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THUNDER

ORGAN OF THE PEOPLE'S
PROGRESSIVE PARTY OF
GUYANA

Hark the rolling of the thunder!
Lo the sun! and lo the thunder,
Riseth wrath, and hope, and
wonder. — WILLIAM MORRIS

JULY — SEPT. 1976

Report of the Central Committee
of the People's Progressive Party
held on July 31—August 2, 1976 at
Tain, Corentyne and delivered by
General Secretary Cheddi Jagan

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Report of the Central Committee to the 19th Congress of the
People's Progressive Party delivered by Cheddi Jagan, General
Secretary.

Printed in this issue of THUNDER is the Central Committee
Report to the 19th Congress of the PPP, held at Ta'n. Corentyne,
from July 21-August 2, 1976. In the next issue of THUNDER, we
will print some of the Resolutions and Messages to the 19th Con-
gress, which will later be compiled as a complete booklet.

In previous issues of THUNDER, we have printed the Central
Committee Report in two parts, but we believe that our readers
would prefer to have the whole report published at one time, in
order to get a more complete picture of the situation in Guyana.

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REPORT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE TO THE 19TH CON-
GRESS OF THE PPP, Delivered by CHEDDI JAGAN, General
Secretary.

Dear Comrades,

Our 18th Congress enunciated and endorsed the theme that
"To Socialism has passed the historical initiative. Its moral pres-
tige 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, de-
mocracy 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 under-
standing is to be found partly in the demonstration effect of the
spectacular economic and social progress the socialist countries con-
tinue 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 contradic-
tions 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 demon-
strated, in moral and material terms, its superiority over capital-
ism and its ability to hold the imagination of people and to
inspire their day to day activities; it has forged bonds of brother-
hood, 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 per cent 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 comes 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 per cent. With only 9 per cent of the world's population and 18.5 per cent of its land territory, these countries had as their share about 34 per cent 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% 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 N.A.T.O. and the Warsaw Pact must be acted upon. Disarmament must become an attainable goal. This is the only way in 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 precondition 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 per cent, unemployment has soared, and trade has decreased by 7 per cent. The economies of some countries (Britain and Italy, for instance) are experiencing tremendous difficulties if not actually retrogress-

ority" 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 vacates 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 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 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 Southeast Asia, the victory of the peoples of Laos, Cambodia and especially Vietnam after years of brutal aggression have 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 '70's, 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 O.A.S. became outspoken against US domination and the progressive movement gained support from wider sections of the people. Today, despite 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 these 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 of 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 seige (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 1960's, were the order of the day. The bullet is replacing the ballot. Imperialism regards the Caribbean and the aspiration of its people with studied contempt and cannot contemplate with equanimity the Manley government even thinking of 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 continues to rise in price. In 1975, there was a decline of nearly 13% in the purchasing power of the exports of the devel-

oping 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% inflation rate, the "scandalous" food importation bill of \$1,000 million, 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 the purchase of imported wheat and wheat flour. The area has a capacity to produce substitutes such as rice, breadfruit, potato, cassava, etc. and even if a 10% reduction in flour imports were made this would amount to a saving in foreign currency of about \$9½ 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 bananas — 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% of families suffer from calorie deficiency; 30% fail to meet adequate protein requirement (meat and fish); 30% lack sufficient iron; and more than 50% are deficient in their intake of the B-vitamin, riboflavin.

The most vulnerable groups from a nutritional point-of-view in protein-calorie-malnutrition are the pregnant and 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 5 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% 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 undernourishment in later years.

Undernourishment 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-1960's.

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% for drainage and irrigation as compared with an allocation of only 17% (actual expenditure about 5%) in the PNC gov-

ernment's first Development Plan (1966-72).

No doubt because of our persistent criticisms and agitation on this point, the Minister of Co-operatives 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% as compared with 55.05 per cent in 1964; for the 1965-75 period of PNC government, the average was 19.38% as compared with 43.55% for the 1958-64 period of the PPP government.

There is still only talk about the Tapacuma Extension Project and the Mahaica-Mahaicony-Abary schemes. Had the PPP government 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% respectively (bauxite - alumina also declined by 15%).

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%, 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% over 1973 and rice by some 60,000 tons, about 60% over the 1973 output; there was no increase in crops other than sugar and rice; and livestock output decreased by about 2% 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% in the decade 1954-64, but increased by only 5% in the first decade of PNC rule.

TABLE 1

P.P.P. IN OFFICE

1961	—	324,745 tons
1962	—	326,023
1963	—	317,137 ..
1964	—	258,378 ..
<hr/>		
TOTAL		1,226,283 ..

P.N.C. GOVERNMENT

1971	—	368,843 tons
1972	—	314,800 ..
1973	—	265,704 ..
1974	—	340,815 ..
<hr/>		
TOTAL		1,289,962 ..

AVERAGE ANNUAL PRODUCTION

1961 - 1964
306,571 tons

1971 - 1974
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, there was a decline. For the first four years of this decade (1971-74) under PNC rule with peaceful conditions, it was 508,447 tons, only 92% 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 were: 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 II
RICE PRODUCTION

P.P.P. IN OFFICE

1961/62	—	128,347 tons
1962/63	—	139,495 ..
1963/64	—	118,349 ..
1964/65	—	163,929 ..
<hr/>		
TOTAL	—	550,120 ..

P.N.C. IN GOVERNMENT

1971/72	—	118,440 tons
1972/73	—	101,433 ..
1973/74	—	107,415 ..
1974/75	—	181,159 ..
<hr/>		
TOTAL	—	508,447 ..

AVERAGE ANNUAL PRODUCTION

1961/62 - 1964/65
137,531 tons

1971/72 - 1974/75
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 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 Co-operative Development Bank disbursed over the past 2-years 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 number of 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 organisation 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 per cent in 1972 as compared with 1971. In 1973, the value of exports increased by about \$5 million or 4 per cent, but there was a fall in the output of dried bauxite of about 18 per cent. Mining and quarrying other than bauxite-alumina products increased by only 2%, and manufacturing other than sugar and rice milling, by about 4 per cent.

From January to August 1975, export quantities of bauxite-alumina fell on average by nearly a twelfth and dried bauxite by

15 per cent.

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% 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 per cent 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 per cent 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%.

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 has 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% of the GDP to 20%, while that of agriculture and industry declined from 50% to 53%.

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%.

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 over-all 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 and 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% of revenue in 1964 to 28% in 1976.

To meet the payments for the national debt, the huge administrative and police-military bureaucratic apparatus, the paramilitary 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%.

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%: 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 hodge-podge 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 Associates 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% 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%. 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% 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 of 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. One 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 become endemic. Administration costs increased from \$16,511,000 in 1964 to \$83,651,000, equivalent to 407% increase. But expenditure for economic development in the current estimates increased from \$4,564,000 in 1964 to \$11,006,000, equivalent to 207% increase. For the 10th Anniversary Independence 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 in that the rise in the cost of living is not blamable 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 Com-

mon 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% as compared with 28% 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 goods 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%.

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 (5.2%) was more than twice the annual average increase (2.3%) for the 11-year period — 1961-1971. 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 was 20 per cent. In the 1-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% 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%.

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 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 to 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 80c. 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% 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% 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 condition 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 license 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% 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 200 teachers in the UK, as has recently happened. Instead of cutting down from three to one the number of Teacher Training Colleges the PPP had 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% of applicants failed to gain admission to the Guyana Technical Institute; in 1972, 600 applied but only 10 were enrolled; 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 co-operative 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", this is also "HEALTH YEAR". But no one would think so from the small portion (5.3%) 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 gov't 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 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. 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, mid-wives, doctors—in the rural and particularly the riverain 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 extravagance 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 programmed 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 "two 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 3 quarters—941); At this rate, it is unlikely that 6,000 will be built by the end of 1976—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 per cent.

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 per cent. 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 claims 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 lifestyle 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 the seven-year period was 814,103—about 1 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 per cent 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 régime 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 co-operative 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-week 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 per cent of the votes cast.

The poll, at which 83 per cent 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 per cent 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 "co-operative socialism," and counterposed 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, Association 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 co-operation but separately at the beginning to forge later a revolutionary alliance of Indian 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 Chile'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 houselots). 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 political 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 active support of UN resolutions on the Middle East and the cause of the Palestinian people, supported after some vacillation the MPLA in An-

gola, 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 under-developed countries, are: diamond, coffee, platinum, mercury, natural rubber—100 per cent, cobalt—99 per cent, manganese—98 per cent, cocoa—97 per cent, chrome—95 per cent and aluminium 94 per cent), 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—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 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 the "treatment" which drove Cuba into the socialist camp, sections of the American ruling class did not apply the sanctions under the Hickenlooper Amend-

ment and the Sugar Act after the government of Peru had seized US trawlers and nationalised without compensation U.S. 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 Surinam 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 Surinam 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 tech-

nique 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.

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 1950's and 1960's, 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 sellout". 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 partition of the country.

Now that the PNC is claiming 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 into 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 PNQ 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 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 crying out anti-PPP indoctrination.

Living in a camp in the Interior with all the amenities and food for one year is not necessarily the same as settling in the Interior. If the government wants settlements in the Interior, it must establish these state and co-operative farms. Or is it because of the failure of the Interior and even coastal settlements — Brandwagt Sari in the Berbice River; Butenabu in the Mahaicony

River; Matthews Ridge in the North West District where the agricultural co-operatives 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 home. 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 Student Society which had been rigged to permit the Young Socialist Movement (YSM), the youth arm of the PNC, to win, 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 govern-

ment; 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 ideologues and gov't 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 imprisoned. The First Secretary of the Communist Party in 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 Uru-

guay, 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; "co-operative socialism" in 1970 when Guyana became a "co-operative 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 co-operative 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, Marcuseism, 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 fury as the most vicious spokesman 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 parties 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 pre-requisites 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.

Marcusism 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 co-operative philosophy is in marked contrast to both the capitalist and communist systems in at least two important aspects.

1. Whether they exist in the East or the West, co-operatives only constitute a small part of the economic structures in relation to the major form of economic organisation.

Whether free enterprise or state-owned, co-operatives havenot come to occupy positions of major significance. It is the Guyana government's intention to make the co-operative 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 co-operative 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 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 stated:

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, co-operative, 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 co-operative socialism, "suited to local circumstances" like "Arab socialism" and "African socialism", nationalised companies are registered as private companies and are to be turned into co-operatives, and workers will own shares. According to Hugh Saul, head of the Guyana Marketing Corpora-

tion. "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 co-operatives 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 co-operatives, 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 Co-operative 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."

Co-operatives are permitted to become shareholders in what should be fully-owned state enterprises — the Guyana National Co-operative Bank, Guyana Agricultural Co-operative Development Bank, Guyana Co-operative Mortgage Finance Bank — and to enrich themselves through state patronage and at the expense of the people.

At the same time, monies invested in co-operatives 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 co-operatives 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-co-operatives, which under the umbrella of co-operative socialism, are breeding a new form of capitalist, co-operative-capitalist, exploitation and oppression.

Our Party must also intensify the ideological struggle against co-operative socialism under which the co-operative 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 it is 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 was 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 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.

This 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 result of the intensification of the political and ideological struggle, the confrontation 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 — big salaries and allowances, and other prerequisites and advantages — acquired during the past 11½ 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 production and productivity cannot be increased without the PPP, it wants co-operation 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 weakness, its extravagance and erratic ways.

In this regard, the PNC regime has resorted to underhand practices, utilising coercion and bribery to induce 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 dirty 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 Cde. 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 strive 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 U.S. 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, 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 emphasizing 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, we 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 difference of opinion about the brand of socialism that would best suit the country. The present PNC Administration is concentrating on a concept of Co-operative 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 "Co-operative 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 stereo-typed, 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 band-waggon, 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 hodge-podge 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 unstinted 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 sellout".

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, 5 seats of the 1953 election were combined by this "gerrymandering" into 3, whilst in our area of strength in Eastern Berbice 3½ 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 was 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 sellout 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 principled 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 re-iterated 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 2 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 of 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 meetings, there is an "educational". Weekend and one-to-two-week seminars are held in the districts, and 2-week to 2-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 defectors, who are now advisers and paid hirelings of the PNC government, are therefore without substance. They stem from the minds of the tiny minority who did not get its way to the Central Committee and was not prepared to accept the views of the majority; namely, democratic centralism, a basic tenet of Marxist-Leninism.

Those who defected from our Party must be isolated. To have followed their unscientific and adventuristic 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 which 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 1940's and early 1950's 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 1936). 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 joining 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 per cent at the top earns as much as 50 per cent 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 make a deal (the Sinai Agreement) with the USA and Israel for which he was attacked by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), and support 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 Chron-

icle" (4/7/76) by Dr. Fred Soakdeo.

Guyanese must be united not only for the direct defense 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 regard, 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 1950's 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 pre-requisites 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 and General Workers' Union (GAWU), Guyana Rice Producers' Association (GRPA), Guyana Agricultural Producers' Association (GAPA) and the Guyana Cane Farmers' Association (GCEA) 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, aid 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 International Women's 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 body-guards, our M.P.'s 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 P.N.C. 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-Leninist 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!

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