

CONGRESS REPORT

by JANET JAGAN

The twelfth Annual Congress of the People's Progressive Party, held at Zeeburg, W. C. D. from April 17th to the 19th began with the exciting and spectacular meeting of the two cross-country Freedom Marches which converged at Zeeburg at 4 p.m. The two groups of Freedom Marchers, one beginning from Crabwood Creek and the other from Charity, had traversed the whole coastal belt demanding the release of the 14 Detainees. Holding nearly 100 public meetings on the way to Zeeburg, speakers called for the end of the Emergency and the release of the Detainees.

With Party Leader Cheddi Jagan in front of the marchers, a meeting was held at Zeeburg just before the opening of Congress. After an opening address by the Chairman, scores of messages and cables of greetings from overseas were read by members. Old stalwarts of the fight against colonialism — Mr. D.N.Pritt, Q.C; Alan Bush, Ralph Milner and messages from fraternal organisation, from students abroad and a message from Detention Camp all sent their greetings.

Final item of the first session was the Treasurer's report for the years 1963 and 1964. After discussion and approval, the session was adjourned for the evening.

Members were shown the full hospitality of the Zeeburg comrades who played host; accommodation and food were provided for all.

The second session began at 8 p.m. with the reading of the Secretary's Report. This was followed by discussion and the adoption of the report. The Report outlined developments in the Party since the Eleventh Congress held in 1963 and indicated a sharp increase in membership and greater attention being

paid to Party Education and Organisation.

The final item of the second session was the reading of a paper on "Party Organisation". The Third session began on Sunday morning with reports from the Women's Progressive Organisation, the P.P.P. Education Trust, the Progressive Youth Organisation and the Accabre College of Political Science. This was the first time that a special report on Accabre was given. The Leader's Report was then given and discussion followed into the fourth session. He outlined the political situation generally, and turning to the Party's internal affairs, spoke on the need for greater discipline and loyalty and for the weeding out of the opportunists, racists, careerists and incompetents. He stressed the need for the unity of all forces opposed to imperialism.

During the lengthy discussion that followed, Congress declared in favour of the Party taking all the necessary steps and precautions not only to achieve national unity and racial harmony, but also party unity in ideology, organisation and propaganda. Congress decided that for

an interim period not exceeding 12 months there would be a party administration to be headed by the Leader, Cheddi Jagan, who would be assisted by a secretariat and who would formulate plans and programmes after consultation with the members of the previous General Council and the mass organisations closely associated to the Party.

This means, in effect, that during the interim period there will be no designated officers of the Party with the exception of the Leader, who, in consultation with the Secretariat and the previous General Council, will be responsible for the conduct of party affairs.

Before closing, the fourth session dealt with a number of proposed amendments to the Party Constitution. Some were deferred for the Special Conference to be convened during the year, some rejected, and two amendments accepted.

On the Sunday evening, a concert was held before a packed hall. Over a dozen items of music, poetry reading and singing kept the audience keenly attentive. A long round of applause greeted two outstanding women comrades when they were presented with gold brooches. One was given to the mother of Michael Forde who was killed in the Freedom House bombing, and the other to Julie, veteran Freedom Marcher, both for their loyalty and devotion and example set for other women. Another presentation was made of phonograph records for the Detainees at Sibley Hall.

The final session held on Monday morning April 19th dealt with the large number of resolutions

coming from Party groups. Congress decided that the PPP legislative group should participate in the deliberations of the House of Assembly with the object of exposing the sell-out of the interests of the Guianese people to colonialism and imperialism. The resolutions passed by Congress are printed elsewhere in Thunder.

AFFIRMATION:

In concluding its sessions Congress affirmed.

1. An end to the emergency, the restoration of full constitutional guarantees and the release of all detainees.
2. A demand for genuine independence, based on anti-colonialism and anti-neo-colonialism.
3. The necessity for a political settlement with a. new constitutional arrangements; b. New elections, new electoral system and voting at 18 years.
4. Democratisation and re-structuring of government institutions dealing with law, administration and security.
5. No foreign troops on Guianese soil and a properly constituted Guianese national army.

Letter to the Editor Cheers for PPP

Dear Editor,

Cheers to the PPP for being the only Party in the English speaking Caribbean to have the guts to demonstrate against the US interference in the Dominican Republic. What is happening to the progressive forces in the Caribbean? Are they so subservient to the US dollar that they have lost their manhood?

Yours, etc.,
J. L. Khan.