

THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC STATE

by
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The expectation at the end of the cold war ideological/political confrontation was an era of peace and tranquility. Indeed, after the Gulf war, a New World Order was proclaimed by President George Bush. But regrettably, instead of order there is now grave disorder worldwide, because of the paradox of the continued development of the forces of production on the one hand and the increasing deterioration of the quality of life on the other - growing poverty and increasing inequality. The Iron Curtain has been replaced by the Poverty Curtain.

East/West confrontation, based on ideology, has given way to conflicts rooted in racial/ethnic, religious and cultural/historical differences both between, and especially within, states.

Coupled with population growth and mass migration, poverty and insecurity are posing the dangers of an equally-terrifying political explosion, as seen in Somalia, the former Yugoslavia, the Middle East and elsewhere.

As a result of global poverty, convulsions and conflicts, more than 100 million migrants are living outside their countries of origin. Some 19 to 23 million of these are refugees or in refugee-like situations - up from 3.5 million in 1985. In addition, about 26 million people are internally displaced within their own countries. These figures show no sign of abating but rather are growing!

The United Nations peace-keeping expenditure increased seven-fold between 1991 and 1992, whilst UN agencies' aid programmes declined by ten per cent between 1992 and 1993.

Ita Cide

In the industrialised countries, drugs and crime have become serious problems. Today, roughly half of US households possess arms, and every year about 38,000 persons die of gun shots.

Jingoism and xenophobia are raising their ugly heads. Across the globe, the neo-fascists, the conservative far right and the religious far right are gaining ground politically.

The Commonwealth Caribbean, long recognised for its democratic traditions, is stagnating and facing a crisis not known since the late 1970's when the Caribbean Basin was deemed as one of the "circles of crisis". In a report to the CARICOM Summit in Barbados in July 1994, the Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce (CAIC) referred to the growing jobless figures and declining levels of foreign aid and investment. On unemployment and under-employment, the CAIC said these levels remained far too high:

"(They) do not begin to tell, in their cold statistical reciting, either the tragedy of broken lives and wasted human potential in our region, but also speak of a problem which, if not solved or at least significantly ameliorated, will ultimately destroy, through industrial and societal disruption, all other well-meaning efforts at economic development."

PALLIATIVES

The top leaders of the developed capitalist countries cannot present any prescriptions for curing the problems of the world economy. Symptoms, not the root causes, are treated. And the treatment is a palliative, a band-aid, like an aspirin to relieve the pain but not to cure it.

After the G7 "Jobs Summit" in Japan, a Conference was held in Washington D.C. on poverty, and later another on unemployment in Detroit. The Development Committee of the World Bank and the IMF for the first time sponsored a meeting on "Population and Migration". But nothing tangible resulted.

"Jobs and Growth" was one of the most important themes of the G7 Naples Summit meeting. Its Economic Declaration noted: "Unemployment remains far too high, with over 24 million unemployed in our countries alone. This is an unacceptable waste."

Modernised monopoly capitalism is unable to deal with recession, unemployment, financial deficit, trade frictions, the global environmental question, and the ^{widening gap} differences between the rich and the poor, the "included" and the "excluded", in both the developed countries and the developing countries, as well as between them.

The "trickle-down" economy does not work, even in the most politically and militarily powerful and the economically-richest country, the United States of America.

The famous US economist, Professor J.K. Galbraith, referred to the widening gap between the rich and the poor, and the increase in numbers of the American people below the poverty line. He noted that in 1980, "the chief executive officers of the three hundred largest American companies had incomes twenty-nine times that of the average manufacturing worker. Ten years later, the income of the top executive were ninety-three times greater... The number of Americans living below the poverty line increased by 30.6 percent in just ten years, from 24.5 million in 1978 to 32 million in 1988."

And according to the US Census Bureau, the number of Americans living in poverty in 1993 rose past 39 million or 15 percent of the population, the highest since 1961, and more than one million above the 1992 levels.

The average worker's wage, adjusted to inflation, was 2.3 per cent less in September 1995 than a year before. In contrast, the profits of Corporations were/are soaring, and chief executives of corporations were earning average increases of 12 percent per year!

This general trend accounts for the cynicism and the loss of faith by the electorate in elections and governments. It also

accounts for the defeat of incumbent political leaders and parties around the globe.

The prevailing economic and social disparity provides a breeding ground for hunger, disease and poverty, and ultimately constitutes a threat to international peace and security.

OUR OWN AGENDA

The roots of conflict are embedded in a history of complicated political, economic, social and cultural factors.

Economic tinkering with interest rates and structural adjustment are not enough. We need a correct theoretical perception of events, not only of the development of productive forces, but also of the relations of production and their contradictions. Piecemeal management is not enough. Nor can everything be left to be regulated only by the market. Both the market and the state have irreplaceable, complimentary roles.

We need our own agenda - a new agenda of sustainable development. Past "models" of development have proven to be wanting.

The net outflow of capital from Latin America and the Caribbean in the 1981-85 period was US\$36 billion yearly in the form of profits, dividends and debt payments.

Developing countries lose US\$500 billion annually through unequal international trade, equivalent to 10 times the aid they receive from the developed countries.

Third world debtor countries paid more than US\$1.3 trillion between 1982 and 1990, yet, in 1990, they were 61 per cent more in debt than they were in 1982.

Sub-Saharan Africa's debt had spiralled from 8.4 billion US dollars in 1980 to just under 200 billion dollars. Since the early 1980s, the Latin American and Caribbean countries have honoured their debt obligations at tremendous suffering of the masses of the people. Yet, the debt continues to grow. According to the 1992 UNICEF publication "Children of the Americas". 'Between 1981 and 1990 Latin America spent US\$503 billion on foreign debt payments (US\$313 billion in interest). At the same time, the region's consolidated external debt rose from US\$297 billion in 1981 to US\$428 billion in 1990. This mechanism whereby "the more you pay the more you owe" is perverse and must be stopped'.

The \$10 billion (US) debt of the Commonwealth Caribbean countries imposes a crushing burden and inhibits sustainable development.

What is needed is a new socio-economic order, which can resolve the contradictions of the existing modernised methods of production. However, a new social order cannot be built by wishful thinking. Nor by copying foreign models. In actual fact, there should be no models; there should be only principles. And these have to be adapted in keeping with the local concrete situation - history, politics, social-psychology, culture.

We must elaborate a rational approach to development, not simply for economic growth, but also for human development. We need growth with social justice and eco-justice. There will be no solution to environmental questions, for instance, if the boundaries of poverty continue to expand. The Caribbean Council of Churches, alluding to the widening gap between "the haves" and the "have-nots", stated that more distressing to the penthouse than the slum, but no less powerful an incentive to seek a solution, is captured in the UNDP Human Development Report of 1993: "There is a real threat that global poverty will begin to travel without a passport in many unpleasant forms: drugs, disease, tourism, migration. Poverty everywhere is a threat to prosperity everywhere."

RECONSTRUCTION

With a multi-polar global economic situation, but only a single superpower with capitalist ideological and cultural dominance, it is not feasible immediately to embark on a revolutionary programme. The world balance of forces and the objective global reality today do not favour a socialist programme. A feasible programme therefore must be based on radical reforms -- reforms, not as an end in themselves, but as a means towards a revolutionary goal of socialism. Such a programme in this era of globalisation and modernisation must be based on interdependence and genuine North/South partnership and cooperation.

For reconstruction and meaningful change, it is an imperative for developing countries to establish a state of national democracy. It is neither a capitalist state propagating capitalism, nor a workers' state practising socialism.

It must embark on an integrated programme of development for Guyana, based on:

- * Good Governance - a clean and lean government - with equity;
- * democracy in all its aspects - political, economic, industrial, social, cultural - and the empowerment of the people at all levels;
- * the fullest exercise of human rights - civil and political, as well as economic, social and cultural, in keeping with the UN Covenants on Human Rights;
- * a mixed economy;
- * economic growth with social justice and ecological justice;
- * balanced agricultural/industrial and rural/urban development;
- * integrated programme of human resource development;
- * multiculturalism - unity in diversity.

By national-democracy is meant a state which -

- * constantly upholds its political, ~~and~~ economic ^{and} cultural independence;
- * fights against militarism and military bases on its soil;
- * resists new forms of colonialism and foreign domination, as in the colonial period when British Guiana was "Booker's Guiana";
- * rejects dictatorial anti-popular forms of government;
- * ensures the people's broad democratic rights, and enables their participation in shaping Government policy;
- * embarks on radical socio-economic changes including the promotion of co-operation in the country side and the development of the public sector, together with the provision of social services such as education and health.

The tasks of a national democratic character comprise:

- to consolidate national independence;
- to carry out agrarian reforms and eliminate survivals of feudalism and exploitation;
- to restrict the development of foreign monopolies (two PPP governments had been destabilised with the help and in the interest of foreign monopolies);
- to secure substantial improvement in living standards for all the people;
- to democratise social life;
- to pursue an independent and peaceful foreign policy;
- to promote a national industry and enterprises belonging to its citizens.

An enduring foundation for economic growth and human development is democracy: democracy in all aspects ~~political, economic, social and cultural~~, representative, consultative and participatory. It is not simply about voting and electing

representatives, and the minority obeying the dictates of the majority. *Belise*

Representative democracy must be linked with consultation, participation and accountability. The many varied parts and levels of society must be in an ongoing, dynamic and working relationship with each other.

Democracy and development are inter-related and is a key for the attainment of our goals of social and ecological justice.

Democracy is essential for economic growth and human development. Equally, human development is necessary for the sustenance of democracy. *Belise*

Party paramountcy, as under the PNC administration, must be abolished and the supremacy of Parliament must be restored.

A democratic culture must be firmly established. As it was so pointed out by Haitian president Jean Bertrand Aristide, it is the second election which is the more important in the restoration of democracy.

Democracy entails the right of persons and communities to political self-determination. It is the best form for the political development of society, and is ultimately about expanding human freedom and potential, as enunciated in the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. *Belise*

The previous administration ratified the United Nations (UN) Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, but honoured them in the breach. It had a dismal record of reporting to the United Nations on the fulfillment of these rights, and it refused to sign the Optional Protocol to the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The PPP/CIVIC Government has ratified the Optional Protocol and intends to expand the authority of the Ombudsman. It will provide regular reports to the United Nations. It also proposes to retrace the footsteps of the PPP Government in the 1957 - 64 period when, under a national democracy, the country attained both economic growth (an average annual rate of 10 per cent in rice, seven per cent in sugar and bauxite, and eight per cent in manufacturing) and human development (high levels of education and health, with special emphasis on women and children, guarantees of Fundamental Rights, a multi-party political system and periodic free and fair elections).

Participation involves empowering the people to exercise control over resources and the decision-making processes which affect management of resources.

In keeping with the need for efficiency, and to prevent bureaucratic/command type of management, trade unions in the public sector have been given the right of workers' participation in management and decision-making. And, at the grass-roots level, broad-based Citizens Committees have been established in communities throughout the country for self-help activities towards poverty alleviation, improvement of physical, social and cultural infrastructure, community policing and anti-narcotics and anti-smuggling activities, as well as for co-management.

Apart from entrenching a democratic culture, good governance must encompass transparency and honesty in public administration, prudent financial husbandry, integrity in public life, justice and equity. Corruption, extravagance and lack of accountability, vices which characterised the past, will not be tolerated by the PPP/CIVIC administration - a policy which has won the confidence of the people.

The PPP/CIVIC, in establishing a clean and lean administration, is "reinventing" government.

National accounts had not been presented to parliament for nearly a decade. The PPP/CIVIC Government has brought to the National Accounts Committee (chaired by an opposition member) accounts for 1993 and ~~will soon present them for~~ 1994.

Through cuts in extravagant and wasteful expenditure, additional budgetary allocation was made to combat crime and to increase expenditure on social services from eight per cent in 1992 to 14 per cent in 1993 and 16 per cent in 1995. And at the UN World Social Summit in Copenhagen, I made a pledge that by 1997 Guyana would allocate 20 per cent of budgetary expenditure for social development, in keeping with the UNDP 20/20 compact, which provides that any third world state expending 20 per cent for the social sector should receive an equivalent 20 per cent of international support.

The previous administration had made the State indistinguishable from the ruling party, and subverted and emasculated the state institutions, such as the Elections Commission, Public Service Commission, Police Service Commission, Teachers Service Commission and the Judicial Service Commission, and made them instruments of "Third-paramountcy".

The police, army, public service and judiciary are once again asserting their independence and professionalism, and ridding themselves of overt and covert political influences. The results of these bold policies have been a clean administration and increased revenues, especially at the Customs Department.

The PPP/CIVIC government respects fully the independence of the institutions which deal with employment. Employment and promotion will be carried out irrespective of political affiliation, race, ethnicity and religious persuasion. Qualification, merit and experience are the basis for employment and promotion. In this regard, and also to cope with fears of racial/ethnic insecurity, a Task Force on Race Relations has been set up under the leadership of the distinguished Bishop of Guyana,

the Rt Rev. Randolph George. A draft report is being circulated for board discussion with the objective of enacting a Race Relations Act and establishing a Commission to deal comprehensively with all forms of discrimination and racist incitement and to provide for equality of opportunity.

The Government is committed to accelerated development of the Amerindian people. A Task Force has been set up to elaborate a comprehensive Development Plan and projects for these communities.

The Guyana Airways Corporation (GAC) instituted in 1993 a scheduled air service to various parts of the Interior. This has proved to be a boon, particularly for the Amerindians

Women play an important role in Guyanese society. They are well-represented in the National Assembly and two are Ministers of Government. It is proposed to enact legislation to guarantee equality of opportunity for women, to provide greater opportunities for their education and to embark on urban and rural projects for gainful employment opportunities.

Young people have been affected seriously by the maladministration of the PNC regime. The decline in educational standards along with the absence of sports, cultural and leisure facilities contributed significantly to demoralisation of Guyanese youth leading to migration, drug addiction and other social vices. In retrospect, we may never be able to calculate the negative effects of National Service in its initial format, and Mass Games.

In the cultural field, Government is working to develop community centres throughout the country for cultural activities and to broaden training with more sports coaches and equipment. The provision of facilities in culture and sports will really assist in diverting the youths from alcohol and narcotics. It will also facilitate the improvement in educational standards and technical skills.

The expansion of operations in the fields of mining and forestry has raised concerns about effects on the environmental sector. Government is in the process of establishing an Environmental Protection Agency. *Italy*

A National Environmental Action Plan has been approved and an Environmental Protection Act will shortly be presented to Parliament.

ROLE OF THE STATE

The role of the state in development is a source of great controversy. This is due to different conceptions by businessmen and social scientists.

Businessmen want a marginal role for the state. Their philosophy is less government in business and more business in government. On the one hand, they do not want government to interfere; everything must be left to free competition and market forces. On the other hand, they want the state to provide the unprofitable infrastructure facilities such as roads, sea defence, drainage and irrigation, etc. (This has led to debt payment and balance of payment problems, especially with very high earnings on foreign investments in the profitable agricultural, industrial and service sectors and the drain of ~~supply~~ ^a profits overseas, (in Latin America and the Caribbean, there was ^a net annual outflow of \$36 billion due to dividend, principal and interest payments in the 1981-85 period.) *Italy*

As regards Big Business and the transnational corporations, Keith Bezanson noted:

"Much deeper than the end of the Cold War and the breakdown of ideology is the supplanting of the nation-state itself by the new forces of transnational and supranational entities. The effects of these new forces cross all boundaries. They are fast rendering meaning-less the intellectual basis for

differentiation along a North-South axis. A more accurate reflection of what is happening between and with societies is increasingly to be found on an "included-excluded" axis ... The investments of transnational and supranational entities are unlikely to be the kinds of investments that the poverty-riddled parts of the world require: basic infrastructure, health, education, and fundamental services for the integration of populations into their own economies and societies. Since the 18th century, these are the kinds of investments that have been made by the nation-state."

There is need for a Code of Conduct for the transnational corporations and a greater role for the state in development to attain social justice. *It is*

In a developing country, there is a greater activist role for the state. It is also felt that the earnings from the profitable industrial, agricultural and service sectors must be utilised to finance the unprofitable infrastructure.

The PPP/CIVIC government sees the need for a mixed economy and a genuine partnership arrangement with foreign capital and local capital and/or the state. Such joint ventures exist with the Guyana/Libya agricultural scheme, the Guyana/Reynolds bauxite mining company, Aroaima, the Guyana/Edgworth Construction International Stone quarry at Tiperu-Itabu, and the Continental Agencies/Berjaya Co Ltd hotel project.

On the issue of privatisation, the views of the PPP/CIVIC Government are reflected in the UNDP Human Development Report 1993, which observes:

"Privatisation is no panacea, however. Hastily conceived or executed, it might achieve very little. Privatisation should thus be seen not as a means to higher levels of human development."

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

It is possible to have growth without social justice and ecological justice, without human development. Dr Wilfred David, former economic adviser to the PNC Government, just prior to his sudden resignation in 1971 declared: "We have had growth without development. The problem has been exemplified by the high level of unemployment and foreign dependency."

The type of development to which we aspire is a harmonious mix of developed physical infra-structure, adequate production, just distribution of the national wealth, and genuine social and cultural upliftment within a rowing political, economic and social democracy. It is the progressive realisation of the capacities, abilities and talents of each individual for his/her own satisfaction and enhancement of the social good, and harmonious relationship with the environment,

The concepts, one might refer to as "human development" or "people-centered" development or more broadly a "basic needs strategy" as distinct from economic growth alone - the growth of income and profits without ensuring the broad-based distribution of those benefits.

Equally important as a correct strategy, programmes and policies for sustainable development is the question of politics and who controls state power. If the social contract of our national democracy is to attain the objective of economic growth with equity, with social justice and eco-justice, then state power must be in the hands of the democratic, programme and left forces of society - the working class, peasantry the revolution democrats (the progressive/radical sectors of the petti-bourgeoisie middle class) and the patriotic sections of the bourgeoisie/capitalist class.

Positive change will not take place and social progress will not be attained without such a coalition of forces.

The PPP/CIVIC is such an alliance of democratic and progressive classes and strata of the Guyana society. It provides for racial/ethnic and class balance and ideological pluralism.

State power and natural resources (natural capital) are not enough for sustainable human development. These must be combined with physical capital (money in the form of savings, foreign aid and investment) and social capital (human resource).

In this era of modernisation and globalisation, certain objective factors must be taken into consideration

- * widening gaps between the rich, "the included" and the poor, "the excluded" in both the developed North and the underdeveloped South, and between the North and the South.
- * unequal international trade.
- * "jobless growth"; "jobless recovery"
- * "aid fatigue"; "donors fatigue"

In the face of budget and balance of payments deficits of most of the OECD developed capitalist states, aid is being reduced. For the major countries, ODA contributions are now less than half of the 0.7 percent of GNP commitment in the late 1970's. Meanwhile, debt payments of the developing countries have reached unjust unsustainable levels. The current nearly US\$2 trillion foreign debt burdens and strangles their economies. Participants at a Conference in Rome of Catholic economic and legal experts denounced the current debt structure as a form of "macro-usury" - the practice of lending money at excessively high rates. During the period 1980-1990, Latin American countries paid \$418 billion

interest on original loans of \$80 billion. Because of factors such as currency exchange fluctuations, the interest rate has jumped from an original six per cent to more than 30 per cent in many cases.¹

At the same time, the major powers which control the international financial institutions, the IMF and World Bank, have not given support to the proposal of the British Government that the IMF should sell US\$50 billion of its gold reserves for debt relief especially to the highly indebted countries of the world.

In this context, a separate global fund is necessary to render aid, without political strings, to both the developed and developing countries for sustainable human development, the alleviation/eradication of poverty, unemployment and social disintegration, and meeting the basic needs of the people.

Financial resources for development cooperations can be found from:

- ** A global tax on energy. A tax of US\$1 on each barrel of oil (and its equivalent on coal) would yield around US\$66 billion annually;
- ** Pollution taxes;
- ** Taxing global speculative foreign exchange movements. A tax of 0.05 per cent on the value of each transaction can yield US\$150 billion annually. Nobel Prize Winner, economist James Tobin recommends a 0.5 per cent tax which will yield a much greater sum.

Payments for service by poor countries can also be made to ensure global human security. This can be for environmental controls, destruction of nuclear weapons and controlling

¹ MICHAEL, Rougemont, Quebec, Canada, July - August 1995, pl.

communicable diseases and narcotics. Compensation should also be paid for brain drain, exclusion of unskilled labour and restrictions on trade.

The additional funds, the "peace dividend", can be utilised for the following;

- ** A works Programme for physical, social and cultural infrastructure, as was embarked upon by the Roosevelt New Deal Administration at the time of the great Depression of the 1930s.
- ** Increase employment by the reduction of the number of days or the number of hours worked per week, without loss of pay,; also the reduction of the retirement age without loss of benefits;
- ** Tax and other incentives for the use of technology which will create jobs instead of destroying them;
- ** A new EU/ACP Lome Convention with enhanced assistance for the developing countries;
- ** A refashioned Alliance for Progress for Latin America and the Caribbean;
- ** Debt relief for the developing countries.

"Third world" countries remitted during the 1982-90 period, the strangling sum of US\$1,345 billion (interest and principal) in debt service alone to the creditor nations. For each month in the same period, interest payments alone amounted to US\$6.5 billion. In contrast, total resource flows between 1982 and 1990 from the North to the South was \$927 billion, causing a net South to North outflow of US\$418 billion, not including outflows such as royalties, dividends, repatriated profits, underpaid raw materials and the like -- a sum equal to six Marshall Plans (US aid to Europe at the end of World War II) averaging US\$70 billion a year in 1991.

Monsignor Diarmuid Martin, undersecretary of the Pontifical Justice and Peace Council told a group of economic and legal experts meeting: "Pope John Paul II has suggested that debt

cancellation be seriously considered as a way to usher in an era of economic fairness at the start of the third millennium.

"...Vatican officials challenge the assumption that debt forgiveness would simply be a gesture of charity toward poorer nations."

"We have to ask ourselves whether debt cancellation would be an act of mercy or an act of right."

Debt cancellation is a matter of enlightened self interest for the OECD developed capitalist countries.

Susan George, in her book The DEBT BOOMERANG: How Third World Debt Harms Us All, says that "the debtor countries as a group began the 1990's fully 61 per cent more in debt than they were in 1982", the year of debt crisis in the "lost decade" of the 1980's.

Oscar Arias, former President of Costa Rica, Nobel Peace Prize Winner and member of the Commission on Global Governance says that foreign debt payments should be not more than 10 per cent of export income. And Ms. George rightly argues that if debt is not cancelled/relieved, there would be six boomerang effects on the North -- environmental destruction; drugs; cost to taxpayers; lost jobs and markets; immigration pressures; heightened conflict and war.

On the other hand, with debt relief, funds will be available to lay the foundation for rapid economic growth, which can then provide the basis for the expansion of world trade through the purchase of goods and service, especially capital goods, by the developing countries from the developed countries.

A New Global Human Order, however, will not be attained simply by making declarations of principles and programmes of action. To win support for, and the implementation of, such a national

democratic programme it is necessary to organise a world wide alliance of governmental and non-governmental forces:

- * at the state level -- the United Nations Network; the Group of 77; the Group of 15; the Rio group; the
- * Non-Aligned Movement (NAM); Organisation of American States (OAS); Latin American Economic System (SELA); Organisation of African Unity (OAU); ASEAN; Pacific Forum
- * at the institutional level -- organisational such as the Carter Centre, the South/South Centre; the North/South Centre; the Carnegie Foundation on Science, Technology and Government; the International Development Research Centre (IDRC); the Commission on Ford Foundation; Global Governance; Inter-American Dialogue; Institute for Policy Studies; Council on Hemispheric Affairs
- * the national, regional and international network of Non-governmental Organisations (NGO's)

Unity and struggle must be the motto of all democratic, progressive and revolutionary forces worldwide.

At the national level in Guyana, the PPP always had as its principal objective the attainment of national, racial/ethnic and working class unity. Such unity was attained, when the PPP, with the support of the TUC and four of the most powerful unions, won 18 out of 24 seats in the elections in April 1953: a victory which destroyed the racist/conservative political influences of the League of Coloured People (LCP) and the British Guiana East Indian Association (BGEIA).

Regrettably, the suspension of the Constitution in October 1953 and the removal by force of the PPP from government, and the split of the national democratic movement/party in 1955 and 1956 laid the basis for national disunity.

In the 1980's and early 1990's, unity developed on three broad fronts -- political, trade union and religions.

At the political level, the PPP in alliance with four other opposition parties, formed the Patriotic Coalition for Democracy (PCD) immediately after the 1985 rigged elections. On a multi-racial/ethnic basis, the PCD played an important role in the struggle for free and fair elections.

The PPP/CIVIC alliance is now creating the objective basis for national, racial/ethnic and working people's unity.

Some who see only race/ethnicity in politics in Guyana, as others who see tribalism and religion in other countries, are not viewing reality comprehensively, objectively and scientifically.

They fail to note in our multi-racial/multi-ethnic, multi-religions and multi-cultural mosaic, that economics, on the one hand, and politics, ideology, culture and institutions, on the other are inter-related and inter-acting. For instance, race/ethnicity was not the determinant factor when the 7-unions' candidate, George Daniels, with a minority of delegates won, in a secret vote in the 1984 TUC General Elections against the PNC-backed presidential candidate. At that time, the struggle at the trade union level was sufficiently advanced to cut across racial/ethnic lines. So now, the struggle will advance to realise racial-ethnic unity at the political level, as in the 1947-53 period.

Now was race a divisive factor at the religious level in the fight for the restoration of democracy. Afro-Guyanese Anglican Bishop George and Indo-Guyanese Catholic Bishop Benedict Singh played a sterling role, especially with their BISHOPS' MANIFESTO, to achieve free and fair elections.

In time, with the PPP/CIVIC government's commitment to and attainment of further economic growth and human development, fears of racial/ethnic insecurity will disappear, and the ground will be prepared not only for national unity but also for racial/ethnic and working class unity.

Our success in building a cohesive and united national-democratic state and in attaining social progress will depend also on the extent to which we can build an edifice of world civilisation: A New Global Human Order on the basis of international cooperation and genuine partnership in our interdependent world.

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