Divisive Mischief
by Janet Jagan

It is regrettable that one of our three daily newspapers, the Stabroek News (SN) continues to spray mischief through its pages. Not only mischief, but rank racism. Its letter columns abound with all sorts of lies, distortions, rumours and vicious racial references. I read one not so long ago, that really turned my stomach upside down. A frequent letter writer balled on all Afro-Guyanese to rise up one way or the other, but to objectively present the news and its letter columns were there, hidden under the usual racist garbage.

A newspaper, unless it's openly aligned to a political party or some specific entity, is not expected to be strongly biased or some specific entity, is not expected to be strong on the electorate or the outcome of elections. Now, SN is trying hard to stir up mischief that the President doesn't know her background as an historian, but as one who has lived through the times she records, she is way off!

In describing the 1957 elections, the historian noted that the PPP won 9 seats “roughly the same percentage as East Indians in the population.” So what is she implying? That the PPP won office in 1957 on the basis of the exact number of East Indians in Guyana? Sheer, bigotry and racism! The PPP from earliest times and after the Burnham split in 1955, always had a strong working class/farmer base. Neither of these is of one race — no! Not even farmers who are of all racial origins!

Ms McAlmont quoted from “The West on Trial,” in her article, but neglected to read what Dr Jagan said about that accusation of Apan Jhaar. On page 114, Dr Jagan explains that Daniel Dobidin’s United Farmers’ and Workers’ Party in the early 50’s attacked the PPP for its position on Federation. “And so it originated the slogan “Apan Jhaar” (literally, own race) – the use of racism, emotionally to frighten the Indians away from the PPP.

A good editor would never permit such racially divisive and incorrect writings to be published, unless he/she had a specific agenda.

Despite my strong criticism of the content of Stabroek News, I repeat my earlier call for the end of the advertisement ban on that newspaper.

Correction: The “World Bank” should replace the words “World Monetary Fund” in this column last week.