

GUYANA:
THE FACES BEHIND
THE MASKS

*For obvious reasons, given the situation described below, the author of this article, who has spent considerable time in Guyana, must remain anonymous.**

They have lived for these many years by putting on certain masks, by trying to fool the outside world--and even some Guyanese who live right here, with the mask of democratic government because they have a joke institution called a parliament. In this mask they have something called a free press, free judiciary, etc., but we know that when we lost the right to choose our own government in free elections, we lost all other rights. It is just a matter of time--they take when they want to take, they give when they want to give until the time when the people intervene. Unmask them and show them that power belongs to the people.

(Excerpt from speech by Dr. Walter Rodney, Georgetown, Guyana August 1979)

On Friday, June 13, 1980, in Georgetown, Guyana, Dr. Walter Rodney, internationally acclaimed historian and political activist was blasted to death by a bomb concealed in a walkie-talkie that he had been tricked into testing. Ironically, his murder, designed to silence his eloquent opposition, has ripped the last mask of respectability from the Guyana government of Linden Forbes Burnham.

Guyana's history during the last twenty years is replete with duplicity and bizarre occurrences, many of which have been directly linked to covert CIA operations. In addition, Guyana's Prime Minister Burnham, and his People's National Congress party, have become accomplished at the arts of deceit, dirty tricks, covert operations and political violence in their efforts to maintain themselves in power and privilege.

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The burden of this violence, fraud and manipulation has been borne by the majority of Guyana's 827,000 citizens who have lashed out at each other under CIA and government-backed racial manipulation; been disenfranchised via vote fraud and election rigging; have been disgraced by the Jonestown affair; suffered from extreme poverty, malnutrition and disease as a result of secretly negotiated deals between the ruling party and international lending agencies such as the IMP and World Bank; been set upon by thieves and thugs comprising the paramilitary arm of the House of Israel religious cult, and faced steadily escalating official repression in a society where one in every thirty-five citizens is armed by the state to protect the status quo.

Guyana, first colonized by the Dutch in 1621, became an English colony, British Guiana, in 1825. Then, as now, most of the population was concentrated along a narrow coastal strip of low-lying but fertile land. The critical need for fresh water for drinking and irrigating the sugar crops and the battles against the sea mandated a large, unskilled, cheap labor force. First, the need was met by importing African slaves. However, with the abolition of slavery in 1832, many Afro-Guyanese left the plantations and organized villages from which they fought for better wages and improved working conditions. The plantation owners responded with the importation of East Indian indentured laborers who unwittingly undercut Black demands and began the long history of Black/Indian antagonisms that have been manipulated ever since. Today, East Indians comprise 52 percent of the population and dominate the sugar industry. Africans, comprising 38 percent, dominate the bauxite industry and civil service jobs.

In the 1940s, racial divisions were surmounted and the powerful People's Progressive party was formed under the leadership of Dr. Cheddi Jagan, son of an East Indian worker. The PPP's solidarity and Marxist analysis directly threatened colonial interests. A false rumor was circulated that the PPP planned to burn Georgetown so that the British could declare a "crisis situation" and land British troops. On October 9, 1953--a day that became known as Black Friday--Guyana's constitution was suspended and the duly elected PPP government removed from office to "prevent communist subversion."

This inflammatory deceit gave the British government the excuse to turn Guyana into a police state for the next four years while they agitated racial tensions and again pitted East Indian and Black workers against each other. The British also encouraged Linden Forbes Burnham, an Afro-Guyanese with an excess of narrow, opportunistic ambition, to split from the PPP and to use racial invectives and an anti-communist platform to

challenge Jagan in the 1957 elections. However, despite Burnham and his British Colonial Office support, Jagan's wing of the PPP carried nine of fourteen constituencies and again took office.

CIA-British Ouster of Jagan

The 1961 elections were marked by further Colonial Office gerrymandering and fierce campaigning that was aided by US dollars channelled through the CIA-linked Christian Anti-Communist Crusade, but again the PPP won the elections.

After the third victory of the PPP, the US and British operatives stepped up their destabilization activity. A campaign of racial violence and trade union manipulation was waged by the CIA, masquerading under cover as the American Institute for Free Labor Development. AIFLD's penetration of the Guyana trade union movement resulted in prolonged strikes and racial violence from 1962 to 1964. This gave the British an excuse to stall independence and rig the voting system by establishing a "proportional voting scheme" and "proxy voting." Although the PPP captured 46 percent of the total votes, they only won 8.6 percent of the 6,665 proxy votes. The proportional voting scheme allowed a coalition between Burnham's newly formed PNC party and the ultra-right United Force party to oust Jagan from office.

As reported in the April 10, 1967 London *Sunday Times*, Jagan's ouster was "relatively inexpensive for the CIA and accomplished with around \$250,000. The price for Guyana was 170 dead and hundreds wounded, 10 million pounds sterling worth of damage to the economy and a legacy of racial bitterness."

In order to perfect the mask of democratic government after independence in 1966, Burnham established an election commission with representatives of each of three political parties. He then denied this commission access to the process of compiling a voter registration list. Instead, the voter registration list was compiled by Shoup Registration System International, a Pennsylvania-based CIA proprietary now disappeared that had also helped ensure "correct" voter registration in South Vietnam. Under Shoup's guidance, the registration lists were heavily padded by including horses, deceased citizens and hanged criminals as valid voters. A British opinion research group has estimated that the majority of overseas voters who "registered" were non-existent. With support like this, Burnham easily won the 1968 elections and began to consolidate his power. Despite this massive fraud, it was still insufficient to give the PNC the required two-thirds parliamentary majority to override the Westminster-style constitution. In 1973 the Guyana Defence Force seized the ballot boxes "for their protection" and held them for twenty-four hours...enough time to ensure Burnham's PCN a majority parliament.

Burnham's "success" at the polls led to the establishment in 1973 of the doctrine of "paramountcy" of the ruling party over the state apparatus and included the merger of the General Secretary of the PNC with the government's Ministry of National Development. Paramountcy thus allowed for direct access by the ruling party to the public till and further established a device for government control and subsidy of non-governmental groups such as the People's Temple cult and the paramilitary House of Israel. Exact details are unavailable because the PNC refuses to account for Ministry of National Development funds. Since 1975 this office has spent \$54.3 million, of which 97.4 percent is unaccountable.

As Burnham's clique continued its grab for power, its Afro-Guyanese base of support began to erode due to worsening economic conditions, although Burnham nationalized Guyana's bauxite and sugar industries and postured as a non-aligned Third World leader bent on establishing "cooperative socialism."

Burnham's socialist mask was perhaps intended to increase his bargaining power by pitting East against West in attempts to maximize foreign aid expenditures. The nationalization aspects of this deceit earned Burnham a reputation as a hard bargainer, but in fact Guyana's treasury provided compensation to the multinational interests whose properties were seized. This "cooperative socialism" really means state capitalism and recent developments vis-a-vis the World Bank and the IMF auger the return of multinational investments and surrender of "nationalized resources."

Burnham's "tilt" toward Cuba in the mid'70s and his socialist posturing apparently caused some concern in US ruling circles, but a severe cut in aid during the 1973-75 period, combined with hints of CIA destabilization against its former friend brought the PNC regime around to a more acceptable position in 1977. In that year, US Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, Terence Todman, said: "Guyana is seeking a different path to social and economic development, one with which we have no quarrel and which we have no reason to fear." Perhaps Todman's absence of fear was predicated on his certain knowledge that US penetration of Guyana was so complete and Burnham's opportunism so consuming as to ensure ultimate loyalty to Western interests.

CIA Grooms Its Guyanese

A specific "development" project that was funded was the now infamous USAID Office of Public Safety police training program. Exact figures are not easy to obtain, but records that are available indicate that between 1966 and 1970, 921 Guyanese

police officers were trained in the OPS program's Latin American facilities. At least another fifty-three had received training in the US by the end of 1973. (By 1976, Guyana's police force numbered 3,121.) In addition, the OPS program supplied security forces with hardware such as jeeps, patrol boats and aircraft, along with arms, ammunition and riot-control equipment.

Along with the routine courses in police work American-style at the CIA-run International Police Academy, a number of Guyana's finest went to special training courses operated by the CIA's proprietary, the International Police Services, Inc. (INPOLSE) out of a residential townhouse in Washington, D.C. At least one officer, Eustace V. Kendall, attended the Texas Border Patrol "technical course" in bombing, arson and assassination. This Texas facility was so dirty that even the Department of Defense refused to staff the operation. Information so far available shows notable graduates of the Washington INPOLSE program to include Cecil "Skip" Roberts, present head of Guyana's Criminal Investigation Division and Norman McClean, now chief of staff of the Guyana Defence Force.

Although given a favorable AID evaluation, the OPS training program apparently did little to improve police capability in the apprehension of criminals as evidenced by the attempted assassination of WPA activist and University of Guyana biologist, Joshua Ramsammy. Ramsammy was shot and severely wounded in 1971. Police officers Wally Kelman and "Skip" Roberts identified the getaway vehicle, which was traced to Burnham's cousin, Hamilton Green, the minister of labor and health. Green, whose involvement in political thuggery looms large, was never taken into custody. Kelman was hustled out of the country and given enough cash to relocate in New York; Roberts was eventually promoted to his present post as CID chief.

The Ramsammy affair involving violence in open view of police, linkages to PNC hierarchy, official failure to conduct a proper investigation and unavailability of a key witness bears striking resemblance to other mysterious violent episodes in Guyana history. The Jonestown massacre and killing of US Congressman Leo Ryan, the daylight stabbing of *Catholic Standard* news photographer Fr. Bernard Darke, the shooting death of Education Minister Vincent Teekah and the assassination of Walter Rodney also remain uninvestigated.

In 1974, Arnold Rampersaud, a PPP activist who had campaigned against highway tolls, was arrested and charged with the shooting death of a toll booth operator on the Corentyne Highway. The evidence was flimsy, involved several major impossibilities and was widely believed to be a frame-up. Finally, after three trials and 1,250 days in prison, Rampersaud was declared "not guilty" by a unanimous Guyanese jury. The interna-

tional defense team included the present Prime Minister of Grenada, Maurice Bishop, plus the presence of Amnesty International and other US and UK observers. The prosecution was headed by private attorney Rex McKay, a PNC favorite who also has been tapped to present the state's case in the now-pending arson trial of Working People Alliance (WPA) members.

Just as the Ramsammy shooting portended the official use of violence, the Rampersaud case contained elements to be repeated in future political trials. In addition, the jury verdict acquitting Rampersaud caused Burnham to push for the passage of an administration of justice act that allows summary proceedings and excludes the right to jury trial for certain categories of crimes involving national security.

In 1978 government forces passed the Referendum Act which proposed a national referendum to permanently alter Guyana's constitution and pave the way for an "executive presidency" that could be Burnham's for life. Opposition to this proposal came from literally every segment of Guyanese society. Rather than compete with non-existent voters in the Shoup registration lists, these opposition forces organized a nation-wide boycott and monitored the polling places for the July 10, 1978 special election. Citizen efforts document voter turnout at 14 percent, while the PNC claimed a 71 percent turnout and overwhelming victory.

Another event with perhaps equally far-reaching consequences occurred just one month before the "referendum to end all referendums." In June, Burnham negotiated a secret deal with the International Monetary Fund that typically required harsh economic consequences for Guyanese. In return for \$81 million, Burnham agreed to widespread public sector layoffs and other measures that resulted in dramatic reduction in real wages. The details of the arrangement were kept from the Guyanese public until after the July 10 referendum. As if the IMF reward for Burnham's referendum vote to life presidency was not enough, US funding also increased dramatically from \$2 million in 1976 to \$26.8 million in 1978.

Jonestown

On November 18, 1978, US Representative Leo J. Ryan and four of his party were gunned down under the noses of Guyana Defence Force personnel and soon the world and later Guyana was to hear the horror of the Jonestown massacre.

Despite the sensational murders and "suicides" resulting in at least 914 deaths, there has been no investigation by Guyanese officials and only half-hearted prosecution of chief suspect Larry Layton. He was recently acquitted in a Georgetown court on attempted murder charges and many say he will never have

to face trial for his role in the killings of Ryan, those in his party or the hundreds of others at the People's Temple. (Charles Beikman, the only other person to face charges related to Jonestown, has been sentenced to only two years for his throat slashing of Sharon Amos and her three children.) Defense attorney for the cult killers is none other than Rex McKay, who has reportedly taken a sizeable fee and made large investments in the US.

The Jonestown death camp and related controversy, including the existence of a People's Temple hit team, will probably never be fully explained. However, persistent rumors and abundant loose ends have led to the recent reopening of US congressional hearings into CIA linkages with the People's Temple. The following is a partial list of some of the factors which have fed flames of controversy.

- Ryan aide Joe Holsinger reports that a White House official told him on the night of the Ryan murder that there was a CIA report from the scene.
- Large supplies of sophisticated behavior modification drugs were found in Jonestown.
- Jonestown also was well supplied with sophisticated arms.
- Unduly large amounts of cash were found in the camp.
- A number of Jonestown residents were US criminals on probation or parole.
- Larry Layton's father, who admits pouring cash into the People's Temple, was a US government biochemist raising the spectre of MK-ULTRA.
- First reports indicated only 300 dead and one week later the world learned of the 914 person death toll. We are asked to believe that 600-plus bodies were hidden under 300!
- The Justice Department attorney picked to handle the investigation, William Hunter, "coincidentally" had a personal relationship with Timothy Stoen, the former San Francisco assistant district attorney who for a time was Jim Jones's right-hand man.
- Leo Ryan's name appears in "Who's Who in the CIA" by Julius Mader.
- The removal of the bodies was conducted by US military personnel.

The list is endless and for the Guyanese and American people, there is little likelihood that the truth will ever reach the surface. In Guyana, the Jonestown tragedy served to focus attention on other cult groups with similar deals involving the Burnham government. These include the Moonies, a Black group from Brooklyn, New York called The East, as well as the House of Israel. The latter is a largely Guyanese cult led by a fugitive North American who calls himself Rabbi Emmanuel Washington.

The Not-So-Kosher House of Israel

"Rabbi" Washington, or just "Rabbi" as he is called in Guyana, was known in the United States as David Hill. Before his mysterious appearance and rise to power and riches in Guyana, he was a thief and con artist with a record of more than thirty arrests, numerous convictions and a one-year stint in Ohio's facility for the criminally insane. Rabbi used the Black Power movement of the '60s for personal aggrandizement.

The House of Israel was originally founded in Cleveland, Ohio, in the mid '60s by the David Hill who in prior dealings in Cleveland's Black community was known as "Bishop." *Cleveland Plain Dealer* accounts of Hill's activities go back to 1964 when he was sought on bad check warrants in Cleveland and Columbus. Later, Hill teamed up with a Reverend Earnest Hilliard who had made a name for himself as a radio personality, the "Prophet" Frank Thomas.

Together, Hill and Hilliard shook down local businesses, and, in the process, stumbled on the fact that the McDonald's fast food operation was owned exclusively by Whites and took millions of profits from Cleveland's Black community. Unfortunately for Hilliard, his powers of prophesy did not foretell his sudden demise in July of 1969 when he was murdered in his garage by a bullet in the brain.

The Rabbi, who stepped into Hilliard's leadership position with the Black Unity Campaign against McDonalds, was questioned in the shooting death but charges were not filed. Meanwhile, Rabbi Hill continued to do what he did best. He used fraud to steal more than \$50,000 from Cleveland's Black community, utilizing a stack of McDonald's franchise applications acquired in the boycott campaign to convince hardworking Black citizens and parishioners that they only had to execute the forms and give Hill a check for \$5,000 in order to acquire their own fast food franchise.

Hill was indicted for blackmail in the McDonald's campaign and found guilty by an all-White jury, his one legitimate claim to persecution. He was sentenced to four to twenty-five

years in prison. During the pendency of this case, he was also indicted by a Chicago grand jury on grand theft felony charges and bail was set at \$150,000. In addition, an angry member of his church filed a complaint for money stolen by a bad check and Hill was also indicted on larceny-by-trick charges for bilking an area auto dealer.

A genuine Cleveland community activist who was in jail with Hill reports that "Rabbi" bragged of a deal with government officials. Nonbelievers were soon convinced when within weeks Hill was granted appeal bond in the McDonald's case, had the Chicago bail reduced and posted via a bondsman and was released on the other pending charges.

He failed to appear in court on November 17, 1971 and soon surfaced more than 3,000 miles away in Guyana. Within seven years Rabbi Washington and his House of Israel has become established as a powerful force in Guyana political life. Services rendered by "Rabbi" to the Burnham regime include strike-breaking, physical harrassment of opposition meetings and murder. In an interview following Jonestown, Hill bragged of 8,000 followers including other US fugitives. One of them, Albert Louis Bradford, is wanted for rape and murder in St. Louis and is reported to now be a Guyana security forces member.

A recent interview with Ohio prosecutor John Corrigan revealed that his office had no intention of seeking extradition. This fact coupled with Corrigan's reputation as a hard-nosed ultra-conservative who has in the past spared no expense in prosecution of Black activists, and Corrigan's track record of active cooperation with FBI COINTELPRO agents, lead many to suspect that David Hill is in Guyana serving the Burnham regime because US officials want him there.

There is also evidence that much of Hill's present wealth has come from USAID programs and other development assistance money. The Rabbi was paid for a time for work performed with a US-funded brickmaking training program and reliable sources indicate that Hill is getting a monthly check from the Guyana Ministry of National Development which receives funds as a result of US support.

There is also a Washington, D.C. connection of a more deadly sort. A former employee of a Washington-based shipping company claims that the House of Israel was the recipient of arms and ammunition handled by the D.C. firm.

For Guyana, 1979 may have marked the point of no return to the route to civil war. As economic conditions mandated by IMF austerity measures affected every sector of society, organizing efforts by the opposition People's Progressive party

and the Working People's Alliance gained momentum. The PNC regime, faced with an almost total lack of popular support, became more and more reliant on House of Israel thugs and force of arms to maintain power.

The year 1979 was also marked by signs of inner circle factional fighting as well as a strike by traditional Burnham supporters, the Afro-Guyanese bauxite workers. Despite desperate poverty and concurrent increases in malnutrition and disease, the IMF deemed the 1978 program successful and a new three-year extended facility was negotiated. Part of the new deal was to be a public sector wage freeze despite prior government promises of a \$14-day minimum wage.

A Mysterious Fire

On July 10, massive public demonstrations marked the first anniversary of the rigged referendum and another significant event of that day was that the office of general secretary of the PNC requested information from the Bank of Guyana that indicated a fraud investigation concerning the Ministry of National Development. Early the next morning the building which housed the office of general secretary of the PNC and the Ministry of National Development was burned to the ground in a spectacular blaze marked by numerous explosions. Despite eye-witness accounts that the fire was the work of men in Guyana Defence Force uniforms, eight WPA leaders were arrested and five were subsequently charged with various crimes. Three were charged with arson in connection with the fire: Dr. Walter Rodney, Dr. Rupert Roopnarine and Dr. Omawale, all WPA leaders and leading academic figures.

On July 13, the public was notified of a major Guyana Defence Force shake-up. The CIA INPOLSE-trained Norman McClean was given the top command job over Clarence Price and Ulric Pilgrimage. Subsequent disclosures by Arnold Mollyneaux, a guard at the fire-ravaged building, indicated that in the early morning hours of July 11 immediately after the fire, he was taken to Prime Minister Burnham's residence and that McClean, who was present, was already acting as chief of staff.

Thus, it appears that Burnham contrived to deal with dissident GDF elements who may have been responsible for the sensational fire, by removing them from power and then charging the opposition à la Reichstag in order to create diversion from his significant internal difficulties.

Despite the sleight of hand, Burnham's problems continued to mount, as July 11 also signaled the beginning of the bauxite worker walkout and demands for the promised minimum wage. On July 14th, the PNC's organ, the *New Nation*, contained a cartoon

showing a mouse with a crucifix around its neck, being crushed to death by a house that it had attempted to bomb. At the bottom of the page appeared the words "Exterminate Rats" and "war is declared."

That day, as hundreds picketed the courthouse in protest of the arrests connected with the fire, House of Israel thugs set upon the crowd. Father Bernard Darke, a news photographer for the *Catholic Standard* was fatally stabbed. Another *Standard* reporter, Mike James, was severely beaten and Gordon Yearwood, known for his opposition to Burnham, was stabbed.

All this occurred within yards of the police station and in plain view of several police officers. Yearwood recalled that as an officer moved to intervene, his attackers shouted: "Don't shoot, we are 'Rabbi's' men." Police quickly moved to protect House of Israel property throwing up a guard around the premises. Several House of Israel members were charged in traffic court and fined G\$136. Hamilton Green, minister of labor and health and acknowledged "unofficial" goon squad leader, later attempted to pin the killing of Darke on an unnamed Catholic priest.

These events drew ever increasing numbers of Guyanese to opposition rallies and, on July 27, the Working People's Alliance formally declared itself a political party dedicated to the building of scientific socialism.

Official Violence and Intimidation Escalates

On the labor front, the Afro-Guyanese bauxite workers rallied trade union solidarity such as had not been seen since the pre-1964 era, when the largely East Indian sugar workers and their union, the Guyana Agricultural Workers Union joined the walkout. By the end of August, trade union solidarity was capped by the addition of support from the Clerical and Commercial Workers Union, the National Association of Agricultural, Commercial & Industrial Employees and the University of Guyana Staff Association. All of these events occurred amid increasing violence and stepped up beatings by police, openly operating with the House of Israel elements. In one of the most vicious attacks on CCWU strikers, Hamilton Green personally led the fray.

In addition to the usual Burnham tricks, strict import controls required to meet IMF targets were used to deny newsprint to opposition newspapers. Most severely affected is the PPP's *Mirror* which is reduced to a weekly four-page format reaching only 8,000 instead of a daily with a circulation of 40,000. The independent *Catholic Standard* has been forced to pay exorbi-

tant prices for printing to continue its weekly newspaper and is further burdened by defamation litigation initiated by Minister Green.

On October 25, 1979 Vincent Teekah, PNC minister of education and the only East Indian cabinet member, was killed while sitting in a parked car with Howard University Dental School teacher, Dr. Oswaldene Walker. Walker was whisked out of the country before the police could take a statement from her and physical evidence such as powder burns negate the official version of a shooting from outside the car. To date no investigation of the killing has taken place.

On November 18th Ohene Koama was added to the list of those murdered when the WPA activist was gunned down in cold blood by police who later claimed he was armed. Eye-witness accounts are contrary and photographs taken at the scene have been denied to the press.

National Insurance Director Field-Ridley was fired when "Rabbi" Washington's request for insurance following mysterious explosions at his House of Israel headquarters was denied. The headquarters was also shown to be a bomb factory. On the other hand, Court of Appeals Justice Crane, after reversing the lower court and denying the *Mirror's* right to newsprint, was given the position of chief justice and later chancellor of the judiciary. Those looking for answers about Jonestown should know that the Guyanese official selected to investigate the matter is none other than the faithful Chancellor Crane who, to this day, has yet to convene his first hearing on the grisly massacre.

The year 1980 began with the visible escalation of official police repression. The CID, under INPOLSE-trained "Skip" Roberts, became formally associated with gangster elements and House of Israel thugs. The "death squad" of the police force terrorized the public with National Security Act warrantless house searches, beatings and shootings.

Evidence of official terror was dramatically released on February 25, 1980 at a WPA press conference where government documents were revealed showing transfer of arms to the House of Israel. A top secret radio message transcription was also produced from "Moonbeam to Chief of Staff." It read, "Re Delta Serra, plans for attacks on known WPA members must be fatal" (Delta Serra presumably means Death Squad). The cable was dated November 20, two days after the fatal police shooting of Ohene Koama. The same day as the press conference, another WPA member, Edward Dublin, was shot several times by police after an exchange of words outside a Linden nightclub. The original police version of the story that Dublin was stealing cement from a construction

site was changed the next day following eyewitness accounts of cold-blooded murder.

February also marked the promulgation of the new PNC constitution and the publication of still another secret deal between Burnham and CIA-linked forces. It was revealed that in October 1979, the PNC had concluded a deal with a consortium of right-wing US religious groups headed by Franklin Graham (Billy's son) for a massive resettlement of Southeast Asian refugees from Thailand to the Yarikita region of Guyana near the Jonestown camp. (See *CAIB* Number 9)

These were no ordinary refugees, but were in fact the remnants of the once powerful Laotian Hmong (formerly called Meo) army which was recruited by and fought for the CIA under Colonel Edward Lansdale, Hugh Tovar, Edgar "Pop" Buell and others in the secret war in Laos. Nor were they religious groups of the ordinary variety. They counted among their number elements of the Summer Institute of Linguistics/Wycliffe bible translators which has been named as a CIA front by *Time* magazine.

For Guyanese with a bloody history of CIA destabilization, the plan was too much and widespread opposition forced the temporary postponement of this scheme to import a 40,000-strong mercenary army.

At the end of February 1980, James Mentore, head of the Special Branch and assistant police commissioner was fired for "leaking information to the opposition." His dismissal and subsequent disappearance has led to much speculation as to his fate. Mentore, who received little attention by the US media, has much to tell. As security chief he holds information that could unravel the Jonestown mystery as well as document the connections between Guyana government repression and US assistance thereto. While many Guyanese suspect his disappearance can be traced to a death-squad sanitizing operation, other rumors indicate his presence in the Washington, D.C. area as recently as June. It is known that CIA officer James Lee Adkins (named in *CAIB* Number 9) sought contacts with WPA members immediately following Mentore's disappearance, ostensibly seeking information concerning the security chief's whereabouts. These attempted contacts were rebuffed and the true purpose of the CIA man's inquiry is not clear.

By Spring 1980, the regime's attempts to cover its real nature became more and more transparent. A bill known as Criminal Law Bill 1980 was rushed through Parliament in order to change results of pending cases resulting from the Referendum Anniversary arrests in July 1979. In response, the Guyana Bar Association staged a boycott and the legislation was condemned

throughout the Caribbean.

Also, the economic conditions reached an all-time crisis as indicated by the government newspaper's now classic announcement that "milk was banned in the public interest." To add insult to injury, Labor Minister Green proclaimed that there were no shortages, but that long lines at Guyana stores were caused by "lazy workers who were not responsible to customer requests."

On June 30, the stalled arson trial began before the chief magistrate. As in the Rampersaud case, an international defense team was assembled and human rights observers gathered from the US and the UK. The trial, which lasted only three-and-a-half days, was set in an atmosphere of increasing violence. More than twenty persons were arrested throughout the country and six were charged with treason, a hanging offense not employed since 1823. In addition, the Guyana Bar made public evidence of torture against prisoners who were also denied access to counsel.

Arson trial defendants, Walter Rodney, Rupert Roopnarine and Omawale, were effectively denied public trial when House of Israel members were allowed to pack the court. WPA supporters were also subjected to violent harrassment at home with stepped up "Death Squad" searches and parents intimidated by weapons placed at the heads of small children.

The trial itself was notable for its lack of substance. The government's lead witness, Arnold Mollyneaux, repeatedly contradicted his written statement and in the end was only believable insofar as he insisted that he believed the fire was set by Guyana Defence Force personnel. Mollyneaux's death in July makes him unavailable for further questioning. The only other witness to give evidence, the police photographer, was also caught in contradictory testimony.

It is interesting to note that the government theory about the fire is that the three WPA members started the blaze with a mixture of paint and paint thinners despite witness statements indicating multiple explosions and rapid destruction which are inconsistent with the paint and thinners explanation. When the trial resumes in August 1980, a key witness will be Eustace V. Kendall, the firearms and explosives examiner who learned his trade at the CIA Texas Border Patrol facility.

Walter Rodney is Assassinated

One week after the trial adjournment in June, Guyana and the world were shocked by Walter Rodney's murder. First accounts by the government were obviously prepared *in advance*

of the killing and reflected the scenario envisioned by the PNC plotters. Official accounts first said that a man had been killed outside the walls of the Georgetown jail when a bomb he was carrying to blast the prison detonated. The government claimed that the corpse was not immediately recognizable because the face had been blasted away.

In reality, Walter was killed a block away from the prison and, although cut in half by the exploding walkie-talkie, his face was at all times recognizable. Further evidence of the government lie comes from witnesses at a Georgetown cocktail party who recall that Chief of Staff McClean excused himself at 8:45 p.m. on the 13th--within minutes after it happened--to meet with Burnham and others, saying Walter Rodney had been killed in an explosion! This was despite official allegations that it was not known until much later who had been killed.

Donald Rodney, who was in the car when his brother was killed, was injured by the blast and was able to hide out with friends and provide an accurate account of the deception used to lure Walter to his death. Donald recounts that he and his brother had been meeting for several months with Gregory Smith, a GDF sergeant who was a British-trained electronics expert. Smith had promised to build walkie-talkie sets for the WPA. These were necessary because communication devices were routinely confiscated by police and banned via import controls.

On the evening in question, Walter's brother met Smith who instructed Donald to give one of the devices to Walter for testing. He, Smith, would keep the other. Smith insisted that the test should occur outside the prison wall to test the set's ability to overcome metal interference. Smith also instructed Donald that Walter should be on foot and that he should peer into the device to look for a light signal prior to communication.

Instead, Walter and Donald parked one block away from the prison and Walter held the device in his lap. The result being that his face was not obliterated as intended and he was not killed in close proximity to the prison wall. The actual manner of his death thus showed the contrived nature of the pre-fabricated publicity. Another factor undermining government credibility is that government death-squad police were positioned near the site where the test should have taken place.

Since Walter's murder, the GDF officially claims no word of a Sergeant Gregory Smith and the house where he resided is empty. However, public reactions to Rodney's murder have been so strong that many have come forward and proof of Smith's identity, including photographs, now exist. It is known that Smith's service number 4141 was still listed on the army payroll in June

and that an acquaintance recalls his training in England in 1977. True to form, witnesses have been sent out of the country and are not available for questioning. A mutilated corpse with hands cut off was recently found in the Guyana countryside and there is increased speculation that Smith, having served his masters well, has received his last reward!

The international horror at Walter Rodney's murder has led to former PNC friends coming forward and in confidence detailing further evidence of the regime's corruption.

Hamilton Green and Norman McClean are said to have visited Washington, D.C. twice in the last week of May. McClean confided in several persons that the purpose of his visit was to acquire "electronic communications equipment." The WPA claims that this included the rigged walkie-talkie anti-personnel device.

In addition, there is growing evidence of a well-organized network of PNC supporters in this country who continue to do the bidding of their Guyana-based masters and who finance activity with illicit drug sales. The center of the cover drug and goon-squad operations appears to be New York City and involves elements of a Guyana ex-police organization and the remnants of a New York cult. Green and McClean have made repeated visits since the assassination and are reported to have conferred with elements of the above groups in Brooklyn.

PPP and WPA sympathizers in North America have been attacked in recent weeks and many have received harrasing phone threats; several have been followed.

One former PNC supporter with good connections even reports that the mysterious James Mentore was killed last month by PNC thugs in Brooklyn. This report can neither be confirmed nor denied.

While many US citizens and organizations have joined the growing condemnation of Guyana's repressive regime, these sentiments have not been echoed by the official Washington establishment. To the contrary, one week after Walter Rodney's brutal murder, the IMF and World Bank proudly announced a special joint funding package totaling \$100-plus million and support for a multi-billion dollar hydro-power aluminum smelter scheme slated for Guyana's Upper Mazarumi district. These events have been heralded by the *Washington Post* as "good news for the Caribbean."

Thus, with masks removed the face of imperialism is revealed and the stage is set for the final phase of the struggle by Guyana's people against the Burnham dictatorship and the US agencies which installed and have maintained it for sixteen years!