Why is there so much Crime?

by Janet Jagan

Crime today is one of, or perhaps is, the biggest problems in Guyana. And I think it applies to most countries in the world. Was it always such a problem? I don’t think so. Looking back on the history of many countries, there have been times when crime was pretty much uncontrollable and then there were declines. I suppose historians can find understandable reasons for what happened and why and how changes took place.

However, in this particular moment in history, there are several factors that have come together which have brought about serious crime, with a prognosis for the growth of this source of fear in too many societies.

Generally, the easy availability of all types of weapons, particularly small and lethal weapons, has led to a situation wherein too many people actually own such weapons. There’s not much difficulty in using them or in obtaining whatever amount of ammunition is needed.

People have been stealing since human beings occupied this earth, so it’s nothing new. What’s new is that the thieves now carry weapons and use them with much more provocation. I give an example of Guyana some 50 years ago. When we lived on Laluni Street, Georgetown, we were robbed, at night, twice. But the thief didn’t carry a gun either time. One time a madman forced his entry to our house, but he didn’t have a gun; if he did I wouldn’t be here writing this tale, because I was alone at the time and had to run for my life. I’m sure many others in that period and up to relatively closer times had various experiences of this type, but none so cruel as the young man who just two weeks ago went to his mother’s assistance when she was being robbed and was shot to death. So there are different factors prevailing in the new man has become so “out of hand” that its influence is almost total. Most children grow up glued to the TV screen, most without any parental restrictions. What I see is frequently absolutely revolting as regards killing, sex, general behaviour, etc., but a child cannot discriminate so easily what is good from what is bad. Men and women, with guns, shoot and shoot and shoot; it goes on every day, all day and night on TV. After a while, you can’t see a shot at another person.

If we look deep into our own history, we will observe that violence erupted for the first time, I mean real deadly violence, in the 60’s, when the UK/USA coalition entered the scene here with money and agents. The killing spree began, for political/cold war considerations, and with US/CIA money to pay for the bombings and killing spree that led our country to a new kind of crime. If we remember correctly, “kick down the door” later, was the early manifestation of a new kind of violent crime that gradually became more prevalent.

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come criminals and killers and a menace to society. We don’t see that development here, but it might be coming because we are seeing more juveniles being caught in criminal activity, including, now, murders.

The growth of drug trafficking, a relatively new phenomenon, is at the root of a great percentage of our robberies and murders. Guyana has joined the fraternity of executions. I suppose for cheating in money transactions related to drugs.

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What is the answer to all these problems of security which frighten and threaten us all? Certainly the first step is to see that the generation growing up is guided to steer clear of criminal activities. That is something all of us can engage in, and hopefully, we will see a decline in the awful rise in crime that has swept through this world in which we live.