

QUESTION: Dr. Jagan, do you feel the delegates chosen to travel to London for the Constitutional Talks are truly representative of the people of British Guiana?

ANSWER: Considering the resolution passed by the Legislative Council in June 1958 that British Guiana should become an independent territory within the Commonwealth, I consider that the delegation is truly representative. The delegation is also representative in another sense, — it will reflect the views of the Constitutional Committee.

There seems to be a great deal of criticism about the composition but the facts are that the **P.P.P.** and the **P.N.C.** who are represented, speak for 76% of the voting population. When the U.D.P.'s voice is added to the P.N.C., one sees that the elected members chosen are in fact speaking for 84% of the population. We must face facts. The P.P.P. and the P.N.C. are the main forces in the country and they are adequately represented in the Constitutional Delegation. The only other voice there seems to be some worry about is, what may be regarded as the voice of business. Most will agree that Messrs. Gajraj and Davis can be regarded as representing the views of the business community.

Incidentally, it is said that we hand-picked the delegation but it should be noted that the P.P.P. only has seven solid votes. Messrs. Gajraj, Davis and Jai Narine Singh secured thirteen votes each. In other words, they received votes from all sections of the Legislative Council. Criticism is expressed in certain quarters about a representative for labour and for the Constitutional Assembly and the inclusion of Mr. Campbell in the delegation.

I fail to see why the T.U.C. should be represented specifically to represent labour since both the P.P.P. and the P.N.C. speak for the broad masses of the country. Incidentally, I see that criticism is also levelled at us for suggesting the name of

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Jackson instead of Kendall. We did this for no ulterior motive except that Jackson is a trade unionist. The Constitutional Assembly is another arm of the P.N.C. As for Mr. Campbell, it should be noted that he was elected with less than one thousand votes.

QUESTION: What in your opinion will these Talks achieve for British Guiana?

ANSWER: I am rather hopeful that the aspirations of our people will be met, i.e. for a free and independent sovereign Guiana. I express this view for two reasons.

Firstly, there is no doubt in my mind that the majority of people in British Guiana want an independent country. I am prepared at any time to put this to a test. Secondly, there is world public opinion. The independence movement abroad is today moving at the pace of a blizzard. Not only are colonial leaders demanding and in some cases resorting to armed forces for their national independence but also leaders of metropolitan countries and the United Nations are now convinced that national independence can no longer be kept back. Mr. Macmillan during his recent African tour stated that a "wind of change" is blowing over Africa. This is equally true for every colonial and semi-colonial country. He said, and I quote him, "whether we like it or not this growth of national consciousness is a political fact." Mr. McLeod addressing the Kenya delegation made it clear that the will of the majority will have to prevail.

Those who are today claiming that British Guiana should not be free and independent by next year will do well to take a look at the large number of territories which are free or on the threshold of freedom. To cite a few examples, Guinea, French Togoland, Cameroons, Madagascar, Cyprus, Nigeria, Somaliland, Tanganyika, etc. Mr. Manley recently said that Jamaica is ready for independence.

In view of these facts I fail to see what arguments can be put forward for still keeping British Guiana in the colonialist fold.

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