

## Cadre Development

by Janet Jagan

The development of cadres in the People's Progressive Party has been an ongoing process from the birth of the Party in 1950. Before any formalised processes were developed, cadres grew as the Party grew. This was a haphazard process before the formation of Accabre School of Political Science, the Party school, in the early 1960s, and the despatching of cadres for political studies in the socialist countries, which began some years later.

During the 1950s, cadre development was "hit and miss" and depended largely on the use of Marxist-Leninist literature, which was available in large quantities due to the positive and innovative actions of Party Leader, Cheddi Jagan. He began importing such literature, mainly from England in the 1940s. The reactionaries, led by Sir Lionel Luckhoo, became so incensed that a restriction was passed in the Legislative Council preventing such books from entering the country.

It was called the Subversive Literature Bill and was not repealed until the PPP won office in 1953, and then after the suspension of the Constitution in October 1953, it was brought back again. It was later repealed again when the PPP won back office in 1957. These stormy actions over Marxist-Leninist literature succeeded in focusing attention and interest, leading to more and more persons reading "subversive literature". It also helped the growth of cadres.

Cadres, during these early periods, developed also with the fairly frequent holding of discussions and seminars on mainly ideological subjects. And, of course, there was *Thunder*, official organ of the Party which came out monthly and which had ideological articles in each issue.

Besides, senior members gave personal guidance to comrades and helped them develop not only ideologically but encouraged them to apply their knowledge in active political work. This is how the Party grew in those days.

With the birth of the Party School, greater efforts were made to groom cadres. The best were then sent abroad on one year scholarships of political studies in socialist countries. On their return, biannual meetings

of these students were held to keep in touch and keep them on track.

However, in recent times, it was felt that this was not enough. A well planned programme for cadre development was proposed and a committee was established in 1985 to put forward a plan.

A year later a paper on **The Party and Its Cadre** was approved by the Executive Committee. This paper first of all defined what was a cadre. "Being a party cadre implies having a sound and healthy character; always being firm ideologically and politically; having the ability to apply theory into practice; at the same time possessing an activist-minded disposition and a willingness not only to assume responsibilities, but to effectively carry out such responsibility in a creative and methodical manner.

The paper also noted that "the Party cadre is one who in times of crisis and indecisiveness is capable of making correct political judgements and decisions based on a class analysis. He or she should possess the qualities and the willingness to carry out party assignments under any conditions internally or externally. The cadre is in effect a potential leader of the Party".

The paper, which was distributed to the secretaries of District and Regional Committees set out in detail the type of cadres needed, advice on selection of cadres and where they should work, the supervision of cadres, their activities and the attitude of Party leaders towards cadres.

Regarding the last point, it was noted that cadres who are promoted to higher positions should be guided continuously. Regular talks by leaders with cadres are necessary in order to help clarify misconceptions and to assist in personal and other problems. It also advised leaders to give assistance to those cadres who have committed errors, with the aim of helping them overcome their mistakes.

Later the Party formed a Cadre Commission and set out the functions of this body. These include that of assisting, forming, promoting and supervising cadres in the day-to-day life of the Party. It also includes cadres in the identifying, selecting and placing cadres in positions of responsibility which corresponds with the interests of the cadre and that of the Party. Lastly, it has the job of working out ideas aimed at winning back cadres who have

either "lost their way" or "strayed away" from the political mainstream and activities of the PPP.

The Cadre Commission is a permanent Commission in the Party and is made up of seven members holding responsible positions in the leadership. It has issued two papers during the past year, one a guideline to cadre supervisors, encouraging personal contact, care about the cadre's character, his ideological development and his political work. It also issued a guideline to Accabre College for courses on cadre development.

The Cadre Commission has looked into a serious lapse and that is that new members have not been given any conscious induction into the Party. A guideline for the conduct of induction seminars has been prepared and sets out how new members should be introduced to Party life. This includes an explanation of the Party structure, the flag, Party symbol and Party song. Explanation of how the Central Committee works and an introduction to the Party Constitution are on the agenda. Also is an introduction to the PPP Handbook which contains the Party Code of Conduct, the meaning of democratic centralism, criticism and self-criticism, revolutionary morality and the Congress paper on Party Transformation.

As well as these, the new member should be introduced to the Party programme and the most recent Congress Report. And last, if he is not already knowledgeable of *Mirror and Thunder*, he should be introduced to these two journals. Lastly, a new member should be given a Party button.

As it is now, the Cadre Commission is a relatively new concept and it will take some time for it to get fully into gear. But it has already made a good start to consciously and effectively implement the intentions which led to its formation.