

# Wanted—A Minimum Wage Law

BY CHEDDI B. JAGAN B. Sc., M. D., S

The standard of living of the majority of the wage earners of British Guiana is miserably low as compared to most progressive countries.

The present condition of low wages and high cost of living is responsible for many of his ills. In the sugar estates, he lives for the most part in dungeons, ranges and barracks which keep out the light, but let in the rain. Fear of insecurity that he and his family can anytime be kicked out of the rat trap always dominates his soul and has made of him a cowed and servile individual. It would be far better that his wage was increased to allow him to pay rent or own a house. In the city the very miserable pitances doled out to factory (shirt, tobacco, etc.), workers and domestic servants force them to live crowded in backward rooms and hovels. Census returns will show that large numbers of ten and more persons are huddled in one room.

Body and soul of the wage-earner cannot be expected to be kept together under the existing low wages of 4jots to 7 and 9c per hour. It is no wonder that he is always having some kind of fever, aches and pains. The famous estate hospital cure—*arsenic*, quinine, cough mixture and salts and all the quack patent medicines—if of any value whatsoever—will be of no use if he is not receiving adequate amounts of all the necessary food values. Why is the tuberculosis rate so high in this country, especially among the lowest paid workers? Incidentally, advanced cases of tuberculosis patients who may require lung surgery by rib resection etc. cannot receive this treatment here. If he cannot afford to spend an enormous sum to go to Jamaica, he is left to die. Our government prefers to spend more than \$30,000 on free leave passage than to spend the same amount for medical experts.

The Heller Committee for Research on Social Economics at the University of California found that it required about \$54.00 per week to provide for "the standard; health, decency and moral well-being for a man, wife and two children". Senator Claude Pepper introduced a resolution in the U. S. Congress to make 65c per hour the

minimum wage, saying that any other figure would be "sub-standard".

Anyone who is familiar with the United States will agree that the cost of living here is not very much lower. Why then the tremendous difference in wages? The majority of Guianese cannot help but live sub-standard. Workers and wage-earners unite! Make a concerted drive for a minimum wage law of at least 25c per hour. Write your Legislative Council representatives to introduce and support such a measure.

Read and Advertise in The Labour Advocate

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## North West District And Pomeroun service

The service to the North West District and to Pomeroun will be operated as follows:—

### NORTH WEST DISTRICT Leave Georgetown

Monday, 13th May,	2.00 p.m.
Monday, 27th May,	2 p. m.
† Whitmondoy, 10th June,	2p. m.
Monday, 24th June,	2 p. m.
Monday, 8th July,	2 p. m.
Monday, 22nd July,	2 p. m.

### POMEROON Leave Georgetown

*Sunday, 13th May,	9 p. m.
Monday, 3rd June,	9 p. m.
Monday, 17th June,	9 p. m.
Monday, 1st July,	9 p. m.
Monday, 15th July,	9 p. m.
Monday, 29th July,	9 p. m.

\* Ice and Perishable cargo will be received at the Georgetown Steamer Stelling on Sunday, 14th April, from 7.00 a.m. to 9.00 a.m.

### FOUR FREEDOMS

Freedom of Speech & Expression  
Freedom to worship God.  
Freedom from Want.  
Freedom from Fear.

President Roosevelt

Transport and Harbours Department,  
Georgetown,  
19th May, 1946.

R. V. TEARE,  
Lieut. Col.,  
General Manager.

## Registration Of Unemployed Women And Girls

Unemployed women and girls have been given an opportunity to register at a Branch Office of the Employment Exchange Service, at premises in the compound of the District Commissioner's Office, Kingston, as from Wednesday, June 19.

At present the office will be opened on the afternoon of Wednesday of each week between the hours of 1.30 and 3.30 o'clock. Registration will be by age groups and women in the 21 - 25 years group must call for registration on June 19, 16-20 years on June 26-26-30 on July 3, and over 30 years on July 10.

### DIRECTIONS

Persons who register are asked their name, age, address and what kind of work they had been doing, what kind of work they would like to secure, the name of their previous employer and length of service; and whether they would take a job if it means living away from home. The answers to these and other questions are carefully kept in a register for the benefit of unemployed workers who want work and employers who want workers.

Each person who registers is given a card and must report regularly at the exchange.

B. P. I.