

**OPEN LETTER
TO THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE
FROM CHEDDI JAGAN**

GUYANA Current Dec. 1988

Dear Commissioner,

I completely reject your unprecedented statement that criminal activities are the result of political agitation conducted by me. I challenge you to produce the evidence on which you base your unfounded and defamatory allegations. If you cannot, you ought to have the grace to withdraw them.

I am accused and convicted of agitation against an IMF programme for Guyana. It is a conviction which I will gladly bear. After all, it was your founder-leader who said in 1982 that the IMF proposals were a recipe for riot, and in 1983, at the PNC Biennial Congress which the present PNC leader and no doubt you were present, inveighed against the IMF. I am expanding these views.

Unless you have evidence that members of the PPP have committed arson or that I have incited arson (which obviously you do not have or you would not have hesitated to publish it), then I can only judge that you have decided to depart from professionalism and take a partisan political position in keeping with that of the ruling party. Your statement is political in that it impliedly suggests that I should cease my political agitation against the IMF. It touches on trade union matters in so far as you deem a strike at Albion Estate to be without industrial basis.

As a citizen and Leader of the Opposition, I am concerned that the police should, whether directly or indirectly, wittingly or unwittingly, take positions on matters which are beyond their competence. In this sense your allegations are unprecedented. This is how a police state comes into being.

Arson was first introduced in this country in the early sixties as a political weapon against the homes and business places of PPP supporters. You may well remember statements advising the public that all that was needed for victory was a box of matches. I therefore invite you to direct your attention to those who know their own guilt and, like the thief who believes everyone else to be a thief, cannot accept that others can act on the basis of principle.

As for myself, I have been engaged in political agitation since 1943; first for independence from the British, for which I was restricted and imprisoned and later for democracy and economic liberation from the PNC for which, up to the present time, I have been harassed and intimidated. Imprisonment in 1953 did not stop me.

You can rest assured that threats will not stop me now.

Cheddi