

An Offence Against the People of Guyana

by Janet Jagan

The Guyana Chronicle on July 23, 2005 carried a report of eleven Guyanese who were recently deported from the USA and Canada for committing various crimes. This is an ongoing event in Guyana and there are many who, rightfully, object to this deportation procedure which fuels the already dangerous crime scene in Guyana.

There is strong evidence that these criminals have been engaged in criminal activities on their return. Not only are they further involved in crime, but their North American experi-

ences have made them more efficient and knowledgeable operators of crime, which techniques they apply here. Further, they can teach our home grown criminals more sophisticated techniques and introduce new tools and methods of criminality.

One would have thought that after their experiences in North American jails, many would have chosen a new course for their own future and security. The US jails, in particular, are tough and harsh schools where many prisoners are killed, maimed or raped and besides, meet some of the world's most dangerous criminals. Unfortunately, these jail experiences probably harden many and they

come out of prison worse than they were before they went in. And Guyana must bear the results of these experiences in the hardened criminals who show no mercy for their victims.

Examining the Chronicle report on the "returnees" or "deportees", an astounding factor emerges. Of the eleven deportees, only two were adults when they entered the USA. Nine of the deportees were small children when their parents took them to North America. Here are the facts:

- 1) Roel Burrows, age 27, left Guyana in 1988 - at the age of 10 years.
- 2) Rabindranauth Ramnauth, age 25, left Guyana in 1991, at the age

of 11 years.

- 3) Khimlall Mohabir, 26, left Guyana in 1992 at the age of 13.

4) Lancelot McKenzie, no age provided, left Guyana in 1981, 24 years ago, so he must have been a child.

- 5) Kendonouan Cummings, 35, left Guyana in 1982 at age 12.

6) Andrew Daniels, 39 left Guyana in 1978 at 12 years of age.

7) Michael Stephens, 24, departed for the USA in 1985 at 4 years of age.

8) Michael Hamid, 29, departed for the USA in 1985 at 9 years of age.

9) Harold Zephyr, 46, left for the USA in 1992, at 13 years of age.

Only two deportees -

Dwain Dick and Mark McLeod were adults when they entered the USA.

What does this tell us? A very clear tale of injustice to the Guyanese people! Here are criminals, some high up on the ladder of crime, who lived in the USA and/or Canada as children, attended public schools, were indoctrinated into the life and culture of the country in which they lived, grew up in an environment very different from the land of their birth and were influenced by the culture and people around them to do whatever they did, against the laws of the land in which they lived.

Guyana and the

Guyanese people had nothing to do with their development, which in these cases, resulted in the committing of crimes. Yet the nation and its people are now burdened and hurt by the deportation of criminals who learned how to be criminals in another land.

It's morally wrong for these countries to throw its homegrown criminals into our back yards. The least we should expect is that deportees be restricted to adult immigrants who break the laws, not to those who grew up and were educated under the state that now rejects such citizens because of their birth origin.



Embassy of the United States of America

Georgetown, Guyana
September 26, 2005

H.E. Janet Jagan
c/o Freedom House
41 Robb Street
Lacytown, Georgetown

Dear President Jagan:

After reading your article, entitled “Exporting Nurses, Importing Criminals” that appeared in the Weekend Mirror dated September 3-4, I thought that I would take the opportunity to provide you with some data relevant to the topic. The issues that you mention in the article are important ones. For that reason, I feel compelled to set the record straight, and provide you some pertinent data.

In your article, you state that “the majority of deportees grew up in North America, having been taken there by their parents when they were small children or early teenagers.” Our data indicates otherwise. According to the Department of Homeland Security, 1582 criminals were deported to Guyana between 2000 and 2004. Those deportees had an average age of 24 when they entered the United States. They stayed in the United States for an average of 7 years, before they were deported at an average age of 32. A study commissioned for Jamaica in September 2004 (copy attached), and carried out by a professor at the University of the West Indies, indicated that many deportees had criminal records prior to migration.

In your article, you referred to recruitment seminars that target skilled workers, including teachers and nurses. I would like to stress that any recruitment efforts targeting nurses are sponsored by private firms and hospitals, and are not affiliated with the U.S. Government. It is also important to know that members of the Caribbean Diaspora are involved in this recruiting.

Teachers, on the other hand, are recruited by various school districts. Under these programs, teachers are encouraged to teach in the United States for two years before returning home to contribute to Guyana’s educational

system. Visas issued to participants require them to return to Guyana upon the completion of two years of service. This requirement can only be waived with permission from the Government of Guyana. We regularly receive requests for waivers from government authorities.

We recognize the challenges that Guyana's outward migration pattern presents for the country. The United States government is committed through its many development programs to assist in reversing this trend and in assisting Guyana's developing economy. Through these programs, we hope to give Guyana's skilled professionals incentive to stay here and serve their country.

The U.S. government is committed to stemming the flow of illegal immigrants to the United States, while at the same time facilitating legitimate travel by granting non-immigrant and immigrant visas to qualified applicants. We hope that this helps to clarify U.S. immigration policies.

Please be assured of my continued consideration and regard.

Sincerely,



Roland W. Bullen
Ambassador

**JANET JAGAN
FREEDOM HOUSE**

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October 10, 2005

Ambassador Roland Bullen
Embassy of the USA
100 Young Street
Kingston
Georgetown

Dear Ambassador

Thank you for your most informative letter of September 26, 2005 in response to my article in the Mirror Newspaper of September 3-4, 2005.

I am sending you a copy of an earlier article I wrote, July 30-31, 2005, concerning deportees. You will note that my information on deportees came from my analysis of a report in the Guyana Chronicle of July 23, 2005, which gave precise data on eleven deportees. Out of the eleven, it appeared that nine were children when they migrated to the U.S.A.

With best regards.

Yours sincerely

Janet Jagan