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ACTIVITIES IN GUYANA RELATING TO

THE WORLD PEACE MOVEMENT

by

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The first "shots" for the World Peace Movement were fired in the PAC Bulletin, the organ of the Political Affairs Committee (PAC), which in December 26, 1949 reproduced from In Defense of Peace Martin Andersen Nexa's article WAR IS CANNIBALISM, and in Thunder, organ of the People's Progressive Party (PPP), which in May 1950 published WAR OR PEACE by the Dean of Canterbury, Dr. Howlett Johnson, and in November 1950, PEACE AT ALL COST.

In April and December 1951, THUNDER carried protests by the PPP against the persuction of the great peace fighter Dr. W.E.B. DuBois.

In the early 1952, the British Guiana Peace Committee was formed and carried out several activities for peace and national independence including the picketing of the visit British Royalty, Princess Alice of Alton, as a result of which Martin Carter and Eric Huntley lost their Government jobs.

The B.G. Peace Committee's delegate, Sydney King, attended the World Peace Council Meeting in December 1952 in Vienna, Austria as reported in a MESSAGE OF PEACE by its Secretary, Rory Westmaas, (THUNDER, JANUARY, 1953)

The Peace Committee, along with other organisations associated with the PPP took part in a rally to express solidarity with Korea (THUNDER, July 1953).

Dr. Cheddi Jagan, now WPC Presidential Committee, member, was appointed a member of the World Peace Council in 1953, soon after the PPP had won 18 out of 24 seats and formed the Government (THUNDER, July, 1953).

In October, 1953 British Warships arrived in the then Colony of British Guiana, the Constitution was suspended and the PPP removed by force from the Government.

In justifying this brutal cold-war act, the British government's WHITE PAPER, 1953 and the Robertson Commission Report (1954) cited the PPP's association with the World Peace Council, and other international organisations such as the World Federation of Trade Unions, the Women's International Democratic Federation and the World Federation of Democratic Youth.

Similar cold-war pre-occupations and interventions through CIA fomented and - financed disturbances in the early 1960's led in December 1964 to the removal of the constitutionally-elected PPP Government.

WORLD PEACE COUNCIL IN MAINSTREAM OF HISTORY - by CHEDDI JAGAN

Mankind witnessed the horrors of the two world wars in the space of twenty-five years. World War II was a "war to end all wars" and "a war to make the world safe for democracy".

But soon after hostilities ended, those forces, unwilling to see humanity advance and to let science and technology be used to the service of man began the cold-war. Contrary to the terms of the Potsdam Treaty, Germany was re-armed. The main wartime aggressors, Germany and Japan, were built up militarily and economically in support of the policy of "containment of communism"

Some even advocated a pre-emptive strike against the Soviet Union with Atomic bombs, arguing that would settle once and for all in this so-called problems of the socialism and national liberation. It was in this atmosphere that the World Peace Movement was born. Great scientists and humanitarians who were associated with its birth, were unwilling to see science perverted. They lent their names and prestige to our great movement in the quest for world peace.

The beginning was not easy. The strident voice of anti-communism was a powerful weapon.

In the then British Guiana, for instance, the British Guiana Peace Committee was singled out for attack soon after its formation. In the British White Paper on the suspension of the British Guiana Constitution and in forcible removal of the popularly elected (18 out of 24 seats) People's Progressive Party (PPP) from the government in October, 1953, the British Guiana Peace Committee was cited, along with other international organisations.

The White Paper, inter alia stated;

"Meanwhile, the leaders have strengthened their links with Moscow and have boasted of their preference for the Russian way of life. Mrs Jagan, who is Secretary of the party was a member of the Young Communist League when in America, attended the third world congress of the Women's International Democratic Federation (Communist) in

Copenhagen in June, and later visited Rumania. Mr Rory Westmaas is vice-president of the PPP and organiser of the local 'peace committee' and the Pioneer Youth League. He has recently been to a Communist organised international youth conference in Bucharest. Dr. Jagan visited Berlin to attend an international youth conference which was held under Communist auspices in 1951. Three members of the party will attend the October meeting of the World Federation of Trade Unions in Vienna. "Mr Sydney King another Minister, visited the W.F.T.U, Vienna and Hungary in February, 1953".

In my book FORBIDDEN FREEDOM (Lawrence and Wishart, 1954), referring to the spurious in British charges, I wrote:

"Reference is made in the White Paper to ^{the} visit ^{of} Mr Sydney King and Mr R.O Westmaas to the World Peace Congress. The PPP does not regard membership of the World Peace Movement as a Communist monopoly; many non-communist the world over belong to this organisation.

As colonials we realise that unless new development schemes are embarked upon our standards of living will continue to be very low. Vast sums of money are being spent on ^{armaments} ~~armaments~~ and war preparations. If only a fraction of this wealth could be used for construction projects in backward territories like British Guiana, the lives of the people there could quickly be changed.

We see nothing wrong with the Peace Appeal of the last World Peace Congress, which said:

'A great hope has been born. Everybody now sees that agreement is possible. The slaughter can be ended. The cold war can be stopped.

'In this hour we solemnly call upon the peoples to demand of their governments that they negotiate and agree.

'It is for us to support every move - from whatever government it may come - to solve disputes by peaceful means. It is for us all to frustrate the efforts of those who prevent or delay agreement.

'Peace is within our reach. It is for us to win it.'

Soon after the military destruction of the PPP government, the British Guyana Peace Committee was banned; among others, it was declared a subversive organisation.

Two of our colleagues, Fred Bowman and Nasruddeen, were charged with sedition. The famous peace fighter, D.N. Pitt came to defend them and unfortunately secured their release. To fight against colonialism then, as to fight against neo-colonialism today, was/is seditious and treasonable.

Peace was then regarded as subversive, and peaceful coexistence, the cornerstone of the World Peace Council, as the "Trojan horse" of international communism to lull the "vigilance" of capitalist states.

Later opposition came from the "ultra-leftist" and the "left" revisionists, who charged the WPC for pacifism, for "selling" "out". Peaceful co-existence they said, meant "reconciliation" with imperialism. This view I found prevalent in Canadian universities in 1968. Patiently, and I must admit in some cases unsuccessfully, I related my experience of the heated encounter between the Soviet and Chinese delegations on the questions of peaceful coexistence at the Tricontinental Conference in Havana in 1965. The Soviet delegation had pointed out that it was suicidal in this era of mass weapons - nuclear, chemical and bacteriological - of destruction to think of war for the settlement of disputes between the socialist and the capitalist states. For them, the Soviet delegation said, peaceful coexistence meant struggle, not war but peaceful competition. That did not imply, however, that there was to be no class struggle, no liberation struggle. The Soviet Union, he reiterated, would continue to aid all those who were fighting against class exploitation and national oppression.

Later, unfortunately, this same attitude on the part of China was to hamstring the work of the World Peace Council. But the world has travelled a long way. Today, China too accepts the principle of peaceful coexistence although regrettably she considers the Soviet Union as enemy Number One.

And peace is no longer regarded as a communist monopoly. Evidence of this was the historic Congress of Peace Forces, held in Moscow in October 1973; which brought together from 147 countries more than 3,000 delegates of all walks of life - believers and non-believers, militants and pacifists.
ifists,

academic and laymen.

Credit for this great achievement must go to the World Peace Council and its indefatigable General Secretary, Bhanesh Chandra, also to the peace programme and policies of the socialist states, particularly the Soviet Union.

The World Peace Council can look back with pride at 25 years of real service to mankind. Because of its unrelenting activity, coupled with the growing economic and military strength of the socialist world, many cold warriors have been forced to abandon their dreams of "containment", and their idea of bargaining from "positions of strength". They have been compelled to accept the idea of peaceful coexistence.

But peace fighters must not be lulled into false sense of security. Imperialism has not given up its strategic aim of world domination. New methods are being devised to realise its objectives -- "non military" confrontation", "limited revalary", "partnership", ideological warfare, and social strategy to combat national liberation.

The fourteen topics discussed at the World Peace Congress of Peace Forces show that although much has been fained, there is still a great deal to be done.

A glorious perspective is opening up for the cause of world peace, on this its 25th Anniversary, the World Peace Council must redouble its efforts and strengthen world unity of all anti-imperialist forces - the Socialist World, the national liberation movements and the progressive working class and peace fighters of the Capitalist world.

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