

112 Regent Street,  
Laceytown, Georgetown,  
British Guiana.  
2nd December, 1953.

Dear Friends,

When the Tory Government landed troops in our country and, without any warning or justification, suspended our constitution and deposed our ministers, we knew that there would be the strongest opposition to their crude imperialistic tactics on the part of liberty-loving British people. How strong this opposition is, we have been able to see for ourselves during our few brief weeks in this country, where we have met and spoken to thousands of men and women of all shades of opinion.

In thanking our friends for their support we wish to pay a particular tribute to those members of the great British Labour Movement who have been active on our behalf. From the most eminent member of Parliament to the ordinary rank and file, the sympathy and support we have received on behalf of our oppressed people will be remembered and cherished.

*Executive*

We would be lacking in candour, however, if we did not express our deep regret at the statements issued by the Executive Committee of the T.U.C. and the Labour Party on British Guiana. The T.U.C. has condemned our Government for dealing with trade union problems when we were only following the precedent of the Labour Government in this country, which used its majority in the House to amend the notorious (Trades Dispute) Act. We have no apologies to make for our unwillingness to co-operate with the "Manpower Citizens Association" referred to by the T.U.C. as this has become a "yellow" company union, with a handful of members only, using its monopoly of negotiating rights to further the interests of the sugar owners.

The legislation which the T.U.C. refers to and which was based on the U.S. Wagner Act sought to give the right to workers to obtain recognition for any union which had a substantial majority of membership.

The Labour Party Executive seeks to justify the Government action in sending troops by using the age-old slogan of British imperialism—"Law and Order." No evidence, other than the vague tittle-tattle of anonymous police agents, exists to justify the contention that law and order were threatened by our Government, and it must be noted that this information was received by the Colonial Secretary on October 7th, three days after the Constitution had been revoked.

In the few weeks that we were in office, Bills were introduced to Repeal the Undesirable Publications Ordinance, to Amend the Ricefarmers (Security of Tenure) Bill. This would compel landlords to keep in a state of good repair the drainage and irrigation canals on their property in order to allow the tenant farmers to have a chance of making a living on their farms. We further introduced Bills to extend piped water supply to the suburbs of Georgetown (our capital); to limit the interest charged by moneylenders and to extend food production loans, including the fishing industry. Shortly to be introduced was a Bill reimposing three sugar taxes that were repealed by the old legislature a couple of months before it was dissolved.

We are deeply disturbed by the use of the Communist "smear" in references to our Party and Government, but we are convinced that there has been too wide an experience of Tory tactics in this country in respect of the Labour Party from time to time for this to prevent a fair consideration of our case.

We trust that the members of the British Labour Movement will not forget the people of British Guiana and will secure a reversal of this iniquitous act of repression.

Yours sincerely,

CHEDDIE JAGAN.  
L. F. S. BURNHAM.

*General Council*

*few weeks*