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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! thereunder
Rise! with and hope and
wonder. — WILLIAM MORRIS

JULY - SEPTEMBER, 1974

**ADDRESS TO 18TH PPP
CONGRESS**

ON BEHALF OF PPP

CENTRAL COMMITTEE
CHEDDI JAGAN

**RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY
THE 18TH CONGRESS OF
THE PPP**

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RANJI CHANDISINGH, Editor

JULY—SEPTEMBER 1974

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Editorial Note

This issue of Thunder is devoted entirely to the 18th Congress of the People's Progressive Party held at Leonora from August 3 to 5.

The Congress took place a year after the unprecedented electoral fraud involving army intervention, and after the PPP had boycotted the parliament. Congress gave solid support to the Party's policies and decisions.

Attended by over 600 delegates and observers, the 18th Congress analysed and summed up the recent experiences in the people's struggle for democracy and a better life.

The main Congress document — the Central Committee's report, prepared and delivered by General Secretary Comrade Cheddi Jagan — thoroughly analysed the economic and political situation in Guyana in the context of the international situation and the struggle of two world systems — capitalism and socialism.

It also set the general line for Party building and consolidation, which was concretised in various amendments to the Party rules and elaborated in separate reports.

Specific resolutions embodied the Party's views and demands on several aspects of socio-economic and political life.

Delegates from fraternal parties and organisations from Venezuela, Guadeloupe, Surinam and Cayenne attended, while over 40 messages were received by the Congress from parties abroad, including the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. A Pravda correspondent also covered the Congress.

Just a few days before the Congress opened, the police carried out widespread raids and minute searches of PPP offices and homes of leaders and activists including the home of Comrade Cheddi Jagan and Party offices in Georgetown and New Amsterdam. But these attempts at intimidation were to no avail. The 18th Congress was bigger than ever before, highly spirited and conscious.

Space does not permit full publication of all the documents of the Congress in this issue. We offer however the first part of the Central Committee's report delivered by Cheddi Jagan, together with a selection of resolutions.

In our next issue it is intended to publish the concluding part of Comrade Jagan's report.

ADDRESS TO 18th PPP CONGRESS

BY COMRADE CHEDDI JAGAN

ON BEHALF OF PPP GENERAL COUNCIL

On behalf of the General Council of the People's Progressive Party, I bring you, delegates, observers and guests, revolutionary greetings.

The International Meeting of Communist and Workers Parties in which we took part in Moscow in 1969 noted that "Ours was an epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism".

Since 1969, the world socialist system has grown stronger economically, politically and ideologically. By contrast, the world capitalist system has grown weaker, plagued by a deepening structural crisis.

The socialist countries in 1972 accounted for 26 per cent of the world territory and 33 per cent of world population, but produced about 39 per cent of world industrial output.

Their industrial expansion is characterised by long-term dynamism and stable high growth rates.

Taking 1950 as the base year at 100, their industrial growth rate increased to 501 in 1965, 723 in 1970 and 842 in 1972.

For the developed capitalist countries, the corresponding figures were 213 in 1965, 284 in 1970 and 305 in 1972.

The socialist states which constitute the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) have one-third of the world's scientists with only 10 per cent of the world's population.

The Soviet Union alone has one-quarter of the world's scientists, and the numbers are growing faster than in the capitalist states. And its percentage of National Income for research and development is the same as that of the USA and 50 to 100 per cent higher than those of the Western European countries:

ADDRESS TO 18TH PPP CONGRESS

A survey of economic development in Europe in 1950-69 by the UN Economic Commission for Europe, published in 1971, showed that the rate of growth of the gross social product of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries averaged 7% annually as against 4.6% of the developed capitalist countries.

According to the London journal, *The Economist*, in twenty of the largest industrialised countries, "growth has been grinding towards a stop" since March, 1973.

Later, the Economic Commission for Europe stated that "real economic growth in the Community (European Economic Community) as a whole could well reach only two to three per cent in 1974".

In the USA, the gross national product which had increased by 5.5 per cent in the first six months of 1973, dropped to 3.6 per cent in the third quarter and to only 2 per cent in the fourth quarter.

Stagnation or slump has been coupled with rampant inflation in the economic life of capitalist society — a phenomenon referred to as stagflation or slumflation.

The USA, Japan and most of the West European states suffer from "double digit" inflation; namely, more than 10 per cent.

Consequently, as the *New York Times* on February 2, 1974 noted: "What the worker could buy with his weekly take-home pay after allowing for higher prices and taxes left him 3 per cent worse off than at the start of 1973".

Unemployment is also increasing in the developed capitalist states. In 1973, there were three million more unemployed than in 1970.

In the USA, the unemployment rate rose from 4.8 per cent in December 1973 to 5.2 per cent in January 1974, with a prediction of 6-7 per cent for the rate of the year.

Imperialism is dying. Let's redouble our efforts to bury it.

By contrast, socialist countries do not face such crises. In the Soviet Union for instance, all prices are stable, while real incomes rise by some 5 per cent annually.

Medical services and education are free. House rent

"There comes a point at which we must face the fact that business is business, and, if it is going to go on in any event, we might as well get a piece of the action."

Stressing the advantage also to employment, Peterson also noted:

"...the goods that we are likely to export to the Soviet Union are products like machine tools, earth-moving equipment of various kinds, consumer goods, grain products, which are characterised by what the economists call high labor intensive products. In plainer language — jobs.

"On the import side, we plan to import substantial amounts of raw materials which we need, energy which we need, clean energy, I might emphasize. But here again, with low labor content. So I think it is safe to predict that in addition to having a favourable balance of trade surplus, the evidence I think is very persuasive that we will have an even more favourable balance of jobs surplus."

May the Soviet Union grow from strength to strength. Long live the heroic Soviet people!

Twenty-five years ago "peace" was regarded as subversive. When the world peace forces tried to assemble in Paris at the Salle Pleyel in April 1949, many were denied passports; a second emergency meeting had to be arranged hastily in Czechoslovakia for all those who could not go to France.

But in May 1974, there were no barriers; all the delegates were able to meet in the same Salle de Pleyel to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the World Peace Movement.

In our own case the British Guiana Peace Committee, organised in 1952, was used among other fabrications, as justification for the suspension of the Constitution and the removal of our Party from the Government in 1953.

For nine years after the Anglo-American-backed ouster of our Party from the government in 1964, party leaders were refused visas to enter the United States. That they have been able to do so in 1974 is largely due to the policy of peaceful coexistence and detente relentlessly pursued by the Soviet and other peace-loving states.

Detente has been ushered in to European relations as a result of the signing of the 4-Powers Agreement on West Berlin, and agreements by the Soviet Union, Poland and the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany.

Detente and peaceful coexistence have led to the admission of the two German states in the United Nations.

They have led also to the withdrawal, after several years of brutal aggression, of U.S. troops from Vietnam. This was a victory not only for the liberation forces but also for the peace forces throughout the world.

In Laos in February 1973, with the imminent failure of the puppet troops, peace was restored; and in August 1973, the United States was compelled to end the bombing of Cambodia.

Hostilities have ceased and ceasefire has come to the Middle East. The myth of Israeli "military superiority" has been shattered and imperialist-backed Zionist expansionism has been checked. The Suez Canal is to be reopened. Some territory in the Golan Heights area occupied by Israeli troops have been returned to Syria. And the Israeli aggressors have been forced to the conference table in Geneva.

Recognition for the just demands of the Arab Liberation Movement broadened. The tenth OAU Summit denounced the Israeli aggression and called for a settlement based on the U.N. Security Council resolutions, and the Algiers meeting of non-aligned states in September 1973, boldly called for the unconditional restoration of the rights of the Palestinian people and further recognised the Palestine Liberation Organization as their true representative. By the time the decisive military operations by Egypt and Syria during October of last year ended, 25 African countries unprecedentedly broke off diplomatic relations with Israel, thus making it extremely uncomfortable for the United States' policy in that area.

Important to note are the far-reaching measures taken by some other Arab countries which definitely indicate an anti-imperialist direction. The Libyan, Iraqi and Syrian governments have extensively nationalised foreign petroleum monopolies and the latter two countries even have communists within their administration.

On the African continent, significant advances have been registered. While the 10th OAU meeting unanimously condemned NATO's aid to colonial and racist regimes, the armed and political struggles of the peoples of Guinea-Bissau, Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa have been gaining momentum and steadily progressing.

The founding of the Sovereign Republic of Guinea-Bissau in September 1973 has been a signal victory for the national liberation struggles.

The struggles in the Portuguese African territories no doubt have greatly influenced the military coup in Portugal, which has brought an end to decades of hated, fascist rule.

The change of the regime in Portugal will have a chain reaction effect. It will better the prospects for the people of the Portuguese colonies, it will have an impact on the liberation struggles in Rhodesia, South Africa and long term effects even in our own continent.

It must be remembered that Portugal, Brazil, Rhodesia and South Africa had established a South Atlantic alliance of reactionary, fascist states to contain national liberation and socialism not only in Africa but also in Latin America.

And we cannot forget that Brazil, the "gendarme" of imperialism in Latin America is flanking our southern and part of our western borders.

The near-victory in the 1974 presidential elections of Francois Mitterand, the candidate of the left united front of communists, socialists and radicals drove jitters into NATO circles.

Nearer home, many Latin American countries are unitedly defending their national interests and sovereignty.

Despite the grave, though temporary, setback in Chile with the overthrow of the Unidad Popular government, the continent has, nevertheless, made notable strides forward.

Even the OAS has become outspoken against U.S. policy of domination, over the system of inter-American relations. Earlier this year there was even a demand by Argentina and Panama for the re-organization of this system.

Long live detente and peaceful coexistence. For lasting peace, let us fight to make detente irreversible.

But the situation calls for continuous vigilance. Let us not forget that while a section of the imperialists now embraces detente and peaceful coexistence, another section has not given up its cold-war aims. In this period of so-called "nuclear stalemate", it adheres to the strategy of "limited response". It continues with its subversive activities, and where necessary its "limited" or "local" wars as in Vietnam, the Middle East and Africa to arrest the onward march of the revolutionary forces.

In Chile, imperialism with the help of its local lackeys staged a military coup, and established a bloody junta. Democratic practice of long standing has been brought abruptly to an end, and fascist terror stalks the land. The blood of patriots has been spilled, and torture is commonplace.

In Uruguay on June 27, 1973, after almost 75 years of bourgeois democratic development, the Bordaberry regime had established a Brazilian-type dictatorship. The progressive trade union movement has been outlawed, Congress has been closed and militants have been thrown in jail.

The internationally-known Communist leader, Rodney Arismendi and the popular leader of the democratic anti-imperialist Broad Front, General Liber Seregni, have been imprisoned.

We must continue to agitate for the release of Luis Corvalan, Rodney Arismendi, General Seregni and other political prisoners.

And we must not forget the latest violation of international law. In Cyprus, the Greek fascists have staged a military coup and displaced the popular and progressive government of Archbishop Makarios. This is a flagrant intervention which has its roots in the 1947 cold war declaration of the Truman Doctrine. Then, when the containment of communism and revolution was proclaimed, U.S. military aid to the reactionary forces in Greece was seen as the only way to stem the democratic and revolutionary forces. Later, in the early 1960's, when it became clear that the democratic left under the leadership of Andreas Papandreu would have won the elections, the army seized power.

Greece, like Chile and Brazil, has many similarities to Guyana.

We must continue to fight for the restoration of economic and political democracy in Chile, Uruguay, Brazil, Paraguay, Bolivia and elsewhere the gorillas have established fascist rule.

Down with fascism!

Down with the little Hitlers!

Fascism in these countries, especially in Brazil, pose a constant threat to the peace and security of the freedom-loving states and peoples, particularly in our Hemisphere. President Nixon's remark that "the whole continent will follow where Brazil leads" is ominous.

DENIAL OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

In our own country, we have seen, step by step, the outcome of intervention by "doves" turned into "hawks" — the denial of human rights and civil liberties; fraud and force in elections; and clear and unmistakable signs towards fascism.

Not long ago, a leading spokesman of the PNC regime declared that "freedom is a living reality in Guyana".

But a year ago, when the PNC misused the army to intervene in the July 16, 1973 general election, it demonstrated that it would not only deny the right to vote but also kill, if necessary, to maintain power.

Like Ian Smith's, the PNC elite constitutes a minority regime. Its electoral support has dwindled from 40.8 per cent in 1964 to about 25 per cent in 1974.

And soon after that infamous day, it re-enacted the National Security Act.

This draconian measure provides for preventive detention and restriction of movement of persons, control of firearms and ammunition, powers of search without warrants, increased powers of policemen, and so on. Furthermore, the government is armed with powers to make regulations — in situations deemed as "periods of war, threatened subversion and other emergency" — which are even more sweeping and all-embracing. Among these are provisions for

"censorship, and the control and suppression of publications, writings, maps, plans, photographs, communications and means of communication", and sequestration of property.

The penalties provided are extremely harsh. Section 22 (1) states: "Subject to the provisions of section 30, any person who, without lawful authority, the burden of proof of which shall lie upon him, purchases, acquires or has in his possession any firearm, ammunition or explosive shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years or to both such fine and imprisonment and, on conviction on indictment, to imprisonment for life".

Another sub-section states that "any person who is proved to have had in his possession or under his control anything whatsoever in or on which is found any firearm, ammunition or explosive shall, until the contrary is proved, be deemed to have been in possession of such firearm, ammunition or explosive".

This violates a fundamental principle, a "sacred cow" of civilised jurisprudence: namely, that the accused is presumed to be innocent until proved guilty.

Under the neo-fascist PNC regime, the accused is presumed to be guilty until he can prove himself innocent.

There is also the odious provision of guilt by association.

Section 22 (2) stipulates: "Any person who consorts with or is found in the company of another who, without lawful authority, has in his possession any firearm, ammunition or explosive in circumstances which raise a reasonable presumption that he intends or is about to act or has recently acted with such other person in a manner prejudicial to public order or public safety, shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable. . . ."

The Guyana Act is more vicious than its U.S. namesake, the National Security Act of 1947, which "spawned" McCarthyism and eventually led to abuse of executive power in Indochina and at Watergate.

This same kind of abuse and misuse of executive power is growing alarmingly in Guyana.

We must erase this vicious Act from our statutes.

In place of normal democratic methods of political struggle, the PNC regime has imposed administrative methods. And the army, police and judiciary are subverted to crush political opponents.

Police harassment of our comrades continues unabated. Reminiscent of the Hitler youth, PNC and YSM youth thugs are with impunity, in full view of the police, allowed to try to break up our meetings and those of other opposition forces. And the blatant partiality of the police is demonstrated when not the thugs but our supporters are arrested and charged.

Under these conditions, freedom of assembly is merely nominal. Press freedom is also in jeopardy. Pious declarations have been made from time to time. L. F. S. Burnham told parliament in November 1971, that his government had passed "no legislation or done anything to prevent the publication of any newspaper in this country and has no intention of doing so".

But soon after that utterance, the regime in February 1972, assumed powers to control the importation of newsprint, printing equipment and materials.

Because of that control, import license has been refused the New Guyana Company Limited, publishers of the Mirror, to import equipment on which a down-payment has been made. And because of delays in issuing licenses for the importation of newsprint, the Mirror was forced to cease publication on 3 occasions for a period of about 2 months in 1972-73 and for 6 weeks in 1974.

Now, the regime is planning to go one step further, to censorship and suppression. Addressing the Rotary Club in June 1974, Kit Nascimento, Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office said: "a newspaper or broadcaster that persistently and deliberately sets out to frustrate and sabotage Government's development efforts, in my view would have no more right to publish than a citizen to cry fire in a cinema where there is no fire".

They tell the world that in Guyana the rule of law is observed. But an election petition brought by the People's Democratic Movement one year ago has not yet been listed

for hearing! And no doubt, it will never be brought up. The PNC is bent on establishing an authoritarian one-party state, de facto, if not de jure.

Let us pledge to stand firm against the erosion and destruction of our rights and liberties. PNC did not give us those rights. We must not allow them to take them away.

THE ECONOMIC SITUATION

It is no mere accident that there is a definite tendency towards fascism.

Marxism-Leninism holds that there is a close connection and interaction between the economic base and the political superstructure. The political trend towards fascism must be seen as the outcome of the economic collapse, the deterioration of living conditions and the growing dissatisfaction and dissent among practically all sections of the people.

After nearly a decade of PNC rule, the economy is facing collapse. The glib promises have not been fulfilled.

In the preface to the Development Programme (1966-1972), Mr. L. F. S. Burnham wrote: "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".

Later, in 1970, Dr. P. A. Reid, the then Minister of Finance, in his Budget Speech talked about redistributive justice. He pointed out that "development is revolution" and "revolution means a radical change in the values and structures of society. Our political independence can only be meaningful if the objective is to acquire power in order to establish institutions and policies that will lead to a better quality of life for all Guyanese".

Has the economy been established "on a firm basis"? Has unemployment been reduced? Have institutions and policies led "to a better quality of life for all Guyanese"? The answer is definitely no.

Dr. Wilfred David, one-time Economic Adviser to the PNC regime, disclosed just prior to his sudden departure in early 1971 that "we have had growth without development.

The problem has been exemplified by the high level of unemployment and foreign dependency".

By 1974, the crisis has deepened. The regime has warned of a calamity not felt since the Depression Years of the 1930's. And in an understatement of the year during the 1974 budget debate in the "bogus" National Assembly, Dr. Kenneth King, Minister of Economic Development, stated:

"I do not wish to minimise the seriousness of the state of the economy".

The "foreign dependency" alluded to by Dr. David has been further consolidated. Guyana with political independence is tied now even more securely to imperialism than in the days of colonialism. This is being achieved through financial and other controls.

The basis of foreign dependency was laid immediately after the PNC usurped power in December 1964 with the help of Anglo-American imperialism and CIA subversion.

A secret agreement was made with the USA granting it the right to land military personnel and equipment and to build military installations in Guyana, and to fly over Guyana.

The Caribbean Free Trade Area (CARIFTA) aimed to benefit the US trans-national corporations and to establish US economic hegemony in the Commonwealth Caribbean was initiated by the PNC.

The PNC-UF coalition signed with Guyana Mines Limited, subsidiary of Reynolds Metals Company (US), a secret deal which the PPP has refused to sign. Under that deal, income tax of about \$½ million was frozen for 25 years, annual permissions to about ¾ million acres of land were converted into a 75-year lease and the government was committed to dredge the bar at the mouth, and the channel, of the Berbice River estimated at \$8 million.

Monetary controls on the pound sterling imposed by the PPP government were removed.

And taxes imposed by the PPP on W/g business in 1962 were scaled down and in some cases abolished in 1965.

So-called accelerated development has been based on

deficit financing resulting from revenue short-falls progressively increasing year after year —

\$22.3 million in 1965	\$40.2 million in 1970
\$23.6 million in 1966	\$62.6 million in 1971
\$22 million in 1967	\$56.8 million in 1972
\$27.7 million in 1968	\$150.8 million in 1973
\$34.9 million in 1969	\$167.3 million in 1974

Deficit financing has been carried out by extensive borrowing — overseas loans mainly from the USA, Britain and Canada, and internal loans from the banking system and pension funds.

By the end of 1974 the public debt is estimated at \$813 million (of which only \$48 million was covered by sinking funds) as compared with only \$128 million in 1964. \$492 million of the 1974 public debt was external as compared with \$105 million in 1964.

At the end of 1973, outstanding short-term Treasury Bills were \$135 million. These were first issued in 1965 and a large portion is held by the 6 commercial banks, only one of which is local.

As a result of the huge public debt, debt charges have increased from about 15 per cent of current budgetary expenditure in 1964 to 23 per cent in 1974. Should the regime succeed in borrowing the \$200 million now sought, foreign dependency and thus foreign political control will greatly increase. Guyana's sovereignty, like that of many "third-world" countries, particularly Latin American, would be further jeopardised.

Equally, if not more important than the financial controls are those exerted at other levels through administrators, experts and advisers in the economic, security and ideological-educational fields.

David Rose, who had served British imperialism well particularly in the 1954-1957 period was given the key post of Governor, and Governor-General after independence.

Shridath Ramphal was brought back as Attorney General after the collapse of the West Indies Federation when he had lost his job as Deputy Attorney General and had set

up legal practice in Jamaica. Now he holds the key posts of Minister of Foreign Affairs and Justice. It is not accidental that he became a member of the International Commission of Jurists.

It was not also accidental that Sir Arthur Lewis was made the Chancellor of the University of Guyana, from which leftists and progressives like Dr. Horace Davis, Stuart Bowes, Kathleen Drayton and Mohamed Insanally had been dismissed or "smoked out"; that political pressure is now being exerted not to implement the UG Appointments Committee's offer to Dr. Walter Rodney of the post as head of the Faculty of History; that the West German Dr. Horst Bockelman and not Dr. Clive Thomas was given the strategic post of Governor of the Bank of Guyana; that economist, W. Davenport was appointed economic adviser to the Prime Minister and Sir Arthur Lewis was asked to frame the first \$300 million, 7-year (1966-72) economic development plan; that after the collapse of that plan based on the pro-imperialist Puerto-Rican model, there was announced at the time of the 1973 general election the new \$1,150 million 5-year (1972-76) development plan based on the reformist-imperialist Alliance for Progress and ECLA model, already discredited in Latin America, particularly under Eduardo Frei's government in Chile between 1964 and 1970; that the US administration trains our police, army officers and also senior civil servants, and gives aid to the police and security forces.

At the US Bomb School at Los Fresnos, California which specialises in police terrorism in Latin America, one Guyanese policeman was trained. And under the US Public Safety Program, 1961-1972, Guyana received US \$1,299,000 aid for the specialized training of 45 Guyanese policemen in the United States.

These steps were taken to buttress foreign domination. That's why services — shipping, banking, insurance, import-export trade — are still predominantly in foreign hands; why the sugar industry, which employs the largest labour force continues to be foreign-owned and controlled; why Guyana Mines Limited, the bauxite subsidiary of the US Reynolds Metals Coy, has not been nationalised even though it had been announced that the nationalisation

would have taken place by December 1973; why nationalised Guyana Bauxite Company has as its selling agent, Philipp Bros, the US subsidiary of the giant Anglo-American Corporation of South Africa, and as its financiers, the US-government Export-Import Bank, Chase Manhattan and other imperialist banks.

Our PPP government, though with restricted power, was criticized for not diversifying the economy. Today, a decade later, the PNC with unlimited power, admits failure. During the 1974 budget debate, Dr. Kenneth King was forced to say: "I do not wish to deny the undoubted importance, indeed the pivotal nature of rice, sugar and bauxite on the economy".

The sugar and bauxite industries are still primary producers.

Guyanese were told in 1967 that the Aluminium Company of Canada (ALCAN) would have built a smelter in Guyana. Now we are told that one would be built in Trinidad by 1975 under the strategic control of the imperialists.

Although the smelter will be jointly-owned by Jamaica, Trinidad and Guyana, the strategic natural gas will be owned and controlled by the trans-national companies, which will charge fantastic prices as they have done for gasoline, Bunker C and cooking gas.

No doubt, as an after-thought after the PPP's severe condemnation, it was announced that Guyana would have one by 1980! Like so many other plans and promises, this will be believed when it is seen.

In 1968 just before the general election, it had been announced that the Guyana government would build at Tibboku Falls in the Mazaruni River a hydro-electric station, then estimated to cost US \$114 million. Now the PNC regim is still talking about surveys and feasibility studies!

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Falling production has contributed to the grave balance of payments deficit of 1973 which in turn is leading to more foreign borrowing and thus increased foreign dependency.

Dependency in foreign food is also growing although Guyana was touted to become the granary of the West Indies. Production cannot even meet domestic requirements.

Despite bans and restrictions, food imports continue to rise in an economy which is predominantly agricultural. In 1964, food imports, including feeding stuffs, were \$30 million; in 1973, they increased to \$58 million.

The USA not only meets Guyana's food requirements. It is also taking over its Caribbean rice market. By contrast, our PPP government had met the West Indian bulk needs, displaced U.S. packaged rice from the area, and also opened the door of the Cuban market.

Foreign dependency is also characterised by a growing and dominant U.S. influence. This is symbolised by Chase Manhattan Bank and Pan American Airways straddling the two wings of the Central Bank of Guyana Building facing the Avenue of the Republic, and the American Life Building towering over its rivals, even the "mighty" Bookers, in the business centre.

The bulk of Guyana's loans comes from the USA.

And its import trade, about 95 per cent of which originates from the capitalist world despite the claim of non-alignment, is more and more being oriented towards the USA directly and indirectly.

Imports for 1964 and 1973 are as follows: USA from \$33.8 million to \$92 million; Canada from \$13.5 million to \$19.8 million; UK from \$50 million to \$94.7 million; Commonwealth Caribbean from \$17.4 million to \$78 million.

Flour imports have shifted from Canada to the USA. And from the countries of the Caribbean Free Trade Area (CARIFTA), now replaced by the Caribbean Common Market (CARICOM), goods produced by branch-plants of US corporations now displace British goods.

Trade and cultural relations with Cuba, which had been established by the PPP from 1960 to 1964, were completely severed by the PNC regime after it usurped power in December, 1964. And it was not until late 1970 when L. F. S. Burnham was on his way to the Non-Aligned

Conference of Heads of Governments in Zambia that it was announced that diplomatic relations would be established with a socialist country, the Soviet Union. Yet to this date, agreement has not been reached for the USSR to establish an embassy in Guyana, a facility granted to the People's Republic of China. The PNC has established an embassy in Peking, but none in the socialist countries which comprise the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA).

The PNC's recent establishment of diplomatic relations with Cuba on a non-residential basis should not be viewed as an act of independence. It must be seen in the same vein as its vacillating position at the United Nations in the case of the seating of the People's Republic of China.

The Guyana delegation voted against the seating of China in 1967 and 1968, abstained in 1969 and voted for in 1970. Its position was merely a reflection of the twists and turns of US foreign policy.

During that period, more and more countries had been voting for the seating of People's China and the US position was becoming untenable.

Secondly, polarisation was taking place at the UN with the Soviet Union and the progressive "third-world" countries on the one hand, and the United States and other imperialist and "third-world" puppet states on the other. China's presence in the UN created ideological confusion and tended to create division in the anti-imperialist camp, thus helping the US strategy of divide and rule.

It must not be forgotten that Dr. Henry Kissinger, US Secretary of State, in his book "The Necessity for Choice" when he was Harvard University Professor in 1962, referred "to the frequently held view that we should conduct our diplomacy so as to bring about a rift between Communist China and the USSR... of course, the possibility of a rift must not be overlooked. And if it occurs, we should take advantage of it rather than force the erstwhile partners into a new alliance through intransigence".

Thirdly, the objective situation then obtaining necessitated a change in the US political line and the acceptance of the policy of peaceful co-existence towards the socialist world as a whole for the purpose of enhancing American trade and resolving its difficulties.

The PNC's position on Cuba should be seen in the context of US economic and financial difficulties and recent developments in our hemisphere. Note that when the US Secretary of State was asked at a recent meeting of the Organisation of American States (OAS) about US attitude towards Cuba, he remarked that the hemispheric isolation of Cuba was an OAS, and not a US decision, and that if the countries of the hemisphere decided to change their policy, the United States would go along. Not too long after, American subsidiaries operating in Argentina were allowed to sell trucks, motor cars and other equipment to Cuba when only a few years before extreme pressure had been applied on the governments of Great Britain and Canada and US subsidiaries operating in Canada not to trade with Cuba and China.

The PNC regime was obviously given the "green light" on China and Cuba by its US overlords. Having accepted peaceful coexistence with the USSR and China, US foreign policy could gain little from the continued blockade of Cuba. Besides, with CARIFTA and CARICOM outgrowing its limited market of 4.5 million population, Cuba with a population of 8 million looms large as an attractive trading partner. That is why even the Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce now wants Cuba in CARICOM.

Shridath Ramphal, Minister of Justice and Foreign Affairs told the PNC 1973 Congress that Guyana "has deserved and secured the recognition and respect of the international community because of Mr. Forbes Burnham's forthright leadership and his unswerving commitment to internationalism".

A close examination reveals, however, that it is not proletarian, working-class internationalism, but internationalism largely in the service of imperialism.

The PNC government had never taken a firm stand on Vietnam, the most decisive national liberation struggle. It has not recognized the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam (PRG) even though it gave the impression that it supported the seating of its delegation at the Non-Aligned meeting in Guyana in August 1972.

Documentary films brought by the PPP General Secretary from Hanoi showing US bombing of schools, hospitals and dykes were seized and never released.

At the UN Security Council Meeting in Panama in early 1973, the Guyana delegation failed to express the strong feeling of the people of Guyana with respect to US occupation of a part of the territory of Panama. Instead of expressing anti-imperialist solidarity with a "third-world" country by calling for an end to the Canal Zone occupation, it merely parroted the US line for negotiations between the USA and Panama for a new treaty, and as a diversion raised the question of the independence of Belize which was blocked by Guatemala's claim to it.

Earlier in 1968, it had condoned US massive armed intervention in 1965 in the Dominican Republic.

At the Non-Aligned Summit of 1970, the PNC regime announced an annual grant of \$50,000 for the liberation movements in Africa, and sanctuary in Guyana for African Freedom fighters.

But although pressed by the PPP, nothing, not even a token "solidarity" contribution, was given to the liberation movement in South Vietnam. And it refused to offer sanctuary to freedom fighters in Brazil.

It has largely remained silent in the black liberation struggle inside the USA. Not a word of solidarity was issued on behalf of Angela Davis when she was on a frame-up charge of murder.

It had long ostracised the socialist world at the diplomatic, trade and cultural levels until moves towards peaceful coexistence and détente were made by President Nixon.

Before its affirmative vote in 1970 at the United Nations for the seating of the People's Republic of China, it advocated the two-Chinas policy of the US government.

It imposed restrictions on trade and a 10 per cent surcharge on imports from the socialist countries.

At the theoretical-ideological level, it equates, with its two super-powers line, imperialist USA with socialist USSR, regarding both as predatory.

It contraposes the "North" to the "South" ("third-world") and the "developed" to the "developing" countries without making any ideological distinction between the developed, capitalist countries of the North and the developed, socialist countries of the North.

The PPP sees the need for sacrifice, self-reliance and cooperation in and among underdeveloped countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. But unlike the PNC government, we also see the need for the closest cooperation of the three world revolutionary streams — the liberation movement in the developing countries, the socialist world and the anti-monopoly-capitalist and peace forces of the capitalist world.

Vietnam, Cuba and other countries have proved that without the fullest cooperation with, and help from the socialist world and the democratic and progressive forces in the capitalist world, it would be impossible to break the political, economic and cultural domination of imperialism.

The PNC clearly does not follow a principled course but moves pragmatically and opportunistically. Its anti-imperialist pose is the result of a variety of factors — constant ideological pressure from our vanguard party, from other social groups and even from within its own ranks.

There is also the subjectivism of the PNC leader, who aspires for regional if not "third world" leadership.

Pressed by these objectives and subjective factors, the PNC elite is forced to move forward. But it simultaneously comes under pressure from imperialism. It thus vacillates and works within the ambit of imperialism. This has been shown up on many occasions.

It was shown up in the case of the break of diplomatic relations with Israel. L. F. S. Burnham travelled together with Comrade Fidel Castro to Algiers for the Non-Aligned Conference in September, but did not follow the lead of the Cuban leader in breaking off relations with Israel and in denouncing the "two super-powers" line. Only later, when the PNC regime went abegging for a \$200 million loan and must have come under pressure from the Arab world, was the break with Israel announced.

The PNC's foreign policy must be seen therefore as a product of countervailing pressures. Basically, it operates after consultation with imperialism and within the limits imposed by it in accordance with its changing strategies and tactics.

Some may be fooled by the anti-imperialist pretensions of the PNC. But the imperialists are not worried. They know

the realities of the situation. They see arch-conservatives like Sir John Carter, Rahman Gajraj, Rudy Kendall (Sir Lionel Luckhoo was the former High Commissioner in London) and others in key positions in the diplomatic service.

Little wonder that Mr. Ted Braithwaite, Guyana's first ambassador to the United Nations resigned his post and in a recent radio interview stated: "Time and time again I was forced to realise that while I was at the U.N. pursuing what I considered to be my country's right to intervene in certain political issues, back in Guyana other presences were dealing with those same issues..." resulting in his being told "what the American Secretary of State would wish him to do or would wish what posture he would wish him to assume".

No doubt, it was this subservience to imperialism that caused the reactionary United Force to vote with the PNC in a foreign affairs debate in the National Assembly in 1973.

This was also the reason for the Nelson Rockefeller Mission's report being in favour of the PNC status quo. Under the heading: "United States — Guyana relations", the following points appeared:

"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".

Little wonder that the PNC regime has signed with Brazil, imperialism's gendarme in Latin America and the Caribbean, far-reaching agreements in the field of trade, aid, culture and technical training including the military, and cooperation in fighting "terrorism".

Brazil will get duty-free warehouse facilities in Georgetown and in turn will give technical assistance to prepare and coordinate plans for the design and construction of a bridge across the Takatu River which separates it from

Guyana, and a loan of \$6 million for the construction of a highway to link the two countries.

Our fears about the interior highway were confirmed by Alfredo Tarre Murzi, leading Venezuelan Congressman and Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Chamber of Deputies, who declared in November, 1968 when General Jose da Cunha Garcia became Brazilian Ambassador to Guyana that the highway from Boa Vista to Georgetown would be "enormously useful" to Brazil's "aspirations of domination and control over the north-east flank of the South American continent," and would "be a road of political, economic, technical cultural and military penetration into the heart of Guyana". Since that warning, Brazil's predatory influence has been felt in neighbouring Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay and Chile.

We must intensify our efforts to make these facts known to those who have been deluded by PNC propaganda. We must let them know that credit for any positive move by the regime must go to the PPP for its sustained pressure. And we must remind those, who are not aware of developments inside Guyana but are "taken in" by the progressive image created abroad, that like France under De Gaulle, it is possible to have a progressive foreign policy and a reactionary domestic policy.

For a free Guyana, we must fight for an independent foreign policy coupled with a progressive anti-imperialist, pro-socialist domestic policy.

Foreign dependency, foreign ownership and control have led to political control and clientele neo-colonial rule. Our political independence has been traded for privileges for the ruling PNC elite.

ECONOMIC COLLAPSE

This is the root cause of the crisis in Guyana and not the so-called world crisis, fuel crisis, hoarders and black-marketers, and lazy and irresponsible workers as the corrupt PNC would have the Guyanese people believe.

As has been already shown, the socialist world is not in crisis.

It is the capitalist world to which the PNC regime has deliberately tied Guyana that is in crisis.

The so-called oil crisis is only a part of the deepening crisis of capitalism-imperialism. It has been precipitated by the lust of the oil monopolists for profits.

The "seven sisters" which monopolise gas and oil made exorbitant profits. These went up in the 3rd quarter of 1973 as compared with the same period in 1972 as follows: EXXON by 80.9 per cent, Gulf 56 per cent, Standard Oil of California 50.6 per cent, Mobil Oil 58.5 per cent, Texaco 47.2 per cent, British Petroleum 285 per cent and Royal Dutch Shell 275 per cent.

Profits were much greater in 1973 despite the oil crisis and the price increase by the oil-producing (OPEC) countries.

British Petroleum (BP) made £295.5 million pre-tax profit for the first quarter of 1974 compared with £47.1 million for the first quarter of 1973. Of the £295.5 million, £175 million was on stocks in hand before the price went up.

Shell made £319 million pre-tax profit for the first 3 months of 1974, nearly 3 times the figure for the same period in 1973.

Little wonder that BP's Chairman, Sir Eric Drake, gets a salary of £66,270 a year, and Shell's chairman, F. S. Mc Fadzien gets £37,807.

The oil barons are doing well because they have developed a good working relationship with the ruling elites.

Tesoro Petroleum Corporation, whose net profits were US \$13.4 million for the first quarter of 1974 as compared with \$4.4 million in the same period in 1973 (per share earnings exceeded 30 per cent per year), in an advertisement claiming to be "the fastest-growing energy company in America" said: "The company's continuing confidence in Trinidad and Tobago is based on the abundance of talent and natural resources there; and from experience on the unquestionable integrity and stability of the Trinidad government with whom Tesoro's relations are excellent".

Shridat Ramphal, at the recent special session of the Central Assembly, bitterly complained about the effect of oil on the Guyana economy, stating that "in Guyana for example, which has a total dependence on imported petrol-

oil and petroleum-based products here will be a net increment of over 400 per cent to our Import Bill for these products for 1974 over 1972. Even with increased earnings from some of our agricultural exports, payments for petroleum imports this year will absorb 27 per cent of our total export earnings as compared with 8 per cent in 1972".

What he failed to mention was that the petroleum comes from Trinidad, a member of the Caribbean Common Market, the brain-child of the ruling People's National Congress and imperialism.

CARICOM ties Guyana to the purchase of Trinidad oil and gas whether or not these products could be purchased cheaper elsewhere. It should be noted that in 1964, the last year of the PPP government, Cuba was awarded a contract by the Guyana Electricity Corporation for the supply of Bunker C fuel at a price of about \$50,000 less than the lowest offer of Esso, Texaco and Shell.

No doubt Cuba was able to do so because it was purchasing crude oil from the Soviet Union at about 30 per cent less than the oil companies controlled by Standard Oil of New Jersey, Texaco, and the Anglo-Dutch Shell had been charging previously.

Their monopoly of the Caribbean market has resulted in the retail price of cooking gas in Guyana being increased from \$5.78 to \$8.40 per 20 pounds and \$23.90 to \$39.50 per 100 pounds, and gas oil from about 46 cents to \$1.26 per gallon between November 1973 and April 1974. During the same period, gasoline retail price increased by 147 per cent as compared with 28 per cent in the USA, and Bunker C fuel from approximately \$23 during 1972 to about \$45 in October 1973 and \$140 per ton in 1974. **CARICOM is a YOKE; We must cast it off.**

The present near-collapse of the economy is due not mainly to the oil crisis; the latter has merely aggravated it.

The oil crisis was not the real cause of the record-breaking balance of payments deficit of \$43 million in 1973, the steep fall in foreign reserves from \$93.3 million in 1964 to \$67.9 million average for 1965-72 and \$39.5 million in 1973, and the fantastic public debt which increased from \$128 million in 1964 to \$655 million in 1973.

The balance of payments deficit and drop in foreign

reserves are largely due to an excess of imports over exports of \$80 million (this merchandise trade deficit is part of the current account deficit of \$115 million).

Conspicuous consumption facilitated through banking credit to commercial firms and the creation of a huge governmental-bureaucratic machine with big salaries and allowances (personal emoluments — salaries — increased from \$27 million in 1964 to \$95 million in 1974) have led to a sharp increase in imports from \$266 million in 1970 to \$365 million (provisional) in 1973.

At the same time, production and exports have been declining. In 1972, there was a decline in output as compared with 1971.

The summary of the Central Bank of Guyana Report for 1972 referred to the "disappointing performance of the export industries...." In physical terms, sugar declined by 15 per cent, rice by 20 per cent and bauxite-alumina by 15 per cent. And the "real growth of production in 1972 was evidently well below the average (4%) of the past five years".

According to the Bank of Guyana Report of 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".

Export income increased from \$265 million in 1970 to \$285 million (estimated) in 1973.

This unfavourable position is due to the fact that the PNC's \$300 million 7-year plan (1966-72) concentrated not on industry and agriculture, but on infra-structure.

What has been growing are government services, not industry and agriculture. The 1973 Bank of Guyana Report disclosed that over the period, 1969-1973, the output of Government services has risen from 13% of the G.D.P. to 20%, while that of Agriculture and Industry have together declined from 60% to 53%.

Very few factories have been set up. The PNC regime's attempts to get private investors to invest in industries have also failed; under CARIFTA and CARICOM, they prefer to set up in Jamaica, Trinidad and to a lesser degree in Barbados.

To add insult to injury, it has decided to locate a joint ly-

owned government (Guyana and Barbados) cement factory in Barbados and a jointly-owned government (Jamaica, Trinidad and Guyana) aluminium smelter in Trinidad.

Agricultural production has been curtailed because of the sabotage of the PPP's progressive agricultural policies.

As militant Chairman of the PPP, L. F. S. Burnham in *Thunder* of July 1952 wrote: "Our Party holds that priority must be given to the Hutchinson Drainage and Irrigation Schemes which will bring immediate agricultural development and prosperity — supplying at the same time power for hydro-electricity. With or without the World Bank, we Guyanese SHALL have them". (his emphasis).

But as puppet Prime Minister, his government shifted infra-structural emphasis for drainage and irrigation to roads, sea defences, public buildings, airport and airstrips.

The PPP's 1960-64 Development Plan had allocated 30 per cent for drainage and irrigation. By contrast, the PNC in its first D-Plan allocated only 17 per cent but expanded about 5 per cent.

And now they blame the weather! They removed crop bonuses and subsidies such as duty-free gasoline, free anti-rabies injections and acoush-an drugs, and so on, which we had instituted.

Credits were also curtailed by the Credit Corporation to the agricultural sector.

Commercial hire purchase credit dropped from 51 per cent in 1965 to 30 per cent in January 1972 for industrial and agricultural equipment and vehicles.

During the same period, credit for motor cars increased from 13% to 26%, and consumer durables from 37% to 44%.

New registration of private motor cars increased from 1,946 for the 3-year-period 1962-64 to 4,482 for the 3-year 1969-71 period. For tractors, for the corresponding periods, the figures were 1,289 and 857.

That rice production fell from 165,000 tons in 1964 to 90,000 tons in 1973 is clearly a consequence of unsound policies, bureaucratic mis-management and harassment of the Rice Producers' Association.

Sugar production at 266,000 tons in 1973 was the lowest in 11 years.

Poor industrial relations and the continuous refusal by the PNC regime and the Sugar Producers' Association to recognise the Guyana Agricultural Workers' Union were contributory factors.

And there has been little success in diversification of agriculture away from rice and sugar. In the key meat and dairy sector — beef, pork, mutton, ham, pickled pork; lard; cracklings, milk — increases in production were smaller than the growth of population.

Bauxite production has fallen not because of production problems, but largely because of shipping and marketing difficulties. According to the Minister of Finance in his 1974 budget speech, "Aluminium has experienced the weakest market conditions over the past two or three years".

That excuse is not good enough. Had the PNC not adopted a hostile attitude to the Soviet Union, much of the marketing and transformation problems of the Guyana Bauxite Company (GUYBAU) could have been solved.

It is quite probable that with a PPP government in power during the past ten years, a hydro-electric plant and an aluminium smelter would already have become a reality with the help of the world socialist community.

We must point out loudly and clearly — had the PNC pursued overall the course charted by the PPP, there would have been no crisis today.

Payments of debts (\$50 million in 1974 — 22.5 per cent of the budget — as compared with only \$10 million in 1964) would have been met by increased production and not by increased taxation, as presently.

DETERIORATING LIVING CONDITIONS

Guyana is among the world's countries with the highest rate of taxation.

Taxes on goods (indirect taxation) averaged \$55 million per year under the PNC during the period 1965 to 1973 as compared with only \$25.8 million under the PPP for the period 1957 to 1964.

And direct taxes, which also hit the small man through

the pay-as-you-earn system averaged \$42.6 million under the PNC as compared with only \$19.5 million under the PPP.

The tax squeeze of \$19 million in the 1974 budget is the biggest in the history of Guyana. It has been imposed by the same PNC, which with the United Force, trade unionists and big business engineered violence and arson (which burned down part of Georgetown) against the PPP 1962 (Kaldor) Budget. Guyanese who were then misled would do well to remember that taxes then amounted to only \$10 million on the budget introduction and \$7 million on its revision.

On one PNC tax alone, a Defense Levy of 3 per cent on all imports, the regime obtained \$5 million per year, almost the whole amount obtained under the PPP's 1962 budget proposals.

In 1974, it imposed a surtax of 5 per cent on all chargeable income above \$500 per year, which it has euphemistically described as a "National Development Surtax".

The same PNC had opposed a PPP's National Development Savings Scheme in 1962, which applied to income earners of over \$300 per month and provided for interest payment of 4 per cent per year!

Since the 1974 budget, other taxes and impositions are being enacted with a vengeance — an increase in fuel charge by the Guyana Electricity Corporation of 25 per cent for Tariff 1, and 96 per cent for Tariffs 2, 3 and 4; increase of steamer fares from 15 to 20 cents; increased tax on gasoline to 79 cents per gallon, equivalent to the retail price in October 1973; increase of tax on gas oil from 0.7 cents to 5 cents per gallon; withdrawal of subsidy on public transport by abandonment of the railway; proposed imposition of road tolls, and proposed removal of subsidy on flour.

It imposed a special levy on the sugar industry of \$30 million, of which about \$18 million belongs to the sugar workers as their part of profit sharing.

Had the PNC concentrated on industry and agriculture, as proposed by the PPP, increased production would also have helped in the balance of payments problem — there

would have been an inflow of income from increased exports to compensate for debt payments outflow.

The PNC's answer to the present crisis is to go around in a vicious circle — like a dog chasing its own tail.

Because of the huge balance of payments deficit and low foreign reserves, the regime has embarked on import restrictions, qualitatively and quantitatively.

Luxuries and semi-luxuries such as whiskey, rugs, carpets and large motor cars have been banned. And licencing now limits purchases to only about 60-70 per cent of 1973 imports.

This has had several unfavourable consequences for the people.

Customs duties (taxes) previously collected from the rich from luxuries and semi-luxuries which are now banned are passed on to the poor.

Bans and restrictions will also reduce profits of private business and thus loss of income tax. This loss too will be passed on to the poor consumers.

That's why consumption tax has increased from \$5 million in 1970 to \$33 in 1974.

Prices are increasing not only because about 95 per cent of our imports come from capitalist countries ravaged by inflation, but also because of additional taxation. And shortages created because of government-imposed bans and import restrictions are leading to black-market prices.

And since taxation alone could not raise all the revenues required to pay salaries and debt payments and to maintain social services, the latter has been cut.

The share of the budget for the people's welfare declined from 45 per cent in 1964 to 35 per cent in 1974.

The budget allocation was as follows:

	1964	1974
Personal Emoluments	40.7%	42.3%
Debt charge	14.7%	22.5%
Social services, subsidies, etc.	44.6%	35.2%

Simultaneously, because of a shortage of revenue and

the need to balance the budget, dismissal of workers has begun at the lower levels of the public service. This will also be resorted to by the private sector as commercial houses will suffer from reduced turnover and profits as a result of import bans and restrictions.

Fearing outbreaks because of resentment arising out of increasing prices cuts in social services and subsidies, and retrenchment, the regime is trying desperately to borrow \$200 million. But this will only buy some time — it will be only a palliative, not a cure.

A \$200 million short-term, high interest loan will mean additional debt payments of about \$50 million per annum. This means that debt payments alone will consume more than one-third of the budget.

This will only exacerbate the present vicious circle of shortages, taxation, higher prices, cuts in social services and retrenchment.

Living conditions have greatly deteriorated due to soaring prices. In 1972, the rate of increase in price (5.2%) was more than twice the annual average increase (2.3%) for the 11-year period (1960-71); in the first 8 months of 1973, the increase was three times the 1960-1971 increase.

During the past 9 years (1965-1973) the cost of living (COL) index figure rose by 41.6 points.

But more recently, because of rampant inflation, it has been increasing by geometric progression. In the last 3 months (September 15 to December 15) of 1973 alone, the COL index jumped by 8 points. For one month alone (May 15 to June 15) in 1974, the figure rose by 10 points as compared with 11 points during our 7-year (1958-64) term of office of the PPP.

In the food sector, the picture was the most alarming. During the last 3 months of 1974, the food index figure rose by 11.5 points, more than for the 7-year period of the PPP government.

As a consequence, between January 1972 and August 1973, the domestic purchasing power of the Guyana dollar declined by nearly 13%; and later, even more rapidly.

In recent years, per capita income has not been keeping pace with the growth of population, estimated to be

2.5%. The result is poverty and malnutrition on a wide scale.

The Mayor, Mrs. Beryl Simon, in recent broadcasts highlighted the problem of poverty in her attempts to chastise the citizens of Georgetown for raiding dump trucks with contaminated potatoes and for rummaging through garbage heaps for food and clothing.

In one broadcast she stated: "I received complaints about children and adults rummaging through the garbage thrown at the dump near Roxanne Burnham Gardens and taking away old clothes and items of food, etc. I have already spoken of this practice, since it is not only injurious to health but interferes with the work of the Department responsible for dumping".

"There was an occasion when a child was nearly run over by the bulldozer when the vehicle was in the process of pushing and rolling the refuse dumped by one of our trucks. The refuse is sent to the dumps for disposal and in all cases, any items of foodstuffs found would be unfit for human consumption. I must warn all citizens to discontinue this dangerous practice as the consequences can be very detrimental".

In another radio broadcast, the Mayor said: "an unusually large number of persons raided the lorries and took as many bags (of condemned potatoes) as they possibly could with the result that only a very small portion of bags were finally buried at the dump".

The good lady should not be chastising the citizens and warning the children. They are all too aware of the danger of consuming contaminated foods. She should attack her party and government for forcing the people to live under such conditions — the same party which in 1961 had promised free milk and cassava, and had declared that under a PNC government "not a soul would go to bed hungry".

A recent report by the Medical Officer of Health of the Municipality of Georgetown disclosed that 215 or 72% of the 299 persons treated at the Georgetown clinic in June 1974 were suffering from "calcium vitamin deficiency".

Nutritional deficiencies have increased largely because of the non-availability of essential foodstuffs, mainly proteins, and the exorbitant prices which are out of reach of the ordinary wage earner.

Two years ago the regime stupidly banned \$12 million worth of foods included among which were fish and meat. This was for the people a disastrous decision as local production was inadequate to meet the basic needs of the population.

A breakdown of government statistics showed that for 1972 production represented a very low weekly per caput consumption level of 3-4 ozs. for beef, 3 ozs. for pork and 4/5 of one pint for milk. Eggs were about 35 per person per year. Taken together, production of all types of meat was 13 ozs. per person per week.

For the average housewife, life has become a nightmare. Her predicament was graphically illustrated by Claudette Earle. Writing in the *Sunday Graphic* of April 8, 1973, she pointed out:

Today's housewife is probably the truest human gauge by which the rapidly rising cost of living is registered, for it is within her already taxed conscienceness that the far-reaching effects of a penny more on a pound of plantains or a cent more on a tin of milk is worked out with a precision of a computer.

"While psychologists and social workers keep shouting that the housewife of today never had it so good, what with scores of modern appliances and household gadgets that cut to a fraction time spent on the laborious aspects of housework, we all know that whatever energy the lady of the house saves through these appliances she expends on head-shrinking tasks of budgeting for food supplies for her family, and searching the town frantically for eggs, meats, greens and ground provisions at prices she can afford.

"Even with the Guyana Government's policy of import substitution the local woman shopper (and oftimes man shopper) has the most harassing task of purchasing locally-grown and locally-produced commodities at reasonable prices and in sufficient quantities...."

No doubt, part of the reason for pressuring out of his job Ric Mentus, editor of the *Sunday Graphic*, was the publication of material such as this.

The removal of the subsidy on flour will greatly affect nutritional standards as bread and roti are substantial items of the diet of the average Guyanese.

In the meantime, while the government created conditions which pre-disposed to malnutrition and disease, medical care is becoming out of reach for the average Guyanese. The major health institution, the Georgetown Public Hospital, is ill-staffed; there is no radiologist, anaesthetist, or pathologist. Because of shortages for nursing and other staff and drugs, private medical consultants have withdrawn their services. Two persons in one bed continue as before despite the exposure by the press.

The free milk and school feeding scheme inaugurated by our PPP government has been withdrawn. Schools are over-crowded, under-staffed and ill-equipped. As a result 31% of the children leaving primary school are unable to read properly as was disclosed recently by the Minister of Education. There are also inadequate places at secondary and university levels. The Principal of the Guyana School of Agriculture disclosed in his 1972 report that only 10 places could have been provided for 600 applicants.

The limit to the number of graduates permitted to be employed by government-aided secondary schools is affecting the standard of education.

And the plight of Guyana's school children and youths has worsened since the closure of the railways on the East and West Coast of Demerara. Mrs. Vivien Surrey, Secretary of the Georgetown Branch of the Guyana Teachers' Association in May 1973 stated that "within recent months, children, not only in Georgetown, but on the East Coast Demerara, have found great difficulty in getting to school on time.

"Since the scrapping of the East Coast Railway, the Guyana Transport Services — the Government-operated bus company — has shown that it was not adequately equipped to cater for the large number of commuters, including school children from the East Demerara.

"As a result, children from both primary and secondary schools find themselves locked out from school when they arrived late".

The PNC has clearly failed to develop Guyana's most important resource — its people. It has dishonoured its pledge in its 1964 "New Road" manifesto to give free education "from the kindergarten to the University". If the

reformist Manley government could give free university and secondary education, including all grant-aided schools, and one free uniform for all children in primary and all-age schools, then the extravagant PNC regime must be forced to do likewise.

In housing, the situation remains alarming. The government has failed to embark on a programme of slum clearance and the building of low-rental houses for the lower-income group.

Because of the shortage of houses overcrowding is a major problem. The majority of households in Georgetown have a one-room combination of a bedroom, a kitchen and living room; 49% of all households in 1970 had five and more persons; and about 39% of households share their toilet facilities.

This overcrowding will be intensified as more and more persons, estimated to be 25,000 annually, trek from the rural areas to Georgetown.

And as the pressure for housing increases, rents which now consume about 1/3 of the wages of the worker will increase, despite the government's talk of a rent freeze.

Old persons are especially hard-hit. The callous PNC elite reduces the pensionable age for parliamentarians and ministers from 50 to 40, and increase salaries, but refuses to abolish the means test of \$16 per month and to increase pensions of \$10 and \$12 per month respectively in rural and urban areas. At the same time it has failed, despite promises, to lower the pensionable age from 65 to 60 under the National Insurance Scheme.

If the PNC continues in office, the small man will not become the real man; he will become the dead man. We must bring down the anti-working class, PNC regime!

We must intensify our struggle to arrest this decline in living standards. In this regard, our Women's Progressive Organisation especially must play an increasing role.

Our women must come out in the struggle. We must fight for unemployment relief, the re-introduction of the school-feeding programme, subsidisation and standardisation of school books, subsidisation of essential commodities, removal of bans and restrictions on the importation of food.

and on trade with socialist countries, family allowances, better medical care, abolition of the means test, reduction of the qualifying age under the NIS, increase of pensions, lowering of taxes, strict prices, unit and factory safety controls, cuts in the ministerial apparatus, the army and police, increased wages and fair and realistic prices to the farmers.

In 1970, the Minister of Finance in his budget statement said that it was the aim of the PNC to have re-distributive justice. But what is the end result? Instead of the gap between the super-rich and the poor narrowing, it is widening every day, every month. A larger and larger portion of the Guyanese cake is going to the PNC elite. Personal emoluments for the government machine has increased from \$27 million under the PPP in 1964 to \$95 million under the corrupt PNC in 1974.

Social services sector which aids the poor has been cut. As a result, the percentage for health has decreased. For education, the percentage of the national budget decreased from 16 in 1970 to 11 in 1974. The amount spent on pensions and social assistance has hardly increased, but salaries and allowances for the PNC elite has sky-rocketed.

At a lavish function on his 50th birthday, L. F. S. Burnham called for sacrifices; he declared that Guyana had to be built "over the sacrifices of many of us" and this means giving up many of the things we have grown accustomed to having". Maybe like the four horses which were especially flown to Mat hews Ridge for his comfort and enjoyment!

Soon after the fraudulent July 16, 1973 elections, the bogus National Assembly doubled the pay of ministers and parliamentarians.

The Prime Minister's salary and allowances now amount to an average to about \$5,000 per month; a senior minister's monthly take is over \$3,000 and parliamentarians had an increase from \$350 to \$500.

There are now 25 ministers and 9 parliamentary secretaries; under the PPP, there were only 10 and 3 respectively.

There are also six regional ministers with five-room air-conditioned villas and Rover cars.

The new pension law revision will also give them a handsome windfall. The new rates are as follows: for not

less than 4 years of service, $\frac{1}{4}$ of one year's salary; for not less than 6 years, $\frac{1}{3}$ of salary; for not less than 8 years, $\frac{1}{2}$ of salary; for not less than 10 years, $\frac{2}{3}$ of salary; for not less than 12 years, $\frac{3}{4}$ of salary.

These proposals reduce the minimum qualifying period from 6 years to 4 years; and increase the maximum pension (service of 12 years and above) from $\frac{2}{3}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a year's salary.

Squandering of public funds is a crime; we must remove the PNC!

Apart from increases in salaries and pensions, the PNC has further swindled the nation by including among the 13 non-elected technocrat ministers, five who were on the PNC list of 53 candidates for the 1973 elections. Why were they not selected and put as elected members in Parliament? By appointing them as technocrats non-elected ministers, the PNC made it possible for additional political hacks to sit in the parliament and to be paid handsomely by the hard-pressed taxpayers.

By electoral fraud, the PNC took 37 seats and appointed 13 technocrats ministers causing the payment for public funds for 50 persons (in 1964, the PNC had only 22 seats).

As a result of this extravagance, the expenditure for the so-called parliament has been increased from \$258,186 in 1964 to \$1,576,628 in 1974.

The PNC is sinking the nation deeper and deeper into the mire of moral depravity.

The belated reports of the Directors of Audit for 1968 and 1969 have amply demonstrated how the PNC regime has made corruption a way of life in Guyana.

If there is an increasing trend towards waywardness and crime, the answer is not to bemoan the fact as the Mayor of Georgetown has done by referring to the Guyanese society as "a tug-of-war, each one pulling the other way" and wondering "what our society will be in the next decade". It is not enough to teach moral lessons about the role of parents in conditioning their young and to call on the Church, the schools and women's organisations "to come forward and save Guyana".

What is essential is to bring an end of corruption.

Only when the governmental leadership lives a life consistent with frugality and sets the example will there be a positive response to the call for sacrifice and good behaviour. The PNC must practice what it preaches. Practice is better than precept.

From this rostrum we demand the enactment of laws and the implementation of measures to bring an end to corruption in our fair land. Why haven't the promises made in his regard been fulfilled? The Prime Minister in December 1971 had told the nation that there were already in draft proposals for a code of conduct for ministers and parliamentarians. That has not yet seen the light of day.

The Ombudsman's powers were also to be enlarged to include corruption. A parliamentary committee was appointed to look into this question. Three years have passed and nothing has been done. Our nation deserves better.

ASCRIA had brought a complaint to the Ombudsman about corruption in connection with two ministers. But after nearly 3 years, no report has been published.

Jamaica must be praised for taking the lead in the Caribbean in enacting legislation to bring an end to corruption in public life. This is a lead which is worth emulating. We must press for implementation of measures along the lines of Jamaica. We must bring an end to corruption. We must fight to save our nation's honour.

UNEMPLOYMENT

In the preface to the Development Programme in 1966, Mr. L. F. S. Burnham wrote: "The plan aims at increasing the gap between the percentage annual population increase (just over 3%) and the percentage annual growth (4% in 1964) so that by 1972 the economy, on a modest estimate, should be growing at the rate of 5 to 6 per cent per annum, reducing the unemployment figure steadily and substantially until there is full employment".

What is the position? As has already been pointed out, growth rates are not keeping pace with the growth of the population. This is a disgrace as population growth rate since 1970 averages only about 2.5 per cent, less than the "over 3%".

And unemployment instead of steadily decreasing is

increasing. Instead of a substantial decrease, there has been a substantial increase. This in turn has led to serious increase in juvenile delinquency, crime and prostitution.

According to Carlyle Harry, President of the Trades' Union Movement.

"The first three months of 1973 — the year of the Breakthrough — have been welcomed with an upsurge of crime in the form of increase murders, choke-and-rob incidents, one road death within every thirty-seven hours, a high incidence of rape reports, and a general breakdown in moral discipline.

"This breakdown in public safety has brought criticisms from the Church, representatives of Municipalities and Local Authorities, social and political organisations, the man in the street, and comments in the Press and Radio...."

What Harry failed to mention was the massive exodus of Guyanese to North America.

The government claims that the unemployment rate is about 15%. But the actual figure is nearer 30%. Among youths as a survey in Georgetown and New Amsterdam disclosed, the position is worse — 1/3 of the youths was unemployed and another third under-employed. And annually, thousands of school leavers enter the labour market with no hope of employment.

Attempts by the PNC to move urban dwellers into agriculture either in the rural areas or in the interior has been a dismal failure. Land settlements started by the PPP at Brandwack Sari and elsewhere have under the PNC mismanagement collapsed. And many started by the PNC have also failed.

Meanwhile millions of dollars are poured into places like Kibilibiri with little return. At Matthews Ridge also huge sums are being spent to prevent the trek of residents from that one-time industrial area to Georgetown; the agricultural cooperatives which were ballyhood at the beginning have largely failed.

The trek from the countryside of about 25,000 annually is aggravating the unemployment problem.

We don't need this kind of trek. What Guyana needs is a forced trek of the PNC from the government.

And then there is the retrenchment (dismissal) of workers by the government and the private sector. The warning of the Minister of Economic Development in early 1974 that in view of the grave crisis there would be massive retrenchments in mid-1974 unless there was increased production has come to pass — retrenchment has been taking place in different government departments.

Because of the grave financial situation and the inability of the government to meet its bills, there is also the likelihood of a freeze in employment in the future. This means that thousands of school leavers will find no opportunities for gainful work open to them. No doubt, this was one of the main reasons why the government has embarked on the National Service Scheme. Unable to employ youths and pay them, it plans to employ them without pay.

The regime hopes to solve the dilemma facing it — increasing unemployment leading to increasing crime — by removing the youths from the streets in the urban areas and taking them into National Service in the interior.

Apart from free labour, which is tantamount to forced labour, the PNC hopes to achieve other even more sinister objectives; firstly, the brainwashing of the young people; secondly, the making of entry to the University of Guyana and other institutions of higher learning conditional on national service; thirdly, the creation of a military reserve.

The government is cognisant of the fact that there is grave discontent which can explode at any time.

It is aware that the Youth Corps and its "ideological teacher", the YSM, have failed to control the youths, who are highly idealistic and militant and are becoming more and more critical.

It is conscious that the PYO's control of the University of Guyana Student Society frustrates its designs for "thought control" at the University and for a completely regimented, robo-like state bureaucratic apparatus.

It knows that although expenditure on the police and

army has increased from \$16 million in 1972 to \$28 million in 1974, the security forces are insufficient to contain an angry Guyanese people. The Pioneer Corps under the National Service Scheme will thus enable the PNC to build cheaply a reservoir of military-trained young people.

What is needed is not forced labour. What is needed is not a larger army and police or a reserve army. What is needed are more jobs.

The PNC makes a big fuss about strikes and the 300,000 man-days lost by strikes. What it remains silent about are the 17,000,000 man-days lost from unemployment and underemployment.

We must take a firm stand on the question of unemployment and underemployment. The youths of Guyana face a difficult future. Our Progressive Youth Organisation must give the fighting lead to end the scourge of unemployment. It must demand unemployment relief, special emergency works programmes and adequate educational facilities, including grants and loans, for the acquisition of technical, vocational and professional skills.

Some years ago after the retrenchment of workers at Sandbach Parker and Plantation Diamond, the Clerical and Commercial Workers' Union General Secretary, George De Peana, proposed an unemployment march. Unfortunately, the TUC shunted this good proposal into a seminar on unemployment. We must press for countrywide unemployment marches.

Above all the militant PYO must let the young people understand that unemployment will only worsen under the reformist-imperialist economic planning strategy of the PNC, that only under our economic programme will the economy be stimulated and the situation transformed.