

# Guyana Public Service Union

## PRESS RELEASE

It is ridiculous, malicious, self-serving and a show of ignorance that Mr. Dvane St. John AKA Dwayne Marshall, a former Branch Representative of the Guyana Public Service Union (GPSU) Statistical Bureau Branch, could seek to malign the Union's administration over matters he ought to be fully aware.

Rule 3(g) of GPSU Rule Book clearly indicates that dues should be:

*“four (4) percent of the minimum of Band 1 of the Bargaining Unit pay structure and shall increase pari passu with increases in the minimum of the band ...”.*

This rule was unanimously approved at the 2008 Biennial Delegates Conference of the GPSU. All members are fully aware and committed to membership obligations stated in the Union's rules and this information is clearly stated on the “Membership Application Form,” endorsed by all members at the time of joining the GPSU.

The Executive Council of the Union, however, opted for restraint as it relates to increases in dues for the years 2018 to 2023, since it viewed Government's imposition as arbitrary, illegitimate and interim increase of wages and salaries.

However, following negotiations between the Government and GPSU in 2024 and the achievement of the settlement of 10% for 2024 and 8% for 2025, the Executive Council reactivated the requirements of the rules with the proviso that increases of dues should be set at \$3,000, which is \$1,094 less than the 4% of the Public Service minimum wage of \$102,346. The increased dues should have been effective since March 2025. It was interesting to learn that since being written to in 2025, Ms. Soyinka Grogan, M.S., Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of the Public Service, who is the representative of the Government of Guyana willfully

neglected to circulate the increase in dues to other Permanent Secretaries, Regional Executive Officers and Heads of Departments, as was previously done by all previous Permanent Secretaries responsible for Public Service Management.

Ms. Grogan's conduct is clearly in conflict with International Labour Organization Convention 151 that is ratified by the Parliament of Guyana. Suffice it to say that over the years the Union has been subjected to a litany of other abuses.

Surprisingly, the awareness of Mr. St John selectively ignored these occurrences and sought to malign union officials for the effects of external pressures and attacks on the Union's sovereignty. As a former Branch Officer, within the core of the Union's structure he saw no problem, proffered no solutions to arrest the waning foundations of the Union that the current leadership gallantly seek to salvage. It is men like St John that sacrificed Christ at Calvary without justification.

In hindsight, St John would not have been in a position to be so misleading and mischievous, if he had not benefited from the sound representation made by GPSU

President, Patrick Yarde and 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Dawn Gardener, when his employment was threatened at the Statistical Bureau. Moreover, his circumstances were not only resolved to his expectation, but perceptiveness during discussions on his plight

brought recognition that he was also being stifled by management at the time and made representations for him to be promoted to his current level. It proves that the professionalism within the Union is paramount, even when it recognizes how disgruntled and unreasonable some persons within the membership could be.

Trades Union representation comes at a cost and without dues paying membership, many of avenues towards proper representation would be unavailable. This is why from a political point of view, the destruction of GPSU was so important. If not for members, who displayed more commonsense than Mr. St John, the GPSU would never have risen like a phoenix from the ashes it was condemned to on the first political onslaught.

The GPSU is proud and unapologetic for paying its professional staffers, such as, President, Vice-President, General Secretary, Administrative Officer and other full-time staff the remuneration that were legitimately approved by the Executive Council, notwithstanding the obstruction to the Union's legitimate income, because of the failure of Ms. Soyinka Grogan, M.S., Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of the Public Service to act professionally by appropriately circularizing the Union's decisions. To date, all staff members of the GPSU enjoy better conditions of service than that of the Public Service.

In this scenario of events, there is one embarrassing aspect to the Union, which is the stupidity of Mr. Dvane St John AKA Dwayne Marshall. Clearly, he has not benefited from the Trades Union education made available to him over the years. This is a travesty.

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