

Constitution

TOWARD INDEPENDENCE



by

CHEDDI
JAGAN

The speech by Dr. Cheddi Jagan, Leader of the People's Progressive Party and Minister of Trade and Industry, delivered in the Legislative Council on June 5, 1958, during debate on a self-government motion.

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This is an economic relationship. It is true that the connections are not as severe as they were a few years ago, but nevertheless they are there. I would like to say that as long as those connections continue and a country is not politically free this backwardness will continue. It is no argument to say that there are certain countries which are politically free but backward also. There are many reasons for backwardness; there may be political corruption and a whole host of other reasons. But political considerations certainly are among the most important considerations in determining the state of backwardness of a country.

Before I take my seat I would like to read one last quotation on this point from an author who has written a book entitled "Self-Government for the Colonies." It is written by Mr. W.R. Crocker who, incidentally, is not a Marxist or a radical. He has had a long history, I believe, in the Colonial Service, as he writes in his book of "when I first went to Africa nearly twenty years ago to join the Colonial Service in Nigeria." So he should know what he is talking about.

I quote:

"Too many of the men responsible for, or concerned with colonial policies, whether in the Colonies or in the Metropolitan State, whether French or English, Dutch or Belgian, still profess to believe that the real problem in the colonial areas is economic, not political. Give the colonial peoples more goods and services, they argue, so that their poverty, disease and ignorance can be eased; all will then be well."

"Let us not deceive ourselves: the essence of the colonial grievance is not economic. It is political." At the very end of his book he makes a very brilliant statement. He says:

"It was a great Englishman who hit the nail on the head. Good government is no substitute for self government." I hope that Hon. Members will support this Areadment unanimously.



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