

THE GREAT VISIONARY DREAMS HAVE COME ALIVE

By Frederick Mallay

ON MARCH 6, 1997 12:23 AM Guyanese witnessed their historic Darkest Hour after pleading with God for the recovery of Dr. Cheddi Bharat Jagan. The World's Greatest Visionary, the Founding Father of the Guyanese Nation, their Symbol of Sanctity and their Guide to Conduct, the Personification of integrity, Honesty and Holiness, the Repairer of the breach to lead us triumphantly into the 21st century, the Healer of racial wounds, One of God's Chosen, our Prophet was recalled by the DIVINE into a realm of Higher Consciousness to fulfill a Higher Mission. The forces of Nature were upset at his passing. There was raging a storm on Thursday night and also on Friday. Another Great World Leader, an Outstanding Humanitarian, Michael Manley died shortly after. Michael and Cheddi shared their vision and strategies and were inspired to emancipate their peoples.

Dr. Cheddi Bharat Jagan was divinely appointed to lead his people from the bottomless pit of poverty, from despair and hopelessness. He instilled in us the true meaning and essence of Life – that we are Brothers and Sisters of the Human Race, that we must not demonize and mis-characterize one another, that we are all here to serve a worthy purpose, that we are here to make a worthwhile critical difference, that we should be caring for one another and be respectful to each other, that we should see life as Giving and Sharing with one another. We must always take a hard look at ourselves to cure our deficiencies.

Many great leaders had dark sides to their lives and rose to become world leaders only after major economic disasters or social upheavals, war, famine, etc. discovered the true meaning of life only from the ashes of their lives. Cheddi was the rare exception. He must have had daily communion with God pleading for divine

guidance to accomplish God's Will. From his boyhood years, he saw that Afro- and Indo-Guyanese have much more in common to keep them together and to proud of. Both of the above groups are descendants of 'slaves' and shared common history; both have lost self esteem, worthiness and were routinely dehumanized. He was aware of the heinous psychological dehumanizing practice of Caste System and the *Untouchables* was re-emerging in the Indo-Guyanese community. He was aware that the Afro-Guyanese have lost their roots, their culture and have been subjected to stereotyping as genetically inferior. Racial tolerance must be practiced in substance. He was guided by the twin pillars of Hinduism, *Dharma* and *Karma* (culture and deeds). He lived a principled life with integrity and was never duplicitous. He was a pure, simple and humble human being. He was firm believer of the Gandhian principles. He never believed in bloodshed and violence (HIMSA). He believed in non-violence (AHIMSA). He always sought the Truth (SATYAGRAHA, Truth Striving).

His greatest gift, the Gem of his Life, Guyana's Independence that he fought relentlessly for over forty years was stolen from him. For 28 years he was in the wilderness holding and outreaching to his people, mobilizing them in their just cause for liberation.

He always won by a landslide. All ethnic groups prayed and wept for him. His dreams of inter-racial solidarity and cohesiveness came alive again at his funeral. Few times has the world experienced such an event like this.

He has taught the true meaning of Forgiveness and Compassion, not to be permanently embittered. For in forgiving we are forgiven. He had reached out to his most inveterate formidable enemies and accommodated them – both local and foreign. We all belong to the Big Tent. We must keep his redemptive spirit alive.

Guyana and the Caribbean were bountifully blessed during his two terms in Office. In his first term in Office, Guyana had an unprecedented Agricultural Food supply. The surpluses were distributed to Georgetown, Plaisance, Buxton, New Amsterdam, to the poor and the needy. One cent a pound for plantain, cassava and vegetables. Great industrial nations have not done this to their poor. He second tenure saw an upsurge of overseas Guyanese investment, primarily in the agricultural sector. Many Guyanese overseas have decided to make Guyana their retirement home. All of his programs were blessed and were successful.

His innovative, pragmatic, consensus-building models were adaptive to suit the Guyanese needs. He made an in-depth analysis of all the models from the industrial nations, including the USSR, and adapted only the workable features. He was an advocate of Participatory Management Styles encouraging input from all, from the bottom up. He leveled the playing field for all. He was in essence the rising tide that lifts all boats.

Life is not fair but God is good. We are so thankful to God that his Rays of Enlightenment dawned on a tiny village of Ankerville, Port Mourant to give us a Mahatma. He had never withdrawn into a sanctuary, never deviated from his vision and championed the cause of the needy and the down-trodden.

We are eternally grateful to him for his years of struggle on our behalf. The Torch is now passed on to us. Will we foster his legacy of Oneness, Togetherness, Humility, Racial Tolerance and Accommodation? The World is a Global Village. Let Peace, Love and Harmony reign in our hearts.

He always wants us to think objectively by assessing all the variables. If we do not learn to think critically, we may believe in the unproven and in the unexplained or become willing recruits in the never ending stream of religious, social and political cults.

Can we give our Immortal Leader the unconditional assurance: "EVERYTHING WILL BE ALRIGHT?" He is looking to us to make our critical humanitarian difference.

