

**A  
History  
Of  
Political Parties  
In  
Belize  
1950—1981  
By  
LAWRENCE VERNON**

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## THE PEOPLE'S UNITED PARTY - 1950

The 'national party' which Leigh Richardson had called for in August, 1950, came into being the following month. Friday night, September 29, marked the end of the People's Committee and the formation of a political party, fully constituted, called the People's United Party. Those people present in the Thistle Hall heard George Price introduce the Party to them. He said that a powerful political party would not only be a good thing but a very necessary thing, and that shortly the People's Committee would present to them the constitution of a new party, with a view to inviting all citizens of the country to join and work for the betterment of conditions. He assured them that if they received the constitution with interest and enthusiasm, if they enrolled by the thousands, and if the majority of the people constituted the People's United Party, then they would embark on the road to political and economic advancement. As a result they would not only win municipal and national elections, but also direct and control the country eventually.

✓ The constitution was summarized and presented to the gathering by Philip Goldson, as follows:-

- a) Members may be either registered voters or persons at least 18 years of age with three years residence in British Honduras.
- b) The Party would be governed at various levels by district executive committees controlled by a central executive council, which would be under the supreme authority of a convention of delegates appointed by members throughout the country.
- c) Municipal candidates were to be selected by district conventions, while national candidates would be chosen by the convention of delegates from among persons proposed by the various district conventions.

✓ The Hon. John Smith became the first member of the Party, as well as the first leader, when he publicly took the pledge. He was followed by George Price, Philip Goldson, Leigh Richardson, Cameron Gabb and Henry Middleton, who were subsequently elected Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Chairman, and Party Councillors respectively. The membership grew steadily, and support for the new Party was given even by those who did not register formally. In due course a new Headquarters was established on Albert Street adjoining Rita's Store at the corner of Church Street



It was not long before branches of the Party began to be formed in the main district towns. On October 30, a six-member Steering Committee of the People's United Party was established in Stann Creek by Philip Goldson. The Provisional Chairman was Mr. Frederick Gill, and the Secretary, Harry Stanley. Early in November a Steering Committee was formed in Corozal, when both Leigh Richardson and Philip Goldson were present at the inauguration. As early as September 6 a delegation of the People's Committee had journeyed to El Cayo and presented the Baymen's Flag to Mr. Eduardo Espat, Chairman of the Cayo Branch of the Committee.

The early aims of the Party were lofty, the most important being:-

- a) Industrial development
- b) Agricultural development
- c) Adult suffrage
- d) Just laws for all classes
- e) Self-government.

The slogan of the Party proudly announced: "The only Party. Your only hope."

During November legal action was taken against Philip Goldson, the publisher of the Belize Billboard, and News Editor Leigh Richardson. The former was charged with publishing in the Billboard of September 24, 1950, words with seditious intent, as follows:- "A letter dispatched to His Excellency the Governor received an evasive reply which could only have originated from a desire to deceive the people of this country." Richardson was charged separately with having said, with seditious intent, at a meeting at the Courthouse Wharf on October 6, words implying that the Governor was a "gangster" and a "liar or dishonest person." They were committed for trial to the Supreme Court in the sessions commencing January 29, 1951, and immediately Philip Goldson flew to Jamaica to secure legal assistance. The following night, November 9, at a People's United Party meeting, a fund was launched for the defence of the two men.

Mr. Noel Nethersole, eminent Jamaican solicitor, whose services the journalists had secured, was due to arrive in British Honduras on January 30, 1951 to defend them. However, on the 29th the sedition charges against them were withdrawn when the defendants apologetically withdrew the charges they had made against the Governor.



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## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This history is intended to be exclusively of political parties in **BELIZE**, and thus constitutional history prior to 1950 (the year which saw the birth of the first political party) is intentionally omitted. Any constitutional development since 1950 has necessarily affected political parties, and only in such instances is it mentioned. The 1935 constitution, with the 1938 and 1945 amendments incorporated, remained in force until 1954.

In 1945 a Commission of Inquiry was appointed to make recommendations on constitutional advance. The results of this Commission comprise the 1954 Constitution, the main provisions of which were: (a) the introduction of universal adult suffrage; (b) the title of the legislature restored to Legislative Assembly; (c) the number of electoral seats increased to have an elected majority in the Assembly; and, (d) the Executive Council reconstituted as the chief instrument of policy having the Governor as Chairman.

The main event which was responsible for the political awakening was the devaluation of the dollar on December, 31, 1949. However, underlying and preceding this action, other relevant factors can also be presented.

They are:-

1. The first organized workers union in the Country, the General Workers Union, was receiving its first successes and recognition as a valuable organization during the years 1947 to 1949.
2. The Belize Billboard, one of the two newspapers in the Country, was vigorously airing the cause of labour and the masses.
3. As early as 1945 the Legislative Council was objecting to the status of financial dependence of the Colony on the United Kingdom, from which it was receiving grants-in-aid.
4. Steps towards self-determination could be seen from the committee which was working from 1947 on constitutional proposals for adult suffrage, an elected majority in the legislature, and an elected executive.

The "New Year's gift," as the Belize Billboard termed Governor Garvey's devaluation of the dollar, effected a political transformation which might not have otherwise taken place so early. Whether or not devaluation was really



necessary or justified economically is not the author's premise to give his opinion on; it for this study it will suffice to give some reasons for devaluation as stated in the Financial Secretary's Report for 1949 --

1. American demand for mahogany and chicle slumped in 1949 and the trend to trade turned away from the dollar area to the sterling area.
2. 'The producers of pine lumber, grapefruit and fruit juices soon found that their export market in the sterling area was very adversely affected' by the devaluation of sterling while the B.H. dollar was not devalued.
3. There was a lack of confidence in the dollar, which was 'exhibited in many different ways.'

The majority of the members of the Legislative Council had voted against devaluation, but the Governor (Sir Ronald Garvey) used his reserve powers and passed the resolution. The action was immediately branded as dictatorial, and on the night of December 31, 1949, some 1,500 people defied heavy rains to attend a meeting on the Battlefield. Here a resolution was passed demanding that the dollar be restored to parity with the U.S. dollar, and a People's Committee was set up to lead the "Dollar Back" fight.

The work is comprised mostly of edited, summarized and adapted versions of the opinions expressed by direct reporting, in the case of newspaper sources cited; direct quotations in the case of works by authoritative historians; and in the very rare case the author strays from this system, the views expressed are meant to be unbiased, and does not in any way attempt to compare or contrast one party or faction or personality with another. **PARTIES ARE TREATED IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER.**



THE PEOPLE'S COMMITTEE -- 1950

The formation of the People's Committee in early January, 1950, was the nucleus of the first organized national political party in **BELIZE.**

The success which it initially achieved was praised and supported by the majority of the people. This was due partly to the vigour of its youthful leaders, partly to the novelty of political agitation effectively displayed in heated speeches from the 'Battlefield' rostrum, but mostly from the views the Committee held and the aims it advocated during the early months of 1950. The original three-fold objectives of the People's Committee can be summed up as:-

1. Dollar back and development - not exploitation.
2. Anti-Federation.
3. Removal of Clause Six.

As a means to gaining added strength and recognition, the Committee allied itself with the General Workers Union, the only real organized body fighting the cause of the working class at that time.

The leaders consisted of the Hon. John Smith, (the Senior Elected Member for the Belize Division in the Legislative Council), who was selected to be Chairman of the Committee; George Price, a young councillor in the Belize City Council who was appointed Secretary; Philip Goldson, the Managing Editor of the Belize Billboard, who returned to **BELIZE** in August from a journalism scholarship in London in the midst of the political fight, and immediately joined in.

Trust in the People's Committee was displayed as early as January 10, 1950, when the people at a 'Battlefield' meeting conferred on it a mandate to approach the United Nations, if necessary, in the cause of the "Dollar Back" fight.

The thirst for identification as a free people was displayed first on February 1, 1950, when the People's Committee raised the flag of the Baymen(1) on the Battlefield. While a band played, thousands of voices were raised in the song

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(1) The Baymen flag is a light blue colour. In the centre is the coat of arms of the Settlement on a white circle.



"God Bless America," and the flag of the Baymen, which up to seventy years before had flown over this country, was hoisted on the Battlefield. Citizens greeted the Hon. John Smith with cheers as he mounted the rostrum and declared: " People of Honduras, we have recovered the ancient flag of our Baymen fathers." Also among those to speak was George Price, who near the end of the meeting spread the flag and intoned to the gathering: "Behold the ancient flag of this country. Blue as the skies above -- high *ideals* of democracy; the coat of arms -- the symbol of our country. Take it, protect it, love it." Pointing then to the flagstaff by the Courthouse, he ~~concluded~~ amidst loud cheers: " And perhaps someday if it is your wish, we shall move it from here and put it over there."

The subject of federation with the West Indies was being seriously discussed by the Government, and the People's Committee did not neglect to attack it. At the same meeting the Hon. John Smith asserted that the Government wanted British Honduras to federate so that the West Indies could become one big slave camp. He felt that devaluation was the fore-runner of federation.

Heated as the people were after devaluation of their dollar, and feeling at once, with the urging of the People's Committee to greater self-determination, that their cause was one worth fighting for, it was not surprising therefore when a small eruption of violence occurred. This was prompted when, at a Battlefield meeting of February 14, 1950, the crowd became angry at the Open Forum Chairman E.A. "Kid" Broaster who had tried to persuade them not to sing "God Bless America" on the occasion of Princess Alice's proposed visit. He was forced to leave the rostrum after being stoned, and running through the crowd took refuge in the Queen Street barber-shop of Tony Soberanis. Riot police were called out to disperse the crowd, and were subsequently stoned with bottles. The Acting Superintendent of Police, John Storey, ordered a tear gas bomb to be thrown into nearby Wickie Wackie Club from which location he said the missiles were coming, and unconsciously made history by allowing the first tear gas bomb to be used against any Belize crowd. Some more missiles were thrown at the police and they retaliated by throwing another bomb



The Chairman of the People's Committee arrived on the scene and suggested to the Acting Superintendent <sup>THAT HE</sup> be allowed to address the people in an attempt to disperse them. He refused, assuring Mr. Smith that the police would handle the matter in their own way. Finally, however, the Chairman was able to *address* the crowd from the Lizarraga home on Daly Street. He asked them to go home, telling them that when he approached the United Nations he wanted to prove that the people were peaceful and orderly, and that it was the Police Chief who had been irresponsible and lost his head. He also spoke to the Governor by phone, and he assured Mr. Smith that he would look into the matter as it was the first time he was hearing of it.

✓ Another small bit of violence had also broken out at midday on the previous day. A crowd attending a People's Committee meeting on the Battlefield became furious when they were told that certain members of the City Council had voted in favour of the keys of the City being presented to Princess Alice on her arrival. City Councillor M.B.L. Wilson was abused physically, Councillor Gordon Leacock chased, the office windows of M.S. Metzgen broken, and the home of the Hon. W.H. Courtenay stoned. Happily, before any serious damage was done, the Committee Secretary arrived and led the people back to the Battlefield where he dispersed them.

On the same night, February 13, an emergency meeting of the Executive Council invoked Public Safety Regulations, and the Governor declared a state of emergency, outlawing assemblies of seven or more persons. Following this, on March 15, Government placed a total ban on all Battlefield meetings. The voice of the People's Committee on the Battlefield was hushed for 137 days, because the Public Safety Regulations was not repealed until July 1. During this period, however, the leaders had not been idle. The Belize Billboard continued its unwavering fight against what they called Colonial injustice, and the Party Secretary had gone to New York to present the people's case before the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations. He reported this on Friday night, July 28, to a meeting on the Battlefield, adding that after the Human Rights Commission had studied it, it would be presented before proper committees of the General Assembly.



In this report it can also be said that Mr. Price summed up the objectives and policies of the People's Committee, while elaborating on the original three. He said that the Committee was resolute in its demands that each individual received all that was needed for the common good. This was social justice. A government was needed which was soundly established to secure for everyone the goods which the wealth and resources of nature and technical achievement could offer. These goods should be sufficient to supply the wants of all, to provide an honest living for all who wanted to work, and to uplift the people to a higher level of prosperity and culture. The Committee advocated laws to protect the labourer and to guarantee him a minimum wage, and had tried to stress repeatedly three things: the rights of individuals, the love of neighbour, and the brotherhood of man. There were a few people among them who were seeking to prevent the determined march of a united people towards better conditions and self rule. He concluded by saying: "As long as evil exists, the People's Committee will have to hammer and hammer until they drive the nail home. Beware of a system that blocks the people's progress even though it bears gifts in its hands."

During the months ahead the Committee had continually announced its intention to press for self-government by making the country economically and socially sound, in keeping with the assurance given repeatedly by the British Government. National consciousness was not long in asserting itself in the minds of the people. But it was realized that to advance constitutionally an organized party was needed -- a party which could contest elections on both levels and endeavour to constitute a government duly elected by the people. Leigh Richardson was most forceful when in August he called for a national Party. He felt that in order to be free what was most urgently needed was a political party that would work for eventual self-government. He was not unmindful of the fact that for a political party to achieve anything worthwhile the constitution of the country in which it existed had to allow for the right climate, so that civil and political freedom could grow and flourish. He was convinced that the only way to amend the position into a healthy one was to found immediately a



national political front which would oppose lawfully every individual, every restriction, every condition that smelled of oppression under the guise of British freedom. Once the political party was formed it should acquire constitutional control over both municipal and national affairs; this should be the ideal if progress and freedom for the inhabitants of British Honduras were intended. The party had to be assured of the people's support in its actions, and it had to work to assure the people in turn that it was sincere and skillful. The People's Committee was in the early stages of forming such a party, which would allow them to work successfully to overcome the dark political blanket which Britain had thrown over the country.

As the people prepared to celebrate their national day on September 10, another advocacy of the Baymen flag was made on Friday night August 11, 1950, by George Price when he explained the People's Committee's stand on the September 10 celebrations. "We have a flag," he asserted, "a beautiful flag. It is similar to the United Nations flag -- blue and white. Blue like the sky -- our lofty democratic ideals, and white like the sea foam -- our pure and sole love of country. Since the night of February 1, the flag has flown bravely through rain and shade, through better or worse, from the mast of the Mule Park and on Queen Street. It is your flag. As we celebrate our day, let blue and white be our colours...."

At a subsequent meeting on August 18 the people were told that Baymen flags and rosettes were being made and would soon be put on sale. The following week, at another meeting, Philip Goldson urged the people to "answer them with the blue and white." He was referring to taunts, abusive language and lies that were being directed at the People's Committee by radio speakers and other people. "We respect the Englishman's flag," he continued, "we respect the American flag, but we love our own. We must live for it, suffer for it, and if need be, die for it."

At the same meeting George Price pointed out that some people were trying hard to force the September 10 celebrations parade to be an exclusively pro-British affair, rather than a parade and demonstration in honour and memory of the Baymen who founded the City and established a tradition of law and order in this part of Central America.

He called for support to be shown in ~~two~~ two ways:- (1) there should be no address of loyalty to the King, (2) non-predominance of the Union Jack.

The People's Committee, in early September, marched to the tomb of British Honduras patriot Simon Lamb who fought at St. George's Caye, and who was responsible for keeping alive the spirit of the Tenth. A wreath was placed on his tomb by Peter Lamb, great grand nephew of the patriot. On September 11, the day chosen for the parade, some 1,800 people marched through the streets in rain. It was perhaps a significant celebration because of the unprecedented incidents which occurred -- police permission for the official parade under the auspices of the City Council was refused; boos and shouts greeted the loyalty address; the Governor was roughly and openly opposed, and the British National Anthem was not played when he appeared; the people joined forces in confusing the official sponsors; and, "God Bless America" was sung.

The People's Committee died so that a properly constituted party could carry on. It had served its purpose of awakening the people politically and preparing them for greater days ahead.



THE PEOPLE'S UNITED PARTY - 1950

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more. The constitution was summarized and presented to the gathering by Mr

Richardson, as follows:-

- a) Members may be either registered voters or persons at least 16 years of age who have three years residence in British Honduras.
- b) The Party would be governed at various levels by district committees controlled by a central executive council, which would be under the supreme authority of a convention of delegates elected by members throughout the country.
- c) Municipal candidates were to be selected by district conventions while national candidates would be chosen by the convention of delegates elected from among persons proposed by the various district conventions.

Mr. John Smith became the first member of the Party, as well as

the first to publicly take the pledge. He was followed by George P

and Mr. Leigh Richardson, Cameron Galt and Henry Richardson, who were

appointed Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Chairman, and Party Com

missioners. The membership grew steadily, and support for the new Party w



This action was taken by Goldson and Richardson on their personal responsibility, and it was advanced that the People's United Party had nothing whatever to do with the decision. Mr. Nethersole was informed by cable that his trip was no longer necessary. The P.U.P. immediately called a meeting on February 1 to consider the action of the two newspapermen. The meeting was split and ended in disagreement when members could reach no decision on the 'compromise.' The Party Secretary termed it a "dishonourable settlement" and further moved that "the Party record its disagreement with the action." The Party Leader, on the other hand, completely approved of the action, as did Mr. Nethersole in a message a few days later.

✓ The P.U.P. contested an election for the first time in its history, when on Monday, November 20, 1950, their candidates were able to win a majority of seats in the Belize City Council. It was the largest municipal election ever held in British Honduras up to that time, proving how politically agitated the people had become through the instrumentality of the P.U.P. 1812 voters went to the polls out of a total of 2917 registered voters, and allowed the P.U.P. candidates to fill five out of the nine seats in the City Council. The Party Leader, Hon. John Smith, topped the polls with 296 votes, and the other members of the Party elected were:- George Price, Leigh Richardson, Cameron Gabb, and Philip Goldson. A candidate of the Democratic Party, Lionel Francis, was also returned, along with three independents: Herbert Fuller, Ebenezer Barrow, and Egbert Brackett.

During the remainder of the year the P.U.P. continued its activities, and the leaders kept their promise to the people of using their majority in the City Council to establish the beginnings of a party system of government. They kept constantly in touch with the people through meetings on the Battlefield, and took the people into a new year filled with optimism and high morale for the future.



"Judge by the things we have done" was the plea of Philip Goldson to a gathering on March 2, 1951. He admitted there was a lot to overcome as yet, what with: the claims of Guatemala and Mexico to British Honduras, the threat of federation, the dangers of immigration, foreign development of the country, and the stifling grip of England over our destinies. At another meeting Leigh Richardson urged that the watchword of the people should be "Onward to Freedom." Citizens were also kept in touch with P.U.P. activities through the leaflet which outlined 'the party system,' first issued in April and sold at two cents each.

The first convention of the Party was held at Thistle Hall on April 30, and the Hon. John Smith, then also Mayor of Belize, was re-elected Leader of the Party. The former officers were also re-elected to their original posts, while additional Party councillors elected included Leopold Grinage, Mrs. Elsa Vasquez, Reginald Bevans, and José Rivero. All the elected officers comprised the Central Party Council, which now replaced the Steering Committee. Several resolutions were passed at the meeting, the most important of which were:-

- a) A Scroll would be prepared on which would be inscribed names of the People's Committees (which formed the P.U.P.) throughout the country.
- b) The British Government should follow a policy leading to the speedy relinquishment of authority to the freely chosen people of the country.
- c) The Baymen flag was chosen as the official flag of the country, and it was decided to take firm steps to bring it into common and official use.
- d) The use of the term colony should be discouraged, the name of the country itself should be altered to Belize, Central America, and the inhabitants known as Belizeans.

The question of import control came up for its share of ridicule when George Price launched an attack on it at a City Council meeting on July 10. He said that it had created scarcity of essential food and an excessive increase in the cost of living.

First rumblings of contention in the City Council, which led to a series of incidents culminating in the eventual dissolution of the City Council on August 6,



began when a resolution that a portrait of the King of England be hung in City Hall was defeated. This occurred at the City Council meeting on July 10, when George Price moved an amendment to the resolution, saying that such an action should not be considered until:-

- a) The currency of the country was restored to its former value.
- b) Import controls were abolished.
- c) Conventions of international labour organizations were extended to British Honduras.
- d) The 'green curtain' cutting off workers from natural association with their fellow citizens had been lifted, and,
- e) a democratic constitution liberated the people from colonial rule.

The resolution was defeated by a vote of three to two in favour of the P.U.P. councillors. Within a few days a petition was being circulated by Mr. H.W. Beaumont, a retired Postmaster General, requesting the Governor to dissolve the City Council. This was suggested on the grounds that the P.U.P. majority in the Council was disloyal to the British royal family because (a) the People's Committee had earlier created disorder to prevent Princess Alice from visiting the country, and (b) the P.U.P. councillors had now insulted the King.

The matter reached Legislative Council level, when on August 6 the members voted to ask the Governor to dissolve the City Council because of alleged disloyalty to the Royal Family. The resolution was moved by the Hon. Herbert Fuller, and was passed by a five to one vote in favour, with two abstentions. The following day the P.U.P. circulated a petition which called upon the Governor not to dissolve the City Council, and in turn demanded dissolution of the present Legislative Council. It further demanded that elections be held immediately, as the present legislators were enjoying a prolonged term<sup>(1)</sup> of two additional years without the consent of the

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(1) The Commission of Inquiry appointed in 1948 to make recommendations on constitutional advance did not make its report until April 1951. Drafting of constitutional instruments did not proceed until after January 1953, and the new constitution came into effect in 1954. The three-year period of the Legislative Council was therefore prolonged by the Governor, until elections could be held under the new constitution.



people who elected them originally. The Governor did not see it fit to accept the terms of the P.U.P. petition, and on August 8 dissolved the Council. In a radio message he told the people, in part, "After my God comes my King. From my youth I have been taught to worship my God and honour my King. As long as I remain Governor of this British colony I will not stand by and see such acts of disloyalty done without my doing something about it. I shall therefore dissolve the City Council, and in due course I will refer the matter back to the electorate". He appointed a nominated body to be members of the Council, under the Chairmanship of Mr. A.N. Wolffsohn (a native and former Acting Colonial Secretary). All the other members were either Justices of the Peace or prominent citizens in social life.

When the Hon. John Smith returned to the country on August 10 after representing British Honduras at the Festival of Britain, the Governor offered him a seat on the nominated City Council. This offer, in a letter to the Governor, he flatly refused, and further challenged the Governor to hold elections immediately, asserting in part: "Neither my intelligence nor my integrity would permit me to assist in the retrograde step of replacing a fully elected Council, dissolved for exercising the right to vote, by a fully nominated one. So I must decline." In conclusion, he said, "My constituents strongly urge him to put his statements to the proof by having an election now."

Dissolution of the Council naturally infuriated the people, and undoubtedly increased the strength of the P.U.P. This could be seen in the response and support given the Party when September approached and they prepared to celebrate their National Day once more. Leigh Richardson wrote that he regretted there had to be a rift in the celebrations. He felt that this rift had occurred because there were people determined to keep the country a colony of Britain, and on the other side there were people determined only to bring freedom to their country. It was a national duty to refuse to celebrate the 'Tenth' the way the colonialists and the colonial authorities wanted to celebrate. Philip Goldson, at a rally on the Battlefield on September 7, stated: "We celebrate with the Baymen flag and the



Baymen colours, our beloved blue and white, to show that we are dissatisfied with many things in our country ... Let every true Honduran be in that parade wearing his blue and white Baymen colours." On September 10, as the Billboard reported, about 500 citizens cheered the Hon. John Smith, and listened intently to a report from him on the conditions and plans of the city. They then took a pledge of loyalty to their country, followed by a parade accentuated by blue and white Baymen flags.

Federation of British Honduras with the West Indies again came up at a meeting on October 2, when the P.U.P. members accepted resolutions by the Hon. John Smith against the forcing of the country into a British West Indian Federation. He moved that the P.U.P. organize a large demonstration, also that they inform in writing all foreign governments, the United Nations, the Pan American Union, and the British Colonial Office that steps were being taken to federate this country against the will of the people. Public protest was also shown in the anti-federation signs displayed in store windows and homes.

✓ During October also the four proprietors of the Belize Billboard: Philip Goldson, Leigh Richardson, Lindberg Goldson, and Armando Diaz, were charged by Police Superintendent Abraham with publishing words in the newspaper with seditious intent. The charges came out of:- (1) a speech made by Leigh Richardson and published in the Billboard of June 17, showing that it was theological teaching to bring democracy to a country by evolution or otherwise; (2) an article published on September 2 reviewing the struggle of the English people against Kingship; and, (3) a speech made by Philip Goldson and published on October 7, reviewing the ways of Central American dictators. As with the first sedition charge earlier in the year, Mr. Noel Nethersole of Jamaica was engaged to defend the proprietors of the Billboard. He arrived in the country on October 22, and preliminary hearings began the same afternoon. The trial started on the 29th and ended on November 5, when a jury found Philip Goldson, Leigh Richardson, and Armando Diaz guilty, and acquitted Lindberg Goldson. The first two were each awarded jail sentences of twelve months with hard labour and a peace bond of \$1,000, while Armando Diaz was fined \$120



with a peace bond of \$1,000. Immediately a fund was started for the two imprisoned journalists to help their families.

Indications showed that the position of the Party was further enhanced with the publicity of the sedition case, but personal feelings, pointing in another direction, among the leaders was soon to cause a rift. Rumours had been circulating among opposing parties of possible P.U.P. aid from Guatemala. This was perhaps first prompted when on October 5, Philip Goldson reported to the people at a Battlefield meeting on his recent week's visit to Guatemala. The main points he brought out were all in praise of Guatemala, as compared with the backward state of British Honduras, and can be summed up as follows:-

- a) He had 'escaped' from British Honduras and breathed the sweet air of freedom for one whole week.
- b) There was absolutely nothing wrong in anyone going to Guatemala.
- c) He saw modern toilet facilities in the humblest homes.
- d) The Labour laws were better than in British Honduras.
- e) The effect of freedom on the people and the country could be plainly seen.
- f) Guatemala was ahead politically, culturally, and economically.
- g) He urged that the 'green curtain' which separated us from our neighbours be parted.

✓ The radical-conservatism so effectively displayed by the Leader of the Party since its inception culminated on the night of November 19, following a policy debate during which his proposals were turned down. John Smith had always advocated the aims of the Party, the chief of which was to throw off British colonial policies and lead the people to self-determination. In this he was radical; but apparently he was conservative enough to admire some aspects of the British rule, and thus he proposed to show some loyalty to the British flag. He therefore, at the general membership meeting on November 19, urged the Party to show in a tangible way its sincerity to the declared policy of the P.U.P., that is, to attain self-government within the British Commonwealth. He further proposed that to give the lie to accusations that the P.U.P. was anti-British and under foreign domina-



tion, the British flag should be hoisted alongside the Party's blue and white flag at public meetings. This gesture, though not really necessary, was very important in the absence of any other suggestion to establish the true identity of the people and the country.

Unfortunately, this proposal did not meet with the approval of most other officers and members of the Party. Two days later, Mr. Smith announced his resignation, and in a letter to the Party gave as one reason for resigning the fact that the P.U.P. had been accused of receiving aid from Guatemala, and yet had not seen it fit to vindicate itself. It had apparently seen no need to disprove the allegation either, and under these circumstances he could no longer be associated with it, adding that he would not work for Guatemala either directly or indirectly. Among other officers who resigned at the same time were Mervyn Hulse and Cameron Gabb. It is interesting to note too, that the Billboard, in an editorial, backed the action of Mr. Smith. [A postscript to the resignation was the Party Secretary's letter to the Billboard on December 3 stating that the issue of November 21 (which reported the P.U.P. Leader's resignation) contained an inference that suggested that the P.U.P. was receiving aid from Guatemala to work against this country. He asked to say that there were no grounds for such an inference.

The year 1951 ended on a note of achievement for the people in the recognition of their present and future place in the world; an awakening to their political responsibility and their economic and social rights; a development of their consciousness of the need for a better constitution and better living conditions; and an awareness of the best road to a happy political and economic future.

For Guatemala, the P.U.P. rose up declaring that British Honduras was for the people.

On election day, when the Party attempted to register its candidates for the election, the Returning Officer rejected Philip Goldson and Leigh Richardson on the legal grounds that they were imprisoned with hard labour for a term exceeding



1952

The year 1952 opened with strong rumours that City Council elections would be held in the very near future. This was the signal for the P.U.P. to start its campaigning, as it was felt that the National Party would itself soon begin a vigorous campaign now that elections, which the P.U.P. felt was the main motive for the opposing Party's existence, were near. At a 'Battlefield' meeting early in January, George Price told the people, in a semi-campaign speech, that the P.U.P. refused to stoop to Toadyism; also that a full report of the sedition charges against the editors of the Billboard had been sent to the United Nations together with a description of the unsuitable conditions in the country. In concluding his speech, he called on the people to use their vote in the 'limited suffrage' and thus show the world and the United Nations their protest against the present conditions and against federation. This they could do by putting all the P.U.P. candidates into the City Council at election time.

The following month the P.U.P. held the first real campaign meeting at which loud applause greeted the announcement that Leigh Richardson and Philip Goldson, although still imprisoned, would be candidates in the municipal elections. The Party Secretary declared that "... a sign that the P.U.P. is feared by the privileged few, and the colonial ruling class, is the vicious and violent campaign of lies to smear the P.U.P. as traitors who, they say, would turn this country over to a foreign power." He further assured them that the P.U.P. was not backing the claim of Guatemala, and as a matter of fact when the United Kingdom contended that British Honduras was for the United Kingdom, and Guatemala in the same vein maintained it was for Guatemala, the P.U.P. rose up declaring that British Honduras was for the people.

On nomination day, when the Party attempted to register its candidates for the election, the Returning Officer rejected Philip Goldson and Leigh Richardson on the legal grounds that they were imprisoned with hard labour for a term exceeding



twelve months. (This was neither true nor justified, since the sentences handed down by the Court had in fact been for twelve months exactly). The Returning Officer upheld his decision, however, thus leaving the P.U.P. with only five candidates -- Herman Jex, David Smith, William Coffin, José Rivero, and George Price.

Election day was March 19. Out of a total of 2,955 registered voters, only 1,694 people went to the polls, and the P.U.P. won a signal victory when George Price topped the polls with 238 votes (46 more than in 1950). The other candidates who were successful were: William Coffin and José Rivero, giving the Party only three seats out of the nine in the City Council. The National Party won four seats (Herbert Fuller, Mrs. Floss Casasola, Ebenezer Barrow, and Lionel Francis), while the other two seats were won by independent candidates Fred Westby and John Smith.

The first meeting of the new Council to elect a President and Vice-President was held on March 31, and ended in a deadlock; as did another meeting convened on April 2. Finally, on April 4 the Acting Governor, exercising powers given to him legally, nominated Herbert Fuller to be the President. The first business meeting convened on April 9 and elected Lionel Francis as Vice-President. The P.U.P. councillors declined from serving on any of the six committees, George Price significantly refusing nomination to the Import Control Advisory Board on the grounds that there was insufficient representation of the people on the Board.

It was a day of great rejoicing by the people when Philip Goldson was released from Prison on July 8, after serving eight months. After attending Mass at Holy Redeemer Cathedral he took part in a parade held in his honour, and was hailed as "hero of the day." He addressed the crowd after the parade returned to the Majestic Theatre Yard, saying that he did not regard his imprisonment as a sacrifice, but as a joy. He had also had the chance to think of new ideas for furthering the struggle and for helping the Party and the Union. Leigh Richardson got a similar treatment when he was released a week later. After his parade returned to Cinderella Town he praised the people for having kept together during the past months, which proved that



throughout the world "they don't come any better."

On July 28 the Legislative Council approved a draft constitution for the country, which included, among other points —

- a) adult suffrage (with ability to write, and over 21 years of age),
- b) Legislative Council to have a Speaker appointed by the Governor,
- c) three official, three nominated, and nine elected members,
- d) Executive Council to have the Governor as Chairman.

The P.U.P. immediately cabled a protest against the constitution to the Secretary of State, objecting to: (1) the proposal that voters must fill out registration forms before Justices of the Peace on the grounds that it was impossible for 18,000 potential voters to complete such registration before a mere handful of Justices of the Peace available. It was therefore suggested that enumerators be employed to institute adult suffrage effectively; (2) the proposal that the Executive Council contain only four elected members; (3) the proposal that the Governor retain reserve powers; and, (4) the withholding of adult suffrage in Town Board elections.

The constitution, after being approved by the Secretary of State, did not come into force until in 1954.

That year's National Day was celebrated as usual, but was marked by a telegram sent by the P.U.P., through the Acting Governor, to the Queen. In it they demanded independence and self-determination through a plebiscite as guaranteed to the people by the United Nations Charter. It asked that the people be released from the shackles of colonialism, otherwise they might be compelled to appeal to their democratic neighbours of the Western Hemisphere to help to secure their sacred rights. A message from the Party Secretary, who was in the United States on business, was read to the gathering, in which he complimented them on having defeated mentally the colonial system of life. They were beginning to see what was necessary for a free and happy way of life, and they would have to fight for this free and full life for themselves and their children. He praised the courage of those who had welcomed imprisonment rather than betray their people and their country, and actions like



that should inspire the masses of people. He asked for God's blessing on that National Day to make them "more determined and more courageous to meet bravely and surmount skillfully and defeat gloriously the forthcoming encounters and obstacles that will come from whence we know not where."

The Second Anniversary meeting of the Party was held on September 29, when several speakers reviewed the activities of the P.U.P. and stressed its aims and purposes. Philip Goldson said that the P.U.P. was prepared for long hard years of struggle if need be, and while they hoped for early victory they did not allow this hope to keep them from preparing for the struggle.

The P.U.P., allied with the General Workers' Union and the Belize Billboard, had several charges levelled against them by their natural 'enemies.' The Party classed these 'enemies' as colonial government spokesmen, the National Party, and the newspaper the Daily Clarion. The charges included the following:-

1. The Party represented the minority of the people.
2. The leaders were merely seeking personal glory.
3. They were tools of Guatemala and Russia.
4. The entire movement was communist.
5. The Party was under the Catholic Mission in British Honduras.
6. The leaders were irresponsible.

Allegations like these did not have much effect in belittling the integrity or power of the Party, and the year ended with the P.U.P. still on the upward climb.



1953

The yearly convention of the Party was held on September 30, and officers were elected. This was a significant year for British Honduras in that it saw the beginnings of important constitutional reforms which were approved to be brought into effect the following year. As a result of these preparations, political activity quickened and the people showed an increased awareness of the constitution, and even attempted to assess its possible effectiveness and intentions.

Early in the year too, the Secretary of the Party began to attack the charges made against them by opposing factions. At a meeting at Yarborough on January 29, he said: "The strategy of our enemies is to smear falsely and propagate that the movement of the P.U.P. for liberation from Colonial evils is wild and irresponsible, and that it advocates violence and bloody revolution. It may be revolutionary in the sense that the P.U.P. is working for a change for better living conditions of the people. By its very nature the Colonial system wielding means of modern warfare makes revolution impossible. It is absurd and untrue to pretend that there are possibilities of revolution."

Campaigning for elections to the Legislative Council under the upcoming constitution got under way early, and the P.U.P. began holding meetings in various sections of the City. The Representation of the People Ordinance, which Government sought to pass in July, came under savage attack by the P.U.P. They protested certain clauses in the Bill which stated that the people could not wear what they choose on election day, condemning this as violating the rights of citizens to vote freely. They also protested strongly against all the clauses of the Undesirable Literature Bill, calling it a Police State Bill, on the grounds that it prevented people from learning and knowing the truth. These protests were directed at the Colonial Secretary and the elected members of the Legislative Council, and backed up with a petition signed by 1,250 citizens representing Belize City and Stann Creek. Both bills were passed by the Legislative Council on July 24.



The yearly convention of the Party was held on September 30, and officers elected to official positions were: Leigh Richardson - Leader, William Coffin - Chairman, José Rivero - Vice-Chairman, George Price - Secretary, Philip Goldson - Assistant Secretary, Tharine Rudon - Treasurer; and Party Councillors included Albert Cattouse, Nicholas Pollard, and Herman Jex. Several resolutions were moved by the leaders and accepted by members, the most important of which were: administration of internal and external affairs by representatives of the people, universal adult suffrage, opposition to Communism and Colonialism, encouragement of credit unions, equitable land reform and financial assistance to farmers, social security, opposition to racial prejudice, religious dissension and class prejudice. Nicholas Pollard and Albert Cattouse also passed a resolution that the P.U.P. offer a reward of One Hundred Dollars "to any person or persons or any organization able to prove that any officer or officers have been seeking and/or receiving financial assistance from any foreign country or foreign source with a view to the violent or subversive overthrow of the administration." They said that the reason they had moved such a resolution was because for three years opponents of the P.U.P. had been asserting, and the Colonial Government had been implying, that the P.U.P. received financial assistance from Guatemala (or through Guatemala from Russia). No proof, however, had ever been advanced.

Although the Government had taken the P.U.P. suggestion of having enumerators, apart from the handful of Justices of the Peace, to register votes, closing of registration had to be extended more than once, the final date being December 15. Up to then 20,858 people had been registered.



1954

The year opened with the P.U.P. asserting its usual stand against Colonialism in a campaign speech delivered by Philip Goldson on January 22 at a Pound Yard Bridge meeting. He cited the evils of Colonialism, saying that it was responsible for (1) our not having a nationality of our own, and (2) the natural resources of the country to be largely undeveloped except for that section that had been exploited for the benefit of the ruling power. He urged the people to vote out the colonialists in the coming election, adding that the P.U.P. was the only group that showed itself capable of leading the people out of Colonialism into freedom and progress. The Party had stood up for justice for the worker, the farmer, the businessman, and generally for all the people irrespective of creed, colour or state of life. It was led by Christian leaders with singleminded devotion to the welfare of the people, and by this election it could be made possible to lead the country "out of the gloom onto the threshold of a great opportunity."

On January 28 the Party held a convention at which candidates for the Legislative Assembly election were named. George Price was to contest the Belize North Division, Philip Goldson the Belize South, Leigh Richardson the Belize West, and Herman Jex the Belize Rural. To complete the P.U.P.-G.W.U. platform for the election, the G.W.U. General Council named its five candidates on February 12 — Enrique Depaz for Cayo, José Chin for Corozal, George Flowers for Orange Walk, John Busano\* for Stann Creek, and George Gardiner for Toledo.

A policy statement on charges of Guatemalan relations with British Honduras was made during February by George Price, when he refuted a report by an English reporter reprinted in the Daily Clarion. The item alleged that a B.H. resident in Guatemala City made certain statements regarding P.U.P. ties with Guatemala. "These charges are dirty lies," denied Price. "The truth is that the P.U.P. is not turning

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\*On nomination day he was replaced by Nathaniel Cacho, because he had not resided in the country for the time specified to allow him to stand for election.



this country over to Guatemala or any other country. The P.U.P. is vindicating the rights of the people to possess their own land and to rule and govern themselves in the manner that suits their interests best."

These allegations of P.U.P. pro-Guatemalan activities were acted upon, when on March 10 the Undersecretary for Commonwealth Relations said in reply to a question in the House of Commons: "In view of the allegations which have been made from time to time of connections between the P.U.P. of British Honduras and Guatemala, it has been decided that an impartial inquiry shall be held as soon as possible by a commissioner from outside the Colony." Since the Party had consistently and vehemently denied that there was any truth in the allegations, the decision was taken mildly. The Leader of the Party commented that the P.U.P. had absolutely nothing to fear from any enquiry of that sort. What they had objections to was the time chosen for such an enquiry — practically on the eve of elections. Secretary George Price sent a letter to the Colonial Secretary, along with a telegram for transmission to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, branding an investigation of the P.U.P. on the eve of elections as a political trick. He further asked that if an enquiry be held at all, that it be conducted by United States Senator Joseph McCarthy (a great Communist hunter), rather than by a British commissioner.

Governor Renison for his part seemed convinced, however, that there was a tie-up "between the Central American colony's leading political party and the communists of neighbouring Guatemala." He proceeded to appoint Sir Reginald Sharpe, Q.C., to carry out the enquiry. He arrived in the country on March 23, and the enquiry started at once. Seven days later, after listening to evidence from several people, he read the summary of his findings to a packed courtroom, while thousands of citizens stood outside, some lifting George Price onto their shoulders amidst the playing of "Land of the Gods."

At a press conference held afterwards the Governor stated that he felt the contact with Guatemala had been proved, and it was left to the voters and the world's



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press to say what the contact meant. Philip Goldson asked the Governor if he thought he could work with a P.U.P. Legislative Assembly majority, to which he replied: "I think I could depend on the P.U.P. It would be my duty to work together with the P.U.P."

At the end of it all the P.U.P. charged that all the persons who gave evidence against them were either Government officials or hangers-on of John Proud (Public Relations Officer and leading witness against the P.U.P.), or one of his stooges. Still, they agreed, the charges against the Party, which were being made for four years, were not proven. It was noteworthy too, that the evidence of Luke Kemp, a neutral witness, was completely suppressed by the British Honduras Broadcasting Service, the Daily Clarion, and the Commissioner himself in his report. (Kemp had said that it was impossible for the people of British Honduras not to have contact with Guatemala; that John Proud was unreliable and untrustworthy; and that Proud had tried to get him to form a political party with John Smith against the P.U.P.)

On election day, April 28, the majority of voters showed their trust in the P.U.P., and their contempt for the Sharpe enquiry, when they returned eight out of the nine P.U.P. candidates to the Legislative Assembly. This was the first general election under semi-universal adult suffrage, and it signified a victory for the Party in more ways than one — the people were satisfied to know that the "Colonialist trick" had not worked, and the P.U.P. leaders on the other hand must have felt exonerated. Seventy-one per cent. of the electorate voted, of which the P.U.P. won sixty-five per cent. of the votes. The Punta Gorda candidate, George Gardiner, was defeated by Charles Westby.

Now in command of the majority of seats in the Legislative Assembly, the P.U.P. could still not be regarded as completely in charge. Their power was limited in that they had no control over the Executive Council, which was composed of the Governor, three officials, two nominated members, and four elected members of the Legislative Assembly. The inaugural meeting was held on June 18 under the chairmanship of the Speaker, the Hon. A.N. Wolffsohn.



At the yearly Party convention held on or around the anniversary of the P.U.P. — this year held on September 22 at Liberty Hall — Leigh Richardson was re-elected leader of the Party. During the course of the meeting he made a call for the granting of the ministerial system to the government of British Honduras, and also for provision of twelve million dollars in C.D.& W. funds to be made to the country to help development during the period April 1955 to March 1960.

On May 26 the Secretary of State had announced from London that he would invite the P.U.P. leaders to discuss plans for the development of the country, as well as other matters. Later in the year the delegation was named and comprised the Governor, Hon. Salvador Espot (a nominated member), Hon Philip Goldson, Hon. Herman Jex, and Hon. Leigh Richardson. They left Belize on October 12, and after friendly discussions, returned on November 9 with the Secretary of State's promise of an initial allocation of five million dollars for the next three years. This was to allow the country to carry on, and if possible, improve on the then present rate of expenditure on development. He also promised that a further measure of constitutional advance was now justified due to the good co-operation of the majority party in Government. The plan was that as from January 1, 1955, there would be three members who would have responsibilities for those departments dealing with natural resources, social services, and public utilities. There were also to be three associate members who would share the responsibilities. So it was that at a Legislative Assembly meeting held on the last day of 1954, the Governor announced that he had invited the unofficial members of his Executive Council to assume responsibilities, as from January 1, 1955, as follows:-

Hon. Leigh Richardson - Member for Natural Resources  
Hon. Herman Jex - Member for Public Utilities  
Hon. Philip Goldson - Member for Social Services  
Hon. George Price - Associate Member for Natural Resources  
Hon. Salvador Espot - Associate Member for Public Utilities  
Hon. J.W. Macmillan - Associate Member for Social Services.

The Membership system of government was regarded as semi-ministerial responsibility for the ruling Party, and also a step in the right direction leading towards a greater measure of participation in the affairs of the Country.



1955.

On the eve of Flag Day ( February 1 ) the P.U.P. leaders at a meeting, pledged allegiance to the Blue and White flag, referring to it as the "sacred symbol of the people's aspirations for a true and lasting democracy." The Party leader said that the Blue and White should eventually fly atop Government buildings all over the Country in an attempt to oust Colonialism, which still remained a vital issue and a dangerous threat to "life, limbs, and property." He also thought that it was time for foreign investors to be encouraged to come into the Country, and in fact efforts to attract investments of some six million dollars was already under way. At the same meeting George Price reiterated his statement of three years before, in connection with the flag, when he stated that it was, and would forever remain the guiding star of the people and their leaders. When the day came that they were completely liberated from the evils of British Colonialism, the blue and white flag would fly from the flagstaff of the Courthouse Wharf.

The Party celebrated its first anniversary, on winning the elections the previous year, with a meeting on April 29. Leigh Richardson urged the people to face the facts, because before the elections there were fantastic stories being circulated about the P.U.P. These rumours were still strong, but they were prepared to fight them, since the people had shown good faith in electing them.

In August the Party Leader approached the Acting Governor requesting him to consider a greater measure of responsibilities and authority for the elected members of the Executive Council. Under the Membership system the Members had no powers to take steps to solve the unemployment problem, so it was necessary for the functions of Members to be extended so as to allow them to deal with this pressing situation. Members also needed powers to enable them to undertake better the social and economic fields on a long-term basis. The Acting Governon agreed to make a few changes in the original distribution of departments and subjects among the official and unofficial members of the Executive Council. He proceeded to place Development Concessions,



which was previously under the Financial Secretary, under the Member for Natural Resources. Industrial Relations, Labour, and Local Government were placed under the Member for Social Services, who in an effort to create complete impartiality in labour and industrial relations, had to resign his membership of the General Workers Union and sever all connections with it and any other trade union. With these changes it was advocated that it would now be possible to attract potential investors, settle land tenure problems, and eventually set up a development corporation.

On the National Day the pledge of allegiance to the P.U.P. and to the Country was renewed. The Party Leader spoke of the need for the celebrations to be carried on separately in protest of the ways of Colonialism. He also felt strongly that there should be a never-ending fight for social, economic, and political rights and privileges to be carried on despite criticisms.

Political progress under the P.U.P. since the 1954 elections, as well as under the Membership system introduced afterwards, was lauded in a September issue of the London Times. The article stated, in part, "The course of political development has run remarkably smoothly in British Honduras since the elections of 1954. This has been recognized by the devolution of increased powers upon the elected members of the Executive Council, who are drawn from the P.U.P.... This is cause for satisfaction, seeing the anxieties which were felt at the time of the elections..." It was not only constitutional reasons, however, that was responsible for this smooth progress, but also human reasons "attributable to the personalities of the leaders involved. The P.U.P. Government has certainly addressed itself courageously to the tasks it has had to tackle, and has exhibited a marked degree of wisdom and restraint which has been fully met by the outgoing Governor..."

A P.U.P. convention held at the Riverside Hall on October 11 saw the re-election of the Party leaders en bloc to a new term of office. A resolution was passed unanimously by which the leaders were authorized to 1) seek from the Government of Britain thirty million dollars needed for urgent development and reconstruc-



tion, 2) request the immediate granting of the Ministerial system of government to the Country, and 3) send a delegation to London, if necessary, to present the case on these matters.

The year was a calm and progressive one for the Party and the Country, but perhaps the greatest achievement was the unity and dedication with which elected, nominated, and official members of the Government served the people's interest.

At a meeting held on February 24, the Party Secretary expressed his conviction and pride in the fact that four years of pulsing political life had allowed the people to become graduates of the college of politics. These years had made the men and women in the streets responsible, intelligent and sharp.

Before election day, which was set for March 19, the Leader of the Party returned from the London Federation Conference he had attended as observer, and in his report to the Party, brought out three main points on federation:-

1. So long as British Honduras could help it, she should try to steer clear of any form of federation.
2. If she could not do this, she should then look around to secure the best possible conditions before making alliances with anybody.
3. The Country should not close the door completely on a possible union with the West Indies, but should rather wait and see what the future had in store.

These statements were perhaps interpreted by certain members of the Party to show a slight pro-federation attitude, very unlike the Leader's initial stand on the matter.

4,483 voters went to the polls on election day, representing forty-seven per cent of the electorate. The P.U.P. won an unprecedented landslide victory over their opponents<sup>(1)</sup> by getting all six candidates elected. William Coffin topped the polls with 115 votes, and the other successful P.U.P. candidates were George Price, Ted Davis, Charles Nelson, Leopold Grinage, and James Staines. At the victory meeting the Secretary said that by their polling the people had shown again tangibly their support and devotion to the Party.

At the City Council met, George Price was elected President of the Council, and James Staines City. William Coffin was elected Vice-President.



1956

The determination and solidarity the P.U.P. expressed during this year was no less than it was in those/early 1950 days when the Party first came to the people. This was the year when the first municipal elections under adult suffrage was to be held, and the Party's campaign was vigourously under way. At one campaign meeting held on February 24, the Party Secretary expressed his conviction and pride in the fact that four years of pulsing political life had allowed the people to become graduates of the college of politics. These years had made the men and women in the streets responsible, intelligent and sharp.

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These statements were perhaps interpreted by certain members of the Party to show a slight pro-federation attitude, very unlike the Leader's initial stand on the matter.

4,449 voters went to the polls on election day, representing forty-seven per cent. of the electorate. The P.U.P. won an unprecedented landslide victory over their opponents<sup>(1)</sup> by getting all six candidates elected. William Coffin topped the polls with 715 votes, and the other successful P.U.P. candidates were George Price, José Rivero, Tharine Rudon, Leopold Grinage, and Jaime Staines. At the victory meeting the Secretary said that by their polling the people had shown again tangibly their support and devotion to the Party.

When the City Council met, George Price was elected President of the Council, and Mayor of Belize City. William Coffin was elected Vice-President.



The Belize Billboard of March 25 contained an editorial praising the merits of the P.U.P. It said: "The P.U.P. is the people of the Country. Study the P.U.P. and you will see in its members, in its leaders and its candidates, exact reflection of the people of British Honduras. In the P.U.P. you will see mirrored the strength and the weakness of Honduras. Study the P.U.P. and you will see a people's determination and ability to overcome all obstacles to political progress for their Country."

On September 10 the address of loyalty was read and presented to the Governor by a P.U.P. leader for the first time, when the task fell on George Price as Mayor.

A little over two weeks later the second rift was made in the Party, when at the annual convention at Riverside Hall on September 27, the Party Chairman, William Coffin, made a declaration bringing up the following points:-

- On July 6 the G.W.U. suspended its General Secretary, Nicholas Pollard, for financial irregularities<sup>(2)</sup>.
- On July 7 Nicholas Pollard began a public campaign of slander against leaders of the P.U.P. (with the exception of George Price and some other Party Councillors who he said supported him in his actions).
- During the course of his campaign Pollard had declared many times that his aim was to destroy certain leaders of the P.U.P. and the G.W.U., leaving only "Price for politics and Pollard for unionism." He had been assured of the full support of George Price in achieving that objective.
- This campaign had resulted in distrust and disunity within the P.U.P., and had allowed informed and thinking people to get the impression that the Party was not to be trusted with the destiny of the Country. If this was not checked, the Country's prospects for getting

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(2) This dispute amongst the leaders of the G.W.U. had resulted in Pollard forming a break-away union registered as the Christian Democratic Union.



development capital from abroad could be damaged, and a certain neighbouring republic might be encouraged to press its claim to British Honduras.

This declaration was signed by the following persons, who also made it clear that they were resigning from the Party:- Leigh Richardson, William Coffin, Philip Goldson, Robert Stansmore, Albert Arzu, Elfreda Reyes, Arthur Waite, Magnus Vernon, Herman Jex, José Chin, Jaime Staines, and Leopold Grinage. There was disorder in the meeting when the Chairman reached that section of his prepared statement, attempting, as the Belize Times put it "to read a slanderous statement about C.D.U. General Secretary Nicholas Pollard and Party Secretary George Price." Coffin had apparently ignored the point of order moved by Pollard, despite the Secretary's and the entire meeting's demand that the point of order be considered before the Chairman continued his speech. The P.U.P. members, who had resigned, failing to have the statement properly read due to the loud noise, left in a body amidst boing. Several people were injured in the melée that ensued, and the Police had to intervene to prevent Leigh Richardson from causing any serious harm with the pistol he had exhibited.

After order was restored, the meeting resumed under the chairmanship of George Price, and the convention, among other things, reaffirmed its determination to achieve self-government for the Country, and re-emphasized the Party's stand against federation. At election time the new officers unanimously elected were:- George Price - Party Leader, Edward Austin - Party Secretary, José Elvero - Party Chairman, Albert Cattouse - Treasurer, Alfred Bevans - Deputy Chairman, José Cleland - Assistant Secretary.

The solidarity of the P.U.P. in the Legislative Assembly was now split. Leigh Richardson formed the Honduran Independence Party on October 4, and five of the former P.U.P. members aligned themselves with this new Party, while three remained with the P.U.P. Several views were expressed on the split — its causes, its possible



effects, its justification — and it is interesting to note the opinion of a 'Special Correspondent' writing in the Daily Clarion of October 20: "Leigh Richardson, Philip Goldson and others had from the beginning followed an irresponsible and extremist policy of agitation and Utopian promises. With the election of the members to public office, they found themselves up against the true facts of the situation. The decision which they had to make was whether to modify their aims and views of the facts presented, or whether to continue to demand the impossible so as to secure for themselves the continued support of their followers. Because of their honesty these members modified their demands and tried to work with Government in order to bring about the much needed changes. This, of course, brought them into conflict with the Party's extremists. Since the two factions could not reconcile their different viewpoints, it was an inevitable development that one of them would have to resign from the Party."

Louis Sylvestre	---	Polina Rural
Barique Dupas	---	Cayo District
David McKay	---	Stann Creek District
Bartholomeo Ricalde	---	Corozal District
Victor Orellana	---	Orange Walk District
Samuel Mungie	---	Toledo District.

On election day, March 20, the second general elections under universal adult suffrage, the P.U.F. won a clean sweep of all nine elected seats and the Party Leader led the polls with 1835 votes. They acquired fifty-nine per cent. of the total vote cast, and another feature of the voting was that only fifty per cent. of the electorate voted (compared with seventy per cent. in 1954). One opinion on this situation was as follows:- "It is clear that Price captured most, but far from all, of the 1954 P.U.F. voters; and it seems likely that Richardson was unable to attract any new free people who had voted against the P.U.F. in 1954 — perhaps because we have viewed the election of 1957 as a purely internecine struggle within the P.U.F., or possibly because Price's stigmatising of Richardson as pro West Indian function restrained such voters from voting H.I.P." (1)



1957

The Governor dissolved the Legislative Assembly on January 31, and announced that new elections would be held in March. Important political developments had occurred in 1956, which resulted in the formation of the Honduran Independence Party, and thus the need for early elections. This was to be conducted under the same constitution of nine elected seats in the fifteen seat legislature.

The P.U.P. in its election campaign maintained its stand against Colonialism and West Indies Federation, advocating instead the country's position on the Central American mainland. Its platform was a formidable one, consisting of candidates drawn from the P.U.P., the Corozal United Party, and the Christian Democratic Union, as follows:-

George Price	---	Belize North
Albert Cattouse	---	Belize West
Denbigh Jeffery	---	Belize South
Louis Sylvestre	---	Belize Rural
Enrique Depaz	---	Cayo District
David McKoy	---	Stann Creek District
Santiago Ricalde	---	Corozal District
Victor Orellana	---	Orange Walk District
Faustino Zuniga	---	Toledo District.

On election day, March 20, the second general elections under universal adult suffrage, the P.U.P. won a clean sweep of all nine elected seats and the Party Leader topped the polls with 1335 votes. They acquired fifty-nine per cent. of the total votes cast, and another feature of the voting was that only fifty per cent. of the electorate voted (compared with seventy per cent. in 1954). One opinion on this situation was as follows:- "It is clear that Price captured most, but far from all, of the 1954 P.U.P. voters; and it seems likely that Richardson was unable to attract many votes from people who had voted against the P.U.P. in 1954 -- perhaps because such voters viewed the election of 1957 as a purely internecine struggle within the P.U.P., or possibly because Price's stigmatizing of Richardson as pro West Indian Federation restrained such voters from voting H.I.P."<sup>(1)</sup>

(1) D.A.G. Waddell, "British Honduras: a historical and contemporary survey." 1961.



The inaugural meeting of the new Legislative Assembly was held on April 12. Later in the month the Governor announced the names of the unofficial members of the Executive Council, assigning portfolios to Members and Associate Members as follows:-

Member for Natural Resources	---	Hon. George Price
Assoc. Member for Natural Resources	---	" Louis Sylvestre
Member for Social Services	---	" Albert Cattouse
Assoc. Member for Social Services	---	" J.W. Macmillan, C.B.E.
Member for Public Utilities	---	" Denbigh Jeffery
Assoc. Member for Public Utilities	---	" H.T.A. Bowman, O.B.E., J.P.

The 8th Annual Convention of the P.U.P. was held on October 1 in the Riverside Hall, when all officers and committee members were re-elected. Resolutions were moved suggesting a vote of confidence to George Price and his colleagues, and supporting and empowering the proposed delegation to London to request further financial assistance, advanced constitution, ministerial powers, a fully elected Legislative Assembly and Executive Council, and self-government by a fixed date.

A six-man delegation comprising the Governor, the Financial Secretary, the Hon. H.T.A. Bowman, G. Price, A.E. Cattouse, and D.R. Jeffery, left for London in late October. They were scheduled to hold talks at the Colonial Office with the Secretary of State for the Colonies. These talks were a sequel to the discussions on budgetary matters held in London in November 1956, and were concerned with financial and economic topics arising out of the Development Plan and draft 1958 Budget. Further constitutional advance would also be asked for.

On November 27 the Secretary of State announced in the House of Commons that George Price had been discovered in a conspiracy with the Guatemalan Minister in London to take over British Honduras from the Commonwealth, and form some sort of association with Guatemala. He consequently informed Price that because of "his lack of good faith" he would not continue the talks, and Price, in an effort to save the talks, requested that he withdraw from the discussions, and that the remaining members of the delegation be allowed to carry on the negotiations. The Secretary of State refused, saying that the Governor and himself had agreed that the correct thing to do



was for the delegation to return home, consider the new circumstances, and as soon as possible form a reconstituted delegation.

On November 28, Jeffery cabled home saying that the Guatemalan Minister had offered them all the money they needed to balance the budget and for development -- a sum totalling some sixteen million dollars -- if British Honduras agreed to become a part of Guatemala. Price, on the other hand, explained that the Guatemalan Minister's offer was purely a suggestion that he himself would have laid before the Secretary of State. They were never asked to accept or reject it. He did not regard the mission as a failure, adding that it would probably lead to something much bigger. He further denied, before leaving London, that his talks with the Minister were secret.

The delegation returned to British Honduras on November 30, and there were many P.U.P. supporters at the Airport to greet them. Price was presented with bouquets bearing the greeting: "We are still loyal to you," while the people carried him on their shoulders. In a brief statement to the people he said: "We were betrayed by the third member of the unofficial delegation... For months there were negotiations going on between the Guatemalan Embassy and the British Foreign Office. The Guatemalan Minister invited us and said he would inform us of a proposal which would be put to the Foreign Office. He did not make a proposal to us... When we heard of the proposal, we pledged to keep silent about it... The thing to do is to stand firm and make sure that if you are going to send another delegation back to London, then you send Mr. Cattouse and myself."

In a radio broadcast the Governor gave his views on the matter, and informed the people formally of the Secretary of State's decision. He said that George Price along with three other unofficial members of the delegation had attended a luncheon in London given by the Guatemalan Minister, Señor Jorge Granados. Proposals were made to the four delegates which in fact meant the severance of British Honduras from the British Crown, and its integration with Guatemala as an associate state. Mr. Price, as leader of the delegation, had failed to inform the Governor of these proposals, and when asked by the Secretary of State about them had said that he wanted more time



to think about them, as he had not been able to make up his mind. The Governor was convinced that "Mr. Price had the intention of trying to play one Government off against the other... and he was prepared in certain eventualities to see the people of this country handed over to the Guatemalan Republic lock, stock and barrel."

On December 6, at a Legislative Assembly meeting, Price's election to the Executive Council was revoked under Article 14 of Letters Patent 1954, on the grounds that his actions were not compatible with his Councillor's oath of loyalty to the Crown. This dismissal was condemned by the elected members of the Assembly. Price was replaced as Member for Natural Resources by Enrique Depaz, the P.U.P. Member for the Cayo Division. On the same afternoon the Anti-submarine Frigate H.M.S. Ulster arrived at Belize Harbour with military reinforcements from the regiment in Jamaica, while others arrived by plane. These steps were taken as a precautionary measure in case of disorders following Price's expulsion from the Executive Council. There were, however, no incidents.

An emergency meeting of the P.U.P.-C.D.U., also held on December 6, decided to petition the Government for the expulsion of the Hon. D. Jeffery from the Executive Council, on the grounds that he no longer enjoyed the confidence of the Assembly majority which had placed him on the Council. He was already expelled from the Party.

The Deputy Leader, Albert Cattouse, proposed on December 27 at a meeting of the Assembly, a resolution reaffirming the House's allegiance to the Crown, and rejecting any other government's claim to sovereignty over British Honduras. He also called for friendly relations with other countries. The resolution was unanimously approved by the Assembly.

George Price lost little of his popularity, and throughout all the allegations he maintained his innocence, protesting that the whole Government action was a plot against him. His defence against the charges levelled at him bordered around the fact that he had been advised by the Secretary of State to be ready at a moment's notice to discuss the Guatemalan question in London. Mr. Jeffery and Mr. Bowman both in



Belize and on the boat to London had advised him to see the Guatemalan Minister with a view to settling the British Honduras - Guatemala dispute. All four unofficial delegates knew of his actions (except perhaps Mr. Bowman who was out when Price went the second time to clarify certain points with the Minister). The Minister had only 'informed' them of a proposal to be made to the Foreign Office, and Price had made it clear to the Secretary of State that he did not recognise Guatemala's claim to British Honduras, and furthermore did not wish to become a part of Guatemala. He believed that the Minister's proposal of self-government for British Honduras in a Central American Federation could only be decided by the people -- not there and then by the delegation in London. He would not commit himself without coming back to the people about the proposals, and for this reason -- and not because he wanted to sell the country to Guatemala -- the Secretary of State became displeased.

This statement was further strengthened when the Guatemalan Minister, before leaving London for consultations with his Government, issued a statement to the British press. He completely exonerated the P.U.P. leader from any kind of action labelled 'secret intrigue' by over-zealous, too hasty politicians in Parliament. At home too, the Party Leader and the Executive Councils of the P.U.P. and the C.D.U. issued a statement on the results of the London delegation, bringing out the following:-

1. They regretted and protested the action of the Secretary of State in breaking off talks. They thought this was deplorable in view of the urgent financial and constitutional needs of the country.
2. Faith in and loyalty to George Price and Albert Cattouse were reaffirmed as leaders of the P.U.P. and Government of the country.
3. They could not find it possible to believe that there were disloyal or clandestine intentions connected with talks with the Guatemalan Minister in London.
4. It was their view that the Guatemalan Minister merely told them out of courtesy a proposal he was going to make to the Foreign Secretary.



They also felt that this proposal should not be completely ignored, and should be made known to the people.

5. Their intention of listening, along with all the unofficial members of the delegation, to a proposal of self-government with a Central American Federation with economic aid was not intended to be 'secret intrigue' by the Minister or the delegation.
6. There was never any intention of transferring the sovereignty of British Honduras to Guatemala.

Price later declared and signed to the effect that he did not accept Guatemala's claim to British Honduras, but rather believed in self-government under the United Nations. He advocated finally that it was a first principle of British and United Nations' justice and freedom that a man has a right to think, listen and to discuss anything not morally wrong.

The year ended with the announcement that a new delegation was to leave for London early in 1958.



1958

A reconstituted delegation, comprising of the Governor, the Financial Secretary, the Hons. Enrique Depaz, Albert Cattouse, and Denbigh Jeffery, left the country on January 8 to begin talks on January 14. They did not achieve the financial success hoped for.

The P.U.P., under George Price, continued to dominate the political life of the country. This was observed even in England when a February issue of the New Commonwealth said of the Leader — "There is no doubt that he is experiencing his most difficult days as a politician, but those who are hoping for a change in heart are likely to be disappointed... Although dropped from the January talks in London, and temporarily in the shadows, Price is still the man who cannot be ignored in British Honduras politics."

During March the Hon. E. Depaz wrote a letter to the Belize Billboard dissociating himself from the P.U.P. The letter, although not one of resignation, mentioned among other things that he was not satisfied with certain aspects of party action and party policy set by George Price. This attitude followed on the heels of a statement said to have been made by C.D.U. Secretary, Nicholas Pollard, to the effect that he had completely lost confidence in Price.

Pollard's threat to resign supposedly came about because of an address which Price was alleged to have delivered, favouring a plan for joining British Honduras with Guatemala<sup>(1)</sup>. Pollard said he would have to resign unless the P.U.P. Executive declared that neither the leader nor any other member of the Party should advocate such a matter in public before the Party Council had given its approval. On March 8 he was expelled from the Party on the grounds that he "released for public information a libellous letter containing damaging and false statements against the Party and its Leader." Shortly after this Depaz resigned, and the P.U.P. consequently

(1) Pollard said that he was always in favour of using the Guatemalan situation as a weapon against Britain, but he was never serious about any form of association with another country. He believed that the future of B.H. was independence.



lost its majority of one in the Legislative Assembly.

Although he suffered the loss of some of his associates, Price continued his onward fight. About this time one historian<sup>(2)</sup> said of him: "A man of considerable personal charm, and an effective speaker, his personal magnetism rather than his policies attracted many followers, though the visions he conjured up of a Central American destiny were also not without effect. His uncompromising nature, his rigid Catholicism, the asceticism of his private life, all tended to lead to uncritical and enthusiastic idolization. To a great extent he was assisted by the rudimentary structure of politics... Moreover, the emotional reactions Price produced among his opponents tended to rob the opposition groups of much potential effectiveness by making their outlook essentially anti-Price, and thus predominantly negative."

While addressing a political meeting on March 21 at the Majestic Theatre Yard, Price was alleged to have said that while he and Cattouse were in New York they had observed that toilet paper, instead of ticker-tape, had been dropped on to the Queen during her visit to New York. He was immediately charged with sedition, and the trial which opened in the Supreme Court on April 16, ended with his acquittal on April 25.

During May, Herbert Fuller, President of the National Party, and Philip Goldson, Acting Leader of the Honduran Independence Party, proposed in a letter to George Price that the three parties combine to send a delegation to discuss a solution to the Guatemalan problem with Mr. John Profumo, Under-Secretary of State, due to arrive in the country on May 13. The P.U.P. declined on the grounds that the Guatemalan claim was a dispute between the United Kingdom and Guatemala, and as such should be dealt with by the Foreign Offices of both countries.

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(2) D.A.G. Waddell; "British Honduras: a historical and contemporary survey." 1961.



On the day following the joint delegation talks with Mr. Profumo, the P.U.P. nevertheless sent a separate delegation. On May 15, the Executive Council, which included the Deputy Leader and one other member of the P.U.P., unanimously passed the following resolution:- "That the people of British Honduras reject entirely and absolutely any pretensions to sovereignty over their territory by Guatemala and on behalf of the people we represent this Council urges Her Majesty's Government vigorously to resist any claims of this sort which are totally repugnant to the people of British Honduras."

In July, Price asserted that his policy was one of economic association with Central America, with a view to becoming a sixth Central American state.

A demand for self-government was made during August in the form of a demonstration in which about 5,000 persons of Belize City and the districts took part. They supported the presentation of a memorial signed by Price suggesting that Her Majesty's Government had failed to bring about adequate economic development and to provide several of the basic services required by the people. It was further requested that immediate self-determination and self-government be granted. The memorial was delivered at Government House following a parade through the City, requesting transmission to the Secretary of State.

The reply came on December 15, re-affirming Her Majesty's Government general policy for political and constitutional development of Colonial territories, namely to guide the people along the road to self-government within the Commonwealth. The request on a whole had been diplomatically turned down, and the reasons given included:-

- a) the country would still have to be financially dependent for a time,
- b) self-government could only be interpreted as transfer to another power — most likely Guatemala — in view of statements made by both British Honduras and Guatemala, and,
- c) any transfer of that sort would not be in keeping with the resolution of loyalty previously passed by the Assembly in December, 1957.



By the end of October the P.U.P. had announced its candidates for the Belize City Council elections. They were: Edward Austin, Lucas Marin, Anthony Meighan, Mrs. G. Lizarraga, Fred Westby, and George Price. At a convention held on October 27, the P.U.P. passed several resolutions, among them -- that the Party continue its struggle to achieve its rightful place within the Central American orbit, and that the name of the country be changed from British Honduras to Belize, and the capital city be known as Belize City.

On election day, December 15, <sup>4449</sup> votes were cast -- the highest up to then in City Council history. 56.9 per cent. of the electorate voted and returned five P.U.P. candidates to office. They lost some ground here, although still in the majority, and the opposition charged that the anti-P.U.P. vote was split due to independent candidates intervening. At a City Council meeting on December 22, George Price was unanimously elected President, and Fred Westby Vice-President.

At year's end municipal elections were also held throughout the country (with the exception of Stann Creek), and the P.U.P. won majorities in all six of the seven Town Boards in the ... districts.



1959

Early in the year the Governor attempted to introduce a resolution into the Assembly against association with Guatemala. This was done to offset the bold, continuous statements of the Guatemalan President regarding 'Belice,' and although the resolution was carried, quite a few elected members opposed it.

On April 3 the P.U.P. held a demonstration for better housing and employment. At the same time a memorial addressed to the Secretary of State was presented to the Governor. The memorial referred to a previous one of August 22, 1958, requesting immediate self-government and self-determination in accordance with the United Nations Charter.

A Constitutional Commissioner, Sir Hilary Blood, arrived in the Country on September 1 to review the 1954 Constitution. The P.U.P. submitted a number of proposals, summarized as follows:-

- a) The introduction of the ministerial system.
- b) A fully elected Assembly of seventeen members.
- c) The Governor to be divested of all legislative or administrative powers, and to be solely the Queen's representative in the Country.
- d) The Government should be under an elected representative.
- e) There should be no nominated or ex-officio members of the Assembly.
- f) Members of the Assembly should be immune from prosecution for their political opinions, and should not be arraigned in Court without consent of the Assembly.
- g) A Cabinet should be charged with the administration of the Country, and be responsible to the Assembly for all acts of Government.
- h) The Cabinet should be further empowered to contract loans and request aid for economic development.
- i) Appointments to the public service should be made by the Government.

The report of the Commissioner was made public on October 23, and he recommended only a few constitutional changes. He said that he preferred to institute a gradual change because —



1. The Guatemalan claim complicated matters.
2. British Honduras was not ready for any more changes.
3. The fact that the P.U.P. wanted self-government under the United Nations was a danger-signal.

On November 19 it was announced by the P.U.P. Secretary that Councillor C.L. Rogers, a former member of the National Independence Party, had resigned that Party because he disagreed with their policy, and had now become a member of the P.U.P. This move increased the Party's representation on the City Council to six.

Elections to the Stann Creek Town Board were held on December 28, and resulted in the P.U.P. gaining three seats out of five. 897 out of 1,380 registered voters went to the polls, and the successful P.U.P. candidates were: Allan Arthurs, David McKoy, and Carlos Nolberto.

embodiment of the more important being:-

- the introduction of the ministerial system, with the majority Party leader to be known as First Minister,
- an Executive Council consisting of the Governor as Chairman, two official members, the First Minister, and five other ministers, elected by the Legislative Assembly from among their own members,
- a Legislative Assembly presided over by a Speaker, comprising eighteen elected members, two nominated official and five nominated unofficial members,
- the First Minister to propose names of his Cabinet to the Assembly,
- the First Minister to allocate, through the Governor, the portfolios of Ministers.

These developments, brought about by the new constitution, undoubtedly took the country nearer to self-government, and although most members of the delegation were thanked and praised for the part they played, it is interesting to single out



1960

In January the P.U.P. and the N.I.P. agreed on joint action so as to present a United Front at the forthcoming London talks. This was mostly in reaction to the Constitutional Commissioner's report, and it was proposed to present suggestions for a greater measure of constitutional advance.

Besides the Constitutional Delegation from the Working Committee which comprised George Price and Albert Cattouse of the P.U.P., Herbert Fuller and Philip Goldson of the N.I.P., and two independents (Rev. G. Hulse and W.H. Courtenay), there was the official Government's Delegation (which would discuss economic policy and financial aid), and a Christian Democratic Party delegation. The talks opened on February 1, and when it ended on February 17, there were several constitutional changes agreed on for the Country, embodying substantial transfers of political power to the people, the more important being:-

- the introduction of the ministerial system, with the majority Party leader to be known as First Minister,
- an Executive Council consisting of the Governor as Chairman, two official members, the First Minister, and five other ministers, elected by the Legislative Assembly from among their own members,
- a Legislative Assembly presided over by a Speaker, comprising eighteen elected members, two nominated official and five nominated unofficial members,
- the First Minister to propose names of his Cabinet to the Assembly,
- the First Minister to allocate, through the Governor, the portfolios of Ministers.

These developments, brought about by the new constitution, undoubtedly took the Country nearer to self-government, and although most members of the delegation must be thanked and praised for the part they played, it is interesting to single out the P.U.P. Leader and quote what a newspaper<sup>(1)</sup> had to say of him -- "After some ten

(1) The Belize Times. January 29. 1960.



years of arduously fighting for the people of this Country, after some ten years of hard work, uniting the people of this Country, and after ten years of removing the many obstacles presented by the Colonial system, the Hon. George Price, Leader 'omnipotent' of Belize Country, has won another great victory — this time that of uniting the voices of their Country to seek for self-government and independence."

It is significant that in the preamble to the new constitution, there was a section which rejected the Guatemalan claim to B.H., and another section which stated that a referendum must be held before there could be any question of joining with a neighbouring country. This was signed by leaders of both the P.U.P. and the N.I.P. Price was definite when he proclaimed that he wanted B.H. to be a bridge between the Commonwealth and Central America.

The granting of greater constitutional powers to the Government heralded what later became known as the 'new order.' The people's identity began to assert itself, and nation-consciousness was encouraged by slogans and daily reminders. The Party Leader led the movement with vigourous and perspicacious declarations. An example of this was in December when he moved amendments to certain bills concerning the Judiciary system of the Country, proposing that Belize be no longer termed a town, but a city, and the entire land no longer a colony, but a country. He said that such terms were in keeping with the 'new order' and the new pattern of Government.



1961

With the dissolution of the Legislative Assembly by the Governor on January 14, and the subsequent announcement that general elections would be held early in March, the P.U.P. began campaigning vigorously. Their national convention opened at Memorial Park in Belize City on January 27, when thousands of members and supporters attended, and the district candidates for the election were presented to the convention. The following night's session was held at the Riverside Hall, when officers were elected and the Party's manifesto for the elections adopted. The officers were as follows:-

Party Leader	George Price
Deputy Party Leader	Albert Cattouse
Chairman	Alfred Bevans
Deputy Chairman	Ivan Tillett
Secretary	Anthony Meighan
Asst. Secretary	Melvin Ysaguirre.

On March 1, election day, the P.U.P. candidates<sup>(1)</sup> won all eighteen elected

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- (1)
- |                    |                      |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| C.L. Rogers        | Mesopotamia Division |
| G. Izarraga (Mrs.) | Pickstock Division   |
| A. Cattouse        | Collet "             |
| F. Westby          | Albert "             |
| A. Hunter          | Fort George "        |
| G. Price           | Freetown "           |
| S. Ricalde         | Corozal North "      |
| J. Ken             | Corozal South "      |
| H. Silva           | Cayo North "         |
| S. Perdomo         | Cayo South "         |
| A. Arthurs         | Stann Creek Town     |
| D. McKoy           | Stann Creek Rural    |
| F. Hunter          | Belize Rural North   |
| L. Sylvestre       | Belize Rural South   |
| S. Vernon          | Toledo South         |
| F. Zuniga          | Toledo North         |
| G. Pech            | Orange Walk South    |
| V. Orellana        | Orange Walk North    |



seats in the Assembly, under an advanced constitution. This victory was regarded by the P.U.P. as a strong mandate for them to govern the Country during the next four years. This was the second time in succession the Party had won all the elected seats in a general election. Statistics for the election showed that over eighty per cent. of the registered voters went to the polls, and 63.16 per cent. of these voted for the P.U.P.

George Price was formally appointed First Minister by the Governor on March 3, and on March 27 Price in turn allocated portfolios to his Ministers, elected to his Cabinet through the Governor, as follows:-

Finance and Development	Hon. G. Price
Public Works, Power and Communications	Hon. A. Cattouse
Local Government, Social Welfare and Cooperatives	Hon. L. Sylvestre
Natural Resources, Commerce and Industry	Hon. A. Hunter
Labour	Hon. C. Rogers
Education, Health and Housing	Hon. J. Macmillan.

Now in total power, the Leader and his Party went ahead with plans for the Country, helped along by its mouthpiece the Belize Times, and before the year ended much had been changed in areas of semantics and political ideas and ideals.

At a City Council meeting held on May 23, the members unanimously approved a resolution made by the President that Central Government should repeal the existing law of proportional representation, and institute the system of direct counting of votes as was used for elections to the Legislative Assembly.

During this year too, the Battle of St. George's Caye, celebrated on September 10, was branded by the Party as a myth, and at a Legislative Assembly meeting held on June 27 a resolution was proposed that the 10th day of September be adopted and declared to be the National Day of the Country. This was approved by the Executive Council on July 19.



1962

The Country was split once more in the celebration of September 10. One  
An unprecedented incident on the southern border with Guatemala on January 22 caught the attention of the entire Country, when a party of armed Guatemalans hoisted that country's flag at Pueblo Viejo after tearing down the Union Jack and burning it. This at once formed a platform from which opposing factions could launch attacks on the P.U.P. A few days after the incident, the Leader of the N.I.P., Philip Goldson, wrote to the Mayor of Belize City saying that his Party's Executive felt that since the Guatemalan invasion of the Toledo District, public feelings in the capital had been such that the displaying of the Guatemalan national colours in a public square of the City was causing growing resentment among the people. He requested therefore that the P.U.P. flag be removed from its stand in the Market Square, and be displayed only at Party meetings.

George Price replied, reminding the N.I.P. Leader that the flag of the P.U.P. had been flying in the Market Square for over nine years, and moreover, had been there with the knowledge and consent of the Belize City Council which owned and controlled the Square. He did not believe that there was any danger of spontaneous disturbance.

In April Price led a delegation to London to discuss financial assistance for hurricane reconstruction and rehabilitation<sup>(1)</sup>. The British Government gave a grant of \$16 million. Later in the month, on April 16, talks were held in Puerto Rico between delegates from Britain, Guatemala, and British Honduras on the long-standing dispute between Britain and Guatemala over British Honduras. Price also attended, along with two other delegates.

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(1) On October 31, 1961, Hurricane Hattie severely wrecked Belize City and other parts of the Country.



The Country was split once more in the celebration of September 10. One faction insisted on gloryfying the events of the battle of September 10, 1798, and condemned the P.U.P., or Government, faction for not regarding it completely. The P.U.P. had an explanation for this. They were celebrating that year's National Day (as they choose to call it) shadowed by a conjunction of events, recalling the indecision and the struggles of the past, the awareness of the present, and with minds turned to the future of the aspiring nation. "Today we are celebrating the memory of those glorious events of 1798 which gave us the occasion to observe the tenth of September," the Belize Times stated. "But the emphasis of the Twentieth Century celebrations have a new theme, a new angle. Instead of dwelling on the victory of masters and slaves over Spaniards, the idea is to increase our national concepts. We are looking forward to the future, not to the total exclusion of things of the past, but necessarily in keeping up with our gradual evolution to mature thinking."

On October 31, Riverside Hall was the scene of the P.U.P. Convention, at which nine members were selected to contest the City Council elections to be held on December 12. They were:- Hons. George Price, Lindbergh Rogers, Fred Westby, James Meighan, and Mrs. Gwendolyn Lizarraga; and Mr. Anthony Meighan, Miss Lois Encalada, Mr. Orlando Lizama, and Mr. Vallan Neal. On election day the P.U.P. gained a complete victory when all nine candidates were elected, allowing the Party to realize its goal of having a P.U.P. City Council working along with a P.U.P. Central Government -- a theory first proposed by the Party Leader. 8,774 people voted out of 12,731 registered, and out of 77,086 votes cast the P.U.P. received 44,625 (57.9%), while the N.I.P. got 32,461 (42.1%). At the first City Council meeting held after elections, Hon. Fred Westby was elected Mayor, and Anthony Meighan Deputy Mayor.

- a Senate with a president, to initiate legislation, but have no control over finance



1963

In May, George Price in the following words, made clear the plans he had for the future of the Country:- "Our aim is independence and friendship with all Central America, including Guatemala who is our neighbour. We want trade relations with them in the development of the adjoining large Peten region. We are studying the Central American Common Market of which Guatemala is a part; the Economic Commission on Latin America (in Mexico City) is about to make a study." (Price probably saw that the development of Peten would depend on the communication facilities available through British Honduras. If development of British Honduras and Peten could become a reality, then British Honduras in turn could benefit immensely from having this large area of development so near to it).

Constitutional change was being agitated for, and a conference in London was due to take place in July. As Leader of the P.U.P., Price formally announced his Party's proposals for the type of constitution he hoped to negotiate for the Country. On June 11 he placed these before a special committee appointed to hold public meetings in the Legislative Assembly Chambers, and the most important were:-

- the Governor shall act in accordance with the advice of the Cabinet or a Minister
- Executive authority to be vested in the Cabinet
- Ministers directly responsible to the House of Representatives
- a Prime Minister shall be appointed by the Governor
- Ministers appointed by the Governor with the advice of the Prime Minister
- two ex-officio members of Executive Council replaced by Ministers
- Prime Minister removable by the Governor, but only if a vote of no confidence passed by the Legislative Assembly
- bicameral Legislature consisting of the elected House of Representatives (18 members)
- a Senate with a president, to initiate legislation, but have no control over finance



- a Privy Council to advise the Governor on the exercise of the Royal Prerogative of Mercy in capital cases
- all matters concerning foreign affairs to remain in the hands of H.M. Government in the United Kingdom
- Public Service Commission appointed biennially by the Governor, on the advice of the Prime Minister
- a Court of Appeals set up, and an Auditor-General for the government.

At the Legislative Assembly meeting on June 17 these proposals were approved, and for the next few days the Party Leader visited all the district towns taking the proposals to the people. He left the Country on June 29 to attend the talks in London, the other members of the delegation being:- Hon. Mrs. G. Lizarraga, Hon. C.L. Rogers, Hon. F. Zuniga, Hon. W.H. Courtenay (constitutional adviser), and Hon. C. Henville (legal adviser). The conference started on July 10 and ended on July 22, with most of the P.U.P. proposals approved.

A victory rally was held on August 28 to celebrate the achievement of a constitution which would form the basis for full internal self-government. The Party Leader said that the strength of the delegation which went to London was the support it received from the people, and it was also the people who would be called upon to decide and approve the next step in constitutional advance. He added that the National Day programme and ceremonies, coming up in a few days, should also be regarded as a celebration of the new constitution.

On September 27 the P.U.P. held its annual convention at Riverside Hall, and George Price was re-elected Leader of the Party. Other officers elected were:-

Hon. A.E. Cattouse	Deputy Leader
Mr. A. Bevans	Chairman
Mr. A. Meighan	Secretary
Mr. M. Ysaguirre	Assstant Secretary
Hon. A. Hunter	Treasurer
Hon. C.L. Rogers )	Co-Assistant Treasurers
Mr. O. Lizama )	
Mr. I. Tillett	Deputy Chairman.

Several resolutions were passed on such subjects as communism, internal



security, and national symbols. The new motto proposed for the convention was:

"We join the P.U.P. to give to the nation -- not to take away from the nation."

Besides being a celebration of the 13th birthday of the P.U.P., the convention was also a celebration to mark the achievement of a self-government constitution -- a job the P.U.P. set out to do when it was formed on September 29, 1950.

The Party Leader was always partial to self-government and self-determination in accordance with the United Nations Charter. With United Nations Day approaching (October 24) he further stressed his convictions when he raised the United Nations flag in the Market Square on October 22. In a short address he told the gathering that the flag was symbolic to this Country, because the P.U.P. Manifesto stated that the Party would continue to adhere to the principles of the United Nations Charter. This was being done in an effort to attain full internal self-government within the Commonwealth, and eventually go on to independence.

Town Board elections were held on December 27 in the seven district towns, and 4,010 voters out of 4,943 who were registered voted. The P.U.P. gained victory by winning in five towns, namely:- Corozal, San Ignacio, Stann Creek, Monkey River, and Punta Gorda. They garnered 53.4% of the total votes, while the N.I.P. got 45.9% winning in the towns of Orange Walk and Benque Viejo del Carmen.



1964

On January 1, British Honduras became the newest nation of the hemisphere when it was granted full internal self-government by Great Britain, after ninety-five years of Crown Colony rule. George Price was sworn in as Premier by the Governor at Government House on January 6. Ministers who would subsequently form the Government Cabinet, were also sworn in and allocated portfolios as follows:-

Hon. A. Cattouse	Minister of Local Government, Social Welfare and Co-operatives
Hon. J.W. Macmillan	Minister of Education, Health and Housing
Hon. A. Hunter	Minister of Natural Resources, Commerce and Industry
Hon. C.L. Rogers	Minister of Internal Affairs and Justice
Hon. D.L. McKoy	Minister of Labour
Hon. H.D. Silva	Minister of Public Works, Power and Communications.

The date January 6 was also significant in that it marked the 13th Anniversary of the anti-colonial, anti-devaluation demonstration.

Celebrations were the order of the day. January 13 was declared a holiday, and all over the Country festivities reigned. The numerous events were characterized by a great show of enthusiasm. A special sitting of the Legislative Assembly was held on January 13, and was addressed by Mr. Nigel Fisher, then Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies. In his talk he said that British Honduras was well set on the road to independence, and that the people should always cherish the fact that they are free from racial strife, and should always remain a "truly united people." Mr. Fisher had only words of praise for the Premier and his Government. "You have a good Premier who has gained the friendship and confidence of the United Kingdom Government," he told the people of Punta Gorda as he made a 'whirlwind' tour of the district towns. In Stann Creek Town he told the school children that the new Constitution would one day be remembered as a most important event in their history, and he further felt that they should know that no other man in the Country had done more to achieve the present political advance than the Premier.



"This is an important week," he said in San Ignacio, "and one which was well earned. This is due to the calibre of your leaders and their wisdom during the past years."

In collaboration with the celebrations the P.U.P. held a meeting at the Majestic Theatre Yard on January 15, at which the Premier and other speakers addressed the gathering. Price said that fourteen years ago when the movement of independence started, the moving desire of the Party was to ensure the betterment of all the people. The task was not an easy one because the vested interests in the Country tried to keep down the people. He made a pledge, however, that Government would do its best to bring a better life for all, and reiterated his call for hard work in a dedicated manner so as to achieve complete nationhood.

On February 25, the City Council passed a resolution that the official name of the capital city be known as Belize City. Councillor Price, speaking on the motion, said that the resolution was intended to clarify any confusion which may arise over the district of Belize and the capital Belize City<sup>(1)</sup>.

Three Government Ministers<sup>(2)</sup>, all members of the External Affairs Committee, left the Country as a delegation on March 7 on a goodwill tour of Central American countries. The purpose of the tour, which lasted eighteen days, was chiefly to observe the workings of the Central American Common Market, and to establish goodwill abroad.

At a Party meeting held at the Courthouse Plaza on July 28, the Premier announced that the Cabinet had decided that Government should sponsor the National Day celebrations during 1964. This was decided on because the P.U.P. Government had led the people to full, internal self-government, and the National Day (celebrated on September 10) could serve as a unifying force toward nation-building.

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(1) The Legislative Assembly on May 23 passed a Bill changing the name. It also changed El Cayo to San Ignacio, and added 'Town' after Orange Walk, Corozal and Stann Creek.

(2) G. Price, C.L. Rogers, and A. Hunter.



The theme for that year's National Day was: We unite to build a nation.

Another delegation, this time destined for Mexico, left the Country on August 7. It comprised of G. Price, C.L. Rogers, and F.S. Ricalde, and lasted nine days,

During the National Day celebrations, the Party's and people's aspirations for sovereignty, unity and an identity, were best reflected in the following words used during one of the celebration activities:-

"I see a certain light  
Which beckons me  
To walk upon a wider stage.  
I speak with one voice,  
And still I tell you true  
There are so many parts to me,  
But one voice raised  
In perfect harmony ...

Things men yearn for, hope for, sigh for;  
Things men pray for, live for, die for;  
My people now in happy integration,  
My people now with fervent concentration,  
My people now resolve to build a nation ..."(3)

A series of campaign meetings, conducted in all six electoral divisions of the City, was launched by the Party on October 5 in preparation for general elections scheduled to be held in 1965.

The year was in many ways a politically historical and significant one for the Country, the highlight being the attainment of full, internal self-government. The Governor too felt that the people were justified in looking back at the past twelve months with satisfaction and gratitude for the many blessings they had received. They had witnessed the development and establishment of friendly relations with neighbouring countries, and they had been greatly encouraged by the spirit of genuine goodwill which so many friends had shown them. It was almost certain that these friends had appreciated the way in which the people had reciprocated their interest.

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(3) From "Epic of Belize" by R.L. Clark.



1965

On January 21 the Premier announced that general elections under the new Constitution would be held on March 1. The candidates chosen to contest the election for the P.U.P. were:-

Freetown Division	G. Price
Pickstock Division	Mrs. G. Lizarraga
Fort George Division	A. Hunter
Albert Division	F. Westby
Collet Division	A. Cattouse
Mesopotamia Division	C. Rogers
Belize Rural North	F. Hunter
Belize Rural South	L. Sylvestre
Orange Walk North	E. Urbina
Orange Walk South	G. Pech
Corozal North	F. Ricalde
Corozal South	F. Marin
Cayo North	H. Silva
Cayo South	S. Perdomo
Stann Creek Town	A. Arthurs
Stann Creek Rural	D. McKoy
Toledo North	S. Vernon
Toledo South	C. Martinez, JR.

Before the elections, the Party held a convention at the Riverside Hall on February 11, at which all officers were re-elected to their posts. The Manifesto was read to the members and approved unanimously.

Election day came and 26,431 voters, out of a total of 37,860 registered, returned the P.U.P. candidates to sixteen<sup>(1)</sup> seats in the Assembly, the N.I.P. candidates winning the remaining two seats. Of the total votes cast, the P.U.P. captured 15,271 (57.8%), while their nearest rivals, the N.I.P., got 10,407 (39.3%). In Belize City, 17,660 voters were registered, of which 12,409 voted.

The following night, after the last of the election results were announced, George Price and the other successful P.U.P. candidates were given rousing cheers by the crowd gathered in front of the Party Headquarters in Queen Street. The Leader told them that the people had given the Party a strong mandate to lead the

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(1) F. Westby and S. Vernon were defeated.



country to independence within the Commonwealth, and to build a prosperous, happy Christian democratic nation in Central America.

On March 3 the Governor invited the Premier to form a government. The Ministers comprising his new Cabinet were sworn in on March 5, and allocated portfolios as follows:-

Hon. G. Price	Minister of Finance & Economic Development
Hon. A. Cattouse	Minister of Local Government & Social Development
Hon. A. Hunter	Minister of Natural Resources & Trade
Hon. C. Rogers	Minister of Internal Affairs & Health
Hon. D. McKoy	Minister of Labour
Hon. H. Silva	Minister of Public Utilities & Communications
Hon. Mrs. G. Lizarraga (2)	Minister of Education & Housing.

The National Assembly, which was made up of the House of Representatives and the senate, met on March 12 to elect the Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the lower house and the President and Vice-President of the upper house. Both houses were thus fully constituted and this completed the introduction of the Country's new self-government Constitution. A Seven Year Plan, drawn up to coincide with the date on which the Constitution came into effect, was formally implemented. The Plan was designed to help the country achieve full independence by giving it a viable economy.

The Party was fifteen years in existence on September 29, and at this stage it might be useful to pause a while and go back in history to assess what progress had been made since George Price assumed full leadership --

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(2) Mrs. Lizarraga was the first woman to be appointed a Cabinet Minister in this Country.



- sugar increased from an output of 6,000 tons in 1957 to 35,000 tons in 1965
- rice increased from one million to seven million pounds
- citrus made significant strides
- many co-operative societies were formed
- each village now had its own Village Council, and most villages also had a community centre
- feeder roads linked many villages with the rest of the country
- high schools were established in each main town
- several people had gone abroad to study
- thousands of acres of land had been given to farmers
- electricity supplies in Belize City had been improved, and plants were being set up in the district towns to allow for 24 hours service
- more clinics were built, as well as a new hospital for Punta Gorda
- over \$50 million was being invested in the country by private enterprise.

On November 17 a convention was held at Riverside Hall when nine candidates were approved to contest the coming City Council elections. They were:- F. Westby, A. Meighan, J. Meighan, O. Lizama, Miss L. Encalada, W. Coffin, G. Dakers, Mrs. M. Usher, and H. Escalante. In addressing the meeting, George Price told the people that the P.U.P. in the City Council had worked along with the Government, and together had accomplished ninety-five per cent. of what they had promised in their Manifesto. The Party gained complete victory on election day, December 14, by winning all nine seats. 10,004 people voted out of 17,716 registered, and the Party received an aggregate popular vote of 46,647, while the N.I.P. got 39,732.



1966

The P.U.P. Government had always advocated that the ideal state for the Country should be a Christian and democratic one, and this was brought out strongly in the Premier's New Year message in 1966, when he said:-

"In March of 1965 Belizeans chose Christian Democracy as the best way to happiness and prosperity for the new and independent Belize... We believe in Christian Democracy as the best way of life and we are determined to prove that it can best succeed where other systems have failed and will fail. For our way is 'Christian' in its belief in the supreme value of the individual; it is 'democratic' in its concern for human rights and the rejection of all forms of ungodliness and slavery; and it is 'revolutionary' in the sense that it implies a transformation and a perfection of the social and economic structure not by violence, but by law and order."

1966 was also to be remembered as the year Ambassador Bethuel Webster, a United States lawyer, arrived in the Country (on January 16) to mediate in the dispute between the United Kingdom and Guatemala over British Honduras. He held meetings with political party representatives and other interested parties in an effort to reach an honourable and amicable solution to the long-standing question. The Cabinet assured Mr. Webster that the people of the Country did not want to belong to or be a part of any other country whatsoever. They wanted the world to respect their right to decide their own future.

In connection with mediation discussions, the Premier led a delegation to New York and London during June. On his return, on June 17, he made a statement to the people telling them that the British Government had given a solemn



assurance that there was no intention of imposing any solution to the Anglo-Guatemalan dispute that was not acceptable to British Honduras. He said it was never suggested or proposed, either in London or in New York, that the Country should not be a sovereign and independent nation.

While the talks were in progress in New York, a Trinidad newspaper had reported falsely on the discussions in London, saying that "Britain wants to quit British Honduras and in effect hand the colony over to Guatemala as soon as possible." The Premier branded this as completely untrue, and added that he had every trust in the United Kingdom Government and in the ability and integrity of the Mediator.

In a bye-election held in Stann Creek Town on July 14, the Party suffered a small defeat. Their candidate, Mr. Carl Ramos, lost to the N.I.P. candidate, the former receiving 564 votes, while the latter got 664. Out of 1,883 registered voters, 1,259 voted. This bye-election came about through the death of Mr. Richard Castillo, a P.U.P. member of the Town Board, when his seat was declared vacant.

The sixteenth birthday of the Party was celebrated on September 29, and a Belize Times editorial of that date, stated:-

"Never before in the history of our Country has any one organization meant so much to so many people. Never before has one organization received the support, loyalty, and affection of so many people.

"Because the P.U.P. has accepted the rule of democracy and recognized the sacred personality of the individual, it has received the backing of all segments of our society.

"If anybody is to be singled out for praise today on the sixteenth anniversary of the Party formation, it is the ordinary Belizean man and woman who has made the P.U.P.



what it is; the voters who have given their support at the polls; and the leaders who have worked the Manifesto."

A new headquarters for the Party, called "Independence Hall," was officially opened and dedicated on October 21. The P.U.P. leader formally cut the blue and white ribbon across the front door, and along with the Minister of Internal Affairs, addressed the gathering.

Town Board elections were held in all towns on December 28, and the results were:-

Corozal Town	- all seven P.U.P. candidates elected
Orange Walk Town	- 2 P.U.P., 5 N.I.P. elected
San Ignacio	- 4 P.U.P., 3 N.I.P. elected
Stann Creek Town	- 1 P.U.P., 6 N.I.P. elected
Punta Gorda	all seven P.U.P. candidates elected
Benque Viejo del Carmen	6 P.U.P., 1 N.I.P. elected
Monkey River Town	- all seven N.I.P. candidates elected.

Out of 7,025 registered voters, 5,387 persons cast 36,259 votes -- 18,685 of these going to the P.U.P.



1967

of national consciousness, is empty and undesirable..."

One outstanding feature of this year occurred during May, when the Premier issued a commission to inquire into allegations made by opposing factions<sup>(1)</sup> "that I have been making secret weekly visits to the Gallon Jug area near the Guatemalan border since the month of June 1966, and that in the month of November 1966, I made eighteen trips to the area, crossing the Tower Hill Ferry at the dead of night. Inquiry is also to be made into my movements on the 20th April and 3rd May of this year." He appointed Sir Colin McGregor, a retired Chief Justice of Jamaica, to be the Commissioner, and he arrived in the Country on May 29. The inquiry opened the following day, and the Commissioner's findings were read publicly on June 2, completely exonerating the Premier of the allegations made against him.

Talk of an early independence for the Country grew stronger during this year, and although some people had adverse, and even pessimistic views, the Premier's Government seemed optimistic. One journalist, Jean M. Fox, who visited the Country went back to Michigan and began telling the story of British Honduras and independence in a series of articles. One article stated:-

"Leaders in Belize are charged with good sense... As a colony costing Great Britain approximately \$5 million annually, they could have independence tomorrow morning if they wanted it... But in the words of a very wise man, the Premier of the newly emerging country: 'We prepare for independence slowly. When it comes, we want to be able to stand on our own feet economically, financially and emotionally. Belize can be independent whenever it wishes. We are fully aware, however, that political independence without economic stability and without a universal feeling

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(1) Headline article published by the Belize Billboard, May 10, 1967.



of national consciousness, is empty and undesirable..."



1968

"We go forth with hope and courage. We go forth united under the ensign which is raised over the people. An ensign we will need to keep us going onward in the face of fear and obstruction." With these forceful words the Premier, in his New Year's message, opened 1968.

The will of the Party to forge on to achieve full sovereignty for the country was evidenced a few weeks later, when on March 14 at a meeting held in Independence Hall, a resolution calling for the drafting of an Independence Constitution was passed by the Central Party Council of the P.U.P. The resolution, which was presented by the Party Leader, centred around two main points: (1) it expressed the hope that mediation would produce a satisfactory solution of the Anglo-Guatemalan dispute; (2) it emphasized that whatever the outcome of mediation the P.U.P. would be guided by the mandate it had received from the people to lead the country to independence within the Commonwealth. The drafting of such a constitution, it was hoped, would lead to broad, bi-partisan agreement on at least the main features of the draft to be taken to London for a final conference at which independence and arrangements for future assistance from Britain would be determined. P.U.P. supporters endorsed this decision at a public meeting held at the Courthouse Plaza on March 21, and further asked that the National Assembly proceed with the drafting.

A meeting of the House of Representatives was held on March 29, and in reply to a question as to a time-table for the attainment of independence, the Premier, in answering stated: "However much our good Belizean people ardently desire independence at an early date, it does not seem possible, according to the present time-table, that independence will be this year; neither is it possible at this time to fix the date for an independence conference."



1969 P.U.P.

On April 5 both the House and the Senate passed motions setting up a joint committee to study terms of an independence constitution.

The proposals of Mediator Bethuel Webster on the Anglo-Guatemalan dispute were to be handed over in London, and on April 24 the P.U.P. section of a delegation (Premier George Price, Hons. A.A. Hunter, C.L.B. Rogers, S. Ricalde, S. Perdomi and W.H. Courtenay) left Belize.

On May 8 the Premier made a radio broadcast to the country, announcing that following country-wide consultations with the people his Government had notified the United Kingdom of its decision to reject the draft Treaty presented by the Mediator.

In a bye-election held in Stann Creek Town on June 1, the P.U.P. candidate Carlos Holberto (949 votes) defeated the N.I.P. candidate Luke Palacio (793 votes). Of the 2,611 registered voters, 1,753 persons voted. The P.U.P. viewed this victory as "an important indication of the people's continued confidence in the P.U.P."

On September 29 the Party was eighteen years old. The Premier published a message in the Belize Times of that date in which he said that "all objective observers will have to admit that the P.U.P. has brought great benefits and progress to Belize. We must keep up our support for this great movement -- to lead Belize to independence and prosperity."



1969 - P.U.P.

A convention at Independence Hall on March 13 selected the following candidates to contest City Council elections:

Brian Chavannes  
William Coffin

George Dakers  
Mrs Iris Gullap

Adolfo Lizarraga  
Anthony Meighan

James Rogers

Peter Thomas

James Meighan

All nine were successful in the elections held on April 30.

Faustino Zuniga, a former member of the House of Representatives for Punta Gorda died on 1st April.

From October 2 - 7, Lord Shepherd, the Minister of State in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, visited Belize, and the Premier viewed the visit as significant because it was usual for the Minister to visit territories that were going into Independence. In a petition to Lord Shepherd, it was stressed that in 1965 the people of Belize gave overwhelming support at the polls to the P.U.P. and its Manifesto for Belizean Progress; deciding then that Belize should become a nation free, sovereign and independent. The petition also brought out the important need for an efficient, well armed and well trained Volunteer Guard, which with military aid from the United Kingdom would defend Belize from outside aggression.

As a preface to Lord Shepherd's visit, in proposing a motion in support of the petition, the Premier stated in the House: "The Government of the P.U.P. was a responsible government. It originated from the people, represented the people and had a sacred responsibility to serve the people. In discharge of this responsibility it sought to fulfil its promises made at election



time and was, in consequence, determined not only to achieve independence but was also committed to secure proper guarantees of the territorial integrity of the new Central American nation of Belize in the heart of the Caribbean Basin".

At a convention held on October 26 in Corozal Town seven candidates to contest that Town's upcoming Town Board elections were selected. They were: Hon. F.S. Ricalde, Enrique Romero, Ramon Chi, Rodney Moguel, Antonio Sosa, Alfonso Alcala, and Mateo Ayuso.

General Elections were held on December 5, with the P.U.P. winning 17 of the 18 contested seats. The N.I.P.-P.D.M. won the other seat. (Detailed figures are listed at appendix ).

The following were appointed Senators by the Governor: Joseph Gray, James Meighan, Elsa Vasquez, Thomas Salam, Allan Castillo, S.A. Hassock, Ulric Fuller, and Adolfo Schofield-Perez. The President of the Senate was E.W. Francis.

Municipal elections were held on December 29 in seven towns, resulting in the P.U.P. winning an overall thirty five seats to the N.I.P.'s fourteen. (Detailed results are shown at appendix ).



P.U.P. - 1970

Introducing the decade of the 1970's the Premier in his New Year's message spoke of the problems and the challenges of the "surging seventies". For Belize, the challenge was to guarantee the security of an eventual independent country.

On September 20 the Premier led a delegation comprising the Hons. A.A. Hunter and V.H. Courtenay on a tour of Canada and Washington. On returning in early October the Premier announced that the Canadian International Development Agency (C.I.D.A.) will take another step towards achieving modern sewerage and a more adequate water system for Belize City.

meeting held on December 15.

P.U.P. celebrated 20 years of existence on September 29. Ag. Premier, C.L.B. Rogers in his address stated: "Without the support and dedicated effort and prayers of the Belizean people, the success of the P.U.P. could not have been achieved.

We are grateful for that support as we girth ourselves to face the challenges of our peaceful, constructive Belizean revolution".

Members of the House of Representatives and the Senate held the first meeting in the National Assembly building in Belmopan on Friday October 9.



P.U.P. - 1971

Former Deputy Mayor William Coffin was elected Mayor at a City Council meeting held on January 5.

Hon. Fred Hunter, Minister of Agriculture, Lands and Cooperatives on March 14 declared open the Belizean Green Revolution 1971, which was described as a campaign by the Agriculture Department to grow more food.

A Commonwealth Caribbean Regional Secretariat release dated March 10 stated that Belize was to become the twelfth member of the Caribbean Free Trade Association (CARIFTA).

The P.U.P. won all nine seats in the City Council elections held on December 8, returning the following candidates to office: James Rogers, Peter Thomas, Brian Chavannes, Iris Gullap, William Coffin, Doyle Prince, George Dakers, Adolfo Lizarraga, Michael Usher. <sup>William</sup> Coffin was re-elected Mayor at a meeting held on December 15.

Results of 1971 Belize City Council Elections  
(in order of highest number of votes received)

<u>P.U.P.</u>		<u>N.I.P. - UBAD</u>	
G. Dakers	- 4499	E. Hyde	- 2953
W. Coffin	- 4425	R. Berry	- 2564
A. Lizarraga	- 4396	M. Burgess	- 2562
D. Prince	- 4292	B. Belisle	- 2551
J. Rogers	- 4291	I. Shabazz	- 2549
B. Chavannes	- 4236	E. Bennett	- 2544
P. Thomas	- 4151	C. Leslie	- 2513
M. Usher	- 4150	M. Gardiner	- 2499
I. Gullap	- 4134	F. Abraham	- 2443
<u>INDEPENDENTS</u>			
A. Meighan	- 801		
R. Brooks	- 432		



P.U.P. - 1972

In January the P.U.P. selected three candidates to contest a bye election to fill vacant seats <sup>in Orange Walk Town</sup> as a result of the resignations of three N.I.P. Town Board members. The candidates were: Santiago Rosado, Joe Loskott, and Fortunato Cervantes. Since no other candidates were nominated, the Returning Officer declared them duly elected on January 13.

In Town Board elections held on December 8, the P.U.P. won six of the seven town boards, while the N.I.P. won one. This victory was viewed in the light "that the great majority of the Belizean people are supporting the People's United Party and its programme to lead Belize to independence and prosperity".



P.U.P. - 1974

On October 13, the following candidates were nominated by the P.U.P. to contest the upcoming general elections:

P.U.P. - 1973

	-	Corozal North
*Florancio Marin	-	" South
*Gijito Briceño	-	Orange Walk North
*Guadalupe Pech	-	" South
*Fred Hunter	-	Belize Rural North
de Sylvestre	-	" South

On March 16 the National Assembly approved the third reading of a bill to change the name of the country from British Honduras to Belize. The new name was scheduled to come into effect on June 1, 1973. At the first reading of the bill the Premier told the House of Representatives that the bill was in fulfillment of the manifesto promise made at three successful general elections. The change of name was seen as a conferring of dignity on the people - not as subjected citizens, but as a people in their own right with their own name and their own identity - Belizean.

On November 12, Hon F.S. Ricalde resigned from the P.U.P. He was representative for the Corozal North Division.

He was elected (\*) and a few days later the Premier named his cabinet as follows:

George Price	-	Premier and Minister of Finance
V.H. Courtney	-	Minister without Portfolio and Ambassador to CARICOM
Fred Hunter	-	Minister of Works
Florancio Marin	-	Minister of Agriculture & Lands
David McKay	-	Minister of Social Services, Labour & Local Government
Guadalupe Pech	-	Minister of Education & Housing
Santiago Pardo	-	Minister of Trade, Industry and Consumer Protection
Abad Dooan	-	Attorney General and Minister of



P.U.P. - 1974

On October 15, the following candidates were nominated by the P.U.P. to contest the upcoming general elections:

*Vilio Marin	-	Corozal North
*Florencio Marin	-	" South
*Elijio Briceño	-	Orange Walk North
*Guadalupe Pech	-	" " South
*Fred Hunter	-	Belize Rural North
*Louis Sylvestre	-	" " South
*George Price	-	Freetown
*Adolfo Lizarraga	-	Pickstock
Said Musa	-	Fort George
Joseph Gray	-	Albert
*C.L.B. Rogers	-	Mesopotamia
*V.H. Courtenay	-	Collet
Assad Shoman	-	Cayo North
*Santiago Perdomo	-	" South
*David McKoy	-	Stann Creek Rural
Allan Arthurs	-	" " Town
Thomas Salam	-	Toledo North
Alejandro Vernon	-	" South

On election day October 30, twelve P.U.P. candidates were elected (\*), and a few days later the Premier named his cabinet as follows:

George Price	-	Premier and Minister of Finance
V.H. Courtenay	-	Minister without Portfolio and Ambassador to CARICOM
Fred Hunter	-	Minister of Works
Florencio Marin	-	Minister of Agriculture & Lands
David McKoy	-	Minister of Social Services, Labour & Local Government
Guadalupe Pech	-	Minister of Education & Housing
Santiago Perdomo	-	Minister of Trade, Industry and Consumer Protection
Assad Shoman	-	Attorney General and Minister of Economic Planning
Louis Sylvestre	-	Minister of Power and Communication



The P.U.P. nominated the following nine candidates to contest the Belize City Council elections: William Coffin, George Dakers, Jose Encalada, Joe Erales, Alvan Fuller, Iris Gullap, Louis Humphreys, Billy Musa and Doyle Prince. On election day, December 11, the following three were elected: Jose Encalada, George Dakers and Alvan Fuller. The U.D.P. won the other six seats.



At a public meeting held on May 21 at the Courthouse Plaza, Premier Price reported on his attendance at a recent Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Kingston, Jamaica. He stressed that for the first time in the P.U.P.'s twenty-five year struggle for independence the Belize question had received so much support and publicity abroad.

The first woman elected to serve in the House of Representatives, Mrs Gwendolyn Lizarraga, died on June 9 at the age of seventy four. She served for three terms in the House, being first elected in 1961 and serving as Minister of Education from 1965 - 1969.

From September 21 the P.U.P. entered into a week long series of activities to celebrate its Silver Anniversary, popularly referred to as "25 years of struggle and achievement".

In October a mission was set up in New York comprising Assad Shoman, C.L.B. Rogers and Said Musa, along with a member of the opposition Theodocio Ochoa. The purpose of the mission was described as follows: "The Belize Government in its continued efforts to bring about a settlement of the unfounded and unjust claim of Guatemala to this country has established a U.N. Mission in New York headed by Minister of State Assad Shoman whose job it is to gain support for Belize by internationalizing the issue".

On November 4 Premier Price left to join the Mission in New York, and on November 7, he addressed the 4th Committee of the United Nations. In general he called on the U.N. to support the right of Belize to self-determine its own future. At the end of it all the countries of the world voted overwhelmingly in favour of



Belize's right to self-determination, independence and territorial integrity.

Town Board elections were held on December 22 and the P.U.P. was victorious in four of the main municipalities, winning over 51% of the votes cast to the U.D.P. 39% (detailed results at appendix ).

In a letter dated December 30, the Hon. V.H. Courtenay tendered his resignation as a Minister of Government. He explained that his reason for resigning was that he was personally involved as a solicitor for the Ajax Petroleum Company and Ariel Petroleum Company both of which had an outstanding legal dispute with the Belize government. He pledged his continued faith in the P.U.P.



P.U.P. - 1976

The Hon. Vicente Choco, representative for the Toledo North Division submitted a letter of resignation as a member of the U.D.P. on February 20. Mr Choco said that "he could no longer support the policies of the U.D.P. since he was treated with contempt by the leadership of that Party and not as a representative of his people". At a sitting of the House of Representatives on March 5 he crossed the floor and joined the P.U.P. side of the House.

The P.U.P. held its National Convention in Belmopan on November 28, and the following officers were elected.

Party Leader	-	George Price
Deputy Party Leader	-	Carl L. Rogers
Chairman	-	Louis Sylvestre
1st Dep. Chairman	-	David McKoy
2nd Dep. Chairman	-	Santiago Perdomo
3rd Dep. Chairman	-	Florencio Marin
Treasurer	-	William Coffin
Campaign Manager	-	Jose Erales
National Youth Organizer	-	Dr. Leroy Taeger



P.U.P. - 1977

In January Mark Cuellar was appointed Secretary General of the P.U.P. and Assistant Editor of the Belize Times.

The nine P.U.P. candidates nominated to contest the City Council elections were: Said Musa, George Dakers, Jose Encalada, Alvan Fuller, Leroy Taeger, Signa Yorke, Edwin Flowers, Lois Young and Evan Hyde. On election day December 7, 9448 voters out of 13,948 returned all nine candidates of the U.D.P.



P.U.P. - 1978

"The policy of the People's United Party remains the same after as before the Belizean government and opposition party met in New York City with Doctor David Owen, the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on June 2 this year". The circumstances and the substance of these discussions was seen by the P.U.P. as the basis for the independence of Belize. Any delay in reaching independence after an acceptable settlement of the Anglo-Guatemalan dispute was viewed as being contrary to the decolonization policy of the U.N. and the policy of the U.K., "to bring Belize to early and secure independence as soon as possible".

In Town Board elections held on December 20, of 10,136 registered voters 9,026 voted giving the U.D.P. an overall majority of seats. (Details at appendix).



Assad Shoman resigned from the Cabinet as from January 2, and effective January 9 his post as Attorney General was assigned to Edwin Flowers. The post of Minister of Trade and Industry left vacant by the resignation of Santiago Perdomo was assigned to Guadalupe Pech effective January 15. Eligio Briceño was appointed Minister of Education also effective January 15.

The Central Party Council of the P.U.P. passed two resolutions on January 17: (1) "that the guiding principles of the P.U.P. continue to be those of democracy with a mixed economy and that any other principles or systems, be it communism, fascism or any kind of dictatorship, have no place in its philosophy or its activities"; (2) "requests the Government of Belize, using the authority of modern legal thinking, to persuade the Government of the United Kingdom to spare no effort to obtain a just settlement of the Guatemalan claim to Belize in accordance with the United Nations resolution passed on the 13 day of December 1978".

The National Convention held on February 11, also passed the two resolutions, and elected the following to the Central Party Council:

George Price	-	Party Leader
C.L.B. Rogers	-	Deputy Party Leader
Louis Sylvestre	-	Party Chairman
D.L. McKoy	-	1st Deputy Chairman
Santiago Perdomo	-	2nd " "
Florencio Marin	-	3rd " "
William Coffin	-	Treasurer
Leroy Taeger	-	Youth Organizer
Jose Erales	-	Campaign Manager



In general elections held on November 21, the P.U.P. candidates won thirteen of the eighteen contested seats. The U.D.P. won the other five. Successful P.U.P. candidates were:

George Price	-	Freetown
J. Usher	-	Pickstock
S. Musa	-	Fort George
V. Courtenay	-	Collet
F. Hunter	-	Belize Rural North
L. Sylvestre	-	Belize Rural South
A. Shoman	-	Cayo North
S. Waight	-	Cayo South
V. Castillo	-	Corozal North
F. Marin	-	Corozal South
E. Briceño	-	O.W. North
G. Pech	-	O.W. South
D. McKoy	-	Stann Creek Rural

(See appendix for details).



George Dakers, the President of the Senate, died on March 26 at the age of 58.

Senator Norma Fuller resigned as a member of the Senate on May 14, and was replaced by her husband Alvan Fuller.

At a sitting of the Senate on May 23 William Coffin was elected President of the Senate.

In City Council elections held on December 17 the P.U.P. won a landslide victory over the U.D.P. by gaining all nine seats. The candidates were:

Dorian Barrow	-	6620	votes
Alvan Fuller	-	6585	"
Gloria McField	-	6528	"
Rafael Chavez	-	6505	"
Harry Lui	-	6479	"
Daniel Meighan	-	6447	"
Simeon Sampson	-	6445	"
Earl Ferguson	-	6440	"
Remijio Montejo	-	6385	"

The Council's inaugural meeting was held on December 23. Elected as Mayor was Remijio Montejo, and Deputy Mayor Dorian Barrow.

A fire on December 22 completely destroyed the building which housed the P.U.P. headquarters and the Belize Times Press.



On January 30 history was made in the House of Representatives when Premier George Price laid on the table a White Paper containing Government's proposals for the new constitution of Belize on the attainment of independence.

The P.U.P. saw this move as "the beginning of the crowning glory for him and his 30-year old People's United Party which began its struggle to achieve independence on September 29, 1950."

A special convention was convened on February 15 to study in detail the Government's White Paper. Representatives from countrywide attended the convention at the Agriculture Show grounds in Belmopan.

Negotiations on the Heads of Agreement began in New York on May 20, and Belize was represented by C.L.B. Rogers; V.H. Courtenay and Assad Shoman.

Mrs Idolly Simpson, a former Senator, appointed in 1974, died on May 27 at the age of 68.

A former Minister of government for two terms, Albert Cattouse, died on July 6 at the age of 88.

Independence came to Belize at midnight on September 20 as the British flag was lowered and the Belizean flag hoisted in its place. Thus fulfilled a promise made 31 years before, on February 1, at the 'Battlefield' by George Price regarding the flag of the Baymen: "And perhaps some day if it is your wish, we shall move it from here (the Battlefield) and put it over there" (the Courthouse flagstaff).

The Belize City Council, at its meeting on December 14, elected Earl Ferguson as Mayor for 1981 - 82, and Simeon Sampson as Deputy Mayor.

In Town Board elections held on December 16 the P.U.P. held control of three of the six main towns: Orange Walk, Corozal and Punta Gorda.



The inaugural meeting of the National Party was held on August 21, 1951, in the premises of Halsey and Matthews in North Front Street. Capt. Halsey presided at the meeting by saying: \*\*\*\*\*

THE  
NATIONAL PARTY  
1951  
The meeting was chaired by the Hon. Mr. Miller, and the proposed constitution read by Mr. E.O.B. Barrow. The meeting agreed to the proposal to form a new Party, which was to be called the National Party. \*\*\*\*\*

- The early objects of the Party were summed up as follows:-
- to secure and extend the liberties, to protect the interests and to develop the national life and prosperity of the people of British Honduras by all constitutional means.
  - to work for and promote political, economic, social and cultural progress of the Country.
  - to develop the political life of British Honduras by guiding, informing and expressing public opinion through public meetings and Party literature.
  - to nominate and support Party workers for elections.
  - to secure the development of a planned policy for the social and economic future of British Honduras.

The officers elected to serve were:-

President	Hon. W.B. Courtney
Vice-President	Hon. Herbert Miller
Secretary	Mr. E.O.B. Barrow
Asst. Secretary	Mr. E.J. Lewis



## NATIONAL PARTY - 1951

The inaugural meeting of the National Party was held on August 21, 1951, at the premises of Metzgen and Matthews in North Front Street. Capt. Metzgen opened the meeting by saying that this was the culmination of several smaller meetings held during the past few months among certain people who had seen the need for proper political organization. The meeting was chaired by the Hon. Herbert Fuller, and the proposed constitution read by Mr. E.O.B. Barrow. The gathering agreed to the proposal to form a new Party, which was to be called the National Party.

The early objects of the Party were summed up as follows:-

- to secure and extend the liberties, to protect the interests and to develop the national life and prosperity of the people of British Honduras by all constitutional means.
- to work for and promote political, economic, social and cultural progress of the Country.
- to develop the political life of British Honduras by guiding, informing and expressing public opinion through public meetings and Party literature.
- to nominate and support Party members for elections.
- to secure the development of a planned policy for the social and economic future of British Honduras.

The officers elected to serve were:-

President	Hon. W.H. Courtenay
Vice-President	Hon. Herbert Fuller
Secretary	Mr. E.O.B. Barrow
Asst. Secretary	Mr. E.A. Laing
Treasurer	Mr. M.S. Metzgen
Committee members	Mr. C.M. Staine, Mr. M.B. Wilson, Mr. N. M. Tennyson and Mr. F.D. Westby.



Other citizens who attended the first meeting were:- R. Reneau, H.W. Beaumont, N. Lainfiesta, Philip Hall, Reginald Pratt and Edward Pitts.

The Party was viewed as "the answer to the challenge of the times."

During the following months meetings were held on the lawn of Messrs. Metzgen and Matthews on North Front Street, and membership grew slowly but steadily.

On October 16 some 150 members and friends attended a rally which was held on the lawn of Metzgen and Matthews. The President, W.H. Courtenay, who had recently returned from a tour of the United Kingdom and Europe, addressed the gathering. He congratulated the Party on the strides it had made since its formation, and appealed to members to give it every co-operation for the general good of the country.

Beginning on October 30, the Party held a series of talks on the Report of the Constitutional Reform Commission.



1952

Early in January, Party members unanimously approved the Policy and Programme of the Party as outlined by the Executive Committee, which was presented at a general meeting. The basic points can be summarized as follows:-

- a) Constitutional - self-government within the British Commonwealth
- b) Economic - self-sufficiency in basic food production; development of local industries; expansion of exports; and financial independence
- c) Social - improvement and extension of medical and health services; increase of educational facilities; better housing; and social security
- d) Labour - improvement of living standards of workers and employers; unemployment insurance.

Later in the month the Party announced its decision to contest the forthcoming Belize City Council elections, and presented the following seven candidates:- E.O.B. Farrow, Egbert Brackett, Herbert Fuller, Lionel Francis, M.B.L. Wilson, Henry Middleton, and Mrs. Floss Casasola. The Party's platform embodied the items of its manifesto, promising:-

- to do practical work and eliminate "playing of politics" at taxpayers expenses
- construction and repairing of streets
- new areas for building of houses, and fostering a building scheme
- better water distribution
- to encourage and promote every advancement for the City.

Campaigning began in earnest on February 29 at the Imperial Hall, when Mr. W.H. Courtenay presided at a meeting and presented the candidates to the gathering.

On election day, March 19, the National Party won four of the nine City Council seats. Herbert Fuller, Mrs. Floss Casasola, E.O.B. Farrow, and Lionel Francis were successful candidates. The Party Leader had this to say

(1) The first lady in the country to be elected to the Belize City Council.



on the results of the elections: "The working of the democratic process has resulted in a victory for the National Party. The people of Belize, by their free and unfettered will, have elected to office as members of the Belize City Council a majority of candidates of the National Party. That is democracy." He ended his statement by declaring: "Let us all together -- NP's, PUP's and Independents -- join hands together and shoulder to shoulder work hard for our fair city and our people's advancement. That is the only pledge, the only promise which the National Party makes and by God's grace will keep."

Herbert Fuller, the Deputy Leader of the Party, was appointed by the Governor on April 4 to be President of the City Council. This came about after two attempts to elect a President failed. Lionel Francis was elected Vice-President at a meeting on April 9.

The Party held its first annual Meeting on July 22 in St. Mary's Hall, presided over by W.H. Courtenay. Membership at that time numbered 345. The officers elected at the meeting were:-

President	-	W.H. Courtenay
Vice-President	-	H.C. Fuller
Secretary	-	E.O.B. Parrow
Asst. Secretary	-	M.S. Metzgen

Members of Committee:- Mrs. Violet Logan, P.S.B. Vernon, George S. Cabb, Crispin Jeffries, Irvin Robinson, Mrs. Vivian Seay, and Norman Lainfiesta.



1953

At the Annual General Meeting held on March 3, the following officers were elected:-

W.H. Courtenay	President
H.C. Fuller )	
H.W. Beaumont )	Vice-Presidents
Mrs. V. Seay )	
L.A. Francis	Chairman
E.E. Eusey	Vice-Chairman
E.O.B. Barrow	Secretary
S. Vernon	Asst. Secretary
M.S. Metzgen	Treasurer.

On April 23 a meeting discussed in detail the water problem in Belize City, taking a serious view of the situation. The Party's Executive was charged with the task "to go into the matter thoroughly, immediately, with a view to making such recommendations to the authorities as may help to find a solution to the problem."

For the remainder of the year the Party continued to hold regular indoor meetings.



1954

The first open-air meeting of the general election campaign was held at the corner of Cemetery Road and Amara Avenue on January 28, when Branston Clark presided, and the principal speaker was Mr. C.M. Staine. The candidates selected to contest the election were:-

H.C. Fuller	Belize South
L.A. Francis	Belize West
M.B.L. Wilson	Belize Rural
S.A. McKinstry	Cayo
W.A. George	Orange Walk
C.J. Benguche	Stann Creek
C. Westby	Toledo.

Election day was April 28, and the Party was only able to win one seat, this in the Toledo District. The P.U.P. won the other eight seats.

1955

This year was a rather quiet one politically, and the Party mostly watched the course of political development under the ruling Party since the 1954 elections.



1956

"The first shots in the 1956 Belize City Council election campaign were fired by the National Party in the Yarborough area last night. The opening attacks against the 'Enemy' were made by Mr. Ethelbert (Kid) Broaster and Mr. Wilfred Leslie, and the main attack came from Mr. Herbert C. Fuller, National Party Leader." Thus did the Daily Clarion of February 21 report the launching of the campaign, using as the main issue the unemployment situation. The candidates chosen to contest the election were: Herbert Fuller, Lionel Francis, Manfred Wilson, Robert W. Reneau, Mrs. Floss E. Casasola, George Quinto, Samuel McKesey, and Roy Belisle.

On election day, March 19, Herbert Fuller and Mrs. Floss Casasola were the only two successful candidates for the Party. The P.U.P. won six seats, and the remaining one was won by an independent candidate.

On October 13 the Party released a statement for public information regarding an article which appeared in the Belize Billboard of October 12, under the caption: "Fuller not asked to join H.I.P." This was in connection with a rumour which was circulating suggesting that there might be a merger between either the National Party and the P.U.P., or the H.I.P. and the National Party. The release stated that apart from this being an unfounded rumour, it was also designed to mislead the electorate. Furthermore, the National Party had remained firm to its policy since its inception, and there had never been any division among members regarding it. The Party was not prepared to waver in any direction from its policy and programme, since it was fully convinced that it had the best aims for the Country.

During October too, a political observer writing in the Daily Clarion of October 25, saw the political situation in British Honduras at that time as underlining the need "for a political party truly representative of the interest of the Colony." The writer felt that neither the P.U.P. nor the National Party had served the



interests of the people, and commenting on the latter Party, continued:- "The National Party is by its very nature, negative. The Party can be said to have been formed to oppose the P.U.P.. Its opposition has neither been constructive nor effective. Patriotism is an admirable quality in political life, but it must not be confused with flag waving, band beating, and empty, servile protestations of loyalty. A party can oppose the Government in its policies which may be considered to be not in the best interest of the country, without being unpatriotic or disloyal. An effective National Party should have been able to give leadership to the people; instead the P.U.P. was allowed to dominate the situation much to our detriment and the resulting situation we are now in... The National Party has failed to reflect the hopes and aspirations of the people and has consistently failed to show the dynamism necessary for the political progress of the country at this stage of its development."

At election day, March 20, the National Party gained 4,538 votes, while

The Annual General Meeting was held at Liberty Hall on November 15, when it was reported by the President (Herbert Fuller) that there had been a considerable increase in membership. At election time the following were elected to office:-

H.C. Fuller	President
L.A. Francis	1st Vice-President
E.A. Goff	2nd Vice-President
C.L. Jeffries	3rd Vice-President
H.A. Middleton	Chairman
L. Burns	Secretary
Mrs. C. Dunn	Asst. Secretary
N. Tennyson	Treasurer.

Committee members were: E. Eusey, H.W. Beaumont, Mrs. M. Brackett, Mrs. V. Seay, and Mrs. F. Casasola.



1957

The year opened on a note of vigorous campaigning by the Party for general elections to be held in March. The Leader of the Party was most forceful when he declared at a meeting held at Liberty Hall on January 17:- "The people of British Honduras have seen the administration they wanted and it has not come up to their expectation. We are the ones with our experience to show them how to do it, and we are going to do it. 'Sweep them out' is our slogan for this campaign."

Towards the end of February the candidates were announced --

H.C. Fuller	Belize South
L.A. Francis	Belize West
L.T. Burns	Belize Rural
H.A. Musa	Cayo Division
B.A. Avilez	Toledo Division
W.A. George	Orange Walk Division.

On election day, March 20, the National Party gained 4,338 votes, while the P.U.P. got 6,876 to give the latter Party a clean sweep of the polls.



1958

Speculations about a possible N.P. - H.I.P. merger were widespread during May, and one month later had started to look like a reality when the two parties entered into serious discussions at joint meetings.

"We have before us a decision to make which is even more important than the decision we made seven years ago when the National Party was formed. A proposal has been placed before us that the National Party and the Honduran Independence Party should both dissolve themselves to make way for a new political party." These words were said by the Party Leader in his opening remarks at Liberty Hall on June 26 when the Party held its special General Meeting to decide on the resolution to dissolve the Party. The resolution was moved by Mr. A.B. Clark, and ninety-seven voted in favour and one against. Thus the life of the National Party was terminated, and a new party<sup>(1)</sup> was formed out of the National Party and the Honduran Independence Party a few days later.

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(1) The National Independence Party, n.v.



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THE

HONDURAN INDEPENDENCE PARTY

1956

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## THE HONDURAN INDEPENDENCE PARTY - 1956

The resignation of Leigh Richardson and other officials and members from the People's United Party on September 27, 1956, (1) prompted the formation of a new political party. On October 4, the Honduran Independence Party came into existence, a move instigated by the ex-P.U.P. members. In his inaugural address, Richardson said that it was necessary for them to found a party which consisted of stable and informed persons, who would not surrender their reason to demagoguery, expediency and threats. The Party's sole aim should not be to oppose those people who disagreed with its official policy, but should rather be to give the Country a sound government. It would not enact class legislation, engage in any class struggle, nor seek to set up a dictatorship. The Party, he concluded, stood firmly on the side of freedom and democracy, reason and integrity. Other aims of the Party included:-

- a) to seek self-government within the Commonwealth by 1966,
- b) to secure for all citizens the highest standards of living through training and opportunity, and,
- c) to co-operate with management and labour for the betterment of the Country.

The charter members met at Riverside Hall on October 11 to adopt a constitution and to elect the first officers of the Party. The constitution was presented by a previously appointed committee, and was passed with minor alterations. In an address, Leigh Richardson called for closer ties with the West Indies. He felt that if we failed to co-operate, the West Indies could employ such measures as would ruin us financially and cripple our economic growth.

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(1) Vide P.U.P. 1956. In a published statement which came out following the split, it was revealed that the leaders of the P.U.P. did not leave the Party because they objected to Party policy, but because of Nicholas Pollard's dishonesty in the General Workers' Union.



Regarding the Party's attitude, he said that it was young and therefore open to large hostile forces allied against it, and it would be necessary to show great moral and physical courage. If the Party based its policy on truth, regardless of how long the struggle, it would triumph in the end and the principles of truth would be justified.

On October 15 the National Executive Committee elected Leigh Richardson to be Party Leader, Philip Goldson as Deputy Leader, Lloyd Coffin as Chairman, and Frank Tench as Vice-Chairman. Other members included: Mrs. Elfreda Reyes, Mrs. Muriel Bevans, Mrs. Stephanie Jones, Messrs. Jaime Staines, Robert Stansmore, Terrence Keating, Herman Jex, Lindbergh Rogers, M. Nembhard, Lloyd Griffith, Charles Lewis, McKay Olivera, Arthur Waite, Dennis Davis, Magnus Vernon, and Richard Felix.

An early slogan declared — "H.I.P.: Honour, Integrity, Progress."



1957

The National Executive, on January 17, accepted nominations from H.I.P. divisional parties in Belize City for the general elections to be held in March. Those approved were:-

Leigh Richardson	Belize West
Philip Goldson	Belize South
Jaime Staines	Belize North
Herman Jex	Belize Rural

Later in the month the names of the district candidates were announced --

George Flowers	Orange Walk
José Chin	Corozal
Eduardo Espat	Cayo
Charles Westby	Toledo.

During March the Party published a political handbook entitled "Design for Democracy." It related the activities of Government during the previous three years, and gave a forecast for the following three years.

On election day, March 20, the H.I.P. suffered total defeat when the P.U.P. captured all nine seats. Out of a total of 11,635 votes cast the Party received 2,057. At a meeting held two days after, the National Executive resolved to organize the Party to prepare for the next general elections. The leaders of the Party who were members of Government<sup>(1)</sup> felt that they had been handicapped because they had to work until the day before elections, and "were unable to cope with the great amount of lies and slanders spread by George Price and Nicholas Pollard among the people." They were now free, however, and the work of educating the people politically would begin.

The first general meeting since elections was held at Liberty Hall on April 1. The Party Leader said he was convinced that the 11,000 people who did not vote constituted a reservoir of defeat for the P.U.P. in the 1960 elections.

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(1) Leigh Richardson (Member for Natural Resources), Philip Goldson (Member for Social Services), Herman Jex (Member for Public Utilities).

He added that the Party would work to make sure that the P.U.P. stayed in line and did not create chaos.

During April too, the H.I.P. announced that it was planning a series of indoor and outdoor meetings as part of the educational and organizational drive in carrying out its pledge to produce an effective opposition outside the Government.



1958

The Leader of the Party relinquished his post on February 21, and left the Country four days after to take up residence in Trinidad. Before departing, he said he was sure that the Party would continue "to appeal to the more realistic section of the electorate and serve as a rallying point for those who do not favour the irresponsible conduct of affairs of Government and legislation." He assured members of his continued support, and we would contribute indirectly to the Party's existence and growth. Philip Goldson acted as Leader.

An advocacy for the indentification of the Party flag was made by James Meighan, a retired District Commissioner, when he made his political debut on April 11. He spoke at an H.I.P. meeting, saying that the Party should request the right to fly its flag at Market Square.

Early in June a joint Honduran Independence Party-National Party Unity Committee submitted a report to the executive committees of both parties, recommending that they dissolve with a view to reorganizing as one political party under a new name. The recommendations were discussed at separate meetings of the parties, and both sets of members were enthusiastic about the merger.

The H.I.P. was the first to act, when on June 25 it voted to dissolve itself "simultaneously with the N.P. to make way for a new political party founded under a new name and based on the united membership of both parties." The following night members of the N.P. met at Liberty Hall to consider a similar resolution, and it was approved with one vote against. A further resolution was moved by William MacDonald, and unanimously approved, that the assets of the N.P. be donated to the new party as a gesture of love for the Country.

One newspaper editorial saw the merger as an action which would eventually bring self-government to the Country, since three political parties had been a hindrance to political growth. The writer felt further that because the new party had a virile membership, it would be almost impossible for even the most

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THE

NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE PARTY

1958

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## THE NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE PARTY - 1958

The inaugural meeting of the National Independence Party was held at Riverside Hall on July 1, when several hundred persons braved heavy rains to be present. It was chaired by Mr. James Meighan, the Chairman of the Steering Committee. A debate on the name of the Party took some time, and finally, in a secret ballot, "National Independence Party" was chosen. Herbert Fuller was elected Leader, James Meighan Deputy Leader, and Jaime Staines Chairman. Philip Goldson, the former Acting Leader of the H.I.P., was elected Secretary by a unanimous vote. Other officers were:-

Deputy Chairman	Robert Reneau
Assistant Secretary	Jeanette Buller
Treasurer	Lindbergh Rogers
National Organizer	Lindsay Burns.

At this period of political development it was surmised and predicted that the politicians and leaders had begun to strive towards higher levels of political thought and action, and in their upward climb they would take the Country to prosperity and national dignity. It was further felt that Fuller's stability, experience and seniority in political affairs, backed by an aggressive and strong executive, would counterbalance the more 'chaotic' and 'destructive' policy and politics of the P.U.P. Leader.

The Executive Committee of the Party held its first meeting on July 4, when it appointed two committees: the Labour Affairs Committee, and the Town Planning and Water Committee.

Membership grew rapidly during the early days, and towards the end of July it was reported that over eight hundred foundation members were enrolled.

The Party took up the matter of unemployment as a first project, when at a meeting at Liberty Hall on July 30, unemployed workers gave it a mandate to



approach Government in an effort to relieve the situation. A representative of the Christian Democratic Union (which was affiliated with the P.U.P.) stated that his Union would give full support to the N.I.P. in such a move to assist the working people. He invited the Party to send representatives to serve on the Union's Labour Committee, and so make a united drive to relieve the labour situation. At a subsequent meeting, however, the Executive Committee decided not to accept the proposal, the reason being that the P.U.P.-C.D.U. members in Government were supposed to be the ones responsible for solving the unemployment problem, and it would be a farce to associate with the Union in a protest against their own members in Government.

Also at that meeting the members adopted the Constitution and Standing Orders, and approved the Party's Programme and Policy. The latter covered constitutional, economic, social, labour, and defence matters affecting the Country.

August 1 at the Riverside Hall was the date and venue of a dance, at which the flag<sup>(1)</sup> of the Party was unfurled and displayed by the Party Leader and Secretary. The band played "Sons of Honduras" as the crowd stood at attention.

Still on the matter of unemployment, the Party Leader on August 12, in a letter to the Acting Governor called his attention to the growing number of unemployed people throughout the Country. The Acting Governor agreed to meet a five-man delegation for discussions at Government House on the 20th, when the Member for Social Services (Hon. A. Cattouse), the Member for Public Utilities (Hon. D. Jeffery), and the Member for Natural Resources (Hon. E. Depaz) were present. Mr. Fuller felt hopeful that the discussions would lead to some jobs for the unemployed.

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(1) An oblique bar of white with bordering triangles of red with the letters NIP inscribed in the centre.



A Headquarters Office of the Party was officially opened on September 1 at Tucker's building on Bishop Street.

The Leader, in his address at Liberty Hall on the National Day (September 10) called for a new constitution for the Country, more elected members in the Executive Council, and the implementation of the Ministerial System to give the people's representatives more power. He proposed that the P.U.P. and the N.I.P. set up a Joint Constitutional Reform Committee which would present to the United Kingdom Government a united demand for a new constitution.

During September too the first branches of the Party began to be formed in the district towns. The Stann Creek Branch was formally inaugurated on the 21st at a meeting in CDS Hall. Elected to the Steering Committee were:-

Chairman	Alfred Ramirez
Deputy Chairman	Walter Slusher
Secretary	Lorenzo Benguche
Committee members:	Benjamin Rees
	Reginald Carter
	Peter Lewis
	Laertes Gill
	L. Smith.

On September 28 the first meeting of the Corozal Branch was held, when William Gegg (Chairman), Gerado Castenada (Secretary), Cornelio Martinez, Robert Dixon, Rodwell Graham, Mrs. Adelia Francis, and Mrs. Nellie Codd were elected to the Committee.

The Cayo Branch was formed on October 5 at a meeting of Cayo citizens in the Stork Club. Committee members were:- Hamid Musa (Chairman), Percival Middleton (Secretary), Domingo Cruz, Juan Elias, Leopold Coleman, and Mrs. Caroline Burns.

City Council elections were scheduled to be held in December, and at a membership meeting held on October 16 at Liberty Hall, the Party presented six



persons for candidates. They were:- Herbert Fuller, Jaime Staines, Mrs. Claire Gill, Edward Flowers, Lindbergh Rogers, and Charles Lewis.

In Orange Walk, on October 19, the following members were elected to the Steering Committee:- George Flowers (Chairman), Valentine Hopun (Secretary), Miss Betty Canton, Edgar Sanchez, and Antonio Cal.

On October 27 the Punta Gorda Branch was formed. Bernard Avilez (Chairman), John Gentle (Secretary), S. Moriera, Charles Williams, M. Gutierrez, Mrs. Santiago Lindo, and Mrs. Bonifacio Martinez were Committee members. At that time branches were also formed in Monkey River and Barranco, and early in November there were branches in Burrel Boom, Santana, and Maskall.

Campaigning for the elections was well under way, and the Party's main platform <sup>Central in</sup> the P.U.P. ties with Guatemala. They also promised:-

- self-government within the Commonwealth
- prosperity for farmers
- homes for everybody
- good education for all
- building of a modern capital city
- towns and villages rebuilt along modern lines
- social security for all
- drafting of a modern labour code
- military training for defence of the Country.

Two members of the Party, Mrs. Floss Casasola and Mr. James Meighan, were charged with campaigning as independent candidates, and by this action had broken their signed pledges to the Party. A decision to expel them from the Party was made by the Executive Committee at a meeting on November 5.



A "No Guatemala" demonstration, sponsored by the N.I.P., was held on December 13 in which thousands of citizens participated. This was done to show non-acceptance of the alleged claim of Guatemala to British Honduras.

On election day, December 15, Herbert Fuller, Jaime Staines, Mrs. Claire Gill, and Lindbergh Rogers were elected, gaining four seats to the P.U.P.'s five, and receiving 2,480 (49%) of the votes cast. Although they failed to get a majority, the Party was convinced that it had achieved two things -- (a) strengthened the formidable organization it had built up; (b) shown a solidarity against the Guatemalan wish to incorporate the Country.

1959

In January the Party set up a Constitution Committee, headed by Herbert Fuller, to draft proposals for a new constitution for the Country. The Committee was also to study ways for the improvement of the voting system in municipal elections.

At a meeting held on February 19, Jaime Staines was elected Deputy Leader to replace James Meighan. Edward Flowers was elected Party Chairman at the same meeting.

A six-man delegation comprising Herbert Fuller, Jaime Staines, Philip Goldson, Denbigh Jeffery, Nicholas Pollard, and Enrique Depaz, met with the Governor on February 26 to discuss constitutional advance for the 1960 elections. They requested the Governor to invite a Commissioner from Britain to discuss constitutional advance.

Additional policies for the Party were presented at a meeting of February 27, when delegates from N.I.P. branches all over the Country met at Liberty Hall for the opening of the Organization Planning Conference. The purpose of the Conference was to have better consolidation of the Party so that it might be a continuing force in local politics; that it might operate efficiently yet democratically; that its members be politically educated; and that party policy be developed from the informed opinion and decisions of all ranks of the Party and not from one individual.

A branch of the Party was formed in Benque Viejo on April 12, and officers elected to the first Committee were: Juan Gongora (Chairman), Javier Castellanos (Deputy Chairman), Eduardo Guerra, Pastor Kotch, Aurelio Guerra, Benjamin Rosado, Medardo Bannos, and Luis Gongora. On April 29 a Party called the Western Independent Party was also formed in Benque Viejo, and



immediately sought affiliation with the N.I.P. The Western Independent Party was in essence comprised of the same officers who a week earlier had been elected to head the N.I.P. Branch, and thus the N.I.P. did not hesitate to give approval for affiliation. The Leader of the new Party was Juan Congora.

During May the Executive Committee, in a letter to the Secretary of State through the Governor, formally requested that a conference be held in London to deal with all outstanding political, economic and security problems affecting the Country. It suggested further that the three main political parties should be represented, and the conference coincide with the Government delegation which would be going to London for financial talks.

A Joint Constitution Committee comprising members of the N.I.P. and C.D.P. drew up a set of proposals in August, to be presented to the Constitutional Commissioner (Sir Hilary Blood) when he arrived in September. Some of the more important were:-

- establishment of the Ministerial System
- a new Constitution should confer internal self-government on the Country by October, 1960
- a Legislature comprising a House of Representatives (18 members) and a Senate (11 members) should be set up
- provision made for a Cabinet presided over by a Prime Minister, and nine other members
- the Governor should retain control of Security, Justice, the Civil Service, and Foreign Affairs
- Belize City should in itself be one electoral division.

The Party met with the Commissioner on September 3, and presented its proposals.

The first Annual Conference of the N.I.P. opened on November 13 at Liberty Hall, with the Party Chairman acting as Conference Chairman. The officers elected during the course of the Conference, which lasted over the week-end, were:-



Herbert Fuller  
Jaime Staines  
Edward Flowers  
Charles Lewis  
Philip Goldson  
Lindsay Burns  
Magnus Vernon

Leader  
Deputy Leader  
Chairman  
Deputy Chairman  
Secretary  
Assistant Secretary  
National Organizer

Two important committees were set up -- the Political Policy Committee, which drew up guidelines for political policy with an objective of full internal self-government with a local head of state, and the Blood Report (with some modifications) as a practical step towards this goal; the Economic Planning Committee, which produced a plan for national prosperity, and which was to be the economic programme and policy of the N.I.P. for the Country. The Conference further approved the appointment of a "Shadow Ministry" made up of Party officials, to ensure that the National Prosperity Plan was put into effect.

In the Town Board elections held in Stann Creek on December 28, the Party gained two seats (Felix Martin and Harry Stanley), while the P.U.P. got three seats. The N.I.P. won 49.625%, and the P.U.P. 50.375%, of the votes cast.



1960

Early in the year the leaders of the Party joined with other existing parties to form a delegation to go to London to discuss constitutional and economic advances.

The conference, which opened on February 1 and lasted about three weeks, was largely successful. Herbert Fuller and Philip Goldson represented the Party, and they felt that a union of parties was justified in more ways than one, as witnessed by:- (a) the Colonial Office had been impressed by the unity and were willing to give much more than if separate representations had been made; (b) the Constitution Commissioner, Sir Hilary Blood, himself publicly expressed delight that a greater measure of constitutional advance than he had recommended had been granted the delegation; (c) the denunciation of the Guatemalan claim by the United Front.

A suggestion for the merger of the N.I.P. and the C.D.P. was made by a correspondent writing in the Daily Clarion of February 24. He felt that if the two parties joined together they had a better chance of winning the upcoming general elections, but the Leader of the N.I.P. did not agree with the idea and further denied all rumours of a merger.

An active member of the Party announced her intention to resign on August 11. Miss Clare Gill described herself as a 'Pollardite' and was known to be opposed to the policy of the N.I.P. Executive Committee of non-association with the C.D.P.

The official monthly magazine of the Party, "Newdeal," appeared on October 20. It was sold at .10¢ a copy and featured articles and news stories on national and Party matters.



1961

N.I.P. activities at the beginning of the year started with a campaign for the general elections. At a meeting at the Courthouse Wharf in January, the Party Leader, in his speech, reiterated that contrary to unfounded persistent rumours the Party had no merger, association, united front, or any other arrangement with the C.D.P., P.U.P. and independent or splinter groups for the 1961 elections.

The second Annual Conference opened at Liberty Hall on February 3, and ended on the 6th. Addresses were made by officers of the Party, greetings given by delegates, and the third session was marked by an 'Election Charge' made by the Party Leader. The candidates<sup>(1)</sup> for the election pledged loyalty to the Constitution, principles and policies of the Party, and if elected to office they would work in unity and co-operation to achieve the aims of the Party as set out in the Manifesto.

On election day, March 1, the Party was defeated when the P.U.P. won all eighteen elected seats in the Legislative Assembly. The N.I.P. received 5,107 of the 22,033 votes polled. A few days later Philip Goldson was named as one of the five members nominated to the Assembly by the Governor.

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(1) Albert Division	Mrs. Floss Casasola
Collet "	Edward Flowers
Fort George	Herbert Fuller
Freetown	Sabino Savery
Mesopotamia	Mrs. Erlean Casasola
Pickstock	Jaime Staines
Belize Rural North	Marcelo Casasola
Belize Rural South	Todd Brown
Orange Walk South	Ignacio Vega
Orange Walk North	Eloy Escalante
Corozal South	Victor Greenwood
Corozal North	Gualberto Martinez
Cayo South	Pedro Mena
Toledo North	Charles Westby
Toledo South	Francis Martinez
Stann Creek Town	Paul Guerrero
Stann Creek Rural	Harry Stanley



During April the Party Leader went to Jamaica to receive medical treatment, and returned to the country on June 2 after undergoing a major operation. In a message to the supporters of the Party, which was read at a meeting at the Court-house Wharf on September 28, he called on all people who formed the opposition to the P.U.P. Government, whether within or outside the N.I.P. ranks, to unite in one grand endeavour to defeat the common enemy.

The Party's Headquarters was established in more spacious quarters in Liberty Hall during October. A timely editorial in the Belize Billboard of October 8 saw this as a move "for the N.I.P. members and supporters to promote vigorous political activities tending towards the firm establishment of a second strong political party in the Country."

By year's end the Party Leader had relinquished his post due to ill-health, and Philip Goldson was elected Leader.



1962

fact that the delegates (Hon. George Price, Albert Gattouse, and Louis  
Wheatley) were alleged to be Fifth Column agents for Guatemala.

Early in the year the Party Leader said that he was surprised over a statement made by the First Minister to a correspondent for "Newsweek," to the effect that Guatemala was friendly to British Honduras. Goldson advanced that if Guatemala had any real friendship for the Country she would discontinue immediately her unfounded claims. The N.I.P. stand on the matter was a desire for the people to live in harmony with their Guatemalan neighbours, and when the Country gained independence the people should still be in possession of the whole land "from the Hondo to the Sarstoon." He further asserted that before independence could become a reality the leaders of the Country "must seek ironclad guarantees from friendly nations like Mexico, the United States, the West Indies, Great Britain, Canada and others, that our Country will be protected from aggression."

On March 3 the Party sponsored a demonstration to protest Guatemala's claim to British Honduras, and thousands of citizens marched through the streets. A memorial was presented to the Governor in which the people asked for the establishment of a British Honduras Battalion; that the impending conference between the governments of British Honduras, Great Britain, and Guatemala be held in British Honduras; that majority and opposition parties be fully represented, and that Mexico be represented. Following the demonstration, supporters donated cash for the Party Leader to attend the conference.

Herbert Fuller, who had been given the title 'Founder-Leader,' died on March 11 at the age of forty-nine.

Another demonstration, dubbed the Citizen's Demonstration of Protest, was held on April 11. A memorandum protesting the composition of the British Honduras delegation to the Puerto Rican Conference was handed to the Governor for transmission to the Secretary of State. Their main objection bordered on



the fact that the delegates (Hons. George Price, Albert Cattouse, and Louis Sylvestre) were alleged to be Fifth Column agents for Guatemala.

The Party Leader left the Country in April and attended the Conference as a member of the press. Prior to this, on April 7, the Secretary of State had replied to the Party's memorandum of protest, saying that he saw no valid reason why the N.I.P. should be represented at the talks, and also did not consider British Honduras a suitable place to hold the talks.

On July 4 the N.I.P. Albert Division Organization was formed at Miss Annette Meheia's premises on Racecourse Street. A few days later, on July 11, the male section of the Party formed the "Liberty Force" at a meeting held at Liberty Hall. Edward Flowers, the Second Deputy Leader, was elected to be National President, and other officers included Lester Reyes, Leigh Richardson Sr., and Karl Mahler.

The Stann Creek Branch of the Party held its annual general meeting at the Catholic Schoolroom on August 12, when Albert Arzu was elected President, Sam Daniels Vice-President, and Alfred Ramirez Chairman.

Early in September the political future of the Country, as viewed from British eyes, was put forward in a booklet entitled "Imperial Postscript: the smaller territories." It contained a chapter on British Honduras written by Jane Tweedy, a public relations adviser who had travelled in Latin America. She advanced that there were three choices for the Country:-

1. Independence, of which the fundamental difficulty was that British Honduras had neither the population nor the resources to stand alone; therefore this would not be a practical choice.
2. Federation, for which she proposed that the Country joined the "Little West Indian Federation." This would provide the best solution because the Country would still manage her internal



affairs while acceding with the Commonwealth to politically, economically, and strategically viable entities.

3. Self-government, on which she wrote: "There remains self-government on the Singapore pattern... Until such time as British Honduras feels able to look the world in the face with greater confidence."

On October 1, the Nominating Convention elected the nine candidates to contest the Belize City Council elections. This was held in Thistle Hall, and 290 votes were cast to elect the following:- Hon. Philip Goldson, Jaime Staines, Edward Flowers, Reginald Brooks, Miss Helen Taylor, Mrs. Rosita Williams, Mrs. Leotine Gillette, Sabino Savery, and Mrs. Floss Casasola. Mr. Goldson, in his keynote address before the voting took place, felt that under the new system of voting in City Council elections (direct instead of proportional representation) the Party had a better chance of gaining a majority if it put up nine candidates.

Early in November the Party's "Manifesto for a Modern Belize," was published, in which pledges were made to work as a team on the City Council to replan, modernize and beautify the City. They felt that the elections would have a significance beyond the mere municipal affairs of the City, since the Country was very near to self-government and independence and the elections would demonstrate whether there was a proper balance of political power. If they won the elections, this would show those who were watching in the United Kingdom and other countries that the two-party democratic system of government was assured for British Honduras. To a greater degree, it would show that the Country could therefore be entrusted with the responsibilities of self-government.

During November also Goldson had written to the Minister of Education protesting the use of the radio (B.H.B.S.) by the First Minister and other Ministers to abuse the opposition party, while denying the right to the opposition party to



reply. The Minister's answer bordered on the fact that all candidates who were contesting the election would be given free radio time as in the past. The Party Leader felt that the Minister, in such a reply, made a "dishonest attempt to misunderstand his letter."

The N.I.P. failed to secure a single seat on election day, December 12, when all nine P.U.P. candidates were elected. The Party felt that the 32,461 votes (42.1% of the popular votes) was a good percentage, and that the two-party system was well on the way to becoming a reality. All the Party had to do was to continue the battle to establish democracy, and to save the Country from Guatemala.



1963

The "Independence" group of the Mesopotamia Division was formed at No. 54 George Street during March, and the meeting was chaired by Reginald Brooks.

On April 26 the Party Leader declared open the First Plenary Session of the 1963 Annual Party Conference at Riverside Hall. The following night, at the Second Plenary Session held at Thistle Hall, officers were elected as follows:-

Philip Goldson	Party Leader
Jaime Staines	First Deputy Leader
Edward Flowers	Second Deputy Leader
Colville Young	Third Deputy Leader
Lindsay Burns	First Secretary
Sabino Savery	Deputy First Secretary

Appointed to offices by the National Executive Committee were:-

Miss Helen Taylor	Financial Secretary
Reginald Brooks	Chief Organizer
Kenneth Mitchell	Transport & Equipment Officer.

The Orange Walk Branch of the Women Pioneers was formed on May 16 at a meeting held at the Tropical Theatre. Mrs. Leonie Vega was elected President and Miss Aurora Rejon Vice-President.

"Historians will record the events which are scheduled to take place today as one of the great mile-stones in the history of British Honduras. Today, Wednesday July 10, marks the opening of the constitutional talks for self-government for British Honduras in London, as well as the protest demonstration to be staged by the N.I.P. against the one-party<sup>(1)</sup> delegation representing British Honduras at

(1) For several weeks the N.I.P. had been asking the Governor and the Secretary of State to allow them to be represented by more than the one delegate allocated them by Government. The P.U.P. would be represented by four delegates and an adviser, while the N.I.P. had been relegated to one delegate and an adviser, and the N.I.P. felt that this was unequal representation. In reply to one protest by the N.I.P., the Secretary of State said he could not allow the Party more than one delegate, and since constitutional conferences were not determined by votes of delegates, the representation agreed for the N.I.P. was sufficient to enable it to make its case. Furthermore, representation at constitutional conferences was usually confined to parties with elected members in an Assembly. In view of the electoral support the Party got in the General Election in 1961, the Secretary of State felt that the allocation of one representative was reasonable.



that Conference, and also the 24-hour vigil and fast which the Leader of the N.I.P. began at 12 this morning, also in protest against the one-party delegation."

In those words the Belize Billboard announced the N.I.P. activities which were intended to protest the Party not being granted equal representation at the talks. The Party did not attend the Conference, and Mr. Goldson said that he felt justified in taking such a stand. He explained that when the Party said it was not going to London and in fact did not go, it was more respected; when it said that it was prepared to make some sacrifice and showed it, it was also respected a little more.

On July 30, the Party Leader at a Courthouse Wharf meeting called on the Consul-General of Guatemala to leave the Country within twenty-four hours. This was in view of the fact that the Guatemalan Government had earlier broken off diplomatic relations with Britain. The following day the Leader and a few supporters picketed the Guatemalan Consulate.

A booklet entitled "Political Facts about British Honduras, including pattern of betrayal to Guatemala" was published by the Central Office of the N.I.P., and went on sale in early August at .10¢ per copy.

Town Board elections for all towns was due to be held before the end of the year, and the Party selected the following to be candidates for the election:-

Stann Creek

Augustus Buller  
Albert Abu  
Harry Stanley  
George Guerrero  
Alfred Ramirez  
Felix Martin  
George Picart

Punta Gorda

John Gentle  
Daniel Haynes  
Charles Westby  
Victoria Martinez  
Albertha Castro  
Erminio Noralez  
Charles Bevans



El Cavo

Theodosio Ochoa  
Domingo Cruz  
Alejandro Cruz  
Francisco Alvarado  
Maria Arellano  
Roy Waight  
Alejandro Guzman

Corozal

Qualberto Martinez  
Jose Chin  
Kenneth Lawrence  
Matilde Zetina

Orange Walk

Ignacio Vega  
Felipe Escalante  
Pedro Luna  
Lorenzo Coyoc  
Alejandro Perez  
German Ayuso  
Erlindo Leiva

Benque Viejo

Juan Gongora  
Pedro Guerra  
Enrique Coleman  
Pastor Kotch  
Jose Guerra  
Alfonso Castellanos  
Alberto Guerra

Monkey River

Harris Coleman  
George Morey  
Herbert Coleman  
Edwin Morey  
Winston Duncan  
Donald Coe.

Election day was December 27, and the Party won the towns of Orange Walk and Benque Viejo del Carmen.



1964

The year opened with the visit of Mr. Nigel Fisher, Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, and a delegation of the N.I.P. held discussions with him at Government House on January 16. Later in the month, on January 23, the Party Leader declared at the weekly mass meeting held at the Courthouse Wharf that the N.I.P. was the Party that must lead the Country into independence, and that was the reason why the Party had been formed.

Early in April, German Ayuso resigned from the Orange Walk Town Board, and in a bye-election held on April 9, Eugene Flowers defeated the P.U.P. candidate Belizario Carballo.

At the Annual Party Conference, one of the highlights of the second and final plenary session held at the Riverside Hall on June 28, was the re-election of Philip Goldson as Party Leader. Other officers elected were:-

Jaime Staines	First Deputy Leader
Colville Young	Second Deputy Leader
Edward Flowers	Third Deputy Leader.

Towards the end of the year the candidates chosen to represent the Party in the general elections due to be held early in 1965, were elected as follows:-

Albert Division	Philip Goldson
Mesopotamia	Colville Young
Collet	Edward Flowers
Fort George	Miss Helen Taylor
Pickstock	Jaime Staines
Freetown	Miss Tharine Rudon
Stann Creek Town	Albert Arzu
Stann Creek Rural	Augustus Buller
Toledo North	Edwin Morey
Toledo South	Charles Westby
Cayo North	Theodocio Ochoa
Cayo South	Pedro Mena
Corozal North	Gualberto Martinez
Corozal South	Isidro Casteneda
Orange Walk North	Felipe Escalante
Orange Walk South	Erlindo Leiva
Belize Rural North	Elwyn Pitts
Belize Rural South	Philip Gillette.



1965

On election day, March 1, the N.I.P. won two seats in the form of Philip Goldson and Edwin Morey. Goldson polled 1,422 votes, the highest number of votes gained by any candidate in the election.

Towards the end of March, the Party Leader announced the formation of a Shadow Cabinet, the first in the Country's history. He explained that now that the N.I.P. formed the elected opposition in the House of Representatives, the Party should not only provide good, vigorous opposition, but should also be ready to produce an alternate government any time it was called upon to do so. The functions of the shadow ministers would be to advise and assist members of the opposition in the House and the Senate<sup>(1)</sup> to establish the principles and practices of a parliamentary opposition, and to develop the nucleus of a future N.I.P. government. Although there were seven Ministers in the Government, the Party Leader said that for the time being he would name only six shadow ministers in his Party, as follows:-

Hon. Philip Goldson	Finance, Planning, Information and Broadcasting
Hon. Edwin Morey	Local Government and Social Development
Dean Lindo	Natural Resources, Trade and Economic Development
Edward Flowers	Internal Affairs and Health
Colville Young	Education and Housing
Albert Arzu	Labour.

At the open session of the Annual Party Conference held at Riverside Hall on June 25, Philip Goldson was unanimously re-elected Party Leader, and other officers elected were:-

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(1) Reginald Brooks and Simeon Hassock were appointed Senators by the Governor with the advice of the Leader of the Opposition.



Edward Flowers  
Colville Young  
Mrs. Leotine Gillette

First Deputy Leader  
Second Deputy Leader  
Third Deputy Leader.

The Eighth Annual Party Conference opened on March 31 with a political Preceding the elections, the Party Leader in the keynote address pointed out to the gathering that the N.I.P. had grown fifty times as fast as the P.U.P. in the whole Country during the past four years, and more than one hundred times as fast in Belize City. Mr. Goldson produced statistics to show that the P.U.P. had barely gained 300-odd new voters in the City between the 1961 and 1965 general elections. On the other hand the N.I.P. had gained more than 3,000 new voters in the City, and he felt that it was only a matter of time before the Party became the Government.

On October 12, the visiting Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr. Anthony Greenwood, met a delegation of the N.I.P. at Government House. The main points discussed were -- fair elections through honest registration and a fair voting system; the Party's proposals that the national symbols (the flag, name and anthem) of the Country should be selected through a National Symbols Commission with both parties taking part; elections before independence; and proper arrangements for the security of the Country.

Delegations from Party groups in the City met at Riverside Hall on October 20 and elected nine persons to contest the forthcoming Belize City Council elections. They were:- Edward Flowers, Howell Longworth, Miss Helen Taylor, Mrs. Leotine Gillette, Colville Young, Rolando Perdomo, Clare Gill, Abel Rudon, and Allan Anderson.

December 14 was election day, and the N.I.P. received 45,738 per cent. of the votes, but were unable to secure any of the nine seats.

Benjamin Westby  
Emanio Morales  
Pearl Apoloda  
Mrs. Ivy Usher  
Charles Westby

First Vice-President  
Second Vice-President  
Secretary  
Assistant Secretary  
Treasurer



1966

The Eighth Annual Party Conference opened on March 31 with a political rally at Harley's Lot. The keynote address was delivered by Senator Hassock on the subject of independence for the Country. The following night the Party Leader officially declared open the Conference at the Riverside Hall. In his opening address he directed special attention to three resolutions which had been submitted by the National Executive Council, calling for:-

1. reform of the electoral system of the Country,
2. proportional representation in all elections,
3. N.I.P. policy on the question of independence.

These resolutions, after being discussed by delegates, were unanimously passed. At election time Philip Goldson was re-elected Leader, and other officers were:-

Edward Flowers	First Deputy Leader
Mrs. Leotine Gillette	Second Deputy Leader
Senator Simeon Hassock	Third Deputy Leader.

A Recreation Centre for the Party's Stann Creek Branch was formally opened by the Party Leader on April 23, and was located in the Genico and Bowman building.

In a Town Board bye-election held in Stann Creek on July 14, the N.I.P. candidate Albert Arzu defeated the P.U.P. candidate Carl Ramos. Arzu polled 664 votes.

On September 30 the Toledo Branch held its annual convention at La Favorita Hall, electing officers as follows:-

Francis Martinez	President
Benjamin Westby	First Vice-President
Erminio Norales	Second Vice-President
Pearl Apolonio	Secretary
Mrs. Ivy Usher	Assistant Secretary
Charles Westby	Treasurer.



The candidates chosen by the Party to contest the Town Board elections on December 28, were:-

Corozal

Roy Rancharan  
Lester Sawers  
Astor McCord  
Gualberto Martinez  
Raymond Flowers  
Guillermo Villamor  
Enrique Vera

Orange Walk

\*Felipe Escalante  
Pedro Luna  
\*Ignacio Vega  
\*Eugene Flowers  
\*Erlindo Leiva  
Porfirio Gonzales  
\*Alejandro Perez

San Ignacio

\*Joseph Andrews  
\*Domingo Cruz  
\*Theodocio Ochoa  
Anthony Pitts  
Francisco Alvarado  
George Marin

Benque Viejo

\*Pedro Mena  
Arcelina Banos  
Aurora Guerra  
Alberto Guerra  
Jose Guerra  
Miguel Hegar  
Alfonso Castellanos

Stann Creek

\*Albert Arzu  
\*Augustus Buller  
\*John Martinez  
\*Paul Guerrero  
\*Maurice Leslie  
Luke Palacio  
\*Felix Martin

Monkey River

\*George Garbutt  
\*Arthur Young  
\*Winston Duncan  
\*Herbert Coleman  
\*Solomon Ramclan  
\*Paula Forman  
\*Florence Garay

Punta Gorda

Benjamin Westby  
William Usher  
Charles Bevans  
Pearl Apolonio  
Victoria Martinez  
Erminio Norales  
Graciano Castillo

In viewing the results of the elections the Party Leader said that they had made substantial gains, by winning twenty-two seats with representations in five towns and control of three towns.

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\* denotes successful candidates



1967

A National Municipal League was formed in Stann Creek Town on January 28, when Albert Arzu moved a resolution at the First Planning Conference of N.I.P. Mayors and municipal councillors. He called for councillors in the Country to form a united body to improve themselves as councillors, and to create interest in improved methods of local government. The following morning the League elected a pro-tem Council of Management comprising of:-

Albert Arzu	President
Augustus Buller	Vice-President
Joseph Andrews	Secretary
Maurice Leslie	Treasurer.

The Ninth Annual Conference opened in St. Mary's Hall on April 7, and elected officers as follows:-

Philip Goldson	Party Leader
Edward Flowers	First Deputy Leader
Dean Lindo	Second Deputy Leader
Colville Young	Third Deputy Leader.

On August 14 the Party Leader met the Premier to discuss national problems, and the Opposition Party demand for a Referendum on the Anglo-Guatemalan Mediation. The talks also covered such subjects as:- the voters registration system, new general elections, national symbols, defence, history of the Country, Radio Belize, and economic conditions.

At the end of August, the Party Leader, having travelled to New York, addressed the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization. He asked that they intervene to speedily end the Guatemalan threat which was retarding the economic, political and social progress of the Country.



1968

The Party began its 1968 political activities with the holding of an All-Belize meeting at Liberty Hall on January 9. The main speaker was the Party Leader, who during the course of the meeting introduced Mr. Rolando Perdomo and Mr. Teodosio Ochoa as new Shadow Ministers.

The first public meeting for the year was held on Thursday night, January 25, at Freedom Lane. Mr. Goldson addressed the gathering, citing malpractices in the voting system and calling for election reforms.

The Stann Creek Town Division held its annual divisional conference on February 11, and supported a resolution the Stann Creek Town Board had presented to Central Government seeking funds for the improvement of the Town. Mayor Albert Arzu was elected as President of the Division. Two days later the Fort George Division held its Divisional Conference, and Allan Anderson was re-elected President.

A demonstration was held on February 23, demanding that Government "be frank, honest and above board with the people of the country on vital issues, especially so on the matter of independence."

Early in March the Leader of the NIP met with the Leader of the newly formed Peoples' Independence Party a.v. in Orange Walk Town to discuss common problems affecting the Country.

The Toledo North Division held its Divisional Conference in March, and elected Mr. C.J. Avilez to lead the Division.

At the 10th Annual Party Conference held at Liberty Hall on March 22, Philip Goldson was re-elected Party Leader unopposed. Other officers re-elected were:

Edward Flowers - 1st Deputy Leader  
Dean Lindo - 2nd Deputy Leader  
Colville Young - 3rd Deputy Leader



During April the Government began making preparations to send a delegation to Washington to receive the proposals of Mediator Bethuel Webster for settlement of the Anglo-Guatemalan dispute over British Honduras. The N.I.P. were invited to form part of the delegation, but were dissatisfied with the small proportion of their representation. At a meeting held at Freedom Lane on April 22, the N.I.P. Executive, after carefully deliberating the matter, decided to accept Government's invitation. The delegation left on April 23, and representing the N.I.P. were Hon. Philip Goldson, Hon. Edwin Morey and Dean Lindo. They returned on April 28, and after the proposals were distributed and broadcast to the people, they <sup>were</sup> rejected entirely.

"Sunday May 5, 1968 will be famous in history as the date on which the biggest demonstration ever to take place in Belize, demanded the resignation of the Government of the People's United Party for its part in the plot to sell out British Honduras to Guatemala." In this way the Belize Billboard described the people's reaction to the Webster proposals. The National Executive Committee of the N.I.P., in addition to demanding immediate resignation of P.U.P. Government, called for a general election to be supervised by the United Nations and the Commonwealth Secretariat. The N.I.P. Leader further asked for permission to broadcast the N.I.P. views concerning the Mediator's proposals, and was refused.

On June 1, the N.I.P. suffered defeat in a bye-election held in Stann Creek Town when their candidate, Luke Palacio, was defeated by the P.U.P. candidate Carlos Wolberto. The former polled 793 votes (45.6%) of the 1753 votes cast, while the latter received 949 (54.4%). This bye-election was to fill the vacant seat in the Stann Creek Town

Board

caused by the death in April of N.I.P. Councillor Maurice Leslie.

The Party celebrated its 10th birthday on July 1 at Liberty



On November 18 a nominating convention was held at Liberty Hall, when nine candidates to contest the upcoming City Council Elections were selected. They were: Miss Helen Taylor, Ulric Fuller, Henry Fairweather, Colville Young, Edward Anderson, Edward Flowers, Frank McNab, Reginald Brooks and Rolando Perdomo.

The N.I.P. wound up its 1968 activities with a rally at Freedom Lane. The Party Leader, in his address said that it was in the interest of all citizens, P.U.P. and N.I.P. alike, to preserve the unity and strength of the opposition to ensure that British Honduras can continue each new year to enjoy that freedom and security which the opposition's vigilance had preserved so far.



1969

City Council elections were due to be held during this year, and towards the end of January the N.I.P. presented what it termed "the new team to build the new Belize." The candidates were as follows:- Edward Anderson, Henry Fairweather, Ulric Fuller, Rolando Perdomo, Reginald Brooks, Edward Flowers, Francis McNab, Colville Young and Helen Taylor.

The City Council was dissolved on April 18, and on election day, April 30, 9,467 persons voted. The N.I.P., gaining 38,908 votes, was defeated by the P.U.P. candidates who received 44,255 of the 83,163 votes cast.

On May 2, the Party Leader addressed an audience at Freedom Lane, stating in part: "I have a mission and so I must go on to the end of the road. That mission is to help put down roots of democracy in our country, to protect the self-respect and the dignity of our people and keep this country secure for its people." He continued by saying that all that matters is for him to complete this mission, and ended with the loquacious statement that the present leaders of Government, both in their personal and public conduct, tended to draw the people towards evil. The vote, he said, suggested that the people liked it and "so we can expect the condemnation of mankind and the vengeance of God to fall on our country."

The question of whether Britain would guarantee security and defence measures to the country after it achieved independence was for some time the main topic in N.I.P. circles. At an all-Belize meeting at Liberty Hall on June 2, Senator Simeon Hassock felt that Britain was morally obliged to provide the country with defence because although Britain so far had stood by us, she did not teach us to defend ourselves. The Senator further felt that Britain might be induced if the NIPs and the PUPs would agree to act unitedly.

The 11th Annual Delegates Conference opened on June 27 at Bayvue Hall. An



editorial in the Belize Billboard of the same date observed that it was the first Annual Conference of the Party since the rejection of the seventeen Proposals in 1968, and as such marked a turning point in the Party's mission. The editorial also suggested that since the Party had convinced the country that the Proposals should be rejected, it could now pay more attention to the economic, social and political issues and problems of the people. At election time Philip Goldson was re-elected Party Leader with 110 votes, after having been openly opposed by Dean Lindo who received 71 votes. Other officers elected were:-

Edward Flowers	-	1st	Deputy	Leader
Ignacio Vega	-	2nd	"	"
Elfreda Reyes	-	3rd	"	"

Towards the end of July the Party Leader made a nine-day tour of the southern and western districts, finding "the Party everywhere strong, intact and growing". To a reporter he commented: "our NIP members and supporters in the districts are standing by their Party as we enter this second phase of the great struggle to save and build our country."

At a meeting held at Freedom Lane on October 1, Goldson told the gathering that he had never lost faith in the people, and asked that they continue to have the same faith in the N.I.P. which had led them "through obstacle after obstacle to save and preserve our country." Two days later he and his followers supported a demonstration which presented a petition to the visiting British Minister of State for Dependent Territories, Lord Shepherd, calling for British military protection after independence.

On October 6 a delegation from the N.I.P. met Lord Shepherd. During the course of the interview he commented: "Great Britain is not holding you back from independence, but at the same time she is not pushing you into it either. It is entirely up to the Government and people. They will get it when they ask for it." He, however, evaded the question about a security guarantee for the country.



At a brief session of the House of Representatives held on November 7, the Premier announced that he had advised the dissolution of the House, and called for new general elections. Commenting on this, Goldson, at the inauguration of Freedom Hall — the N.I.P. centre of activities at Barrack Road — held on the same date, predicted that taxes would be increased considerably in the coming year if the P.U.P. was allowed to win the elections. He further expressed confidence that the N.I.P. could win the elections.

"The National Independence Party and the People's Development Movement (q.v.) have agreed to contest the national elections as one body." This announcement was made by Goldson at a meeting at Freedom Lane on November 10. Within the next few days the candidates for the N.I.P.-P.D.M. were announced.

They were:-

Philip Goldson	Albert Division
Dean Lindo	Fort George "
Edward Flowers	Collet "
Colville Young	Mesopotamia "
Charles Woods	Pickstock "
Henry Fairweather	Freetown "
Roy Canton	Belize Rural North Division
Allan Anderson	Belize Rural South "
Gualberto Martinez Jr.	Corozal North "
Lucilo Teck	Corozal South "
Felipe Escalante	Orange Walk South "
Ignacio Vega	Orange Walk North "
Joseph Andrews	Cayo North "
Pedro Guerra Mena	Cayo South "
Rodwell Leslie	Stann Creek Town "
Albert Arzu	Stann Creek Rural "
Edwin Morey	Toledo North "
Cypriano Avilez	Toledo South "

On election day, December 5, Philip Goldson was the only N.I.P.-P.D.M. candidate elected. Of a total 29,823 registered voters, 22,377 went to the polls, giving the N.I.P.-P.D.M. 8,910 votes and the P.U.P. 12,888.

The final big political occasion for the year was the District Town Board elections held on December 29. The N.I.P. candidates were as follows:-



Corozal

Andres Campos  
Israel Alpucho  
Gualberto Martinez Jr.  
Daniel Esmond  
Gualberto Martinez Sr.  
Godfrey Blades  
Jose Ching

(Result: P.U.P. all 7)

Orange Walk

Ignacio Vega  
Erlindo Leiva  
Felipe Escalante  
Carmelita Villar  
Porfirio Gonzalez  
Alejandro Perez  
Eugene Flowers

(Result: N.I.P. 4, P.U.P. 3)

San Ignacio

Teodocio Ochoa  
Joseph Andrews  
Domingo Cruz  
Plutarico Guzman  
Alejandro Cruz  
Eduardo Alvarez  
Miguel Awa

(Result: N.I.P. 3, P.U.P. 4)

Benque Viejo del Carmen

Pedro Guerra Mena  
Victor Cowo  
Jose Maria Guerra  
Jose Silva  
Mario Castellanos  
Maximiliano Reyes  
Aurelio Guerra

(Result: P.U.P. all 7)

Stann Creek

Paul Guerrero  
William Lino  
George Blease  
Albert Arzu  
George Guerrero Sr.  
Vicente Fernandez Sr.  
George Guerrero Jr,

(Result: P.U.P. all 7)

Punta Corda

Cypriano Aviles  
Charles Bevans  
William Usher  
Benjamin Westby  
Francis Martinez  
Martin Flores  
Reginald Nuñez

(Result: P.U.P. all 7)

Monkey River

Winston Duncan  
George Garbutt  
Edwin Morey Sr.  
Arthur Young  
Paula Forman  
Solomon Ramclan  
Everet Coe

(Result: N.I.P. all 7)



NIP - 1970

After several months of public silence the NIP held a mass meeting on Thursday July 30, when Party Leader Philip Goldson warned that the country was headed for economic crisis brought on by the policies of the present government. He specifically stated that Belmopan, the new capital city, would greatly increase the cost of administration without increasing the wealth of the country or the revenues of government.

Reginald Brooks, a former Senator in the National Assembly, resigned from the N.I.P. "caused by distrust created after he was charged with disloyalty to the Party".

NIP - 1971

In City Council elections held on December 8 a coalition front comprising six NIP candidates and three from UBAD, was defeated when the P.U.P. won all nine seats (see P.U.P. 1971 for detailed results).

NIP - 1972

The NIP contested Town Board elections held on December 8, gaining in only San Ignacio. The P.U.P. won in the other six towns.

In 1973 the NIP, PDM and Liberal parties became amalgamated into the United Democratic Party (UDP).



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THE  
DEMOCRATIC AGRICULTURAL AND LABOUR PARTY

Afterwards

THE  
CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY

1958

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THE DEMOCRATIC AGRICULTURAL AND LABOUR PARTY - 1958

At a small meeting held on August 19, the Hon. Enrique Depaz, Member for Natural Resources, moved a resolution that a political party be formed. He proposed that the name of the party be the Democratic Agricultural and Labour Party, and this was passed unanimously with Nicholas Pollard being elected provisional leader. The resolution also stated that "in view of the fact that to date there was still no effective opposition to George Price and the P.U.P., the coming into being of a third party was justified."

The main aim of the Party was the achievement of self-government within the British Commonwealth, although not agreeing with the view that the Country should become "economically self-sufficient before we can attain complete self-government by reasonable stages." Other aims included:-

- the co-operation with any and all individual and other political parties in any endeavour that was for the good of British Honduras,
- the formation of a coalition in the case of a party minority with any other minority group to destroy the treachery of the P.U.P.,
- the promotion of a strong programme for the social, economic and political development of the Country,
- specializing in educating the people and workers to a proper sense of their rights, duties, and wise conduct in a democratic, christian state, and,
- abstaining from entering the West Indies Federation, or any political association with Guatemala or Central America.



A Steering Committee was formed comprising Nicholas Pollard, Enrique Depaz, Hector Locke, Justo Pollard, Simon Young, and E. Cain.

On December 13 the Party was associated with a 'No Guatemala' demonstration sponsored by the M.I.P., and the Party Leader was among those who addressed the gathering.

On December 16, Pollard was informed that his naturalisation as a British subject had been granted by Her Majesty's Government(1).

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(1) During the previous eight years Pollard had made three applications for his citizenship to be transferred from that of a Mexican to British.



1959

Early in January, Pollard in a letter to the Belize Billboard, advanced the view that the P.U.P. had been "put on the spot" by a speech made by the Governor on December 29, 1958. The Governor had been speaking at the second inaugural session of the Legislative Assembly, and he had called for "overwhelming and uncompromising evidence" to refute Guatemalan propoganda claims that the people of B.H. wanted to give up their British inheritance in favour of Guatemalan sovereignty. The P.U.P. Leader had reiterated that Party's objectives of self-government and self-determination within or without the British Commonwealth, but it was still Pollard's opinion that the P.U.P. would no doubt, with Guatemala's approval, pretend to oppose the Guatemalan claim.

The Party, on February 19, together with the N.I.P. held a mass meeting at the Courthouse Wharf, beginning a series of public discussions about a new constitution for the election in 1960. One week later a six-man delegation (four from the N.I.P. and two from the D.A.L.P.) met with the Governor at Government House to discuss constitutional advance in 1960.

When the Constitution Commissioner (Sir Hilary Blood) arrived in the Country later in the year, the Party (now popularly called the Christian Democratic Party) sent a delegation<sup>(1)</sup> to hold discussions with him.

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(1) Nicholas Pollard (Leader), Robert Taylor (Secretary), Enrique Depaz (Deputy Leader), Richmond Fitzgibbons and Rupert Cain.



1960

A correspondent, writing in the Daily Clarion of February 24, felt "obliged to denounce what he considers the errors of the N.I.P. leadership, but the N.I.P. and the C.D.P. still remain his favourite political parties... The N.I.P. and the C.D.P. must win the first General Election under the coming new constitution. And one of the first steps toward that end should be a merger of the two parties."

Nicholas Pollard announced on October 12 that the Hon. Denbigh Jeffrey, Member for Public Utilities, and a former member of the N.I.P. Executive Committee, had resigned that Party and was now Leader of the reorganized C.D.P. The reorganization had taken place the previous night at a joint meeting of the Executive Officers of the C.D.P. and the Citizens Committee, when Pollard stepped down as Leader, supported Jeffrey as the new leader, and Jeffrey's nomination was unanimously accepted. Election of officers at that meeting resulted in the following persons holding offices:-

Nicholas Pollard	Deputy Leader
Lionel Francis	Chairman
Mervyn Hulse	Secretary
Ernest Cain	Assistant Secretary
Clare Gill	Treasurer
Robert Taylor	National Organizer.

Other members of the Executive Council were: Hon. Enrique Depaz, Hubert Usher, Rupert Cain, Tasman Hinds.

Jeffrey made it known immediately that his primary objective was the defeat of the P.U.P. At the first public meeting of the reorganized Party, which was also the first major campaign meeting in connection with the forthcoming elections, held at the Courthouse Wharf on October 14, the Party Leader called on the N.I.P. to join forces with the C.D.P. to "crush this wicked element that is <sup>in</sup> our midst."



1961

The Party's candidates for the election were announced early in the year, and were as follows:-

Denbigh Jeffrey	Fort George Division
Nicholas Pollard	Albert
Clare Gill	Pickstock
Ernest Cain	Freetown
Eduardo Espat	Cayo South
Manuel Figuerroa	Cayo North
Tomas Salam	Toledo North
A. Woodeye	Toledo South
Arthur Wade	Belize Rural North
Mervyn Hulse	Collet
Edward Usher	Mesopotamia.

On March 1 the C.D.P. contested its first General Election, but failed to secure any seats, as the P.U.P. won a sweeping victory. The Party received 2,514 (11.4%) of the 22,033 votes cast.

During May one writer in the Daily Clarion exhorted the Party to continue its fight and grow stronger, stating in part:- "The C.D.P. is the youngest of our three political parties and the poorest of them all; but I sincerely feel that it is destined to play a great part in the efforts of the righteous to make this land a better and happier place in which to live." He ended by asking the leaders of the C.D.P. to ensure that they do not weaken before their great opportunity comes, for it was bound to come.

The C.D.P., however, after a brief life of three years, disbanded a short while after this, and became amalgamated with the N.I.P.



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THE

UNITED BLACK ASSOCIATION

FOR

DEVELOPMENT

1968

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UNITED BLACK ASSOCIATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

The United Black Culture Association was born at a lecture given by Evan Hyde in September 1968 at the Bliss Institute, held under the auspices of the Extra Mural Department. The theme of the lecture was "Black History".

Early in the following year, on February 9, 1969 the United Black Association for Development (UBAD) (formerly United Black Culture Association) adopted a constitution and elected officers. Its aims were described as "cultural" and "educational", and several public meetings were held in Belize City and the district towns in an effort to gain support.

Along with UBAD there sprang up a similar organization called the Peoples Action Committee, (PAC) created with the aims and objectives of "the changing of a corrupt and oppressive system to a system which ensures freedom, justice and equality for all". While UBAD emphasized the cultural aspect of the struggle, PAC emphasized the political.

In October 1969 the two became joined together under the name Revolitical Action Movement (RAM). In the same move the newspaper FIRE was incorporated into Amandala with Evan Hyde as editor. The officers of the new united organization were:

President	-	Evan Hyde
Vice President	-	Assad Shoman
Treasurer	-	Ismael Shabazz
Chairman	-	Albert Faber

Other members of the executive were: Calvin Avilez, William Stewart, and Charles Eagan.

The first public meeting was held on October 22 at the Courthouse Plaza.



UBAD - 1970

Evan Hyde and Ismael Shabazz, President and Secretary of UBADRAM were arrested on March 5 and charged with Seditious Conspiracy. The charge alleged that in February 1970 they published an article entitled "Games Old People Play", which inferred that the administration of justice was a farce and that the Chief Justice and counsels who participated in it were involved in a childish game of amusement. The Supreme Court case ended on July 7 with acquittal of both.

On July 13 UBAD demonstrators marched through the streets of Belize City demanding (a) 18 year-olds be eligible to vote in all elections, (b) that radio time be granted impartially to political parties, (c) more jobs be created, (d) land made available, (e) African history be taught in schools.

UBAD RAM moved gradually into the political arena, and by July 15, 1970 had declared itself a political party at a meeting held at Liberty Hall. At a subsequent meeting held at the same venue on August 12, 1970, the following were elected to the Executive:

President	-	Evan X Hyde
Vice President	-	Galento X Neal
Chairman	-	Charles X Stamp
Secretary-General	-	Lillette Barkley
Treasurer-General	-	Ismael Omar Shabazz

Officers: Wilton Meighan, Raiford Wade, Michael Stephen, Clifford Leslie and Albert Betson.

In November Evan Hyde resigned as President, and Galento Neal was elected the new President.



UBAD - 1971

At its annual general convention held on February 28, the following were elected to office:

President	-	Evan X Hyde
Vice President	-	Galento X Neal
Treasurer-General	-	Ismael Omar Shabazz
Secretary-General	-	Wilton Meighan
Chairman	-	Rufus X

Officers: Wilfred Nicholas, Jack Jordan, Clifford Leslie.

In April the UBAD Party and the NIP set up a joint working committee to consider and discuss the upcoming City Council elections. Of particular interest were the need for opposition radio time and the 18 year-old vote.

On June 25 the UBAD Party marched non-violently through the streets of Belize City demanding the vote for 18 year olds and radio time for opposition parties. UBAD contested the Belize City Council elections on December 8, putting forward the Belize City Coalition Nine comprising: Evan Hyde, Ismael Shabazz, Clifford Leslie, Rita Berry, Benjie Belisle, Hubert Gardiner, Thomas Abraham, Edney Bennett and M.E. Burgess. The P.U.P. won all nine seats.



UBAD - 1972

During the course of the year the Party held some public meetings in Belize City and San Ignacio advocating its stand in Belizean society, and reiterating the principles for which it stood. The Party was described as an organization which seemed very loose and undefined from the outside, but was in reality very tight, cohesive and disciplined internally.

On June 1, a UBAD sponsored demonstration marking the end of five days of activities in connection with the celebration of Pan African Liberation Week, ended in disarray. The demonstrators stoned the Guatemalan Consulate building, and this extended to attacks on various government and business offices along Albert and Regent Streets. The police made fifteen arrests, including Norman Fairweather the publisher of Amandala.



UBAD - 1973

1973 was described as a year of internal strife within the Party. UBAD, preferring not to become a part of the Unity Congress (see PDM 1973) was accused of leaning towards the P.U.P. However, the Amandala explained during November: "What has been happening over the past few months is that the Premier has adopted the foreign policy of the UBAD Party and has indicated he is willing to consider the domestic policies of the UBAD Party in new light. So why should we attack him when he does something we have advocated?"

UBAD - 1974

Early in the year UBAD announced that Evan X Hyde, President of the Party would be contesting the upcoming general elections as a candidate in the Collet Division. The Party reiterated its programme as:

1. Voting rights for 18 year old Belizeans
2. A free radio and television for Belize
3. Proportional representation
4. Arming of the people
5. Land ownership by Belizeans
6. Workers and farmers power
7. Teaching of African and Indian history
8. Independence for Belize

In general elections held on October 30, the UBAD candidate was defeated in the Collet Division, the winner being V.H. Courtenay of the P.U.P. Overall, the P.U.P. won 12 of the 18 seats, while the U.D.P. won the other 6.

In a post-election statement the UBAD Party felt that its principles and doctrines had affected both the P.U.P. and the U.D.P. as follows: "A former UBAD member Assad Shoman is now Attorney General and Minister of Economic Planning. UBAD sympathizers like Philip Goldson and Paul Guerrero are now elected representatives of the people. Two other sympathizers, Said Musa and Theo Ochoa, are senators".



UBAD - 1975

The UBAD Party phased itself out after the 1974 general elections. In reply to a letter received from the Leader of the Opposition in early May on the matter of the Guatemalan claim to Belize, Evan Hyde stated in part:

"I reply to you as the last President of UBAD originally a cultural organization, then a political party and since November 1, 1974, unofficially and for all intents and purposes, disbanded.

" All that is left of UBAD is a feeling of spirit and the Amandala newspaper which has been attempting to give independent, impartial political reports".

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THE

PEOPLE'S DEVELOPMENT MOVEMENT

1969

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PEOPLE'S DEVELOPMENT MOVEMENT - 1969

This political party was formed during October, 1969. Its basic views were described as "liberal in its economic and development policies, and pragmatic in its approach to national problems."

Founding members included Dean Lindo, Colville Young, Carlos Castillo, Hugh Weir, Lawrence Young and Joe Lisbey.

At a private meeting Dean Lindo (a lawyer who had been in politics for over five years as a member and deputy leader of the N.I.P., but resigned after having failed to influence the policies and strategy of that Party) was elected leader of the People's Development Movement. Other officers were:-

Colville Young	-	Deputy Leader
Hugh Weir	-	Treasurer
Carlos Castillo	-	Secretary
Lawrence Young	-	Chairman of the National Council.

The Party joined with the N.I.P. to contest general elections held on December 5, 1969 (vide N.I.P. 1969).

P.D.M. - 1973

The P.D.M. held its first public meeting on January 31 since its inception in 1969. The Party Leader, Dean Lindo, stated that his party was prepared "to sit down and meet with any opposition group in an attempt to have opposition unity".

During March the P.D.M. issued a statement objecting to the change of the country's name from British Honduras to Belize, on the grounds that "the Premier's Government is now seeking to put into effect Article 1 of Webster's 17 proposals which, in 1968, was rejected by the people". The P.D.M. felt that any change in the name of the country was a matter for the people which should be decided in a plebiscite including the 18 year olds.

In August, after many months of serious political discussion, the P.D.M., the N.I.P. and the People's Liberal Party, arrived on the threshold of unity. This was done mainly in an effort to present a united force to contest the upcoming general elections. The three parties by executive decision appointed three delegates each with authority to act on behalf of their respective parties at a proposed Unity Congress.

On September 27 a release issued by the Unity Congress stated that the Congress had resolved itself into one political party called the United Democratic Party.



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THE  
UNITED DEMOCRATIC PARTY

1973

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UNITED DEMOCRATIC PARTY - 1973

The United Democratic Party (U.D.P.) was formed in September 1973 out of the P.D.M., N.I.P., and the Liberal Party as a display of unity among opposition parties.



U.D.P. - 1974

Its first political meeting was held on January 16 at Harlem Square on Glynn Street in Belize City, at which the keynote speech was given by Kenneth Tillett. A U.D.P. central office was opened at 56 Albert Street on July 17.

General elections were held on October 30, and the U.D.P. won 6 seats to the P.U.P. 12. The U.D.P. viewed the outcome as a spell that had been broken, stating that: (a) it was the first time in six terms stretching back more than 20 years that opposition parties were able to gain more than two seats in the eighteen-man National Assembly; (b) three of the seats gained by the P.U.P. (Collet, Pickstock and Corozal Town) represented a majority of only 17 votes. The overall count showed that the P.U.P. polled 12,289 votes to 11,030 polled by opposition and independent candidates, giving the P.U.P. 52.7 per cent of votes cast. (See detailed results at appendix).

On November 1, a release from U.D.P. headquarters announced that Dean Lindo had been appointed Party Leader, and Joseph Andrews Deputy Leader.

The U.D.P. senators appointed to the House were Kenneth Tillett and Theodocio Ochoa.

At a convention held at Birds Isle on November 25, nine candidates to contest the upcoming Belize City Council elections were selected. They were: Philip Goldson, Kenneth Tillett, Harry Lawrence, Paul Rodriguez, Curl Thompson, Collet Gill, Angus Vernon, Manuel Esquivel, and Eric Neal.

The City Council election was held on December 11, resulting in the U.D.P. winning six of the nine seats, from the P.U.P., who held a nine seat majority in the previous Council.

U.D.P. Councillors elected:

Kenneth Tillett	-	4,085 votes
Phillip Goldson	-	4,036 "
Paul Rodriguez	-	3,994 "
Manuel Esquivel	-	3,943 "
Curl Thompson	-	3,916 "
Harry Lawrence	-	3,857 "

P.U.P. Councillors elected:

George Dakers	-	3,971 "
Alvan Fuller	-	3,895 "
Jose Encalada	-	3,834 "

The new City Council met for the first time on December 18, electing Paul Rodriguez as Mayor and Curl Thompson as Deputy Mayor.



U.D.P. - 1975

On June 7, Leader of the Opposition Dean Lindo travelled to London for a series of meetings with members of Parliament and the Secretary of State. The visit was intended to gain first-hand information regarding the attitude of the British government towards independence for Belize.

"Following months of closed doors negotiations between the Government and opposition delegates, the parties have finally agreed to join forces in making another appeal to the United Nations on the Guatemalan claim over Belize". This announcement was made after a sitting of the House of Representatives held on October 3. The opposition held the view that the Guatemalan claim to Belize has always been a serious one, and they therefore welcomed the opportunity to reaffirm this stand. Senator Theodocio Cchoa was the opposition delegate to the United Nations.

In Town Board elections on December 22 the majority of seats were won by P.U.P. The U.D.P. won all seats in Punta Gorda, one seat in Stann Creek, one seat in San Ignacio and their allies the Corozal United Front (C.U.F.) won all seats in Corozal Town. (Detailed figures are shown at appendix

U.D.P. - 1976

The Belize City Council re-elected Paul Rodriguez as Mayor, and Curl Thompson as Deputy Mayor for 1976.

During February Vicente Choco, U.D.P. elected Representative for the Toledo North Division defected to the P.U.P. He had been voted into office in 1974.

On April 4 the U.D.P. held its first National Convention, and the following were elected to office:

Manuel Esquivel	-	Chairman
Kenneth Tillett	-	Secretary General
Harry Lawrence	-	Vice Chairman
Margaret Guerrero	-	Deputy Sec. General
Lionel Tillett	-	Director of Organization



U.D.P. - 1977

Paul Rodriguez was re-elected Mayor and Curl Thompson Deputy Mayor.

The Party held a members' meeting on March 7, the highlight of which was the inauguration of the U.D.P. Roll of Honour when more than ninety persons were enrolled.

The Party planned a demonstration on July 10 to emphasize the party's call for a referendum before Belize reached independence status. Following a rally at the Courthouse Plaza, Party Leader Dean Lindo led several hundred supporters in a spontaneous protest march along the Foreshore where they were confronted by soldiers of the paramilitary unit, armed with riot clubs, tear gas grenades and rifles. Violence was averted when the police agreed to allow the demonstrators to make a detour through South Street which took them back to the Foreshore. This incident was given prime broadcast time on the BBC.

Candidates of the U.D.P. won at the polls on December 7, taking all nine seats of the Belize City Council. Mayor Paul Rodriguez topped the polls with 5,162 votes, while other candidates elected were:

Phillip Goldson	-	5,078
Manuel Esquivel	-	5,062
Ken Tillett	-	5,055
Harry Lawrence	-	4,963
Lionel Tillett	-	4,963
Curl Thompson	-	4,956
Eudora Pitts	-	4,907
Jacqueline DeShield	-	4,849

P.U.P. candidates who contested the election were:

Said Musa	-	4,414
George Dakers	-	4,412
Jose Encalada	-	4,336
Alvan Fuller	-	4,360
Leroy Taeger	-	4,343
Signa Yorke	-	4,316
Edwin Flowers	-	4,302
Lois Young	-	4,289
Evan Hyde	-	4,203

The inaugural meeting of the City Council elected Paul Rodriguez as Mayor, and Curl Thompson Deputy Mayor of Belize City.



U.D.P. - 1978

In a declaration dated February 8 the U.D.P. stated that: "the independence of Belize should be deferred for a period of not less than ten years, and that the National Assembly should immediately adopt a resolution for a ten year moratorium".

During February the Corozal United Party, the ruling party in the Corozal Town Board, converted itself into the Corozal United Democratic Party, thus becoming one of the self-governing divisions of the U.D.P.

Philip Goldson was suspended for an indefinite period as a member of the House of Representatives at a meeting held on March 3 when he was challenged by the Speaker on his right to speak. The suspension was viewed as wrong and unjustifiable by the U.D.P. He was reinstated on July 7, in absentia.

The second biennial conference of the U.D.P. was held on May 21, and elected officers as follows:

Manuel Esquivel	-	Chairman
Theodore Aranda	-	1st Deputy Chairman
Nestor Vasquez	-	2nd " "
Israel Alpuche	-	3rd " "
Lionel Tillett	-	Executive Secretary
Faith Stuart	-	Asst. Secretary
Collet Gill	-	Financial Sec. General
Philip Goldson	-	Director of Organization

In Town Board elections held on December 20, the U.D.P. won 30 of the 49 seats offered in seven towns. Results were as follows:

	<u>U.D.P.</u>	<u>P.U.P.</u>
Corozal Town	7	-
Punta Gorda	5	2
San Ignacio	7	-
Monkey River	7	-
Dangriga	3	4
Orange Walk Town	-	7
Benque Viejo	1	6

March of the electorate and the country towards their  
ultimate goal - The New Direction.



The selection of Mayors and Deputy Mayors for the U.D.P. controlled Town Boards resulted in the following:

<u>Town</u>	<u>Mayor</u>	<u>Deputy Mayor</u>
Dangriga	Alonzo Ogaldez	Margaret Guerrero
San Ignacio	Joseph Andrews	Rene Moreno
Corozal Town	Israel Alpuche	Maria de Carmen Reyes
Punta Gorda	C.J. Avilez	Eugene Martinez
Monkey River	Melvin Coleman	Pearl Duncan

In Belize City, Paul Rodriguez and Curl Thompson were reappointed Mayor and Deputy Mayor for a further one-year term.

February 24 was declared as "Philip Goldson Day" to commemorate the first anniversary of Mr Goldson's being named and suspended from the House of Representatives.

General elections were held on November 21, resulting in the U.D.P. winning five seats and the P.U.P. thirteen. The five successful candidates were: Theodore Aranda, Philip Goldson, Curl Thompson, Charles Wagner, and Basilio Ah.

(Detailed results at appendix).

The election results prompted great discontent among U.D.P. followers countrywide, claiming that the elections were stolen by the ruling P.U.P. through "rigged ballots printed by a friendly communist government". On November 30 hundreds of high school students attended a mass rally at the Pound Yard Bridge, and in the following days large demonstrations were held.

Dr. Theodore Aranda, the elected representative for Dangriga, was appointed Leader of the Opposition in the House by the Governor. Previously, Dr Aranda had been selected by the Parliamentary Committee of the U.D.P. to be Leader of the Party. Philip Goldson was appointed Deputy Leader and Curl Thompson Party Whip. Appointed to the Senate by the Governor were Manuel Esquivel and Elodio Aragon.

During the inaugural session of the House of Representatives, the opposition U.D.P. members comprising the five Assemblymen and two Senators walked out as a group when the time came for the Governor's speech. The Leader of the opposition made a statement formally charging the P.U.P. with election fraud: "Mr Speaker, with due respect to Her Majesty the Queen, we the Opposition cannot stay here today when those of the majority party have been <sup>fraudulently</sup> elected".



U.D.P. - 1980

In a letter to the Secretary of the U.D.P. Collet Division, Kenneth Tillett stated that he was withdrawing from politics effective April 14, 1980. Mr Tillett left the country shortly after.

A delegation comprising Dr. Theodore Aranda, Philip Goldson, and Manuel Esquivel arrived in London on August 3 for talks with officials of the Foreign and Commonwealth office over the future of Belize.

<sup>Council</sup>  
City/elections for Belize was held on December 17, and the U.D.P. lost all nine seats to the P.U.P. The U.D.P. candidates who contested the election were: Leroy Panting, Jacqueline DeShield, Manuel Esquivel, Curl Thompson, Philip Goldson, Eudora Pitts, Gustavo Bautista, Derek Aikman and Sam Rhaburn. About 66 per cent of the 18,000 registered voters turned out, giving an average of 6,492 votes to the P.U.P. as against 5,504 to the U.D.P.

With the advent of Belize's independence in 1981, the Central Committee of the U.D.P. adopted a proposed National Flag and called for a National Symbols Commission to go into the matter of the national symbols.

During March, following the release of the details of the Heads of Agreement reached in London, there was widespread rejection among the people. One of the more unpopular clauses was summed up in the Premier's radio address on March 16: "To meet Guatemala's need for sea access to the Caribbean sea from the Gulf of Honduras and the Bay of Amatique, Guatemala shall be assured of a sea passage with rights over the sea bed of such passage. This will be achieved by Belize limiting its territorial sea in our southern waters to the three-mile limit which we presently claim and enjoy. We will not give up any seas that we now own". On March 17 clashes occurred between citizens and the police, resulting in damage to property, looting and several arrests. As a result a state of emergency was imposed by the Governor on April 2.

At constitutional talks regarding independence, which started in London on April 6, the U.D.P. was to be represented by Dr. Theodore Aranda, Philip Goldson, Manuel Esquivel and Charles Wagner. The Party later decided to boycott the conference, giving the following reasons for its action:

- (a) a rapidly deteriorating situation in Belize due to a state of emergency and a nationwide strike of civil servants and teachers;
- (b) the refusal of Minister of State Nicholas Ridley to postpone the conference long enough to enable him to come to Belize for on-the-spot consultations and observations;



- (c) feeding to the news media by the Government half truths and lies, indicating a complete lack of good faith on their part in dealings with the opposition;
- (d) non-materializing of commitments by the British Government of assurances since 1978 that the opposition would participate in all Anglo-Guatemalan negotiations.

In mid-April the U.D.P. made categorical statements on the subject of independence. It was fully committed to the principle, but felt that before independence the following should be done:

- (a) find a just and peaceful solution to the Anglo-Guatemalan dispute;
- (b) if (a) is not possible, then the people be given the chance in a referendum to say whether they wish to go into independence without a solution to the dispute;
- (c) an immediate reform of the Elections and Boundaries Commission and of Radio Belize to allow both political parties equal participation in these two public bodies;
- (d) Britain make the necessary arrangements to ensure the country's future security;
- (e) Britain prepare Belize to enable it to participate meaningfully in defence by land, sea and air.

The U.D.P. further consolidated its rejection of the Heads of Agreement when in May it declined an invitation from the Belize government to go to New York to negotiate a treaty based on the Heads of Agreement. It stated in part: "the Party believes that it cannot join in negotiations which are preconditioned to produce results so detrimental to the vital interests of Belize and so contrary to the expressed wishes of the Belizean people".

On June 30, former P.U.P. Minister of Trade and Industry Santiago Perdomo formally joined the U.D.P.

At the invitation of the British Foreign Office Minister Nicholas Ridley, Dr. Theodore Aranda and Manuel Esquivel left Belize to meet with Mr Ridley on August 6. The delegation was able to extract a promise from Mr Ridley that he would urge the Premier to meet with the U.D.P. to try to resolve the many serious problems causing disunity in Belize, especially the issues connected with progress towards independence.

At midnight on September 21, the Union Jack was lowered for the last time, and the new Belizean flag hoisted in its place. "And so it was that on the 21st September 1981 Belize became an independent nation without rancour, without violence and with a fund of goodwill which should stand her in good stead for the future".

In Town Board elections held on December 16 the U.D.P. claimed control of three of the six main towns, as follows:

	<u>U.D.P.</u>	<u>P.U.P.</u>
Benque Viejo del Carmen	7	-
San Ignacio	7	-
Dangriga	6	1
Orange Walk Town	3	4
Corozal Town	3	4
Punta Gorda	-	7

(See detailed results at appendix ).

On December 29 the death of Joseph Andrews occurred in Los Angeles at the age of 37. Andrews served as U.D.P. area representative for the Cayo North constituency in the House of Representatives from 1974 - 1979.



THE PEOPLES' INDEPENDENT PARTY - 1968

The "Partido Independente del Pueblo" (Peoples' Independent Party) was formed in the Corozal District on February 4, 1968.

The Party's aim was to give the country "the leadership necessary in its objectives of individual and collective liberty and its search for the welfare of the individual on the communal as well as national level."

The officials of the Party promised never to depart from the democratic path, nor violate the sacred rights of the individual, and to accept the voice of the majority as well as to defend the rights of the minority whose existence is endangered.

An appeal for support of the Party was made to nationals of all categories, since the Party belonged to everyone and it would supply the machinery necessary for the urgent advancement of their goals of liberty and national welfare.

Officers elected at the initial meeting were:-

Lucilo Teck	-	Chairman
Ronaldo Herrera	-	Treasurer
Tobias Mendez	-	Secretary

Committee members were: Damiano Mendez, Claudio Teck and Pedro Gonzales.

#### UPDATE TO GENERAL ELECTIONS 1984

In an effort to revitalize the machinery of the U.D.P., the office of Party Leader was separated from the office of Leader of the Opposition. This move resulted in Dr. Theodore Aranda being demoted to Deputy Party Leader, while retaining the office of Leader of the Opposition. The decision was accepted by majority vote of the National Executive Committee in Dangriga on November 21, 1982. Shortly after this, Dr. Aranda resigned from the U.D.P. and formed a political party called the Christian Democratic Party.

At a Special Party Conference held on January 16, 1983, Manuel Esquivel was elected Leader of the U.D.P. Carl Thompson became Leader of the Opposition and Deputy Leader, while Dean Lindo was elected Chairman.

During a much publicized and heated P.U.P. convention on May 29, 1983, Louis Sylvestre successfully regained his seat as Party Chairman.

The results of City Council elections held on December 14, 1983, showed the U.D.P. victorious by dislodging the P.U.P. from all nine seats.

The resignation of Deputy Prime Minister Carl Rogers because of health reasons in January 1984, caused major changes in the P.U.P. government portfolios.

General elections were held on December 14, 1984, and for the first time in Belize's political history the P.U.P. failed to gain majority in the House. The U.D.P. won 21 to the P.U.P.'s 7 seats.



## GLOSSARY

The Battlefield - the site of today's Central Park.

Flag of the Baymen - Of a light blue colour, in the centre of which is the coat of arms of the Settlement of Belize on a white circle.

Heads of Agreement - A document attempting to settle the Anglo-Guatemalan dispute over Belize, signed in London on March 11, 1981, by the Premier of Belize, the Minister of State in the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and the Foreign Minister of Guatemala.

Baymen - During the Eighteenth Century several logging camps, comprising of Negroes and Scots, sprang up along the coast from Yucatan to the Republic of Honduras, including the Bay Islands and Nicaragua. The inhabitants of these logging camps became known as Baymen.

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