

**For a
Democratic &
Prosperous
Guyana**

**Programme of the
PEOPLE'S
PROGRESSIVE
PARTY**

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INTRODUCTION

The People's Progressive Party (PPP) was formed in 1950 as an organization of the working people. It came into being because there was no political organization to advance the interests and aspirations of the vast majority of Guyanese. Since its formation, there have been several phases in the struggle to win independence and create a sovereign, democratic and prosperous Guyana. The principles and policies of the Party have been captured in its Programme. The Programme of the PPP describes the party's policy orientation and serves as a genuine guide to action. It always takes into account the dynamic character of global, regional and national developments.

A written programme was first compiled and adopted at the Party's 20th Congress in 1979 and has since been revised periodically.

This current Programme that is being revised was adopted in 1990. Some of the more significant reasons for this revision are:

- The collapse of the world socialist system with an ending of the Cold War;
- Globalization of the world's economy;
- Rapid technological development;
- A change from a Party in opposition to a Party in government;
- Successful implementation by the PPP-led Government of several immediate and medium term tasks in the existing programme.

Since returning to office in 1992, the PPP formulated a National Development Programme, key planks of which include:

- Rebuilding democratic institutions;
- Diversifying the economic base;
- Rehabilitating and further developing the physical infrastructure;
- Pursuing stable macro-economic policies; and
- Fighting poverty

Tremendous achievements were realized in spite of an adverse international trading environment and a difficult domestic situation characterized by industrial strikes that were politically motivated and by episodes of destabilization by anti-government forces.

The PPP and the PPP-led government, while enjoying popular support, has maintained the confidence of the Guyanese people and while realizing programmatic objectives, has also remained strong and united.

Section A

OUR TIME

The Third millennium has dawned. The political landscape of the world has drastically changed. The Eastern European Socialist countries which emerged after World War II, imploded and collapsed. At the turn of the 1990s, the Cold War, which influenced world politics and world trends for nearly half a century, ended. On the heels of the dramatic events in the closing decades of the last century, new distinguishing features have appeared globally. These include:

The expansion and consolidation of Globalization

Globalization, as it is envisioned, should see the free movement of goods, services, finance, capital, information and labour. Actually, it is only labour that had not had free movement across borders.

While the international financial and trade institutions have strongly advocated and promoted policies for the removal of barriers to globalization, they have not looked in a detailed way at the impact of those policies on small developing countries. Empirical evidence has shown that while globalization has the benefit of increasing trade, it has been associated with the dislocation of the economy of many small countries and an increase of poverty.

In this region, globalization has been associated with the erosion of preferential access of our products to crucial markets and a reduction in aid flows.

For us to avoid economic dislocations, increasing poverty and marginalization and for all nations to share in the benefits of globalization, there must be special and differential treatment for small developing countries in the world's trading and financial systems.

The emergence of the United States as the sole superpower in the world

This unique position gives USA a decisive role in determining the shape and character of a new world order. This superpower status has been used positively in some cases. However, recently there has been a growing tendency to unilateral behaviour especially in the areas of trade, environment, armament and through International Financial Institutions. Other power centres behave similarly on various issues.

Such behaviour has been to the detriment of small developing countries especially in the areas of trade and the environment. Worse still, unilateralism has had a very negative consequence for the stature of the United Nations, the OAS and other organizations that operate on the basis of collective decision-making. Such actions have led to the diminishing of the status of these and other bodies in the eyes of the international community.

The upsurge in militarism, social conflict and terrorism

With the collapse of the Warsaw Pact, expectations ran high that the world would have entered a new era based on peace, disarmament, the abandonment of military solutions to political problems, the eradication of poverty and the respect for international law. However, the disintegration of States accompanied the collapse of the world socialist system and has led to greater social unrest and upheavals.

In this 'new' world, the weapons industries appear to be doing very well. There has not been any reduction in the proliferation of arms. Between 1993-1997, for instance, world arms sales more than doubled and billions of dollars worth of weapons have been sold to virtually every nation on earth. And in these times of wars, violent hostilities and armed confrontations more and more resources are being devoted to armaments.

Terrorism has now become another cause for the militarization of the world as diverse groupings have resorted to terrorism in support of their beliefs. Terrorism, whatever its form and brands, whether by individuals, groups or States, is wrong and has never benefited, in the final analysis, the causes and genuine struggles of people historically. Such practices must be roundly and firmly condemned. This has been and is the position of the PPP. But it is equally wrong to use terrorism as an excuse for curtailing and denying human rights of the people, muzzling the press, disrespecting international law, engaging in military adventurism and ethnic profiling of selected groupings.

Such unsettling developments, far from making the world secure and peaceful, make the dream of a humane world order elusive and immediately unreliable.

The times in which we live are marked by a world that has profoundly changed and is changing. It has also grown more complex. Apart from these prevailing features which have come to substitute for those that, in the main, dominated the second half of the 20th century, a full and rounded picture must necessarily take into account other significant factors and developments. These, whether directly or indirectly, will definitely impact, influence and make their forceful contributions in shaping the new world.

The frequency of economic and financial crises since the mid 1980s

As predicted, cyclic crises have accompanied the development of world capitalism. Many economies including strong ones are plunged into crises, literally, overnight. Sometimes these crises are related to the unregulated movement of short-term capital. When it strikes, its effects are almost always felt in several countries simultaneously.

As in the past, the first victims of economic crises are the working and middle-classes and their families. Millions have and are being thrown out on the streets, jobless, left to contend with an insecure existence and an uncertain future.

The policies of the international financial institutions play a central role in these crises. Despite the 53 years since their establishment and despite severe criticisms and frequent demands for reforms, the International Monetary Fund and World Bank still follow a course that results in mixed outcomes of their policies. These mixed outcomes are based on too much reliance on technocratic and prescriptive measures which ignore the political and social context in which those measures are taken.

The growing poverty and inequality around the globe

Despite some positive strides, poverty and inequality are spreading. This aggravation has coincided with the advent of globalization. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, underlined the extent of this all pervasive scourge in the observation that some 50% of the world's population must survive on US\$2 or less a day. And in a report on the findings of the European Children's Trust entitled 'The Silent Crises', we are informed that since the break-up of the Socialist system in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union "poverty in the region had increased more than tenfold over the decade" and at least 50 million children now live in poverty and are "exposed to tuberculosis levels usually associated with the Third World."

Further, from a fact sheet "Bread for the World" – published by a US- based Christian citizens' movement we learn that "in the most prosperous of times, 31 million people, including 12 million children, in the United States did not have access to enough food for an active, healthy life and were often forced to choose between relying on emergency food sources or going hungry."

And, of Latin America, Professor Tom Lewis of the University of Iowa wrote: "widespread poverty still haunts Latin America. Based on the unrealistic figure of one dollar per day, figures show that a majority of rural households and 30% of urban households currently live in poverty throughout the region. Those mired in abject poverty remain 35% of the region's people. Professor Lewis went on to quote other analysts to show that the situation has not changed from what it was a decade ago but, in fact, the percentage of poor could have risen to as high as 60%.

Poverty remains a primary breeding ground for, among other problems, malnutrition, hunger, untimely deaths, deprivations, crime, spread of drugs and disease. AIDS, for instance, has acquired epidemic proportions in the world and has become a scourge especially on the African continent. Poverty moreover, is linked, inextricably to the crushing debt burden.

Many, who are poverty stricken, succumb to despair and hopelessness and their ranks keep increasing. Even sectors like the 'middle-class' feel threatened by impoverishment. UNDP reports confirm the inability of countries caught in the 'poverty trap' to extricate themselves. Clearly, neo-liberalist policies, having been around for two decades, have failed to effectively address the worldwide, crucial and grave problems confronting humanity and civilization.

The continuing political instability, dismemberment of states and the rise of narrow nationalism

One of the disturbing phenomena of our times is the rise and spread of narrow nationalistic and separatist fervour. Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, present glaring manifestations of such developments. This phenomenon finds expressions in exceptionally violent conflicts, often instigated from the outside, and, at times taking the form of 'ethnic cleansing'. In the end, long established and often developed states are dismembered and must contend with instability, divisions and dislocations. The resulting social and economic damage are devastating. States in that category are in Europe, Asia and Africa.

National oppression, rivalry and personal ambitions may well be responsible factors for the nationalism, separatism and ethnic hostilities that have merged. The impact of an unresponsive world economic order on many developing countries have undoubtedly contributed to the alienation and hopelessness under which divisiveness thrive. Thus weakened, many States succumb and are easily ensnared by policies and designs hostile to their peoples' genuine interests and welfare. Where such developments occur, they are major contributory factors for worsening regional instability, undemocratic practices and denial of civil liberties.

They pose a real threat to peace apart from the trauma and wreckage they brought to the affected countries and peoples.

The degradation of the environment

Today, on the agenda of humanity, the environmental question has come to the fore. Its degradation has reached alarming proportions. The widening gap in the Earth's ozone layer, the erratic behaviour of the climate, global warming, pollution, disposal of waste, including nuclear waste, depletion of the world's forests and fresh water resources best express the environmental dangers facing humanity in our times.

The drive for super profits and the economic thrust and activities associated with 'globalization' are fueling justifiable fears that the irreparable damage to the world's environment will continue apace. Lack of commitment of certain countries to the KYOTO agreement on the environment has increased such anxieties. In view of the gravity of the situation, complacency cannot be countenanced. Too much is at stake. Countries and regions, flora and fauna, the atmosphere and our seas, our very lives and means of livelihood are at grave risks and require our active intervention to save our planet and ensure the rational use of its resources, many of which are not replenishable. In this context, we must support the efforts of those across the world and from all walks of life, enjoined in the struggles to 'save earth', to protest against those who, with growing impunity, irresponsibly abuse our environment and irrationally waste its finite resources.

Reawakening of people's activism

This revival of people's struggles is inspiring new hope and confidence in the future; for a new world order much different from the one currently being forged ... activists have mobilized in Non-Governmental Organizations and as individuals.

From Seattle to Prague, from Quebec to Italy, from India to Argentina, Mexico to Malaysia – worldwide, demonstrations are mounted, protests are held and fresh people's struggles are launched around one issue or another. Issues affecting the developing world, the environment, unequal trade and many other objectionable practices have been placed on the international agenda through the actions of the activists.

These activists have not only engaged in street demonstrations but have created coalitions and broad-based alliances to work in international forums and meetings to defend the interests that they support.

An important aspect of these revitalized struggles is that many of the independent streams – environment, against 'globalization', opposed to militarism and racism, anti-fascism in support of for democracy and peace are gaining momentum. Working class and peasant struggles are converging. Resourceful leaders are enjoying increasing success in mobilizing and organizing on an international scale. Prospects for greater successes in the overall struggles re heartening and hope is being rekindled.

Clearly, a people's response, stretching across the globe and firm in rejecting the status quo, is in the making. It is a response opposed to the prevailing negative features of our epoch. It is a response that is seeking to bring about a world where people come before profit, where freedom, justice, peace, co-operation, respect and tolerance of different cultures, security in all its dimensions and social progress are the pillars on which the edifice of a new global human order is built.

Section B

A BRIEF HISTORICAL OVERVIEW: Social, Economic and Political Background

Colonization

The first inhabitants of Guyana were the Amerindians. In the early stages they obtained their food from hunting, fishing and gathering. They gradually added the planting of crops and moved from one place to another as the soil declined.

They remained isolated from the other regions of the world until the Europeans came towards the end of the 16th century. European interest was strongly influenced by the rumours of the existence of El Dorado – the city of gold – greatly enhanced by the adventures of Walter Raleigh. The Dutch were the first to establish a presence with a number of trading posts. Permanent settlements were subsequently developed along the Essequibo, Demerara and Berbice rivers. These were later organized as three distinct colonies.

The Dutch remained in full control of the three colonies for almost two centuries and then from 1781, Guiana had to endure a 50-year period of colonial hopscotching which brought the following colonial powers in control:

- 1781 Essequibo, Demerara and Berbice captured from the Dutch by the British
- 1782 The three colonies captured by the French
- 1784 French pass over control to the Dutch
- 1796 British invaded and took control for the second time
- 1802 The three colonies handed back to the Dutch by the Treaty of Amiens
- 1803 British invade during British Dutch war and take control of the 3 colonies for third time
- 1812 Demerara and Essequibo united
- 1831 Essequibo, Demerara and Berbice united and called British Guiana.

British Guiana remained under British colonial rule until political independence was achieved in 1966.

Sugar, Slavery and Indentureship

By the 1630's, the Dutch, influenced by the development of sugar plantations by the Portuguese in neighbouring Brazil, introduced sugar-cane cultivation in Guyana. This led to a huge demand for labour which the colonial powers provided in different periods through slave and indentured labour from Africa, Portugal, China, and India. This led, by the 19th century, to the transformation of Guyana into a multi-ethnic society within which the original Amerindian people became a very small percentage.

The importation of labour was characterized by intense brutality and exploitation. By 1658, people captured in West Africa and shipped under the slave trade were introduced as slave labour. This inhumane system dominated until the slaves were freed in British colonies in 1835. After slavery was abolished, labourers were brought from Portugal from 1835, India from 1838 and China from 1853. The system of indentured immigration from India continued until 1917.

Exploitation, brutality and dehumanization were the hallmarks of the slave system. Indentureship which succeeded slavery in 1838, displayed little difference; “paper chains” replaced the “iron chains”. The prevailing pattern during the period of slavery and indentureship was a vicious circle of punishment and rebellion.

The plantation system under Slavery and Indentureship in the early colonial period was an aggravated form of master-servant relationship – a rigid social structure based on class, colour, race, and religion to buttress foreign domination under an under-developed dependent capitalist and semi-feudal economic system of exploitation.

Economic and Social Structure

Long after slavery was abolished in 1838 and indentureship ended in 1917, sugar was still “king,” the sheet anchor of the anchor.

Because of the shortage of plantation labour up to World War II as a result of high incidence of malaria and enteric diseases, the sugar plantocracy deliberately arrested the development of agriculture in the interior and on the coast as in the early village settlements established by the ex-slaves. Policy was formulated with the purpose of making peasant agriculture unprofitable and unattractive so that the farmers would continue to look to sugar for their livelihood and thus provide a reservoir of cheap and docile labour around the sugar plantations.

It was not until World War II, when the demand for aluminum greatly increased that the base of the Guyana economy widened. Bauxite production expanded, and Guyana and Suriname provided nearly three-quarters of the raw material requirements for the wartime aluminum industry in North America. But as in the sugar industry, no attempt was made to establish an integrated system of production.

So imbalanced and dependent was the economy that the foreign capitalist-owned and controlled sugar and bauxite industries earned more than 75% of the export income. The rest of the export economy was based on rice, timber, and to a lesser degree on gold and diamonds.

British capital dominated the economy (sugar and services) with American-Canadian capital playing the junior partner role mainly in mining. British influence was exercised mainly through the monopoly, Booker Bros, McConnell and Co. Ltd. So pervasive was this influence that British Guiana was referred to as “Booker’s Guiana.”

Imperialist Britain thus regulated Guiana to a typical colonial economy with emphasis on primary production of foods (raw sugar and its by-products – raw spirits and molasses – and rice, minerals, bauxite, gold and diamonds) and timber, and the importation from Britain of manufactured goods under preferential treatment.

At the top of the colonial social structure was a narrow group of the foreign monopolist plantation, mining and comprador bourgeoisie, operating a handful of companies and monopolizing the economy including the available coastal land. It concentrated on the production of raw materials (sugar, spirits, molasses, timber, bauxite) for export and the importation of goods, mainly from Britain.

Closely allied to the foreign big bourgeoisie were the national (middle) bourgeoisie and the landlords. Together they constituted the ruling class.

Because the foreign big monopolist bourgeoisie wielded unlimited political power and geared the economy towards the purchase of manufactured goods from overseas, industrial development was arrested. Thus, the national industrial bourgeoisie remained relatively immature.

Landlordism on an extensive scale did not develop in Guyana as in Latin America. Most of the land was held as State property in order to “contain” agricultural development outside the sugar plantations. However, because of periodic crises of sugar in the international market and also the necessity for enlarging the social base of their rule, the planters from time to time sold out small sugar plantations ranging generally from 200 to 2,000 acres. The landlords combined landlordism with money lending, shop keeping and rice-milling. Thus, along with colonial dependent capitalism, there was semi-feudalism in the countryside, particularly on the Essequibo Coast and Islands.

Political Structure

The first formal colonial government was set up in 1664 through the Dutch West India Company and the first legislature was the Court of Policy. Successive forms of Government under Dutch and British rule during the 18th and 19th centuries maintained the dominance of the owners of the sugar plantations.

Constitutional reform from 1887 for elections in 1892 led to a small opening for middle-class professionals and businessmen. Because of their growing influence, the Colonial Representative and the Planter class felt threatened and they responded with the imposition of Crown Colony rule in 1928 placing all powers in the hands of the British Governor with the right to veto (to reject all laws passed by the legislature) and certification (to make any laws refused by the legislature).

During the 1930s when the world experienced severe economic depression and there was mass discontent in the Caribbean, agitation for constitutional changes was led by the Popular Party, which was dominated by middle-class professionals and businessmen. A Royal Commission agreed in 1943 for Constitutional amendments providing for a Legislature with a majority of elected members. The elections under this new arrangement did not take place until 1947.

Political Struggle

The slaves and indentured labourers resisted the colonial masters with great courage and heroism. Many gave their lives in the numerous revolts and rebellions against the Planters and Colonizers. The recorded events, which are better known, include:

- 1763 Berbice Slave Rebellion
- 1823 East Coast Slave Insurrection
- 1824 The Damon Slave Rebellion (Essequibo)
- 1869 Leonora Riots
- 1873 Devonshire Castle Riots
- 1913 Rose Hall Riots

The colonial system did not cater for the participation of the masses in official political life. There were property, income and literacy requirements for people to be qualified to vote. The organizing of political activity, outside of the colonial representatives and the plantocracy was led by professionals and businessmen. Some of them were able to win seats in the elections of 1921. By the elections of 1926, they formed the Popular Party and made greater inroads.

When the Crown Colony system was imposed in 1928 to reduce the influence of the middle-class, the Popular Party petitioned against it but did not succeed. Their continued agitation for Constitutional advances was also unsuccessful. This led to their collapse as a political party before the elections of 1935.

Their place was taken just before the elections of 1947 by the Labour Party, which was also dominated by professionals and businessmen.

Although sizeable trade unions had emerged, very few leaders came from among the workers themselves. There was therefore by the end of the Second World War, a crying need for organization of the working people at the trade union and political level. And it was in this vacuum that Dr Cheddi Jagan set out to change the direction of political struggle in our country.

Formation of the PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE PARTY

The birth of the modern political movement took place in 1946. In his autobiographical "*The West on Trial*", Cheddi Jagan stated: "By 1946, I had become convinced of the necessity for a theoretical organ and political platform. The people were on the move. Students and others who had gone to fight in the war for democracy and freedom were now returning home. Many of them were anxious to see the implementation in their respective Caribbean countries the principles underlying the Atlantic Charter. Unlike the planters whose objective was the preservation of the status quo, they wanted a change. And so in 1946 were born the Political Affairs Committee (PAC) and the PAC Bulletin."

The PAC set out as its goal the formation of a political party, based on the principles of scientific socialism. The elections in 1947 brought Dr Jagan into the Legislative Council. He utilized this forum to the maximum. Though the legislature "at last became part and parcel of the struggle of the people," he recognized its limitations. "If the legislature was my forum," he remarked, "the waterfront, the factories, plantations, mines and quarries were my battleground."

By 1948, when the police shot peaceful striking sugar workers, killing five of them at Enmore, the PAC leaders decided that the time had come for the creation of a political party of the working people. After a period of intense preparatory work, the People's Progressive Party was launched on January 1, 1950. The major objectives of the PPP were clearly set out in the first Party Programme.

The Struggle for Political Independence

The 1950 PPP Programme declared an end of colonial rule, the first such declaration in our history, as a primary objective of the new Party. Its major concern was the creation of a decent standard of living for all of the people of our country. It recognized that this could not be possible under colonial rule and so political independence had to be won. It recognized also that there were several important steps that had to be taken in the direction towards Independence. These included fundamental Constitutional changes, the most important of which was Universal Adult Suffrage. The PPP began a countrywide campaign for self-government as the first stage in the struggle for Independence.

Constitutional change came in the form of the Waddington Constitution, which set the stage for the first elections under Universal Adult Suffrage in 1953. The PPP won a massive victory taking 18 of 24 seats at the elections.

As the PPP set out to fulfill its elections manifesto, it became very clear that the colonial power was not prepared to accept a government which was committed to ending the exploitation of the Guyanese masses. After 133 days of the PPP in office, the constitution was suspended, and the PPP government became an early victim of the Cold War. The British colonial power was encouraged by the US imperial power to keep the PPP out of government. In 1955, they encouraged a split in the PPP that created a serious division in the population along racial lines.

When Constitutional rule was restored in 1957 and the PPP won the elections, the stage was set for the British to set a date for Independence. However, they refused to set a date for independence hoping that new elections in 1961 would see that defeat of the PPP through a complete alteration in constituency boundaries. When the PPP won again, the British and US moved to extreme action, using the CIA, the PNC, and the TUC to instigate violence as an excuse to further delay independence.

The British imposed Constitutional changes designed to defeat the PPP, called elections one year before the due date and issued an order in the British Parliament to impose the coalition of the PNC and UF into government in 1964.

It was clear that the British – American Imperial axis did not want Guyana to become an independent State with a people-oriented government. They wanted a puppet government, which would replace colonial relations with neo-colonial relations. With full confidence that the PNC-UF coalition would serve their interests, they agreed to Guyana achieving its political independence on May 26, 1966.

PNC dictatorship and the collapse of physical and social infrastructure

The PNC ruled the independent State of Guyana for the first quarter of its Independence. During this time, it squandered the opportunities that the independence struggle had aimed for, by establishing a dictatorship. The PNC wrecked the physical and social infrastructures. It rigged National Elections, a National Referendum and Local Government Elections. It subverted all human rights and civil liberties.

It caused mass emigration through systematic racial and political discrimination. The PNC also institutionalized corruption.

By 1992, Guyana was characterized by:

- A huge debt burden, absorbing most of the foreign exchange and revenue earned.
- A narrow revenue base.
- Harsh conditionalities from agreements with the IMF, IDB etc.
- Ruined physical and social infrastructure.
- Low level of technology.
- Depleted and under-developed human resource base.
- Poor wages in the public service.
- Public service packed with unqualified, incompetent and corrupt officials.
- Ruined education system.
- Closure of the Housing Ministry.
- High levels of infant and maternal mortality.
- Ruined health system.
- Widespread demoralization and decline in moral standards.
- A high level of organized crime.
- Widespread fear.

Struggle for the restoration of democracy

The struggle for the restoration of democracy was long, hard and difficult. For several years the PPP spearheaded this fight alone. The struggle broadened in gradual steps around events such as:

- The formation of the Committee for the Defence of Democracy.
- The rigged elections of 1973 when two PPP supporters, Jagan Ramessar and Bholanauth Parmanand were killed by security forces while defending the ballot boxes.
- PPP's boycott of Parliament during 1973-1976.
- The persecution of PPP activists and the trumped-up murder trial of Arnold Rampersaud.
- The universal boycott of the 1978 rigged Referendum, and the imposed Constitution of 1980.
- The formation of the progressive Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Guyana (FITUG).
- The assassination of historian-revolutionary, Dr Walter Rodney.
- The rigged Elections of 1985 and the formation of the Patriotic Coalition for Democracy.
- The extreme hardships following devaluations of the Guyana dollar in 1987 and in 1989.
- The suppression of Press freedom, and pressure on the Mirror and Catholic Standard newspapers.
- The postponement of Elections in 1990 and 1991.

The PPP intensified the fight locally for free and fair Elections and externalized protests and lobbying efforts. The PNC succumbed to these combined pressures. The PPP enlisted prominent individuals in its PPP/Civic electoral combination for the 1992 elections after the failure of the PCD to reach agreement on a consensus slate for Elections. It fought the 1992 elections under the slogan "Time for Change, Time to Rebuild." The PPP/Civic won resoundingly.

The rebuilding process

Under the leadership of President Cheddi Jagan, the PPP/Civic Government set out from October 1992 to repair the physical and social damage, strengthen the economy, broaden democracy, restore human rights and civil liberties and inspire the people to contribute to the building of a NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC GUYANA.

Since then the implementation of projects and programme have resulted in the following:

- Broadening of constitutional rights.
- Strengthening the rule of law.
- Consolidating multi-party parliamentary democracy.
- Holding of periodic, free and fair National and Local Government Elections.
- Restoring freedom of the Press.
- Promoting good governance with emphasis on public consultation and consensus building.
- Improving security of our people by involving citizens in policing activities through expansion of Community Policing and providing more equipment, transport and better remuneration for our Police and Security Forces.
- Revitalizing Guyana's economy and improving its management.
- Reducing the national debt burden through rescheduling and write-offs.
- Offering incentives for private sector investment.
- Improving living standards and social amenities by providing potable water supply, better housing, education, health and promoting sports and cultural activities.
- Extending electrification to rural and interior areas; restoring the country's infrastructure, including road, sea and river defence and drainage and irrigation systems.
- Increasing basic wages in the public service over six-fold, reducing inflation and creating jobs and job opportunities.
- Providing land titles to Amerindians, and improving their transportation, education, health and water supply facilities.
- Pursuing diplomatic and trade activities based on world peace, good neighbourliness, safeguarding of our territorial integrity, and mutually beneficial trade relations.

Section C

THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CHOICE

Based on a profound analysis of the concrete situation, the PPP has concluded that to ensure Guyana's path of development there is need for a National Democratic State.

In May 1988 when he delivered a paper for the *Genesis of a Nation* symposium, Dr Cheddi Jagan noted that “fundamentally the way forward in multi-racial, multi-religious and multi-cultural developing countries is a new socio-economic order – a National Democratic State. “This is a State that represents the interests of all classes, groups and social strata. It is an inclusive State.”

Since 1992, the PPP-C Government has facilitated substantial reforms to advance the process of inclusive governance including major constitutional changes. The PPP intends to deepen this process on the basis of a conscious effort by the major political parties to build trust and establish confidence.

In this address at the *Travelodge Hotel* in Toronto on October 30, 1996, Dr Jagan insisted on the creation of “the broadest possible unity in order to protect the interest of the nation”...“to create a national democratic state which will fight to preserve the interest of the nation.”

The PPP Constitution (last amended in 1998), states: “At this historical juncture the PPP is committed to the establishment of a National Democratic State which will embrace political and ideological pluralism, political democracy, cultural diversity, racial equality and a mixed economy. Such a State with multi-ethnic and multi-class plural government will fight to prevent foreign domination of any kind and to preserve the full democratic rights of the people.”

The years between our Independence in 1966 and 1992 when the PNC formed the Government could be described as ‘lost’ years. Missed were the opportunities to build a strong economic, social and political foundation to assure steady and continued all-round development of our country. Guyana deteriorated everywhere. Even the achievements of the 1950s and early 1960s, made by the PPP government while Guyana was still in the colonial fold, suffered from erosion. By the turn of the decade of the 1990s Guyana was in shambles.

Guyana became indebted to International Funding agencies in the sum of over US\$2 billion, resulting in stultification of growth, general decay of institutions and infrastructure, falling living standards, low wages, shortages, a thriving parallel market, currency devaluations, as well as massive “brain-drain,” moral impoverishment and high-sounding sloganeering. We believe that the programmes for social and economic upliftment that has been elaborated by the PPP/C government must be matched by an appropriate political framework. We believe that this is the National Democracy.

The National Democratic Programme

In *Thunder*, last quarter of 1995, Cheddi Jagan, then Party General Secretary and President of Guyana, further outlined the character, programme and the tasks peculiar to National Democracy.

- Good Governance – a clean and lean government – with equity;
- Democracy in all its aspects – political, economic, industrial, social, cultural – and the empowerment of the people at all levels;
- The fullest exercise of human rights – civil and political, as well as economic, social and cultural in keeping with the UN Covenants on Human Rights.
- A mixed economy;
- Economic growth with social justice and ecological justice;
- Balanced agricultural/industrial and rural-urban development;
- Integrated programme of human resource development;
- Multi-culturalism – unity in diversity.

Role of the National Democratic State

The role of a National Democratic State must be seen as one which:

- Consolidates national independence;
- Carries out agrarian reforms and eliminates remnants of feudalism and exploitation;
- Restricts the development of foreign monopolies;
- Secures substantial improvement in living standards for all the people;
- Democratizes social life;
- Pursues an independent and peaceful foreign policy;
- Promotes a national industry and enterprises belonging to its citizens.

Tasks of National Democracy

The tasks characterized as National Democratic include:

- Constantly upholding political, economic, and cultural independence;
- Fighting against militarism and military bases on its soil;
- Resisting new forms of colonialism and foreign domination, as in the colonial period when British Guiana was “Booker’s Guiana;”
- Rejecting of dictatorial anti-popular forms of government;
- Ensuring of the people’s broad democratic rights, and enabling their participation in shaping Government policy;
- Embarking on radical socio-economic changes including the promotion of cooperation in the countryside and the development of the public sector, together with the provision of social services such as education and health.

While the road we have chosen is quite clearly defined, it is naïve to believe that it is smooth, with no hurdles or diversion to be met. These tasks will continuously be under review, as they must relate to specific circumstances.

Section D

STAYING THE COURSE

Continuing along the path of Development, Democracy and Progress

A real opportunity to implement the Party's initial Programme emerged with our electoral victories since 1992. The tasks, to which we committed ourselves, to a large extent, have been either fulfilled or are in progress. These were supplemented by additional tasks contained in the PPP/Civic manifestoes for the 1997 and 2001 elections. The specifics and details of our Programme and manifestoes, in essence, accorded with our National Democratic thrust. Proudly, we can proclaim that we have delivered on our promises. However, our accomplishments have also signified an urgent need to proceed to another stage; to elaborate a new programmatic platform – to extend, strengthen and deepen the thrust we have begun.

The steps we must take in the immediate period ahead must necessarily cover the social, economic and political spheres of life; focusing on the base and superstructure of Guyanese society.

Our aim is to unite our nation, develop a strong economy, create full employment, eradicate poverty, build the necessary physical infrastructure, provide quality social services and maintain a democratic and just society based on good governance and rule of law, providing opportunities for all individuals, communities and social groups.

A National Unity

The national division left us by colonialism/imperialism has still not healed. This disunity has weakened the efforts to build our country and slowed down the pace of our achievements. The PPP has ever since recognized the importance of unity to the attainment of our national goals. Though some of our opponents have a stake in perpetuating divisions along ethnic lines, the PPP recognizes that even more vigorous and consistent efforts are needed to recapture the spirit of unity that the Party was able to forge in the early 1950s. Creating the conditions for national unity must go on in a conscientious way. The Party as well as the Government must expend the energies and take initiatives towards this. Forging national unity will be helped by:

- Showing respect and tolerance to the customs and cultures of the ethnic groups that make up our society.
- Preventing discriminatory practices in all its expressions. Necessary legislative and constitutional measures will be developed.
- Shunning, condemning and avoiding hate and race propaganda, speeches and comments;
- Being fair and even-handed in our dealing with all and every Guyanese.
- Upholding the equal opportunity principle.
- Willingness to discuss and debate issues that affect our society and communities;
- Adhering to democratic norms and practices and be guided by inclusiveness.
- Encouraging religious, workers, youth, cultural and other organizations to make significant contributions to national unity.

B Strong Economy

In our approach to building a prosperous nation, priority must be given to the economy.

The economic strategy of the PPP has as its key objectives the eradication of poverty; fair income distribution through a process of social and economic inclusion; promoting economic development that is sustainable, ecologically sound and beneficial to every Guyanese across all regions in the country.

Our aim is to continue to work for a strong, modern economy; at achieving high growth rates and improved productivity so that the people's essential needs are satisfied and the economic independence of our country put on a strong footing. Attainment of these objectives will depend on a wide range of measures.

B-1 Macro-Economic measures:

a) Ensuring a stable macro-economic environment.

A stable macro-economic environment is vital for growth and the attainment of the various economic and social goals. This requires:

- Indicative planning in the economy to improve efficiency and facilitate co-ordination
- Measures to ensure stability, encourage production and prohibit usury
- Prudent fiscal and monetary policy
- Stability in the exchange rate, low inflation

b) Embracing a mixed economy

All forms of businesses, including joint ventures with State, foreign and local entities will be encouraged.

- **The Private Sector:** The local private sector must be encouraged to play a leading role in the country's growth and development. Banks and insurance companies can do more in this respect, especially in the field of investments. This sector should also be more active in training; involving employees' representatives in planning and decision-making.
- **The State Sector:** This will be complemented by a State sector that contributes positively to the Treasury, has systematic impacts and is not a burden to the taxpayer.
- **The Co-operative Sector:** Co-operatives need to be revitalized. Those engaged in small-scale and individual activities – in agriculture, fishing, services, etc. – can serve to harness as well as bolster their meagre resources.

c) Economic and trade relations

Expand economic and trade relations with countries of South America and Caribbean and with the South, generally, while not forgoing relations at these levels with the traditional countries.

d) Encouraging investments

Mainly in the productive sector of the economy and developing all aspects of the productive forces, more particularly, the human capital.

e) Repatriation of skills and capital

Continue to work for more overseas Guyanese to re-migrate and explore possible ways by which they can make an even greater contribution to Guyana's social and economic development.

f) Reform of the tax system

This indicates a broadening of the tax base to ensure that all pay their fair share of taxes.

g) Scientific Research

Develop science and basic research in a planned and systematic way; creatively apply science to production; give a rural bias to scientific research for the development of the agricultural sector to discourage the migration of people and resources from the countryside to the city.

h) Information technology

Encourage and give incentives for the establishment of information-based industries throughout Guyana.

i) A strengthened industrial base

Give support to the development of a stronger industrial base; including agro- processing and value-added activities based on local and natural resources.

k) Development of small business

Promote and give due consideration to the interest of small manufacturers, handicraftsmen and small traders.

B-2 Strengthening and diversification of our economy: Sectoral policies

1) Land management

State lands are a national resource that is linked to the economic development of the country's poverty reduction and the livelihood of individuals and families.

- The use of the land should be proactively planned to realize the benefits of optimal land use.
- Land should be geared essentially for productive use, recognizing, at the same time, other use, viz, for housing, recreation, etc.
- Land allocation should be made on a fair, rational and transparent basis with priority given to those willing and able to utilize the land, the landless and the disadvantaged to pursue their livelihoods. Landlordism will be discouraged.
- Land allotment should not result in rapacious landlordism and the like. A ceiling on land allocation, which is rational, should be considered.
- Work towards the opening of new Schemes in various parts of the country; expansion of MMA. Greater Canje Scheme, Orealla – Corriverton, will be the major areas of thrust.

2) Creating a supporting environment for agriculture

Co-operation in the agricultural sector and co-operative pools primarily with respect to machinery and equipment be encouraged.

Policies for farmers and those engaged in agricultural pursuits to access loans on easy terms for development purposes to be embraced.

Examination of a system for crop and livestock insurance which can be helpful in times of natural disasters. Farmers' legitimate organization should take initiatives on this. In this regard, consideration should be given to the setting up of a Development Bank.

Consultation with democratic and representative farmers' organizations when framing policies affecting farmers and related to land issues.

3) Develop an integrated and sustainable Rice Industry

The Rice Industry will be provided with special assistance to produce high quality rice at a competitive cost. At the field level, productivity will be increased through better technologies to improve efficiency, provision of quality seed of appropriate varieties, organized systems for operations and maintenance of Drainage and Irrigation high quality support services.

The post-harvest handling system will be improved to boost quality and reduce quantity losses through improved services for drying, cleaning, storage and transport. Recovery during milling to be increased and value-added activities to be developed for rice and by products.

An aggressive marketing machinery to be developed to provide stakeholders with decision-making information and promote Guyana's rice to capture targeted markets.

4) Modernizing the sugar industry

Transform our sugar industry to strengthen its contribution to the national economy and social benefits; to develop and better safeguard it and make sugar capable of being competitive in the world market.

The sugar industry will be geared to achieve international competitiveness. This will be centered on expansion of production in Berbice Estates with a further reduction of cost of production.

Expansion will be linked to a Refinery, Distillery and Co-generation plant using bagasse.

Overall, in all estates, there will be emphasis on diversification and value-added activities including the production of organic sugar, packaged sugar and specialty sugars. Special marketing strategies will be used to enter new markets for expanded production.

5) Strengthening the other crops sub-sector

Recognition of the tremendous possibilities for 'other crops' to develop. In this respect export of more fresh and processed fruits and vegetables to traditional and new markets must proceed. Organic farming of crops like cocoa, mushrooms, peanuts and heart-of-palm to be expanded; production of new crops viz, cut-flowers, cassava, cauliflower, honey, others for export purposes must be investigated. More efforts must be made to add value to our primary products keeping in mind standards and quality which consumers now demand.

6) Greater focus on livestock development

On this score, our sights must be set on self-sufficiency in poultry production; export of beef and other products, now that Guyana has been certified Free of Foot and Mouth disease; establishment of milk pasteurization plants introducing value-added products like cheese, yogurt and other milk-based products for local and overseas markets; emphasizing on duck, sheep, goat and wild-meat production.

7) Developing our fisheries and integrated fishing industry

- This will capitalize on the offshore and inland fishing potential and take advantage of the existing lucrative market for sea-foods.
- Aquaculture will be diligently pursued
- Steps will be taken to address the depletion of certain varieties of fish and stimulate their increase both at sea and inland.
- Activities which tend to pollute inland waters and affect the habitation of fishes need to be restricted, regulated and monitored.
- Issuance of fishing licences based on the principle of merit and those actively engaged in fishing activities will be adhered to. Monitoring is required. Due attention must be paid to local consumption as well as export.

- Establishment of the fish processing plants, already on stream, will be actively pursued. Additionally, other related industries will be encouraged, viz, a fish/ meat industry for livestock.

8) Developing Mining

This sector has always been an important pillar of our national economy. The PPP will work towards the following:

- The GGMC to be more active in promoting Guyana's semi-precious and other stones for commercial purposes and targeting local consumption, the tourist industry and export market;
- Concessions to be given to those who work the land and eliminate the system of subletting;
- The bauxite industry to be revitalized to attract private capital to become more competitive and economically viable.
- A system to prevent the illegal export of our precious minerals to be established. In this respect, there is the need also to prevent illegal mining of non-renewable resources;
- Measures to be instituted to prevent mining that cause irreparable environmental damage and pollution, simultaneously, to protect, especially, the marine life of some rivers.
- Collaboration with the miners' organization to promote and institute safeguards related to mining operations.

9) Developing our forestry resources

This should be done judiciously and with due regard to environmental safety. Additionally, there is room for expansion of industries based on our forest products; our overseas Missions could be more active in securing markets for such products as well as other products of Guyana.

Forests are a renewable resource. A thrust in this sector must embrace regeneration and reforestation which loggers along with the responsible agency and Ministry must ensure.

Care and consideration must always be given to communities whose social conditions may be affected by logging activities; attention must also be paid to the conditions of employees in this sector.

10) Promoting use of renewable energy resources

It is recognized that cheap power is the key to massive industrial development and increased employment. Guyana has tremendous potential for development of electrical power from renewable sources of energy. The PPP supports:

Harnessing our immense water resources for generation of hydro-electricity both for cheap domestic consumption and industrial use.

Encourage the use of solar and wind-generated power systems.

Utilise bagasse and other types of biomass energy.

11) Developing Tourism

Though tourism is a budding industry in Guyana, it has the potential for growth and to become a significant economic pillar of our economy. The PPP welcomes the enterprising spirit of our local business community for their strides in this sector. In spite of setbacks due to world recession and the terrorist/war climate, the possibilities for a flourishing industry exist. The PPP urges:

- Government-assisted promotional activities through our overseas Missions and friendly associations.
- Development of more tourist sites and facilities with a focus on the hinterland areas of the country.
- Support for eco-tourism. It is an alternative to traditional white sand tourism, and Guyana has a comparative advantage in the requisite resource for this new and attractive type of tourism.

- Internal tourism should be promoted. This will depend on affordable packages and will allow our citizens to become acquainted and better appreciate their country, its potentials and beauty.

The tourist sector is a suitable sector to promote joint ventures with the industry abroad, particularly with those that have the biggest markets.

C Full Employment

Like education and health, employment is critical to the development of our human resource; for putting into the productive cycle people's skills, talents and creative energies; for the creation of social wealth.

The PPP believes that schemes to create employment opportunities do not rest solely with the government but must be a responsibility of the different forces and economic interests operating within Guyanese society. Our unemployment situation as well as under-employment could be narrowed substantially by collective efforts, while recognizing the central role of Government.

Steps to be taken in this direction should include:

- Training and re-training programmes across the country and which the Ministry of Education, trade unions, farmers' organizations, youth organizations and women's organizations should participate.
- Emphasis on vocational education to provide knowledge and technical skills for self-employment; education in agriculture could also stimulate a greater interest in farming, fishing and livestock-rearing; also, job-creating stimulus could be derived from knowledge and skills in the fields of mechanical and electrical engineering and other fields.
- Encouraging co-operatives especially in the pooling of skills and meagre financial means. Fields such as garment-making, mechanic and repair services, catering, agriculture, transportation and a range of other interests could be encouraged through the co-operative sector. The State must consider what assistance and inducements could be given to such ventures to get off the ground.
- New agricultural schemes should be opened in agricultural communities and agro-complexes should be considered.
- Small manufacturing industries should be promoted by using indigenous raw materials. Medium-sized enterprises should also be encouraged. Banks and Insurance companies can make a more meaningful contribution in terms of direct investments and facilitating small loans on easy terms for individual or group economic activities.
- Ministry of Education should play a pro-active role with the Ministry of Finance and other Ministries and agencies to enquire how our educational system could better prepare our youthful population, and in what fields, for the employment market.
- Regions (RDCs) and NDCs must show an active interest in employment creation activities.

D Physical Infrastructure

Infrastructure development is basic to the functioning of any economy and crucial to the success of Guyana, given its geography and dispersed settlements.

The PPP places emphasis on a systematic approach to the development of the physical infrastructure through a comprehensive national Physical Plan in which economic and social considerations inform the approach to infrastructure development.

Road, maritime and air transport

All communities existing in all parts of the country need to be fully integrated into the mainstream of national development through a network of roads, river, sea and air transport.

The PPP will continuously expand and rehabilitate such a network throughout the country.

This will be strengthened through an elaborate programme of developing major cross-country roads, harbours, bridges and airports.

Sea and River defence

Given the position of the entire coastline of Guyana below sea-level, a massive programme of continuous rehabilitation and strengthening of the sea and river defences is crucial. This needs to be aided through round-the-clock monitoring and timely actions to prevent breaches.

Drainage and Irrigation

Drainage and irrigation in Guyana need to be developed within the twin needs of facilitating agricultural productivity and preventing hazards due to the dynamics of climate change.

Thorough planning is necessary for the system to be effective.

Water

Potable water is vital for life. It will be made available for to all households through the most efficient means for specific areas.

Special efforts will be made to deal with remote areas and those which have never been served before.

Electricity

Electricity is a key requirement for economic growth and for comfortable homes. The PPP places a priority on making electricity available country-wide.

Generation from traditional fossil fuels will be minimized and renewable sources will be emphasized.

Un-served areas will be given priority and special measures will be taken to accelerate rural electrification.

Telecommunications

Telecommunications is a critical tool for development in the modern world. The PPP will ensure that telephone and other related services are easily accessible and freed from monopoly control.

E Quality social services

Education and Human Resources Development

To enhance these objectives and to ensure that Guyanese are well educated and equipped to deal with the demands of the global economy and technological advances, the PPP will work towards:

- Providing as much resources as possible towards education.
- Constantly developing the curricula to improve the quality of education.
- Establishing cultural and recreational facilities throughout the country. This would encourage people to organize themselves and exercise their rights to literacy and artistic creation and to participate in other cultural activities.
- Continuing the expansion of teacher training.
- Developing physical training and sport.

- Expanding kindergartens and nursery schools including the establishment of special institutions for mentally and physically- handicapped children.
- Extending the adult education programme to eliminate illiteracy and raise the educational levels; encouraging civic and political awareness and reinforcing the sense of patriotism of the adult population.
- Opening vocational schools on a Regional basis and creating various branches of higher education.
- Facilitating children of the working people and adults to gain access to higher and technical education either by means of special scholarships or through a system which simultaneously combines study and work.
- Enlisting the assistance of suitably qualified personnel to strengthen the University of Guyana to fulfil its role of developing quality specialists for the country and to allow it to carry out scientific and technological research in the service of the nation.
- Promote cultural relations with foreign countries on the basis of friendship, equality and mutual benefit.
- Putting emphasis on the educative role of the mass media, encouraging social organizations to use these communications media and to develop their own for educational purposes, generally.

Health

As a Party which cares for the people, the PPP pays great attention to the provision of adequate and efficient health care nation-wide. The necessary infrastructure must be provided centrally and in all communities to ensure that everyone has access at least to primary health care. Medical personnel at all levels must be trained to provide vital services. Steps must also be taken to facilitate higher levels of health services to treat with specialized needs.

Protection of mothers and children; women to receive special and continuing attention:

The PPP recognizes that the active participation of women is essential for the building of a strong and prosperous Guyana. It is necessary, therefore, to take purposeful steps, various measures and adopt policies, which will ensure their full participation in the political, economic and social life of Guyana not excluding in the various levels of government.

Despite the tremendous progress made, there is still work to be done to ensure full equality and full participation of women in every aspect of life and that women have equal opportunities in terms of work, promotion and equal pay for equal work done.

It is necessary to enact a Family Code which would lay the basis for equal rights and duties in family life and in bringing up children. Single, deserted and widowed parents should be given special assistance for care and education of their children.

Housing

The PPP is committed to make houselots available to every family in the shortest possible time. Available lands will be developed with necessary infrastructure.

Low interest loans will be available to assist low-income families.

F Democracy

Promote Democracy; Work to Ensure Social, Economic, Human Rights and Freedoms

The People's Progressive Party, from its inception, always held the view that democracy was not only essential but indispensable to achieve national and social liberation. We firmly believe that we would not be able to consolidate the gains we have made since 1992 nor be able to solve the several problems that confront us without democracy.

Since 1992 we have won free and fair Elections. However, the danger is still present that Elections can still be subjected to fraud and rigging. We have to be ever vigilant. We believe that a strong Elections Commission is a requisite mechanism to protect and expand our hard-won but still fragile democracy.

The People's Progressive Party will always strive to deepen and widen democracy at every level of the society not only at the political level, but also at the economic and social levels. This must include democracy at the cultural, local government and industrial levels as well.

Since October 1992, the Guyanese people have been living and enjoying life in a free, democratic country. The PPP/Civic government signed the UN Human Rights optional protocol. The fundamental freedoms that the Party fought for are being upheld in our society. Basic services are also increasingly available. Almost all Guyanese have access to potable water and electricity services which have improved and are being expanded, while the condition of our roads and other infrastructure has improved significantly.

In these new conditions the Guyanese people are working to further improve their material and spiritual fulfillment. Our improvements must be strengthened and expanded. Accordingly, the PPP continues to advocate and work for:

- Upholding, defending and expanding all fundamental Human Rights.
- Improving conditions of work and rest and recreational facilities for our people.
- Implementing policies to protect and increase the real wages of our working people.
- Rationalizing the size of the bureaucracy with the view of making it more efficient and compatible with national circumstances.
- Encouraging investments in the productive sector to create meaningful employment for our youths.
- Enforcing the principle of "equal pay for equal work" regardless of sex or age.
- Providing expanded training for apprentices.
- Expanding the social security system in the country; to eliminate inefficiency and bureaucracy.
- Continuation of the housing drive started in 1993 with the aim of housing every family. In this regard the PPP will work towards lowering interest rates for housing, expansion of housing construction and explore possibilities of technical assistance being available for housing development.
- Strengthening the Standards Bureau to ensure that consumers are protected and provided with quality goods.
- Providing equal opportunity to all Guyanese and to impose punishment by law for racial discrimination.

Freedom of Conscience

In pursuit of this freedom, the PPP:

- Embraces freedom of creed and worship and preservation of Churches, Temples and Mosques as places of religious worship.
- Embraces the equality of all religions without any form of discrimination and abuse. Ensure the neutrality of the State towards religion.
- Oppose and fight against all attempts aimed at dividing the people through the use of religious means; or sowing dissension between believers and non-believers which can do harm to the country, people and religion.
- Works for unity between believers and non-believers for the success of national and social goals.

Cultural development with a progressive and national content:

Culture is defined simply as "the way of life of a people or a society". It represents the sum total of material and spiritual values accumulated by society in the course of history and the means of creating and expressing them. It includes a people's heritage – physical evidence in their monuments, architecture, visual arts, music, literary arts, as well as intangible and oral heritage such as traditions and customs, dance, music, religious practices, culinary arts and their achievements in the realm of science, philosophy, education etc.

As a multicultural society created out of a history based on exploitation and oppression under the various colonial powers

for over 400 years, it is now important that Guyana in this post-Independence nation building process views its cultural diversity as a unifying force rather than a divisive weapon.

The PPP's policy on culture is one that recognizes and encourages this rich multicultural diversity of Guyana and supports the preservation and revitalization of these community art forms in villages across the country.

This is an integral part of the PPP's policy of democracy and democratization of our society. Hence, the opportunities to express, share, preserve, create and be recognized officially are integral parts of the democratization of culture, reduction of feeling of alienation whilst developing national pride and dignity.

Respect and tolerance for differences – culture, religion, gender, geography, history and class is an important foundation for the development of a harmonious and stable society, a critical requirement for economic growth and sustainable development.

G Good Governance

The PPP considers Good Governance as the foundation of National Development. Having moved our country away from the dictatorial era which the PNC had created, and having propelled the country into a new era of freedom and accountability, the PPP is committed to a continuous process of expanding the features of Good Governance in all aspects of life in our country.

Inclusiveness

The PPP believes in the inclusion of all representative bodies in the process of governing Guyana. We strongly believe in the Parliamentary process being a truly deliberative one with full scope for Standing, Sectoral and Select Committees to function. We are also committed to the widest involvement of stakeholders in the Boards which govern State institutions.

Accountability for public expenditure

- Asset declaration for public officers
- Strengthening the fight against money laundering, narco-traffic and corporate fraud
- Mobilising support and assistance of people in the fight to curb economic crimes

Anti-corruption measures

Examine, and where they exist, bring an end to corruption and discourage waste. Resources will thus be more efficiently utilized to provide for the real needs of the people.

Improvement in the administration of Justice:

During the years of PNC rule the administration of justice suffered. It was undermined by politicization. Its independence was tampered with or seriously questioned. Even today, the influence of that period is still felt. The justice system requires special attention. The PPP subscribes to the view that:

- a) All fetters on the judiciary that hamper its independence be removed.
- b) Steps must be taken to strengthen justice administration to make it more effective and speedy in dealing with criminal and civil cases, protect victims' rights, protect civil, human and constitutional rights and to make justice less costly and more accessible.
- c) We should draw from the experiences of other countries and be innovative in engaging persons outside of the legal system to assist in developing a prestigious and well-respected justice system.

- d) A permanent structure to pursue law reform should be established; the required legislation for such reform is urgently needed.
- e) A 'Code of Conduct' for practitioners of the law is needed. At the same time administrators should consider popular programmes to bring knowledge of the law to the people.
- f) Government must explore the feasibility of the University of Guyana expanding its law programme to allow students to complete their studies in Guyana.

For people-oriented security forces and assuring the security of the people and country

Progress and continuous development of our country are inconceivable without reliable security forces and our people assured of their security. The question of security is multi-dimensional; its various aspects, at the same time, interlinked. Given the importance of security to our society's peaceful, democratic and steady development and to our people's peace of mind, safety and well-being, the PPP will insist on and support a professional, well-equipped, well-trained civilian law enforcement and the military to deal with internal and external threats.

H Equal Opportunity

Providing equality of opportunities for all communities and accelerated development for Amerindians

All Guyanese must feel that they are an integral part of the Guyanese nation with equal rights and responsibilities.

The PPP supports such steps aimed at achieving unity and equality among the different communities, to oppose discrimination against, and forcible assimilation of, national groups. All ethnic groups should have the right to preserve and to develop their own spoken and written languages and their cultural heritage; they should also have the right to maintain or to change their customs and habits.

Amerindians should be provided with essential facilities to counter the effects of centuries of oppression and to enable them rapidly to take their rightful place in Guyanese society. Access to general education, vocational and professional training, health and housing is necessary to make equal rights a reality. Emphasis will be placed on the development of cadres so that Amerindians can increasingly manage their own affairs.

State assistance to Amerindians to improve their lands, to develop various economic activities to raise their living standard still higher and make their contributions to the general development of Guyana, must be diligently pursued.

The PPP recognizes in the diversity of our cultural heritage a richness which must be protected and which will make an invaluable and distinct contribution to nation-building.

Strengthening Regional Administration and Local Government

The country's division into ten (10) administrative districts coincides with the belief of the values which can be derived from devolution of power. This structure, in our day, has become integral to the political organization of our society. To maintain it necessarily means to enhance the possibilities of Regional Democratic Councils (RDCs) playing an increasingly bigger part in the various aspects of regional development. Several of the existing responsibilities taken on by the RDC, require improvement, more in some Regions than others.

It is necessary to establish a developmental programme for each region in harmony with the Government's strategy and after consultations with the various interest groups within the region and to take initiatives to expand economic activities to address unemployment as it affects the region.

Local Government elections in 1994 not only broke the cycle of its long delay but also emphasized the PPP's commitment to democracy. It is in keeping with our belief that the people must be fully engaged in running their affairs at the local/community level and also take part in central government. The experiences gathered so far should serve councillors well in their continuing involvement at this level; to do better in their responsibilities to develop their communities and villages. As we proceed along this way, the PPP believes that the council's performance and general work can be improved:

- by regular consultation with villages and citizens on what to be done;
- by adhering to the principle of transparency, accountability and recall;
- by greater involvement of the people and their democratic organizations – PTAs, sports and cultural, religious, CDCs, policing groups – in their work;
- by efficient management of the council's affairs and proper record-keeping and attending to people's interests in an even-handed and rational manner. Offices, well-appointed and secure, and/or holding meetings and meeting with people will be helpful.
- by taking initiatives to promote healthy activities to enhance village development – for training and sponsorship of educational activities and discussions, sports, cultural, self-help, assistance to the very poor and disadvantaged, ensuring that social amenities, facilities and institutions are protected and improved.

I Preserve and protect the environment- our common heritage

In recent years, with the PPP/Civic at the helm of the State, much has been done for the protection of the environment. We welcome the specialized agencies set up to give undivided attention to ensure a healthy environment and its protection. Centuries of plunder for profits and an uncaring approach have resulted in environmental destruction and are, finally, taking its toll on the world's environment. Much of earth's natural resources are becoming extinct, are being depleted or unable to sustain unchecked exploitation for long. This results in extremely serious problems facing humanity. The human species is itself threatened. Faced with such real dangers to life and livelihood, the governments and people worldwide must demonstrate a responsible attitude to this matter. We need to be vigilant; we need to take the necessary precautions to preserve and protect our environment from further destruction, erosion and pollution.

The PPP will unfailingly support the government in any and all measures aimed at protecting our environment. We support the need for strong local actions to contribute to the implementation of AGENDA 21, the Global plan for Sustainable Development. We believe that in the utilization of our country's natural resources, we must ensure good Natural Resources and Environmental Management. The Government must always take a principled and firm stand in discussions of the environment at international and regional fora. The PPP urges its members and the Guyanese people to be part of the worldwide movement to protect our planet and our lives; to safeguard the environment which is our common heritage.

J A foreign policy based on peace, solidarity and respect

The PPP subscribes to the view that our foreign policy must complement and reinforce our domestic tasks and seek to further our national goals. Though a small country with its attendant disadvantages, we, nonetheless, must be principled in the pursuits and forging of foreign relationships. The PPP supports the general direction which the PPP/Civic government is going and welcomes its successes.

The PPP reaffirms:

- Its adherence to peace. We believe that problems with nation-States are best resolved politically and economically and by the international community. Any declaration of war, other than self-defense, must be an act reserved for the United Nations.
- Support for expansion of relations – diplomatic and otherwise – with all democratic countries regardless of their socio-economic systems;
- That our dealings with countries adjacent to our borders be based on good-neighbourly, friendly, co-operative and mutually beneficial relations;

- Support for the all-round work done by the United Nations and expresses our disagreement with all attempts to undermine its authority or weaken its role in international affairs. Simultaneously, we see the United Nations playing a more vigorous role in ensuring world peace, eliminating the growing problem of world poverty and taking firm measures to preserve and protect the world's environment.
- Support for our continued, active, all-round involvement in regional bodies, mainly Caricom and others, primarily of the South American continent.
- The need to do more to ensure that our overseas diplomatic missions are increasingly active in promoting Guyana and our export products. There is also need to examine the possibilities of strengthening our Missions in neighbouring countries and the Missions functioning in the centers of world trade and economy;
- That our participation in institutions – finance, trade, economic and others – must redound to the medium and long-term benefit of the country. Persons representing the country in institutions or conferences must be aware of the State's position on the specific issues to be dealt with and regular consultations/discussions are advisable
- The importance of the State fulfilling its international obligations and treaties. The public must be aware of agreements and treaties entered into;
- The necessity of resisting in a principled way any and all attempts that will affect our economic development, impact adversely on our democracy, undermine our sovereignty or serve to perpetuate unequal and disadvantageous relationships;
- Support for the causes and issues, which accord with our national interest, principles and programmes.

Section E

THE FUTURE

- A Prosperous Guyana

The dream of the people of our world for a better life suffered a major setback with the collapse of the world socialist system but it has not been smothered. It remains alive among the billions who still lack the basic necessities for a comfortable life

In Guyana and even before the formation of the PPP, workers, the poor and the dispossessed have fought for betterment for themselves, families and communities. Since the formation of the PPP we have provided a world view with a programme of action for the working class and we have remained loyal to those objectives based on a shared vision which includes:

- Building of a better life for all Guyanese regardless of race, religion and gender;
- Commitment to the working people; the poor and the dispossessed;
- International solidarity with the working people;
- Development of a mixed economy;
- Commitment to multi-party democracy;
- Respect for human rights;
- Respect for multi-culturalism

This vision captures the PPP's advocacy of socialism. International theory and practice has vindicated the relevance of these objectives.

It is internationally recognized that the neo-liberal path to development cannot provide solutions to the problems of the world. These include recurrent economic crises, growing poverty and inequality.

This failure of neo-liberalism has prompted a search for other paths of development. Such a search is not only an imperative of the developing world but also of the developed world. In this search, we must not underestimate the usefulness of the scientific methodology of Marxism-Leninism.

We believe that the new model must be based on partnership, equity, justice and respect. Such a model was advocated by the great International Statesman, Dr. Cheddi Jagan, in his call for a New Global Human Order. He argued that for the prevailing global economic system to fulfil that promise, it would require a new institutional framework in which a more efficient management of global interdependence can be combined with the introduction of firm, clearly defined principles of international solidarity. For that to emerge in the context of existing globalization, the paradigm has to be shifted from competition and confrontation to partnership and co-operation.

Only then would it be possible, as stated in the UN Millennium Declaration, "to ensure that Globalization becomes a positive force for all the world's people".

We are pleased that our proposal espoused by our late great leader Cde Cheddi Jagan for a New Global Human Order is currently before the United Nations General Assembly and we must strongly advocate and promote this new partnership to put international relations on a new footing away from mere self-interests to one in which the greater good of the whole world is superior to any special interests.

As the champion of the Guyanese people, the PPP remains committed to our founding principles. This requires us to build a better Guyana on the basis of democracy, equal opportunity and social justice. We must continue to improve the material well-being of our people, with education, health, housing, electricity and potable water remaining priorities. We must continue to create the environment for sport, culture, and the arts to flourish, and for them to contribute to strengthening

social cohesion through a better appreciation of our diversity. At the same time we must remain unflagging in defence of our democracy and national sovereignty.

We will build a society where all can feel secured in the knowledge that all fundamental human rights are recognized, protected and entrenched so that they become irreversible.

The PPP will champion and uphold the separation of the powers of the State, the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary. This has served well as a fundamental guarantee against any excess from any branch of the State.

The Party will continuously work towards a society that is open and public business is transparent while demanding strict accountability of all public property and transactions.

The PPP believes that friendship and solidarity and humane social relations should be the values to inform relations among all our peoples and we remain committed to the promotion of these.

We must develop partnerships and alliances with all who share our dream for our Motherland. We must strive to unite our nation to release the latent unique creative energies existing in our diversity to contribute to a united effort to build this beautiful country of ours into the desired land of “One People, One Nation and One Destiny.”

Our vision of the future must encourage our approach to the tasks of the present. Careful consideration must be given to the tactics we take and appropriate actions to avoid the pitfalls which abound in the pathway of developing countries like ours. In the general context of unity and struggle, we must exercise flexibility in our various approaches and positions. Guyana cannot isolate itself from the processes underway. However, we must zealously guard its sovereignty. Its involvement in international and regional bodies is unavoidable but whatever the benefits, this must not place us in a state of dependency or saddle us with policies that do not accord with our national interests. Guyana must strive to become a player in the world arena, even if modestly. Yet it must avoid the drama of war, military adventures or designs to perpetuate oppression. Guyana must be counted on the side of peace; its voice must be sounded for democracy, development, economic justice and social progress.

The journey to our goal, expectedly, will be long and difficult. Many twists will continue to be encountered. The Guyanese people and government must not be daunted by the challenges we will face.

We must go forward with optimism while being vigilant. Our objective is realizable. It's attainment, in the final count, is in our hands, in our determination and resolve, in our struggles and work.

The People's Progressive Party, from its formation, has struggled in a principled way for the freedom and welfare of all Guyanese. Inspired by the example of selfless struggle of the Father of our nation, Dr. Cheddi Jagan, we have confronted very formidable foes and come out victorious when many had surrendered and given up hope.

The PPP continues to offer to all Guyanese, the service of its tried and tested leadership in the battles ahead for the realization of our Peoples' desire for a Democratic and Prosperous Guyana.

Notes

PPP



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Freedom House

41, Robb Street,

Lacytown,

Georgetown,

Guyana

Tel: (592) 227-2095

Fax: (592) 227-2096

Email: ppp@guyana.net.gy

Website: www.ppp-civic.org