

## LETTER IN SERVICE OF STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

*(The following is the text of Dr. Cheddi Jagan's letter to leaders of political parties, trade unions and various organisations all over the world. This letter solicited support for and solidarity with Guyana's fight for independence,. It was printed in Thunder, February 6, 1960).*

30<sup>th</sup> December, 1959

Dear Sir,

We have watched with great interest, sympathy, and understanding the growing national liberation movements in all colonial and semi-colonial countries throughout the world. Whenever and wherever the opportunity arose, we have added our small voice in the cause of freedom for all oppressed peoples.

To use the words of His Excellency, W. S. Tubman, President of Liberia, "We insist upon the inherent and natural rights of all men to be free. We insist that the process should be speeded up and that the time will come, and not too far distant, when all nations shall gear themselves to the proposition that each is the other's brother without regard to geographical locality, racial affinity or religious concepts."

In our country, the People's Progressive Party (PPP) from its inception in 1950 has been in the forefront of the struggle for political freedom and democratic rights. Every method has been used to destroy this Party: from the show of brute force to open terror; from the destruction of the popularly elected constitutional government in 1953 to the detention and imprisonment of its leaders; from victimisation and intimidation of its militants to national bribery at the masses.

Following their traditional practice of divide and rule, forces hostile to our national movement succeeded in splitting our Party in 1955. They even gerrymandered constituency boundaries when constitutional life was restored in 1957. These tricks and stratagems greatly weakened our movement, but it did not succeed in destroying it. At the 1957 election, we won 9 out of the 14 elected seats. Today we are in the government ( a "forced-marriage" alliance with the Colonial Office), in office but not in power!

We are about to go to London for constitutional talks. We are demanding that our country should become an independent sovereign state. We are prepared to maintain our link with the British Commonwealth, and for the next four years to share responsibility with the British Government on matters relating to defence and foreign affairs.

But today, when colonialism is a dying creed, when imperialism is on the defensive, the reactionary forces are bent on devising new chains - constitutional - to keep us in political and economic thralldom. These forces, aided and abetted by the imperialists, wish to keep our country within the colonialist fold. They are limiting their demands to internal self-government only. They are proposing a constitutional structure with certain innovations, the chief aim of which is the defeat of the national liberation movement and the creation of a weak and ineffectual government subject to obstruction and delay.

We have noted with pleasure the resolutions passed at the Sixth World Congress of the ICFTU at Brussels in December 1959:

"That affiliates shall press for cooperation with Government's economic policy to defeat and wipe out poverty in territories and in the world."

"That affiliates shall strive to remove every obstacle in the pathway to economic and political independence."

Knowing of the great role you and your movement have played in your country, and the keen interest and sympathy which you have shown in the freedom struggles of others, I take the liberty of soliciting from you a Declaration of Solidarity with our cause. If it becomes necessary for us to approach the United Nations, we shall be very grateful for whatever assistance you and your Organisation can render us.

Sincerely yours,

Cheddi Jagan