

The Advocacy of A New Global Human Order Moves Another Step

Forward

by Janet Jagan

My warmest congratulations to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Hon. Rudy Insanally and his Ministry and delegation to the United Nations (UN) for their splendid efforts in promoting the resolution in the United Nations for a New Global Human Order (NGHO).

The United Nations General Assembly on December 17, by consensus, adopted this resolution which was proposed by Guyana and supported by the Caribbean Community and the Rio Group. The number of co-sponsors of the resolution has now grown to 75, an indication of the growing, broader support.

According to the Ministry's press release, the NGHO "is concerned with the human development dilemma of persistent poverty and under-development amidst unprecedented global prosperity seeks to promote partnership and cooperation among all nations for greater and more balanced economic and social progress." It calls for primacy to be given to people in the development process in order to create an environment where human beings can develop their potential and contribute meaningfully to their societies.

In the debate on the item at the UN, speakers alluded to the fact that while new and expanded opportunities and greater prosperity had been realized for many states, the contemporary order was increasingly marked by uneven levels of progress. The NGHO offers a qualitatively different approach to development that addresses these realities.

The consensus text also recognizes that inequality within and among countries is a concern for all countries regardless of their level of development – with multiple implications for the realization of the internationally agreed development goals including the Millennium Development Goals. Accordingly, the consensus calls on the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to submit to the General Assembly, at its 65th Session, a report on the implementation of the resolution including an assessment of the implications of inequality for development. It is expected that the report will provide a stronger basis for building over time a just and equitable system of international economic and social relations.

The resolution on a New Global Human Order was first introduced in the UN in the year 2000. However, preparation for that resolution began years before. One might say that the beginning was in the year 1993 when the late President Cheddi Jagan introduced his concept of a way to alleviate world poverty through a "consensus on development" and an agenda for peace, at the Commonwealth Heads of Government helped in Cyprus.

Only a few months after that "firing of the first salvo" which Foreign Minister Clement Rohee described in his introduction to the 1999 book "A New Global Human Order" by Cheddi Jagan. This first publication containing President Jagan's thoughts on the subject was issued in pamphlet form and sent to every Head of State and Government the world over.

President Jagan, some months later, published his ideas on a NGHO in a booklet entitled "Pushing for a New Global Human Order" which he distributed at the first Summit of the Americas held in Miami in

December 1994. I happened to be with him in Cyprus and in Miami on those two occasions. The intensity of his drive to push for a NGHO was remarkable to witness!

Dr Jagan in 1996, at the 7th Inter-Sessional meeting of Caricom Heads of Government held in Guyana took the opportunity to introduce the concept to regional leaders. The meeting expressed general support for his call.

At the same time, Dr Jagan asked Foreign Affairs Minister Clement Rohee to meet with Ambassadors Rudy Insanally, Havelock Brewster and Rudy Collins to further examine and discuss the NGHO.

A motion endorsing the concept of the NGHO to the Guyana Parliament was unanimously adopted in October, 1966. Before that, in August 1966, President Jagan called for a Conference of intellectuals and academics from both the developed and developing world, from trade unions and religious and political organizations to examine all aspects of a NGHO. This conference adopted what is known as the Georgetown Declaration on the New Global Human Order.

At the Georgetown Conference, Dr Jagan expressed the view that developing countries because of their huge foreign debt burden could not embark on the road to prosperity and that handouts and mendicancy were not the solution, nor was aid with strings attached. What was needed, he argued, was a totally new approach which would address the debt problems and find new and innovative ways of mobilizing fresh resources to overcome under-development so as to enable the developing countries, in partnership with the developed countries, to play a more important and meaningful role in the global market place, currently characterized by rapid globalization and trade liberalization.

On the day before he suffered the heart attack that would lead to his untimely death, President Cheddi Jagan addressed the Sixth Meeting of the Free Trade Area of the Americas Working Group on Smaller Economies at the Pegasus Hotel on February 13, 1997. Fortunately, I was witness to this important address, which I can never forget.

In the last speech of his life he said: "Many of our countries are experiencing onerous debt problems, grinding poverty, high unemployment and increasing social disintegration. New countries are seeking debt relief from commercial creditors and other multilateral financial institutions in order to advance the development process for the benefit of our peoples." He called for a definite solution to the third world's crushing debt problems and urged that debt relief must be seen as an investment not only in the development of poor countries, but also in the security of rich nations.

In the year 2000, the Foreign Affairs Ministry through the country's UN office put forward a resolution on the concepts proposed by the late Guyana President for a New Global Human Order and it was accepted. A few days ago, the United Nations renewed the call for a NGHO.

Note: For best reading on the subject is a book published by our daughter Nadira Jagan-Brancier with a brilliant foreword by former Foreign Affairs Minister Clement Rohee entitled "A New Global Human Order" by Cheddi Jagan, available at the Michael Forde Bookshop, Robb Street, Georgetown and at the Cheddi Jagan Research Centre, Red House, Georgetown.