

When will we have a Clean and Truthful Media?

by Janet Jagan



Janet Jagan

A lot of our problems stem from what I might term – “attitudes”. There is in our society a certain, almost definable, behaviour problem in a class that might be termed “elitist”, which group tends to believe that its views can dominate the society in which we live.

Since the mid-20th century, this group has been unable to accept the changes and different outlook engendered by the fact of the People’s Progressive Party. Nothing good could ever be seen emerging from the new concepts and new outlook propounded by this Party. This total rejection and efforts to destroy the Party and its growing influence was in the early days heralded by Lionel Luckhoo and his associates. A media blitz only equal to what we see today in the press and TV, began and continued until the October 1953 suspension of the constitution.

The media, dirtied by that incident, in addition to various forms of outside influence and funding continued throughout the rest of the last century – in various

forms, of course. There has been a certain encompassing attitude, again propounded by that always – wanting-to-control behaviour pattern that has persisted in the form of an unwillingness to accept anything that the PPP proposes or does. “Nothing can please them” might sum up, in simplistic words, the essence of this decades-old attitude of rejection.

Reference is made to the historical behaviour of a very few, who despite their failure in destroying the PPP and what it stands for, continues with modern variations, in rejecting the PPP’s role in society. One of its weapons, used through this whole historical period, has been the media.

When we examine the media in this 21st century, it is almost unbelievable

to observe the level to which it has sunk. Barely one decision by the present government, one act in fighting crime, violence, corruption or what have you is represented as it is. Practically every act of the government

aged to deal with the killer gang. At the very moment, the process is going on. But, take a good look at the media. Has it, with few exceptions, given encouragement to the joint services? Instead, what do we have?

dence in the section of the state apparatus which has as its number one objective – the protection of the people of this state.

No matter how well our joint services operate, the hostile and unpatriotic

distortion of the news. In newspapers around the world, this strange phenomenon of misuse of the letter page in Guyana, is rarely seen. Another strong and unusual practice in Guyana’s media is its penchant for refusing to apologize for any wrong-doing in its pages. Reading newspapers from other countries, one frequently sees corrections and apologies – but not so here! The elitists who want to rule, lack that kind of humility necessary for a fair and responsible media.

It is astounding, too, to witness the arrogance of the media lords who rant and rage that there is no freedom of speech, press, etc. in Guyana. Have they so soon forgotten the years when their lips and fingers were taped, when prominent journalists like Rickie Singh, Ric Mentis and Father Wong were sacked because they wrote the truth, that the 1973 elections were rigged?

A great disservice has been done to the people of this country by a selfish, unpatriotic, destructive media. The sooner they learn the real meaning of freedom of the press, the sooner we will have a clean and truthful media.

One man, the owner of a mining camp, has alleged without a shred of evidence, that the joint services murdered his eight miners at Lindo Creek. This has been embraced by a section of the media, which has blatantly sought to undermine the PPP/C since its inception. It constantly creates disaffection in our society on many issues. In this matter, a most dangerous ploy, it seeks to undermine public confidence in the section of the state apparatus which has as its number one objective – the protection of the people of this state.

and its branches is dirtied by the media and made – in the most grotesque manner – something evil.

Let’s take a look at the present situation wherein dozens of human lives have been destroyed by a gang of bloody killers – terrorists. The joint services, as is clear from all the circumstances, could not have prevented the slaughters. But soon after, it began its offensive and has successfully man-

One man, the owner of a mining camp, has alleged without a shred of evidence, that the joint services murdered his eight miners at Lindo Creek. This has been embraced by a section of the media, which has blatantly sought to undermine the PPP/C since its inception. It constantly creates disaffection in our society on many issues. In this matter, a most dangerous ploy, it seeks to undermine public confi-

media, seek to undermine their efforts. They go out of their way to show extreme sympathy with the village from which most of the terrorists have lived, paying little attention to the risks the joint services face in trying to locate the criminals. Recently, one lost his life in an incident there.

The hostile press uses its letter columns, daily, as part of its propaganda to excite hatred along with its