

Comrade Chairman, Friends,

I am very happy to have this opportunity to have this informal meeting with you so that we can discuss this important question of relations between Venezuela and Guyana. Naturally I would like to say from the start that we feel not only because we are third world countries but more particularly because we are neighbours because we have generally a state of dependency that we have a common destiny and our relations must be built on a foundation of friendship, peaceful co-existence, recognising differences but at the same time not interfering in the domestic affairs of our ~~two~~ respective countries.

As regards the whole question of relations between Guyana and Venezuela, I think it is necessary for us to take a comprehensive view of the total situation rather than looking at the minor issues at the trees as distinct from the forest. because some people tend to look merely at the border question between our two countries and over-emphasise this out of all proportions, especially with respect to our common problems in front of imperialism and foreign domination. And to have this comprehensive view I think we need to look at the situation historically and dialectically.

You were more fortunate than we were in that your country was independent long before Guyana and the Caribbean. We were a colony of Britain and thus relations between Guyana and Venezuela was never developed. We had an outlook which was more towards the metropolises towards Britain and not towards our neighbours in Latin America. But I think looking back in perspective up to the time of the first World War Britain was one of the most dominant countries in the world, not only had a vast colonial empire but it imposed its will on the peoples of the world. Of course the significant development took place during the first World War with the Russian Revolution and this opened the door for the struggles of the people of the world for social and national liberation. In the post-war era and particularly the post-depression era our region, the Caribbean and Latin America were caught in the general upsurge in the struggle for democracy and freedom. We were all told that this was the objective of the war to liberate mankind from fascist oppression. And thus our countries courses moved in the same direction, however taking some different form. You had to fight against dictatorship, which were imposed after independence. We had to fight for independence and a different kind of dictatorship. In the whole Caribbean basin this struggle sharpened in the late '30's and early 40's and the demand for independence became very sharp and strong. However ~~xxxxx~~ after the war the Truman Churchill who was defeated in the elections in England despite the fact that he was a great wartime hero and the reactionary elements in the United States wanted to turn the clock backwards. They refused to grant independence to the colonies. Churchill said in 1941 for instance that the Atlantic Charter was not intended for the

colonial people that it only applied to the Atlantic that is the European states which were occupied by Hitler fascism. And because socialism has advanced, has expanded from the Soviet Union to other countries in Eastern Europe and has become a world system, the reactionary forces of the West thought that it was necessary not only to contain communism which was enunciated in the Truman doctrine in 1947 but also to fight socialism and also national liberation. And the course was enunciated very clearly that the American capitalist system must become the system of the world. And in our own area, particularly in our two countries, we saw the removal of the Galelez government in 1948 and the setting up of an imminent dictatorship which lasted for 10 years.

In our country the same democratic movement which led to the victory of Giagos in your country, led to the victory in Guyana of our party in 1953. Our party won in 1953 18 out of the 24 seats. Incidentally, generally you hear in Guyana of two questions - communism and race, but the question but the fact is on that occasion our party had united the two major racial groups and this accounted for the victory of 18 out of 24 seats. And as regards the question of communism, we found later that many revolutionary democrats, Giagos in this country, in Brazil Goulart, in the Dominican Republic Bosch, were also removed in keeping with the policy of containment of communism and the cold-war doctrine.

I would like to refer to some specific details now against that background. In 1958, We were removed from the government after being in office only 4½ months and in the same way you had a dictatorship here after 48, ~~in the same way~~ the dictatorship of the colonial office was establish in Guyana. And during that period all the colonial leaders in the Caribbean turned their backs against us. I mentioned this because in that period we were completely isolated and attacked. The public meetings were all banned, I was restricted, all our leaders were restricted to the place they were living, some of our comrades were detained under detention; I broke the restriction order and was jailed for 6 months. Some of our comrades were sent to prison for being in possession which were banned but which were bought and read in England. Imperialism even split our party in 1955 and the present leader who is now Prime Minister, was then Minister of Education in our first government.

Elections came in 1957 and immediately after the overthrow of the Jimenez dictatorship by admiral Larasabal when Bettencourt was in the government, I brought here an official good-will delegation government mission because we felt that it was necessary to develop our relations with Venezuela particularly and the Latin American region. I could tell you that we were attacked for that. The West Indians said that we were not going into the Federation formed in 1958 but we were moving towards Venezuela and what they called Latin American destiny.



I not only talked to President Bettancourt at the time I came here but talked to leaders of the the/two other parties - COPIE and ORD coalition and the Communist Party which was in the opposition. There was obviously very good relations between us and good accord and sympathy for Guyana because at that time we were fighting, we had just emerged from dictatorships in both countries. During our discussions with the leaders of the parties I suggested that the border question between Guyana and Venezuela, that Venezuela should renounce the claim. But I was told by the parties that it would not be <sup>politically</sup> wise for the parties to renounce the claim because this will allow the reactionary forces who were defeated in 1958 to state the position and attack the government and political parties. The 4 party leaders said that they would not renounce the claim because if they were to say that it will play into the hands of the reactionary forces who were represented by Jimenez and other rightwing forces who were going to take a gignostic position and attack them. And so they said that they will neither renounce but they will not make the claim active. It was dormant for many many years and so they said it will remain at that and I was more or less happy with that position.

Now a little later when Guyana was on the verge of independence this matter was raised, the border question I mean. At the conference in London for independence for Guyana in 1960 the British government said to us that the Venezuelan government was raising the issue and asked our agreement, that is the Guyana Government, whether we will agree to the Venezuelan Government having the right to look at the records in the British archives and ourselves and the British government agreed and the Venezuelan government sent two economists, a priest I believe, to look at the records. The idea was that if anything new was found then the question could be re-opened. But apparently nothing new was found and later after the removal of the government with the help of the CIA in 1964, the new Guyana government, the Venezuelan government and the British government signed a Geneva agreement in 1965 for 5 years. explored the question.

Now I would just like to give you a little background to this event, which I believe led later to the souring of the relations between Guyana and Venezuela. Before our conference in London in October 1960, there was a conference here in Venezuela in Maracai. The conference was called for democracy and liberty in the Americas. And it was sponsored by an organisation in the United States which I think was connected with the CIA. ~~xxxxxxx~~ They invited the opposition leader in Guyana. They didn't invite me. They said this conference was not to be a government conference only non-governmental people. However, the Venezuelan government invited me. And thus I came as a delegate from an organisation of the government as distinct from that organisation. In this conference a progressive line was taken. I think I should tell you that at that time all the parties the 4 parties, three in government one in opposition, were giving militant support to

Cuba and the whole conference was moving to pass a resolution to condemn rightist dictatorships in the hemisphere - Nicaragua, Haiti and<sup>3</sup> others, but the representatives who were closely linked with the United States wanted to attack Cuba but not directly because the Venezuelan government and the whole four parties were backing socialist Cuba and this led to a resolution being amended to bring in dictatorships not only of the right but of the left indirectly therefore to include Cuba. That led to a big fight. There was a representative from Trinidad by the name of Albert Gomes and he was the principal spokesman for imperialism and led almost to a fist fight between himself and Preato because he took the microphone at one stage when the Chairman overruled him, behaving disorderly and wanted to lie down in front of the place and wanted to fight. However that conference, the influence of the 4 parties in Venezuela, Allende was here from Chile and many other Mexican comrades were here, that manoeuvre was defeated, and so only the rightist dictatorships were condemned.

It is my view that what was intended by imperialism to let the resolution passed at this conference to suggest that this was the voice of public opinion in Latin America and then armed with that to go to the San Jose conference later in September of the OAS and the governments of Latin America to move a resolution to blockade Cuba.

I was in Caracas when the San Jose conference was being held and I was caught up in the Bolivar square in tear-gas because the students were demonstrating against the fact of the order which was given by the government to <sup>Senor</sup> Artias who was the Foreign Minister belonging to the ORD party to sign the agreement and he refused to sign and these students and the people in Caracas were demonstrating in his favour. Now that was the beginning of the process of the isolation of Cuba. I give you this background because we feel that in our own case opinion change although they had agreed in 1960 by the British Government that whoever won the elections in 1961 will take the country to independence. We won the elections in 1961 but then they said Guyana was going to be a second Cuba and to stop the independence, to give the British government an excuse not to give independence, the CIA came to Guyana through the trade union movement and carried out destabilisation strifes, strikes, ~~and~~ as they did 10 years later in Chile. It is our view that not only did the United States put pressure on Great Britain but also exerted pressure on the government of Venezuela at that time, to raise the border question which was a new development contrary to what was told to me in 1958. But as I told you already we were removed from the government in 1964, in 1965 the Geneva Agreement was signed, but in 1968, a development took place which soured the relations between the two countries. By this time ~~the~~ Senor Leonnie was in the Government in Venezuela. We think they were internal political problems within the AD itself while this was taking place.



Whatever the reasons a force was sent and occupied the whole island of Ankoko. Under the treaty of 1899 half of Ankoko belong to Venezuela and half belong to Guyana. The whole island was occupied by Venezuelan soldiers. And our waters were patrolled by Venezuelan naval boats. Well at that time we felt that the matter should have gone to the United Nations, that is, our Party, because we want this matter to be settled peacefully, not by force. But the government of Guyana did not want to take it there. because we think it would have embarrassed the United States and the United States did not want to be put in a position to decide either for Guyana or for Venezuela. They put the Burnham government and they did not want to withdraw support. At the same time they did not want not to support Venezuela because of its huge investments and particularly oil and so that matter was left in abeyance and the relationship between Guyana and Venezuela reached a very low point.

In the following year, in 1969, there was an attack<sup>led</sup> by a third party in a part of the country called the Rupununi in the very south near to the Brazilian border. Two parties were in coalition. From 1964 to 68, but in 1968, the bigger party the PNC, expelled the second party by using electoral fraud. The PNC had 40% of the votes in 1964, the third party had 12%. The contradiction developed between the two parties. The Burnham party began to practice racial and political discrimination in employment practices. They removed them from the government, the United Force party. And the United Force had some<sup>political</sup> support in the Rupununi district who are medium-sized ranchers and they led a revolt which was crushed by the government ~~and~~ it was said that that revolt was supported by Venezuela that they got arms from Venezuela and when they were defeated they ~~came~~<sup>came</sup> and had sanctuary in Venezuela. So that also developed very bad relations between the Venezuelan government and the Guyana government.

Now in 1970 the Geneva agreement came to an end and a new agreement was made a 12-year Agreement called the Port-of-Spain protocol. This was ratified by the Guyana Parliament but it was not brought before the Congress here. no doubt for the same reasons which were given to me in 1958, that is that the rightist reactionary forces within the country ~~will~~ said that the Protocol was a sell-out in Guyana. This agreement is now to expire in the next two years and new negotiations are now to take place.

I do not want to however base our relations ~~on~~ mainly on this piece of territory. I think we have wider and broader interests. As Third World countries we see the widening gap between the industrialised developed countries and the third world countries. And it is no secret that we all have problems even those countries like yours which have oil, because of the inheritances of colonialism and neo-colonialism. We saw for instance the third world countries coming together to improve their position collectively in the non-aligned movement which was started in 1955 in Indonesia.

and great leaders like Sukarno, Nehru, Nasser and others like to forge a policy which is to be based on anti-colonialism, anti-neocolonialism, anti-imperialism, anti-racism and apartheid and discrimination and at that particular moment Mr. Dolles who was then the Foreign Secretary of State said that non-alignment was an immoral movement, that the world is divided in two and those who are not with us are against us. And thus non-alignment was attacked and many non-aligned leaders were undermined and destroyed with the help of the CIA, ~~XXX~~ the latest of course is Allende in Chile.

Now Venezuela like Guyana in its peak of its struggle saw the necessity of having to join this collective non-alignment. This is because in the case of Venezuela imperialism has bequeathed to it a lop sided economy based mainly on oil, employing a very small percentage of the population and very wide gaps between the rich and the poor. In Guyana our situation was even worse. Thus Venezuela joined the OPEC. OPEC was one of the means by which third world countries would have economic justice because our countries' raw material, whether oil, whether bauxite, whether what, was always sold cheap and ~~xxx~~ we bought back the manufactured goods at fantastically high prices. We had when Venezuela joined OPEC Ecuador ~~became~~ under attack from the United States under the Trade Act which was amended to remove these countries from the most favoured nations. In the case of Guyana, because of the intense political and ideological struggle in Guyana waged by our party, because of the worsening conditions of the people, and also because of certain contradictions between the petty-bourgeois leadership of the ruling party and imperialism, nationalisation of the sugar and bauxite industries took place particularly in the 75-76 period and then destabilisation methods were used against the Guyana government.

Today Guyana because of the previous domestic and foreign policies, it is now reinforcing its course. It has in 1978 joined the International Monetary Fund. The need for foreign exchange and in 1979 it made a New Investment Code which now says that foreign capital can come in on an open door policy. The government has signed two agreements for uranium: one with a French company and another with a German company. And two other agreements were signed for oil: for a Canadian Company and the other for an American company. And in the case they are now looking for foreign capital for the development of a hydro-electric station and a ~~xxx~~ aluminum smelter in the Mazaruni area in the Essequibo. This incidentally, the New Investment Code is a reversal of the position ~~of xxx~~ taken by the government in 1974. At that time the government said in what is called the Sophia declaration that the State would own and control all national resources and secondly, that if foreign capital is to come into the country it must join with state corporations or in cooperatives and the state or the cooperatives must have majority control. This therefore means that from 1977 to the present time the reversal of the position taken



in 1974 to 1976. both in domestic and foreign policies. And this is also manifested inside Guyana in a wage freeze, in the cut down of social services, the removal on all subsidies on consumer goods. In other words the government is trying to solve its economic and financial crisis at the expense of the working people. And under the dictation of the International Monetary Fund is putting Guyana on capitalist course.

Now whatever contradictions existed in the 74-76 period between Guyana and imperialism is now resolved because imperialism and the local elite of the government have a vested interest to move against capitalism. And it is important to see what is being done now. In the period 1964 to 70, when the government carried pro-imperialist, pro-capitalist policies it received the highest amount of aid from the United States among the highest in Latin America and the Caribbean. But in the period of 1971-76 aid was severely dropped as happened with the Allende Government in Chile and from 77 to the present time 30% of the total aid for the last 15 years has been granted. In other words massive aid is being given now to prop up this regime whose popular support has dropped from 40% in 1964 to about 15% today. The government is now only using repression any time workers go on strike, the police, the military and paramilitary are brought in to break up the strikes. All strikes called by the people are now called political to give the government the excuse to bring out the army and the police.

Incidentally, while the United States is talking about defending human rights, the Carter administration, I had made a declaration that aid will be tied to the observance of human rights; that is what Miss Sally Shelton, the new force of imperialism in the Caribbean is selling to the people. In Guyana where everyone knows that human rights, political and civil rights are denied, economic help is given as I mentioned already and political support. ~~Mr~~ The Secretary of State Philip Habib visited Guyana in 1977 and said as regards violations of human rights ~~that~~ they are no problems in Guyana. And the American Ambassador to Guyana; this is what he said recently at a Conference: " (Spanish)

This is plain hypocrisy because they all know that the CIA is not only in every country but in also even working in the embassies. Philip Agee who was the CIA agent in Guyana in 1976 went to Jamaica when the CIA was trying to destabilise the Manley Government and named all the CIA agents in the American embassy. and they had to leave very rapidly and he also gave the names of those who were serving at that time also in Guyana.

Now what we would like to conclude with is the following:

In the early part of this century with certain periods of change in the early part it was the big stick which was the method used by imperialism in this area. There were few periods when this was not used. In the Roosevelt good-neighbour policy, in the Kennedy Alliance for progress period, but even then in our case although Kennedy was talking about democracy and Alliance for Progress he unleashed the CIA against us in 1961 he met in Washington the son-in-law of Khrushchev. They were both no doubt accusing each other of subversion and interference in others affairs. Kennedy then told Asubey; look at Jagan, he won his position in 1961 at a free and fair election and we respect it. But one year after the CIA was operating in Guyana. In fact while he was saying that he was acting in Guyana. This came out later. In 1961 when I made the speech in Parliament when I said that the CIA was involved in our affairs everybody said I was made in the opposition. But this was revealed later in 1967 the whole story.

Now I want to say that the big stick policy was used slovenly, direct intervention in the Dominican republic first in Guyana in 1963; having succeeded that method was used in Vietnam. where fortunately it failed. Indirect aggression was used against the Arbenz government in Guatemala; CIA trained counter-revolutionaries in Nicaragua and invaded Guatemala succeeded in overthrowing the Arbenz government. Now imperialism, ideological warfare, giving loans with strings and now is a beautiful expression of this.

They resort to the use of mercenaries. In Angola Ford and Kissinger wanted to send troops but the American people were against any kind of involvement. So imperialism resort to mercenaries and this is what they intend to do in Guyana. You heard of the People's Temple, what you probably don't know is that ballot boxes went to People's Temple area for the people there who are Americans to vote in the Referendum of 1978. This referendum was intended to postpone the elections and the Jonestown people also canvassed in Georgetown in favour of the government. As you heard this was like a 'state within a 'state. They not only have arsenic and drugs, but they also had arms. In our view this arm and this armed force was proudly intended also to be used as an internal mercenary force. The electoral road has been closed by the government of Guyana. 1968 there was fraud; 1973 it was worse, the Army seized all the ballot boxes and took them to army headquarters. Elections are called in Guyana now selections. In other words the government decides how much votes and how many seats they will have and how many we will have, the opposition. Nobody has any illusions in Guyana that they can win by elections. We of course do not want civil war and thus we had proposed knowing that we would not be able to come to power by elections even though the forces which work in alliance with us have about more than three quarters of support of the people. We proposed a National Front government on the basis of



on a programme based on democracy, anti-imperialism and socialist orientation. We said all parties and groups will agree to such a programme, can take part in such a government even though we alone can win an election by ourselves. We propose this for three reasons - to deal with the financial situation today, we say solve the crisis not at the expense of the people but at the expense of the imperialists. Last year for instance, the government refused to pay \$14 a day minimum wage which was agreed to since 1977. It said it hasn't got the money; it will cost it \$85 million. This year again they didn't pay. Meanwhile the inflation rate is about 20% a year. This is having a backwash in affecting production. We say solve the crisis at the expense of those who can afford to pay. The debt and compensation payments take up 57% of the total government revenue. We say if the people for whom money are borrowed and to whom money is owed are not ~~xx~~ prepared to have a re-scheduling of the debts, then we must unilaterally pay only a small amount that we can afford to pay and pay the workers and we will pay them later. But imperialist do not want this and the democratic elite in the government instead of cooperative socialism we not have state capitalism, bureaucratic capitalism and cooperative capitalism all manquerading as cooperative socialism. And because of this new development they do not want to join us in a coalition although they claim that they are democratic, that they are anti-imperialist and they are socialist.

Incidentally Guyana is one of the unique countries of the world where you have the possibilities of going to socialism through a peaceful road like Allende was trying to do because we are not like the opposition parties in Chile. And the PNC the ruling party and ourselves and other forces have about 90% support among the people, another party called the Working People's Alliance. The PNC and ourselves and the Working People's Alliance who have agreed to the coalition represent about 90% or more of the population.

Now in the face of a refusal of the ruling party to join the National Patriotic Front and the fact that they are losing support, the fact that they are trying to solve the financial at the expense of the people, they are going to rig the coming elections to be in power, but imperialism knows today with the experience in Iran ~~xxxx~~ in Nicaragua, in Grenada that dictators cannot last forever. And so they want now to build an internal force. Now that Jonestown has disappeared, ~~imperialism~~ the People's Temple by suicide they are making now the Hmong tribe from Laos. This tribe was counter-revolutionary, fighting against the revolutionaty forces. It was tied up in opium production, it was linked with the CIA. This was disclosed in a recent article in the New York Times and the government was making an agreement with the a body in America called the Religious Refugees Religious International. This is headed by Billy Graham son and you should know that when the CIA was first exposed in \* 1967 it was disclosed that many outfits operating in Latin America were under the CIA control. Thomas for instance admitted, the head of the socialist party in America that they set up 17 parties in Central America to fight communism in Central and Latin America. He was given \$1 million. And on the religious front Billy Graham's Latin American Crusade was also financed by the CIA. His son is now involved in this tribe which is to come to Guyana and the initial settlement was to be 1700. There is also talk that it might go on to the sum of 100,000 or 200,000. Well obviously this is intended to become electoral support for the PNC the ruling party, and if the struggle takes a different form, inspite of all our efforts to avoid a civil war if they continue to oppress and depress the people, an end would come when the people will use revolutionary violence against reactionary violence. And therefore

this Hmong settlement will be not only a dagger at our heart but also strategically placed as it is near to the Venezuelan border, can also be used against the sovereignty and independence of this country. Because like our people, the Venezuelan people has the same objectives. to fight for peace, social progress and democracy and freedom. And thus I would say first of all that we need your strong solidarity and needless to say you can always depend on us for help and solidarity. As I pointed out we have a common objective and a common cause and we must not allow the reactionaries and the chauvinist to make the border issue become an obstacle ~~xxxx~~ to cooperation between our two people. As you know you have a lot of jungles and we have a lot of jungles which are now even being used at the moment. But imperialism deliberately wants to use border conflict that's one of their methods of destabilisation and I think we should therefore so condition our relations that they improve in keeping with our common interest.

Thank you.

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