

Party Stalwarts

by Hydar Ally

The strength of the PPP always resided in the visionary qualities of its leaders and the commitment and dedication of the rank and file to the ideals of the Party. There are thousands of Party comrades who have dedicated almost their entire lives to the cause of the Party many from the very inception of the Party and even before.

One such comrade is Mrs. Janet Jagan, widow of the late Dr. Cheddi Jagan both of whom have together over a century of service and contribution to the cause of the Guyanese people. And this is no ordinary service but service of an exceptional high level with both having attained the distinction of holding the highest political post of the land-that of Executive President.

As Prime Minister Samuel Hinds indicated during a simple ceremony to mark Mrs. Jagan's eighty-eight birthday, Mrs. Jagan is more Guyanese than many

living today having arrived in this country long before those who unashamedly questioned her right to occupy the Presidency of this country. Imagine the audacity of some opposition elements to question her right to the Presidency during the elections of 1997 when she ran as the Presidential candidate of the PPP! Even

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when she won the elections by convincing majority, the highest margin of victory the Party ever received, attempts were made to prevent her from swearing in a State House ceremony by opposition elements who spuriously attempt to use the mechanism of the Courts to thwart the democratic will of the Guyanese electorate. Mrs. Jagan, much to the dis-

may of her detractors, did what any self-respecting person would do. We all know what she did.

The fact is that the history of contemporary Guyana would be incomplete without an acknowledgement of the role played by the Jagans in the creation of a modern Guyanese society and polity. Both Cheddi

during the early days of the Party's formation when attempts were made to divide the Party following the suspension of the Constitution in 1953 after the Party won a landslide victory at the polls, winning 18 out of the 24 seats.

Today there are fresh attempts to diminish the role and significance of the



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scribed as the 'Booker Reformer in British Guiana' during the 1934-1965 period. One hardly associate academic works with the kind of trash being peddled by Clem Seecharran in his work "Sweetening Bitter Sugar: Jock Cambell, the Booker Reformer in British Guiana" Maybe it is not too difficult to understand why that was so, given the fact that research for the publication was financed substantially by Jock Cambell.

I do not propose to go into all the distortions and inaccuracies contained in the publication except to say that the book is on the whole patronizing to the colonial powers especially during the 1934-1966 period when

tration of the Booker Empire.

As I mentioned before, there are countless members of the PPP who have dedicated their entire lives to the cause of the Party, two of whom recently passed on. These two comrades are Husman Ali from Bartica and Carl Douglas from No. 64 Village on the Corentyne. I know both of these comrades well and I can attest to their loyalty to the Party even during the difficult years of political oppression. Carl Douglas is from the same village where I grew up and I have vivid recollections of the passion with which he pursued his political tasks at the community and regional levels. The same is true of Husman Ali whose work in Bartica and for that matter the whole of Region Seven has paid off political dividends with the Party winning a plurality for the first time in a Region in which the PNC once held sway.

A Happy 88th Birthday to Mrs. Jagan and may she continue to serve the people of this country with dedication and distinction