

## THE TRUE FATHER

Almighty and most everlasting God, only you are capable of standing  
in true judgement,  
Over the actions of your Dear Guyanese Son, Cheddi Jagan,  
in our bereavement,  
Give us the wisdom, to bear this loss with unity, peace and strength,  
So that our beloved Guyana may continue, on the road of reconstructions,  
that he had started, free from political and racial discontent.

Help us from afar Dear God, as we mourn at this time, in the history  
of our dear country, his passing,  
And to remember him, as the true founding father of our Guyanese nation,  
and making,  
His struggles of fifty years, both without and within,  
To free our dear country at first, from British colonialism, and later,  
from internal incubated political and racial schism.

O Lord, because of his struggles, once in our homeland, our standard of  
education, was jealously enviable,  
Our public institutions, provided services of levels incomparable,  
And our hearts would burst with joy, when our children passed  
with distinctions, examinations most commendable,  
Only to serve with pride in the professions, with impartiality  
now inconceivable.

We remember, Dear Lord, when his battle began, with our fore-fathers  
living in "logies," with earthen floors, on the British sugar  
estates, alongside the "nigger-yards,"  
And as they waded through mud, slush and water, to and from work,  
plying between the canefields and under their living wards,  
Peacefully co-existing with the blacks, since both saw their lot,  
as servile labourers, toiling towards  
Making tomorrow a better day for their children, destined to inherit  
for a short while, the fruits of their labours, as token rewards.

We recall O Heavenly Father, how their masters, the European  
managers and overseers,  
Lived in gaudy styles, in majestic buildings and cottages specially  
designed with lawns and garden squares,  
Of beauteous electrical illumination, on all cardinal points incompare,  
While our poor fore-fathers made do, with their kerosene flambeau,  
jug lamps, and lanterns ever so rare.

O God, through his struggles and sacrifice, our lot soon improved,  
with the introduction of universal adult suffrage,  
for us to choose,  
A government of our choice, to pacify our conscious rage, built up  
over decades, of imperialism's abuse,  
And with diligent use, of the limited political power by him, and those  
few rare respected leaders, they were to infuse,  
A most welcome spate, of infrastructural development, that  
none would refuse.

We thank thee O God, for the privilege to recall, that under his  
dynamic leadership, extra nuclear housing predominated  
on the sugar estates, through loans from the sugar welfare  
fund were built, modest but beautiful housing schemes,  
With asphalted streets, electric lights and running water, into each  
house, sure means,  
Of welcome progress, for the ever hard-working sugar workers, who now  
moved from "logies" to cottages, and with joyful hearts  
would gleam,  
With wonder and amazement, at their new found gains, full-well knowing,  
that it was only an insignificant drip of compensation,  
wrested from the British sugar barons, of bursting  
million-dollar seams.

He it was, O God, who built agricultural schemes at Black Bush  
Polder, Parika, Bonasika and Tapacooma, which stand as  
living developmental testimony, to this day,  
That fed, and still feed, the city and country, with ever fresh vegetables  
of a notable array,

And the newly built rice schemes, in Berbice and Essequibo, supplied  
the foreign and local markets, with high quality rice,  
and so help to defray

The costs of such imports, as salt fish, split peas, potatoes and sardines,  
which were to be banned at a later day.

During this time, we know Dear Lord, that it was a period of laudable  
development, and the names of Cheddi Jagan, and those  
other leaders, responsible for such progress must now be  
resurrected, with homage and respect,

Despite the umpteen efforts by his opponents, to discredit and  
disregard their Herculean efforts as inept,  
But the chaotic malady, which once stalked our homeland, with him  
out of office, had made many of our countrymen to hang  
their heads in shame, and proclaim with utter disrespect,  
Those who had caused such colossal dislocation and economic  
degeneration, and untold human suffering, to an ever  
bewildering effect.

'Twas during his leadership, we can recall, O God, when many high schools  
were built for the first time, around the country-side, that  
took free secondary education to our needy children,  
And the health centres and cottage hospitals, built in the far flung areas  
of our dear country, took medical care to our poor brethren,  
Who lived away from the cities' medical facilities, and who had to travel  
long distances, to reach them, wherein,  
These were undoubtedly landmarks in Third World development, that  
none could deny, stood as living testimony, of true  
political caring.

We could not forget too, O Heavenly Father, that his achievements,  
in the areas of mass transportation services,  
Our people were to benefit, from the introduction, of ferry  
modernization facilities, of notable consequences,  
With the introduction of the modern motor vessels, such as the Makouria,  
to ply the Demerara/Atlantic reaches,  
While the Torani and the Malali, plied respectively, the Berbice and  
Essequibo estuaries.

Fortunate were we to see, O God, as his lonely voice continued in the  
opposition wilderness, when many of these  
pre-independence progress and developments,  
Were to suffer, with untold economic deterioration and neglect,  
in the post-independence adjustment,  
Which began with the banning of essential food items, by the new  
reigning, political hierarchical judgement,  
And were destined to usher in, the abominable sky-rocketing prices,  
never before experienced, but now became our people's  
number one predicament.

Oh what a shame it seemed, Dear Lord, when all hell broke loose,  
it would appear,  
Who could ever believe, that a pint of cooking oil rose from thirty-six cents  
to forty dollars, one sure example, that was to set in gear  
A litany of Godless sufferings, upon our poor and innocent  
people, for whom to rescue, none but only Cheddi  
seemed to care,  
But sure there were to be, so-called new rising stars, made millionaires,  
by the new trade activities, in a brand new environment,  
of black marketeer.

You know, Dear Lord, that the ever growing and uncontrollable,  
harsh economic realities,  
Were set to destabilise many of the once enviable professions,  
that boasted of job securities,  
Civil servants, teachers, nurses, policemen and even lawyers seemed  
shocked at the runaway inflationary tendencies  
That were to paralyse the purchasing power of their weekly  
and monthly salaries.

It soon disgracefully became evident, O God, when many  
professionals, were opting to supplement their wage,  
by doing the now lucrative trading,  
Many resigned their jobs, and were travelling to New York, Brazil,  
Surinaam, Venezuela and the Caribbean, to buy and  
bring in commodities, that were now selling

At exorbitant prices, never before dreamt of, and which were  
destined in making,  
A brand new group of local entrepreneurs, into mini-millionaires,  
of very unorthodox breeding.

But it was by your miracle and mysterious power, Dear Lord, that our  
indomitable leader, was brought back to power,  
So as to alleviate the pain of the innumerable dislocations of  
his suffering countrymen, and to help them to recover,  
From those never before experienced hardships, and to continue,  
the colossal task, of elevating the lot of our poor  
countrymen, from the suffocating devilish political plunder  
That was thrust upon them, by a dishonourable bunch of our other  
unfortunate self-seeking, corrupt and haughty political  
dictators, we all so easily remember.

O Heavenly Father, only you are capable of granting peace  
upon the soul of our beloved Cheddi,  
Like him, cast your forgiving eyes upon his wicked predecessors,  
who had sinned so terribly, and make those now in power,  
truly ready,  
To carry on the legacy, left by Your late indomitable Son, like footprints  
on the sands of time, and to continue to make our ship  
of state, peacefully steady,  
So that the stability and reconstruction that he had started  
will be continued, whereby our beautiful Guyana  
may rise from the ashes of the ignoble past, never again  
to be the land of the neediest of the needy.

**Robert H Mahesh**