

## **That Walter Rodney COI: Deeply flawed or Granger's Golden Jubilee Nightmare?**

"Don't keep harping back on all that old stuff; the PPP had to go. Time to celebrate Guyana's Golden Jubilee achievements, and move on." That's the call of many still hopeful for transformative change from Guyana's President Granger's administration.

The govt. correctly talks eloquently about "youth", "engaging the diaspora" and are sensitive about managing their image, especially with "foreign investors". However they seem to ignore the huge historic investment by the thousands of Guyanese who, like one brilliant 32-year-old young man full of post-independence hope, invested their zeal, creativity, professional skills, savings, even their families into Guyana's Development. That young man, Dr Walter Rodney, was assassinated and his wife and three young children forced to flee abroad, deeply traumatised, like so many others.

In the absence of genuine political education - like Rodney offered Guyanese, or where there is mis-education, self-servers *will* continue to manipulate the ignorant, and Guyanese will cleave to the old, destructive race politics. **The cracks are beginning to appear. Rodney was killed because he clearly exposed the self-servers' tactics.**

Putrid elements of both of Guyana's post-independence administrations facilitated collective eyepass and unspeakable atrocities on Guyanese people - no need to spell them out here, Guyanese know them. Many remain deeply disillusioned by those brutalising experiences and remain fearful of remigration, even to go "home" to die. Second and third generations with Guyanese heritage, apply their awesome energies and skills doing impressive things in the development of other countries, while many families implore their young not to return.

**To learn the lessons from Guyana's 50 turbulent post-independence years, there must be critical review and analyse of Guyana's history so that Guyanese youth can look forward to the redemption, rebirth and reconstruction of their beloved land.**

**This piece of killer evidence from the Rodney COI transcripts explains:**

*"It is over my head, because seeing this, this is a nightmare" - Anne R.Wagner  
- by Rohit Kanhai*

*Wednesday, March 16, 2016*

*Ms. Wagner, the sister of Guyana Defence Force Sergeant William Gregory Smith, was responding to Commissioner Cheltenham's question: "Ma'am, is you continuing judgment that is the WPA, or is that your judgement at all, could have issued him [Smith] these documents?"*

*Ms. Wagner, through her lawyer, had presented the WRCoI with a passport that Gregory Smith issued in the name of Cyril Milton Johnson on the 21st May, 1999. It was tagged as exhibit ARW2. When asked by consul to the commission if her brother had travelled to Guyana in 1999, Ms. Wagner replied, "I do not know."*

Commissioner Cheltenham asked Ms. Wagner: "Do you believe that the second passport which was handed to the Commission by your Consul could have been issued to your brother by the WPA in 1999?"

Ms. Wagner responded: "No, I do not believe so."

Mr. Hanoman asked Ms. Wagner: "Do you agree at the time this passport was issued that there was an arrest warrant for your brother for the murder of Walter Rodney?"

Ms. Wagner answered: "Yes, Sir."

Mr. Hanoman had used the said passport, issued in 1999, to find the application form for it. The application form was produced to the inquiry for examination.

The application form was dated 21st May, 1999 and transmitted directly from the Commissioner of Police, Laurie Lewis, to be "expedited." On the application form was a photograph of Gregory Smith, which was verified by Ms. Wagner as being that of her brother. She also identified the picture on the passport itself as being similar to that on the application form.

Mr. Hanoman enquired of her as to where her brother was residing in 1999 to which she responded, "Cayenne." He then pointed out to her that the address on the passport stated his country of residence as "the Republic of Guyana." His profession was listed as that of a "carpenter."

The application form had no signature for the applicant, as well as no signature for the guarantor, despite being an absolute requirement for the issuance of a passport under normal circumstance.

The passport had the date of birth for Cyril Milton Johnson as 5th June, 1943. The application form also had the same date of birth, the 5th June, 1943. Smith's actual date of birth was 5th June, 1946.

Mr. Selwyn Pieters noted that two passport application forms were produced, one from 1975 and the other from 1999. He pointed out that no application for a 1980 passport has been provided. Mr. Hanoman informed the hearing that a search was done for the 1980 application form, but none was found. Commissioner Samuels-Brown intervened, pointing out that there was a hand-written notation, stating PP Number 268685. She then noted that it referred to the passport issued in 1980. Commissioner Samuels-Brown asked Ms. Wagner: "Could you tell us what is the passport number on that passport, please?"

Ms. Wagner replied: "268685."

Commissioner Samuels-Brown responded: "So, it is the same passport number that is referenced, Do you agree?"

Ms. Wagner responded: "Yes, I do agree."

With this correlation between the 1980 passport #268685 to the 1999 passport, it was proven without any doubt whatsoever that it was the Guyana state that had provided Guyana Defence Force Sergeant #4141 Gregory Smith with the passport on which he traveled out of Guyana.

Even more devastating was that the said passport #268685 was the very passport that was reproduced in Smith's book, coauthored by his sister Ms. Anne R. Wagner, on page 153, under the caption, "Passport Cyril Johnson provided by the WPA." The passport carried two pictures of Gregory Smith, a young person when the passport was first issued on 5th July, 1980, and an older version of Gregory Smith when the passport was renewed on 5th July 1985 at the Embassy of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, Suriname. Mr. Pieters query of the 1980 application form was now answered.

It was at this point, when Commissioner Cheltenham asked Ms. Wagner if she felt that the WPA could have issued the said passports to her brother Gregory Smith, she responded, "It is over my head, because seeing this, this is a nightmare."

This was the nightmare that faced the Granger-led APNU+AFC administration when it came to power in the elections of May 11, 2015.

The lawyer representing the PNC, Basil Williams, was now the Attorney General with the change of government. His mission was now to shut down the Commission of Inquiry in order to prevent further damage, but it was already too late. The damage had already been done.

On the very first day of the hearings, the book, "Assassination Cry of a Failed Revolution: The Truth About Dr. Walter Rodney's Death," had been touted as the proof that revealed how Dr. Rodney had suffered an accidental death. The book was supposedly written by none other than Gregory Smith himself, and co-authored by his sister Anne R. Wagner. It was the book that the PNC swore by, as the gospel truth. Ms. Wagner's presence at the hearings was the ultimate triumph of the Burnhamists, her coming to vindicate the words of her brother. It turned out to be a disaster for them.

Ms. Wagner Witness Statement was a copying of sections of the book. During Ms. Wagner's testimony, she was told on numerous occasions by the Commissioner to tell her story in her own words. The Commissioner's warning came about because Ms. Wagner refused to give her evidence without reading from the book. Ms. Wagner, when questioned about incidents depicted in the book, had one response, 'I believe what my brother told me.' Undoubtedly, this was the safest strategy, to mouth every thing her brother said as being gospel truth. The problem with this strategy was when it came into conflict with the truth. And so it did in the case of the passport.

Ms. Wagner had claimed that Chapter Four of the book was written by none other than Smith himself. She had claimed that it was an authentic account of his description of events, narrated by him. She had altered nothing, reproducing faithfully what was in the manuscripts. She had discussed everything with him.

The fact that Gregory Smith himself had claimed on p.43 of the book that: "He [Mr. Fowler] then handed me a large brown envelope, the contents of which I examined. The envelope contained a passport in the name of Cyril Johnson, a bank account number, a social security card, two credit

*cards, and list of names with addresses." On page 54, Smith's claim that: "Mr. Fowler took me to an immigration officer, who handed me a passport and a plane ticket. The passport had the name Cyril Johnson." This was coming straight from the horse's mouth.*

*The Walter Rodney Commission of Inquiry Report could not have ignored this glaring evidence of state collusion in the provision of a passport for Guyana Defence Force Sergeant #4141 William Gregory Smith. It could not have ignored the evidence that it was a Guyana Defence Force aircraft, piloted by Captain Gerry Gouveia, who gave evidence that he transported Smith, along with Gwendolyn Jones and two children to*

*Kwakwani on the morning of June 14, 1980. Smith's claim of being drugged did not stand up to the evidence of four other eyewitnesses to the very event he described. Even Ms. Wagner herself blatantly contradicted her brother account of this event. The game was up.*

*The reason that the Granger-led government has delayed the public release of the WRCol Report is simple. It has unleashed its bloodhounds to discredit the Report before it is released to the public. It hopes by the time the President, in his deliberate judgment decides to release the report, the propaganda machine will have done its dirty work. Hamilton Green, Rex McKay, Gerald Periera, Colin Moore, and company have spewed forth some of the worst bile to pave the way for the discrediting of the Report.*