

What's Happening to Mr. Hoyte?

By Janet Jagan

If I didn't see it, I probably would not have believed it. Although I've watched Mr. Desmond Hoyte from the time we were both members of the Elections Commission in 1968 up to the present, I was still astounded at his performance at a press conference last week. Obviously there is recognisable deterioration going on. We know all about "slow fire" etc and his many utterances that have caused tensions in our society. But this one took the cake!

He spluttered – that's the only word I can find to express how he spoke – that the government ministers are all liars. Then he went on to say that the President is a liar.

One of the reporters asked him for an example of the President's lies and then we saw a living example of the degeneration taking place in this man who carries the mantle of Leader of the Minority Party. He spluttered and stammered, he could find no example, and finally muttered something to the effect that everyone know the President lies, he doesn't have to give the specifics.

Well, that is certainly the limit! In what country in the world can you call the Head of State a liar and not give evidence of the lie or lies?

For those who have referred to Mr. Hoyte as a statesman, I say, think again. No statesman, no leader of an opposition party should be allowed to get away with such slander.

Perhaps it's time for Mr. Hoyte to recognise his dire shortcomings, if that is possible, and let a more rational, intelligent and reasonable person take over the leadership.

The PNC gripes that the cards are stacked against it and it cannot win at free and fair elections.

Did the PNC ever face the truth that it cannot win under such irresponsible leadership which preaches and practices violence, not dialogue?

In Jamaica, the racial demography is not like that of Guyana yet, the People's National Party of Prime Minister Patterson has been in office for 3 terms of 5 years each. The latest opinion poll puts the PNP slightly ahead of the Jamaica Labour Party for the next elections.

The PNP, like the PPP/Civic, has had 3 terms in office and may win its 4th term. Race has nothing to do with it. Performance and other factors determine the winner.

In Guyana, leaving aside the die-hards, racists and others of that ilk, people judge by performance. Even if they are blind, they can't escape knowing that the PPP/Civic has reduced the massive foreign debt left by the PNC; almost all the schools neglected by the PNC in its 28 year reign have been improved; the country now has a vibrant housing programme which has already provided housing for some 200,000, an area 100%

neglected by the PNC; pure water and sanitation are on the move with kudos coming from UNICEF; the high infant mortality rate left by the PNC is now about halved and so on. It's a long list and I have not even referred to areas like land distribution, teacher training, health centres, drugs for AIDS and so many others.

If the PNC were capable of correcting its menacing image, it might have a better chance at winning elections.

But who am I to tell the PNC how to do better at the polls (leaving aside its monopoly on rigging)?

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