

~~Secret~~

### Guyana: Hoyte Strengthens His Position

President Hoyte—despite domestic criticism of fraudulent electoral procedures—emerged from national elections on 9 December in a strengthened position. Domestic opposition—while still vocal—appears to be losing momentum. Remaining firmly in control of the ruling party, the President has recently appointed a Cabinet that [redacted] appears more moderate [redacted]

The elections, which produced a landslide win for Hoyte's People's National Congress (PNC), have drawn strong criticism from opposition elements within the country. Prior to the balloting, Hoyte restricted overseas and proxy voting and abolished postal voting, avenues which opposition parties contended had facilitated fraud in the past. Nevertheless, on election day People's Progressive Party (PPP) leader Cheddi Jagan—after charging that the ruling party had barred authorized opposition agents from polling stations, disenfranchised voters, and promoted multiple voting—withdraw from the electoral process. [redacted]

The election was conducted peacefully [redacted]

#### Opposition Alliance Fraying

A five-party alliance of opposition leaders formed on 9 January already is weakening. The Patriotic Coalition for Democracy comprises the pro-Soviet Marxist PPP, the People's Democratic Movement, and the pro-West Democratic Labor Movement, and the National Democratic Front. [redacted]

#### Results of 9 December 1985 Election

|                                    | Votes   | Percentage | Seats |
|------------------------------------|---------|------------|-------|
| Total                              | 291,175 |            | 53    |
| People's National Congress (PNC)   | 228,718 | 78.5       | 42    |
| People's Progressive Party (PPP)   | 45,926  | 15.8       | 8     |
| United Force (UF)                  | 9,810   | 3.4        | 2     |
| Working People's Alliance (WPA)    | 4,176   | 1.3        | 1     |
| Democratic Labor Movement (DLM)    | 2,157   |            |       |
| People's Democratic Movement (PDM) | 232     |            |       |
| National Democratic Front (NDF)    | 156     |            |       |

[redacted]

Attendance at the coalition's second protest rally was only about half that of the initial one [redacted]

[redacted] Moreover, the PPP—the largest opposition group in Guyana and key element in the alliance—continues to lose ground [redacted]

[redacted] Party leader Jagan's call for a general strike following the PPP's defeat at the polls drew little public reaction. Members of the Guyana Agricultural and General Workers Union—also [redacted]

~~Secret~~

31 January 1986

headed by Jagan—struck the country's sugar estates briefly but with little effect because most of the sugar crop had been harvested. [REDACTED]

Other independent and opposition union leaders [REDACTED] are abandoning efforts to organize opposition in the labor sector. [REDACTED] morale among the six independent and opposition trade unions is extremely low. This is in part a reflection of being outnumbered three to one by the pro-PNC unions in the Trade Union Congress—the umbrella organization to which all Guyanese unions belong. [REDACTED]

Church-state relations—after a brief easing of tensions when Hoyte first took office last August—began to deteriorate again after church officials openly criticized the PNC's handling of the election. The government responded by expelling an outspoken British Jesuit priest [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Efforts by regional church officials to investigate the situation enabled Hoyte to dismiss the matter as outside intervention in Guyana's domestic affairs. [REDACTED]

#### Some Signs of Moderation

Government policies in some areas, however, reflect signs of greater balance. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the local press has taken a more evenhanded approach to reporting on the United States [REDACTED]. In recent speeches, Hoyte has urged improved relations with Washington. He also recently fired a news editor from the government-run radio station for allowing the broadcast of an anti-US editorial by an opposition group. Hoyte's newly appointed Cabinet members seem to have been chosen for their technical competence [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Ruling party moderates have the upper hand in decisionmaking, and we expect that under Hoyte's leadership the government will pursue more pragmatic domestic economic policies and a more balanced foreign policy. [REDACTED]