

DR. CHEDDI JAGAN'S FREEDOM FIGHT

THE FLIGHT THAT BRED THE FIGHT

By Seopaul Singh

JUSTIFYING EXPLOITATION AND GREED, a Colonial few
Lured hundreds of Indians to a world that's New;
By deceit and dishonesty, the ensnared masses,
Were hoarded like cattle, then treated like asses,

Small makeshift *logies* identified as their houses,
The young men and women coupled as spouses;
With their fellow comrades, every one still a slave,
They tilled plantations from adolescence to grave.

In the fields and factories, cutting and crushing,
Each day and each night the process repeating;
Sugar though sweet, made their entire life bitter,
The "Gold" they produced to them had no glitter.

They slept like logs, still like zombies they rose,
Back into cane fields embracing their new woes;
To pursue such fate while dawn's dew drops fall,
Their reward a mere pittance was not mete at all.

The fire-sides crackling, and coffee pots boiling,
Sleepless wives stirring *dhol*, their *roti* clapping;
Before daylight their husband's meals preparing,
Hurrying fast to join other women still dreaming.

They left before morn, they returned late twilight,
Black hands, black faces, the blackness of night;
Laborers and sugar cane all covered with sooth,
All ragged, barefooted, having no walking boots.

No rights and freedoms, democracy masquerade,
Much arrogance, White bigotry – their stock-n-trade;
Thru' power and force they enslaved human kind,
To these suffering people they were willfully blind.

The sucrose-soaked rollers ground out their load
Of tired souls taking flight, while red blood flowed;
Squeezing their substance from indentured sons
Who died staring blandly beyond barrels of guns.

First Leonora to Non Pariel, Herstelling and Enmore,
They must refuse to work though hungry and poor;
Their just protest sparking off a wanton massacre,
White masters unleashing their black dogs of war.

The mills still kept grinding, great product refining,
No one truly knew what the process was moulding;
All the factories were livid with production for profit,
While the resolute giant invoked martyrdom's spirit.

Out of their refining, the grinding greed of planters,
Another enigma arose from the loins of our fathers;
Renewed with the spirit of Mahatma Gandhi of old,
He shook Great Britain without having army or gold.

We lived through history, he singly had fashioned,
No one dared stop whom God had commissioned;
He piloted Guyana, he broke the back of that scam,
Of betraying, self-seeking, Machiavellian Burnham,

Democracy we desired has now graced our shore,
Won by our great leader who gave so much more;
He since stood unique after a half century of fight,
He taught us all Guyanese that might was not right.

His toils for all Guyana whether in sunshine or rain,
Proved all his sacrifices, efforts were never vain;
He'd emblazoned our history, Father and Architect,
Of our Freedom, Democracy and Guyana's Respect.

New York
March 26, 1997.