

Remembering Cheddi

by Janet Jagan

March 6th 2005

We come together, again, on this day, the 6th of March, to commemorate the death anniversary of Guyana's hero – Father of the Nation – Cheddi Jagan.

I wanted to share with you a beautiful reflection by our daughter Nadira, who presented her father with a stunning photograph of Kaieteur Falls which she had taken, with this inscription – “Dad, at 76 you are still strong and vigorous as the mighty Kaieteur, your presence as majestic. Your dreams have become a reality. Guyana has seen the dawn of a new day. Your ideals will live on forever, flowing through the lives of all whom it touches, just as the waters of the Potaro, will always flow into our mighty Kaieteur.”

A person's worth after death, will, to some extent, say something of his worth while alive. Since Cheddi Jagan's death in 1997, his ideas and thoughts continues to influence Guyana, and, of course, the Party he built and nurtured and loved. His writings and ideas are preserved at the Cheddi Jagan Research Centre established in 2000 and used by many researchers and students. His major book “The West on Trial” has now gone into its 6th edition and republished by his daughter.

His ideas and plans continue to influence the PPP. But not in any dogmatic or slavish way. He always sought the widest opinions on vital matters and was never afraid or reluctant to ask the views of a wider spectrum of people. His mind was never closed to new ideas and this attitude has pervaded the thinking of the Party's leading members.

On moral issues, the Party leadership is constantly reminded of his unwavering adherence to the principles of honesty and integrity.

Cheddi Jagan never forgot his roots, was proud to be the son of indentured labourers bound to Port Mourant. He used to tell me that he felt refreshed when he went amongst the people, as he did frequently, always seeking ways of alleviating the poverty that so many endured.

He was a man with a vision, never defeated, never giving up. During the 28-years of PNC dictatorship, when to many the future was hopeless, Cheddi always knew that things would change. After the many rigged elections he said “We have been cheated, not defeated.”

Thus it came be, that in 1992, the PPP won elections and a new era began. We can all appreciate and respect this man who created a new spirit in Guyana and who led his people forward to a better life.

Today, we remember him and pay respects to this son of the soil who became the Father of the Nation!