

**HISTORY**

**OF THE**

**P. P. P.**

Price : 15 cts.

# FOREWORD

No one is more competent to write the history of the People's Progressive Party than Janet Jagan who has been General Secretary to this organisation since its inception.

This booklet, however, is not an attempt to recite the full history of the P.P.P. Indeed this will need several volumes and the time is not ripe for this.

But at this time when the amount of slander against this vanguard of the Independence Movement here is increasing it is meet and right that Guianese should be reminded no matter how briefly of the Genesis of their political understanding.

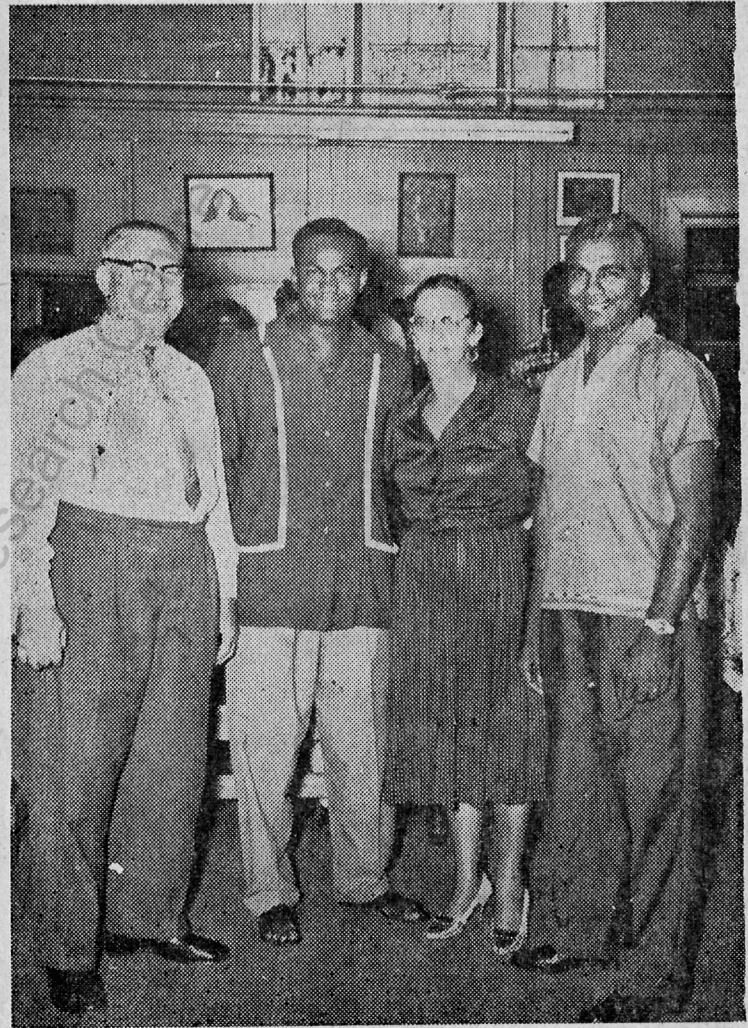
There were efforts to form political parties before the coming of the P.P.P.; there have been efforts to form and maintain political parties since the birth and growth of the P.P.P. but none can claim this Party's outstanding contribution towards Guianese political enlightenment, towards the strengthening of the Trade Union Movement and the breaking down of the walls of privilege here. It can be said without fear of contradiction that all the improvements — social and economic since the end of the war are due in the main to the fighting stand of the P.P.P.

I recommend this revised edition for serious study by all who would see Guiana free.

**B. H. BENN,**  
Chairman,

PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE  
PARTY

January, 1963.



The original members of the P.A.C. formed in 1946—H.J.M. Hubbard, Ashton Chase, Janet Jagan and Cheddi Jagan.

So much has been said about the People's Progressive Party that it is time that the whole story be put. The critics who comprise the press, officials, visiting Members of Parliament, the opposition, the reactionaries, the die hards have all had harsh and frequently untrue things to say about the P.P.P. From the early days of the Argosy and Seal Coon to the present day slander of the United Force, Daily Chronicle, Evening Post and others there has been a steady barrage of hate and lies against the P.P.P. The puzzling thing is why do the masses love the People's Progressive Party, why do they respect and honour and follow its leaders, its policy amidst the hallstorms of hate and abuse?

Perhaps this booklet describing the thirteen years of the P.P.P. in British Guiana will explain this phenomena of a vocal and frequently read press carrying out a thirteen year assault on the Party yet in all that time, not succeeding in altering the opinions of the majority of Guianese. In fact, during the period the Party has won three major elections and can win a fourth whenever they may take place; it has withstood aggression from a leading world power, oppression, loss of liberty, betrayal and sell-outs, arson, looting and rioting, and worst of all, the deadly disease of racialism.

## BEFORE 1950

Before the P.P.P. was formed in January 1950, the embryo of what was to emerge began some four years earlier with the formation of a small group calling itself the **Political Affairs Committee (P.A.C.)**. P.A.C. began with a small educational periodical, explaining the reasons for certain conditions which existed in the colony, raising a voice against injustices and giving the lead that the end of colonialism and the introduction of socialism would mean an end to many of society's ills.

P.A.C. Bulletin set the pace for what was later to develop into THUNDER. It took sides with the South African coloured peoples in their fight against racial prejudices; it disclosed the profits of Bookers and its influence on the economy of the country; it protested against the privileged ruling clique and it studied and examined imperialism and translated this study into simple language for the ordinary man to understand.

Then came the 1947 general elections and a member of the P.A.C., Cheddi Jagan, won a seat in the Legislative Council after fighting in an open struggle against one of the leaders of

privilege and reaction in British Guiana — John D'Aguiar. That he was able to win on a restricted franchise is indicative of the force of his arguments and the desire of the electorate for change. With the entrance of Cheddi Jagan to the Legislative Council, a new era began, the era of politics of protest, the politics of exposure. And it was in the Legislative Council that Cheddi Jagan, later to become the Leader of the People's Progressive Party began his systematic, heroic and now historical exposures of the ruling group in B.G. and initiated the organised protests which have ultimately brought about the changes we have observed from that date to the present. For the first time the workers had a voice, and it was an articulate voice which could not be bribed to silence.

A year after the elections came the Enmore massacre, when five sugar workers, striking for union recognition, better working conditions and higher wages were shot dead by the police. This incident brought to the forefront the terrible and unbearable conditions of sugar workers. It exposed their naked exploitation and the resulting Venn Commission which came to investigate eventually led to an improvement in conditions, mainly in the field of housing.

## THE PARTY IS BORN

It is well to get a picture of British Guiana then before the formation of the People's Progressive Party in January 1950. It was a crown colony ruled by the Governor, advised by a wholly nominated Executive Council with a Legislature made up of officials, nominated and elected members, presided over by the Governor. The franchise was restricted to persons owning property or in receipt of incomes of at least 100 dollars per month. The majority of Departmental heads and persons in authority both in the government, business and industry were Europeans or expatriates. Boards, Committees and cultural activities were dominated by the ruling clique which included the hierarchy of the church and the moneyed interests. Queen's College and Bishops' High School were the domains for the children of the privileged. The three daily newspapers were owned and run by an interlocking directorate of the same people, representatives of Sugar and Big Business. Sugar was the main crop and the water controls i.e. drainage and irrigation and sea-defences were designed for the estates while the villages and private holdings of small farm-

ers were left to the whims and caprices of nature. Floods and drought were ignored, except when they affected 'King Sugar.' The phrase 'Bookers Guiana' a twist on 'B.G.' was said only behind closed doors and open criticism of the Government or of the oppression of the working people was the exception rather than the rule.

The M.P.C.A., trade union of the sugar workers, began with a 'bang' and caused high hopes to spring up in the hearts of the long-neglected and long-exploited sugar workers. This hope was soon destined to die when its leaders took to the golden path of bribery and sold out the rights of the workers. The struggle which began so brilliantly, died in a weak burst. Then began the long era of company unionism in the sugar industry, the back of which is not yet broken. Racialism was rife. The League of Coloured Peoples was in the prime and its main philosophy of a Negro elite, caused harsh racial antagonisms to rise. Balanced against this, was the East Indian Association, preaching a line for East Indians only. In the 1947 elections, race became a real issue and candidates like John Carter and the late Dr. Nicholson won on a strictly racial ticket.

## FIRST POLICY STATEMENT

The few local politicians were apologists for colonialism and did not have the interest nor the guts to seek a change. It was after fighting a lone battle in the Legislative Council for three years that Dr. Jagan and the PAC were successful in getting a number of interested persons together to form the first permanent political party in British Guiana, the People's Progressive Party. So it was in January 1950 that the P.P.P. was born and that its official organ Thunder produced its first issue. The Aims and Programme of the P.P.P. issued in 1950 make interesting reading. It called for the end of colonialism in B.G., constitutional changes and, what was then the primary agitational issue, universal adult suffrage. "First employment opportunities to be given to Guianese" declared the 1950 Programme. At that time, calling for an end to colonial rule and the filling of all posts by Guianese was a most radical and far reaching demand. How far we have travelled since then!

The 1950 Programme called for local government reform — adult suffrage and wholly elected councils (The latter was implemented last year and the former is now an approaching reality).

Land reform, land settlement, the removal of dual control, the training of teachers, the establishment of secondary and minor industries, more emphasis on preventive medicine, un-restricted freedom of speech, press, radio and assembly and our stand on Federation were all enunciated. Look back again over the list and see how far we have gone since 1950 in introducing these changes or improvements.

The establishment of a stable, permanent political party was itself one of the greatest contributions which the P.P.P. made to this country. This meant a great change in the concept of politics to the Guianese people. For politics as it had been known was the politics of the individual — favours, rum and money passing at election time, bribery and the divorce of the masses from this political life AFTER elections. For we know that the politician before the P.P.P. was born, was interested in the electorate only at election time. The electorate was a means of leaping into the Legislative Council with all its grand possibilities of personal economic benefits and social advancements. It was not a means of achieving any particular policy, for independent candidates had no clear cut policy unless it was, like John D'Aguiar, an opportunity to further the interest of his class.

In the past, and even today, political parties were formed merely for the purpose of fighting the elections. There was a Labour Party formed in 1947, which soon died after a few months. We had the U.D.P., N.L.F., the N.D.P., the Guiana Independence Movement, all destined to short lives.

The P.P.P. was not organised to fight any elections. It was born three years after an elections and three years before another. It was formed to organise the Guianese people to fight, in an organised and methodical way for an end to colonial rule, against oppression and for the people's rights. It patterned its structure after that of known political parties. It wrote a constitution which made certain that the Party was democratically run, that the mass of members would have the highest and ultimate voice in electing its leaders and in formulating its policy. This right was vested in its annual conference of members which is commonly referred to as the Annual Congress. Its structure included officers and members of a general council to carry out party policy in between sessions of Congress and a similar executive committee selected from the General Council to handle the day to day affairs of the Party.

All of this was quite new to British Guiana, as no mass organisation had ever fulfilled such an extensive procedural arrangement for any length of time. The democratic centralism of the P.P.P. has been continuing, unchanged and unneglected since 1950, with the exception of certain periods during the Emergency Regulations of 1953-57 which prevented, to a great extent, the full use of meetings, which could be held only with police permits.

## WOMEN AND YOUTH

Into the field of action, stimulated and encouraged by the P.P.P. have been the women and the youth, two vital sections of our community who had hitherto been on the fringe of the life politic in B.G. The first real political grouping of women came, some time after the P.P.P. was formed, when Janet Jagan organised the Women's Political and Economic Organisation. Later, within the P.P.P., a vigorous woman's section was formed which has constantly fought for women's rights, more education for women and urging them to take a more active part in political affairs.

The youth, organised in the early 1950's into the P.Y.L., were a strong group, courageously and fearlessly bringing the youth to the forefront of the struggle for national independence. We all know of the persecution of the youth and their leaders in the 1953-57 period, and the number of times their organisation was proscribed by the Governor. Despite this, they clung to their beliefs and today the Progressive Youth Organisation is an inspiring section of the P.P.P., growing stronger daily and bringing to the movement youths of all races and religions.

## POLITICAL EDUCATION

The major task of the newly formed P.P.P. was to educate the workers and farmers, make them aware of the country's problems and the way to fight for a better life, and the unification of the people for this struggle. The methods used were new to them. They are now so much a part of our life that we somehow forget that much was originated in B.G. by the P.P.P. Public meetings, not just at election time, but systematically, up and down the country, week in and week out began. These public meetings were the opportunity for the Party to meet the people, to explain to them why they must be organised into a political party, to explain how imperialism and colonialism were at the

root of B.G.'s multifold problems, to introduce the policy and programme of the P.P.P. and to preach the need for racial unity.

The political education of the people of B.G. began. It was an awakening from a long slumber and the full credit for this historic awakening of a people goes to its party, the P.P.P. At public meetings Thunder, booklets and pamphlets were sold. Who will ever forget the indelible picture of the Party leader, followed by Party stalwarts, walking around the outskirts of public meetings with a pile of Thunder and booklets under the arm, selling them to all, arguing furiously and convincing the uninterested and then returning back to the platform for a new supply? Up to the time of the Luckhoo motion to ban books and the confiscation of a shipment of booklets, the Party must have sold and distributed at least a half million publications. The public was



Dr Jagan, President of the Sawmill Workers' Union, addresses a meeting of Union members, 1952.

now reading, not only the lies and filth of the daily press, and cheap sensational magazines, but political and educational writings that aroused interest, quickened curious minds for more knowledge and started the ordinary man thinking, discussing and understanding.

These were indeed great changes welcomed by many, hated by those who wanted the masses to remain quiet, subservient, ignorant and asleep politically. The Party political education did not stop here. Seminars were held periodically where those who were interested in more knowledge attended and were taught at classes. These began sometime in 1950-51 and continue to the present.

In August 1962, over 500 students attended our Seminars for Socialism.

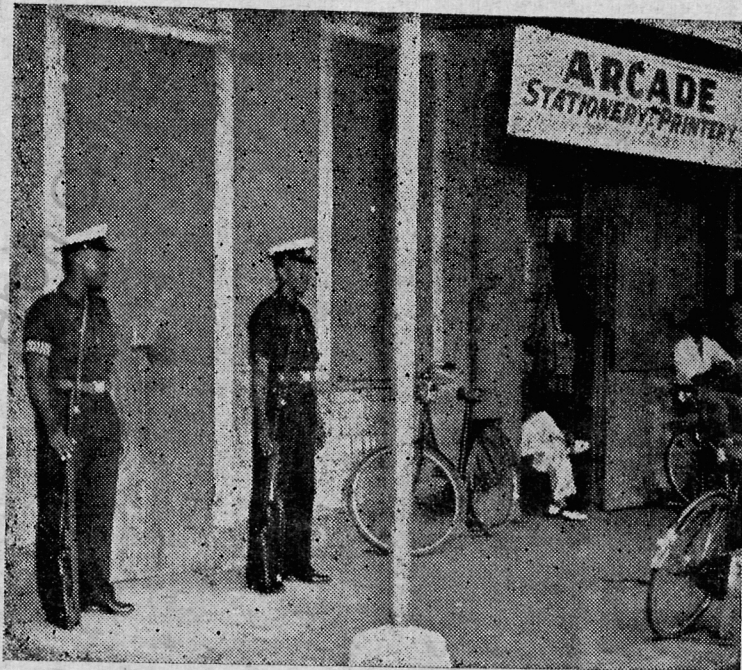
Booklets were written and circulated, pamphlets on particular occasions were issued by the Party, and then, of course, there was Thunder.

## THUNDER

The first issue of Thunder, official organ of the P.P.P., came out in January 1950 as a monthly paper. It has continued without stopping, even in the face of police raids and special legislation to curb it during the 1953-57 period, and eventually became a weekly, as it is today. Thunder has expressed the Party's views and it has clarified its policy. It has maintained a high standard which has been a sobering lesson to Guianese who were accustomed to the dirt of the 'Labour Advocate' in its old gossipy columns of — "Who ate currie at which driver's house and whose daughter was there' etc. of the 1950's and the even dirtier and cheaper gossip columns today of the 'SUN' and the 'NEW NATION,' organs of the other political parties. Thunder has been basically an educational paper, carrying well prepared articles on the class struggle, studies on imperialism, exposes of the wrongs of our society. A look at Thunder in 1950 will give an idea of its far seeing eyes and its broad understanding of the problems of British Guiana.

February, 1950 — "Rather it becomes clear that flood control and irrigation on the coastlands were designed only to benefit the sugar estates and not to release lands for other cultivation

or for animal husbandry . . . . it is obvious to any bystander that the benefits of effective flood control or irrigation on the coastlands will only be felt by the people when it is accompanied by economic and land reforms on a scale not at present envisaged by this administration."



Police on 24-hour guard at Thunder Printers during Emergency Regulations Period.

Here Thunder evaluated the whole picture of B.G. in one small paragraph. The sugar group, which dominated the Guiana picture for so long had the backing of administrations in preventing any flood control which could benefit the small man or the small village. Economic and land reforms were given as the remedy. look at B.G. 13 years later and see what the P.P.P. has done to bring about these changes. The Hutchinson Water Control schemes which had been shelved by previous administrations be-

cause they were considered unsuitable to sugar interests have been introduced and thousands of acres of lands have been opened to peasant cultivation. In 1950, the small man would never have thought that such vast changes could have taken place.

Thunder in December, 1950, protested against the Jim Crow segregation that existed at the Demerara Bauxite Company and the segregation of races on board the "R. H. Carr". Today the R. H. Carr has no special sections for the privileged whites. As it did then, Thunder in 1950 and all the years after took a clear and vigorous stand by the side of all other colonial peoples struggling for their rights. Thunder and the P.P.P. have very definitely made it clear to all that it was not only a party interested in national policies, but was an international party, consolidating its struggle with the struggle of other peoples.

Who can forget the critics both within and without the P.P.P. who have advised and warned — "you have enough to do with B.G. Why worry about the other people? It is not your business." But the P.P.P. has insisted that its members understand what is happening outside the restricted boundaries of B.G. and not have a narrow view of politics. Thus members have always given generously to financial and moral support for the struggles in Kenya, Cyprus, British Honduras, South Africa, Algeria, Congo, etc.

"Pity the Poor Exploiter", writes Thunder in 1950 as it deals with the report of Bookers Bros., McConnell & Co. for the year 1949. The profits that year had increased by half as much, from £538,550 in 1948 to £765,153 in 1949. And this was at a time when sugar was weeping (as it has always wept) at its inability to pay better wages to its workers.

"No taxation without representation," cried out Thunder, echoing the call of the early American revolutionaries in protest against the continuation of a restricted franchise and in demanding universal adult suffrage.

In February, 1950, Thunder took up the question of housing on sugar estates — "The question of housing is a major problem in the sugar estates. There is a great deal of difference between the Manager's house standing in a well planned and cared for garden, the substantially built houses of the executive and subordinate staff and the workers' houses — mud floors, common latrines over a drainage trench."

Questions, too, were asked in Parliament about the miserable housing conditions on sugar estates, where workers and their families lived no better than animals.

## POLITICS OF PROTESTS

One of the recognised methods of fighting for what is needed or what is right and against what is wrong is organised protest. British Guiana had from time to time over the years experienced protests of various kinds. We read in accounts of the early periods of colonization that the Berbice slaves revolted in 1761 against inhuman conditions, of the East Coast slave rebellion sparked off by Rev. John Smith, and of the various revolts of sugar workers at Ruimveldt, Leonora and Enmore. These were explosions, like spontaneous combustion. They had to happen. They were unplanned, unorganised. They were the inevitable results of terrible and cruel conditions. These were, in a sense, protests, but were greater than protests; they were really revolts. But at no time in British Guiana had any group of people sat down to examine the problems and see how best they could be corrected. This the P.P.P. did.

Realising that British Guiana was a Colony and that reforms, and changes could not be introduced in the normal democratic way through the Legislature and the Executive, with wholly elected councils and universal adult suffrage — the P.P.P. did what political parties and trade unions have done all over the world. It began a systematic barrage of attack on the first ill—colonialism. It was a planned and concentrated attack. The organisation of this has been going on since the party began in 1950 and might be likened to the army of the people against the enemy 'colonialism'. This fight, this struggle, has been waged ceaselessly for 13 years and has taken the form of demonstrations, picketing, protests at public meetings, in Thunder, in booklets, in lectures, until today, the battle is almost won.

This organised protest against colonialism has included many other points of protest, which actually come within the scope of the first and major ill of Guiana's society, colonialism. Within the context of colonialism is that of "privilege" — the privilege and the rights of one group to rule, to reap the fruits of the country's wealth, to hold back progress, to hold back democratic rights.



P.P.P. and TUC march in protest against South Africa Shooting — 1966

It was this bastion of privilege, this almost insurmountable fortress that became the pivot of the P.P.P.'s attacks and organised protests. This, of course, brought forth the total venom of the same privileged clique, who controlled the press. What right had the P.P.P. to question who owned the press, to criticise the big sugar interests for piling up profits, holding in their pockets almost 200,000 acres of the country's lands and exploiting its workers? What right had the P.P.P. to suggest a constitutional arrangement which did not allow them to control the Legislative and Executive Councils of the country? These were their questions, questions by a group whose positions of power in the social, political and economic world of British Guiana had never before been challenged. If in all cases they were not the apparent rulers of B.G., they were the virtual and real rulers. Like a puppet show they held and manipulated the strings of the puppets which danced before the people. Many times the puppets were dark-

skinned puppets—Indians, Negroes and Chinese—so that the people might be fooled that their own were there, lending a sympathetic and helping hand. And so, some non-whites joined the privileged clique, to strengthen it and prevent attack from the oppressed masses.

## DENIAL OF FREEDOM

The Luckhoo Subversive Literature Bill which came before the Legislative Council in 1952 was, perhaps, the culmination of expression of all the hatred and frustration of the ruling clique against the growing influence of the P.P.P. It was basically an academic issue—a law to control the importation of literature it considered subversive. It was an attack on civil liberties. What is astounding and revealing of the keenness of the masses, was their reaction to this Bill. It became the most discussed political issue of the period and actually became one of the pivot issues of the 1953. elections. It ensured the defeat of Mr. Luckhoo and his party, so great was the opposition to this denial of a freedom.

Guianese will never forget the mass protests, the picketing of the Legislative Council and the magnificent defence by Cheddi Tagan in what is perhaps the longest address to the Legislative Council, when he stood on his feet for about 7 hours attacking and delaying the Bill.

We saw this clique again in 1953 when they ran to England to assure the British Government that they were perfectly right in suspending the constitution. John Fernandes, John Carter, Lionel Luckhoo, Rudy Kendall, and John Dare were there in the delegation — what would be called an integrated team by Peter D'Aguiar, an integration for treason against the people. D'Aguiar lent his Pepsi-Cola trucks to convey soldiers who came here ready to shoot.

In fact, it was in 1953 that we saw this privileged class in all its glory, fighting a last ditch stand to regain its former position of absolute control of the country. For it was this ruling clique which lost out in British Guiana's first democratic elections— lost just about every seat it fought and then became terrified that its influence and power would be diluted by a democratically elected government bent on pursuing changes to improve the welfare of the people.



They engineered the plots—stories like the one that the P.P.P. was going to destroy the country. They ran to England to whisper into the ears of the colonial office officials that dreadful things were going to happen to B.G. The church leaders who preached for God's guidance during the elections were unwilling to accept the results, were unwilling to accept the policy of the elected government, for example that dual control must go. They began a campaign of hate and lies. The church preached hatred, it misinformed its members, it entered full blast the arena of politics, as it did not so long ago in Puerto Rico, when it threatened its members with excommunication if they did not vote according to directions. It is interesting to note that the Church lost its political battle in Puerto Rico where a mainly Catholic population ignored the dictates of the Church.

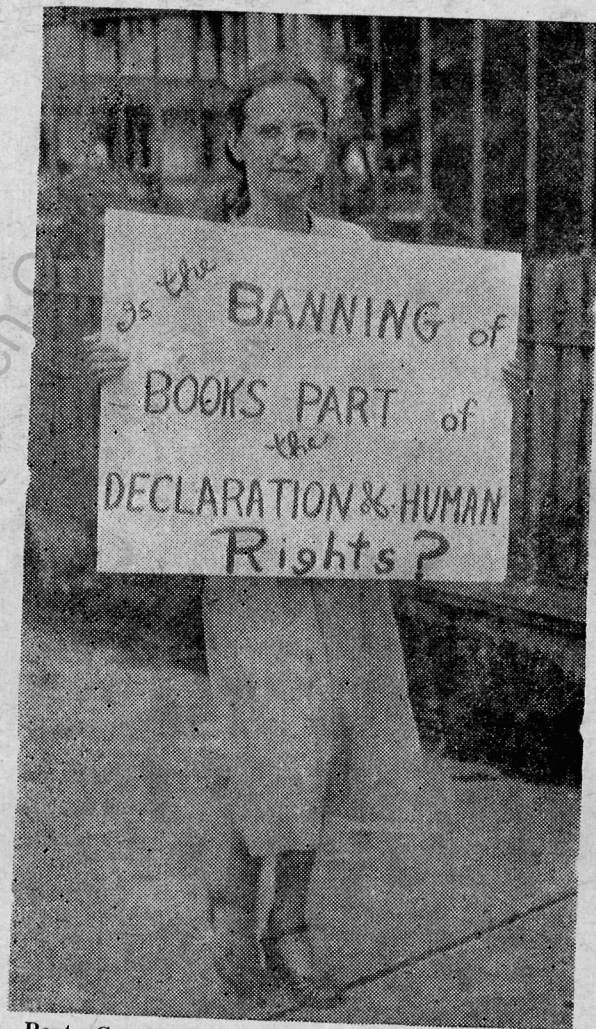
And it is our goodly, godly church leaders whose life teachings are molded out of love and truth, that we can thank for the falsehoods, the unnatural and unwarranted hysteria which was created in 1953 to bring about the suspension of the constitution.

And it is to these same, now with a different voice than they had in 1953 (that of D'Aguiar,) that we must thank for the same lies and hate and hysteria that they are trying so hard to create now. Peter D'Aguiar is now carrying on in the good old tradition of Lionel Luckhoo, C. V. Wight, and John D'Aguiar. The February riots perpetrated by this same clique attempted to overthrow by force our elected government.

These activities of the church, the press, the puppets, the monopoly interests are part of their fight to maintain the positions they have so long held in British Guiana.

## ENDING AGE OF PRIVILEGE

Through the years of the P.P.P.'s fight to end the age of privilege and the privileged few in B.G., great strides have been made. Paternalism, the handing of charity to the workers is ending and through the militant spirit built by the P.P.P., workers are no longer begging, with cap in hand for their rights; they are demanding their rights. The best jobs in Government and industry are no longer restricted to those of white or light skins. The pressure from the agitation of the P.P.P. has brought about Guianisation in the fields of government service, business and industry. The control of Boards and Committees is no longer in



Party General Secretary Janet Jagan picketing Legislative Council during Luckhoo subversive literature debate 1952

the hands of the privileged and their friends. Ordinary farmers, workers, school teachers, etc., today sit on these once exalted seats. Today in the Legislature of the country, the majority are representatives of the common man, the minority —of the once privileged clique. Of course, they still have their lackeys and puppets, to do their bidding, but these are being exposed and understood more clearly every day, for what they are. King Sugar and Big Business no longer control the decisions of the Government. Their mouthpieces in the Government, the McDavids and the Ramphals are going and in their places, gradually, there is being built a government service of patriots, interested in serving their country, their people.

Bad habits acquired by decades of British rule and the imitation of these habits and customs of an alien people are being changed. Art and culture, formerly almost wholly imitative and highly influenced by Britain is gradually shifting to a more distinctive and Guianese influence. The sole ambition of most parents has been to educate their children for white collar jobs. Built on a false sense of values created on the misconception that the white man did not do manual work, there is now a battle going on to shift the emphasis in education to the technical, professional and highly skilled which will help build the nation of the future.

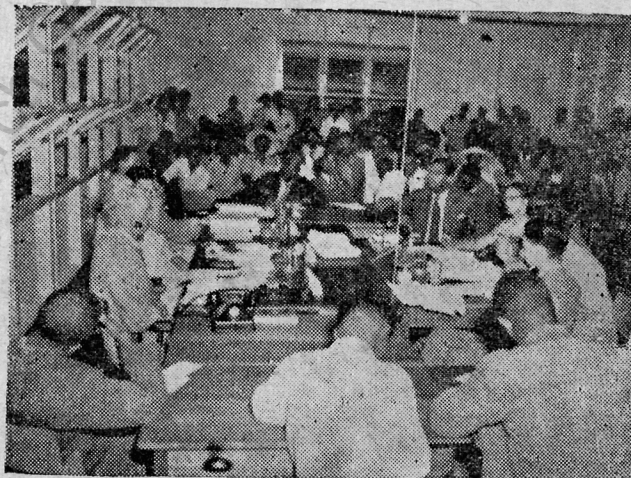
Through the influence of the P.P.P., there has been a gradual move away from these old, false values. In the field of agriculture, for instance, the influence and policy of the P.P.P. has lifted farming from a once scorned field of labour into a now highly prized field, where mechanisation and specialisation are being encouraged.

These are achievements of the People's Progressive Party—these subtle and fundamental changes which have and are taking place. It is true that they would have had to take place eventually for such changes are inevitable; but it is certain that they could not have taken place in such a short period of time if the P.P.P. had not been there organising, leading and consolidating the forces of the people to surmount these fortresses.

Thus, in spite of what our detractors and enemies may say, the P.P.P. has used the politics of protest to help the country, to focus world attention on the problems of the country and to force those in power to bring about needed changes.

## THE CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTION

The demands of the People's Progressive Party for democratic Government in British Guiana were eventually heard throughout the length and breadth of the country as well as abroad. Questions were asked in the House of Commons, comments were made in the world press. The people's voices were being heard and eventually, results of these demands were forthcoming. The Waddington Constitutional Commission was appointed to examine and propose constitutional changes for B.G.



P.P.P. gives Evidence before Waddington Commission, 1951.

The demands of the P.P.P. were clear and far-reaching — universal adult suffrage, wholly elected single-chamber legislative council, reduction of the Governor's powers, cabinet system built after the British pattern. These demands greeted the Commission at the Park Hotel when it arrived in Georgetown. Like several commissions that have been in B.G., there were those who spoke for the 'old guard' and warned against any forward constitutional steps. The old cry, which we still hear today — "the people are not ripe for self-government or independence" was sung to the Waddington Commission. According

to some, the people will never be ripe to rule themselves because it is not in their interests that they be.

The P.P.P. gave evidence before the Commission in late 1951 and submitted a memorandum. We know the results of the Commission's visits. The 1953 Constitution introduced at long last, universal adult suffrage. Instead of a single chamber legislature, an upper and lower house was recommended, the upper house to be a check, a brake, on the lower house, which was fully elected. The Executive was made up of six elected, three officials, one nominated member from the upper house and the Governor presiding. The Governor retained his powers of veto and certification.

While to some extent this constitution did not meet the full demands of the P.P.P., it was as a result of these demands that B.G. got a constitution far more advanced than was anticipated by many. In fact in the West Indies, it went further than the constitutions of many of the island territories.

Incidentally the constitution-makers while recommending an "advanced" constitution, accepted as a premise, that the Party system would not be so developed as to permit one party to win an overwhelming majority at the polls. In other words no one party would control the six elected ministers. Thus though the constitution was advanced, effective power and control would still be in the hands of the Governor. However, in the 1953 election the Party came out victorious, winning 18 of the 24 seats, and upset the constitutional apple-cart.

It was this victory referred to earlier, which terrified the privileged clique of the country, for with this victory began the age of the people's government in Guiana. The former ruling clique saw the handwriting on the wall and feared that their days of influence were over. This end of their rule they maliciously interpreted as an end of their life and possessions, and thus tried to create an hysteria that the P.P.P. would destroy religion and churches, that it would burn and confiscate their property, etc. etc. We saw a repeat performance of this hysteria after we won the 1961 elections.

Of course we know as they know, that these were all lies, lies created to fool Guianese and many abroad. They could fool only a few silly persons in B.G., because the majority were aware that the Party had no sinister intentions — in fact, the whole

reason of being, for the P.P.P. was to lift the living standards of the many and this could not be done by destroying.

The sordid story of 1953 need not be repeated here. Dr. Cheddi Jagan expressed it fully and clearly in his book "Forbidden Freedom," published in five languages and reprinted three times. In Ashton Chase's booklet "133 Days Towards Freedom" we see enumerated the many beginnings to the so greatly needed improvements in B.G. In all of the 4½ months the P.P.P. was in office in 1953, every minute was spent in trying to shake off the vestiges and ills of colonialism and to improve the conditions of the masses.

## 1953 AND AFTER

What happened on October 9th, 1953, is now history and a shameful blot in the history books for Great Britain led by the nose down the garden path of lies and false information. Although the Colonial Office has never



The 1953 PPP Majority Party Members march to House of Assembly to take Oath of Office.

officially admitted its gross and embarrassing mistake in 1953, it is common knowledge that they were ill-advised by persons highly placed in B.G., and that Governor Savage, new at the job and inexperienced, showed great lack of judgement and mis-advised the Colonial Office into taking the step of suspending the Constitution.

We know that the Colonial Office knows that it erred. The subsequent removal of Governor Savage and all those associated with the monstrous events of 1953 are known facts and proof of their awareness that they erred. Many of those who today pose as leaders of the 'people' were in the all-too-quick dash to London after October 1953 to give assurances to the Colonial Office. What is even harder to comprehend is that in that group of quislings who flew to London are those now associated with Mr. Burnham's P.N.C., which makes such a strong claim to being a working people's party. The traitors of 1953 have become "heroes" in the P.N.C. and United Force!

The two issues which apparently infuriated the former ruling clique were (1) the bill to give recognition to the trade union with the majority of members, taken by a poll and (2) the declaration that dual control must go and church domination of the educational system must end. These struck at the roots of the privileged—for with the puppet union, the M.P.C.A., as the only recognised union in the sugar industry, King Sugar had easy going. The M.P.C.A. has always agreed (and still agrees) that the sugar industry cannot afford substantial wage increases and as a company union, it has never put up a fight for the workers. By not allowing any other union to be recognised for the purposes of bargaining, and by the introduction of the check-off, the sugar industry has cleverly had its way with labour. With the check-off system, which immediately inflated the number of financial union members, the union maintained its fictitious numerical strength, aided and abetted by the sugar magnates. For it is common knowledge that workers who attempt to withdraw from the check-off are immediately victimised.

The threat to end the regime of the church domination of the educational system brought to the surface all the latent hate of the church for the P.P.P. We know that at the 1953 elections the church attempted to defeat the P.P.P. The greatest joke of 1953 and 1957 was the Church's solemn direction for all to pray that the right Party win the elections. And at each elections,

the 'right' party was never the P.P.P. the man in the street in high glee on each occasion has said — "We were told to pray that the right party wins and the Lord has answered our prayers!" In the elections in 1961 we again had another repetition of all of this.

## POLICE STATE

The years 1953 to 1957 were not easy years for the P.P.P. nor for the people of B.G. These were the years when the people saw the full effects of dictatorial rule and the denial of all civil liberties. The country was ruled by the Governor and his nominated Legislators, hand-picked for the occasion. Meetings, assemblies and demonstrations were prohibited, persons were detained for months without trial, houses were raided by the police, books were banned, Party members were restricted to districts. B.G. was virtually a Police State.



**Rory Westmaas, Cheddi Jagan and Martin Charter  
are Jailed, 1954.**

It was a hard time for many. It was the time of victimisation — Many workers who stood by the P.P.P. lost their jobs, were given trespass notices by the sugar estates. It was a hard time for the Party, for the difficult times broke down the strength of some, wore away the loyalty of others and eventually

led to the split in the P.P.P. and the gross betrayal by Burnham, Latchmansingh, Jai Narine Singh and others. The remarkable thing about the whole period of 1953 to 1957 is that the Party held together and those who believed in the P.P.P. and what it stood for came out victorious. These four years were a lesson to Guianese and it revealed to all the undaunted and courageous spirit of the P.P.P. Again, one of the outstanding contributions which the P.P.P. has given to the people of B.G. is the tradition of courage, loyalty and perseverance which it established during these four hard years. In fact, looking back, it can be seen, that this harsh period of the struggle strengthened and built the Party really stronger than it had been before. It showed up weaknesses; it gave Party leaders more understanding of the necessity for self criticism.

On the negative side these four years brought B.G. back to where it was before 1950, when racialism was rampant. The split engineered by Burnham and his clique, succeeded in a reversal of the process of bringing about cohesion of the racial groups. It meant that the P.P.P. has had to fight harder and harder to combat racialism, one of the most deadly cancers facing our society today. For that, we can thank the opportunism of some former members of the P.P.P.

One of the inspiring developments during the 1953-57 period was the response which the Party received internationally. We hear today, hostile voices muttering—"The P.P.P. has powerful friends abroad" suggesting that the P.P.P. is closely allied with Russia and Cuba. It is conveniently forgotten that the P.P.P. also has friends in England who ask questions in Parliament and write articles in papers and give public support; that the P.P.P. has friends in the U.S.A., in Venezuela, in South Africa, in India, Ceylon, Egypt, France, Israel etc., who gave great support after the rape of the Constitution. This support has meant that British Guiana has been put on the world map. The country and its problems are now known to many more people and Governments than ever before in the history of B.G. This is itself is another achievement of the Party, another contribution which the PPP had made to its country. This internationalism of the PPP is one of the reasons, too, that this country is now receiving help from international bodies, as never before, and actually, to a greater degree than some of its less demanding and less militant

neighbour colonies. We have also seen the support our struggle for independence has received in the United Nations, a clear result of this policy.

## THE 1957 ELECTIONS

Again those in power misjudged. They felt that the four years in the wilderness had completely destroyed the power of the PPP. They believed that the national bribery of the Interim Government, the house building, the Development Scheme, etc. had completely won over the people. They felt that the years of restricting party leaders to the narrow confines of the city and preventing their moving about, holding meetings, etc. had made them lose influence and support. So, in 1957, the Governor announced that there would be general elections and the so-called Renison constitution was introduced.

The campaign began. The Burnhamites continued to call themselves the PPP, and so, much to the delight of the ruling clique, it seemed that the two sections of the PPP would be engaged in self destruction and the National Labour Front, darlings and spokesmen of the privileged group, would win. Then there would be no more problems in B.G. and life would continue as it had during the past 150 years, with exploitation unchallenged and no subversive talk of independence would be allowed. That was their plan, their hope. They were confident that the National Labour Front would win. They entered into the same frenzy, hysteria and lies of 1953. The newspapers informed us that the PPP (Jaganite) would win a maximum of two seats.

We know the results of the elections. The conservative party, the NLF was completely defeated and its one winning candidate really won on his own merits, and not on the Party's backing. In spite of the well laid plans of the constituency boundaries being mainly against the PPP, the Party was successful even in surmounting this obstacle, the jerrymandering of the constituencies. The election results revealed the gross unfairness of the boundaries with the Party Leader receiving more votes than the five non-PPP winning candidates. On that basis, the Party's nine winning seats were really equivalent to 13 seats. But in spite of this, we constantly hear mutterings that the PPP did not really win a convincing majority at the elections!

The elections revealed two main results of the 8 years' struggle of the FPP—one, that the PPP maintained the confidence and

support of the majority of Guianese people and that the electorate agreed to its policy; and two, that the education of the masses had been successful. The people now understood about imperialism and exploitation and were prepared to reject those that stood for the old order, even if they were dressed up in the clothes of Guianese. For the old ruling clique did not make the mistake in the 1957 elections in putting up "their own people". Their candidates were in the main the puppets and stooges of imperialism, ready to sell their souls for a seat in the Legislative Council.

Another important result of the elections was that it proved the people understood at last the concept of a political party and the necessity for one party to win sufficient seats to command a majority and thus form a government. This understanding assured a confident majority to the PPP and with this final test, the day of independent candidates in B.G. was finished.

## THE COALITION CALL

The behaviour of the Party and its members before and after the elections was a lesson to the whole country. To begin with, we know that the Burnhamites, after winning the three Georgetown seats and thinking that they had won a majority, started behaving arrogantly and insultingly in the city. PPP winning candidates warned supporters not to flaunt the Party victory in the faces of the losers, but to assure all that the Party was in the Government to represent the total population of B.G., not just those that voted for it.

The Party leadership, even with a confident majority to form a government, was not satisfied. It was looking at the broader problems and felt that these problems, mainly the achievement of independence and economic development could be better tackled if the country was free from internal conflicts.

It will be recalled that before the August 1957 elections there was a move, supported by the P.P.P., spearheaded by Dr. J. B. Singh to bring the contesting political parties together for this same purpose and to prevent further racial division. The All-Party Conference, as it was called, went fairly far, but never got the full support of all the parties, and eventually failed to bring unity.

Before elections the Party Leader, Dr. Jagan, issued a call for unity, which was ignored by the other political leaders. After

the election, the PPP offered to form a coalition government with the main purpose of bringing cohesion on the national front and preventing further weakening of the country by internal differences. In other words, the PPP suggested a coalition on the following basis—on the broad national issues such as the move to independence and the solution of the country's economic problems, the two major parties should agree. Their other differences could be submerged in the national interest.

Unfortunately, this offer was rejected by the arrogant Mr. Burnham, more interested in maintaining the separateness of his party than in the problems of the country. In the proposal, the PPP would have been the actual losers, and the Burnham group the winners, in that they would have been participating in the Government, of which they had no electoral claim, having been defeated so well at the elections. The Party was willing to share, putting it crudely, the fruits of its victory, in order to bring peace and harmony to British Guiana.

This attitude of the PPP is also one of its great contributions to the country. It was a lesson to all that for the PPP, national, and not narrow, personal or party interests, came first. It was one of the greatest lessons of patriotism for the country.

## FOUR YEARS OF MAJORITY PARTY

We can only here deal with the general achievements of the four-year term of office of the People's Progressive Party. The full details of this period would take more than a booklet of this size.

The major task of the PPP was to gain for the country full independent status. In this direction the Party had devoted much of its energies, time and thought. The question was debated in the Legislative Council, a Constitutional Commission made up of the whole Legislature was appointed and in this group the major battle took place. The basic difference between the PPP and the P.N.C. came to the front and it was then revealed that the P.N.C. was not anxious that B.G. acquire independent status. The P.N.C.,

in favour of immediately joining the Federation, was of the opinion that independent status would be an obstacle in the way of joining the Federation. Thus, the PNC took a line advocating 'Self Government not Independence'. This reversal of the PNC's former stand on the issue greatly weakened the advocacy for independence, and when the B.G. delegation went to London for constitutional talks with the Secretary of State for the Colonies, this division was exploited to the fullest. The old adage of 'divide and rule' was again applied and the bid for immediate independence by the P.P.P. failed because of the changed policy of the P.N.C. It was only the persistence of the P.P.P. delegates which wrested from the Colonial Office the acceptance of the principle of independence for B.G. and the agreement that two years after the implementation of the August 1961 constitution or one year after the independence of the West Indies Federation, talks would open in London for the final stage to independence.



P.P.P. Majority Party Legislators and Ministers in House of Assembly Chambers, 1957-61.

It is unlikely that if the P.P.P. had not won the 1957 elections, the new constitution would have been so far advanced and it is certain that the final results of the London talks would have been less advantageous than they are now.

There has been much talk and criticism that the P.P.P. ministers have wasted public funds in excessive travelling. This, of course, is not true, and the bill for such travelling is remarkably low considering the results of such travels. As mentioned earlier, the PPP's internationalism has paid off for the country. Already, through the initiative of the Party Leader, assistance has been obtained from the United Nations, the World Bank, I.C.A. and important contacts have been made with other international agencies and the Governments of other countries willing to give assistance to Guiana. We have had recently trade delegations from Poland, Germany, USSR and Czechoslovakia which are now finalising arrangements for aid in the industrialisation of our country. The fruits of all these contacts have not yet been seen, as some take time and will develop in the near future. But with our eyes we can see the results of talks and negotiations, in the work now being done by the United Nations in British Guiana, the loans now being given by the World Bank, the assistance now being given by ICA, and the new trade links established with Cuba and Czechoslovakia. New horizons have been opened by contacts with Venezuela, Brazil and Cuba, neighbours in the Latin America area. Guiana, under the urging and persistence of the Minister of Trade, has joined ECLA, the Economic Commission for Latin America and has given status to the country by its representation at the 1961 conference in Chile.

This seeking of international assistance, opening trade talks with new countries and representation on international bodies is opening up new possibilities for British Guiana. It is allowing B.G. to take its place in the world, to be known as an individual nation seeking a solution to its problems in the wider context —

not just as one of Britain's colonies. This widening of the horizons also has had the effect of revitalising the whole country, introducing new ideas, new thinking and new challenges. No doubt, it has been the subject of great criticism, as are all things new. The full effects of this policy of the P.P.P. cannot be seen so soon, but it is evident that in the end results will be most fruitful for the country and its people. This blossoming forth could not come before because the old ruling clique hated outside contacts and kept Guiana the tiny isolated crown colony that it had always been, where progress and new ideas were snuffed out as fast as they came to view.

### CEASELESS BATTLE TO END CORRUPTION

Good, clean government and a fight to end corruption is one of the major achievements of the 1957—61 term of office. The Party has fought a ceaseless battle to bring honesty into the running of Government and has succeeded in setting a standard that does not exist in many parts of the Caribbean. We all remember the Housing Scandal and the sad state of affairs it revealed of the Interim Government regime. It also brought to the forefront the shortcomings of our legal system.

### INTERNAL TROUBLE

There is no doubt that the Party had internal troubles during the four year term of office and the case of Edward Beharry is one that all recall. There are many who seem to forget that he was removed from office at the request of the Majority Party, removed from his portfolio of Minister of Natural Resources. Mr. Beharry, too, seems to forget, and one would imagine from his outbursts in the Legislative Council that he threw over the P.P.P. The decision of the P.P.P. to remove Beharry from office is a concrete example of the high standards which the Party has maintained, and its willingness to take the risk of losing two votes in the Legislative Council in order to maintain principles and a high standard of service and devotion to the people. If the P.P.P. had been opportunistic, it could have contained Beharry within its ranks and maintained its safe majority in the Legislative Council. Very few political parties have had the courage to do what the P.P.P. did — to weed out from its ranks a highly placed member who had turned against the people's interests and the party and policy through which he won his seat.

### OTHER PROBLEMS

Other problems had to be dealt with during the P.P.P. term of office. There was also a recession throughout the world almost as soon as the P.P.P. took office. This economic recession was felt in B.G. and many persons lost employment in the bauxite and timber industries as a result of the drop in sales of these products. Besides a loss of employment for thousands, there was a consequent drop in revenue from these sources.

A second problem loomed soon after 1957—a serious drought which lasted for two years and which created immeasurable suffering for farmers and great problems for which solutions had to be found. The quick response of the Majority Party is too well known to repeat. Farmers received help, water was pumped into fields, rents were dropped for the year, repayment of loans were deferred, etc.

A general hostility from some sections of the community had also to be faced. Those disgruntled at the election results never were prepared to accept the decision of the electorate and constantly created problems. Many of the trade unions, with members like interim Government nominee Rupert Tello and



Dr. Jagan addresses London Constitutional Conference, 1960 when Burnham refused to join demand for independence



Company Union President Richard Ishmael had only one object—that of causing as much trouble for the P.P.P. as possible. Sections of the trade union movement, actually created as part of the Interim Government's activity to destroy the PPP, continued their nefarious activities, giving poor leadership to the workers, fighting tooth and nail against the national interests, and of course, being bitterly opposed to the seeking of independence. These hostile and reactionary forces have not yet accepted the fact that the PPP has the confidence of the majority of people in B.G. One wonders if they ever will, even after they have seen the results of the 1961 elections.

The press, as we know, has always been hostile to the PPP. During the four years in office —1957-61, the newspapers outdid themselves in spreading hate, lies, misinforming the public and fanning the flames of racialism. The country has never before seen such shocking activities as those of the Sunday Chronicle in printing the anonymous writings of one 'Vigilance' who has poured his racial rantings into the Chronicle and the PNC's official organ 'New Nation.' If one wants any better proof of the racial line carried by the PNC of Mr. Burnham, one has only to read the 'New Nation' to be convinced. Every sentiment of hate for the PPP, whether real or created for the purpose by the ever ready anonymous letter writers who have flooded the newspapers with their writing, has been printed. But the outstanding works of the majority party, the almost unbelievable achievements have not been noted.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

In solving the water control problems of B.G., the Majority Party has moved in the direction of solving multiple problems. In bringing in the large drainage and irrigation schemes originally proposed by Mr. Hutchinson, and advocated over and over by the PPP, the following have been achieved:—

1. Increased employment during the construction period. At Black Bush Polder 1,500 were employed. At Tapacuma, 1,000 are being employed.
2. Open up new lands. Already 27,000 acres were made available at Black Bush and a further 34,000 acres will be available when the Tapacuma project is completed. In the planning stages are the Mahaicony-Abary Scheme

and the Greater Canje Scheme which will together open over 800,000 acres of land. By 1961, 120,000 acres of land had been distributed to farmers. It is a fact that for every person put on the land three others are employed as a result, in transporting, manufacturing and handling produce. For example, the Rice Marketing Board spends one million dollars per year in labour costs, as a result of padi produced by farmers

3. Aside from opening up new lands, other lands in use, but constantly plagued by floods and droughts and therefore unsafe for cultivation are made safe. This safer use of lands plus the additional use of new lands means—
4. Increased agricultural production and a consequent increase in the national income.
5. More land under cultivation means more opportunity for diversification of agriculture, the introduction of new crops, dairy farming, beef and poultry production etc.

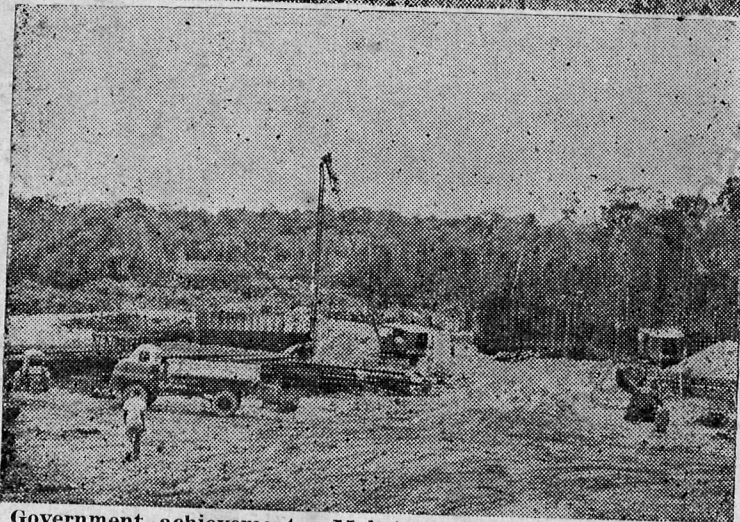
On to almost 120,000 acres of land thousands of farmers and farmers co-operatives have settled. Gone at last are the days of privilege in B.G. when one moneyed man — feudal landowner of the past could apply and get five thousand acres of land. Gone are the days when the rich landlord, having purchased the first depth of land, was given as his right, all the second and third depths behind, which he then in turn leased to small starving farmers for 10 to 100 times the rental he paid to the Government! On to the 120,000 acres of land have gone thousands of men and their families, at last with a chance to earn a living in dignity, subservient to no master as before.

The fostering of co-operatives has been advocated by the People's Progressive Party from its inception. Land co-operatives have sprung up in British Guiana for the first time and many are flourishing. Not all have succeeded, because for some, there was not time for careful preparation. But the beginning has been made, and successful strides are being made from year to year.

The courage to make decisions and the ability to give clear and direct leadership have proved to be the attributes of the P.P.P. Nothing can illustrate these concepts better than the issues of dual control and federation. "Wait until after the elec-

tions," the Party was advised. But the Party's attitude on dual control was nothing new. The P.P.P. is not a dishonest, lying party prepared to fool the public. It has principles and policy. Those on dual control have been enunciated for over ten years.

The Education Bill was the first step taken by the Majority Party to bring about an end to the church domination of the



Government achievements: Mahaicony Cottage Hospital and work on Tapacuma Drainage and Irrigation Scheme.

school system in B.G. This has caused the Church again to express its hostility and anger against the P.P.P.

But, after all, was that emotion not there all the time? Has not the Church in B.G. been consistently on the side of reaction as it has been in Spain, in Puerto Rico?

It is well to compare the PPP's attitude to dual control with that of the PNC. The PNC had maintained Mr. Burnham's original stand on dual control (which we all know was for its complete removal) until his 1960 Annual Conference. At that time, there was a decided change in the PNC's policy so that in the Legislative Council, Mr. Burnham had to stand in 1960, to the derisive laughter of his Legislative colleagues and confess that he had changed his policy on dual control. He had moved from his position as Minister of Education in 1953 when he so openly advocated the unreserved end of dual control, to the position where he stands today, unable to support an intermediate step for the ending of dual control. Such is the extent of the stability of PNC leadership!

## FEDERATION

On the Federation issue, the Party has given a clear line on its policy and from it, has never wavered. When the motion by Mr. Burnham for B.G.'s immediate entry to the Federation came before the Legislative Council in 1959, he scornfully referred to the PPP's stand on referendum before a final decision could be made. It is interesting to note that in 1959, Mr. Burnham asked for B.G. to join immediately the Federation. But he was not prepared to go to the electorate on his 'immediate federation' stand. In keeping with his attitude of changing his policy to suit the times, Mr. Burnham again confused his followers in the 1961 elections by accepting almost the same line which the PPP had advocated—a referendum. That is why we have noted that only the PPP has the courage to make decisions, some of which are not easy, to stick to them, and to give clear leadership. The final failure of the Federation has proved without doubt that the PPP's stand on this issue was absolutely correct. What a mess we would have been in had Burnham's advocacy of joining the Federation been accepted!

## OUTSTANDING PROBLEMS SOLVED

Outstanding problems which have faced the country and which were there when the PPP won the elections in August 1957, have revealed the ability of the Majority Party to settle problems, even within the context of its restricted constitutional position. For it must never be forgotten that the Majority Party was working under a hybrid constitution which gave its ministers some power, but not the full responsibility necessary for an underdeveloped country to get ahead. As a colony the ultimate decisions did not rest with the elected Ministers. For example when Dr. Jagan was negotiating for finance for the Development Programme in 1958, he pursued and obtained an offer from the Swiss Bank for a loan on terms reasonable to the country. The Colonial Office refused to guarantee the loan. In 1960, Dr. Jagan negotiated a loan from the Government of Cuba to the tune of \$8½ million. This is still awaiting approval from the Colonial Office.

The electricity problem is a splendid example of the Majority Party's ability in solving a complex and long standing problem. While in Georgetown, the press, the opposition were fuming and ranting, and Mr. D'Aguiar was making his ridiculous offers to buy over the Electricity Company, the PPP Leader quietly and efficiently went ahead and obtained an excellent deal for the country for the take-over and purchase of new plant and equipment for the Electricity Corporation. The press and the opponents were so dismayed at this victory that their embarrassment was acute.

In fact their attitude to the electricity question is quite similar to their attitude on many developmental problems, where we cannot help noting their supreme disappointment at any solution to national problems which the Majority Party has achieved. This attitude of disappointment has gone even further; it has become destructive to the national life in that the press and D'Aguiar's Party in particular, have gone out of their way to urge investors and contractors for large government projects to stay away. "If the PPP wins the 1961 elections", the United Force undercover agents threatened visiting business men, 'everyone will run out of British Guiana and carry their capital with them. Do not invest now. Do not do any work in B.G. at this stage' they warned. Such a subversive attitude was grossly unpatriotic and indicated that the reactionary forces are prepared

to destroy B.G. in their efforts to defeat the PPP. We saw them attempt the same thing in 1953, again in 1961, and again in February 1962. That of course, makes it even more important that the solid work of the PPP from 1950 onwards to lift this country out of the control of these subversive and reactionary forces must be allowed to continue.

## DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Another outstanding achievement of the PPP during its four year term of office was the 1960-64 Development Programme, financed by the skilful negotiations of the Party Leader. Already in motion, this \$110 Million programme has spent funds on a housing scheme for low income persons, establishing new primary and secondary schools, a farm school at Mon Repos, building Health Centres and Cottage Hospitals, constructing massive drainage and irrigation projects, giving crop bonuses to farmers to encourage diversification of agriculture, building bridges, ferry boats, roads to the interior, building tourism, industrial sites for new industries etc.

"Rice", Sir Patrick Renison once wisely pointed out, "is a highly political substance". And so it has been. The rice negotiations, held annually, to contract for the selling of B.G. rice to the West Indies, have always been opportunities for threats—"Join the Federation or lose your contract". The political aspect has been so intense that one of the opposition leaders in 1961 was reported to have urged a visiting West Indian politician to see that the Rice negotiations failed, in order that the PPP might suffer a loss of its support from farmers at the 1961 elections. On the one hand, the PPP leader has been violently attacked for having trade discussions with Cuba and Venezuela for the sale of rice. Yet it must be accepted that these negotiations have kept the West Indian purchasers at bay, and the rice negotiations have, from year to year, been successful, much to the discomfort of those who were hoping for a crisis. The conclusion of a trade agreement with Cuba for the purchase of all our excess rice for a five year period has placed the rice industry in a more secure footing. The widening of our sales to USSR and Czechoslovakia has further stabilized the rice industry. These are more examples of problems met and handled with wisdom and efficiency by the Majority Party.

## GUIANISATION

The Guianisation of the Civil Service made great strides during the PPP 1957-61 term of office. The majority of Departmental heads are now Guianese and while the Ministers do not have the power to select personnel, their influence in urging that Guianese be selected to posts has been felt. Today, the important departments of Agriculture, Drainage and Irrigation, Medical Services, Education, Forestry are directed by Guianese. This attitude of the PPP is also felt in other aspects of Guianese life, in the selection and appointments to Boards and Committees and in the emphasis placed on things Guianese. History and Culture Week is a good example. The Party Chairman gave the impetus to this concept of devoting special attention of the country's history and culture. History and Culture Week has already become a very important part of the life of the community.

## 1961 ELECTIONS

Despite the gerrymandering of seats by the Hallet Boundary Commission, the PPP for the third time, came out victorious in the August 1961 elections. The Party won 20 of the 35 seats, a positive majority. The 1961 election campaign was not an easy one—violence was used by opposition parties to break up PPP meetings. The Press was, as always, violently and viciously opposed to the PPP. The Christian Anti-Communist League of Dr. Schwartz came to the aid of the United Force and spent thousands of American dollars in an effort to defeat the PPP. The PNC was so certain of its victory that it displayed pictures of its candidates at its headquarters with the sign "This is the next Government." The day before elections, the PNC conducted a victory "broom" parade in Georgetown.

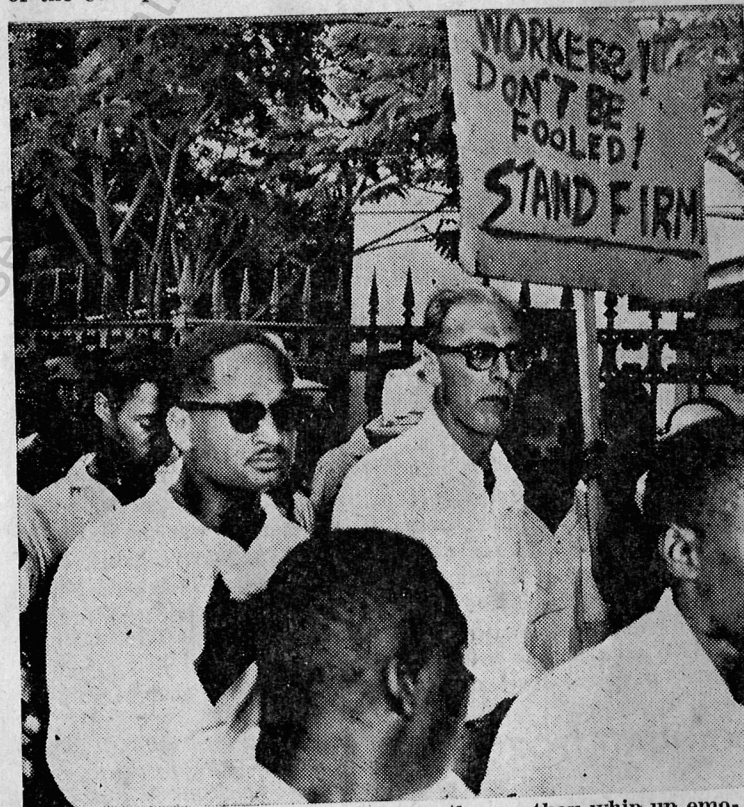
## THE PLOT AGAINST P.P.P.

Both Parties were greatly disgruntled at the election results, and began to plot against the PPP. The disappointed supporters of the PNC were re-vitalised by the six petitions brought by their Party. This ultimate failure was again built into a hope of success by the United Force's efforts to overthrow the Government in February 1962, to which the PNC gave active support.

The United Force, campaigning against independence, grasped at the 1962 Austerity Budget as a means of defeating indepen-

dence for B.G. We all know only too well the events leading up to Black Friday, when unpatriotic and fascist leadership culminated in the shooting, looting and arson, unprecedented in the history of the country.

The D'Aguiar controlled Daily Chronicle worked itself to a pitch of frenzy and hatred with the lies and distortions it printed. Hysteria gained prominence over clear thinking. All those who fought against the PPP in the August elections, including many of the corrupt Trade Union leaders, pitched in to defeat the PPP



Burnham and D'Aguiar march together as they whip up emotions on the day prior to Black Friday.

by force, since they had failed by democratic elections. There can be no doubt that the budget was merely a pretext for the shameful happenings of Black Friday week; the chief motivation was to overthrow the PPP.

The fascist policy of the United Force became clear. Destined to be forever a minority political group, the United Force realised that it could not gain power by democratic elections, for democracy means rule by the majority. Fascists represent minority interests and in the changing world, no longer can capitalists and exploiting interests win elections. So they must resort to other means to regain their rapidly dwindling control.

The fact that the fascist United Force could use the PNC support in its unscrupulous plans, is evidence of the weakness and vacillation of that Party's leadership. It will go forever to its shame that the PNC followers did the "dirty work" for the United Force.

Crises have a habit of coming together. In 1953, after the suspension of the Constitution, we later had the split in the PPP.

After our crisis of February 1962, we had another attempt to destroy the PPP internally. Mr. Raj suffered to some extent, from the same affliction which attacked Mr. Burnham—ambition. Seeing the possibility of the assassination of the Party Leader, Dr. Jagan, he sought to jockey himself into the position of "No. 2 Man" and contested the Chairmanship of the Party at the April Party elections. Failing to win, he began a slander campaign that the elections were rigged. But contrary to normal procedure, he carried his campaign to the press—the anti-PPP Press—and not to the Party.

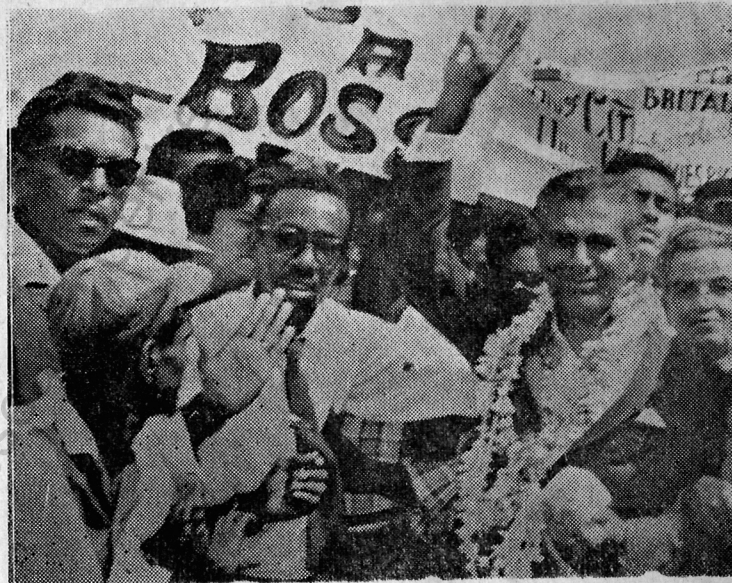
Introduced into his campaign of slander was an inverted racialism, an attempt to drive Indians in the Party against their African comrades. Mr. Raj's subsequent expulsion from the Party and his removal as a Minister resulted in a purification of the Party's ranks, with no loss of support.

That all of this has failed to destroy Party unity, is again an indication of the level of understanding of the membership of the PPP.

## MANDATE FOR INDEPENDENCE

The victory of the PPP at the 1961 elections was a clear mandate for independence. The Party Leader, in December 1961, asked the Colonial Secretary to fix a date for the Independence

talks. Because of the refusal to fix a date, Dr. Jagan immediately brought the issue to the United Nations, being the first colonial leader in office to speak before that international forum.



A big reception greets Dr. Jagan on his return from the United Nations, July 1962.

Pressure brought by world opinion, forced the U.K. Government to fix a date—for May 1962. Following the February riots, the U.K. Government postponed the talks, this time to July 16th. Again, in July, the Colonial Office began its delaying tactics and gave a vague promise of a date in September.

The PPP objected to this vigorously, and began a series of protests in the form of picketing Government House, a Women's March, and mass Rallies all over the country.

The Party Leader, Dr. Jagan, for the second time, went to the United Nations and addressed the Committee of Seventeen where his request that the matter be raised before the U.N. Assembly was accepted.

The issue before us now is "immediate" independence. And behind us in this struggle are the majority of Guianese

people and millions of people throughout the world, who want to see a total end to all Colonialism.

## CONCLUSION

The object of this booklet has been to give a general picture of the People's Progressive Party from its inception in 1950 to the present date. It has attempted to show what the Party had stood for and what it has done during this period. It has been possible to devote only a few pages to the period 1957-1961 and the February riots, the details of which could fill a book.

It cannot be denied that the People's Progressive Party has brought about the many changes which have been noted in this booklet. The public awareness and interest in the political life of the country is a product of the constant educational work of the PPP. The standard of the political life of the country and the performance of the PPP have been a shining example, not only here, but throughout the Caribbean. The refusal of the PPP and its leaders to become stooges of imperialism, sell-outs to colonialism of which we have so many examples in the Caribbean and elsewhere, has been the reward for the militancy of the movement. When the crisis came, as it does inevitably to every colonial movement, the Party was not broken, its fighting spirit was not diminished.

The powers that have held back progress for over a century are being defeated. The final battle in the present struggle for Independence will not be their last bid for power in this country. After Independence, the problem of economic emancipation will be the next challenge to the PPP. We are confident that our dynamic policy of Socialism will win and solve this problem.

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IN ITS

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