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Mrs. Jagan now a

## Guyanese citizen

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HOME Affairs Minister Mr. Llewellyn John yesterday announced that the Guyana Government had granted Guyanese citizenship to Mrs. Janet Jagan wife of Dr. Cheddi Jagan and General-Secretary of the Opposition People's Progressive Party.

Mrs. Jagan who came here from her home in the USA in the early 40's on a British passport, had applied for Guyanese citizenship six months ago.

The Minister, who made the announcement to a surprised Opposition in Parliament yesterday afternoon when he sought to amend the Guyana Citizenship Bill of 1967, said that the Government had no intention of depriving any legitimate applicant of being a citizen of this country.

Amendments to the Bill include a provision for the Minister of Home Affairs to have the power to grant citizenship to anyone in a period of less than eight years as previously provided for.

"Experience has shown," said the Minister, "that cases arise where persons who are virtually stateless need to be given assistance to regularise their status and the requirement of long periods of residence operates as a fetter in rendering such assistance. This amendment will provide the answer. . .

"It is felt also that there are occasions where an aggregate of five years during the proceeding seven years is considered too long. There is no design," he emphasised, "to grant citizenship at random or to use this amendment as a design to meet requisites of registration or otherwise."

But in their criticisms against the amendment, the Opposition MPs alleged that the real motive behind the Minister's amendments was to provide the Government with powers to grant citizenship to as many people as they felt obliged "for registration and electoral purposes."



MRS. JANET JAGAN

Graphic - June 26, 1968