



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

So-called fact-finding mission

By [Stabroek News](#) November 15, 2023**Dear Editor,**

A non-government US team was scheduled to arrive in Guyana from the United States on November 13, 2023, on a so-called fact-finding mission. The team cited presentations (that were not based on evidence but rather on rhetoric and platitudes) from David Patterson, Roysdale Forde SC, Cathy Hughes, and Dawn Hastings-Williams, as providing the basis for their mission. An immediate concern pops up! Is 'fact-finding' a code word for the surreptitious launch of an Opposition Commission of Inquiry (COI)? Doesn't such an act violate Guyana constitution and undermine the state's sovereignty? Where was this team when its sponsors made an unthinkable assault on democracy by staging a 2020 electoral coup d'état that failed? Is the team aware of the Leader of the OAS Election Observer Mission, Bruce Golding's famous quote? "I have never seen a more transparent attempt to alter the result of an election."

The fundamental right in any democracy is the right of citizens to choose a government of their choice. The aborted attempt by Opposition forces to steal that right in 2020 was not only despicable and startling but it also represented a combination of super-indulgence in discrimination, corruption, and constitutional aberration. The APNU's ousting from state power at the 2020 polls has caused them to



ungovernable. Additionally, they have failed in their high profile conference in Washington to impress the Congressional Black Caucus with their exaggerated and misleading allegations. They turned quickly to map out a new strategy by mobilizing the US team to seek validation of what they already know, but also to subtly shake the foundation of the PPP/C government at this critical time in Guyana's history, when Venezuela has threatened to annex 2/3 of Guyana and when the need for the country's social cohesion is pre-eminent. Why would the Opposition invite this team now?

What relief this team might bring to APNU that they could not get from the Washington engagement, is uncertain. They must contend with the formidable record of a performance driven PPP/C government, which is led by a charismatic leader, who has shown a remarkable ability to transcend barriers of race, gender, region, and religion. President Irfaan Ali leads the most successful government in the history of Guyana. Taking government to the people has not only been innovative and highly productive for individuals/ families but also neighbourhood revitalization. The 'One Guyana' philosophy is leading towards ethnic tolerance and equity, while these measures have forced the opposition to alter their strategy of street mayhem and incendiary rhetoric and replace those for now with extra-territorial engagement.

Guyana's Prime Minister Brigadier (R'td) Mark Phillips notes: "It is clear that Burke has not only determined the Terms of Reference of this fact-finding mission but has also essayed the findings of this mission even before it has commenced.... The Government of Guyana will not be engaging this delegation....it is a clear interference in Guyana's domestic politics with a bias towards the political Opposition in Guyana." The Prime Minister says that any delegation that is interested in fact finding mission on problems that Guyana has faced historically must enquire



economic mismanagement (the GDP plummeted by 21.5% from 1979 to 1992) and for making the country the second poorest in the Western hemisphere after Haiti.

What about the notorious Jonestown mass murder-suicide that resulted in over 900 deaths of predominantly Black Americans? That tragedy “represented the largest number of American civilian casualties in a single non-natural event.” Would the team investigate the adventures of House Israel Leader, Rabbi Washing-ton, and his rapacious “gang of thugs”? Would they investigate the vulgar 1978 referendum (in which the PNC claimed they received 97.9% (or 419,936) of the votes cast? The referendum was designed to abolish any future referenda to change the entrenched provisions (like the powers of the President) of the Guyana constitution and allowed these to be changed instead by a 2/3 majority of Parliament.

The US team should learn from the official NY State Delegation (NYSD) that visited Guyana last month. NYSD was very cognizant that they must not seem to be interfering in the internal affairs of the country. Thus, they made it clear that they went to Guyana to listen and learn but not to investigate or fact-find. The US team is doing the opposite. The US team is setting a dangerous precedent. Would the US team go to Trinbago that has almost similar challenges like Guyana? And would they go to Haiti to help solve their intractable problems?

Sincerely,

Dr. Tara Singh



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