

*"In Defence of the Working Class"*  
By C. B. Jagan B.Sc., D.D.S.

As a result of my letter appearing in the Daily Chronicle on Sunday July 7, 1946, R.B.H. in the Guiana Graphic of Sunday July 14 countered with an article "A Vote is like a Wage". To have arrived at those opinions considering the views expressed in my letter, one gets the impression that R.B.H. is either completely devoid of all sense of logical reasoning, in which case he should not be allowed to abuse the freedom of the press, or that he has embarked on an early campaign of smear and slander.

I am being painted as a visionary who will bring the sun and the moon to the people. He would credit me with a campaign slogan, "A car under every house". It may be useful information that the workers in the U.S.A. at the present time do not look upon the possession of a car as a luxury, but as a necessity. My point of argument was that the acquiring of material wants - cars, radios, houses, electricity, books, pencils, slates, etc. - varies in direct proportion with buying power, which in turn is dependent upon two factors, wages and cost of consumer goods. As long as there is maintained the present condition of high cost for consumer goods and low ~~cost~~ rates of wages for workers, the working class which includes the estate labourers will never have the buying power to purchase his normal wants of adequate food, clothing and shelter, no matter how lavishly these are displayed.

A careful analysis of the article reveals the sinister hand of reaction trying to divide the working class along racial lines. I am smeared as "a champion of a particular race in the colony." To me the alignment is clear - exploiter versus exploited, capitalism and profits versus slavery and the misery of the working class. In this I can see no question of race. It is only to be hoped that the workers of British Guiana will recognize the fountainhead of this racial propoganda, and will realize their power in their votes and adopt as their slogan "workers of the world unite, you have nothing to lose but your chains."

Why mention the 3½ million dollars already paid this year as wages by the sugar industry, when no mention is made as to the

number of workers and actual number of man hours involved? In ~~other~~ other words, give us the figure for the miserable wage rate per hour or per day. Why tell us about aggregate wages, and not mention aggregate profits and the various paddings which in truth are profits but are accounted as cost of production. To state that 80% of the 8 million dollars deposited in the Post Office Savings Bank belongs to the East Indians is subtle propoganda showing that their earning power must be high. The fact is that savings is dependent not only on earning power, but also on other factors as thrift and self-sacrifice. Over what period and by how many and what class of depositors was this sum of savings accumulated? One again recognizes in this statement of savings the creative hand of racial antagonism and division, putting forth the case that "wealth is power".

Fear of insecurity dominates the soul of the working class today. The sugar estate labourer is forever paralyzed with the fear that at any time his family and himself can be evicted from estate property and house. R.B.H. would further prostitute and heighten this fear by rearing the ugly head of unemployment. Mechanization of the sugar industry, he would like to have propogated, would mean mass unemployment. He does not tell us that modern methods of production, will decrease the cost of production and therefore, increase the wages of labour, present profits remaining constant. Mechanization need not result in unemployment. The labour force now used can still be employed at prevailing wages but working less hours. He does not want us to know that even if by mismanagement mechanization of the sugar industry results in unemployment, that the unemployed working class would demand and organize for full employment as one of its foremost rights and the Government of British Guiana dare not refuse to find ways and means for employment. It behoves the working class to become alive to this subtle form of propoganda - the fear of insecurity - employed by the capitalists.

Mr. R.B.H. would have psychoanalyzed men who sprang from the masses and who now advocate the cause of the working class.

These men do not resent their origin because they are not seeking admission into the fraternity of the "Leisure Class", the capitalistic "Robber Barons". The fact is that they do not resent, therefore they do not forget. One forgets and represses into the subconscious only the things of which one is ashamed. This is the time not for forgetting, but for remembering the miserable lot of the ordinary exploited worker.

The time is now for the vanguard of the working class to assume leadership and usher in Henry Wallace's "Century of the Common Man".

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