

*A. Neil Deo*

## **BAS' PANDAY, COOLIE PRIME MINISTER**

I watched it on the news  
One I thought I'd never see  
One to make the world uneasy  
Uncomfortable with our views

Trinidad of ethnic fears  
I saw, I felt, I lived it myself  
Truths accumulate on a shelf  
Dusty with the brown man's fears

But why this tribal unity?  
East Indians speak in Creole  
Whisper, "Him is not we people!"  
My accent gave me away

I wrote, cajoled, protested, paid the price  
Not even sibling-victims did me a turn  
When spurned by the academy, I yearned  
For a little thanks, some rice with spice

Bas' who persisted against all political charges  
Was every man, and every laborer's brother  
Raised up now, Prime Minister  
He excludes me, gives marching orders