with an advanced economy, science and technology and at the same time a very humane society. What is the worth of technological progress if ethical standards became hollow with its advance and morality becomes eroded? A worthy aim is to create such social conditions in which economic, and scientific and technological progress would organically blend with social justice and morality, and with a wealth of man's spiritual being.

To those who say that the political and other reforms are capitalist-oriented, the Soviet leader has categorically stated that perestroika means not less, but more, socialism. Its sources, he said, are ideals of freedom and equality, and the striving for a better life. He told the people of Poland, where serious mistakes, corruption and departures from Marxist-Leninist principles and the Communist Party's norms led to crisis: "Today time sets the following question before us: what should be done in order to advance more vigorously, to tap fully the possibilities inherent in socialism, to give a second wind to it?"

We must intensify the class struggle on the ideological front. Imperialism's ideological warfare must be countered. On this, there can be no compromise, especially in the context of growing petty-bourgeois and bourgeois class formation, and information and cultural imperialism.

The working people must be told forthrightly that the imperialists and their patrons have no answers for the people. Jamaica and Grenada are good examples of the failure of dependent capitalism, that increases underdevelopment, which in turn deepens the dependency. Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago have shown that while on anti-government electioneering platform can lead to decisive electoral victories, centrist policies, which maintain the neo-colonialist structures, lead to alienation and discontent. Barbados, which at one time was regarded as a model of development for the Caribbean, is now faced with serious economic and political problems.

In the 1988 Barbados budget debate, four back-benchers including a former Finance Minister voted against the government, claiming that the taxation proposals were a betrayal of electoral promises. Similarly, in Trinidad a recent poll indicated that if a new election were held, the crisis-ridden ruling NAR would lose.

The nation must also be reminded that despite the "war footing" in which the economy had been placed by the PNC regime in the late 1970s and early 1980s, IMF-dictated programmes

and policies have brought our country to a quagmire. And the Labour Amendment Act of 1984 and the subsequent Constitutional Amendment Act after a High Court ruling in favour of the working people are a blot on the good name of Guyana.

These are all manifestations of the depth of the crisis of dependent capitalism, linked even to bourgeois democracy. Political change is necessary. Politics, it is said, is "concentrated economics". The grave economic and social crisis will not be solved by tinkering with or reforming the dependent capitalist system. Bourgeois democracy is not enough. What is needed is a revolutionary democracy and radical change.

At this year's May Day rally at the National Park President Desmond Hoyte suggested that no other force in the country had put forward proposals for a solution to the economic crisis. As in 1978, he had loud praise for the IMF and claimed that there was no alternative to an IMF way.

Nothing is further from the truth. It is the PNC which does not have a solution. What the government is doing is masquerading IMF dictations as a development strategy, no doubt to get foreign dollars to buy more time and continue its bankrupt and illegal rule.

Under the PNC, money has not been a problem. Guyana in the past received substantial amounts of western aid but this money was not put into good use as is evidenced by the chronic ills of the economy.

The PPP had time and time again put forward numerous and concrete proposals for a permanent all-round development of the country. These had widespread support among the population but were totally rejected by the PNC. In essence, the PPP's strategy to solve the crisis presupposes a consensus political solution, something which the PNC regards as political suicide.

Desmond Hoyte has made it clear that he will resist a democratic solution. His administration intends to defy calls for the establishment of a democratic and progressive government. This would obviously lead to a deepening of the crisis since experience has shown that foreign dollars and IMF dictations cannot be a substitute for a national development plan to be carried out by the people under a democratic and progressive government.

The IMF road spells disaster for the working people. More sufferings will come upon the toiling masses. Retrenchment will increase the ranks of the unemployed which currently stands at about 35 percent of the work force. The already miserable wages will be kept at starvation level. The poor social services will get worse. The foreign and local capitalist class on the other hand will increase their profits.

The get-rich-quick syndrome now prevalent will become even more entrenched. More and more workers and peasants, having lost faith in honest and dedicated work for the country, will join the trader class which will have considerable social and political effects on the society. The lucrative blackmarket will continue to attract all sections of the populace. The trade in illicit drugs and its disastrous effects is already growing at an alarming pace.

Under the Hoyte administration there can be no let up in the scandalous speculation in property. One just has to look at advertisements in the paper to see the skyrocketing cost of property. Houses range from \$200,000 to \$5 million. Rentals range from \$1,000 to \$15,000 per month.

And the government's stance on Haiti is a national disgrace. Hiding under the cloak of "non-interference in internal affairs" is cowardly.

In the absence of a national plan aimed at developing the country in a direction of real self-determination, the culture of the people will be stultified. Values such as consumerism and individualism are becoming national phenomena. Western, especially American culture is rapidly penetrating national life through the television. In these circumstances, compounded by the crisis and hopelessness, emigration becomes a natural way for people to settle their multitude of problems.

Foreign dollars and investors are also accompanied by anti-union practices. Investors expect countries like Guyana to provide cheap sources of labour and militant unions are things which they want out of the way. Exploitation will be rampant, especially of young people and

women as is seen in Jamaica and other Caribbean countries where free zones have been and are being set up.

The battles ahead to protect the interest of the working people will be increasingly acute. The PNC minority regime will use its majority in the National Assembly to make and unmake laws, and to amend the constitution in favour of the multi-millionaires. It will not hesitate as in the past to use the police and military forces against the working people.

The PPP is committed to the defence of the working masses and will continue to fight for the return of their fundamental right to choose a government of their will. Only then can a genuine effort be made to mould a nation with a secure economic, political and social future and to end the present chaos and suffering.

THE PARTY

Comrades,

By resolution at our 22nd Congress, we unanimously declared the completion of the key tasks of Party transformation and that we have developed into a full-fledged Party of a New Type. In terms of our Party's history, this was a landmark decision. Inevitably, such a decision imposes new demands and brings fresh tasks before us. At that Congress we had, already recognised the need to strengthen Leninist standards of Party life and norms: the requirement for members to have a firm grasp of the Marxist-Leninist theory; the hope that the Party will grow quantitatively in the context of the new quality.

After these three years, we can say that these tasks and others must be grappled with today with urgency and resoluteness. Collectively, we must proceed to elaborate these tasks in a concrete way and ensure that the necessary and practical measures are taken at all levels of our structure for their realisation. Any objective assessment of the period we are leaving behind will undoubtedly bring us to this path. And, its correctness is further attested to by the accumulated experiences of the many revolutionary contingents of our epoch.

As we look back, take stock, and assess our Party's state and performance following our previous Congress, we realize what a trying period we have gone through. We need, at this time, and possibly on this occasion, a self-critical appraisal of ourselves. An appraisal of this nature should be based on objectivity, be well-considered and guided by the intention to correct mistakes, overcome shortcomings, improve our multi-faceted work and assert our vanguard role in Guyanese society.

From all indications, Party development has become a main — if not a priority — task before us. Quite a number of organisational problems have appeared. In turn, these have had unfavourable effects on many Party activities, and, to an extent, acted as a brake to initiatives.

In the present circumstance, therefore, it has become necessary to give undivided attention to Party related matters and questions. Among the immediate issues before us are: revitalizing our structure from group upwards; resuscitating those groups which have become defunct and establishing new ones where none previously existed, especially among workers and in working-class communities; expanding our membership and deepening our members' political and ideological groundings; ensuring, as far as possible, that every Party member becomes a responsible and militant comrade, and taking on specific duties, even though demanding, at the level at which he functions; making careful preparations for an enlivening our activates and functions, especially those which are for the public and including public meetings; applying routinely the principles of accountability and criticism and self-criticism; assessing objectively all activities to determine and learn from their positive and negative features; giving greater and more serious attention, at all levels, to cadre building with the primary aims of alleviating and solving our personnel difficulties; searching constantly for new methods, bettering our style and cultivating more effective approaches in the conduct of Party work; strengthening discipline throughout our ranks; assisting our sections — PYO and WPO — to grow in strength militancy.

Clearly, comrades, there is much to be done and no easy and smooth road to reach our goals. No matter how painstaking, making the Party into a disciplined force, organisationally invincible and ideologically united is a demand of our times and struggles. Knowledge of the art and science of Party construction must be mastered. Only with such a Party will we be able to become far more effective in our responses to the changes taking place around us, fulfil our historic duties as a vanguard and go on to bring about a fulfilling life for our working masses and social progress to Guyana.

The preceding three years have helped us to better determine the levels in Party development we are at and the essential tasks we are compelled to strive for and attain. However, these should not be taken to mean that the Party was not active, alert and responsive to the needs of our working people and the many changes taking place in and beyond Guyana.

Regardless of formidable difficulties, we persevered. Our prestige and support from the people remains as strong as ever and are, indeed, growing. Goodwill and sympathy among the people for us are widespread. And our work, as this review would show, spanned an extensive field and met with many successes.

On Organisation

Organisationally, we have covered a very challenging period. Shortly after the conclusion of the 22nd Congress, our Party entered full gear into the general elections campaign throwing the entire machinery into that battle.

From the popular response of the Guyanese people and the massive turn-out of our supporters on voting day, it was clear that we continued to enjoy tremendous support from the majority of the Guyanese masses and that our machinery stood up well to the campaign's exacting demands. Without doubt, this was a massive display of courage and determination by our members, activists and supporters in the battle for democracy and social justice. The force, fraud and blatant rigging of elections, once again, did not daunt the Guyanese people but instead urged them to come together for a struggle to restore democracy in Guyana.

A new unity was forged in the form of the establishment of the Patriotic Coalition for Democracy (PCD). Since, this body has striven to intensify the struggle for democracy in our country and the PPP has played a responsible and significant role in it. We took part, for instance, in various PCD activities, namely, in vigils, a stand-still day, a march from Buxton to Georgetown, and in demonstrations against the constitution amendment bill and fuel shortages.

Outside the PCD, our Party organised and observed several major events, among which were: the 40th anniversary of the PAC; 40th anniversary of our General Secretary's entry into Parliament; and the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution.

In keeping with a decision of the Central Committee, three county conferences were held, one each in Demerara, Berbice and Essequibo. The objective of these conferences was to continue analysing the political situation between Congresses and keeping our membership fully abreast with the rapidly changing political, economic and social situation taking place in our country.

In addition to these conferences, regular updates and analyses were conducted at the level of the Party's Central and Executive Committees. Assessment papers on cadre development; analyses of the PNC and changes in that Party's class composition; emigration and its effect on the Party; Party organisation and membership; and urban organization and mood of the people were prepared and fully discussed at these levels. Out of consideration of these papers, practical steps have and are being taken to deal with several matters raised, correction of which will certainly help in improving the state and influence of the Party. The Party's Organising Committee also held frequent meetings — 14 in all. At these meetings we were largely pre-occupied with the functioning of lower party bodies; we examined, planned and projected various activities, discussed problems confronting the Party organisation and the work and placement of Party organisers.

Throughout the three-year period and consistently, specific activities were carried out by the Party and included public meetings, country-wide picketings, demonstrations, bottom-house meetings, servicing of our structure, holding annual district and regional conferences, organising membership recruitment drives, Thunder and Mirror sales campaigns, fund raising campaigns, leading delegations and presenting petitions on various problems confronting the people. Our work also included periodic visits by MPs and CC members to outlying areas of the country. With the exception of Berbice River and Potaro-Siparuni areas, all other interior areas where we enjoy tremendous support have been visited.

In terms of our structure, comrades are fully aware of the important place occupied by our regions, districts and groups. However, the overall functioning of these bodies need to be more closely examined. Much more can be done and need to be done in order to stimulate greater performance in all aspects of work. These bodies have fallen into the rut of routine-ism. This must be overcome. Through innovative methods and style, by an ability to adapt and plan in the context of our changing conditions, shortcomings can be erased. At the regional level we should encourage in a more determined way, individual responsibility of regional committee members and ensure that they fulfil their obligations. Regional committees, too, must perform more effectively and seriously pursue their constitutional assignments.

Similarly, our district committees are expected to fulfil their duties especially as they relate to the groups and their functioning. These committees need to be assertive, function properly and vibrantly and resuscitated where applicable. Given the generally vast geographical area covered by a region, our districts are becoming increasingly important, particularly with respect to proper coordination among groups which often require a helping hand and guidance.

Party groups continue to be a crucial body of the Party. They are our very foundation and our main link to the Guyanese masses. Around our groups revolve all our major activities. Their existence and functioning, therefore, are inseparably linked to our existence. Thus, they must continue to receive our full attention. We must constantly bear in mind the aim of widening our network of groups countrywide, pay greater interest in setting them up on an interest basis and not solely geographically, and give them every help so that they function well and fulfil their duties. To render guidance and assistance to our groups, the Party's leadership has communicated to them on a regular basis. This was done through group visits by Party leaders and, importantly, by the monthly publication of the Group Newsletter which all groups receive and which is primarily intended to keep them abreast of latest developments and through which various Party matters are raised. Groups were also assisted by the preparation and publication of the revised Handbook for Groups which now includes subjects such as "Party transformation", "the Party and its cadres", "democratic centralism" and "criticism and self-criticism".

A task of key importance and largely a group responsibility is that connected to membership. Frankly, it should be pointed out that our membership record shows marginal growth. Obviously, the effects of this must tell on our overall work. In the coming period, this problem must be rectified.

New members must be recruited for our Party, and long-standing ones who are inactive must be re-invigorated. It is also appropriate to remind members of the importance of paying up their regular party dues.

In our efforts to improve our general work, certain initiatives were considered. In this respect we sought to give individual members of the Central Committee, members of regional committees, regional councillors on the RDC's and other leading party activists, responsibility to oversee particular groups. Though, in the final count, every Party group must be able to stand on its own feet, this practice may have some positive benefits at this time and in the initial period of a group's life. We intend to follow this course, and expect that leading comrades will take on their assignments with zeal, as many are yet to seriously fulfil this responsibility. It is our hope that this approach of individual group responsibility will extend to every member in each of our groups.

Another significant initiative taken was that pertaining to the setting up of a cadre commission. It stemmed out of recognition of the need for special attention to be given to the question of cadre development. This commission met on several occasions, prepared a paper with respect to the subject, and initiated some practical steps whereby this work could be promoted. Though a beginning has been made, we cannot claim that the commission has succeeded in putting this work on a firm footing. Given the increasing importance of cadre training and preparation to our Party, we will definitely have to put more concerted efforts in this field and ensure that the entire Party machinery keeps this matter under constant focus.

In our work an important aspect has been that of representation. This was done primarily by our regional councillors and Parliamentarians. The work covered many issues including those related to health, transport, education, pensions, crime, etc. Various people-oriented proposals aimed at improving the welfare and well-being of our people have been often made, in this respect.

As a working-class Party, the PPP's organisational foundation is based on democratic centralism. Its principles must be undeviatingly adhered to, and, with them, we will be certainly able to overcome several of the main problems that presently beset us. However, apart from the need for consistent application of these tested principles to our organisation and structure, due account must be taken of other difficulties which are constraints to our effectiveness.

In this regard we must mention the difficulties in raising sufficient funds to defray the increasing costs of running the Party, the endless problems connected to availability of vehicles and personnel and the endless frustrations stemming from the deteriorating social conditions in the country. It should be pointed out that communication and transportation difficulties, particularly regarding GAC flights to the interior areas. Apart from posing untold hardships to the residents and commuters, these problems also tremendously affected our work in those areas.

These problems notwithstanding, under the leadership and guidance of the Central Committee, our Party maintained its course undeviatingly and never shied away from the battles in defence of our working people's interests and for a socialist future. Ahead is a challenging period and to be ready for it, our Party's organisation must be strengthened at all levels. Our leaders and rank and file members must rededicate themselves to more determined and self-sacrificing efforts to forge a truly powerful Party of a new type and one which will see us through these taxing and arduous times and take us along a triumphant path to tomorrow's goals.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee's main responsibility continues to be the coordination and supervision of fund-raising activities. Towards this end, financial targets are being set for the various party regions at the beginning of each year.

Through activities such as gymkhanas, corn-house, concerts, soliciting of contributions, horse-racing events, sale of literature, etc., regions, with the active involvement of districts and groups, have always worked steadily for the attainment of their targets. On the whole though, reaching their targets, unlike previous times, proved quite challenging. With the exception of Region 4 which has surpassed its target for two successive years, the results of our other regions indicate that their efforts were undoubtedly affected by the economic burdens borne by our supporters and people.

In addition to the usual methods for raising funds, we also introduced special stamp receipt books which are used primarily to raise funds for the construction of the party's school at LBI and the extension of Freedom House which has been completed.

The raising of funds to assist in defraying expenses for our Party is most essential. To a large extent, organisation and a willingness to do a lot of tedious work related to the various events play a key role in bringing about outstanding successes. Accountability is also an indispensable principle connected to fund-raising. It must be insisted on. The slipshod reports that

are at times presented after these activities must be replaced by proper reports, sent in promptly, and which should give a detailed financial account of a given event. There is much to gain also, if our regions, districts and groups can begin to cultivate the practice whereby realistic assessments follow every activity so that shortcomings can be identified and avoided in the future.

In the period ahead, greater emphasis and energies will have to be placed on raising funds for our Party and for the special Accabre construction project. Moreover, shortcomings which detract from our achievements must be overcome and, constantly, we must search for new ways and methods to get this area of work done. The need for a regular inflow of finances to our Party to continue and expand our work cannot be overestimated.

Mass Organisation

When we met at a similar event, three years ago, comrades may recollect that we pointedly called for greater emphasis in the work with and among mass organizations. The road we set out on was fraught with difficulties. There were obstacles which often appeared insurmountable. But the will to forge ahead was strong. Indefatigably, we stood by the working people, championing their cause and defending, at every turn, their rights and interests.

Unlike previous times when mass organisational work was limited to farmers' organizations (RPA, GAPA, and GCFA) Parents Teachers' Associations (PTA) and Rate Payers and Tenants Associations (RP&TA) now, we can report that a wider interest is being taken in other economic and social organisations. This decision was arrived at, following deep consideration of our shortcomings and the consequences of our negligence in working with organisations of a mass character, especially those which were democratic and representative. We saw that new possibilities for expanding our scope of work in grassroots' and peoples' organisations would be opened up and for the Party's influence among other sections of the population to grow. To cope with this expansion, certain adjustments and increase in personnel became necessary.

In keeping with the above decision, mass organisational work today encompasses not only involvement in those sectors with which we have had long association and interest, but also organisations and associations catering for fishermen, tobacco growers, livestock owners, hire car owners, professionals, as well as religious, sports and cultural organisations. For our Party, the importance of functioning in these organisations cannot be underestimated. Party members should see it as their duty to belong to, actively participate in, and strengthen and bring influence to bear on these organisations. As we know, fulfilment of our responsibilities to the Guyanese people is inconceivable without diligent, purposeful and consistent work among the masses and their organisations.

From our experiences in this field of work, it is quite clear that while many old problems remain new ones have and are emerging. Frustrations among the working people are mounting. A mood of dejection and the feeling of alienation exist in virtually every economic and social sector. The reasonable demands of the mass organisations are almost always disrespected by the bungling bureaucracy and authorities; yet, their continuous struggles go on.

The department in the Party that is engaged in mass organisations affairs was exceedingly busy since our previous Congress. Much of its efforts were concentrated in representing people directly or through the mass organisations on various burning matters brought to its attention. Often representations were combined or reinforced by various actions, viz., petitions, picketings, meetings and mobilisation of the concerned people. All of this proved to be demanding, but necessary and, useful, as these efforts brought many nearer to us and demonstrated the confidence that people continue to show in our Party.

Among the many issues taken up during this period was one which concerned our defence of hundreds of stall holders, vendors, wholesale farmers and retailers operating around the municipal markets and those who have stalls at certain locations in Georgetown. These people were brutally harassed, had their stalls and produce seized and faced high market fines. Our

intervention brought a halt to the brutality that accompanied this exercise and substantial relief to the people who were its victims.

Efforts were also directed towards the PTAs of which some 120 have sprung up country-wide. We recognised that many of our comrades in those bodies, as well as parents, needed advice on how to approach and function in these associations. A position paper was prepared and circulated to all groups so that they would be better equipped to offer guidance when required. PTAs bring together many parents concerned about their children's education and they are anxious to halt the decline taking place in the education system. Taking advantage of this concern, the government seeks to transform these associations from mere fund-raising instruments. PTAs, however, have wider and more serious functions, and our presence here must be mainly agitational. Members and supporters must be active in these bodies and see them as a forum where administration, staffing and curricula of schools and the quality of their children's education are constantly raised and assessed.

Unlike PTAs interest in Rate Payers and Tenants Associations (RP&TA) was minimal. When one considers the absence of essential maintenance work in rural areas, that, apart from municipal and city, local governments elections have not been held for some 18 years now, the steep rise in rates and taxes, then one can certainly see the potentials of RP&TAs in mobilising people in various communities to struggle around their daily interests and concerns. Naturally, therefore, their formations must become one of the many tasks that the mass organisation section and the Party's machinery, as a whole, must give keen attention to in the coming period.

Deserving attention was also given to the Rice Producers' Association (RPA). With some 27,000 rice farmers producing a commodity of crucial importance to our economy, the RPA remains a strong and strategic force among farmers in the country. In total disregard of its importance, the government insists on a policy of excluding it from the industry's management and the decision-making process. It also takes administrative measures to minimise RPA's responsibilities as seen by the removal of its representatives from the grading panels attached to the seven silos. On top of this, the rice industry and farmers are affected by a whole host of problems resulting in a steady drop of production to the detriment of producers and the economy.

In keeping with the objective to promote, defend and advance the interests of rice farmers, the RPA took up successfully in some instances, a wide range of matters including drainage and irrigation, shortages of essential agricultural inputs and spare parts, unsatisfactory grades awarded farmers, delayed payments to farmers, unjustifiable seizure of rice and paddy, etc. In the course of these struggles, there were reprisals as witnessed when 41 Cane Grove farmers who were picketing the Presidential Secretariat were arrested and charged.

In yet another area, a significant battle took place. This time it was conducted by Guyana Agricultural Producers' Association (GAPA) on behalf of tobacco farmers. Due to GAPA's consistent efforts, an agreement favourable to farmers was finally signed with Demerara Tobacco Company (DEMTOCO) and out of these efforts, too, these farmers enjoyed three price increases for their produce and their community will benefit from four deep wells, drillings of which have already begun. The agreement also provides for continuing the process of issuing to farmers, through the Government, 25 years land-lease for their farming plots.

GAPA also leaped into the front line of the battle in defence of thousands of farmers of other food crops and livestock farmers. Representations were made for various kinds of farm inputs such as fertilisers, chemicals, fuel during the fuel shortage periods, tools, planting materials and seeds, as well as transportation facilities and market on behalf of farmers and Amerindians throughout the country.

Attention was focussed on a particular issue of non-payment of compensation by the government for land acquired in Golden Grove, East Coast Demerara from a large number of farmers. GAPA successfully negotiated as compensation a sum of \$596,000, one of the highest sums ever paid for such purposes in the country.

In connection with livestock farmers, GAPA staged a battle on their behalf as well. In this regard, thousands of head of cattle and small livestock (sheep, goats and pigs) were saved from dying for the want of stock feed along lower East Coast Demerara. The association also brought some relief to farmers in the case of cattle rustling. Although the problem still exists, the efforts of GAPA have brought a reduction of this calamity, particularly in the Mahaica and Mahaicony river areas. There was not any relaxation by GAPA on the demand for the release of land not only for expansion of pastures but also for the development of forage plots for the enhancement of dairy farming along the coastal belt.

In the period under review, it should be further noted that the mass organisations' section began to give due consideration to cultural and religious organisations. It is felt that given the growing trend of people wanting to identify with these organisations, we must recognise what possibilities and potentials can be found in these organisations. Through these fora also, defence of the people's welfare, promoting their well-being and agitating on their behalf can well be pursued. Let us not deny ourselves such opportunities. Instead, while being sensitive to the various religious customs and traditions, showing respect for the diversity of our cultural heritage, let us in a principled and tangible way show that all these things will fully flourish only in a society that is founded on democracy and respect for human beings and human rights.

Getting close to people, striking deep roots among the masses, defending their interests, are tasks indispensable to our Party and obligatory to all members. In the final count, this is what we are all about and what we are for. Our very revolutionary commitment brings us to this conclusion. And, as we get ready to begin fresh battles, let us be mindful of this truth: it is the masses who make history.

Trade Union Activities

At our last Congress, we said that greater emphasis will be placed on working among trade unions, the Trade Union Congress and among the workers. Within our possibilities, we sought continuously to fulfil this decision and met with varying degrees of success.

In the conduct of this work, we concentrated on making contacts and reaching out to various segments of Guyana's working class. In certain ways we were able to score some triumphs as several members gained higher recognition in those trade unions to which they belong. Through these comrades and through contact at the work places and literature distributions, we were able to communicate with many members of the working class and propagate our ideas and views. Work-place contact has proven to be quite a useful exercise and one which we should follow up on in spite of present coordination and personnel difficulties. Full attention was also paid to the workers' economic organisations — trade unions. We sought, as was practicable, to develop and maintain close relationship with these bodies. Though this by no means was an easy venture, yet, we feel in those efforts we must persist if only because important sections of our workers are found in these organisations.

We also kept under constant review the positions of the Trade Union Congress (TUC) and relations with this body. We have taken note that some positive stand was taken on certain matters of concern to workers and the nation. However, we cannot claim that this body has fulfilled its responsibilities to the working class and represented their interests fully and militantly. As a result, there is the ongoing need for the TUC to assert itself more responsibly in our social life and fight far more resolutely in defence of the Guyanese working class. To do this, we firmly hold the view that it must become independent and loose itself from the PNC's grip and, additionally, must become democratic. We note the continuing hesitation and resistance within the TUC to have its rules changed so that affiliated unions could send delegates to TUC conferences on a fair proportional basis in relation to their membership. Failure to move in this direction has only served to undermine workers' confidence in this body, and its prestige, inevitably, has and is being affected.

Progressive and independent unions, belonging to the TUC cannot rest until these fundamental issues are satisfactorily addressed. To us, a Party of the working class, the existence of

such features in the TUC cannot go unheeded. We have to see that workers interests are defended, promoted and served by their genuine organisations. In this context, we must show continuing concern in the direction, composition, relationship and role of the TUC.

Conscious of the historic role of the working class, the importance of its being organised and the law of the class struggle to social development, our committee has always kept in focus the situation as it relates to this class. Several notable developments have taken place. Firstly, there was the court victory of NAACIE, in the popularly known "Teemal Case". Then, there was the TUC picket line, which condemned the IMF, and there followed the GAWU struggles mounted around the question of meal allowances and a one-month long strike, called in relation to annual production incentive (API) benefits, which brought the sugar industry to a standstill. Once again, notwithstanding the myriad of problems, the GAWU has shown its militant calibre and the fighting spirit that pervades its ranks. This militancy signals well for the working class and we welcome it. However, we also note the dormancy that other sections of this class have been lulled into and we must take it as a task to strive to end this passivity and set all sections on their rightful path — the path of class struggle.

As the economic and social situation inevitably plummets downwards, there is every likelihood that the working class will respond vigorously and militantly. In addition to the struggles in defence of their living standards and more wages, workers should also demand a Trade Union Recognition Law, Severance Pay Law and changes and greater benefits from the NIS, among other things.

With the promise of intense class struggles ahead, the need for a grouping like the 6-Unions movement has become pressing. Given the present trade union situation, an independent movement, offering bold leadership and genuinely fighting on behalf of the workers will prove an invaluable asset at this time for furthering the economic form of the class struggle. As such, the Party is of the view that fresh attempts should be made to revive this movement and give it every assistance so that it could make an impact, stimulate and contribute to the working class struggles for changes, economic betterment and trade union rights.

Another area of interest of the trade union section of the Party was that related to non-unionised workers. Such a situation plays right into the hands of employers who so often capitalise on it and deny such workers even basic benefits enjoyed by their unionised counterparts. Bearing this in mind, the Party recognises the need for other trade unions which will organise these workers, mobilise them to fight in defence of their economic interests, and give genuine representation to them. This will certainly fill a vacuum which, for a long time, exists within the working class. Wherever we can, we should render all assistance and encouragement towards such ends.

Our work among trade unions and within the working class grows in importance with every passing year. No matter how difficult, our Party cannot, in any way, reduce its interest in what is going on in this sphere of activity countrywide. The trade union committee of the Party must be strengthened. It must review and develop contacts and influence among all sections of the Guyanese working class. It must seek to set up equivalent bodies in our various regions so that concentrated work can be done at those levels, too, among workers. There is much scope for this work in Guyana, and, full advantage must be taken of all opportunities that avail themselves. Every member, group, district and region must keep within their vision the importance of this aspect of work. Let us not forget history's lesson that it is the working class, through class struggles, and led by a working class Party that will bring to a head socio-economic transformation and ensure the renewal and construction of a new society which all of us are working towards.

International Activities

Our Party continues to maintain a high profile insofar as its international activities are concerned. Our organisational, technical and personnel constraints notwithstanding, we managed to fulfil our major commitments nationally and internationally.

These activities would not have been successfully realised were it not for a team of comrades who, by putting in that extra effort far beyond their call of duty, made our commitments realisable.

The observance of international solidarity activities and commemorative dates took place within the frame work of the general Party policy of maintaining our links with the popular masses to expose, explain and educate them about the struggles being waged by the oppressed and exploited peoples around the world as well as about the achievements made by the working people in the socialist countries. In this connection, the Friendship Societies have played a vital role in helping to popularise what is real socialism and to show how it is practiced in various socialist countries.

Activities of the Friendship Societies have been held both in Georgetown and the rural areas. Branches of some Friendship Societies have been established in Berbice and Essequibo. These branches are fairly active and do as much as they can under the conditions obtaining in the area where they operate.

The Party continues to follow with interest the work of the Committee for Solidarity with the Peoples of Southern Africa and the Guyana Peace Council. In our times, the significance of these organisations and the importance of their activities cannot be underestimated. Naturally, therefore, we would be very pleased to see these organisations retain their present prominence and pursue their work in a more energetic manner.

In keeping with a directive of the Executive Committee, efforts have been made to diversify the observance of international dates and events. While we shall continue to observe specific dates related to the history of socialist countries and lend active support to and solidarity with the struggles of the oppressed and fighting peoples the world over, special efforts will be made in the coming years to observe historical dates and events pertaining to non-socialist countries such as Brazil, Venezuela, Suriname and, India to mention a few.

The criticism about the unattractive and mundane nature of the programmes of our solidarity activities holds some merit. The cultural element in this respect should not be underestimated. Our Party needs to take a more serious and consistent approach to culture as a political and ideological medium in the struggle for the "hearts and minds" of the masses.

During the period under review, our Party observed separately and jointly with other fraternal social organisations, the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. Bottom house meetings, solidarity rallies, public lectures as well as internal discussions at Freedom House were also organised to highlight topical international issues. The video, public photo exhibitions, articles in the Mirror and Thunder were also utilised to help promote the internationalist positions of the Party.

Whenever called upon to represent the Party at public functions, Party leaders always made themselves available.

Regular contacts with diplomatic missions here in Guyana also formed part of the day to day activities of the International Department of the Party.

We played host to a visiting delegation from the Workers' Party of Barbados and from other Parties and organisations affiliated to the Caribbean and Central American Anti-Imperialist Organisations. A delegation from the Guadeloupean Communist Party was also invited to be guest of our Party but due to the intransigent stand adopted by the Guyana government, the delegation was not granted visas to travel to our country.

At the international level, our Party participated in a number of congresses of and conferences sponsored by fraternal parties and revolutionary democratic parties in different parts of the world.

Our Party has also been very active in its efforts to establish relations with parties and movements other than those with which we either have fraternal or traditional relations. In this connection, relations have been established with a number of Parties in the Caribbean ranging from social democratic, left social democratic and revolutionary democratic. Not only do we now have relations with these Parties and movements, we have also attended important events in the lives of their organisations.

Due to the position which our Party now holds in the Caribbean and Central American Anti-Imperialist Organisations, we are now actively collaborating and cooperating with more than thirty political parties and movements of varying political and ideological orientations. We shall continue to work in this body with a view to doing whatever we can to make it more visible internationally and to give it a dynamic and functional character.

Our relations with the Communist Parties of South America continue to be on a fraternal and active basis. Following our participation in the 1984 meeting of South American Communist Parties held in Argentina, we participated in the second meeting of a similar nature which was held in Lima, Peru, in December 1986. We value highly meetings of this nature; they help us to understand better the realities obtaining in Latin America and, at the same time, they provide us with the opportunity to inform our Latin American comrades about the realities of our own country.

It has always been our desire to deepen our relations with fraternal parties in Latin America. For this reason, we have, at great sacrifice, participated in the congresses of fraternal parties in Colombia, Argentina, Venezuela and Brazil between 1984 and 1987. We shall continue working to enhance and keep on an active basis our fraternal relations with the South American Communist Parties.

We hold in high esteem the work that is being carried out by our support groups based, in Canada, the USA and the Party branch in the UK. These organisations continue to do valuable work on behalf of the Guyanese people and our Party in the countries where they are based. We in the PPP pledge to continue extending to these support groups all the necessary assistance and encouragement which is so vital for them to accomplish the objectives which they have set themselves.

Our relations with the fraternal parties in the socialist countries remain on solid foundations. During the period under review, the General Secretary and other Party leaders visited a number of socialist countries in Europe and Asia at the invitation of the ruling parties in the countries concerned. From the political and ideological standpoint, these visits have helped to increase our awareness of the problems involved in socialist construction and, at the same time, we were able to witness the all-round achievements in all spheres of social life.

We shall always remain grateful to our fraternal parties in the Socialist Community of States which have been very generous in extending assistance to us.

Our association and collaboration with the World Marxist Review holds a special place within the overall international activities of our Party. When we took the historic decision to join the editorial council of the journal, little did we realise how useful the presence of a permanent representative in Prague would be for furthering the interests of our Party. We are highly satisfied with the performance of our present representative and wish his successor every success in maintaining the high standards which he will inherit in the not too distant future.

This year, when the Party observed the 40th anniversary of Comrade Cheddi as a Member of Parliament and, later, his 70th birthday, a number of congratulatory messages were received from fraternal Parties in the socialist and non-socialist world. The State awards which were bestowed upon him from Cuba, the GDR and Bulgaria attest to the high prestige which our Party enjoys in the international communist and workers' movement. We are proud to belong to this great movement which has fought and is still fighting for world peace and the revolutionary transformation of the world.

Propaganda Work

The Propaganda Committee has been engaged in various aspects of Party work pertaining to making people at home and overseas more and more aware of our political line, policies, struggles and assessment of the changing situation in Guyana. Some of the areas in which work was carried out were in the preparation, publication and distribution of booklets, leaflets, posters, brochures, press releases, and sponsoring and holding seminars, video shows, public

meetings, public lectures and symposia. Efforts have also been directed at improving our overall propaganda work. Towards this end a new off-set rotary press has been ordered. When this would have been received we would, no doubt, be able to expand this area of work. Necessarily, this would entail recruiting and training appropriately skilled technicians and enlarging the editorial staff.

A major component of the Party's propaganda work is publishing or overseeing publication of mainly the following: Thunder, (the Party organ), Women Unite, Youth Advance, Interior Special, and Information Bulletin. There was also publication of newspapers of the friendly organisations — one for the working class and the other for the peasantry.

Further, the Propaganda Committee took initiatives to, among other matters:

- 1) Secure the eventual compilation of the history of the PPP.
- 2) Cement closer contacts with regional media, including radio.
- 3) Set up a video department with studio and laboratory.
- 4) Obtain appropriate cine-films and video tapes from friendly sources.

Our efforts to obtain coverage in the state-owned newspapers have only partly succeeded because of stiff resistance from government. Even our offer to pay for radio time and media space on the state-owned radio and newspaper did not elicit enthusiastic responses from government. Buying time on television has been favourably considered as another means to project ourselves in the public limelight.

It is appropriate at this point to note that government has recently acquired television broadcasting facilities which will be an additional medium to the other television relay systems operated by private persons. The advent of TV and video is one more aspect of the scientific-technological revolution reaching into the very homes of Guyanese.

The Party is addressing its limited resources to counter whatever false values emanate from the electronic media. US propaganda penetration is heavy in the entire Caribbean region in which context Guyana is most vulnerable. Some naive Guyanese look at TV commercials, backgrounders, and portrayals of events as typical of capitalist social reality — the seamy side of which is cleverly concealed or glossed over, while socialism is denigrated. As such, they are induced to either emigrate or emulate what they see or hear; and also parrot the anti-socialist views beamed at them.

Long laid plans to have the Information Bulletin printed in Spanish and French are still being hindered by the lack of qualified linguistic personnel willing to do the job either within Guyana or overseas. The Committee is determined to go ahead with this project.

Over the years our propaganda activities have and must increasingly take into account certain realities which adversely affect the Party's work. Upon their solution depends the Party's gains and its efforts to widen its influence among the masses. Issues such as apathy, the barrel mentality, emigration syndrome, parallel market, ethnic tendencies, battered image of socialism, North America value concepts, etc., must be confronted and dealt with. These need urgent attention and call for a total, concerted effort of the entire Party organisation.

Our efforts, directed at resolving these problems, included specific seminars, study circles, discussions with groups, district and regional organisations, articles written in the media, leaflets, rebuttals in the media, pertinent points raised in Parliament and the Regional Democratic Councils, interviews with foreign visitors, and bilateral discussions with delegations at overseas conferences, etc.

The Party has been under concerted attack in the state-owned media. Our General Secretary, Cde. Cheddi Jagan, in particular, has been selected as the chief target for calumnies, misrepresentations and downright falsehoods. The overall intention of the ruling circles is to discredit our Party as the credible alternative government, for there is no other force on the political horizon to assume this mantle of responsibility.

The propaganda of the PNC, which does not hesitate to plunge into the gutter, is also aimed at driving a wedge between the PPP and other member parties in the Patriotic Coalition for Democracy. This is an old divide and rule tactic used by colonialism and neo-colonialism. We

have countered this insidious propaganda at every step, and we continue to be on guard for printed innuendoes which have been appearing in overseas newspapers inserted by PNC officialdom.

We have to do more in the Caribbean, for this area is where PNC distortions and lies are prolific and more malicious, and where that Party has been playing the racial and ideological card against the PPP.

We must win the propaganda battle. To do so, we must improve and modernise our machinery and equipment, our presentation, our packaging, our responses, and our image as the vanguard Party of the Guyanese working people.

Ideological Education Work

At the ideological front, the optimism that underlined our assessment during the 22nd Congress has clearly waned. The deep interest shown nationally in the working-class ideology, Marxism-Leninism and socialism has markedly declined. Many factors, no doubt, are responsible for this. Not least among these is the Government's purposeful de-emphasis and almost total removal of ideologically-related matters from national focus. This, undoubtedly, is in keeping with the turn, new thrust and political "adjustments" we have witnessed since 1985 under the Hoyte administration.

Nowadays, less and less is heard from government quarters, and various programmes aimed at developing an awareness and understanding of socialism among Guyanese have been reduced, down-played or discontinued. Pragmatism, it seems, has resurfaced and today determines the Government's outlook and influences its various policies and positions. Interestingly, this pragmatic approach has not only led to a compromise of its earlier anti-imperialism but also set it on a course that will mean new accommodation with the USA, and in particular with agencies like the IMF and privatisation. Such a direction will have questionable benefits to the Guyanese nation and people.

Serious attention must also be paid to the rising public expressions of capitalist-oriented views and their impact and effects in shaping the consciousness and determining the values and behaviour of growing members of the Guyanese populace.

In addition to the press and radio, note must be taken of the role of the television which has become very popular in Guyana and in the Caribbean. Through this medium, tens of thousands of Guyanese receive directly and daily, via satellite, various US produced programmes many of which are unmistakably ideological in character.

All these developments in Guyana coupled with the continuing work of various agencies serving the cause and centres of imperialism have been some of the factors which have exerted adversely a strong influence on the ideological climate obtaining in our country. As an integral and major component of Guyanese society, our Party cannot be unaffected by these developments. At the same time, as a Party grounded ideologically in principles of Marxism-Leninism, it is necessary to assess the full meaning of these developments and recognise the new challenges they pose to our Party and especially to our ideological/educational work.

In this area of Party work, due account must not only be taken of the new realities emerging within our country, inevitably and necessarily; we must also pay closer attention to what is taking place internationally and, moreover, to the current changes in the world revolutionary movement and their meaning to the world revolutionary process. Among the peoples of the world, a fresh and positive interest has been rekindled in the Marxist-Leninist theory and in the practice of and advancement of socialism. Initiatives taken by the socialist countries themselves have led to this renewed and deep interest in socialism. Our Party welcomes this. Moreover, we consider that the new issues and questions appearing in our times must be dealt within our overall educational work. We should be reminded, too, that success in this type of activity depends, to a great extent, on ensuring that it is not removed from the practical tasks with which we must grapple.

In the three years that have elapsed since our previous Congress, work in the ideological field has proven difficult and demanding. The struggles to win and influence minds to our cause and theory have also sharpened and grown complex. New factors, locally and internationally, have contributed to this. Despite this, though, the Party's educational/ideological work continued, invariably successfully.

During this period, our school, Accabre, maintained its prominent role in imparting, essentially, political and ideological education to our members, and, the Party's Education Committee continued to be fully involved in programmes geared for workers and for youth, students and women coming from the ranks of the youth and women's sections of our Party. While hundreds of comrades completed our two- and three-weeks courses, both at the basic and advanced levels, we must nonetheless draw attention to the fact that beginning from the last quarter of 1987, there has been a marked decline in attendance. This trend must be halted. To avoid cutbacks in the school's yearly programme, our groups must see the need to carry our recruitment drive in a conscientious and consistent way. Simultaneously, it has also become necessary to supplement the school's work by having a similar type curriculum done in various areas and at district or regional levels.

The Party has also maintained its programme of sending comrades to study in socialist countries either at the university level or at various courses and seminars. Many from our ranks and workers, farmers, youth and women from the ranks of fraternal organisations have benefited from these scholarship offers. Yet, here, too, some difficulties are being encountered. Apart from losing several returning students to emigration, we also view with concern the declining number of applicants to take up these scholarships and courses overseas. However, we believe this development is temporary and will be overcome with the numerical and qualitative growth of our membership. Additionally, we hold the view that the Party, at various levels, as well as the fraternal organisations should seek to involve these trained comrades more actively in our many-sided work.

Our ideological/educational activities were also pursued through other well-tested methods, namely, seminars, group educationals, literature sales and distribution, lectures, discussions, equipping libraries, special projects, setting up of study circles, and so on. Educational work was also supplemented through activities organised by other fraternal organisations as well as by other agencies, e.g., Thunder and Mirror. Whenever done, these various activities need to be continued and encouraged, and for these groups and areas that have grown lax, determined efforts must be made to revive this important aspect of our Party's life.

In our ever-constant search for innovations in this field, we began over the past three years to encourage the use of other means to conduct our educational work. Party districts and regions were called upon to programme at least one educational activity monthly. There was an encouraging response but, disappointingly, not for all our districts and regions. We also introduced for two years now, a special discussion/seminar programme for persons in the field of education held during the main holiday season in Berbice and Essequibo. We intend to continue and extend this activity and make it even more successful than they have been so far. It should also be reported that the Education Committee has researched, compiled and prepared for use at Accabre and, for our general educational work countrywide, various materials and papers, some of which are already in circulation and use. More such materials — simple, current and relevant — are presently at the discussion and preparatory stage. Soon, at our disposal should be a wide range of subjects which will be readily available to cater for our needs.

Promoting our revolutionary ideas beyond our membership, always of deep interest to us, has proven unusually difficult in the present conditions. In spite of this though, we persisted. We utilised all available fora, accepted invitations to deliver talks on specific topics, widely distributed literature, offered book donations to schools and other libraries, held seminars and spoke at bottom-house gatherings. While all of this certainly had their value, the task remains an uphill one at this time. Much more must be done if we are to reach a satisfactory level. Again, too, this is a task best tackled by our groups and one which requires earnestness, dedication and consistency.

Despite unfavourable circumstances, the importance the Party attaches to ideological education has not diminished. Marxism-Leninism forms the ideological basis of our Party. It must serve to deepen the theoretical, political and class awareness of our members and people. Knowledge of it is indispensable in the formation and preparation of cadres. It is our guide to action and to a victorious socialist future. Naturally, therefore, defence of our working-class ideology against harmful bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideas is always a Party duty to be responsibly carried out by all members.

As we begin a new chapter in our Party's history and struggles, comrades, let us not forget the crucial role of ideology. We must strive to bring about all-round improvement in this work. We must be ready and prepared to advance the ideological struggle in Guyana for democracy, peace and social progress.

PARTY SECTIONS

Progressive Youth Organisation

Our young people today are faced with numerous problems. The harsh conditions of life and living are felt hardest by our youth. Foremost among those burning problems faced by our youths are those of unemployment and underemployment. And every year thousands of drop-outs and school-leavers swell the ranks of the unemployed. The situation is at an alarming stage with no end in sight. Those "fortunate" enough to find gainful employment are generally peeved and disgruntled over poor salaries, bad working conditions, discrimination in promotion and the steeply climbing cost of living.

While today's conditions are especially hard on our youths, the prospects of tomorrow are gloomier. Little wonder then that significant numbers of young people, in despair and disenchantment, are leaving Guyana seeking opportunities overseas and many more have set their sights in this direction.

In recent times, a phenomenon reaching unacceptable proportions has appeared. This is the drug question. Despite feeble attempts by the government to grapple with it, more and more youths are reverting to the use of drugs. Many are deluded into believing that drug use offers security and contentment. It is seen as an escape route from the mounting economic and social pressures prevailing in the country. However, it is a dead-end street and one with serious consequences to the body and mind of our youths.

Drug use exists today side by side with other social ills such as crime, prostitution and delinquency. More and more of our young people, driven by poverty, pressures and growing hardships, are turning increasingly to these vices.

In the sphere of education, the situation is depressing at all levels. Apart from the very high costs of education, we hold the view that this right is not enjoyed by all our youths. Students and pupils, especially those coming from the ranks of working people, must contend with a host of problems, resulting in increasing numbers leaving the education system as semi-literates. There is need for concern, and the fight for the right to education and for free education will have to be raised afresh. Likewise, attention must also be given to the growth of truancy, as nowadays one can see sizable groups of school-aged youths walking the streets idly in small gangs and who, undoubtedly, are potential delinquents. There are yet others who are involved in minor economic activities or are working to assist the home or are simply engaged in begging.

To the above problems of our youth and students, one must add that there are negligible facilities for recreation, especially in the areas of sports and culture. These facilities, so important for the all-round development of our young people, in many instances are improperly maintained or are in a state of disuse. Equipment, sports gear and materials are not only expensive when available but are generally unobtainable. Incentives and encouragement are lacking and promotional activities are minimal.

Such are the conditions with which our youth section, the Progressive Youth Organisation (PYO), has had to contend and under which it had to operate. Though demanding, difficult and challenging, the PYO discharged its responsibilities creditably and, as becoming of youths, with vigour and enthusiasm.

In the conduct of its many-faceted activities, there were many ups and downs but it remained constant and undaunted. It purposefully sought to assert itself, in a bigger way, as the foremost anti-imperialist youth organisation in Guyana, championing and defending the rights and welfare of youth and students. Simultaneously, it had to promote various activities, while grappling with a number of difficulties that had arisen organisationally.

With respect to membership, it should be underlined that there were significant increases in group membership countrywide and a number of new groups were formed in areas where they did not previously exist. At the same time, it should also be noted that there was a high turnover rate of the more mature comrades, due largely to emigration.

This development, though a positive factor, has had its side effects on the functioning of these groups.

PYO groups have functioned with varying levels of success. While many have been meeting on a regular or scheduled basis either monthly or fortnightly, several others have failed to maintain a schedule.

The question of meetings has been examined at various levels and efforts have been made to adjust schedules to suit the specific circumstances of the members in a given area.

The groups have also shown varying levels of activities. Some have tackled their overall responsibilities admirably but still several others have not maintained a fair balance in their work.

The varying performances of groups and, also districts and regional bodies can be linked to the level of local leadership in the given area. The PYO has an ongoing challenge. Yearly, some of its most developed members serving at various levels come out of active involvement in the PYO bodies due to their reaching the age limit as well as involvement in higher party duties. In the latter case, this sometimes takes effect too early. In many instances, members in the leadership of the PYO bodies have to share their time and efforts in several other areas of political work.

The task of continuously bringing up new members has been a very difficult one. There are many constraints due to the tough socio-economic factors within which our members have to operate. Nevertheless, the PYO has taken several initiatives to grapple with this vital aspect of its work. The successes achieved are in a large way related to the level of support from the related party bodies. Party bodies in all areas are therefore expected to assist to the maximum in the development of members of the PYO groups.

The PYO worked in several ways to develop education work at all levels of the membership. The results at the group levels varied considerably. The semi-annual National Education Contest was used as an impetus for studies by group members. Seminars were held at different levels and a number of members attended Accabre and some proceeded overseas for further ideological training.

The outreach work of the PYO was maintained in several directions. Several campaigns were carried out to meet with young people in different parts of the country. Several seminars were held to deal with topical issues. Great emphasis has been placed on the burning issue of drug abuse. Medical personnel and video films have been widely used in this campaign. The Youth Advance has been used as a means of broadly reaching out to the Guyanese youth and localised publications. Campus Flame and College Flame have been maintained in the respective educational institutions.

The PYO has taken up several problems which affect the Guyanese youth. Protest exercises, picketing demonstrations, petitions and direct representations have been carried out on questions related to education facilities, transportation, sports and recreation facilities and several other concerns of the youth.

The PYO's sports programme has expanded greatly during this period. In addition to the regular district, regional, county and national sports, several competitions were held especially in dominoes and softball cricket. It has actively worked with the Georgetown Football League and has established an annual Under-19 Football Competition.

The PYO has also broadened its contacts with other youth and student bodies in the country especially among the young workers in the trade union field and in religious bodies. It has worked to maintain and deepen the links developed in the work surrounding the last World Festival of Youth and Students which took place at the time of its last Congress. It is presently engaged with several youth and student organisations in the National Preparatory Committee for the 13th World Festival to be held in the DPRK in 1989.

The PYO has also maintained broad international contacts especially in the work of the World Federation of Democratic Youth, the International Union of Students and the Continental Organisation of Latin America Students. The organisation attended several meetings organised by these bodies as well as congresses of a number of fraternal youth organisations. It paid special attention to its links with the youth organisations in the Caribbean and hosted a meeting of these bodies at the end of its 13th Congress in 1986. Repeatedly, the PYO expressed its solidarity in various forms with the struggling youth and students in all parts of the world. As a special campaign, it has been collecting educational tools for Nicaragua. Already a number of items have been handed over.

The course of the PYO in the recent past and in the near future has been chartered by the PYO's 13th Congress held in 1986. In the resolution of the Congress, it was pointed out: "We have to strengthen the PYO organisationally at all levels ensuring that all bodies function well. And we have to develop the all-round fighting capacity of our members and the Guyanese youth in general to counter the blows of the enemy and to bring about the necessary change in our country."

The PYO must proceed in its work to fulfil its major responsibility to ensure the fullest participation of the Guyanese youth in united action for democratic and revolutionary change.

Women's Progressive Organisation

The Women's Progressive Organisation (WPO), as the women section of the Party, carried out its responsibilities in conditions of increasing hardships, frustrations and general economic and social deterioration. The problems women faced three years ago they face today, but on a more extensive scale. Not only do they face severe difficulties in terms of employment, education and training but their personal development as well is affected. Long-standing questions such as equality of women, discrimination and the principle that women should receive the same pay as men for equal work remain unresolved.

Unemployment and underemployment, a basic problem of our society, affect Guyanese women severely. Many, prompted by the declining economic situation and falling living standards, are nowadays showing increasing interest in finding jobs. Due to limited job opportunities and out of desperation, many are forced to take up work which involve risks, on one hand, or are totally unsuitable to them, on the other. For the majority who eventually do find work, they find themselves in some of the most menial, exploitative and demanding occupation and often must contend with unreasonable, almost inhuman working conditions.

With the exception of few occupations, most working women are non-unionised and this leaves them virtually defenceless against unscrupulous employers and bosses. Wages are usually miserable and there are hardly any fringe benefits to be enjoyed. Compounding this problem is the question of racial and political discrimination in promotion practices.

Women who are also mothers have the additional difficulty of combining both duties, more so in our society where there is a minimum of day-care centres.

Women's lot in Guyana is, from any perspective, particularly harsh and difficult. This is equally true for those who joined the ranks of the working class, are engaged in various other work, are students, or just housewives engaged in their traditional roles. What is additionally

disturbing is the unsympathetic attention and total disregard given by the government to our women's plight. Although the Guyana constitution refers to respect of women's rights, and in spite of the fact that the Government is a signatory to the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, hardly has legislation been forthcoming that would guarantee these rights and give meaningful content to its many declarations.

Under such conditions in Guyana in which our women live and work, there is a growing role for the WPO. The last three years showed that our women's section, with the Party's backing, support and guidance is quite capable of taking on new challenges. For the preceding period, it tackled many tasks and shouldered many responsibilities. Of great importance was steady pursuit of its renewed interest in broadening its contact with women of different backgrounds. Accordingly the WPO joined in many events which involved Church women, particularly from the Anglican and Presbyterian denominations, with women sections of trade unions, and with individuals who are professionals coming from educational and medical institutions. Importantly, this outreach thrust extended to the Caribbean region.

The WPO attended conferences in the English-speaking Caribbean organised by the Women and Development Unit (WAND), Caribbean Feminists Research & Action (CAFRA), and participated in the preparatory meeting for the establishment of a broad-based alliance of "Women for Caribbean Liberation".

Though positive and should be continued in the future, this did not lead to WPO's neglect, in anyway, of its work among its members, supporters and women generally. Indeed, this work continued routinely and, in fact, was reinforced by new initiatives. These included a special conference to examine the conditions of Guyanese children and another conference on "Women for Democracy". There was a survey on government's school-feeding programme followed by a petition to the Education Ministry; the putting out of a dehydration poster (advising on the care of dehydrated children); sponsoring of a national art competition for children; distribution of clothes and footwear among the Amerindian people in the Rupununi and the inmates of the Mahaica Hospital and the Dharam Sala; and often giving assistance to needy cases and fire victims. Also, the WPO has had regular video shows and parties for the children at the Georgetown Hospital.

These activities supplemented others such as bottom-house meetings, seminars, collecting petitions, agitation around issues like high electricity charges, food and fuel shortages, distribution of handbills, house-to-house campaigns, sports activities and video shows. The organisation's continuing publication and sale of Women Unite also constituted a major aspect of its overall work.

Close attention was paid to organisational questions as it became obvious that a combination of factors were adversely affecting its structure and, consequently, its effectiveness. Several groups floundered and several others limped along. To stem this development, many visits and recruitment drives were resorted to. The recruitment drives were heartening as they helped to bring about a 50 percent increase in the WPO membership. However, stimulating the groups to function and action proved to be a slow process, unexpectedly difficult, and clearly calling for greater and persistent work.

Though confronted by these difficulties, one notes that the organisation endured and discharged, encouragingly, many of its functions. Here, it should be recalled, that its educational programmes made up of leadership educationals, seminars and Accabre courses were uninterruptedly held. More renewed efforts must be made to place this and other types of ideological training of women on a firmer footing. As an extension of this work, it should be noted that several of the organisation's members took up overseas scholarships while another took on lecturing assignments at the WIDF centre in Havana.

Additionally, the WPO continued to be active internationally and showed interest in international events. Its work at this level included protests, sending solidarity messages, appeals, collecting signatures and information exchanges with women organisations worldwide. The WPO is a member of the executive of the WIDF and has relationship with more than 200 women organisations. It paid special attention to its relations with the WIDF, attending a num-

ber of its meetings, and with women's organisations of socialist countries, attending congresses in Cuba and Czechoslovakia and participated in various conferences, including that of the UN End of Decade Conference in Kenya.

Earlier in this year, the WPO celebrated its 35th Anniversary. A wide cross-section of Guyanese women took part in this joyous occasion. It was marked by a special conference held in Georgetown which provided a forum for women to discuss and assess "how far have women progressed" in our country. Still a fighting organisation after 35 years is a remarkable achievement, and the Party congratulates the WPO on its reaching this milestone.

Significantly, coinciding with this anniversary was another that the WPO also marked. This was the 35th year since the entry into Parliament of Cde. Janet Jagan, one of the founder leaders of the Women's Progressive Organisation.

As our women section, charged with the responsibility of organising educating and mobilising Guyanese women for the struggle for betterment and social changes, the WPO has indeed held a worthy place in our history. But, one must look ahead. And, considering the importance of women in our struggle, the WPO must be organisationally ready and fully prepared to take on additional responsibilities and fresh tasks and to discharge them with greater successes than in the past period.

The Parliamentary Front

The Party has been deeply involved in the struggle on the Parliamentary front. Over the past three years, it has taken up issues closely connected to the working people and has brought the views of the people to the direct attention of the Ministers of government. We have also raised matters in relation to the economy and the social situation.

Several Bills submitted to Parliament by government were opposed outright because of their anti-working class nature and their oppressive intention. Others of less contention were supported with amendments, while a few were supported fully. The budgets of 1986, 1987 and 1988, however, were vehemently opposed and condemned for their attacks on the welfare of the working people, and their failure to get to grips with the real problems of the nation.

On many occasions, heated exchanges took place between PPP and PNC MPs during debate on controversial issues which the government clearly had no intention to make compromises on. These measures were steamrolled through the House over our objections. On a few occasions, the Party members in Parliament walked out in protest.

There were regular clashes in the Parliament between PPP MPs and the Speaker of the House, whose controversial rulings on numerous occasions were hotly contested and which triggered disorder. Apart from the raising of matters in the Legislature, the Party also engaged in representational activities: taking delegations of citizens to Ministers and heads of departments, including to the Commissioner of Police. The intention was to have problems looked into, complaints redressed and suggestions proposed. This form of work has had its areas of success and its areas of frustration due to the bureaucratic bungling and incompetence of officialdom. This type of work should be stepped up.

The 1985 elections (rigged as usual) saw the entry into Parliament of one MP for the Working People's Alliance (WPA) thus making the House one in which three opposition parties are represented — PPP with 8 seats; UF with 2 seats; and WPA with one seat. The ruling party on the other hand (PNC) controls 61 seats. The Parliament has 65 members who are elected, but there are an additional 7 members of the PNC who are technocrats (non-elected members). Six of the technocrats are Ministers; the other is a Parliamentary Secretary.

Issues raised in the Parliament by PPP MPs include rising unemployment, the economic crisis, the debt burden, large scale emigration, developmental projects, investment proposals, violent crime, overdue inquests, drug addiction and trafficking, corruption, police brutality, high turnover of police recruits, human rights violations, discrimination, electricity supply, pure water supply, shortages and soaring prices, the growing parallel market, the minimum wage level, unsatisfactory pensions and social security benefits, poor social services, etc.

Specific questions were asked of Ministers, only a small portion of which have been replied to. Very simple and straightforward queries take an unconscionably long time to elicit replies from Ministers.

Other aspects of this type of work were simultaneously made by Party members in the Regional Democratic Councils. These issues span a broad spectrum, ranging from drainage and irrigation to agricultural inputs, rural roads, prices for farm produce, farm to market roads, distribution of retail goods, machinery spares, fuels, declining social services, land distribution, water shortages, electricity blackouts, municipal cleansing, praedial larceny, community police facilities, etc.

Calls for free and fair local government elections were made at both the Parliamentary and RDC levels. The widespread deterioration in the local government system and infrastructure was raised.

In the National Assembly and the RDCs, the PPP members also put forward many concrete proposals as to how best the economy could be made to function, and how social problems like housing could be solved speedily. Sad to say, some of these proposals were rejected on specious grounds.

For instance, the PPP's proposals on the foreign debt burden, housing, corruption, squandering, job opportunities, democratisation, etc., have not been accepted at any level of the PNC administration, which is precisely why the country is in such a bad shape. It is not that the PPP has not been making constructive proposals. The governing party has its own partisan axes to grind and could not care less about the nation's well-being.

The Parliament and the Regional Democratic Councils do not function as they should or are expected to function. Even though they are packed with PNC supporters, serious aberrations occur. The Party has therefore been pressing for an attitudinal change: the adoption of the committee system in Parliament so that specialised committees can look first into all key legislation before they are submitted for debate in the House. The ruling party has shown no inclination to do so.

In addition so far, no action has been taken by government on the recommendations of the Integrity Commission of 1987, despite assurances during the debate on the report in Parliament. The PPP will continue to press for the early implementation of these recommendations, some of which call for legislation.

The PPP has not been attending sittings of the Supreme Congress of the People from its very inception because of its fraudulent and bogus composition and character.

RACE, CLASS AND LIBERATION

Thirty-eight years ago, the PPP wrote on its banner: "national liberation and socialism". On this 150th anniversary of Emancipation, these words are still a dream. Our nation, though nominally independent, is in chains. A substantial portion of our multi-ethnic people are wage slaves. Neo-slavery in the guise of the CBI and IMF has been substituted for chattel slavery and indentureship.

We are told that structural adjustments are required. But such adjustment under the control of the IMF and the big foreign and local bourgeoisie is intended to rob us of our dreams, our sacrifices and our gains. We must vigorously oppose the "trojan horses" who come bearing gifts and also the modern-day slave catchers and arkatis.

Adjustments are necessary but not under our oppressors. Making them must be the task of the true patriots forces — the working class, the peasantry, the radical intelligentsia, the nationalistic progressive bourgeoisie. Only they can give the political direction and make the necessary changes to lead the country to social progress.

Our Amerindian forefathers fought against the European traders and settlers. They, together with our slave and indentured immigrant ancestors, left us a glorious heritage of struggle. They revolted against slavery they rebelled against indentureship. They shed their blood for

us. And many were the occasions when this struggle was mounted unitedly. Let us tell our oppressors that together we will follow the example of our heroic ancestors.

To those who in despair and hopelessness ask: "how long?", our answer, in the spirit of Martin Luther King Jr., must be: "as long as is necessary". The main thing is commitment and the willingness to make the necessary sacrifices for complete emancipation.

Time is on our side. Let us model our lives on the thousands and thousands of dedicated fighters who, in more adverse conditions in several countries, carried on and are carrying on valiantly the struggle.

Lenin, Ho Chi Minh, Mahatma Gandhi, Fidel Castro, Daniel Ortega taught us how to fight a protracted war against great odds. Nelson Mandela is a symbol of dedication to people and country. And the close links between the ANC and the Communist Party of South Africa point the way for revolutionary democrats and communists to work and struggle together.

The future is bright and it belongs to us. Combat apathy and defeatism. We must renew our confidence in the PPP and the future. This will keep our dreams and hopes alive.

Towards our objective of winning political power, establishing a revolutionary democracy and bringing about "a drastic cure", which the New Nation had called for in February 1982, all our energies must be directed towards deepening working class and racial unity and mobilising the masses for positive action. In this regard, there is a dialectical connection between peaceful and non-peaceful, electoral and non-electoral, forms of struggle. The measures taken by the ruling class against the people generally conditions the path of the fight for national and social liberation.

Whatever the form of struggle or a combination of forms of struggle, an essential ingredient is heightened political and ideological consciousness and mass political mobilisation.

The PNC will not voluntarily surrender power. We must, in cooperation with the PCD, immediately launch a militant programme of action for free and fair elections. We must lead the masses towards the removal of the PNC regime and the establishment of a broad-based popular, representative government. For too long, there has been talk about electoral fraud. The time for action is now. Enough is on enough!

Long live the PPP!

Long live the world communist movement!

Long live international solidarity!

Long live peace and social progress!

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The Twenty-Fourth Congress

Central Committee Report to the 24th Congress of the PPP,
delivered by Dr. Cheddi Jagan, General — Empire Cinema,
Georgetown, 6-7 July 1991

Comrade Delegates and Observers, Members of the Diplomatic Corps, Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen. . .

I bid you a warm welcome to the 24th Congress On behalf of the People's Progressive Party.

INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

The ending of World War II saw a big shift in the alignment of world forces. The United States became the most powerful state in, and at the same time the leader of, the capitalist world. And the socialist world was born. The advent of the Cold War in 1947 saw the convening of the Bandung Conference in 1955 and the emergence of the Non-Aligned Movement in 1961.

The class and national liberation struggles sharpened. In the intense East-West Cold War class conflicts, the North-South liberation struggles were compromised: they were inevitably seen as part and parcel of East-West, socialist-capitalist conflict.

For instance, both President John F Kennedy and General Secretary Nikita Khrushchev, the representatives of the capitalist West and the socialist East, advocated change, but from different perspectives. For Kennedy change through evolution must take place internally, like his reformist Alliance for Progress for Latin America, but not externally through a change from one side to the other; namely, not a shift in the world balance of forces with third world countries moving from the capitalist orbit towards the socialist world. For Khrushchev, Kennedy's views were seen as putting a restriction on their right to self-determination, a clamp on revolution and a freeze on the world. For him, change implied not just political independence and economic emancipation but also international re-alignment.

Because the non-aligned states were generally anti-colonial, anti-imperialist and socialist-oriented, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) was deemed by the West as "immoral". The NAM had not aligned themselves with the military blocs of either the West (NATO) or the East (Warsaw Pact), but, like Cuba, Vietnam, etc., some had joined the economic and other non-military institutions of the East.

In Guyana, the anti-colonialist and nationalist movement for political independence, led by the PPP, embraced the ideals of non-alignment. For this, it became a Cold War target. The arms race ultimately became a huge burden to the USA, the USSR and the third world states, especially the revolutionary-democratic and socialist-oriented. Some of the latter, faced with destabilisation, were forced to put an increasing share of their national income on military expenditure.

Meanwhile, Japan and Germany, restricted from re-arming and taking advantage of science and technology and high labour discipline, leaped ahead economically, and posed a challenge to the United States. America declined from the biggest creditor nation at the end of World War II to the biggest debtor in the world. This became acute in the 1980's with huge arms expenditure and budget, trade and balance of payments deficits. This economic reality coupled with

the massive and costly stockpile of nuclear weapons not only posed a grave threat to world peace but objectively laid the basis for change.

And subjectively, the advent to power a decade later of Mikhail Gorbachev paved the way with “perestroika” and “glasnost” for the ending of the Cold War. His new thinking removed ideological struggle from the realm of international relations and re-introduced the Leninist concept of peaceful friendly relations with all states, regardless of their socio-economic systems. Before the outbreak of World War II, class/ideological struggle had been introduced in international relations.

Internally, Gorbachev moved to establish a law-governed state, the separation of party from state and democratisation at all levels of government, management and party. Criticising bureaucratic/command methods of government and management, he advocated revolutionary reforms — democracy and openness and the replacement of “bureaucratic socialism” with a superior “humane and democratic socialism”.

In this situation, the West, which had viewed peaceful co-existence as the “Trojan horse” of communism, was prepared to accept it. The West position can be summarised in the words of former British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher: “I can do business with Gorbachev.”

World Balance of Forces

Since our last Congress, there has been a big shift in the world balance of forces towards capitalism. In Eastern Europe, communist parties lost power. The Warsaw Pact and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) ceased to exist.

Through the machinations and adventurism of Saddam Hussein of Iraq, the progressive forces in the Middle East suffered reverses. The position of Israel and other reactionary forces have been strengthened. And because of the decline in the economies of the majority of third world countries, the political position of the Non-Aligned Movement has been greatly weakened.

With the disintegration of the socialist bloc in Eastern Europe, many western ideologues have pronounced the death of socialism, an end to ideology and a capitalist millennium. Events in the Caribbean Basin — Nicaragua under the Sandinistas, Grenada under Maurice Bishop, Jamaica under Michael Manley and Guyana under the Burnham/Hoyte PNC — also seem to reinforce the view that socialism is dead.

Socialism has suffered setbacks. But so has world capitalism. The industrially developed capitalist countries are presently going through one of their recessionary cycles, with increasing unemployment and insecurity.

“Welfarism” is being eroded and the gap between the rich and the poor is widening. Meanwhile, the dependent capitalist states in the third world, especially in Latin America and the Caribbean, are generally facing a grave crisis. And the gap between the centre and periphery of the world capitalist system is also widening. The per capita national income of the developed industrialised states is about 50 times greater than that of the poorest underdeveloped countries, the number of which is increasing.

With the ending of the Cold War, a new trend of cooperation, instead of confrontation, is developing in world affairs — cooperation in meeting new challenges for the 1990s; disarmament and peace; resolution of regional tensions; environmental protection; joint space exploration; advancement of science and technology; democratisation and protection of human rights; eradication of poverty, hunger, illiteracy and disease; disarmament for development.

Wendell Willkie’s post-World War II concept of “one world” is now translated into the “global village”. Increasingly, events are being viewed in regional and global dimensions: problems such as ecology and the “greenhouse” effect; social scourges like backwardness, poverty, disease and illiteracy existing side by side with expenditure of billions of dollars on arms; the third world debt crisis and its impact on world trade and development; and so on.

Every minute 30 children die in developing countries because of food shortage or lack of medical care; 800 million people live in total poverty; 500 million suffer from chronic malnutri-

tion. During the same minute, US\$1.5 million is spent for military purposes. And US\$200 billion is pumped out of the third world annually.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) emphasises not simply economic growth (GDP) but human development. Its 1991 Report says that human development is incomplete without freedom — the right to monitor human rights violations, freedom from capital punishment, freedom to hold multi-party elections and the right to free legal aid. And realistic human goals must include universal primary education, health care, family planning, safe water, and the elimination of serious malnutrition. These goals are expected to cost about US\$20 billion per annum. This amount could be realised by a 3 percent cut in defence expenditure in the industrially-developed countries, which would yield about US\$25 billion. Another US\$10 billion could be obtained by freezing military expenditure in third world countries.

The UNDP sees that a favourable international environment could create the conditions for a more open world trading system and for a solution to the debt problem. Foreign aid pleas should be tied to human development and increased from the present one dollar in twelve to one dollar in three. It calls for a cut-off of aid if more is spent on the military than on education and health, and for the allocation of at least 5 to 7 percent of the country's gross national product to social sectors. By the re-allocation of resources, it is felt that the sum of US\$50 billion can be found for human development.

East-West cooperation and UN involvement led to respect for international law and the independence of Namibia. It is also leading to positive political developments in Haiti, Angola, Mozambique, Afghanistan, Kampuchea and El Salvador. However, intransigence of Israel is preventing a Middle East solution. Our firm solidarity must be extended to all who are fighting for national liberation and democracy, especially the Palestinian and South African peoples.

The positive developments, along with the worldwide democratisation process, are impacting favourably on situation in Guyana. We must ensure our people's freedom so as to play our role in the serious challenge facing humankind to provide food for one billion more people by the year 2000, without destroying the precious natural environment. We must struggle to bring an end to the wasteful expenditure of human and material resources for military purposes and fully to mobilise science and technology for the benefit of man. Humanity needs North-South cooperation and genuine interdependence. We need under the auspices of the United Nations disarmament, peace and a New International Economic Order.

In some quarters of the West, it is felt that the third world countries must be jettisoned in favour of Eastern Europe. This would be a serious mistake. The suffering peoples of the East European countries must be assisted, but this must not be done at the expense of the peoples of the underdeveloped countries, who make up more than two-thirds of the world's population.

The South needs the North just as much as the North needs the South in our interdependent world. Translated in realistic terms, this means an end to the unjust and inequitable international trading terms, the curtailment of protectionism through tariff and non-tariff barriers in the developed capitalist states; reform of the trade distorting subsidised agricultural products in the third world, thus destroying agricultural self-sufficiency and food security; observance of the UN code of conduct for the transnational corporations (TNCs); and respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of all nations, especially the young and generally vulnerable third world states.

THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

The 1980's could be described as the lost decade for Guyana. The economic crisis of the earlier period deepened. There was a 5 percent per annum drop in per capita income, 2 percent drop per annum [in consumption and 10 percent drop per annum in investment.

By 1989, the real levels of GDP and export earnings were respectively 23 percent and 50 percent lower than in 1980. Real GOP declined by an average 10 percent in 1982-83 as a result of sharp contradictions in the bauxite sector and decline or stagnation in most other produc-

tive sectors. Economic decline was halted in 1984, but the economy remained stagnant through 1987, before supply constraints caused further downturns in 1988 and 1989.

Guyana's external current account improved slightly during 1984-1987. Unusually large transfers helped to reduce the current account deficit from an average 33 percent of GDP in 1981-1983 to 27 percent in 1984-1987. Exports, however, suffered a setback in 1988-1989 and the current account imbalance widened further in the wake of a deepening crisis in the sugar industry.

As a result of the governmental policy of deficit financing and heavy borrowing and sharp increase in commercial arrears (\$1.2 billion by mid-1989), a total public sector external debt reached almost US\$1.9 billion by 1989 or more than twice its level at the beginning of the decade. Measured by the usual indicators of debt to GDP and debt to exports, Guyana is among the most heavily indebted developing countries in the world.

In 1990, debt service payments were 140 percent of exports earnings and interest amounted to 53 percent of export revenue. This tragic burden was emphasised by the report of the Commonwealth Advisory Group (the McIntyre Report): "Even on the best assumptions about export growth, the debt service ratio is projected at 60 percent of exports and this is clearly unsustainable."

Public finances worsened throughout most of the decade. The overall budget deficit widened from 17 percent of recorded GDP in 1980 to 59 percent in 1985. After experiencing a short-level reduction during 1987-1988, the deficit jumped back to an estimated 55 percent of GDP in 1989.

This deficit was rooted in increases in central government expenditure, increased domestic interest payments and decreased revenues due to economic decline and the shifting of many activities into the parallel economy.

The deterioration of the state enterprises also contributed to the budget deficits. Up to 1980, their combined current account surplus partially financed the deficit.

But this surplus turned into a deficit from 1981-1987, when a sharp currency devaluation increased the value of export earnings and resulted in a current account surplus equivalent to 24 percent of GDP. In the remaining years of the decade, the public corporations' operations surplus averaged 11 percent of GDP which was sufficient to offset the dis-savings of the central government and the sharp increase in public capital outlays in 1989.

THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY PROGRAMME (ERP)

The ERP was ushered in by the PNC with a great deal fanfare. The specific objectives for the 1989-1991 were:

1. To achieve real GDP growth of 4 percent per annum.
2. To reduce the rate of inflation from 60 percent to 10 percent.
3. To reduce the public sector deficit to 20 percent of GDP.
4. To eliminate payments arrears.
5. To build up net international reserves

The programme is to be carried out in three phases:

Phase 1: Stabilisation — March 1989-November 1989.

Phase 2: Rehabilitation — 1990-1991.

Phase 3: Recovery and growth — 1992 and beyond.

So far, the ERP has been a dismal failure, as the PPP had predicted. Instead of stabilisation and progress, there has been retrogression: a negative, instead of a positive, growth rate — minus 3 percent in 1988; minus 5 percent in 1989 and minus 3.5 percent in 1990. The projection of 3.9 percent for 1991 will not be realised.

There has been a drastic decline in the production levels of our key exports — bauxite, sugar and rice — levels which reached historical lows. Production in tons was as follows:

Year	Sugar	Rice	Bauxite		
			Dried	Calcined	Total
1987	220,995	131,700	999,000	487,000	1,486,000
1988	167,550	130,000	887,000	452,000	1,339,000
1989	164,000	142,309	974,000	347,000	1,321,000
1990	129,990	94,000	n/a	n/a	1,560,000

Bauxite production is important for employment and income generation. Under the incompetent PNC regime production has declined by more than 50 percent as compared with production levels at the time of the PPP government. Shortfalls have led to insufficient supplies of bauxite to Venezuela for the bauxite deal. The alumina plant, which was opened by Cde. Cheddi Jagan as Premier, is still closed.

Sugar and rice, which account for nearly 16 percent of the GDP and contribute to almost half of foreign exchange earnings, employ 40 percent of the labour force. These industries, which are net foreign exchange earners, have been wrecked by the PNC government despite the fact that shortage of foreign exchange is one of the biggest factors affecting recovery.

Sugar production is the lowest in living memory — a far cry from the 500,000 tons which one-time Minister of Agriculture, Gavin Kennard, in the early 1970s had said would have been produced in the 1980s; or the 250,000 tons at which it was decided a few years ago to stabilise the industry.

The PNC regime has disgraced the good name of Guyana by importing sugar over the last three years for domestic consumption for the first time in modern history. And despite this, it has failed to meet export quotas for the EEC and US markets.

In 1990, rice production was the lowest in 14 years. The general decline led to the loss of our lucrative markets in the Caribbean. Shamefully, we had to accept a gift of rice from Italy!

IMF Prescriptions

The ERP which was fathered by the IMF and World Bank was approved in mid-1988. During the stabilisation period from April to December 1989, the government, with the support of an IMF-monitored programme, undertook the following measures:

1. An initial 70 percent devaluation of the currency;
2. Full pass-through of price increases resulting from the devaluation;
3. A 20 percent ceiling on public sector wage increase;
4. An increase of the prime interest from 14 percent to 35 percent; and
5. The reduction of all foreign-exchange retention accounts to 10 percent of export proceeds with the exception of bauxite.

The stabilisation phase also called for the steady reduction of the overall deficit of the non-financial public sector, and current interest payments to the multilateral financial institutions. The IMF sought a rescheduling of arrears on behalf of Guyana, including a bridge loan to repay arrears to the IMF, IBRD, and CDB, and monitored progress of the stabilisation process.

An 8-nation Support Group, led by Canada, provided the bridging finance. This disgraceful (for Guyana) step to borrow money, not for development but to pay debts, became necessary because the PNC had so bankrupted the country that it had been declared by the IMF in 1985 “ineligible” for further credits and loans.

The high interest rate/credit squeeze was intended not only to encourage savings but also to control the excess liquidity in the financial system, which contributed to inflationary and balance of payments pressures. In trying to curb inflation and the parallel market in currency trading, the high interest rate/credit squeeze policy at the same time squeezed the local entrepreneurs, thus defeating one of the major ERP objectives — increased production for export and foreign earnings.

But the greatest obstacle to rehabilitation was the currency devaluation and wage restraint policy. The exchange rate policy is the central tool of economic management. All forms of exchange management — fixed exchange rate, crawling peg, currency basket mechanism (1984-87), managed float (secondary foreign exchange window 1987) and free floating (Cambio 1990) — have been tried in Guyana with little or no success. Since the beginning of the ERP, exchange was slided at the rate of 250 percent per annum. Much of the steep depreciation of the Guyana dollar over the decade was due to the fact that the people have lost confidence in the local currency. The Guyana dollar has been systematically devalued, especially under the Hoyte administration. The exchange rate is as follows:

1986 - US\$1 = G\$ 4.37
 1987 - US\$1 = G\$10.00
 1989 - US\$1 = G\$33.00
 1990 - US\$1 = G\$45.00
 1991 - US\$1 = G\$124.50

The disastrous centre-piece of the 1991 budget was the devaluation. Its murderous impact is being felt weekly with the foolish decisions, firstly, to adjust the official rate of our currency to the cambio rate; and secondly, to allow the value of our dollar to float.

The incompetence of the government is demonstrated by the fact that the official rate, which jumped from G\$45 to US\$1 to G\$107.75 at the time of the budget, increased to G\$128.50 in less than a month.

The sharp devaluations over the past three years are impacting adversely against consumers and producers.

Taxation has been sharply increased — almost doubling yearly for income and consumption tax, resulting in increased current revenue, from \$3.3 billion in 1989 to \$5.3 billion in 1990 and \$11.27 billion in 1991.

Devaluation is also leading to a massive increase in debt payments, from \$1 billion in 1989 to \$4.9 billion in 1990 and \$12.67 billion in 1991, which is more than the total current revenue collected for the people. Consequently, as a result of the PNC regime's incompetence and mismanagement, the Current Account Consolidated Fund is in huge deficit, increasing from about \$6 billion in 1989 to nearly \$18 billion in 1991.

The PNC has put our nation up to our necks in debts and our people have to pay through their noses.

Business failures and further job losses are contemplated. Recently, 800 bauxite workers were dismissed, and a further 200 are likely to be sacked, adding to the shrinking labour force (in 1983, after a 6-weeks strike against a 3-days work week, nearly 30 percent of the work force had been dismissed).

The sharp devaluation and rampant inflation have drastically reduced the quality of life. Over 60 percent of the population lives below the poverty line. Inflation, which had generally remained within the 20 percent range after 1981, rose to 40 percent in 1988 and approximately doubled to 80 percent in 1989. Presently, it stands between 110 percent to 125 percent. Prices, measured by the official Consumer Price Index (CPI) which was constructed on a 1970 base year, increased by 13 percent per annum.

Wages and salaries have lagged seriously behind inflation. Over the last ten-year period, our currency was devalued by more than 4,333 percent while the national minimum wage rose by 508 percent.

The 50 percent increase in wage and salary has brought the daily minimum wage from \$43.03 in 1990 to \$65.44 in 1991, about the lowest in Latin America and the Caribbean. It is totally inadequate to meet the cost of living and well below the \$193.77 per day demanded by the TUC in 1989 and the \$307.07 pending in 1991. According to TUC General Secretary, Joseph Pollydore, the workers are in "in a state of near destitution" and "incapable" of buying "even basic food"; that Government "has left children breadless and homes riceless because of the inability of bread-winners to buy even minimum quantities for their families". And TUC

President Frank Andrews attacked “the government’s two positions, first; objection to indexation and removal of subsidies and price controls, while imposing utterly inadequate wages and salaries levels”.

The level of desperation of the workers situation can be gauged by the purchasing power of the daily minimum wage. In 1964, the last year of the PPP government, the minimum daily wage of \$4 could have bought the following items: 4 eggs, 1 pound beef, 1 pound chicken, 1 pint cooking oil, 1 gallon kerosene oil, 2 pounds sugar, 1 pound salt, a pound garlic, 1 pint split peas, totalling \$3.99; the cent change would have bought sweets for the children. Today, the minimum wages of \$64.56, worth less than 50 percent of US\$1, can buy about one and a half pounds of beef, or six eggs, or two and a half pounds of sugar. It definitely cannot buy a pound of chicken and is a far cry from the \$200 which is the price for a pound of garlic. However, the PNC elite, like the Prime Minister, can afford chickens worth \$1,000 each in their freezers!

Noting the marked deterioration, the McIntyre Report observed: “But perhaps the even greater loss has been the deterioration in the physical quality of life of the population. Since 1980, average Incomes have fallen by 50 percent; unemployment has doubled to 40 percent of the work force; health and educational services are minimal, and many of the best doctors, nurses and teachers have emigrated.”

SOCIAL CRISIS

Education

The PPP can be proud of its accomplishments in the field of education. According to the McIntyre Report: “Guyana used to enjoy an enviable reputation for its comprehensive and high quality educational system. The country could proudly cite school enrolment and literacy rates of close to 100 percent.”

Under the PNC regime, deterioration in the quality of education has been marked. A comparative study of CXC 1990 results (percentage passes at grades 1 and 2) reveals:

Subject	Guyana	Jamaica	Trinidad	Barbados
	%	%	%	%
English	13	21	28	50
Maths	16.8	25.7	30	42
History	17.9	49	39	54

The same pattern virtually exists for all other subjects.

The poor results are due to teacher shortage and poor quality teachers, poor salary and conditions of work, a shortage of input, overcrowded classrooms, insufficient financing, shortage of texts and exercise books, transportation costs, rundown facilities and political interference. Also, there are too many out-of-classroom activities — parades, rallies, etc. And students are generally affected by the economic crisis and poor health and nutritional standards. In effect, a nation of functional illiterates is being created.

With the prospect of the reintroduction of tuition fees at the secondary and university levels, the situation will certainly worsen. The PPP is totally opposed to the imposition of fees in the public education system. If this plan goes through, many school-age youths, especially from poor families, will be deprived of access to educational opportunities which, when taken against the background of a deteriorating education system, structures in disrepair, inadequate facilities and equipment, only indicate the near crisis conditions that have befallen this section. At the while, the experienced trained and qualified teachers flee the system in increasing numbers.

Health

The McIntyre Report observed: "Health facilities are run down and there is a severe shortage of drugs. Malnutrition, diarrhoeal disease and respiratory infections account for 40 percent of deaths. Communicable diseases are a major problem, particularly malaria and gastroenteritis. Water contamination and poor sanitation are another source of disease."

Overall, the health sector has seen continuous deterioration. Central government's inadequate funding of health care delivery belies the constitutional commitment to free health care. The decay in the infrastructure and social services has conspired to make adequate care impossible. The demand for health care has escalated as the consequences of the ERP, which ravages the lives of the poor. However, delivery of services is contracting in the face of higher incidence and persistence of malnutrition and water-borne and vector-borne diseases.

Thus the McIntyre Report highlights increases in the infant mortality rate and shortened life expectancy.

There continues to be minimal attention placed on the development of human and material resources in the health sector. Hospitals are falling apart and many of the much-touted surgical units opened in outlying hospitals in 1989-90 are not in use.

IDB funding for the rehabilitation of the Georgetown hospital and health facilities is significant, but the proposal has not attracted the support of health professionals. Additionally, the lack of health and manpower development specialists makes the rational use of IDB funding questionable.

A major factor in the poor delivery of health care in the 80s has been and continues to be the human factor. At all levels of the delivery system manpower shortages abound. The Cuban brigade not only assists but is totally responsible in many areas for total care. Wages and working conditions are deplorable and are worsening. The nurses' strike in 1990 was the eruption of smouldering discontent due to inadequate salaries, poor work environment and unsanitary conditions at the Georgetown Public Hospital.

Professionals are thus leaving the health sector in droves and are heading for greener pastures. Nurses, technologists, doctors and administrators are all in short supply. Training has intensified and local efforts have grown but even the recent trainees are leaving before fulfilling their contractual services. As such, many centres in interior locations have been without medical personnel for years.

The most pernicious shortages in the system have been that of drugs and medical supplies. No other factor has been so disruptive as these endemic shortages which have made the function of health professionals meaningless and frustrating. Hospitals have curtailed or abandoned routine services such as dressings and surgical procedures.

Among the most neglected areas are psychiatric care and attention to malaria-infested Amerindian areas. It is disgraceful but true that the mental hospital has no psychiatrist and out of 76 lab technicians in 1980 only 6 are left today. No wonder so many insane people roam our streets and are allowed, due to lack of attention and care, to menace citizens. Only with the removal of this callous PNC government will there be an end to this madness.

Nutrition

Hunger and malnutrition have grown as a result of the escalation of prices and reduction in social services on a free basis. Guyanese working people simply do not have the financial means to purchase the quality and quantity of basic food requirements.

The per capita supply of calories, as a percentage of requirements, declined from 101.1 in 1985 to 70.04. And the per capita daily intake of proteins declined from 65 grams in 1985 to 49 grams in 1990.

President Hoyte recently deemed the absence of food lines as "progress". True, the lines have disappeared. But while there is now an abundant supply of goods in the shops and markets, the working people do not have the money to make purchases. Essential to children's

good health are the proteins — milk, eggs, chicken, fish, beef, pork and the rest. Even lentils are high priced. Most of the lower income families cannot afford daily (or even weekly) supplies of milk for their children.

THE INFRASTRUCTURAL CRISIS

Water Supply

In this land of many waters, the water problem continues unabated. There must be in many of you in this hall who daily trek for miles to get a few buckets of water, which comes very irregularly and often is of poor quality. Many wells malfunction and pumps do not work. In many places, the lines have been broken in desperate measure to collect a few drops of this precious commodity.

An inadequate water supply is the result of managerial incompetence. Millions of dollars of EEC assistance have been wasted. Pure water is no longer guaranteed in areas of high population concentration such as Georgetown, where water coming through the mains must be boiled to be safe. The constant breakdown of the electricity system only aggravates the crisis evidenced in a total shut-down last year of water supplies.

Housing

The housing problem is acute and tragic — tragic because all the ingredients for housing construction are abundantly present: land, timber, clay, sand, and so on.

The PNC has abdicated its responsibility to house the nation. Low cost housing construction has ground to a halt and government's financial allocation for house building has also ceased. The Housing Department has closed down. There is no public housing for lower income groups. According to Joseph Pollydore, TUC General Secretary, "Government has effectively killed and buried deep in the earth or entombed the traditional ambition even among small wage earners in Guyana to own their own homes."

Construction materials are prohibitive in costs. Consequently, working and middle class persons find it impossible to build their own homes. Before the devaluation, for the middle class person to build a small two-bedroom house, he must first have \$100,000 before he can borrow from a building society or bank. And even with a mortgage, interest rate being below the current commercial rate, he would have to pay on completion of the house about \$4,000 a month in interest and capital repayments, an impossible feat, considering his small salary.

In the sugar estates, only two houses were built in 1989, and not a single house in 1990 through the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund (SILWF). Its loan of \$35,000 is totally inadequate. The loan ceiling should be increased to at least \$150,000.

A look at the ads in newspapers would reveal the price range of houses to be within reach of the rich only. With the low construction level, apartments are scarce and rents are extremely high.

The collapse in public housing, coupled with high mortgage rates, has led not only to growing homelessness and rapacious landlordism, but to speculative investment in real estates, catering only for the very wealthy and expatriates. There is considerable corruption in land transfers by the state, and questionable allocations to a favoured selected few of lands even in the so-called "green belt" areas in the city.

Street Children

The street children problem is assuming greater dimension. Recently, a number of local and overseas organisations convened a conference to address the issue.

In May, the police rounded up a number of children with the intention of returning them to their parents. But it was found that most had no parents or that parents did not want them

because they could not afford to upkeep them. But the problem is centred not only in Georgetown. Street children are also found in rural areas. They beg in markets, at stellingen, at the airport and elsewhere, and as they become bigger move into crime in order to earn a livelihood.

Transportation

Transportation in Guyana to and from any point whether by air, land or sea has become so expensive and frustrating that commuting is done only when it has become extremely necessary.

The steamer service offered by the Transport and Harbours Department makes travelling a nightmare. Steamers and stellingen are in a state of disrepair. They are untidy, leaking, and have no proper seating accommodation. There is no drinking water for passengers aboard, while engines constantly break down resulting in schedules not being met.

Unreliable steamer services for far reaching areas as the North West District and Berbice River hinder agricultural production and threaten the very livelihood of residents. Foodstuff and other essentials cannot reach the areas as expected and produce cannot reach markets, thus farmers and residents are leaving the land and are migrating.

With the frequent breakdown of the Demerara Harbour Bridge for long periods, commuters crossing the Demerara River constantly court danger by using private fishing boats at heavy cost.

Road

The closure of the Guyana Transport Services and the increased price of gasoline further aggravated the plight of commuters. Private mini-buses dominate road passenger traffic and travelling has become uncomfortable and dangerous. Accidents now assume dangerous proportions and constitute a state of national concern.

Air

Guyana Airways Corporation as a national earner for domestic flights has reduced operation to almost nil. Most flights are rescheduled or cancelled. The closure of many airstrips in several interior locations and government's inability to service the hinterland has resulted in the interior virtually being cut off from the coastland.

Private charter flights service mainly the gold and diamond enterprises. The cost of a seat on a private plane is prohibitive.

To get in and out of the interior is expensive and time-consuming. Those who are out cannot get in and those who are in cannot get out.

Electricity

Electricity has become a topic on which anyone can talk. "Next to grinding poverty," one writer noted, "the single most depressing phenomenon in Guyana is the 'normal' activities of GEC.

Energy is pivotal in economic and social development. A comprehensive energy policy deserves the highest priority. Unfortunately, the creation and transmission of energy has been a tragic fiasco and one of the greatest scandals of the PNC government, beginning with the horrible failure of the ambitious Upper Mazaruni project and ending with the barge scandal. After 27 years, the minimum requirement of 36 megawatts has not been provided.

Electricity has to be addressed with great urgency and a policy introduced to reduce dependency on imported fossil fuels, thus maximising the utilisation of indigenous and renewable energy resources. Adequate funds have to be committed to electricity generation and transmission with an effective programme of service and maintenance. Maintenance has been visibly

absent resulting in frequent damages of boilers, crankshafts and other components, not to underplay the constant failing of poles causing injuries to limbs, damage to properties and even deaths.

Mini/micro hydro-power facilities are available but these have not been pursued by the PNC government. Indeed they abandoned the PPP's Tiger Hill plan and opted for the over ambitious Upper Mazaruni project which has swallowed fantastic sums and ended as a colossal failure. Rural electrification is still to be completed. Many areas on the coastal belt, including Black Bush Polder, are without electricity. The entire nation suffers regular blackouts. Electricity is in shambles.

The PPP acquired the GEC, managed it profitably and provided reliable electricity supplies. The PPP can repeat this performance and will do so by effective management, emphasising technical and managerial competence and dismantling inefficiency and political patronage, thereby reducing and eliminating the current 35 percent losses and returning the GEC to viability.

Communication

The telephone company has been divested. Yet despite promises by the new owners, there has been no substantial improvement in the service to date. Already, however, they are battling to raise rates by substantial amounts.

The postal service has perhaps affected the majority of us present here — mails lost on the way or arriving very late, and mails being tampered with and money taken out.

Crime and Justice

There has been an increase over the past three years in crime reports of all types, including violent crimes. Armed bandits are on the rampage, entering the homes of citizens at nights and killing their victims on occasions when they encounter resistance. Embezzlement, shoplifting, wounding, assault, murder, rape are also on the rise. Praedial larceny is widespread, causing financial agony to farmers.

Notably on the rise too, are reports of drug trafficking and drug abuse. Guyana has become a trans-shipment point for cocaine from Colombia en route to the USA; and has also become a consumer of cocaine, in addition to being a big grower of marijuana.

Drug abuse has reached the secondary schools, much to the alarm of parents. Some large scale marijuana plantations have been discovered and destroyed by police in riverine and hinterland areas, but the drug keeps coming in significant quantities onto the streets.

A substantial number of prison inmates are there in connection with drug offences, both males and females. Each day the over-taxed courts deal with several cases of drug trafficking and drug abuse, in spite of severe penalties laid down in the law for offenders. The penalties include a mandatory jail sentence and fine.

The criminal justice system appears incapable of dealing with the flood of offenders, particularly to the Magistrate's Courts. In Georgetown, only one senior magistrate and two juniors are functioning instead of the full complement of nine. This results in a tremendous backlog of cases and a build-up of remand prisoners who are grossly overcrowded in totally inadequate facilities.

Increasing poverty is a contributory factor for the sharp rise in crime, juvenile delinquency and prostitution.

THE POLITICAL SITUATION

The incompetent and corrupt PNC is calling for "continuity": a mandate to continue in government. It is ridiculous and a lot of cheek for a party, which has been responsible for so much misery and suffering, even to think of getting the votes of the Guyanese electorate. When the

chips are down on elections day, the PNC will realise to its chagrin that politics is “concentrated economics”; that there is an interconnection and interaction between politics and economics.

The PNC in terms of mass support is now a spent force. It is torn by contradictions and divisions — between the rank-and-file and the leadership, and within the leadership.

Because of its anti-working people’s policies, its 41 percent electoral support in the 1964 elections has been drastically reduced to no more than 15 per cent in the monitored referendum boycott of 1978, and even less as manifested in the low voter turnout in the 1985 elections and low registration in the 1991 voter enumeration in former PNC strongholds.

Simultaneously, at the grassroots level, the PNC organisational structure has crumbled. Party work is now being undertaken under coercion by paid employees of the state — teachers, civil servants, police and soldiers.

At the top leadership level, two sets of squabbles persist behind the scenes — the Hoyte/Green conflict, with Prime Minister Green viewing President Desmond Hoyte as a usurper; the Hoyte/Burnhamites conflict, with the latter, including many who had been cashiered, feeling a sense of betrayal from legacy of the “Great Leader”. This rift is threatening to widen, especially because of the decision to abolish the position of “Office of the Prime Minister”, and find as Hoyte’s running mate an Indo-Guyanese outside the ranks of the Party.

These divisions are papered over in the face of the perceived “PPP threat” and impending loss of political power.

Apart from its structural weaknesses, the ruling PNC has lost the support of all classes and strata of Guyanese society, including almost all those forces which had helped to bring it to minority power in 1964, as “the lesser of two evils” (PNC’s socialism and PPP’s communism). As they fell victims to the PNC’s sins of commission and omission, they threw in their weight increasingly in the struggle for free and fair elections and the restoration of democracy; they began to accept PPP propositions that there can be no development without democracy; that there can be no economic solution without a political solution. They began to realise like the Caribbean Council of Churches mission that the Economic Recovery Programme “will not be successful in turning around the Guyanese economy”; that the political situation which the programme ignores “is too central in the economic sphere.”

Faced with mass alienation and growing opposition unity and militancy, and unable firstly to motivate the people to produce and to provide much-needed revenue and foreign exchange; and secondly, to play the “Jagan anti-communist card” (the old lesser-of-evils blackmailing game), the PNC decided on external aid at any political price.

As in 1964, when it had been put in power and forced to accept the discredited Puerto Rican model of development for its development programme (1966-72) which prematurely collapsed, so today President Hoyte is forced to use an IMF/World Bank programme based on a neo-Puerto Rican development strategy, a “resurrected industrialisation by invitation model with an export orientation”.

The PNC’s relationship with the IMF has been tortuous. It was embraced in 1978 after an external financial squeeze and political pressures which have followed the 1974 Sophia Declaration (the PNC bible) and the 1975-76 nationalisation of the Bookers monopoly holdings and the US Reynolds bauxite company.

Failure of the IMF 1978-81 programme and harsher IMF/World Bank “conditionalities” led to a virulent anti-IMF and anti-USA posture in the 1982-85 period, with L.F.S. Burnham as president and Desmond Hoyte as prime minister.

President Burnham attacked the Americans and told the 1983 PNC Congress that the IMF were “economic doctors, paper doctors, not social doctors” and their prescriptions meant devaluation, ending all subsidies especially those on food, wage freeze/wage restraint, abolition of price controls and reduction in public spending, thus “creating unemployment in the context of no unemployment benefits being available.”

President Desmond Hoyte also was very critical of the IMF conditionalities. In 1985, he told the PNC Congress: “It is against this background. And in accord with our own analysis, in-

formed by the clear experience of other countries, that we have concluded that the standard IMF prescription is not only palpably irrelevant and useless but also positively dangerous and counter-productive in our particular situation. We must resist with all our might the pressures that might be exerted to force us on the IMF's Procrustean bed."

At the same Congress, he also said: "Our economy has taken a turn for the better, when our detractors said it could not be done. We are on the road to recovery."

Instead of recovery, there was retrogression, admitted "chronic economic imbalances" and bankruptcy. Strapped for money, and needing political support after the rigged 1985 elections, Desmond Hoyte once again embraced the IMF. And though he had vehemently told the 1985 PNC Congress that "while the PNC remains in office, the bauxite, sugar and other strategic industries which we have nationalised in this country, will never, never, never be denationalised", he was forced to somersault and adopt in toto the ideology and philosophy of the West for total free enterprise market economy, privatisation and divestment.

ELECTORAL REFORMS

President Hoyte was also forced to concede the electoral reforms that he had refused to carry out for the 1985 elections and prior to the visit in October 1990 of former President Jimmy Carter. We cannot deny the considerable local pressures, mainly from the PPP and our external lobby dating back to 1968, for electoral reforms. But the external pressure was mounted for a variety of reasons:

1. the charge of double standards — [the USA] fighting for free and fair elections elsewhere and refusing to do so in Guyana;
2. with the winding down of the Cold War, Guyana is no longer perceived as a threat to US geo-political and strategic interests;
3. to discharge its responsibility for clearing up the mess it helped to create;
4. a politically stable and prosperous Guyana can be a positive factor and an asset for US investment and trade and for creating political stability in the Caribbean region.

The US human rights crusade did not result in a strong advocacy for democracy and free and fair elections in Guyana, thus leading to the charge, even by the Catholic Standard of US double standards. Some even accused the US of pressuring the Caribbean leaders to reverse at Mustique their strong criticisms of the 1985 rigged elections in return for Guyana becoming a member of the CBI, and Desmond Hoyte becoming a member of the "club" and embracing the political positions of the conservative leaders of the Caribbean Democratic Union.

The democratisation wave in Central and South America and the Caribbean and the democratic upheavals in Eastern Europe in the late 1980s made it difficult for the US to defend their denial of Guyana's right to free and fair elections.

It became untenable for the US to support free and fair elections for the removal of left-wing revolutionary democrats and nationalists from political power, and at the same time condone their denial in Guyana because of their perception that similar forces were likely to win a free and fair election.

With the ending of the Cold War, Guyana was not viewed as a threat. The OPIC representative, after a short visit, declared that the US Government was concerned more about political stability than ideology. And as the Catholic Standard (21st May, 1988) put it: "No one now takes the Jagan threat seriously. No one believes, least of all the Americans, that Jagan can transform Guyana into a communist base. Too much water has flowed under that particular bridge."

But principle was also tinged with self interest: the budgetary balance of trade and balance of payments problems of the USA and the explosive situation in the Caribbean, the gateway to, and "Achilles heel" of the United States.

This was put in proper perspective by an enlightened American, Terry L. McCoy, Director of The Institute of Latin American Studies at the University of Florida, Gainesville. In an article in the Miami Herald (July 16, 1989, p. 6) he stated:

The situation in Guyana is a tragedy but not a large one in global terms. It becomes alarming upon realizing that Guyana's slide into economic stagnation, social disintegration and political uncertainty is a microcosm of what is occurring throughout the hemisphere. And with Argentine inflation running 12,000 percent per year, Peru near collapse and 300 Venezuelans killed protesting a government austerity program, indications are that the crisis is entering a more desperate stage. In this sense, the message from Guyana is that the 1990's will be more than a lost decade for Latin America and the Caribbean — and for the United States — if development is not revived. This is an important message, and we need to listen to it.

In an earlier article in the Christian Science Monitor (June 12, 1989 p. 19) Mr McCoy had observed:

Sadly, the US shares responsibility for the illegality and impropriety which plague Guyanese politics. Now Washington has an opportunity, and an obligation, to abandon realpolitik in Guyana. Past policy has failed to advance US interests, much less those of the Guyanese people. The Bush administration needs to send a clear signal that it supports free and fair elections in Panama, in Nicaragua and in Guyana.

Our General Secretary drew this in December 1989 to the attention of President Bush, who earlier had expressed the hope that the 1990's would be a "decade of democracy".

THE INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN

Simultaneously, the PPP alone as a member of the PCD placed in high gear the international campaign for free and fair elections in Guyana. In response, President Bush fired the first shot by a US administration in the more than two-decades-long struggle for the restoration of democracy. In a Republic Day message to President Hoyte in February 1990, he said that he hoped that upcoming elections would be held according to the norms of democracy. This call was repeated soon after by the State Department through Sally Cowal. Later, the US Congress entered the fray. Eight Democratic Congressmen and six Senators wrote separate letters to the State Department requesting that US aid be tied to free and fair elections. This was followed by resolutions and statements in the US Congress seeking to block aid to Guyana for fiscal years 1990 and 1991. A similar move is underway to suspend aid for fiscal years 1992 and 1993 if the 1991 elections are not free and fair.

A big factor in the Congressional actions was the key role played by Senator Edward Kennedy and the statement by Arthur Schlesinger Jr., historian and former principal adviser to President John F Kennedy, that US policy towards Guyana in the early 1960's was flawed, and that a "great injustice was done to Cheddi Jagan."

US concern for democracy and development in Guyana is indirectly linked to political stability in the Caribbean Basin which in the early 1980s was described as a "circle of crisis" in the US sphere of influence — a region faced with three crises: fiscal, balance of payments and debt; with the 1980s witnessing a fall in real wages and unemployment, in some islands topping 30 percent; with world recession slowing economic performance; with drugs, crime and religious fanaticism threatening regional security. In this situation, as Caribbean diplomat Edwin Carrington put it: Guyana is "a crucial crucible in the regional integration process."

In 1985, President Hoyte conceded only three reforms — abolition of postal voting and restrictions on overseas and proxy voting.

Though important, they were insignificant, so long as the Elections Commission, the electoral machinery and the security forces were completely under the control of the PNC. The other major demands for free and fair elections were not conceded. Consequently, as the Lord

Chitnis Mission, made up of the UK Parliamentary Human Rights Committee and Americas Watch, in mid-1985 warned, the 1985 December elections were blatantly rigged.

DEMANDS FOR FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS

However, the PNC's plans for rigging the 1990 elections were frustrated by internal and external pressures. When former President Jimmy Carter visited in mid-October 1990, he succeeded in getting President Hoyte to give in to several opposition demands for electoral reforms, including:

1. a preliminary count of ballots at the place of poll;
2. a new voters list to be compiled on the basis of house-to-house enumeration;
3. expansion of the Elections Commission;
4. access to the state media, including the radio stations, of all parties.

The results were hailed as a great victory, especially since only a few days before it had been publicly stated that a preliminary count of votes at the place of poll was "non-negotiable", and President Hoyte had described this as a "logistic nightmare".

But everything was done to frustrate the spirit of the Carter agreement. The bill to provide for house-to-house enumeration was presented to the National Assembly on 28th December 1990, nearly two and a half months after Carter's departure. And the actual registration did not begin until 18th February 1991.

At first, the PNC was opposed to opposition scrutineers. But after reluctantly agreeing, it placed several obstacles — scrutineers would not be paid as in 1964; they could not enter the compound or home of potential voters; an alternate to a scrutineer in case of sickness, urgent business, etc., was not allowed; appointments and replacements of scrutineers had to be done at the centres in Georgetown. And during the enumeration exercise, which lasted three months, there was no proper coordination between the enumerators and Party scrutineers — many enumerators could not be found; many others were generally non-cooperative.

All this was done to prevent the proper scrutiny of the house-to-house registration of voters. Experience in the past had demonstrated omission of persons deemed to be opposition supporters and padding of the voters' list with dead, underage, non-existent and emigrated persons.

Now that election rigging through the tampering with ballot boxes will be prevented by a preliminary vote count at the polling place, the rigging of the voters' lists becomes important for the PNC. And this is facilitated by the fact that the registration machinery is still under the PNC control.

Our Party must redouble its efforts to ensure that the voters' lists are clean. A house-to-house survey must be carried out, especially in former PNC areas to facilitate objections and claims during this short period for the revision of the voters' lists.

Our Party must also continue the agitation for more observer teams and a larger number of observers. At first, the PNC was opposed to observers, deeming them "trouble makers" and "meddlers". Reluctantly, they agreed to invite the Commonwealth and the Council of Freely Elected Heads at Government (the Carter Centre). The Hoyte administration must be pressed to invite also the European Parliament, the Organisation of American States (OAS), the United Nations and the Socialist International to send observer teams, as well as others who may wish to come. We must also press for acceptance of local independent monitoring teams.

For all voting places (206 in the widely-scattered interior and 599 on the coast) to be covered properly, it will be necessary to have at least 500 observers. Haiti, with an area a little more than 10,714 square miles, as compared with Guyana's 83,000 square miles, had over 1,000 observers.

Further, we should agitate for unarmed security personnel to be a part of the observer teams, as in the cases of the Namibian and Haitian elections. Guyana had sent a police squad to form part of the security personnel for the Commonwealth observer team to Namibia. And

the United Nations observer team to the 1990 Haitian elections had unarmed security personnel, including Spaniards and Venezuelans.

Unarmed security personnel are necessary because of the long history of PNC-unleashed violence during elections. In 1973, two PPP supporters were killed in Corentyne, Berbice; in the 1980 elections, opposition polling agents were assaulted; and in the 1985 elections, opposition agents were not only assaulted but were ejected from many polling places.

In the case of Haiti, UN security personnel were sent for the 1990 elections as a result of the violence unleashed at the 1987 elections by the Tonton Macoutes and the army.

In this context, the PPP and other opposition forces warmly greeted the statement of Brigadier Joe Singh, who said at a press conference on 22nd October, 1990, on the occasion of the army's 25th anniversary celebrations, that the military would not be involved in the upcoming electoral process but if its services were required it would be involved under the control of the Elections Commission. He assured opposition parties that they had nothing to fear from the army during the next elections. He added that he could not comply with opposition demands that the military be kept in barracks on election day. He said, however, that the army would have to continue its work even on election day and if there was a climate of peace and stability then certainly the army will keep a low profile.

These assurances, we said, about the army's non-involvement in the electoral process "form a powerful limb in the thrust of the Guyanese people for the restoration of free and fair election and democratic government in the Republic."

Our reservations and call for external security personnel are based on the fact, firstly, that the PNC from the early 1960's with its X13 Plan had armed thugs like Duvalier's Tonton Macoutes and Gairy's Mongoose Gang, which in the 1985 elections, not only assaulted opposition polling agents, but also nearly killed our General Secretary and the British journalist, Tony Jenkins, at Haslington, East Coast Demerara; and secondly, some elements in the GDF are wedded to the past when the security forces had pledged loyalty, not only to the government, but also to the ruling PNC and its leaders, when top army officials were members of the ruling party and attended its Congresses.

We must take cognisance also of recent threats by the President of unleashing his dogs of war and racially branding critics as a "putagee mafia." It was fears and reservations of this type that led us to take the initiative of working towards an electoral peace accord.

CONTINUED RESISTANCE BY THE PNC TO ELECTORAL REFORMS

President Hoyte was determined not to remove Bollers as Chairman of the Elections Commission. Here, also, he caved in under pressure. We made it clear to the second Carter Centre mission, headed by Prime Minister George Price, that it had a clear mandate from the US Congress that for an election to be certified a free and fair, there must be an impartial, independent Elections Commission fully in control of the electoral machinery. This position was soon after highlighted by the Commonwealth team. At its press conference, the team leader suggested to remove any ambiguity, the President of Guyana and the new Elections Commission Chairman should make it abundantly clear that the Commission was in charge of the entire electoral machinery.

To reinforce the struggle for the implementation of electoral reforms, our Party resigned from the National Assembly on April 2, 1991. This was in protest against the foot-dragging over new voter registration and the course the PNC regime had embarked upon to prolong its life beyond May 2, the constitutional limit to its tenure in government.

Having started the registration very late in mid-February, it justified the extension of the life of Parliament on February 2, for 2 months, and if need be for further two-months periods up to September 30, 1991.

We issued an ultimatum that unless vital electoral reforms were introduced in Parliament by April 2, we would resign. With the government failing to do so, all PPP members resigned on that date. Our members on the RDC's also tendered their resignations.

ALLIANCE POLICY OF THE PARTY

With the split in the PPP in 1955 and later the destabilisation of the PPP Government in the early 1960's, the unity which the PPP forged in 1953 was ruptured. Our policy since then has been to restore that unity organisationally and at the grass-root levels. Today, we are satisfied, particularly since our last Congress, with progress made to realise race and class unity. In this context, our Party pursued a twin-track policy action programme:

1. intensify the multi-racial character of the PPP, as in 1950-53, through the struggle against all forms of racial discrimination, and pursue multi-racial forms of work through mass organisations of workers, farmers, women, youth, etc;
2. work with other Parties, mass organisations and individuals to build a multi-racial alliance.

Since the PNC claimed it was a socialist party and had a section of working class support, the PPP always proposed to the PNC a coalition government in order to bring about unity of the working people. However, the PNC refused after PPP victories in 1957 and 1961. And in 1976, it rejected the call of the PPP for a National Patriotic Front Government.

In 1977, at a meeting with other opposition forces, the Party advocated a winner-will-not-take-all policy: namely, that even if it won a free and fair election it alone would not form the government; it would include other political and non-political forces.

Since our 1977 proposals for a National Patriotic Front Government, several attempts were made to unite all forces committed to a democratic renewal. Temporary alliances emerged on specific issues like the 1978 referendum but a lasting arrangement only emerged after the rigged December 1985 elections when the Patriotic Coalition for Democracy was formed initially uniting five of the six opposition Parties which contested the elections — the PPP, WPA, DLM, PDM and NDF.

The PCD at first limited its activities to the struggle for free and fair elections and human rights. Later, it was proposed to transform it into an electoral front, with a consensus presidential candidate and also a joint slate of candidates for the National Assembly. The PPP proposed simultaneous consideration of, and work on, a PCD programme.

On the programme, however, agreement was reached after nearly two years of discussion. Our Party in a spirit of compromise agreed to drop its previous insistence on socialist-orientation. Unfortunately, agreement was not reached to publicise the programme, which the PPP wanted. The Party felt the publication of the programme before the election was necessary so that all ethnic groups, classes and strata would see that their interests would be protected. The DLM did not agree on the ground that publication of the programme was linked to agreement on the consensus presidential candidate and the joint slate.

There were differences on the consensus candidate — DLM wanted a person outside of the Parties; WPA at first wanted the person chosen by the Parties, but later changed its position; the PPP was always in favour of a Party person. There was disagreement also on allocation on the joint slate for the different Parties.

The stalemate in the PCD talks was broken when the Democratic Reform Movement, the precursor of the Guyanese Action for Reform and Democracy (GUARD), approached us. But its proposal was virtually the same as that of the DLM and WPA. When the PPP was told that the presidential candidate must be an Afro-Guyanese and the name of Dr. Roger Luncheon was mentioned, the answer was no: he was unsuitable because he was "Black but Red", meaning that although he was an Afro-Guyanese, he was a communist. In other words, the PPP was black-balled on the ground of race (Cheddi Jagan was not acceptable because he is Indo-Guyanese) and ideology (Roger Luncheon was not acceptable because he is "communist").

Our Party could not accept those conditions for unity. In principle, Indo-Guyanese, the largest ethnic group in Guyana would not accept the view that an Indo-Guyanese regardless of his ability, suitability and reliability, should be excluded simply because of ethnicity.

The PPP also noted that placing it in a minority position in the Executive and Legislature was unrealistic and unacceptable. Our position was that in the interest of the nation and the people, we did not want to dominate nor to be dominated in any future government.

The resumed PCD talks also reached a deadlock on the presidential candidate and Party allocation for the joint slate. Both the WPA and DLM argued for Party equality. WPA proposed that 50 percent of the joint list should be allocated to the Parties and be divided equally between them, and the other 50 percent to the civic bodies. Under this formula PPP would have only 12.5 percent of the joint slate.

The DLM's proposal was that 80 percent to 90 percent of the joint list was to be allocated to the three political Parties (PPP, WPA, and DLM) and divided equally among them; and the remainder 10 percent to 20 percent to be allocated to the NDF and other bodies.

The PPP disagreed with the concept of Party equality on the ground of unrealism; it referred to the organisation structures of the US Congress and the United Nations with a recognition of equality and inequality — each US state having equal (2) members in the Senate, but based on population, unequal members in the House of Representatives; the UN General Assembly having a representative from each member state, but the Security Council having only 15 members, with 5 being permanent members with a veto power.

The PPP proposed as its presidential nominee, Cheddi Jagan, in the context of the Party's proposal for reduced powers for the president and a racially balanced government, which it would not dominate; 60 percent of the cabinet and 51 percent of the PCD list (not 51 percent of parliament, and less than 24 seats the PPP secured at the 1964 elections).

After our suggestions had been rejected, we put forward a new set of proposals for a provisional presidential candidate and a provisional allocation in the joint slate in the proportion of 4-3-2-1 for the four PCD Parties (the PDM had dropped out of the PCD) — an allocation which had been suggested previously by one of the Parties. Our argument was that the PCD Parties should contest together with a joint slate headed by the presidential candidate, for the National Assembly, but separately for the regional elections; and to use the latter results for the various Parties to decide on the allocation for the National Assembly and for the President and two Vice-Presidents for a collective presidency.

However, this proposal, based on the GUARD slogan "let the people choose" was not acceptable.

In further discussions on the presidential candidate, the DLM's suggested nominees were neither available nor acceptable. Of the three names put up by the WPA, only that of Clive Thomas was deemed to merit serious consideration. At that point, prominent executive members of the Guyana Manufacturers Association and GUARD expressed at a meeting their preference of Cde. Cheddi Jagan over Dr. Clive Thomas but, through our Party's pleas, were prepared to accept Clive Thomas as the prime ministerial/vice presidential candidate. And since a Jagan/Thomas combination was deemed too left, DLM's Paul Tennessee was added as deputy prime ministerial candidate to give balance to the slate.

On the eve of a PCD meeting when it appeared that agreement would be reached on a Jagan/Thomas/Tennessee formula, GUARD at a public meeting threw a "spanner in the works" by announcing the name of Ashton Chase as presidential candidate.

On the following day, at a PCD meeting, the WPA adopted the GUARD proposal. Thereupon, PPP, on account of the fact that the WPA was substituting Ashton Chase, for Clive Thomas, proposed Ashton Chase instead of Clive Thomas, for the prime ministerial position. But no agreement was reached.

To break the deadlock on the eve of the then planned December 1990 elections, Sam Hinds, who had been selected at a retreat as GUARD Chairman, was approached at our request by some of his GUARD associates, and he agreed to accept the position as prime ministerial candidate.

But the Jagan/Hinds ticket was not acceptable to the McCormack/Gopaul faction of GUARD. They insisted that the presidential candidate must come from outside the political Parties.

The PPP prefers a PCD electoral front and a joint slate. But since its realistic and reasonable proposals are not acceptable, it is proposing to enter the elections as PPP/Civic joint slate, ethic-balanced and class-balanced.

And if, as is expected, the PPP/Civic slate wins the elections, the PPP is still committed, with its winner-does-not-take-all policy, to form a post-election broad-based multi-Party multi-racial, multi-class and multi-ideology government, which is necessary for economic, ethnic, cultural and security considerations. It is also in keeping with stipulations of the PCD; namely, that, if the elections are free and fair, the Parties would contest separately but form a post-election alliance government.

ELECTORAL ISSUES

Desmond Hoyte has said repeatedly that the electoral battle will be between the PNC and the PPP. The PNC is pinning its hopes on winning by a strategy which exploits race, class and ideology and divisions within the ranks of the opposition.

It plans, as in 1964, to play the "racial card", working on fears of ethnic/cultural insecurity. But this is doomed to failure. Over the past decade and a half, racial unity has been forged at the political, trade union and religious levels. And the working people, including both the Afro-Guyanese and Indo-Guyanese, have realised that the state, under the PNC regime, serves not the working class but the PNC neo-comprador elite and the super-rich corrupt big capitalists and landlords.

We have made it clear that the elections will be a race not between the PNC and the PPP but between the PNC and the whole people; further that we intend to establish a race-balanced and class-balanced alliance government, with guarantees of racial equality through constitutional and institutional measures — the constitution providing for racial equality and penalties against racial incitements and all forms of discrimination; the state Service Commissions and employment agencies, concerned with unemployment and promotion, to act independently of the government, and not as under the PNC doctrine of paramountcy of the ruling Party over the state; the establishment of a commission on ethnic/cultural equality; implementation of the US practice of affirmative action; embarking at the grass roots level by multi-ethnic/cultural groups in joint activities such as policing, self-help and mutual-aid projects.

By allying itself with the CREEPS, the PNC is trying to erase its sordid record of political and racial discrimination and to pose as a multi-racial Party; and, at the same time, to create the impression that it is a friend of the business community. But this policy is not working: the CREEPS are isolated, and the business community is backing the PPP as was demonstrated by the recent dinner function at the Tower Hotel, sponsored by businessmen and professionals in honour of our General Secretary. A bomb scare did not prevent a very successful outcome. Our contacts with the business and professional communities have grown since the last Congress and we have been defining concrete ways of cementing our relationship on a genuine partnership based on trust. For this, the wrath of the PNC was invoked so much that right-thinking businessmen are deemed "fat cats" and "opportunists".

The PNC also tried through mischief to sow divisions in the ranks of the PCD. But it has failed miserably. This alliance has continued unitedly to fulfil its mission of attaining free and fair elections and the restoration of democracy.

Aware that he has genuflected and promised everything, Hoyte is pinning his hope for electoral victory on support from western industrialised capitalist states. But, there is a big gap between expectation and actualisation, between talk and action. The fact is he cannot deliver the goods for with mass discontent and alienation, the Economic Recovery Programme has failed to deliver results and is doomed.

However, the dilemma of the ruling circles in America is real. Firstly, while the Democratic Party is more firm, there is a division between the extreme right and the conservative/liberal in both the Democratic and Republican Parties. The hand of the latter has been strengthened by

the control of Congress by the Democratic Party and the admission of the liberal and influential Arthur M Schlesinger Jr. that the US bears a responsibility for the disaster in Guyana.

But rightists would want to project Hoyte as a reformer though they are fully aware that a victory for him is not possible without massive rigging which cannot be condoned in 1991. Consequently, US ruling circles could live with a possible PPP victory, as stated by the State Department representative in April 1990, and in April 1991 and by Congressman Ted Weiss. In a BBC Interview, he said that the current mood in Congress was pro-democracy, a concern about free and fair election, and not "whether Jagan is Marxist". Asked whether the US Congress could condone a replacement of Hoyte by Jagan, he said that used to be a good argument when the Cold War was at its peak; today, if anyone wants aid dollars from the US, he must be prepared to conduct himself in an honest fashion.

In this era when the West can do business with Gorbachev and the USSR, US investors are prepared to do business with a PPP/Civic government. They are concerned more with political stability than with ideology.

At home, however, our detractors are resorting to every devious means to attack us. A small clique in GUARD and the Catholic Standard, for doctrinal and other reasons and hidden agendas, are constantly attacking the PPP with their line that the PPP and PNC are the same: "curse on both houses". While they criticise the PNC, their regular attacks on the PPP objectively aid the PNC. Their "third force" is a sham, like the United Force in the early 1960s which, on the basis that the PNC was "the lesser of two evils", helped to bring the PNC to power. If they fail in their splitting and other manoeuvres to keep the PNC in power, they will concentrate their efforts, even if we win the presidency, to prevent our slate from winning an outright majority in the National Assembly. In this way, they hope to frustrate a new government and prevent it from implementing its people's programme.

In 1985, we had effectively defeated their line that the PPP was "worse" than the PNC; that our Party had pushed the PNC to nationalisation and socialism which they said had failed. Now, their anti-socialist and anti-communist propaganda will be reinforced by recent events in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

Our Party must warn and mobilise the people not to repeat the mistakes made in 1964. Then, because of confusion created by racial, religious and anti-communist propaganda directed against our Party by specially created and financed splinter parties, we failed to secure the extra 5 percent of votes needed to continue in the government. Today, the same type of confusion will be created by our opponents, some with agendas to prevent our party winning the presidency and a majority in parliament. The people here and overseas must be won over on the basis that only under a broad-based PPP-associated government would recovery and development come, thus providing the necessary real stability in Guyana and the Caribbean. We must confound our detractors by a return to the spirit of 1953 and an overwhelming victory!

THE PARTY

The 23rd Congress of our Party, held in the Empire Cinema Georgetown after more than a quarter of a century since the last Congress, was held in this same venue. That Congress marked a new page in the struggle of our party for political power. The fight for free and fair elections in Guyana was launched.

That Congress ended in a high note and the more than 600 delegates and observers, who came from all over the country, departed to their respective areas filled with enthusiasm and hope.

The ever-deteriorating social and economic situation created serious hardships for our supporters and, in general, the Guyanese working class. 1988 ended with a challenge to our Party to blaze the trail and keep our members and supporters in the forefront of the struggle.

Then came the 1989 budget with its sharp devaluation of the Guyana dollar and other crushing economic measures that fell like a tornado on the working class. And the fight-back

started. A strike initiated by the bauxite workers crippled the two major productive sectors — bauxite and sugar. A new wave of political unrest developed and, as the strike continued to its sixth week, FITUG and the PCD joined in the agitation for more workers' solidarity to get the government to withdraw the budget.

For one week every day huge crowds demonstrated in front of the Parliament building in Georgetown and in New Amsterdam chanting anti-government slogans and demanding that the government withdraw the budget.

Country-wide public meetings were held and these meetings attracted large crowds. The PCD staged a march from Buxton to Kitty and from Herstelling to Kitty in which thousands participated.

The demands were popular and much sympathy and support was given to the striking sugar and bauxite workers. Disappointingly, the city workers did not join the strike.

During that period a wave of new expectations spread among the masses and our members and supporters developed a stronger fighting spirit.

Our Party was the major force behind all events and the wrath of the Government then came down on our supporters. Hundreds of them including frontline leaders and militants countrywide were detained by the police; their homes ransacked and searched and their families harassed.

These provocative acts of constant searches for arms and ammunition, hounding down our supporters, detaining and torturing them for days, inflicted mental and physical strain on our comrades. For fear of their own lives and safety, some of our supporters to this day are on the run. Three were arrested, tortured and charged for treason; they spent over one year in prison and after a successful court battle, the "Mahaicony Three" were set free.

Our comrades stood up to PNC-state repression with fortitude and were further steeled with determination to enter the final battle. Our leadership, which reflects the social composition of the entire population, was welded closer than ever. Today our strength and unity has become our glorious banner for final victory!

Organisation

Our organisational activities include public and bottom house meetings done throughout the country. Even to the remote interior areas, visits were made and meetings held. These areas included North West District; Upper and Lower Mazaruni/Potaro; Tumatumari; Mahdia, the Pakaraimas; North and South Rupununi; and Berbice, Demerara, Pomeroon, Mahaica, Mahaicony and Corentyne Rivers.

Seminars and lectures on topical issues were conducted at group, district, regional and central levels; so too were successful fund raisers. To mark the Party's 40th anniversary 1st year, conferences were held in each of the three counties and a special Amerindian conference was held in the Moruka River where a large gathering of Amerindians attended. Picketing demonstrations and vigils were carried out on several occasions on every issue that affected the people, whether for free and fair elections; against the PNC devaluation budget; against increase of electricity charges; or for the removal of Bollers, etc.

Then in July 1990, the people of Essequibo started the first march for free and fair elections. In defiance of armed riot police, over 8,000 persons from two directions ending at Anna Regina, focusing on the five demands for free and fair elections. Similar marches were conducted on the Corentyne, West Demerara, Canje and West Berbice, with thousands of our supporters marching long distances, rallying support for the Party and demonstrating their will to fight on. These demonstrations have today borne fruit: the demand for free and fair elections has been won. Despite police charges, harassment and manoeuvres to block our marches, the masses turned out in thousands. It was not only a people's demand for free and fair elections but a show of strength. Our Party must be credited for the successes so far achieved.

Other opposition Parties and political groupings attempted to stage marches and demonstrations in various parts of the country also. But whatever support they could have mustered

paled into insignificance when the Party sounded its clarion call, bringing over 70,000 men, women, youth and children into the streets in its seven freedom marches country-wide.

Expectations of a date for elections in late 1990 were high but instead came a bogus voters' list. Our Party machinery was immediately thrown into the campaign to examine that voters' list to detect and report the irregularities. They were so numerous that even the PNC admitted that the list was dishonest. President Hoyte, in condemning the list on the radio, blamed the computers instead of Bollers and Jacobs, as well as his government.

Our demand for the compilation of a new voters list on the basis of house-to-house enumeration was achieved. Regular visits and checks in all areas along with group discussions, bottom house and public meetings are used to monitor and assist the process.

Over 900 scrutineers were appointed by the PPP to work along with enumerators on the house-to-house registration of voters in the ten regions. Ours was the highest number appointed by any opposition political party and certainly we had the highest number in the field as compared to other Parties.

The task was time-consuming, tiresome and even frustrating. Three months of constant hassle was a test of the mettle of PPP scrutineers. A tremendous task was accomplished for which our Party pays gratitude to those many dedicated and hard-working scrutineers.

Comrades, despite the successes so far achieved, we must differentiate popular support as against organisational fitness. Our objectives at all times must be to struggle for and maintain excellence. We can only do so by examining our strength and weaknesses and strive to correct the shortcomings.

Membership

Our records show an increase of membership in each region and this trend continued on the eve of Congress and will continue as we approach the elections. But more so, we can say that in the remote areas, such as in North and South Rupununi Savannahs, Pakaraima Mountains, Upper Mazaruni, Mahdia, North West District, Linden and Anarica, our membership is expanding. The PPP has members all over Guyana.

There is an increase of 12.5 percent in the number of groups in 1991 over the 1999 figure. While this is a sign of growth, we must not allow these new groups to fall into the category of Congress or election groups. As usual, some groups do not function consistently throughout the period: there is the fluctuating tendency. Some groups convene a meeting only to satisfy the record in order to show that they exist. There are, on the other hand, the majority of groups that performed creditably and maintained consistency despite adverse conditions.

Come the next election, if given adequate time, our party will be fielding candidates from among its members in every region.

The political climate is conducive for expanded organisational drive. Hostility has broken down in former PNC areas of support; the Guyanese people are looking for a change.

Since last year September, we have strengthened our field staff by appointing nine more persons to do organisational work in strategic areas such as Georgetown, Linden, Upper Mazaruni, Bartica-Issano, Mahdia-Tumatumari, the Pakaraimas, Orealla and North Rupununi.

To monitor and supervise the work in those remote areas, four comrades are assigned to the following regions: Region 10 (Linden), Region 9 (Rupununi), Region 8 (Pakaraimas); and Region 7 (Mazaruni). Despite high costs of transportation and other logistical difficulties, our comrades are pressing on.

On the coast and riverine areas, our organisers often become frustrated through immobility, but now with the acquisition of outboard engines and new motor cycles this problem will soon be over.

Our fleet of over-worked vehicles at the central office in Georgetown needs to be strengthened with some new vehicles. When this is done we would be in a better position to organise and mobilise for the up-coming elections.

Despite the many constraints and difficulties faced by our field staff, it should be mentioned that with the exception of a few, our organisers have so far performed creditably. In addition to paid organisers, we have attempted to recruit and involve group activists in each region to serve as voluntary organisers in a given small area. Some of those recruited have always carried out their voluntary work within their respective areas, though we will have to continue the search for suitable persons to replace those who have not responded.

The prevailing economic crisis brought with it a particular mentality — the fight for survival. It is a situation that affects every facet of our lives and day-to-day existence. In the battle for survival, our members had to surmount innumerable difficulties. It is with grim determination that they forge ahead in the near impossible task to satisfy personal demands and the demands of the organisation.

This is by no stretch of imagination an easy task under these trying circumstances. However, our membership showed their mettle, dedication and commitment as they stood firm against the deluge of negativism that threatened to drown their confidence in the Party. They stood their ground determined as ever to close the final chapter in the battle for democracy and towards a democratic government.

PYO & WPO

An aspect of vital importance to the continued expansion of the ranks of the Party is the servicing of the PYO and WPO groups. Our youth and women sections must be seen as reservoirs of the Party from which it is replenished with new blood, vigour and enthusiasm.

Indeed, the composition of our leadership at various levels will show a greater influx of young people into responsible positions. At every level of our day-to-day activities, our young people and women have been taking on greater and greater responsibilities as the Party gears itself towards free and fair general elections. They have contributed significantly in assisting in the successful realisation of our organisational objectives over the period of years.

In this light, organisers as paid functionaries of the Party cannot neglect this very important aspect of their overall responsibility. The task of the organisers is not limited to that of servicing the Party groups. An integral part of that responsibility is to ensure that the PYO and WPO function effectively. The youth today can become such influential and active factor on the political scene that no effort should be spared to win them over.

In this, emphasis should be placed in supplementing the various initiatives of the PYO and WPO at various levels in the fields. The struggle in Guyana is gaining a wider momentum, the outcome of which will depend considerably on whose side the youth and women will take; and how they will throw their weight in the struggle for democratic renewals. Therefore, in pursuance of our goals, concerted efforts should be made to bring greater numbers of the young people and women into our folds. Considering a number of factors, this will not be an easy task for many organisers.

Therefore, of necessity, it means that organisers must coordinate this work closely with PYO and WPO CC members as part of their functional responsibility. In this way many hurdles can be swiftly overcome.

Party regional councillors

By and large, our regional councillors have served with a fair degree of credit. They attended regional meetings and represented numerous problems confronting the people. Had the government been able to solve the many problems which they represented, their service and usefulness to the regional bodies would have been much more appreciated.

Our RDC members performed well, were sufficiently aggressive in their demands for the people's rights, and many did their homework in order to expose the inefficiencies and corruption of the ruling Party.

Finance

Since our last Congress, the demands on our Party's finance have been stretched to the limit as a result of the massive devaluations within the last three years and the consequential massive increases in the cost of living.

The cost of all inputs for the smooth and efficient running of our Party's machinery has reached very high levels while our sources of income have seen a contraction in relation to demands.

Fund raising, membership dues, and donations continue to be our main source of revenue and this bears direct relationship to the level of our organisation.

With regards to fund raising activities, the following levels of percentage achievements were attained for the years 1989-1991:

Regions	1989	1990	1991
	%	%	%
1	129.4	705.7	[n.a.]
2	200.3	510.5	[n.a.]
3	80.0	235.6	[n.a.]
4	4.3	413.3	53.7
5	54.9	356.0	7.8
6	150.0	182.0	37.9
7	20.5	193.8	18.2
8	17.6	294.6	81.2
9	97.7	310.0	235.0

From the above, Regions 1, 2, 3, 9, have put in tremendous efforts and should be complimented. Note must also be made of the achievements in 1990 when the massive devaluation had escalated prices to the extent that our targeting policy was distorted.

Clearly, it is noted that there was a reduced number of fund raising activities for many reasons, particularly at the beginning of the reporting period.

However, now that elections are in the making, there is a concerted effort from our membership as well as well-wishers to raise adequate funds.

The coming period in our fund raising activities will be very decisive in our quest for political power. In this election every dollar and every vote counts!

Information and publicity

The Information and Publicity Department over the past three years dealt with many key aspects of Party's image, policies, tactics and strategy. This was done through the utilisation of the press, the radio, the TV, the video, handbills, posters, pamphlets, booklets. Also utilised were articles specially written in response to changing circumstances within and outside of Guyana; plus interviews with foreign and local journalists and appearances on local and foreign TV programmes.

Streams of letters to the press were written by leading Party persons in response to the fulminations of critics.

The department held two writers' conferences in 1990, one in Demerara and the other in Essequibo. Another is billed for Berbice. A writers' conference was venued in Georgetown in 1989.

After some five years of waiting, the new press for New Guyana Company Ltd. (printers of the Sunday Mirror) was commissioned. Management and the editorial staff envisage a 16-page issue in due course on Sundays and a return to week-day production as formerly. The logistics of these changes are being worked out. Our press is the most modern in Guyana today.

We are planning to install a fax machine shortly to afford us instant and efficient communication with our overseas contacts equipped with similar machines. This will enable us to speedily disseminate information and to receive same. This project is in an advanced stage.

We are looking into the idea of having Sunday Mirror airlifted to North America and sold in certain bookstores in the close proximity of Guyanese communities. This project is being put to our support group representatives who are in Guyana for Congress. Their advice is crucial.

We have produced a draft of a new Party programme and are working on a manifesto for the upcoming election campaign. We have also drawn up a "Declaration of Principles" which will be distributed shortly.

We have provided information kits to the foreign observer teams visiting Guyana and have produced a journal which we call "Election Update" oriented mainly to overseas circles. This journal is much in demand in the USA, UK and Canada.

We are looking into the possibility of starting and maintaining a news service. This project will enable us to reach large circulation mass media in the Caribbean and further afield in a speedy manner.

Our efforts to get the government to free up the state owned media have not borne much fruit. Instead of acceding to our legitimate demands, government has set up a partisan committee to take testimony from the public on this and other issues, including legislation for radio, and television. The entire opposition is boycotting this absurd committee.

We have set up a public relations unit within the department, headed by a member of the Party executive. This unit is engaged in day to day monitoring of events, making or advising on appropriate responses, and beaming a correct and positive image of our Party and its leadership. Our Party continues to publish monthly for overseas distribution the Guyana Information Bulletin which keeps recipients updated on events in Guyana.

Also in the planning stage is a restructuring of the format of Thunder and the broadening of the base of the articles carried in it. This project is due for completion.

Interior Special, growing in circulation, continues to be published quarterly — special to Amerindian residents of the interior.

Educational work

International and national developments had their effects on Party's educational activities, which, inevitably and largely, were of secondary interest. Despite the new conditions, the Party's educational work continued, though we were compelled to make adjustments to many of the programmes which, in earlier periods, we had put in place and sustained.

Between 1988 to date, our school, Accabre, held 32 basic, advanced and orientation courses of two and three weeks duration to which over 390 comrades attended. These were from the ranks of the Party and its sections and from the working class. Due to attendance difficulties beginning 1991, we had to limit separate courses and begin experimenting with joint courses between members and workers.

Apart from Accabre, seminars also continued as a major supplementary form of our educational work and these catered for workers, supporters and members. These seminars dealt with a range of subjects including PPP's history, political developments, divestment, socialist theory, working mass organisations, etc.; and in 1990 a number of special seminars were held on the occasion of the PPP's 40th anniversary. Seminars were largely one-day events though some were based on a 5-subjects series, and hundreds were brought together in various Party regions, except in those facing organisational difficulties.

In addition to centrally-planned activities, groups and districts also took some initiatives, but for reasons earlier mentioned, these grew less and less in time. A vibrant system of literature distribution continued up to 1989, waned in 1990 and petered out in 1991 mainly because literature supplies are reduced or no longer forthcoming. Individual comrades, interested friends, organisations and little libraries we were cultivating would, no doubt, be affected by our inability to continue this work.

Our scholarship programmes for 9-months courses and university also continued until 1989 and then began to encounter problems. In 1990, there was no offer of scholarships and in 1991 because there was no suitably qualified candidate who was recommended before the set deadline, we could not have taken up the offer for Lumumba University. Nevertheless, in the period under review, some 20 persons attended seminars or courses overseas. In the meantime, too, some university students have been returning home and expectedly they are making a sterling contribution to the Party's overall work. The situation concerning scholarships at this time appears uncertain, though we do intend to take up offers whenever this is possible.

International activities

Over the past three years, the dramatic and significant changes at the international level have impacted profoundly on the international activities of our Party. At the same time, the national situation which continues to be characterised by the economic and social crises has acted as a disincentive to the active participation of the popular mass traditional solidarity activities.

These setbacks notwithstanding, it must be emphasised that during the period under review our Party has played a visible role in the promotion and organisation of solidarity activities and demonstrations.

The Party has been instrumental in assisting the Friendship Societies and other solidarity committees in realising their programme of activities.

During the period under review, we attended the congresses of several fraternal parties in Latin America and Europe. Messages of greetings were also despatched to those congresses which we could not attend.

The Thunder and Mirror have both played an important role in publicising the international activities of our Party.

A successful theoretical and ideological conference was held in 1989 to assess the developments in Eastern Europe and the USSR. Participants benefited tremendously from the discussions. The International Affairs Committee also played a major role in the successful realisation of the symposium on "Race and Class" held in 1989 and sponsored by the Thunder and the Race Relations Committee of the Party.

Our campaign overseas for free and fair elections occupied the greater portion of our time and focus since the 23rd Party Congress. This campaign has now reached unprecedented heights. Our overseas-based support groups have played a major role in bringing the campaign to this level. These groups have been active on other fronts and continue to lobby important personalities, government and non-governmental organisations in the countries where they are based.

Our Party's presence in Nicaragua as an observer for the 1990 elections has proven extremely useful in our own struggle for free and fair elections. And our Party's lobbying activities at Caricom summits and in member countries themselves have served to win more sympathy and solidarity with our demands for electoral reforms.

The International Affairs Committee organised for Party leaders and cadres discussions on the events in the People's Republic of China. Internal developments in Cuba and the elections results in the USA and Nicaragua. We have issued policy statements on every major international development up to the time of the Gulf War.

We have had certain lags in our work over the past year but these have not been of a fundamental nature that affected the principles on which our Party's internationalist outlook is constructed.

In future, our solidarity activities must go beyond its present scope. They must be made more attractive and interesting. Suriname, Venezuela, Brazil and the rest of the Caribbean should find their rightful place in the realm of our solidarity activities. We show place emphasis on solidarity with the peoples of Palestine, South Africa and El Salvador.

At all times, however, we must bear in mind our Party's political interests when seeking to realise our international activities.

Ideology

The enormity and rapidity of changes in the USSR and Eastern European countries have opened new discussions on the questions of ideology and the path of social development.

For Parties like ours, inspired by the ideals of a socialist society, new assessments are now necessary, but, with matters still in flux and many issues still unsettled in these countries, it would be premature to arrive at definitive conclusions.

Our embrace of Marxism-Leninism lies in our commitment to build a society free from exploitation and governed by those who produce the wealth. But we feel it is necessary to make a very studious re-examination of the numerous specific propositions on which the general theory and practice of socialism has been based. It will be necessary to review even some of the deeply entrenched previously unquestioned tenets of scientific socialist theory.

The PPP has shown in the past and continues in its policies today creatively to apply fundamental ideological principles within the framework of the specifics of our society. We have always been in the forefront of the struggle for democracy, beginning with the fight for universal adult suffrage.

When in government, our Party made possible the involvement of the working people in management and decision-making. We inserted into the 1961 constitution a Fundamental Rights section and advocated political and ideological pluralism. In terms of the economy, the PPP government developed an efficient and profitable state sector while encouraging the growth of the private sector in industry in pursuance of a mixed economy.

It is because of our creative application of our ideology that we made economic and social progress while in government and remained popular, winning three consecutive elections in 1953, 1957 and 1961. Our creativity also has kept us as the strongest political force in the country in spite of the 25 years of victimisation and harassment.

The Guyanese people cannot be swayed by ideological labels on our Party. They trust our Party for its commitment to the cause of the Guyanese people. They like the PPP for the humane ideals and principles to which it is committed.

As we approach the election, there will be a great upsurge of activities; hopes of victory for the PPP will grow and the response of the Guyanese people will swell. In that situation we must not be complacent and make believe that everything will automatically come our way. We have to mobilise and struggle to bring about the change we struggled so long to achieve, and when that change comes a new and greater challenge to our Party will emerge.

The future PPP government must succeed. And the only way it would is when our Party organisation is strong politically, organisationally and ideologically to give it all the support necessary to face the challenge of nation-building.

Let us resolve to make our Party a stronger and more disciplined force to realise this year this historic Congress theme: Towards a Democratic Government!

Long live the PPP!

Long live race and class harmony!

Long live the Guyanese people!

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