



GUYANA Information Bulletin



ISSUED BY THE INFORMATION BUREAU OF THE PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE PARTY
FREEDOM HOUSE 41 ROBB STREET GEORGETOWN — Cable Address PPP GEORGETOWN

BURNHAM RULES BY FORCE AND FRAUD IN GUYANA

by Cheddi Jagan

GUYANA goes to the polls on the 16th of July, 1973. The major issue is the election process itself.

The Constitution guarantees one man, one vote. But electoral fraud and corruption have been established against the ruling People's National Congress beyond doubt.

On May, 26th, 1973, the Prime Minister in announcing the date of the General election stated that in 1968 "there were some irregularities in the compilation of the overseas register" and assured the public that "the arrangements for overseas voting would provide safeguards against irregularities". The regularities were exposed by the Granada Television Company (U.K.) in their two half-hour films, "The Trail of the Vanishing Voters" and "the Making of a Prime Minister", which disclosed that of the 68, 588 overseas votes, only about 30,000 were genuine. But over 36,000 voted! The P.N.C. gave itself 95 per cent of these postal votes.

Soon afterwards Minister of Home Affairs, Oscar Clarke, attempted in the National Assembly to shift the blame for the irregularities to the registration agents, who he said had padded the lists because of payments on the basis of the number of persons registered.

The Registration Agents however, were appointed by Government Officers. In one case, one Joe Hughes registered only 41 persons and he doubted that over 200 persons could have been on the voters list for Wolverhampton in England. Yet no one was prosecuted for adding the phantom voters to the list.

It was the very Minister who dismissed as trifles the demands of the People's Progressive Party for electoral reforms which included a new voters list impartially compiled, an impartial Elections Commission; an end to overseas voting, and an end to proxy voting.

OVERSEAS REGISTER

Despite the assurances of the Prime Minister, the 1973 voters lists are again padded as in 1968. An examination of the overseas register confirm the the worst fears of all Guyanese who have become familiar with the nefarious political electoral activities of the PNC. Once again it has been a **totally dishonest** and corrupt exercise. The names of many persons appear on more than one occasion. For example, the following names appeared four times:
Vincent King, 72, Leander Road, Thorton Heath, Surrey; Irma E. Nichols, 26, Pamela House, E8; Zobida Gafur, 191, A, Highbury Quad NS; Dwight I Gumbs, Antwerp, Belgium; Allan H. Gobin, 1, Greenmore Road, Enfield.

The following names appeared three times:

Melroy Austin, 5, Louisville Road, London; Joseph C. Austin, 248, Francison Road SW17; Ivelaw A. Bogan, 55, Beniman Road N7; Narine Boodhoo, 180 Maylall Road, London, SE 24; Joan P. Cambridge, 28 Thornton Road, SE 13; Doreen Cameron, 71, Keridge Court, N1; David Nichols, 26 Pamela House, E8; Alfred W. Davilar, 125, Tynemouth, Road, Surrey; Lenore A. Freeman, 15, Grofnel Land N-W 13; Cleveland A. Giles, 14 Upper Saxon Street, Lincoln; Shirley A. Gill, 44 Dumow Road; Claudette Manville, 48 Elsdon Rd. N17; Sylvia Lucas, 21 Cheshire E 2; Edgar Lancaster, 95 Churchhill Road; Inez I. Class, 77 Stockwell Park; Kenneth King, Victory 10; Nazmoon Joseph, 3, Clippendale Street; Marie Jones, 60 Egerton Street; Davis Jones, 60, Egerton Street; Vincent Pollard, 92, Tantallon Road SW 12; Rudolph Perreira, 33, Wesley Road, Essex; Haycynth E. Lawrence, Middlesex; Edgar A. Lawrence, Middlesex; Hubert Lloyd, 98 Victoria Road, NW6; Cyril Mitchell, 53B Morat Street, Stockwell; Bassie Narain, 42 Hullins Close, Hants; Mohamed Nazeerally, 190 Wadham Road, E17; Mirna Persaud, 177 Brecknock Road, N19; Yashnant D. Rai, 37 Somerby Road, Essex; Ramdassie Ramcharran, 33 Alexander Road, Birmingham; Daniel Richards, 7 Grossett Court E5; Anthony E. Seabra, 43 Nevern Sq., SW5; Ganesh Singh, 9A Tudor Road, SE19; Lonsdale Skinner, 12 Rowfant Road, SW17; Muriel Tasher, 79 Mildmay Grove, N1; Badrum Veeraragoo, 159 Dallow Road, Luton; Nella Washington, 91 Tynemouth Road, Mitcham; Sydney Weekes, 55 Orchard Drive, Kent; Menen Weekes, 55 Orchard Drive, Kent.

There was also a large number of deceptive subtleties. For example, male voters with the same Christian and Surnames are apparently married to women voters with the same Christian and Surnames and who in many cases live at different addresses :-

Edgar A. Lawrence and Hyacinty E. Lawrence of 42, Trover Road, Middlesex; Edgar A. Lawrence and Hyacinth E. Lawrence of 41, Frognal Avenue, Middlesex; Edgar A. Lawrence and Hyacinth E. Lawrence of 28, Westbourne Park.

Randolph Daison and Doris Daison of 856 Schenectady Avenue, Brooklyn; Randolph Daison Daison of 759 Vansiclan Avenue, Brooklyn.

Walter Eversely and Daphne Eversely of 1214W Lanvale Street Baltimore; Walter Eversely and Daphne Everly of 108, Holden Green, Cambridge, Mass.

Clement Isaacs and Barbara Isaacs of 457, Prospect Place, Brooklyn; Clement Isaacs and Barbara Isaacs of 457 Prospect Place, Brooklyn.

Eric Joseph and Lilly Joseph of 1719, Park Place, Brooklyn, Eric Joseph and Lilly Joseph of 572, East 53rd Street, Brooklyn.

Rupert Klaiber and Carmen Klaiber, of 85 Banana Street, New York; Rupert Klaiber and Carmen Klaiber of 198 West End Avenue, New York,

Wilton Lacon and Gloria Lacon, of 250, Arlington Avenue, New York; Wilton Lacon and Gloria Lacon, of 8, Howard Avenue, New York.

David Lyte and Eileen Lyte of 414, Bergen Street, Brooklyn; David Lyte and Eileen Lyte of 44 Startling Place, Brooklyn.

Ivan Marks and Gwendolyn Marks, of 805, Prospect Place, Brooklyn; Ivan Marks and Gwendolyn Marks, of 225 - 33 Murdock Avenue, Queens.

Caleb Roach and Wilhelmina Roach, of 451 Willoughby Avenue, Brooklyn; Caleb Roach and Wilhelmina Roach, of 451 Willoughby Avenue Brooklyn.

Compton Vanier and Lynette Vanier, of 286, Park Place, Brooklyn; Compton Vanier and Lynette Vanier of 192, East 35th Street, Brooklyn.

Edward Walcott and Matilda Walcott of 1131, Broadway, Brooklyn; Edward Walcott and Matilda Walcott of 1131, Broadway, Brooklyn.

Wilson Welch and Brenda Welch of 137-24 161 Street, Jamaica, Queens; Wilson Welch and Brenda Welch of 1596 Pacific Street, Brooklyn.

Georget France and Kathleen France of 86 Woodmount Avenue, Toronto; George France and

Kathleen France of 484, Manning Avenue, Toronto.

Leyland Lovell and Lorraine Lovell of 2740 Marie Street, Ottawa, Canada, and
Leyland Lovell and Lorraine Lovell of 2740, Main Street, Ottawa, Canada.

are
There/also many instances where the same names of person are entered on the Register with different addresses such as:-

Daphne E. Marshall, Nurse, 2 Stockwell Park, Road SW9; Daphne E. Marshall, Nurse, 117, Wilson Road, W14; Daphne E. Marshall, Nurse, 25 Frinton Road, SW 17.

are
There/also several cases where the names of persons appear with slight variations in different part of the Register, for example:-

Joyce V. Hintzen, 9, Chester Road, Edmonton N9 (Nurse)
Joyce V. Huntzen, 9, Chester Road, Edmonton N9 (Nurse)

Chunilall Hanoman, 25, Queens Road, Surrey, (Chemist)
Chunilall Honoman, 25, Queens Road, Surrey, (Chemist)

No doubt similar fraudulent techniques must have been used in the registration of thousands of nonexistent persons. Of course, it is impracticable for the extent of fraudulent registration in this respect to be precisely determined, having regard to the late release of the overseas lists, and the fact that they have not been posted up overseas during the time of revision.

When the large number of 'repeated' names on the overseas register was exposed publicly, the Chief Election Officer remarked that they were typhographical errors! But that was a lame excuse as each name, whether repeated once, twice three or four times, bears its separate registration number, which means that each name/^{is} recorded as a separate voter.

LOCAL ROLL PADDED.

As regards the local registration lists, there are also grave irregularities which have become apparent. The preliminary electoral register, including the declared 33,546 overseas voters, is estimated at 408,000. The preliminary local register of 374,000 is nearly 75,000 more than it was in 1968; this is 24.6 percent increase in the five year period, 1969 - 73, quite a fantastic feat considering a net population increase of 2.5 per cent per year. This steep increase is all the more fictitious since it is built on the 1968 electoral roll, which itself was padded (a 24 per cent increase in the four year period 1964 - 68 as compared with the 19 per cent increase for the 11 year period, 1953 - 64).

Nothing but massive padding of the voters lists can explain the increase of 75,000 in the local electoral list.

According to the Preliminary Census Report 1970, the population at the end of 1970 was 714,000. With a net population increase of 2.5 per cent per annum, the total population at mid-1973 should be 759,523. Subtracting from this total 17,500 for emigration (according to the draft Second Development Plan 1972 - 1976, a net migration was over 7000 per year in 1970), total net population at mid-1973 should be 742,023. This means a net population increase of 38,833 between 1968 and 1973 since according to the Quarterly Statistical Digest of the Ministry of Economic Development, the population at the end of 1968 was 703,190. With about 60 percent of the population below 21, a population increase of 38, 833 should mean an increase in the voting population of about 15,333 (this assumes that all who reached the qualifying age of 21 were registered; in fact, many eligible persons do not appear on the lists). Yet, about 75,000 new voters were added to the local electoral roll!

All over the country, nests of phantom voters have been discovered. In Wakenaam registration District No. 33, the PPP uncovered 122 nonexistent voters. In District No. 1, Corentyne River, its activists objected to 147 names of dead persons, The Div-

isational Officers accepted 77 of these objections, but at 7 p.m. he refused to consider the other names objected to. In another case, New Hope, East Bank, Demerara, 100 objections were filed by the PPP (the party had to limit its objections to the thousands of phantom names as each objection requires a payment of \$5.00) The Party activists had checked and double checked the names, and were certain that the persons never lived in the village at any time and were totally unknown to any one in the village of 700 persons. The Registration Officers sent out notices by registered letters to the 100 names to attend his Court. All the envelopes were returned to him, undelivered, but the Post Office stamped the envelopes "removed"; "no forwarding address". The Lawyer argued that the fact that all 100 names could not be found and statement that they were unknown to the Villagers were sufficient proof of their nonexistence. But this was disallowed. The phantom names remain on the lists.

ELECTIONS COMMISSION.

Representations to the Elections Commission which is charged under the Constitution with supervision and control of elections to ensure fairness and impartially have merely drawn the reply that the Commission has no executive power, and that the representations of the three opposition political parties would be referred to the Minister of Home Affairs and the Chief Elections Officer; the Minister is a candidate of the PNC in the elections!

The Powers of the Commission have been eroded by the PNC. And even the little powers it has is not being exercised because of PNC domination and control.

The Government has introduced a new system of postal voting in place of certain features of the much-abused proxy system of voting. It has been condemned by the three opposition parties. Referring to postal voting as a ruse and fraud, the same as proxy voting inside Guyana and postal voting overseas in 1968, the PPP and the Liberator Party have asked their supporters not to take part in it.

There is no conceivable need for a postal vote; its introduction is another device by the PNC to enable it to hold on to its minority rule. This device has been introduced to prevent direct voting by voters living in Guyana, and to prevent a clear and fair count of all ballots.

The opposition parties opposed postal voting because of a general lack of confidence in the administrative conduct of the elections. They proposed that as far as practicable there should be direct voting, and recommended that transfers should be permitted from one district to another (quite feasible under the list system of Proportional Representation) in place of postal voting to eliminate loopholes for intimidation, bribery and corruption. But these proposals were rejected. Because of these considerations, the PPP commenced action in the Court to block postal and overseas voting.

FALL IN LIVING STANDARDS.

The standards of living of the Guyanese working people have deteriorated whilst the cost of living is spiralling upwards. The housing situation for the lower income group is alarming and rental exorbitant. The Government has failed to provide low-rental housing. Of over 1,300 rentals units in Georgetown, the PNC Government only built 24 over a period of 8 1/2 years. The government only provided 963 dwelling units, an average of 138 units per year; the government is now sloganeering that it will provide 65,000 homes by 1976, an average of 13,000 thousand per year!

Health standards have seriously deteriorated. There is a shortage of drugs and equipment; and overcrowding is rampant and alarming at the government's principal hospital in Georgetown, the capital. There is need for a new central hospital with no less than 2,500 beds for the Georgetown area alone, with more health centres, polyclinics, and cottage hospitals for outlying areas. But in the face of this need current budget allocation on health has dropped to 8 per cent in 1972 from 13 percent in 1959.

In the field of education, current and capital expenditure dropped from 16% under the P.P.P. Government in 1964 to 11% under the P.N.C. in 1973. Of an estimated 207,000 children of primary school age, accommodation is available for only 163,000. Some 44,000 or 27% are forced to stay out of school. The list of passes between the years 1965 to 1970 at the Preliminary Certificate Examinations averaged 9% and at the Teachers Certificate Examinations 8%. The Government has clearly failed to develop the human resources, in the teeth of the P.N.C.'S "New Road" manifesto which promised to provide free education from the kindergarden to university level.

Social services have been reduced from 44.5% in 1964 (P.P.P.) to 37.7% in 1973 (P.N.C.) of the recurrent budget \$14 million in **subsidies** have been cut out.

Essential commodities which were imported have been ~~limited~~ with no ready substitutes available. Prices have skyrocketed and the cost of living has risen very sharply over the last 8½ years.

GROWTH RATE & NATIONAL WELL BEING

The 7 years (1966-1972) \$300 million development plan collapsed prematurely in 1970. Early in 1970 the ruling P.N.C. party claimed that the country was advancing with increased momentum because of the steep rise in the G.D.P. However there was growth but no development; the growth was not in industry and agriculture but mainly in infrastructure (roads, sea and river defences, airstrips and airport; public building and stelling constructions, etc). It was achieved in consequence of heavy foreign and local borrowing which resulted in the public debt jumping from \$128 million at the end of 1964 to \$508 million at the end of 1972. Public debt payments consequently jumped from \$10 million in 1964 to \$35 million in 1973.

Simultaneously with the rise in G.D.P. and debt charges, there came a deterioration in social conditions, rising prices, increased unemployment, rising crime and delinquency, prostitution etc.

The P.N.C. has announced a new draft one billion dollar development plan (1972-1976) But it will fail as the previous plan because the economic planning strategy is patterned after the already discredited reformist ECLA model and based on "partnership" with foreign capital, import bans and regional integration.

The Caribbean Free Trade Area (CARIFTA), soon to be replaced by the Caribbean Common Market has facilitated the branch plants of the U.S. multi-national corporations, which have been established in Jamaica, Trinidad and Barbados. For Guyana CARIFTA has meant inferior quality and **higher**-priced goods.

Economic and social conditions of the Guyanese people are bound to deteriorate further if the P.N.C succeeds in "winning" rigged elections. More money will be required to pay for bigger debt payments (now 21% of current budget expenditure) and a bigger bureaucracy.

Debt payments will sharply increase as 5 and 10 year moratoria on loans expire. Besides, new loans are being negotiated under more onerous conditions - shorter term and higher **interest rates** than the earlier P.N.C. honeymoon period.

The government bureaucratic machine expanded rapidly because of political and **racial** discrimination and "jobs-for-the-boys", from \$28 million in 1964 (P.P.P.) to \$22 million in 1972 (P.N.C.) in addition to \$28 million for increases in salaries agreed to in June, 1973 just prior to the elections.

As discontent increases, the bureaucracy will be further enlarged, particularly the coercive arm: police, magistracy and judiciary, prisons and army. This will mean further taxation and cuts in social services. Indirect taxation, already excessive (customs duties and excise yielded a yearly average of \$24 million during the P.P.P.'s term of Office as compared with an average of \$55 million for the P.N.C.) has greatly contributed to the increase in the cost of living.

Erosion of living standards has led to dissatisfaction. Progressively, more and more people of different social strata are opposing the corrupt P.N.C. regime. This in turn is resulting in denial of civil rights enshrined in the Constitution of Guyana, the silencing of political opponents, the resort to force and fraud, and the trend towards a one-party, anti-working class, racist, fascist state.

VIOLENCE AND TERRORISM

The beginning of the election campaign has been marred by the breaking up of meetings of Opposition parties by gangs of young P.N.C. activists.

A PPP meeting at Buxton on Sunday 3rd June, 1973, was broken up. Stones, sticks and mud were hurled at the speakers in full view of the police but no arrests were made of these persons. Instead two P.P.P. supporters including a speaker were arrested. At another P.P.P. meeting on June 3rd, the windshield of a P.P.P. supporter's car was smashed and another damaged. At one meeting a few days later in Georgetown, stones were thrown by P.N.C. hoodlums.

Meetings of the Movement Against Oppression, Liberator Party, and Peoples Democratic Movement have also been disrupted and speakers stoned and injured.

On Sunday June 24th, as a result of picketing by members of the P.P.P. at a P.N.C. meeting, the police arrested and charged some 38 supporters of the party including eleven juveniles and four young girls who were taken from their beds in their night clothes to the Police Station.

And Legal Advisers were denied the right to speak with the detainees whilst they were being held at the Police Station.

PRESS FREEDOM

By placing restrictions on the importation of newsprint and printing equipment, the P.N.C. regime has severely curtailed the freedom of the press. During the past 12 months the Mirror newspaper was forced to close 3 times, the latest on May 6th, for a total period of two months because of the Government's requirement of licences for the importation of newsprint, printing equipment and supplies.

Government spokesmen claim that freedom of the press is a living reality in Guyana. But that is sheer hypocrisy. On the eve of the elections, the government has seized newsprint imported for the New Guyana Company, the publishers of the Mirror. As a result, the newspaper has been forced to come out in half its normal size, and may have to cease publication before election date. And the P.P.P. will be unable to put out its election manifesto.

Government has also discriminated in the matter of allocating radio time to the political parties. Without consultation, it fixed and then reduced the P.P.P. broadcasts from 11 to 5. The Liberator Party and the Peoples Democratic Movement were given one each, respectively. But the P.N.C. which has the facilities of the government-owned radio station was given 11.

Should the P.N.C. seize power again by fraud, the Guyanese people will face grave peril. Not only will their material conditions deteriorate. Their liberties will also be in jeopardy.

The P.P.P. calls for unity and solidarity to rid Guyana of the P.N.C. cancer.

July 1, 1973.

Copyright © Nadira Jagan-Brancier 2000