



Mt. Roraima



Local Government Elections will be held in November

It is now official. Minister of Communities Ronald Bulkan has announced that Local Government Elections (LGE) would be held on November 12, 2018. The last elections were held in March 2016; therefore, when the electorate goes to the polls later this year, it would be doing so for the second time in two years, something it had done only once in 23 years of PPP/C rule.

Minister Bulkan in announcing the date, said the holding of LGE constitutes 'irrefutable' evidence of the commitment and sincerity of the A Partnership for National Unity and Alliance For Change's (APNU+AFC) intention to ensure that democratic governance obtains.

He said: "There is not merely respect, but reverence for provisions in the constitution. More importantly, our commit-

ment to rebuilding the damaged and broken system of local government we inherited is something we will resolutely pursue.

"Any functioning democracy deserves frequent elections at every level. Our inability to honour this practice in the past was a serious democratic blunder, which thankfully has been corrected."

We now have new local government legislation which, among other things, seeks to correct the imbalance in the relationship between the cen-



Minister Ronald Bulkan

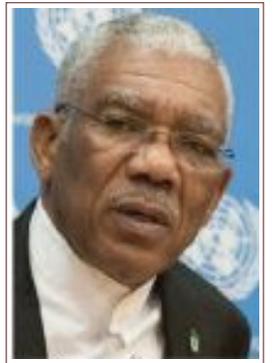
tral government and the local authorities. This has been a sore point in the past. It is worth noting that the PPP/C and the current government have had fundamental differences on what that relationship should be.

The PPP preferred one in which the central government, through the subject minister, maintained what is in effect an absolute veto over local governments, particularly on financial matters. The parties in the current governing coalition have opted for a more democratic relationship, whereby the power of the minister in this regard is greatly reduced.

Former President Donald Ramotar had, during the last Parliament, stubbornly refused to sign into law that aspect of the legislation that sought to operationalise the latter relationship. He had claimed that it was unconstitutional. That was one of several actions that eventually forced the then combined opposition to table the no-confidence motion against his government, which eventually led to fresh elections and the downfall of the PPP government.

It should be pointed out that the Local Government Bill, which was in effect vetoed by then President Ramotar, was one of the first pieces of legislation passed by the new Parliament and assented to by President David Granger.

With the announcement of the date, the electorate should be properly mobilised to participate in the upcoming elections. We have *See page.....2*



President Granger

FBI believes Page was recruited by Russians

By: Erica Y. King

President Donald Trump started this week decrying the use of political research, which he called "fake" documents, to obtain permission to monitor his former campaign aide Carter Page.

He also argued the use of that material meant the investigation by special counsel Robert Mueller into Russia's efforts to influence the 2016 presidential race should be seen as "discredited."

Trump tweeted a series of inaccurate claims, including his allegation that the U.S Foreign Intelligence Surveillance (FISA) warrant application against Page was "responsible" for starting the probe.



Campaign aide Carter Page

Documents released by the FBI indicate the dossier was just one piece of a larger mosaic of intelligence that caused the United States to be concerned about Page's connections to Russian operatives. Much of the most sensitive information gathered by the FBI about Page is redacted in the docu-

ments released publicly.

But Trump went on Monday morning to quote the president of conservative watchdog Judicial Watch, Tom Fitton, who appeared on "Fox and Friends" Monday morning, asserting the FISA warrant was set in place to "target the Trump team."

"It was classified to cover up misconduct by the FBI and the Justice Department in misleading the Court by using this Dossier in a dishonest way to gain a warrant to target the Trump Team," Fitton said. "This is a Clinton Campaign document. It was a fraud and a hoax designed to target Trump and the DOJ, FBI and Obama Gang need to be held to account."

Page said he was stunned by the recent allegations, telling ABC News they were false and "above complete ignorance and/or insanity."

Trump defended Page in a second tweet earlier this week.

The president's tweeting comes after the Department of Justice released more than 400 pages of documents displaying the FBI's intent to monitor Page during his tenure in Trump's presidential campaign.

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Local Government Elections will be held in November

(Continued from front cover) editorialised in the past that this is not an easy task. People all over the world do not generally vote at local elections at the same rate as they do in general elections and 2016 proved this point. There is a feeling that not much is at stake in such elections.

We argue differently. Local governments are the ones that are closest to the people, and therefore lend themselves to greater day-to-day scrutiny by the communities. These governments often determine what services are distributed in the communities, and how these are allocated. In other words, part of the government function of distributing common resources is devolved to the local councils.

Most importantly, local governments should be the nursery for new leadership. Often, leaders arrive in Parliament or in Cabinet without any experience in local government. For all of the above reasons, people should be urged to vote heavily at the LGE in November. The mobilisation should start now, and it should include a popular education initiative aimed at sensitising the public to the importance of the elections. Such education should be done preferably by GECOM and other NGOs, but the political parties should also help in this regard.

The governing coalition, on the other hand, faces some challenges. Will the APNU and the AFC contest separately or as a coalition? Will they be able to mobilise their constituencies to vote with the same enthusiasm as they did at the general election? Governing parties are always judged on their record in government, and that record is always subject to distortion by the opposition.

Creolese is ours to keep

By: Marissa Foster

Last year a lecturer at the University of Guyana (UG) was discussing linguistics when she asked ‘What do Guyanese think about our creole language?’ I was first to raise my hand and answered. I said, ‘Creole is a broken language.’

Given all that I experienced growing up in Berbice, I constantly heard this phrase. At that time it was the best answer I had to that question. The lecturer’s response is one that I will never forget. She said, ‘If something is broken then it cannot be used, but we still use creolese, so is it really broken?’

Creolese is a natural language and it is developed from a mixture of different languages. In Guyana, our creolese is mostly English-based, but also includes words from Dutch, Spanish, Amerindian, East Indian and African languages. Guyanese-Creolese varies within Geography, Race and Class. A Berbician may sound completely different, by using the same creolese compared to someone who lives in Essequibo. East Indians may use different slangs from that of the Africans and even the rich may speak differently from the middle-class. This phenomenon happens in every language.

There are approximately 7,000 different languages. It is estimated that by the year 2100, more than 2,500+ of those languages will become extinct. Every two weeks, a language dies in the world. When a language dies, a culture dies along with it.

This is so because we can gather a whole lot about a person’s culture just by taking a look at their language and dialect. Our Guyanese-Creolese tells us a story of who we are and where we came from as a people. It brings life to our history, a history of our ancestors who worked as slaves and indentured labourers.

They all spoke different languages and as such, a common

speech was formed to help them communicate better with each other and also with their masters. Language, in this case Guyanese-Creolese, is passed down from generation after generation. If by chance an entire generation refused not to speak/use creolese or as the generations go by, fewer persons speak creolese; it breathes a way for extinction.

I grew up with my parents and the majority of times, their speech consisted of formal English. I adapted to my environment, as we all would do and I must say my creolese is not the best. However, I never turned a blind eye on it. I converse with it; use it and I am proud of it. As I was researching, I came across the term ‘culture cringe’. This term was first introduced in 1950.

A.A Phillips wrote an essay on it and he described this phrase as, ‘an internalised inferiority complex that causes people in a country to dismiss their own culture as inferior to the culture of other countries.’ Could this be the reason why so many of us choose to discard our creolese? No culture should be superior or even comparative to another. Each culture is unique and the same goes for language as well. I can’t deny the fact that speaking the English Language helps us on a global platform.

As we migrate, engage in business transactions, etc., many persons may not be able to understand us when we speak creolese. However, I ponder on the thought that if we could learn English Language so that others can understand us, why not teach them our way of speech so that they can understand us as well? It always seems one-sided if you would ask me.

If I am now to answer the question my lecturer asked, ‘What do you think about our creole language?’ I would say, Guyanese creolese is something we should own, because it is ours to keep. It reminds us of the past, present and future of our culture. Through good and bad times, it is an innate brand we have as Guyanese, whether if we still live in the country or have migrated. I do not need to hold up the Golden Arrowhead in a foreign country for the citizens to acknowledge me as a Guyanese. I can just simply start talking!

Elections have consequences

By: Ronald Austin, Jr

Duh (that) is nah (not) me business, is a famous phrase used in our everyday conversations. When we make this remark, it means we have zero interest in an issue. It is sad when this phrase is applied while describing our attitude to public advocacy. The posture of ‘Duh is nah me business’ is what led to what is arguably the worst time for governance in Guyana’s modern history, experienced between 1999-2015. Governance reached its nadir during this period when the holders of power declared with unrivalled pomposity, ‘we have the ethnic numbers’.

On May 11th, 2015, Guyanese demonstrated that elections have serious implications. In this case, there was a positive outcome; in other cases, it could be negative. Numerous issues associated with the arrogance of government in Guyana in the past have disappeared, because of the decision of the masses at the last elections to demonstrate their power at the ballot box.

Further, some ominous things with life-and-death implications are no longer around due to the results of the last polls. The simple pleasure of government critics and reporters driving with their windows down or citizens subjecting their leaders to complete ridicule on social media, no longer come with fatal repercussions, because of our last monumental exercise of our collective franchise.

It is only those who were in the trenches *See page.....13*

Service for national defence

The Constitution of Guyana makes provision for the President to determine the authority, functions and powers of Ministers of the government.

Remember Change Begins From Within Each Of Us Join Other Concerned Nationals And Fashion The New Guyana!

CSJAD calls for a National Commission to investigate **RACIAL UNITY**

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The issue of ethnic balancing in our armed forces has once again come to the fore with commentators in mainstream and social media voicing their opinions.

Intermittently, it has been a topic of discussion, particularly in the aftermath of the 1992 national elections that brought the PPP//C to power, when the question of the ethnic composition of, especially the national army, gained currency. Of course, constituents were encouraged to enlist for service, as part of an active political policy of the party. And even though there was the subsequent Disciplined Forces Commission that made a raft of recommendations with regard to the cultural needs of Indo-Guyanese who would want to become servicemen, the expected rush for enlistment did not occur. As a matter of fact, it was reported that although there was some response, most of the recruits soon dropped out.

Guyana has a traditional pattern as far as enlistment in the country's security forces is known: and this pre-dates our independence, which pattern of ethnic composition has continued on to now. It is one where Afro-Guyanese have favoured the Public Service as a means of employment in deference to the medium of self-employment by Indo-Guyanese, who gravitated towards the more lucrative pattern of business and commerce, as a means of livelihood. This was the realisation that surfaced in the face of the low Indo-Guyanese response to joining the Guyana Defence Force (GDF), post-1992.

Thus, the accusations of ethnic discrimination against those Indo-Guyanese who applied to become members of the army, even to the point of discouraging such, cannot stand, since there is no evidence that supports such a perception. One only has to refer to those initial Indo-Guyanese who became officers and went on to serve with distinction: Major-General Joe Singh, ret'd., former Chief-of-Staff; Lieutenant-Colonel Rohan Seopaul; Majors Vibert Budhoo, and Ishoof; Captain Kennard Ramphal, who served as a former ADC to the late President Arthur Chung, and others whose names cannot now be recalled.

The fact that these named officers rose to their individual serving ranks, is because they answered the call to duty as Guyanese, and not to the insular voice of race. They made the army and all Guyana proud, because of their service and loyalty to country.

And there are still high-ranking Indo-Guyanese officers within the GDF, with the current deputy chief-of-staff of such an ethnic background. Even the personnel of the Guyana Police Force, is representative of many Indo-Guyanese senior officers, so again, it is a bird that cannot fly.

Though one understands the complexities and challenges of our society, because our national army and law-enforcement agencies have stuck to their mandate of serving in the national interest. And in this regard, the GDF stands head and shoulders above all, no doubt living up to its brand as the Peoples' Army, which means serving the nation in any and every critical situation, whether air-dashing the seriously ill from distant areas—a well-known capability that saved many lives—or retrieving the bodies of citizens from crash sites, and in other tragic circumstances.

It must be emphasised that a nation's armed forces is about the call to the ultimate form of duty that could ever be undertaken by any national institution. It is about service in defence of our sovereignty. This is a call to the highest form of patriotism, which has no cash value in terms of what is required of any citizen who answers such a call. It is a selfless understanding and commitment to country first, which no other consideration must stand in the way of such a sacred acceptance of loyalty and duty to such an undertaking.

Therefore, a national army must not become the repository for those who wish to serve on the basis of such a dangerous platform of race and ethnicity; or satisfying any such criterion in the form of quotas, or becoming hostage to any such anti-national thinking. The mission of the army is too crucial, sacred, and central to the national well-being, to be entrusted to citizens of such a narrow mindset who aspire to its ranks. To the nation's benefit, the GDF must be credited with continuing to stand aloof from such parochialism, while maintaining its professionalism.

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We should stand with Govt. to bring errant public officials to justice

Why Defer Today's Possibility for the Uncertainty of Tomorrow

Public servants should be held at a higher standard of honesty

I am happy that the management of the Guyana Prison Service (GPS) is attempting to recruit fit and proper persons for the prison service. According to Director of Prisons Gladwin Samuels, applicants are now required to do drug tests before recruitment. Some have failed the tests. In addition, I recently saw in the daily papers the names, addresses and photographs of some aspirants for the job. All these recruitment tactics and perhaps many more are designed to induct suitable ranks into the system, To curb the ridiculous ease with which illicit items are entering the various prisons and to suppress the rampant corruption in that institution. However, although this is a commendable and giant step in the right direction, much more needs to be done to bring the existing sad state of affairs at the prisons under control. There must be a broader and deeper shift in the paradigm. In the recruitment process, the authorities should establish assessment centres, where applicants would be assessed by trained assessors. Sometime ago I recommended this course of action as part of the Guyana Police Force's recruitment strategy—no movement yet in that direction.

It is even more apposite for the Guyana Prison Service. An assessment centre is widely accepted for recommending personnel actions in a variety of occupations, including the prison service. It is a place where a series of events, exercises or scenarios take place. It is one of the best methods available for selecting suitable candidates for either employment or advancement in law-enforcement agencies.

A brief analysis of the recruitment system in the GPS revealed that as long as an applicant passed the written examination, is medically fit, produced a clean police record, is drug-free and cleared by simple background checks he is guaranteed entry into the prison system. However, there is no testing for unacceptable behavioural traits. No evaluation for psychological behaviour. Hence, undesirables including psychopaths and others coming from the society with real hustlers' mentality can easily become prison officers.

Over the years, the GPS has come under heavy scrutiny and criticism from commissions of inquiry and elsewhere. Non-compliance with some of the CoI's recommendations has resulted in fiery and deadly consequences in the prisons. Several persons in authority have posited statements to the effect that: there are just a few rogue elements that we have to get rid of; if they cannot do the job properly, they should just leave; it is just some rotten apples in the barrel that we have to deal with. Those statements are nothing more than self-serving, superficial facades, intended to draw attention away from their own failure. The real issue might not be the rotten apples, but the barrel. The task of corruption control is to examine the barrel, not just the apples, the organization, not just the individuals in it, because corrupt prison officers are made, not born.

Perry puts the issue succinctly, "Those who serve the public must be held at higher standard of honesty and care for the public good than the general citizenry. A higher standard is not a double standard. Persons accepting position of public trust take on new obligations and are free not to accept them if they do not want to live up to the higher standard.

Clinton Conway

As a young Guyanese who is interested in learning about the political and historical evolution of the country in which I live, it disheartens me to relay my dissatisfaction and struggle to unearth this treasure of information.

The first example that comes to mind is an experience a

few years ago, when I was seeking a recording on the state funeral of the late president Dr. Cheddi Jagan. Quite naturally, I visited the Cheddi Jagan Research Centre at Red House expecting to find what I was looking for. Unfortunately, it was not to be. I was told, much to my disappointment, that while such a recording surely existed in the archives, currently the staff there are having difficulties locating it.

Interestingly, and gratefully, I did manage to find a video record of the late Forbes Burnham's funeral on YouTube, which precedes Jagan's by some 12 years.

On the matter of YouTube, I further note that while I can find the speeches of prominent individuals of the sixties such as JFK or Dr. King, there is a paucity of such records involving Guyanese leaders of the sixties to the eighties.

Hasn't anyone in government hitherto taken the initiative to digitise historic moments, for the contemporary Guyanese audience? I wonder where in Guyana could I locate a satisfactory catalogue of Burnham's speeches, and if such material exists, why isn't it more readily available to the general public?

The man's oration was second to none, but the younger generation has been robbed of listening. That is a shame. The history of our immediate post-independence has taken on an esoteric quality, because only a select few seem able to access said material.

I visited the Walter Rodney (National) Archives a few weeks ago. I began by saying I enjoyed my visit and I was pleased that they possessed copies of the Guyana Chronicle from decades gone by. However, I was uncomfortable with the state in which I found the old Chronicle papers. Very fragile, decaying, and not in one piece. The documents could have been preserved better for posterity with special sleeves.

I reiterate that digitising the material would be a good move for preservation. Digitising would remove the worry of decay and loss.

I do not think that our historical content is simply non-existent, rather, the problem lies in the scattered nature and inaccessibility of this material. You find yourself on a voyage when searching for our historical records, moving between locations, but never finding the completed picture.

It is like trying to assemble the pieces of a puzzle, except that you do not know where all the pieces reside to begin with. I can look up the cherished chronicles of many nations with relative ease, but in Guyana it seems we have been poor custodians of our own past. I wonder sometimes, when the baby boomer generation of Guyana passes on, how much of our history and the commensurate lessons would be lost permanently.

"This is the Dark Time my Love" may very well be the sole Martin Carter poem Guyanese children have ever been exposed to. It was certainly the only one given attention during my literature studies in secondary school. Whose fault that is, I am not sure, but I expected that we would have taken some more pride in Carter and perhaps made his work more pervasive.

The only copy of his works I ever held was found in a dusty corner of my father's library, dating back to the eighties. If you were to search online for Carter, you would be lucky to discover a handful of his better known poems. Have we left him in the eighties? There seems to be a lack of promotion of Guyanese literature, which is unfortunate because I think this country badly needs more readers.

The plight outlined above is significant; I propound that our nation need to understand its history. It is repeated often that we were a very literate nation. I am not sure if that holds true today given our current standard of political discourse. And that is precisely why we should make our historical information and literature more accessible to all citizens.

Gibran A. Azeez

How beneficial was the CARICOM leaders meeting?

By: Sir Ronald Sanders

This week, the Washington-based publication, *Latin American Advisor*, sought responses from me, and others considered knowledgeable on Caribbean affairs, to three questions regarding the recently-held CARICOM heads of government meeting in Jamaica.

For the benefit of readers of this column, I provide more detailed answers to the three questions here than I did to the Washington publication.

The first question posed was: what were the main accomplishments of the meeting? Undoubtedly, the main achievement of the meeting was a renewed commitment to making the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME) more effective. After years of ‘pausing’ the implementation of the many national actions required to advance the single market, new life has been breathed into the process.

Significantly, the new Prime Minister of Barbados, Mia Mottley, who has taken over lead responsibility for the CSME from her predecessor, Freundel Stuart, will hold monthly meetings with officials of the CARICOM Secretariat. This oversight by the Prime Minister will allow regular monitoring of progress and allow Ms. Mottley to consult directly with her colleague heads of government on removing bottlenecks to implementation, which has long been a hindrance to advancing the economic integration process.

Additionally, a special meeting of the Heads of Government will be held in November to focus exclusively on the CSME. There is now a large body of reports from various sources, including the private sector, which can inform the meeting of leaders. There are many contentious issues to be faced. Overcoming the challenges will not be easy, but the willingness to dedicate a meeting to deal exclusively with the matter is a positive sign.

The second question posed by the *Latin American Advisor* was: what resulted from the presence of non-Caricom heads of state, Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel and Chilean President Sebastián Piñera, at the meeting?

Cuba and CARICOM countries have had a strong cooperative relationship since 1972 when four independent nations of CARICOM, defied the U.S. embargo to establish diplomatic relations with Cuba. Relations with Cuba were dominated by the leadership of the Castro brothers – Fidel and Raul – for the 46 years that followed.

Therefore, it was important that CARICOM leaders and the new Cuban President had the opportunity to get the measure of each other and to understand whether there would be any divergence of policies by either side.

As it turned out, the meeting underscored the solidarity of Cuba and CARICOM, including CARICOM’s support for the lifting of the U.S. economic and financial embargo against Cuba. Leaders also agreed to increase trade and deepen economic relations.

With regard to Chile, Chilean President Sebastián Piñera has continued showing the interest in the Caribbean displayed by his predecessor in office, Michelle Bachelet. It was agreed that the CARICOM-Chile joint commission would be convened in Barbados to further cooperation on a range of issues of mutual interest, including a multidimensional approach to measuring poverty. Chile is also interested in a free trade agreement with CARICOM which would be difficult, but should not prevent agreement on a partial scope scheme. CARICOM needs to diversify its trading arrangements to break its vulnerability to a narrow group of countries.

Chile has shown willingness to help champion arguments for a change in rules that disqualify Caribbean countries from access to concessional financing from international financial institutions. In this context, President Piñera’s encounter with CARICOM heads was a very important development.

The final question was: what are the most critical issues currently facing the Caribbean, and do the region’s leaders have the right plans to tackle them?

The critical issues for the Caribbean are: unemployment, the damaging effects of climate change, high debt that limits their fiscal capacity for spending on social welfare and infrastructure; and an international environment that is unhelpful to their plight.

Over the last decade, in the wake of the 2008 global financial crisis that originated in the U.S. and that spread globally, efforts to tackle these issues have largely been pursued at a national level. Regional collaboration was eased to one side, as beggar-thy-neighbour policies were implemented. There will long be a debate on whether the failure to implement regional responses contributed to retarding growth in Caribbean countries and increasing their dependence on countries outside the region, and therefore, compromising their individual and collective independence.

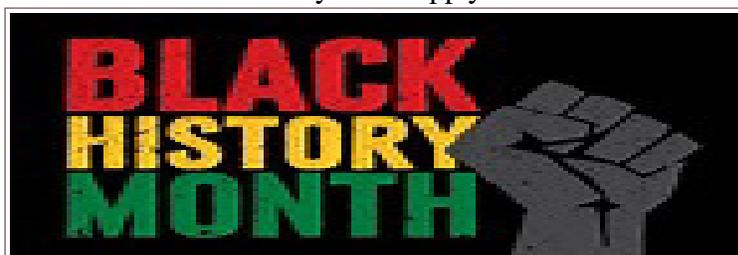
In the event, many heads of government have privately indicated that the July meeting was one of the best in the last five years. New energy and interest were displayed, and significantly, while there was some argument that the ‘E’ in ‘CSME’ should be abandoned because it has no realistic possibility of accomplishment in the foreseeable future, many leaders insisted on its retention as a legitimate aspiration of the Caribbean people and, therefore, a necessary goal of Caribbean governments.

The ‘E’ in ‘CSME’ embraces the creation of a single ‘economy’, going beyond a single market. It would include a single currency, a single Central Bank, common financial legislation and regulation, restrictions on governments from printing money, limitations on incurring debt and constraints on careless spending of foreign reserves. It would also remove the necessity to change currencies to travel around the Caribbean and to pay for goods and services.

Indeed, what the ‘E’ in CSME would do is to replicate across CARICOM, the successful project by the countries of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) in establishing a single currency, and deeper and supportive integration arrangements that have saved their individual states from greater economic hardship and facilitated movement of Caribbean people within their own region.

Steps are being taken to stay on the path to a single economy. They are baby steps such as completing work on a financial services agreement and an integrated capital market. But, they are nonetheless important steps, and they indicate that the meeting of heads of government, rather than being sidetracked by narrow national interests, appeared to have moved – albeit not leapt – to a more regional approach to dealing with the issues confronting them regionally and collectively.

It is important to note that, by its own choice, the Bahamas is not part of the CSME arrangements and many of the observations in this commentary do not apply to it.





Re-unite separated families!

The President’s recent Executive-Order (signed on Wednesday, June 20th. to stop separating families) might have instituted a pause in separations among families seeking accommodation in the United States of America...**BUT THE BIGGER PROBLEM LIES IN RE-UNITING THOSE FAMILIES WHO HAVE ALREADY BEEN SEPARATED.**

The Associated Press has reported that days after President Trump (in responses to national and international outcries) had ordered an end to the separation of families at the border, Federal Authorities were still working out plans to re-unite detained children with their parents, and re-establish immigrant households.

The AP added that parents were struggling to get in touch with their children, who are in many cases being held in centers hundreds of miles apart in different U.S.’ States...Those parents are complaining of “worry and frustration.”

Zenen James Perez of the Texas Civil Rights’ Project stated that immigrant families were still waiting for details on how parents and children were going to be re-United.

Addressing the issue of re-uniting families, Immigration-Attorney—Effren Olivares said “it is difficult for Governmental Agencies to re-unite immigrant families once they are separated, because the systems that process adults, and those that handle youngsters often don’t communicate with each other.”

Henry Lucero—a Director of Field-Operations with the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) recently disclosed “it is unclear how families will be re-unified, it is a big question with very few answers.”

Adults accused of immigration offenses come under the authority of the Homeland Security Department; while youngsters taken from their parents are overseen by the Department of Health and Human Services.

An Entity has been established to enter information into a database in order to help keep track of separated parents and children.

The queries being posed by Advocates are (i)... What is the plan, (ii) what is the strategy for reuniting separated-families; and (iii)... what constitutes the infrastructure to re-unite.

PROBLEM-AREAS

The major problems affecting the re-unification processes include:-

* Where the 2,000 odd-children and babies are being currently housed; are the facilities properly licensed, equipped and staffed with qualitative and experienced staff.

Mayor Bill de Blasio in a pointed missive to Washington, demanded to know details on the hundreds of migrant children who were stripped from their parents and shipped to various sites. He stated “we have a sacred duty to protect every child, but unfortunately lack of information from Federal authorities is making that mission very difficult.”

* How will the parents be contacted and/or located?

* If/when contacted by officials and locations are secured...How will the re-unification processes be undertaken? Since there are so many bureaucratic barriers and hurdles;

Mayor de Blasio in calling attention to the detained children’s mental-health crises dispatched a letter to the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Alex Azar stating “Many of these children are struggling with profound emotional trauma and require immediate medical care.”

* Easing pain and trauma, think about being separated from our children for brief moments at a mall or some other site;

* None of the above is being helped by the limited access that elected-officials and other personnel are having to detention-centers sprinkled across several US’ States.

Let me borrow a quote from NY City Council Member-Jumaane Williams “The Trump Administration’s Executive-Order does nothing to fix the humanitarian crisis at our border, and does nothing to re-unite the thousands of children who have been ripped away from their families (or as Trump referred to them: animals) as they flee danger and hardship in pursuit of a better life (or as Trump said: to infest our country, the Executive Order will not end the crisis”.

In closing, how can we forget those seven minutes of aired-children’s/babies cries and tears—they were beyond RACE, NATIONALITY, POLITICS, AND GEOGRAPHY.

How can we forget the interruption from a border-guard joking “it sounds like an orchestra, in need of a conductor”.

How can we forget the voice of a little one appealing to be allowed to call her aunt (whose telephone-number she had); or another pleading to contact his father (whose telephone number he also had.).

CURIOSITY

Since President Trump has issued the executive-order that is aimed at ceasing the separation of families, curiosity is being expressed as to why the Immigration and Customs Enforcement has posted a Notice saying it is looking into creating 15,000 beds for use in detaining immigrant families; as well as why the Pentagon has agreed to provide space for as many as 20,000 migrants on U.S. Military bases.

I believe that the main solvent to this Issue/CRISIS is for the agitations and advocacies to be maintained until the re-unification process is completed.

After implementing the policies that separated families, we must now endeavor with passion and fever to re-unite children and babies with mummies and daddies. We must have a say in preventing any more delays.

Immigrant children separated from their parents are being held in what amount to cages. The public outrage continues over Trump’s immigrant family separation policy.

‘Will-power is the key to success. Successful people strive no matter what they feel by applying their will to overcome apathy, doubt or fear’

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Ethnic Imbalance in Guyana: A danger that will consume all of us

By: Dr. David Hinds

Some people have condemned me for raising the issue of ethnic control of decision making in Guyana's cricket. Not for the first time I seem to have touched a raw nerve. Many people have stopped me in the streets or written to inquire about my response to the interview given by the secretary of the Guyana Cricket Board. The fact is that I did respond, but only one of the daily newspapers carried it.

I argued in that response that cricket is our national sport—it is part of our shared heritage. It is played by all ethnic groups in Guyana. It is one of the few areas of life that our competing ethnic groups have found some common purpose and joint nationalism. It follows that its management should not be dominated by one ethnic group. The management institutions should not be monopolized by one ethnic group. Stakeholders, representative of the broad spectrum of the game's participants, should not be systematically marginalized or excluded from management of the game.

I contended that a group of Indian Guyanese men, selected by Indian Guyanese clubs and stakeholders cannot effectively represent the interests of African Guyanese stakeholders and players, and other ethnic groups. I further contended that what we have had for the last decade is a reproduction of ethnic control, with the same group of individuals rotating the top positions among themselves.

I also observed that those associations representing areas of the country where African Guyanese players and clubs abound are not part of decision making in Guyanese cricket. They do not benefit from the funds and resources the GCB receives from the West Indies Cricket Board. Only players and clubs which submit to the control of the so-called GCB can benefit—patronage at its best.

I called on the GCB to agree to fair and open elections in which all member-boards and associations participate, and to agree to a neutral cricket ombudsman to mediate between the factions.

African Guyanese have a right to be part of management of a sport in which they have contributed beyond the call of duty. Their contribution to Guyanese, West Indian and global cricket has helped in no small way to humanize the sport and transform it into a source of empowerment, pride and culture for all Guyanese and West Indians. I want African Guyanese boys and girls to once again aspire to be President and Secretary and Treasurer of the GCB. Cricket in Guyana is better when it is a source of ethno-racial harmony rather than ethno-racial dominance.

My decision to tackle the cricket question was not to stir up trouble, but to draw the country's attention to the ethnic imbalance in our society, and to urge that something be done about it. Such imbalance is a clear and present danger to Guyana. No society survives for long under such conditions. I am arguing that that ethnic imbalance is at the heart of the volatility in our society.

Ethnically divided societies such as Guyana have proven to be very difficult to manage politically, economically and culturally. Guyana is especially difficult because two of the groups are large enough to induce fear in each other when they hold the levers of political power.

During the PNC's reign, its ability to totally dominate the state and society was always hampered by Indian Guyanese control of the private commercial sector and its dominance of both the public and private agricultural sectors which were key to the country's economic survival. This gave the PPP a serious political weapon, which it used both as leverage and as a tool

of economic sabotage.

The PNC's resort to electoral malpractice, militarization of the state and public ownership of the commanding heights of the economy were rationalized as a form of ethnic counterbalance to the Indian Guyanese control referenced above. The problem with the PNC's strategy was that it was premised on overt anti-democratic foundations and could only be sustained by an authoritarian regime.

That that regime eventually crumbled was due in part to its inevitable assault on the civil liberties and rights of all Guyanese, regardless of ethnicity. African Guyanese had to make a choice between ethnic loyalty and democracy—the dilemma which Africanist leaders in the WPA such as Kwayana and Rodney faced.

When the PPP assumed political power in 1992, its decision to pursue an agenda of dominance is critical to understanding where Guyana is today as far as ethnic power is concerned. The party was able to merge its newly acquired political power with the existing Indian Guyanese grip on key sectors of the economy to completely tilt the balance of power in the society in favour of one ethnic group. Unlike the PNC, the PPP did not have to resort to overt anti-democratic methods. It won successive certified elections and avoided the authoritarian tag, even though it governed in the most anti-democratic manner.

What the PPP also did was that it used state patronage and ethnic engineering to neutralize African Guyanese-dominated state institutions such as the military, police and public service. Soon the leadership of these institutions were no longer loyal to the PNC and to African Guyanese ethnicity—Desmond Hoyte's "kith and kin" had vanished.

The PPP simultaneously cultivated a small African Guyanese group within the commercial sector and at the top echelons of the public service. Finally, they facilitated the formation of paramilitary militias comprising mainly African Guyanese ex-military men and unemployed youth.

In the meantime, the party used the government to transfer economic wealth to mostly Indian Guyanese elites and party supporters, mainly through government contracts and other questionable methods, worth an estimated 500 to 700 billion dollars. The granting of land, scholarships, grants and special contract employment in the government sectors were also part of this grand agenda of ethnic domination.

The deliberate strategic placement of party supporters and ethnic "kith and kin" in key institutions of government and state. Including the police and the military. ensured control of the decision making even in institutions over-populated by African Guyanese.

This lopsided transfer of economic resources and institutional power has had dire consequences for all areas of the society. Today African Guyanese, for example, perform substantially worse than their ethnic counterparts in an education environment that is driven by money—the wealthier the parents are, the more likely the child will do well at exams. These performances in turn determine how the various groups view education as a tool of upward mobility.

Just look at the private economic sector and you see the great ethnic disparity in ownership of businesses. It is no secret that access to capital is indispensable to getting loans from banks to start businesses. Those with established businesses and access to capital are in better positions to bid on contracts. Wealth reproduces wealth and poverty reproduces poverty.

Guyana on the mend

In spite of the doom and gloom criticism being heard daily by some politicians, it seems that some good things are happening in Guyana under this administration. From all indications, Guyana appears to be on the mend. The crime rate, especially murder, rapes and gang violence have reduced, traffic fatalities are lower, and there is a significant decrease in corruption and the illegal narcotics trade. The Guyana Revenue Authority (GRA) is no longer as corrupt as it used to be. Under its new Commissioner General, the GRA has reduced the smuggling of counterfeit items into the country and has plugged a number of tax loopholes which has led to an increase in the collection of revenue by some 30 percent.

Georgetown is now cleaner; garbage is being collected daily, and the stench that had hovered over the city during the last administration has disappeared. Today, there are fewer potholes in the city streets, and there has been an increase in the flow of potable water. Construction has increased and several small companies have sprung-up, not only in Georgetown, but in other cities and towns across the country. The fear and hopelessness that once gripped the nation have drifted away and have been replaced with confidence and optimism. For many, especially the youths, the future looks bright and Guyana is no longer considered a pariah state as it once was.

As Guyanese, one of our unique traits is our ability to rise above adversity. We actually obtained such traits from our leaders who seemingly overcame insurmountable odds in their struggle for independence. These traits became very useful during the abysmal failure of the last fifteen years to end the sale of illegal drugs, the crime wave and murders of several prominent persons, including the former Minister of Agriculture, Sash Sawh, journalist Ron Waddell and more than 450 youths. Today, Guyana has drifted away from being a corrupt, crime-ridden and drug-infested state. It seems that government's "zero tolerance" policy on crime, corruption and illegal drugs is working.

History has proved that we are a resilient people. Those who continue to preach damnation need to know that during the last three years, the majority of people overcame adversity and have embraced hope. The citizens, especially youths, have moved off the cynicism bandwagon and have become more productive. The entrepreneurial spirit in the country is at its highest level in the last few years. People are not interested in political gimmicks, but in issues that will improve their well-being in the short, medium and long term. Empty promises and propaganda are things of the past.

It is not surprising that people are very informed about what is happening in the country and they have pronounced upon who among our politicians are performing poorly. They are concerned about incivility of our politicians from both sides of the isle and the gradual disappearance of the traditional societal values and a myriad other issues, but they are not about to throw in the towel. Instead, many are hoping for a better and brighter future for themselves and the country.

Gone are the days when there was a tremendous amount of ill-will towards the country. Today, people believe that things are getting better under this government and that the country is on the mend, especially with the impending production of oil scheduled for 2020. However, given ExxonMobil track record, they are hoping that the government does not pin all its hopes on oil. It should take into consideration the warnings from this publication and several countries whose poor policies have brought untold suffering to their citizen from the company. While the future prospects of oil look bright for Guyana, the government must acknowledge that the supply of and demand

for oil could impact the cash inflows. Oil prices fell before, and while it is rising again, albeit slowly, it could also fall again. But the people are hopeful that Guyana is on the mend and could have a very bright future.

Training our youths

There continues to be a discernible high level of frustration and anger among youths in this country, especially the uneducated, poor and jobless. Too many are committing crimes in order to survive. This is evident in our daily newspapers and other media outlets. Others have been promised employment, only to realize that they have essentially been fooled by the power brokers who have now gotten what they want and have changed course.

While some youths have vented their frustration toward society, others are striving to achieve political leadership against all odds. This is commendable, given that a large number of them voted in the last elections. Despite the fact that youths are the majority in the country, only a few are in positions in the government and decision-making structures such as the cabinet and Parliament. This is a far cry from what was promised to them during the election campaign.

Having political ambitions is all well and good for youths, but there is cause for concern as regards to how they will be groomed. There is real fear that they will be schooled in the same old partisan, divisive, racial and vindictive politics that will ultimately see them mirroring the politicians whom they would replace. The fear becomes worse because none of the political parties in the country have any real formal systems or mechanisms in place to train youths.

Youths are needed on the political scene, but they must be taken seriously by the leaders of the main political parties. Their beliefs and aspirations to become leaders must be guided by the principles of democracy. They should not subject themselves to the autocracy of their respective parties' hierarchy.

However, it is known that in recent times most youths are not always willing to toe the party line or engage in rabid partisan dialogue, because they have witnessed or believe that partisan politics has stifled the development of Guyana over the past 50 years. They want to be holistic leaders who will move the country away from the tunnel vision that would have existed in the past. Therefore, ample training by the established parties would perhaps provide the right balance for real and genuine political leadership that is needed to develop the economy and unite the country. It would provide the ideal opportunity for youths to practice politics without biased overtures.

Partisan politics is also at the root of much of the economic and social disparities between the rich and poor as well as in the education system. It has created a dysfunctional society. Most of the politicians today were taught to practice partisan and racial politics, to the detriment of society. This is evident in government departments and agencies, many of which are staffed with personnel from the party in power. Partisan politics is destructive to society because it has unsettled stability.

There are no laws to prohibit anyone from having political affiliations or from practicing or being engaged in partisan politics. However, it would be in the best interest of Guyana for all political parties and civil society groups to begin the dialogue to transform the political system into a non-partisan structure. The leaders of the two main political parties should refrain from practicing partisan politics in order to avoid repeating the mistakes of the past. They should start the process of schooling the young politicians in the art of non-partisan political strategies and equip them with the tools for effective and visionary leadership to transform the country. This should be the minimum standard.

An inexplicable reliance on others to determine for us what we have written for ourselves

By: Lincoln Lewis

The engagement between President David Granger and Leader of the Opposition Bharrat Jagdeo on Thursday, 19th July signals an encouraging sign. Arising from this engagement, there seems to be an acceptance, by both sides, of the necessity to go ahead and appoint members to the Public Service Commission and Police Service Commission, which are constitutional bodies.

Emerging from the meeting, the Opposition Leader informed the media that the engagement came about because of the intervention of former United States (U.S.) president Jimmy Carter, who spoke to the President and himself as to the necessity of meeting and having dialogue. The Opposition Leader further stated that the President indicated his interest to speak about three issues, viz, crime; environment; oil and gas, a position he would have to engage the party's leadership for their position, and whether the PPP/C will identify other issues, but he was clear in saying that he has not taken a position there will be no engagement.

The revelations and admissions surrounding the July 19th meeting speak to a sad state of governance in our society, where the political leadership requires foreign intervention to engage in basic civility and uphold the Guyana Constitution. At the expense of being accused of belabouring the point, this issue reinforces that our problem is not the Constitution; it is the want of the will of the leaders and citizens to enforce and respect it, which in this instance came at the behest of Carter.

The issues floated by the President can be considered matters of national character that impact the day-to-day wellbeing of the citizenry, yet when concerns are being expressed from varying quarters about making shrewd, informed and collective decisions on these, our political leaders have ignored the people. The President and Opposition Leader are elected and paid by the citizens, hold constitutional offices, and are expected in the execution of their duties to take into consideration the hopes, aspirations and desires of the people to live in peace, harmony, and benefit from the patrimony of this nation.

Holders of these offices ought to be reminded that they have constitutional roles to discharge on behalf of the citizenry, and this they must. The question, only they can answer is, "Why it had to take Carter to cause them to come to the table when their own constituencies have been calling for same?" Are we to believe that as a people our voices, our influences, are not important to these politicians? Ours is a representative democracy where our leaders must be representing our interests and the 19th July meeting gives the clear impression that while we elect them to do so, their agenda is not being determined by us.

Come 1st August, the nation shall be observing Emancipation, marking a significant achievement in our centuries of struggle for freedom and self-determination. Yet today it is not unfair to say, in too many instances, some still depend or rely on being nudged into action, not due to the determination of those who they represent, but that of external forces.

It was Bob Marley who delivered the admonition of emancipating ourselves from mental slavery because none but ourselves can free our minds. Heed needs to be taken.

Carter's initial involvement in this country, more than a quarter century ago, was influenced by the U.S Congress' opinion that our political conflict had to do with strong perception of electoral unfairness, and as such, it required his involvement with the stakeholders to bring about a system acceptable to all. His present intervention had to do with day-to-day governance and the discharging of constitutional responsibilities vested in

the Presidency and Opposition Leadership.

The distinguishing feature in the two interventions is that the first dealt with the establishment of a new electoral policy, while the present is nudging the leadership in respecting and upholding what is written and required of them.

Chapter X, 'The Executive' in the Constitution, at Articles 99 and 110, highlight the existence of the President and Leader of the Opposition. By virtue of their collective presence in this branch of government, it means both office holders have shared responsibility in the day-to-day management of this nation's business and its citizens' welfare.

The fact the President has placed three issues (oil and gas, environment, and crime) on the agenda, gives the Opposition the opportunity to place issue(s) of national character on the agenda, since they all impact on the citizens' wellbeing. This brings attention to the point of addressing talks about constitutional reform in the absence of putting laws and structures in place to realise constitutional enforcement.

As such, both leaders are called upon to place Article 13 on the agenda for engagement, with the intention of putting laws and structures in place to bring about the environment the people seek after. Article 13, "The principal objective of the political system" mandates inclusionary democracy, where groups and individuals are involved in the management and decision-making processes of the State on matters that impact their wellbeing.

It took Carter's involvement to cause this country's two premier political leaders to uphold and respect their constitutional responsibility. More importantly, what does this say about this nation whose people, for centuries, have fought for the right to self-determination and marked major achievements in 1838, 1966 and 1970, that there still exists the reliance on others to determine for us what we have written for ourselves? The truth is, by actions within recent years, the nation has been taking one step forward and three backwards in the advancement of solidifying our freedoms.

Jimmy Carter has brought the leaders to the table. We the people must find ways to make sure they remain there. Of immediate concern is the importance of engagement being facilitated on internationally acceptable principles. It is every leader's responsibility to determine the composition of his/her negotiating team. A negotiating team is not akin to selecting a jury panel where the other side can object to who participates. You don't have to like my team to respect the principle of the right to identify how it is composed and who participates. It is the issue that must determine the relationship, not the person. Civil and human decency is built on respecting the rights of others, and should the nation start out from this premise, it stands to eliminate the destructive, personality-driven politics that determine engagement, benefits, and entitlements.

Since leaving the presidency, Carter has created for himself the image of an international humanitarian and activist. And while Guyana and Guyanese must acknowledge and respect his work/contributions, it's a shame to rely on him to tell us what is within our Constitution and what is expected of us. In the coming days, society must resolve to hold the President and Leader of the Opposition's feet to the fire to make sure meaning is being given to our desire for peace, harmony and structured development.

"Everyone has the right to a standard of living-adequate for the health of himself and of his family...."

The Gang of Eight ‘Yes Men’

By: Moses Nagamootoo

As reluctant as I am to return to “party politics”, I decided to do so in an attempt to address the concerns of people after recent parliamentary proceedings, which the opposition used as early public relations stunts to showcase the likely choice as the PPP/C presidential candidate for the next elections.

The “Gang of Eight” would eventually recommend that person who is being allowed media exposure and promoted as the premier parliamentary speaker on national issues in place of the opposition leader, who cannot now run. This is crude sponsorship that mocks at inner-party democracy, and shows that the “Gang of Eight” has taken an early jump.

As president, Bharrat Jagdeo had deployed this tactic, when he first pitch-forked Donald Ramotar to the top of a slate of potential candidates. I recall, sometime in late 2010, a protest by then senior party executive, Ralph Ramkarran, when the aspirant not only prematurely announced his candidacy, but was anointed as “Advisor to the President”. He was placed on the Guysuco board and went on several presidential luxury rides to such places as Kuwait, China and India.

MAJORITARIAN CONCEPT

The “Gang of Eight” could have been a majoritarian political concept, but in the absence of a strong leader, it became a weapon of manipulation and control. In the post-Jagan period, there was an obsession with manipulating political processes. Some leaders were not allowed access to lower party bodies, and were vilified by Moscow-trained “Marxist-Leninists” as liberals and social democrats. The fight for a place on the 35-member Central Committee degenerated into character assassinations.

The party’s structure is that the congress of delegates would elect 35 persons to sit on the Central Committee. Those 35 members, in turn, usually a week after congress, would meet to elect a 15-member Executive Committee. In my case, having emerged at the Top Two with the highest numbers of votes at the 1998 congress, a simple majority of 18 members voted against me. I was removed from the Executive Committee, after being continuously a member for 20 years. I had openly denounced my exclusion as “Stalinist”, reminiscent of the purges that took place under the Russian communist dictator.

The idea is to sanitise the Executive Committee, by making sure that a simple majority of eight out of the 15 members would support the “maximum leader”. The built-in majority would be decisive in a situation where the Executive Committee had to “recommend” a person or persons to be a presidential candidate.

In short, the “Gang of Eight” is a political concept that represents group loyalty and bloc support for a leader, or for preferred political decisions from time to time. The “Gang of Eight” numerically represents a majority where the decision-making body comprises 15 persons. The persons are not fixed, and could rotate from time to time, depending on whether or not he/she is seen as loyal. The “gang” is like a revolving door.

IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES

Historically, leaders were thrown out from the party’s inner core, mainly due to tactical/strategic shifts and ideological differences, but the persons who were purged were invariably branded “opportunists”. From the early years of the PPP, there was expulsion of “ultra-left deviationists” like Martin Carter, Rory Westmaas and Sydney King (later Eusi Kwayana). That was

followed by expulsion of “right opportunists” like L.F.S. Burnham and Jai Narine Singh, even though what has been described as a “split” emanated from more complex factors than just differences between hard-lined communists and moderate socialists.

In the 60s, the right-wing/leftwing contradictions became manifest in the contest between the fire-brand Communist Brindley Benn and Balramsingh Rai, the rightwing “Rajput”. It was then that Dr. Fenton Ramsahoye, famously consoled Rai, by observing that “the party works in devious ways”.

But there have also been “lefty-left” fallouts. Benn, who had declared that “it is easier to stop tomorrow than to stop communism”, and was perhaps, together with Boysie Ramkarran, loyal Jaganites, was to leave the PPP. He was deemed a “Moaist”, and he later formed the Working People’s Vanguard Party (WPVP). Another known “leftist”, Moses Bhagwan, was expelled and formed the Indian People’s Revolutionary Associates (IPRA).

FOUNDER-LEADER

Another of the great progressives, Ashton Chase, departed sometime after 1969 when the PPP formally joined the Moscow-controlled International Communist Movement. I may never know all the reasons why Ashton Chase left, but he remains respected and revered, and he stands tall above the political fray that has consumed so many worthwhile patriots and leaders. Having shared my first public meeting with him in 1964, at Liverpool on the Corentyne Coast, for me, he remains affectionately “the Founder-Leader”.

Today, I hear similar description of Jaganites as “Old guards” and “spent”, well ahead of another anticipated purge.

The biggest upset was caused not by “left-right” deviations, but as a result of advocacy by some of us for PPP-PNC talks. I was a strong advocate for talks and rapprochement between Cheddi Jagan and Forbes Burnham, which resulted in a rearguard rump inside the party crudely rigging the PYO elections in 1976 in an effort to oust Halim Majeed, his brother Zaheer, Odeen Ishmael and myself. Cheddi Jagan ordered that the ballots be taken to his house, and we were reinstated in the leadership.

BIGGEST EXODUS

It was then that the biggest exodus of left-wingers took place from the PPP, led by the pro-Moscow, Marxist-Leninist ideologue Ranji Chandisingh and included, later, pro-Cuban Marxists Vincent Teekah and Lallbahadur Lalbachan. Almost the entire corps of Moscow-trained communists defected to Burnham’s PNC.

The fallouts occurred mainly as a result of failure of the inner-party political processes to handle political/ideological and sometimes personality differences. That was the reason I was foremost in my advocacy to broaden the shoulders of the party to avoid one-man dictatorship and to cleanse the party of reliance on unacceptable practices to entrench a “Gang of Eight”.

But the quest for personal power had become insatiable, and it would continue to devour some of the finest intellectuals and progressive leaders this country has produced. In the post-Jagan PPP, political life could be cruel, brutal and short!

Guyanese see management of the country’s resources through different lens than most of our Political Leaders

BE GRATEFUL AND THANK THE PEOPLE THAT SUPPORT YOU ALONG THE WAY

An American insults Guyanese and fools the world

By: Adam Harris

I have heard and read many things about Guyana. Many conflicted with what I know, having lived here all my life. I have read about Georgetown being a quaint town because of the wooden structures described as beautiful architecture; I have read about the tree-lined streets and the canals that drain the city.

But I never read about the country having only three paved highways. I racked my brains to find the other unpaved highways and could find none. I am familiar with the roadway linking the city to Berbice; the other linking the city to Timehri; one linking the city to Parika; the one linking New Amsterdam to Crabwood Creek; the roadway linking Timehri to Linden; and the others that run through the city.

The only unpaved roadways are those leading to the farms aback of the villages. I live in Tucville and I drive all the way on paved surfaces to get home. Even if I try I cannot find an unpaved surface.

I drive in Sophia; I drive in many communities and the only unpaved surfaces are those tracks made by people taking shortcuts to their neighbours.

Perhaps the writer of an article about Guyana in the New York Times, can tell us about our vehicles that are ubiquitous; about the way our children look as they go to school. I am certain that he never saw a barefooted school child in this "impoverished" country.

Earlier, I spoke about choosing to remain in Guyana. In 1994 my family migrated because of the pull factor. My wife's mother had moved to the United States and she sponsored her children. I left, spent six weeks and returned, because I was comfortable in that country.

Over the years, many of my colleagues migrated as Guyanese were wont to do. I taught and trained many and some have migrated, again because of the pull factor.

Recently, I read a piece by a man named Clifford Strauss, who says, "A vast majority of college-educated youths emigrate to the United States or Canada, while those who stay behind experience high rates of H.I.V. infection, crime and suicide."

If what he says is true, then I am experiencing a high rate of HIV infection, crime and suicide. Mr. Strauss has condemned all resident Guyanese to being HIV infected, a criminal or a victim of crime and a potential suicide.

I suppose he saw our sick people all over the place. He saw many people walking around with vials of poison or a length of rope. He saw many gunmen or other criminals robbing people.

When last I checked, Guyana had a lower HIV infection rate than many developed countries and the figure was declining. Guyana's crime rate is lower than many big cities in the United States and it is no longer the suicide capital of the world.

It would be interesting to note how many of Exxon's employees have been victims of crime.

But people who read Mr. Strauss and who never heard of Guyana would now see my beautiful country through darkened lenses. They are going to believe him. They are going to look at Guyanese in their neighbourhoods and say to them that they have escaped HIV infections.

If that is not bad enough, Mr. Strauss talks about villages sitting along rivers that snake through rainforests. Indeed, there are Amerindian communities that sit alongside rivers but this writer, in his ignorance, contends that the drainage canals in most of Guyana are in fact rivers.

I am willing to bet that most Guyanese live in homes that are better than many people in the country in which Mr. Strauss

lives. Not only are they living more comfortably, but they are also more intelligent than the people around him. This could be put to the test.

He knows that Guyanese who leave to reside in his country are so much better than his kinfolk that his country is now being goaded by these Americans to keep out immigrants. My sisters, my brother, my children after just a few years not only own their homes. They have other homes which they rent to Mr. Strauss's fellow Americans.

There are Guyanese shooting laser beams into space with NASA; some being among the best surgeons in his country; they teach his irascible and rude children, fashioning them to be better citizens.

It is common knowledge that our riverine Amerindians use canoes, but what does he expect people to use if the waterways are the only link with other communities? I am certain that much of what he writes are embellished anecdotes.

Then he says that most of the country is without electricity. What year is he talking about? We were challenged, given our landscape, but we have taken electricity to every community where the population is concentrated. Even the United States has communities that do not have electricity and that is a filthy rich country.

If that is not bad enough, this pompous man from his pedestal decides that we Guyanese would be drowned in money. We do not know about money so the few dollars that we would get from Exxon would make us giddy.

This is a country that is firmly rooted in agriculture. It has been this way for some two centuries. Why he believes that will change is anybody's guess.

We do not have the sports facilities that the United States has, but that does not mean that we are backward. Our athletes are making waves in his country.

We do not play football in muddy patches. Two boys may kick a ball on any plot of land that is convenient, but so do Americans with a baseball or a basketball.

He has exposed me to what Donald Trump calls fake news. I expect him to return and I would like to meet with him to give him a tour of my country at my expense. And I expect him to write the truth if he ever returns.

"Emancipate yourself from mental slavery," because "None but ourselves can free our minds"

Guya- ese have to focus their mi- ds o- Local Gob- er- me- t Electio- s (LGE). Voters will determi- e our Leaders via the ballot box.

We need Justice for victims of mass killings in Guyana

Minister of Social Cohesion is interested in 'on the ground' approach to developing National Unity.

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Why is Trump blasting Iran on Twitter?

By: Alex Ward

The theories range from a poorly learned lesson of his North Korea diplomacy to a seriously considered, long-term strategy.

When President Donald Trump threatens another country, we usually know why.

But in the case of his latest tweet about Iran — where he promised the country could “SUFFER CONSEQUENCES” — a lot is still unclear.

Take when he infamously vowed to “totally destroy” North Korea last September during a speech at the United Nations. Trump said he would only follow through on his threat if Pyongyang kept antagonizing the US or its allies.

Trump bombed Syria on two separate occasions, and both times it was in response to a narrow, but important, concern: Bashar al-Assad’s use of chemical weapons to kill scores of men, women, and children.

The president and the rest of his administration have made no secret of their animosity toward Iran, of course. But it’s not clear what, exactly, prompted this recent tweet, or what Trump was hoping to achieve.

In May, Trump’s administration withdrew the US from the



President Donald Trump

Iran nuclear deal — an agreement that stipulated that the US and other countries lift sanctions on Tehran in exchange for Iranians halting their nuclear program. In June, after pulling out of the deal, the administration said it would impose sanctions on all Iranian oil importers by the fall. (Officials have since moderated that demand).

It appears, though, that Trump’s tweet was a reaction to a speech delivered by Iranian President Hassan Rouhani earlier on Sunday. He warned that peace between the US and Iran would be the “mother of all peace,” and confrontation between the two countries would be the “mother of all wars.”

But if that’s what Trump was responding to, it doesn’t make much sense. After all, Iran has effectively threatened conflict with this administration before.

For example, last October, Tehran’s military chief, Gen. Mohammad Ali Jafari, said the US should move its bases out of Iran’s missile range if it planned to impose sanctions again. And Iran’s supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, urged all Muslims to unite against America and its other adversaries last April.

Even then, Trump didn’t threaten a possible war.

National Security Adviser John Bolton, who advocated for striking Iran before he joined the administration, followed up on Monday morning by noting that “President Trump told me that if



Ayatollah Ali Khamenei

Iran does anything at all to the negative, they will pay a price like few countries have ever paid before.” That’s very vague, and implies that there is no exact reason for Trump’s Twitter missive and no actual goal he’s trying to achieve with it.

So what’s really going on here?

Why Trump is threatening Iran right now

There are three broad theories for why Trump hit send on his bellicose tweet.

The first, as experts Colin Kahl and Vipin Narang hypothesized in the Washington Post, is that the president learned the wrong lesson from his dealings with North Korea. Mainly, Trump thinks talking tough will eventually deescalate tensions and get the opponent to do what America wants.

But Kahl and Narang, both critics of Trump’s foreign policy, don’t think that will work. “A ‘strategy of increasing tension’ is likely to produce just that: increasing tension, kicking off a spiral of pressure, retaliation and military threats,” they wrote in May. If this is actually why Trump pushed back on Rouhani so hard, Trump probably won’t like the result.



President Vladimir Putin

The second theory is Trump wants to distract the public and the media from his poor meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin last week. During the post-meeting press conference on July 16, Trump sided with Putin when the Russian leader denied that Russia interfered in the 2016 presidential election, even though the US intelligence community assessed that it did.

That led to arguably the worst foreign policy week of Trump’s presidency, in which the administration failed to convincingly walk back Trump’s comments and curb the tide of widespread criticism, including from Republican leaders. But if he gets people to focus on Iran — especially GOP members of Congress — then maybe he can make everyone forget about his really bad Russia week.

The third and final explanation, made mostly by Trump’s foreign policy supporters, is that it was actually part of a longer-term plan.

“The administration’s goal is to increase the pressure on Iran in order to force it to the table to renegotiate a better nuclear deal,” Matthew Kroenig, an Iran expert at the Atlantic Council think tank in Washington, told me. “Better terms will require more pressure, so Trump’s tweet, tougher sanctions, and calling out Iran’s human rights abuses are all part of this broader strategy.”

Trump has said many times he wants a better deal with Iran, one in which Tehran agrees to never have a functioning nuclear program. Trump’s tweet may be a shot across the bow, warning Rouhani and others that Trump would consider some kind of military option should they not comply with his wishes.

When I asked Kroenig if he thought the tweet was a good idea, he had this to say: “On balance, yes. Clear threats are often an essential component of successful diplomacy and contribute to international peace. The tweet helps to ensure that Iran’s leaders do not miscalculate.”

Regardless of which theory is correct, the big worry is that the president’s threat could potentially lead to war. And that outcome, my colleague Beauchamp points out, “would kill thousands of people, destroy whatever vestiges of political stability remain in the Middle East, and potentially wreak havoc on the global economy — all while likely failing to permanently end Iran’s nuclear ambitions.”

It’s possible that Rouhani’s speech angered Trump enough to motivate him to send a strong message in response. Still, it’s jarring to see the president respond with a statement that could lead to war, regardless of why he sent it.

“Those who do-’t k-ow history are doomed to repeat it.” *Edmund Burke*

Use funds seized from criminals to fight crime

By: Roshan Khan Snr.

The Customs Anti-Narcotics Unit (CANU) is doing a great job apprehending drug dealers and smugglers at Guyana's official ports of exit and entry, especially airports. I compliment them for the service to our country and I urge them to pay the same attention to other well-known hot spots for smuggling, such as stollings and landings along rivers and creeks.

I believe the huge amounts of cash and valuables seized from drug dealers and smugglers should be used to find new ways to reach the heart of criminal operations. Maybe, a significant portion of seized assets should be used as reward money or to pay informers and engage private investigators to help in CANU crackdowns with extremely secure confidentiality.

Every citizen knows the names of the 'Big-Bosses' linked to drug dealing and smuggling, inside and outside Guyana. Find ways to recruit undercover agents or informers; pay them well and ensure they are not identified. Residents in every area know who are the drug users, dealers and smugglers living among them. Follow the users to the dealers; follow the dealers to the smugglers and so on until you get to the Big Bosses.

Furthermore, when persons are convicted, authorities should consider using them as informers to track bigger dealers and suppliers in exchange for reduced sentences, provided the information obtained is useful and leads to further arrests.

It hurts me terribly to see the negative impact the drug trade has on crime and the way it destroys the lives of my people, their families and communities. Many youths start with excessive use of marijuana then get addicted to cocaine. When they become addicts they will steal, hurt and even kill over and over again to get drugs. Some have even murdered their own parents and burned down family homes. Drug dealers also do anything to secure their business and profits and do whatever it takes to protect themselves and their interests.

The criminals who do these things get exposed sooner or later. Even the 'big bosses' eventually lose their honour, dignity, respect and even their lives just for piles of dirty money. Colombian drug lord Pablo Escobar was once the biggest drug boss in the world, but he was shot down like an animal and died in disgrace as a sick scoundrel. After his death, his family wanted to go into exile and no country wanted them.

Escobar was called "The King of Cocaine" and some foolish Guyanese used to admire him. He had billions of US dollars and he used to run Columbia through bribery and murder. Such criminals lose their humanity by hurting others severely and this curses them and they end up dying in prison or being killed cruelly. Escobar ended up running and hiding, but he was cornered and shot dead without mercy.

The illegal drug trade is one of the greatest evils ever inflicted upon humanity. It destroys persons caught up in it, the societies that get overrun by it and it infects the core of civilization. Drugs do horrendous damage to the body and soul. Users are not only killing themselves with drugs, they are also murderers or potential murderers because they will do anything to satisfy their craving.

CANU should be applauded for bringing constant pain to those trying to get rich quick through smuggling and drugs. I want CANU to continue to go after criminals relentlessly and bring great grief upon those that decide to enjoy a big life by poisoning people and destroying society for generations.

Alcohol is a legal drug that should be illegal. For their own profits, big companies encourage excessive consumption of al-

cohol despite clear evidence that alcohol abuse is causing enormous destruction. Lives have been lost, serious injuries have been suffered and countless families destroyed as a result of crimes committed by persons under the influence of alcohol.

Punishment for serious crimes is too mild in Guyana. When major drug dealers are convicted, too many of them get off with a slap on the wrist. I think 20 years imprisonment should be the minimum penalty for serious drug offences, and fines should be triple the value of the drugs involved with long jail sentences to be applied immediately if the fines are not paid.

I believe the property and assets of persons convicted of serious drug crimes should be confiscated immediately upon their conviction. And the authorities should scrutinize their estate and, if it can be proved that they transferred any financial or property assets obtained through crime to their relatives, friends, associates or companies, these should be confiscated also.

Large-scale smuggling and drug dealing have expanded and diversified into a number of fake businesses around the country. These criminals have become very vicious because their money gives them the power to penetrate the highest levels of law enforcement agencies, the legal system, political parties, civic organisations and even government.

Criminals get enormously wealthy from crime and they use it to form companies and corporations to make it easier for them to do crime on a bigger scale and pass it off as legitimate business while laundering money at the same time. This is what drives the constant smuggling of items in the country, including drugs, while foreign currency goes out of the country.

I support CANU every step of the way as they fight against these vagabonds. Use funds seized from criminals to fund CANU's fight against crime. When the big criminals are caught, jail them for life because their criminal activities have given so many others life sentences of pain and misery.

Elections have consequences

(Continued from page.....2) during this period of destructive and vindictive government would appreciate the dangers of going to the Cheddi Jagan International Airport to fulfil an overseas obligation as an anti-government activist and having to face the dreaded possibility of having drugs planted in your luggage. These simple fears are no more due to the wise choice made by Guyanese. These consequences cannot be underestimated, especially in light of the fact that most of the persons who were custodians of the bad state between 1999 and 2015, have gone nowhere, they are the ones waiting in the electoral wings to once again reign down terror on the population.

Added to this, an election, besides its conspicuous mechanisms, is a formal process by which you make a decision. When you cut through the razzle and dazzle of campaigning and all the shining fanfares, it is a wise choice to make, which can affect from what your children will carry in their lunch kits to whether your country gets a bad reputation in the international arena.

This practice of democracy has been in place since the 17th century. It is the results of the May 11th 2015 elections that have erased the shame of Guyana having a reputation of being a drug-filled banana republic with little law and order. It is due to our last election- we have seen an unprecedented crackdown on the drug empire in Guyana and the concomitant positive effects consistent with dealing condignly with this scourge.

The average Guyanese party-goer can now remark: 'Is a long time me ain't see people shooting up in parties'. This is due to the fact that Guyanese made a decision to *See page.....14*

CSJAD CONDEMNS VIOLENT ATTACKS AGAINST INNOCENT CIVILIANS

Use funds seized from criminals to fight crime

(Continued from page.....13) elect an incorruptible President who stands for law and order and cannot be enticed by the overtures of the drug empire. Again, your safety when you go out to have a good time can be traced right back to electoral decision-making.

Be that as it may, global voter apathy is at its highest percentage. The youth remain the most passive global voter block; this is a universal trend. In July 2010, 75% of eligible voters between ages 18 and 30 chose not to participate in the US midterm elections.

The question is: who is to be blamed for low voter turnout by youths globally? Politicians or young people? On one hand, there is the argument that politicians are out of touch with issues that impact the lives of young people. On the other hand, there is the valid contestation that if politicians refuse to address your issues, it is you who must delve into advocacy and address those issues.

It is a crime against your fellow citizens to allow the rise of the destructive state by not having an I.D Card or refusing to get up on national elections day to vote. Not getting involved is too detrimental. It is a good time to remind ourselves of the wise words of William Lyon McKenzie King, 'Where [there] is little or no public opinion, there is likely to be bad government, which sooner or later becomes autocratic government.'

UPCOMING EVENTS

SUNDAY, JULY 29th

Tutorial High Alumni Association (Toronto): 25th Anniversary Bursaries Awards Brunch. At: JC's Banquet Hall- 1686 Ellesmere Road, Toronto. From: 12:30 pm to 5:30 pm. Info. Call- Michael at 416-636-2961 or Daniel: 416-283-7895 or Shirland: 905-569-0920

FRIDAY, AUGUST 3rd & SATURDAY, AUGUST 4th

Central High Alumni: Third International Reunion. Venue: Rembrandt Banquet Hall- 930 Progress Avenue, Scarborough, Toronto, Canada. From: 9:00 pm to 1:00 am. Dress Formal. For more information call: 905-837-2736.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 4th

Friends of Villages Museum & Archives Inc: Opening of Buxton/Friendship Museum, Archives & Cultural Center. For more info. Call Keith Easton at 240-601-3892.

MONDAY, AUGUST 6th

Last Lap Lime- Annual community event. At: Woodbridge Fairgrounds. From: 1 PM to 9 PM. Call: Gillian at- 647-216-7069.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 18th

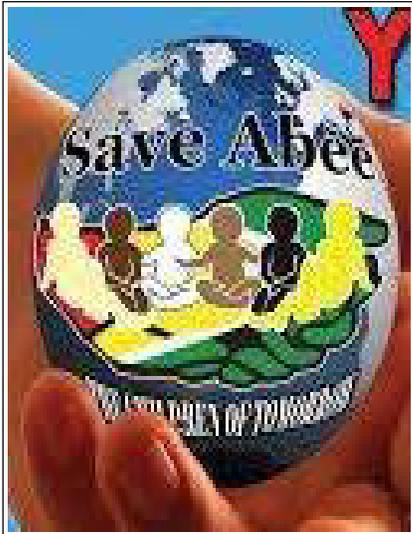
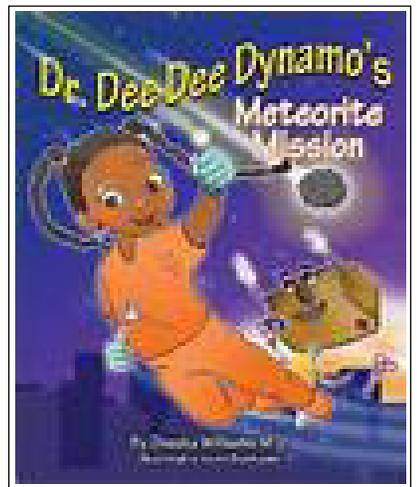
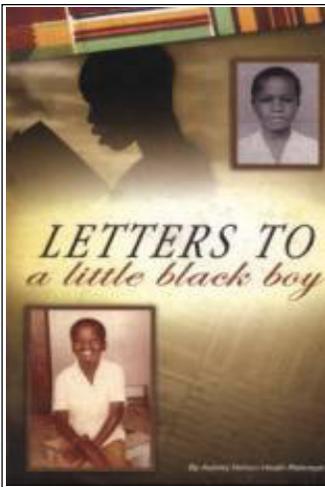
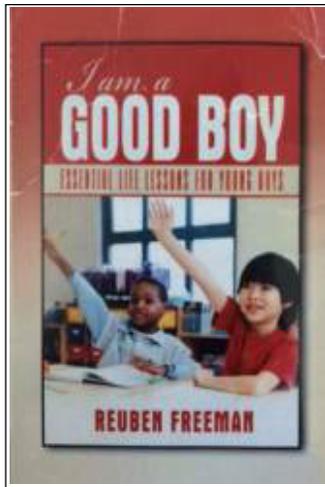
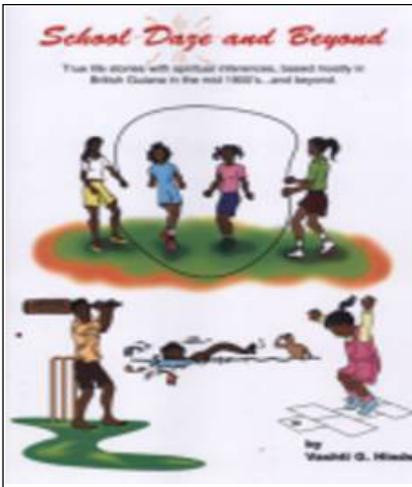
Linden Fund (USA). 4th Annual Parade of Hats Contest. Venue: St. Stephen's Lutheran- 2806 Newkirk Ave., Bklyn, NY. From: 3:00 pm to 8:00 pm. Music: Dj Musical Mike. Donation: \$35 . All (Food & drinks) incl. For info. call Hazel: 646-982-8117.

Guyana Heritage Foundation- Seattl

FRIDAY, AUGUST 31st

South Georgetown Secondary School Alumnae Association: Reunion Gala. At: Glen Terrace- 5313 Avenue N, Bklyn, NY. From: 9:00 pm to 2:00 am. Tickets: \$100 all inclus. For info. Call: Deborah at 347-531-7917 or Dawn: Tel. # 347-661-7965.

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THE ABSENCE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS MAKES CLAIMS OF DEMOCRACY IN GUYANA A BIG GIMMICK



It is important to emphasize that *Suicide* cannot be considered in isolation. Instead, the solution requires a collaborative and broader approach...

A Crisis of Child Abuse in Guyana

NOTHING LESS WILL SUFFICE UNTIL THERE IS A REVOLUTION OF VALUES AND A MORE RADICAL RELOCATING OF POWER TO THE DISPOSSESSED