Wanted: A United Trade Union Movement

by Janet Jagan

History is an important factor in our lives and should be, not only recorded accurately and profoundly, but respected for the lessons it provides and the guidelines it etches for the future.

Our education system does not yet provide for a full and balanced and fully accurate account of Guyana's rich history. More text books are required to deal with this subject, written specifically for the different age groups of the students. One of the books that has been neglected in the past and should be used in our educational system is Ashton Chase's "A History of Trade Unionism in Guyana: 1900 to 1961." It also contains an epilogue which carries the history to 1964. Chase's history book was written in 1964 and by the 70's was out of print.

Fortunately, through the perseverance of progressive trade unions it was reprinted in 2006 and launched at the NAACIE trade union hall last year.

This significant event, although largely attended by many trade unionists, also in dividing the working class along racial lines. Only the working class has suffered from this division. And finally, through the intervention of the Americans the basis for corrupting the trade union movement was well and truly laid.

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The PPP recognised that if it were to successfully pursue the class struggle it had to work in close collaboration with the trade unions. It was fortunate that at its inception many of the trade unions were under class conscious leadership. The PPP and the trade unions worked together, planned but also in dividing the working class along racial lines. Only the working class has suffered from this division. And finally, through the intervention of the Americans the basis for corrupting the trade union movement was well and truly laid.

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History is an important factor in our lives and should be not only recorded accurately but also in dividing the working class along racial lines. Only the working class has suffered from this division. And finally, through the intervention of the Americans the basis for corrupting the trade union movement was well and truly laid. This period therefore starts off on a high note of expectancy and hope springing from a firm unity that was being built up in the ranks of the working class. It ends on the low note of such high hopes having been dashed austerely.

It was during the Interim Government of hand-picked members by the British Governor, after the suspension of the constitution in 1953, that a new TUC leadership was picked and the former TUC thrown in the trash can, period of the first set of rules of the BG Labour Union began to be translated into reality. This cooperation between the advanced guard in the workers' political struggle and the trade unions paid dividends. The union movement was strengthened, its militancy sharpened. Greater respect and more purposeful recognition were accorded the movement.

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