neutralist nations that incline toward the Western bloc, and move in the orbit of whatever Eastern Caribbean grouping may succeed the present Federation of the West Indies.

Since 1957 an important point of cleavage between the P.P.P. and P.N.C. has been their avowed conceptions of democracy. The P.N.C. insists that it alone embodies the true democratic tradition of Western socialism with its strong emphasis on human rights to match its pledge of economic equality. Only a P.N.C. Government would thus be a safe custodian of individual rights in an independent Guiana. According to the P.N.C., Jagan's Government will substitute Soviet for British domination and inevitably conform to the totalitarian pattern of a "people's democracy."

Thus thrown on the defensive, P.P.P. leaders have taken considerable pains to validate their own claims as the bearers of an authentic democratic tradition. They cite with pride the record of their prolonged opposition to the British abridgment of civil rights after the 1953 crisis at a time when the Burnhamites were allegedly destroying the political unity of the working class. They stress the P.P.P. authorship of the "fundamental rights" section of the 1961 Constitution which introduced internal self-government. In addition to the conventional guarantee of freedom of religious worship, speech, and association, the P.P.P. stresses the provision for the protection accorded property-owners against Government's compulsory acquisition of their holdings except on payment of "prompt and adequate" compensation.

The P.P.P. further argues that it pays more than lip service to human and propertied rights. It was a P.P.P. Government that first "recognized and used" the Hindu and Moslem faiths in official ceremonies. Attention is drawn to the "fair" compensation the P.P.P. Government awarded the Demerara Electric Company when it assumed ownership, its sponsorship of a Land Registration Law which clarified the title rights of many small farmers, and its granting of nearly one hundred thousand acres of land to peasant farmers between 1957 and 1961. The testimonials of confidence in a P.P.P. Government by the leading foreign enterprises, particularly that by Booker's Chairman Sir Jock Campbell, and their continued heavy investment in their Guianese holding are important inclusions in the P.P.P. defense.

Only the attainment of full independence will provide the ultimate test of the P.P.P.'s democratic pretensions. Positively it can be said that for four years a P.P.P. Government has operated within the accepted framework of British parliamentary practice and has been associated with a succession of fair and free elections. A favorable climate of opinion between the P.P.P. Government and foreign business firms indubitably exists at the present time. The historical memory of the aggressive and somewhat capricious P.P.P. Government in 1953 has been softened by the moderation and flexibility in approach to economic policy demonstrated by the Jagan Government since 1957. Much depends on the future success of the new Jagan Government's Development policy and the amount of technical and financial assistance which the Western bloc, particularly the United States, tenders in the immediate future. Any very sustained lag in economic ex-

pansion may lead to an adoption of a much more doctrinaire Sovietized approach in Development policy with a consequent decline in democratic practices.

On the eve of independence the most grievous unresolved problem facing the political parties is the establishment of a true national unity. In the last year ethnic divisiveness has been dangerously exacerbated. It is a moot point whether either the P.P.P. or P.N.C., as they are presently constituted, can serve as an effective instrument to heal the breach between East Indian and African.

The roots of racial tension lie deep in the economic history of British Guiana. The East Indians first came to the colony in the post-emancipation period in the mid-nineteenth century to replace the freed African slaves on sugar plantations as indentured workers under short-term contracts. By 1917 there had arrived over a quarter-million East Indians, many of whom opted to remain permanently in British Guiana. They remained a culturally distinctive group, their continued adherence to Hindu and Muslim religious practices distinguishing them sharply from the predominantly Christian African population.

Gradually a marked occupational differentiation between the two groups became apparent. East Indians did field work on sugar plantations and tilled rice paddies. Africans predominated among sugar factory workers in the sub-managerial levels in bauxite mining. Other largely African occupations were the civil service, the police, the professions of law and teaching, which accounted for the African urban majorities.

In recent years, particularly since World War II, significantly large numbers of East Indians have transcended their previously inferior "coolie" status and have entered business and the professions. In this connection the growing stature of the Georgetown Junior Chamber of Commerce, composed mainly of a new generation of East Indian businessmen, is noteworthy, challenging the entrenched position of the predominantly European Senior Chamber of Commerce. Politically the Junior Chamber of Commerce is strongly pro-P.P.P. in orientation and is one of the forces operating to moderate the dogmatically Marxist tendency within the P.P.P.

Although neither the P.P.P. nor P.N.C. can afford to ignore the electoral realities which have been made the core support of each party ethnically distinctive, both proclaim their fidelity to the objective of national unity. P.P.P. spokesmen stress the class basis of their party's ideology. They draw attention to the historical role of the P.P.P. in diminishing the political influence of the East Indian Association and League of Coloured Peoples. They deny that the P.P.P. Government's agricultural policy deliberately favors the East Indian peasants at the expense of urban African workers, asserting that their commitment to well-rounded economic development in both agriculture and industry will ultimately benefit all Guianese regardless of race. They point proudly to their leadership of the Nationalist movement as the more vigorous champion of the rapid attainment of full independence in constitutional negotiations with the British. They place the onus for the present hightened racialist feeling on the disruptive action of the Burnhamite faction in dissolving the unity of the working-class move-

ment in 1955. They emphasize the repeated P.P.P. efforts, always repelled by the P.N.C., to heal the ethnic breach by reunifying the popular movement.

In the P.N.C. an important fissure occurred in 1961 between the Burnhamite leadership and the stridently racialist faction led by Sydney King and H. H. Nicholson. King, one-time close associate of the Jagans and later a migrant to the P.N.C., had become by 1960 one of the most popular leaders of Burnham's party and editor of its influential weekly, the *New Nation*. Nicholson, a master at the colony's leading secondary school, Queen's College, had suddenly acquired local notoriety in 1961 under the pseudonym of "Vigilance" for a series of articles, published in the P.N.C. organ and reprinted in the conservative *Daily Chronicle*, attacking the East Indians and their political vehicle, the P.P.P. The King-Nicholson thesis was that the P.P.P. was not a genuine political party but merely a self-interested association of East Indian capitalists and peasants who threatened to use their growing political power to victimize the African minority. King and Nicholson began to utilize this aggressively anti-Indian position as a rallying-point within the P.N.C. to replace Burnham as party leader, and an intensive intra-party power struggle, mostly concealed from public view, ensued.

At the outset of the 1961 campaign Burnham asserted that as P.N.C. leader he would be willing to "fly in the same plane" to London with Jagan to conduct negotiations for full independence. The outraged King issued his sensational proposal for the partition of British Guiana on racial lines. King's solution to Guianese racialism was a two-step proposal. First he suggested a "joint and equal prime ministership" shared by the leaders of the Indian and African peoples for a Guiana neutralized between East and West. An interracial "Watch Commission" was to be instituted to supervise the expenditure of Government funds and fair distribution of jobs. Anticipating Jagan's rejection of a joint prime ministership, King then proposed a partition of the country into separate African and Indian zones with an intermediate third zone "for those who wished to live with other races."

After the release of this political bombshell King and Nicholson were peremptorily expelled from the P.N.C. King became for a time an independent legislative candidate but later withdrew. Under King-Nicholson leadership the African Society for Racial Equality was formed to agitate for an ethnic partition and immediately won a mass response. The future relationship between the P.N.C. and its rebellious offshoot is uncertain. Doubtless King retains a wide following in the P.N.C., particularly in his home constituency of Buxton.

As the Government party the P.P.P. bears primary responsibility for some amelioration in this very marked racialist antagonism. Some initial steps were taken in this direction following the P.P.P.'s electoral victory in 1961 by the inclusion of several Negro leaders of the P.P.P. in the new home-rule cabinet and by Jagan's nomination of P.N.C. leader W. O. R. Kendall to be deputy Speaker of the New Legislative Assembly. Barring a fundamental political realignment along class rather than ethnic lines, which does not seem likely in the immediate future, a radical improvement in East Indian-African relations cannot be anticipated, so that the parties' asserted goal of national unity remans mainly a paper declaration.

III

The 1961 General Election provided a concentrated summation of the main features of the party system. The campaign was conducted under the new constitution that represented the penultimate step toward full independence.[4] The principal characteristics of the new governmental system were as follows: (1) a return to the bicameralism of the Waddington Constitution with a wholly elective legislative Assembly of thirty-five members chosen in single-member constituencies by plurality vote and a nominated Senate; (2) the creation of a policy-forming executive organ, the Council of Ministers headed by a premier, normally the leader of the majority party in the lower chamber, and solely responsible to that body; (3) a mixed composition in Senate membership, thirteen of whose members the governor would appoint on recommendation of the premier, three to represent minority opinion in the lower house and two in the sole discretion of the governor; (4) a limitation in the Senate's legislative authority to a suspensive veto of six months for ordinary legislation and of one month for a Money Bill, the latter necessarily originating in the Legislative Assembly; (5) the premier's domination of appointments to such key statutory boards as the Public Service and Police Service Commission; (6) the retention of Colonial Office control over defense and external affairs, excluding trade relations with foreign countries and the reiteration of the emergency powers of the British-appointed governor; and (7) an elaborate section of guaranteed "fundamental rights," as cited above.

Pitted against the two established parties were the conservative United Force and the less significant Guiana Independence Movement. The United Force epitomized the conservative third-party contestants with no mass base that have waged a losing political struggle since 1953. Its dominant figure was its founder and leader, Peter D'Aguiar, a wealthy brewer of Portuguese descent and a nominal Roman Catholic. The ideological trademark of the United Force was a firm espousal of the free-enterprise system as the principal catalyst of the country's rapid economic development coupled with a shrill anticommunism. This placed the U.F. well to the right in the Guianese political spectrum, sharply distinguishing it from both the P.P.P. and P.N.C.

The strongest single motivation for organizing the U.F. in late 1960 was to form an electoral combination strong enough to defeat the feared incumbent P.P.P. Its actual organization had been preceded by long months of negotiations between D'Aguiar and the P.N.C. to provide a single major opposing party to the P.P.P. These broke down over the composition of the executive of the proposed party merger. In view of the markedly different policy outlook of D'Aguiar and the Burnhamites such a union would have had dubious viability. Fear and dislike of the P.P.P. would have been virtually its only integrative element.

By election time in 1961 the U.F. had become a carefully organized, well-financed political grouping. Its leadership and clientele were more ethnically heterogeneous than either of its major opponents and included Portuguese and Chinese businessmen, wealthy East Indian landlords and light-colored Negro professional persons. It placed candidates in all thirty-five constituencies. Its

[4] *British Guiana Constitutional Instruments*, Georgetown, B.G., 1961.