



Freedom and the Liberation Struggle in Southern Africa: Recognizing Guyana's Contribution



Paper
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Abstract:

The Caribbean held the singular view that Apartheid was more important for dismantling than the 'Cold War', for life would have been backward-looking if yesterday's slavery would have morphed into Apartheid today. Hence, connecting the descendant of slaves with their ancestral home in Africa is to shun blindness for justice and to allow Ubuntu (or human kindness or humanity towards others) to thrive. This paper addresses this issue in the context of the liberation struggle for Southern Africa. It highlights the specific contributions by Guyanese who used their talent and skills in the struggle to end Apartheid in South Africa.

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Shun Blindness for Justice, Live Free

*Shackled, but unbowed, they un-freely went;
But survived they did, and freely they returned,
Singing songs of freedom, with liberation ensured.
Never again, no never again, will they be cowed.*

*Tethered against history is painful for the un-seeing;
But thanks to those who shun blindness for justice,
Walking defiant, never muted, never unprepared.
So rise again, rise again, for humanity cannot wait.*

*Ubuntu would be crushed and life diminished, if
Yesterday's slavery morphs into Apartheid today,
So strive together, never again let division prevail.
Build freedom, shun blindness for justice, live free.*

CKH, 2016

(1.00) Introduction

A review of published articles written on the liberation struggle in Southern Africa and the actions taken to terminate Apartheid in South Africa would reveal that it required over many years, the work of several individuals from across the globe, including large and small countries, and multilateral institutions. While it is important to recognize all the dedicated hard work by many, the focus of this paper is to present the contributions made by Guyana through policy positions and programming actions taken by the late President Burnham of Guyana in the liberation struggle of Southern Africa.

The justification for this paper stems from the indefinite hold the South African Government placed on the Oliver Tambo Award that was proposed to be posthumously conferred on President Burnham in 2013. The withholding of the award is related to claims made by several academics and political activists who blamed President Burnham for the death of Dr. Walter Rodney who died on June 13, 1980 (Tula Diamini, 2013).

From the outset, it should be stated that this paper will not address any of the issues related to the death of Dr. Walter Rodney, for that investigation has been examined in several articles; and more recently, it was assessed by a Commission of Inquiry, after which that very report was handed over to Parliament of Guyana on May 12, 2016 for debate and decision.¹

¹ The handing over of the report at: <http://www.stabroeknews.com/2016/news/stories/05/12/govt-presents-rodney-coi-report-parliament/>. A copy of the report is at: <http://digitalcommons.auctr.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1000&context=wrcoi>.

Turning to the subject at hand, some of the questions this paper will address are: How did Guyana become involved in the liberation struggle in Southern Africa? What actions did the Government of Guyana take and who initiated such action? Did the prevailing international environment, such as the 'Cold War', have any effect on the countries involved? Before presenting the evidence on this matter, it would be worthwhile to examine some background information on the political environment in which Guyana gained its independence.

(2.00) Background Information

Before independence, all British Guiana foreign affairs matters were managed by the United Kingdom (UK); and it was only after independence on May 26, 1966 that these responsibilities were transferred to local management, with Prime Minister Burnham being the first Foreign Minister of Guyana (Ramphal, 2014, p104). Consequently, the attainment of independence added a new dimension to international affairs and foreign policy among newly independent countries. For example, for the first time the authority to fashion their own foreign policy was a local decision; and many times what was perceived to be within their national interest, such as freedom and justice for all human kind, was not necessarily seen as a priority by others. For instance, whereas the United States of America (USA) was interested in preventing the spread of socialism /communism even as they promoted capitalism and democracy, the Soviet Union, in contrast, opposed the USA position.

These contrasting perspectives held respectively by the USA and Russia, formed the basis for the 'Cold War' for several decades; and those new independent countries on either side of the divide, or those with membership in the Non-Aligned Movement, found varying degrees of difficulty in international trade, finance and diplomacy. For example, USA policy towards pre-independence British Guiana in 1964 was impacted by 'Cold War' fears, where the elected Premier Dr. Cheddi Jagan, a self-identified Marxist, did not find favor with the USA, largely because the USA held the view that Dr. Jagan would create 'another Cuba' in the Western Hemisphere (US Department of State 2005). Hence, out of self-interest, the USA preferred the opposing side led by Mr. L.F.S. Burnham and Mr. Peter

D'Aguiar that later won the December 1964 elections.

It should also be stated that the false claim by Venezuela to more than sixty percent of Guyana land and sea areas gained prominence around this period, due to Venezuela's concern for the spread of communism in a neighboring state. In fact, Venezuela in 1962 having recognized the USA was concerned with the spread of communism in the Western Hemisphere, the then Venezuelan President Rómulo Betancourt used the pretext of 'another Cuba' to get the USA involved in trying to stop Communist Jagan, but their ultimate aim was to deny Guyana its land (the Essequibo area that borders Venezuela) that Venezuela falsely claimed as theirs (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Guyana, 2016, p. 24).

In the case of South Africa, a similar strategy is devised as that employed by Venezuela with the USA. Specifically, the South African Government was opposed to communism, making them allied to the USA; but at home, South Africa suppressed democracy, advanced Apartheid, and discriminated against all non-white South Africans.²

In a letter written in 1980 by Mr. P.W. Botha, President of South Africa, to Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, Prime Minister of Britain, he advanced the notion that a pro-communist leaning African National Congress (ANC) was more of a threat to the West than the concerns with Apartheid. Specifically, he wrote that, *"There is no doubt that the Southern African region has now become a prime objective of Soviet ambition. ...The Soviet Union is already established in Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique, and its influence in other African*

² See the experience of Mahatma Gandhi in South Africa in the early 1900s. (<http://www.sahistory.org.za/people/mohandas-karamchand-gandhi>).

countries poses a direct threat to the whole of Africa. ... if democratic institutions are to survive anywhere in Africa, a common anti-Soviet strategy for Africa as a whole must be worked by the West... All anti-Soviet governments in Africa from Egypt to South Africa must be supported, their foreign policies coordinated and their differences submerged...." (Ramphal (2014), pp. 412-413).

Prime Minister Thatcher may have been influenced by the contents of Mr. Botha's letter; and together with President Reagan's support, Apartheid was dismissed as a threat and unimportant in South Africa, while socialism/communism and the 'Cold War' became their number one concern and focus.³ By 1986, however, the Anti-Apartheid Act was passed into Law by the United States Congress (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comprehensive_Anti-Apartheid_Act), but the struggle to arrive at that position was not an easy undertaking by the Anti-Apartheid Movements.

For some Americans, Apartheid was wrong and they worked hard to end it. Included in this group were Harry Belafonte, Charles Rangle, Adam Clayton Power, Jr., and Stokely Carmichael, among others. Also, there were the Congressional Black Caucus and the American Committee on Africa (Greenidge 2014, p. 10). Working to end Apartheid as well was Senator Robert F. Kennedy, who connected the Civil Rights and Anti-Apartheid Movements in his speech entitled, "Ripple of Hope", delivered at the University of Cape Town, South Africa (<http://www.npr.org/2011/08/12/139449268/remembering-rfks-visit-to-the-land-of-Apartheid>).

Other American leaders might not have agreed with the

³ President Reagan embrace of Apartheid, "http://www.salon.com/2011/02/05/ronald_reagan_Apartheid_south_africa/

Anti-Apartheid Movement, since they believed that the African National Congress (ANC) was pro-communist; and that the ANC was more of an immediate threat than the Apartheid system.

(2.01) A Foreign Policy Objective in New Independent Countries

An important foreign policy objective of the new independent countries was focused on ending Apartheid not only because of the injustice it perpetuated, but also because it was seen as the dehumanization of a significant proportion of the South African population. In fact, quoting Burnham (1981), *'We..., having won political independence', cannot be oblivious of the issues at stake in Southern Africa. A sense of morality as well as the recognition of self-interest compel our involvement.'* Consequently, solidarity between the people of the Caribbean and the people of Southern Africa on the question of ending Apartheid was inviolable; and this superseded any other concern, including the issues identified with the 'Cold War'. Furthermore, the dismantling of the Apartheid system was more important to the Caribbean than the concerns of the 'Cold War' because Apartheid was seen in the Caribbean as a beginning stage of slavery and as such it could not stand. Table 1 contains a matrix reflecting the binary choices perceived to be taken for or against Apartheid and the 'Cold War' by various countries. For example, whereas the USA and UK were against the Soviet Union 'Cold War' programs, and they took no action against Apartheid; the Caribbean, in contrast, took the opposite position that Apartheid had to end, while down playing the importance of the 'Cold War' that was considered to be of less importance to them.

Table 1: Apartheid and the Cold War Choice Matrix

| Policy Choices | Willingness to take or not take action against Apartheid/ Cold War | |
|----------------|---|---|
| | UK & USA | (Jamaica, Guyana, Trinidad & Tobago, Barbados) |
| Apartheid | Take no Action against Apartheid; not important; Botha's letter to Thatcher | Take Action: Dismantle Apartheid Commonwealth; United Nations Sanctions and Assistance; Non-Aligned Movement against. |
| Cold War | Take Action; Dismantle Communism/Socialism | Take no Action/ Ambivalent/ some sympathetic to Socialism, some not; some 'Non-Aligned' (Rampal 2014, p 493) |

To buttress the independence earned in the newly independent countries, many of them, including Guyana, joined the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), where they had among its principles the respect for fundamental human rights, signaling thereby that Apartheid had to be dismantled:

(<http://mea.gov.in/in-focus-article.htm?20349/History+and+Evolution+of+NonAligned+Movement>).

At the conference of Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries held in Guyana 8th-12th August 1972, Prime Minister Burnham spoke of the struggle to end Apartheid and the urgency required to ensure the liberation of Southern Africa (Burnham, 1972, p 109-110). It is apposite to note that this address was even before the opening of Diplomatic Relations with Cuba which occurred later in that year in December 1972.

(2.02) Commonwealth, UN and USA Support against Apartheid

International support against Apartheid was advanced by the Commonwealth and the United Nations. In the case of the Commonwealth, they approved in 1977 the Gleneagles Agreement which banned all sporting contacts with South Africa, while Resolution 418 of the United Nations (UN) Security Council in 1977 banned the sale of arms to South Africa (Ramphal, 2014, p.426).

This resolution was further strengthened when the UN passed Resolution 591 in 1986. Likewise, in a bold move in 1986, the United States reversed its earlier position of not condemning Apartheid when it introduced disinvestment legislation aimed at pressuring South Africa to end Apartheid:

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Disinvestment_from_South_Africa).

(2.03) Frontline States and the Caribbean against Apartheid

Apart from the international support by multilateral institutions, there were also individual countries that worked to dismantle Apartheid. Among them were the frontline states, namely, Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Zambia, and Tanzania. These countries are neighbors or are in close proximity to South Africa; and given that President Botha had already stated that Angola and Mozambique were under Soviet influence, it was not surprising that South Africa engaged in military raids and economic sabotage against these states, resulting in the loss of property and many lives: (<http://aamarchives.org/history/front-line-states.html>).

Strengthening the defense of the frontline states against South African aggression became a priority; and this critical task was closely associated with the introduction of Cuban troops in Southern Africa on behalf of the frontline states. This was seen as the expansion of communism in Africa as stated in President Botha's letter to Prime Minister Thatcher, but seen by the frontline states as critical support to end Apartheid.

Meanwhile, the new independent Caribbean countries provided assistance to end Apartheid by engaging in additional activities outside of their contribution through the Commonwealth, the UN and NAM. This path was only possible due to their independence gained in the 1960s and their freedom to engage in their own foreign policy. Independence for these countries was granted on August 6th 1962 for Jamaica; Trinidad and Tobago on August 31, 1962; Guyana on May 26, 1966; and Barbados on November 30, 1966. Also, it is important to mention that Cape Verde received its independence from Portugal on July 5, 1975; and the connection of Cape Verde to Cuba, Guyana and the liberation struggle will be explained later.

(2.04) Foreign Policy Changes with Cuba

One of their first foreign policy positions by these Caribbean countries was to establish diplomatic relations with Cuba, a position that was not welcomed by the USA, since the USA had severed diplomatic relations with Cuba on January 3, 1961, following their concern for the spread of communism:

(<http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/united-states-severs-diplomatic-relations-with-Cuba>).

It should be noted, however, that on December 14, 2014, the

USA reestablished diplomatic relations with Cuba: (<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/18/world/americas/us-cuba-relations.html>; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cuba%E2%80%9393United_States_relations), following the hiatus of over fifty years; and during this period, Switzerland was the protecting power and interlocutor for the USA in Cuba. This change in foreign policy by President Obama represents a fundamental shift that will facilitate trade, investment, financial market expansion and diplomatic relations in the western hemisphere, unless President Trump changes this policy. (*Note: President Trump has changed the policy*).

Pope Francis must also be congratulated for facilitating this



President Raúl Castro of Cuba and President Barack Obama, USA, March 21, 2016.⁴

⁴ President Barrack Obama trip to Cuba March 21, 2016; these are pictures of the visit: https://images.search.yahoo.com/search/imag-es;_ylt=A0LEV12rDxxYKU0Ae1pXNyoA;_ylu=X3oDMTEyZ3Z1b2hvBGNvbG8DYmYxBHBvcwMxBHZ0aWQDVUkyQzNmMQRzZWMDc2M-?p=President+Obama+Trip+Cuba&fr=mcafee#id=137&iurl=https%3A%2F%2Fcbismiami.files.wordpress.com%2F2015%2F09%2Fgettyimages-490519652.jpg%3Fw%3D640%26h%3D360%26crop%3D1&action=click

diplomatic change in USA-Cuba Foreign Policy:
(<http://edition.cnn.com/2014/12/17/politics/pope-cuba/index.html>).

Asserting their independence, the Prime Ministers of these four countries, Mr. Michael Manley, Jamaica, Mr. Errol Barrow, Barbados, Mr. Forbes Burnham, Guyana, and Dr. Eric Williams, Trinidad and Tobago, collectively stated that as sovereign states, they had the sovereign right to form diplomatic and economic relations with any country they chose; and in keeping with this declaration, they all signed on December 12, 1972 to begin diplomatic relations with Cuba (Ramphal 2014, p 131).⁵

This was indeed a significant event at that time, because in the hemisphere only Mexico and Canada had diplomatic relations with Cuba, following the Cuban Revolution in 1959.⁶ In other words, Cuba was seen as a pariah nation in the Western Hemisphere. Consequently, for the four small, independent countries with no economic or political weight or power to take such a bold move was perceived as an unwelcomed step by many, but forward-looking by the four countries as they subsequently formed the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) group on July 4, 1973, approximately six months after starting diplomatic relations with Cuba.

⁵ Burnham, Barrow, Manley and Seretse Khama of Botswana were friends when they were students in London in the 1940s. They later became Prime Ministers/ Presidents of their respective countries twenty-five years later. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forbes_Burnham

⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/For-eign_relations_of_Cuba#Relations_with_Caribbean_Community.28CARICOM .29

A second reason for strengthening relations with Cuba resulted from their historical and cultural ties to Africa, given their similar experiences of the dehumanizing conditions of sugar-plantation slavery; and the plausibility that many Jamaicans of African descent and Cubans of African descent are related.⁷ In commemoration of the 1972 diplomatic signing among the countries, December 8 is celebrated as CARICOM-Cuba Day. Equally important is the fact that slaves from Cape Verde (Africa) were taken to Cuba in the year 1526 to work on the Caribbean sugar plantations: (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cape_Verdean_Cuban), a common circumstance imposed without free will and choice on all the people from Africa during slavery.

The liberation of Southern Africa as noted previously came from different institutions and countries, including but not limited to the Commonwealth, the United Nations, the USA, some European countries, Cuba, Guyana and the NAM that affirmed their commitment against Apartheid in 1972 at the NAM Foreign Ministers Conference in Guyana. In the next section, the linkage Guyana had with Cuba in the liberation struggle in Southern Africa will be presented, and this will be followed by specific contributions made by Guyanese.

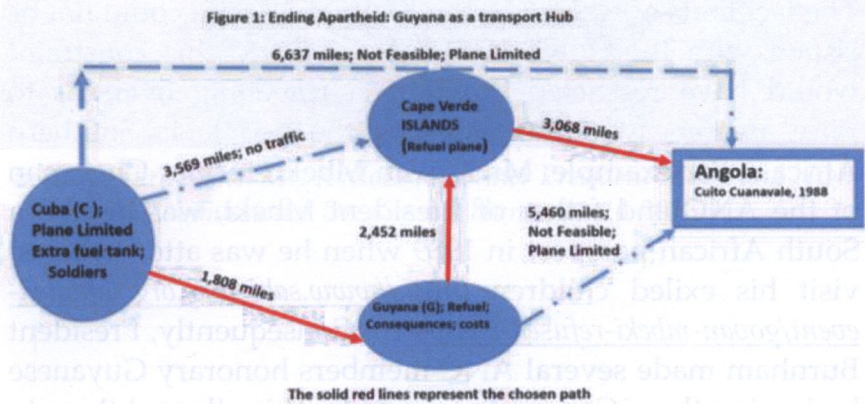
(3.00) Guyana-Cuba Link to Angola and Consequences for Guyana

In order to assist the front line states in their fight against being colonized under the Apartheid system, Cuba

⁷ In a film for mature audiences by Jorge Luis Sánchez (2015), "Cuba Libre", he provides a dramatic depiction of the connection between Cuban and Jamaican slaves. I have spoken with Cubans who have relatives in Jamaica.

provided troops to fight in the war against South Africa. However, the logistical arrangements for moving troops and military supplies from Cuba to Angola was a difficult challenge. For instance, Cuba did not have the aircraft to make such a long, non-stop flight of over 6,600 miles across the Atlantic Ocean to Angola. So in 1975, the Guyana Government, headed by Prime Minister Burnham, provided landing rights to Cuba so that refueling operations of the old British plane which Cuba used and the refueling of an on-board extra fuel tank could be made in Guyana for the onward journey to Cape Verde. A refueling operation was completed in Cape Verde and the last leg of the flight to Angola was executed.⁸

Figure 1 below presents a flow chart of the possible routes from Cuba to Angola, with the bold lines tracing the actual path taken from Cuba to Angola, while the dotted blue lines trace the infeasible path.



⁸ I received this information from His Excellency Carlos Fernàndez de Cossio, the Cuban Ambassador to South Africa. His father, His Excellency, Jose Fernandez, was the Cuban Ambassador in Canada when the four Caribbean countries established diplomatic relations with Cuba on December 12, 1972.

Certainly, the USA and Guyana's neighboring countries were concerned by the close association between Guyana and Cuba, as they saw this as an alignment with communism which had negative outcomes for Guyana. For example, it has been alleged that the bombing in October 1976 of the Cubana airline flight No.455 in which 11 Guyanese, along with another sixty-two passengers from other countries were killed, was payback for joining with Cuba (Stabroek News: <http://www.landofsixpeoples.com/news022/ns21227.htm>.; Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cubana_de_Aviaci%C3%B3n_Flight_455). Other pressures were brought to bear on Guyana in area of commerce, trade and financial markets; but this did not cause a reversal of the policies in Guyana, since it was felt that the fight against Apartheid was the most important event for the self determination of Southern Africa.

(3.01) Guyana Passports to ANC Leadership

The fact that several leaders in Southern Africa could not be issued with their own national passports, this constraint would have restricted them from travelling overseas to raise awareness of the plight of the people in Southern Africa. For example, Mr. Govan Mbeki, former Chairman of the ANC and father of President Mbeki, was denied a South African passport in 1989 when he was attempting to visit his exiled children (<http://www.sahistory.org.za/dated-event/govan-mbeki-refused-passport>.). Consequently, President Burnham made several ANC members honorary Guyanese by issuing them Guyanese passports. This allowed them to travel without immigration interference when visiting supportive organizations and Governments (Granger 2013).

In discussions with former President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa on November 16, 2016, he confirmed that several

ANC members travelled on Guyanese passports during the 1980s. ANC members who received passports were Mr. Theo-Ben Gurirab, former Prime Minister of Namibia and Mr. John Makatini, ANC Representative at the United Nations, among others (Majeed 2010).



In the picture below: Mr. K McLean, former President Mbeki and High Commissioner Dr. Kenrick Hunte, 11-16-2016.⁹

⁹ (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thabo_Mbeki; 2nd President of South Africa, June 14, 1999- September 24, 2008).

(3.02) Guyana's Financial Contribution to the African Liberation Fund, Scholarships and Action against Ian Smith's UDI

Despite the severe financial hardship the Guyanese economy experienced during the 1970s and 1980s due to the oil price shock and falling commodity prices for primary products, Prime Minister Burnham, on behalf of Guyana, still made an annual contribution of US\$ 50,000.00 in 1970 to the Liberation Movements of Southern Africa, increasing the amount to US\$250,000.00 (Burnham 1981, p 14). At the Summit Conference of the NAM in Lusaka, Zambia in September, 1970, Prime Minister Mr. Forbes Burnham (right) in the picture below, present to the President of Tanzania, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere (left), a cheque of \$50,000 for the freedom fighters in Africa (see picture below). At the same NAM Conference, Burnham spoke on



behalf of the Caribbean in the struggle against Ian Smith's Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) for white-ruled Southern Rhodesia (Ramphal 2014, p 120-121). Additionally, recognizing the need for skilled personnel in Southern Africa, President Desmond Hoyte of Guyana in 1987 offered scholarships to Southern Africans for studies in Guyana. This offer was accepted by Mr. Olivier Tambo when he visited Guyana and was to be followed up by the ANC (Granger 2015; p. 19).

3.03 Guyanese Public Servants in Southern Africa

In addition to the financial contributions and scholarships offered (Burnham 1981, p 14), the Guyana Government seconded skilled Guyanese to work in the front line states. For example, when Zambia gained its independence from Britain on October 24, 1964 and it did not have a sufficient quantity of skilled workers to efficiently manage the public service, Guyanese public servants were recruited and employed in Zambia (Granger 2013, p.7). This was one of the outcomes of independence, resulting from the loss of skilled workers as some civil servants migrated from the new independent countries. Migration was apparently more acute in some countries than in others; and without a pool of skilled workers to replace the skilled migrants, output in the public service would have been stymied, crippling the liberation struggle.

Zambia faced such an experience and a program had to be devised to contract skilled public servants to close the skills gap. Consequently, as part of Guyana's Liberation Diplomacy for Southern Africa, Prime Minister Forbes Burnham established Guyana's first High Commission on the African continent in Zambia; and seconded several skilled public servants (doctors, lawyers, engineers,

secretaries) to work in the Zambian and Southern African governments during the 1970s (Granger, 2013, p 7). The record shows that some of these workers remained in Zambia and formed families; some migrated to other countries in Africa and elsewhere, while others died and have been interred in Africa. Appendix 1 includes the names of public servants who worked in Zambia, while Appendix 2 contains the recollections by five seconded workers: Mrs. Cleopatra B. Sinkamba Islar, Mrs. Bernadette Ngwane, Ms. Villet Fernandes, Dr. Ann Angela Alleyne Wallace¹⁰ When they left Guyana, more than forty years ago, it was the first time many of them travelled to another country. Many were just teenagers and one was just seventeen and half years old. Undoubtedly, their experiences speak to their willingness to go beyond the call of duty to help others at a time when the struggle for freedom was poignant.

(3.04) Guyana Use of the Gleneagles Agreement

The 1977 Gleneagles Agreement banned men and women from playing sports in Apartheid South Africa. It is apposite to note that at that time, Sir Shridath Ramphal, a Guyanese, was the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Secretariat and he was very active in seeing implementation of the agreement (<http://www.global-briefing.org/2012/07/moving-sport-into-the-political-arena/>). The Government of Guyana, led by President Burnham, and the West Indian Cricket Board, enforced the agreement against several West Indian cricketers. Two such players from Guyana who were banned were Alvin Kallicharran and Colin Croft. There were other Caribbean cricketers, such as Geoff Greenidge from Barbados, Laurence Rowe from

¹⁰ Other public servants from the Caribbean were seconded as well.

Jamaica, among others (Granger 2013; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colin_Croft).

These West Indian players were called “honorary white” persons when they visited South Africa during the Apartheid period. Obviously, this was not acceptable in the Caribbean, as it was a dehumanizing pejorative. The Guyana Government also withdrew its 1976 National team from the Montreal Olympics in support of an African boycott that resulted from New Zealand’s Rugby team’s tour of Apartheid South Africa (Granger 2013).

(3.05) Guyana Involvement at the Commonwealth and UN

During the period 1970 to 1975, Guyana’s High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, His Excellency, Sir John Carter, was the Chairman of the Commonwealth Sanctions Committee that had oversight and management functions over the Commonwealth policies on the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) in Zimbabwe and apartheid in South Africa. The actions by Sir John Carter were at the direction of President Burnham. A former Guyanese High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, His Excellency Cecil Pilgrim, was a member of the Commonwealth Observer Mission for the first free elections in South Africa in 1994.¹¹

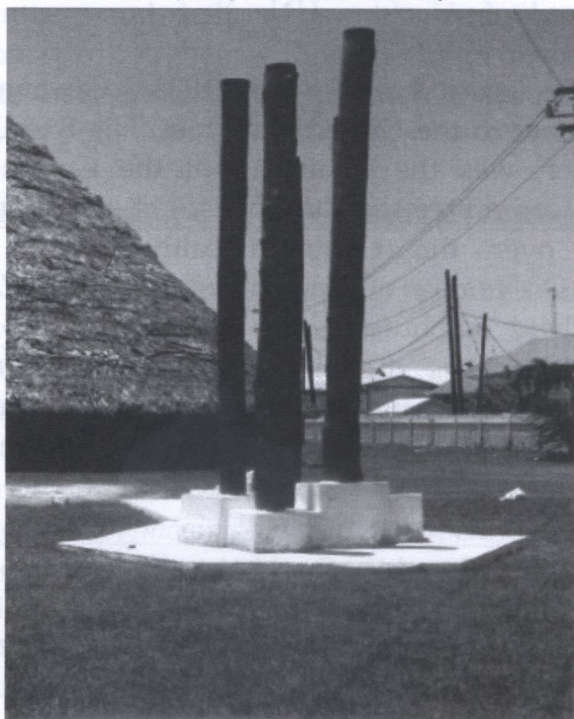
At the UN, Guyana, under the leadership of President Burnham, played an important role in the formation and

¹¹ In 1994, the PNC Government was now the Parliamentary opposition having lost the 1992 elections. The President of Guyana at that time was Dr. Cheddi Jagan, who objected to High Commissioner Pilgrim’s appointment, but he was still retained on the committee by Chief Emeka Anyaoku of the Commonwealth Secretariat (Greenidge 2014, p. 13).

management of the UN Council for Namibia. In this regard, the first President of the Council was Guyana's Sir John Carter, with other Guyanese, such as Ambassadors Rashleigh Jackson and Noel Sinclair at subsequent periods after Sir John Carter, providing leadership on this Council and other committees for several years (Majeed 2010). In recognition of the work done on the liberation of Southern Africa, the Government of Guyana constructed the African Liberation Monument in Georgetown, Guyana (See below).

**"MOURN NOT FOR US WHO DIED
BUT FOR OUR BROTHERS EVERYWHERE
WHO LIVE IN BONDAGE
AND IN MOURNING TURN AWAY TO ACT."**

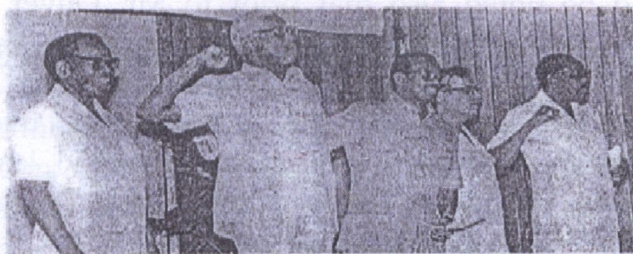
(Inscription on the monument)



African Liberation Monument, Georgetown, Guyana, which was constructed during the visit of the Council for Namibia on the 26th August 1976. The President of the Council at the time was Guyana's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Mr. R.E. Jackson

(3.06) Mr. O. R. Tambo and other African Leaders visit Guyana

In recognition of Guyana's contribution to ending Apartheid, Mr. Oliver Tambo visited Guyana during the period July 14th to July 19th 1987 (see the picture below), in order to express on behalf of the people of Southern Africa, their gratitude for the assistance given over the years to the liberation struggle (Guyana Chronicle No. 3457, July 16th 1987).



Album of photographs of the official visit of Oliver Reginald Tambo, President-General of the African National Congress of South Africa to the Republic of Guyana, July 1987.

Also visiting with Mr. Tambo on that occasion were Mr. Neo Mnumzana, Chief ANC Representative in New York and Frene Ginwala, Press Attache (Granger 2013). In his speech, Mr. Tambo remarked that, *"... that the people of Guyana and their leadership take our struggle as their own... (at a time when) ... Africa continues to be in chains because a part of Africa (Namibia and South Africa) continues to be in chains..., (but)....there is no doubt that Apartheid is retreating (and that the struggle is one) ...that is certain to be won."*

It should be noted also that prior to Mr. Oliver Tambo visiting Guyana, other African leaders who came to Guyana in support of Guyana's commitment to the African liberation Movement were Mr. Sam Nujoma, the South West African Peoples Organisation (SWAPO) leader, in May 1974; President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania in



The late President Forbes Burnham in a meeting with the legendary leader of Mozambique, Mr. Samora Machel, in Georgetown, Guyana, 1975.

November 1974; the UN delegation responsible for Namibia in 1974; and in 1975, President Tolbert of Liberia, President Kaunda of Zambia, President Gowon of Nigeria; a delegation from the Organization from the African Union (OAU); President Seretse Khama of Botswana, '... Burnham's chum in London in the 1950s.' (Ramphal 2014 p 121); and President Samora Machel of Mozambique. These visits were in keeping with the high regard these leaders had for the contribution that the Guyanese people made toward the liberation of Southern Africa.

(3.07) Guyana Eddie Grant: Jo'anna Give Me Hope

Who could forget Nelson Mandela's 90th birthday celebration, when many artists presented a musical tribute to him in 2008? They sang what has been described as the Anthem of Apartheid's demise: "Jo'anna Give Me Hope" (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oH2zXEu7nTc>). Written and sung by Eddie Grant of Guyana, it was banned before 1994 by the government of South Africa: (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/music/3555191/How-Eddy-Grant-gave-hope-to-South-Africa.html>; Greenidge 2014, p 11). The first verse of the song: (<http://www.metrolyrics.com/gimme-hope-joanna-lyrics-eddy-grant.html>) states:

*Well Jo'anna she runs a country
She runs in Durban and the Transvaal
She makes a few of her people happy, oh
She don't care about the rest at all
She's got a system they call apartheid
It keeps a brother in a subjection
But maybe pressure can make Jo'anna see
How everybody could a live as one*

Undoubtedly, Eddie Grant captures in his song the plight of a majority of those who were oppressed in the Apartheid

Clive Lloyd meet Nelson Mandela at African National Congress Head Quarters, Shell House, Johannesburg, August 1991.



This is a picture in Mandela's House in Soweto

Taken on a visit to the house 4/15/2017

system, with the song ending on a hopeful promise, where Apartheid is defeated, freeing people to live as one without bigotry and racism. Furthermore, Guyanese Eddie Grant weaves in this song the implementation of political action that sustained the path required for the demise of Apartheid in South Africa.

Concluding Comments

Apartheid is an abominable crime against humanity, something for which there is no compromise (President Hoyte, July 11, 1986, p 25). In this regard, reclassifying a West Indian cricketer as an "honorary white" in order to make him acceptable in South Africa is demeaning and an insult to Caribbean people. Consequently, the main objective by the Anti-Apartheid groups has always been to ensure that Apartheid was no more, while safeguarding the liberation of Southern Africa, and obtaining the freedom of Nelson Mandela. The records show that this goal was achieved by 1994 and to today non-white South Africans play cricket and other sports as members on the South African teams. Incidentally in 1991, Clive Lloyd, the West Indies cricket captain from Guyana who boycotted the cricket tours to South Africa before Apartheid ended, met Mandela in Johannesburg, South Africa (see pictures on page 26).

It should also be emphasized that dismantling Apartheid in Southern Africa came at a high price. In September 2006, Cuban Ambassador to South Africa, H.E. Ms. Esther Armenteros, handed over the names of 2,107 fallen Cuban freedom fighters who sacrificed their lives to ensure human dignity, liberation and freedom in Southern Africa. These names have now been inscribed at "The Wall of Names" in Freedom Park as a reminder of the price of freedom in the cause of human dignity and justice (The Diplomatic

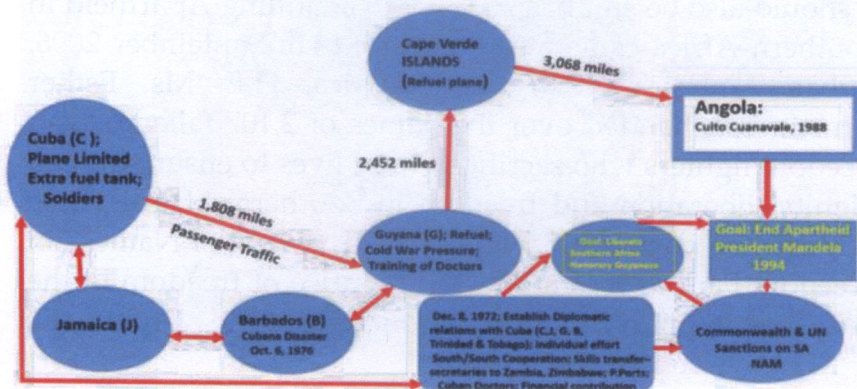


Mandela and Fidel; visit by Mandela to Cuba to say thanks; Exhibition, 'Fidel at 90' Freedom Park

Society: <http://www.thediplomaticsociety.co.za/archive/past-editions/2016/august>).

A precursor to the success of Cueto Carnivale was premised on the following events: the beginning in 1972 of diplomatic relations between and among Guyana, Jamaica,

Figure 2: Ending Apartheid, the Linkages



Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago with Cuba; and the granting of landing rights by Guyana and Cape Verde to Cuba by 1975.¹² Figure 2 below shows the flow, projects and linkages between and among individuals, institutions and countries as they worked to attain the goal as outlined above.

It can, therefore, be argued that without the diplomatic relations between and among Guyana, Jamaica, Barbados, and Trinidad and Tobago with Cuba; and without landing rights for Cuban planes in Guyana 1975 and Cape Verde, no Cuban troops would have landed in Angola and there would be no Cueto Carnivale success.¹³ Furthermore, Apartheid would not have been dismantled by 1994. This is, therefore, irrefutable evidence of their contribution, signaling a strong collaborative effort from 1975 in what could only be described as the first south-south cooperation project among Cuba-CARICOM and Cuba-Cape Verde.¹⁴ Moreover, the leaders of these countries at a difficult time during the 'Cold War' provided visionary and successful leadership, aimed at achieving the liberation of Southern Africa. Sustaining such close cooperation, however, was no easy undertaking and it came at a high price, even as enduring friendships were built (Fidel and Forbes in the picture at the side; source of picture unknown) in pursuit of

¹² Equally important was the fact that Cape Verde received its independence from Portugal on July 5, 1975; and by September of the same year, Cuba and Cape Verde established diplomatic relations (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cape_Verdean_Cuban).

¹³ Equally important was the fact that Cape Verde received its independence from Portugal on July 5, 1975; and by September of the same year, Cuba and Cape Verde established diplomatic relations (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cape_Verdean_Cuban).

¹⁴ Equally important was the fact that Cape Verde received its independence from Portugal on July 5, 1975; and by September of the same year, Cuba and Cape Verde established diplomatic relations (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cape_Verdean_Cuban).



President Forbes Burnham of Guyana, President Fidel Castro of Cuba, and Prime Minister Michael Manly of Jamaica during a visit to Guinea.



justice and reclaiming our human dignity. And by these acts and commitments to end Apartheid, the late Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Dr. Eric Williams; the late the Prime Minister of Barbados, Mr. Errol Barrow; the late President of Cape Verde, Mr. Aristides Pereira (he served as President from March 8, 1975 to March 22, 1991: ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aristides Pereira](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aristides_Pereira)); and the late President of Guyana, Mr. Forbes Burnham (he served as Prime Minister from 1964 to 1980; and President from 1980 to 1985), should each be posthumously awarded the Oliver Tambo Award, allowing them to join the late Prime Minister of Jamaica, Mr. Michael Manley who posthumously received the OR Tambo Award in 2005 (Jamaica Observer May 10, 2005); and the late President of Cuba, Fidel Castro, who received his OR Tambo Award in 2009:

([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Order_of_the Companions of O. R. Tambo#Recipients](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Order_of_the_Companions_of_O._R._Tambo#Recipients)).

It would be an injustice to deny these leaders the OR

Tambo Award as they satisfy the criteria used to select awardees. The evaluation award criteria is based on the following: It is given to foreign citizens who have promoted South African interests and aspirations through co-operation, solidarity, and support:

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Order_of_the_Companions_of_O._R._Tambo).

Guyanese policy makers, High Commissioners and Ambassadors worked assiduously within the multilateral fora of the UN and the Commonwealth to ensure sanctions were imposed on South Africa. There were Guyanese diplomats at the UN who were engaged in the decision making processes aimed at ending Apartheid. Many of them were appointed by President Burnham during his tenure in office. Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, Guyanese Sir Shridath Ramphal, was awarded the O.R. Tambo Award in 2007 in recognition for his work on ending Apartheid, among his other contributions.

During the 1970s and 1980s, Guyana provided skilled public servants, scholarships and training, financial contributions, and issued passports to many in leadership positions from Southern Africa, and especially ANC members. The year 1972 represented the arrival in Zambia of the first group of skilled Guyanese workers who volunteered to assist with the strengthening of the Zambian public service during the fight to end Apartheid. These workers should be commended for going into harm's way and should be celebrated for a job well done. In fact, for their service in the cause of freedom, these pioneers, along with their colleagues, should be recognized and a Guyana National Award bestowed on each of them. The Golden Arrow of Achievement (AA) best matches what they have done for Southern Africa and Guyana.

The Golden Arrow of Achievement is the fourth highest award in the Order of Service of Guyana. It may be awarded also to any citizen of Guyana who has performed an outstanding and specific act of service or achievement of an exceptional nature, or is given for long and dedicated service of a consistently high standard in responsible offices, local government services, social and voluntary services, industry or trade unions, or in any other area of public service. These honorable Guyanese satisfy and surpass the exceptional criterion, given what they have done in Southern Africa:

([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orders, decorations, and medals of Guyana](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orders,_decorations,_and_medals_of_Guyana)).

It should be stated as well that the accomplished musician Eddie Grant, who composed the Anti-Apartheid Anthem, 'Jo'anna give me hope' should be granted a National Award for his contribution to the liberation struggle.

Finally, Apartheid was more important for dismantling than the concerns of the 'Cold War', for life would have been diminished and backward-looking when yesterday's slavery would have morphed into Apartheid today. Additionally, newly won Caribbean independence as compared with Apartheid were at opposite ends of the liberation struggle for freedom and human dignity. Hence, connecting the descendants of slaves in the Caribbean with their ancestral home in Africa is to shun blindness for justice and to allow Ubuntu (or human kindness or humanity towards others) to thrive.¹⁵

¹⁵ See the definition of Ubuntu at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ubuntu_\(philosophy\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ubuntu_(philosophy)) See the definition of Ubuntu at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ubuntu_\(philosophy\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ubuntu_(philosophy)) See the definition of Ubuntu at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ubuntu_\(philosophy\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ubuntu_(philosophy))

APPENDIX 1:

APPENDIX 1: Public Servants seconded to Zambia (to be completed and verified).

| LAST NAME | FIRST/MAIDEN NAME | PERIOD | WHERE EMPLOYED | REMARKS |
|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|---|--------------------|
| Adonis | Kathy | 1972 to 1975 | | |
| Alexander | Noreen | - | Medical, RN (Nurse) | |
| | | | | |
| Alt | Emily | - | Cook, Guyana High Commission | |
| Anderson | Monica | - | | |
| Angoy | Patricia | 1972 to 1975 | | |
| Anthony | Cheryl | - | | Deceased |
| Assanah, Dr. | Frank | - | Medical (Doctor) | Deceased in Zambia |
| Austin | Bridgette | - | | |
| Bess Nkole | Audrey | 1974 to present | | |
| Blair | Madeline | - | | |
| | | | | Deceased in Zambia |
| Bourne | Brenda | - | | |
| Braithwaite | Constance | - | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Brandon | Zandra | 1978 to 1982 | Incar Zambia Ltd and Afri-Consult/Afri-freight shipping | Lives in USA |
| Brown | Gem | | | Deceased |
| Carter-Mingo | Dianne | 1972 to 1979 | | Lives in USA |
| | | | | |
| Case | Ron & Monica | - | telecommunications | |
| Cato | Irvin | 1973 to 1983 | | Lives in Zimbabwe |
| Chan-A-Sue | Marcia | - | | Lives in England |
| Chandler | Desiree | - | | Lives in England |
| Chugani | Aleena | 1974 - | | Lives in England |
| Clarke | Donna | 1974 to 1977 | | |
| Cumberbatch | Greta | - | | Lives in USA |
| Douglas | Anita | 1974 to 1977 | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Fernandes | Vellet | 1974 to 1985 | Police HQs CID, High Court in Lusaka | Lives in USA |
| Fraser | Geraldine | 1974 to 1977 | | |
| | | | | |
| Fraser | Joe & Mel | - | telecommunications | Joe is deceased |
| Foster-Gaskin | Jeannette | - | | Lives in Canada |

APPENDIX 2

| | | | | |
|-------------|---------------------|-----------------|--|---------------------|
| Gonsalves | Christine | - | | |
| Gonsalves | Sonia | - | | |
| Goodman | Oswald & Chris | - | Telecommunications | |
| | | | | |
| Greene | Richard & Wynette | - | Attaché, Guyana High Commission | |
| Harding | Reginald | 1974 - | | |
| | | | | |
| Harper | Reginald | - | Attaché, Guyana High Commission | |
| Harrington | Valerie (Hartman) | 1974 to present | | |
| Henry | Janice | - | | |
| | | | | |
| Hooper | Ivan & Myrna | - | Attaché, Guyana High Commission | |
| Hubbard | John | - | Television and Radio | |
| Hutson | Leona | - | | |
| Huntley | Jewel | - | | |
| Jeffrey | Danette | 1974 - | | Lives in England |
| Jessimy | Desiree | 1974 - | | Lives in USA |
| Jones | Lucille | - | | Lives in Guyana |
| Li | Jewell | - | | |
| Lindy | Lelia | - | | |
| Loupe Grant | Marva | 1974 to 1976 | | Lives in USA |
| Lovell | Peggy | - | | |
| Macova | Nicole | - | | |
| Martin | Merlene | - | | |
| Matthews | Monica | - | | |
| Mbozi | Yvonne | - | | Deceased in Guyana |
| Meyers | Ivan | - | | |
| | | | | |
| Monroe | Leslie | - | Telecommunications | Deceased in England |
| Ngwane | Bernadette (Rodney) | 1972 to present | | Lives in Zambia |
| | | | | |
| Overton | Winston | | Geological Cartographer, Geological Survey | Lives in USA |
| Pieters | Edith | - | | |
| Remy | June (George) | 1974 - | | Lives in USA |

APPENDIX 1

| | | | | |
|----------------|---------------------|--------------|--|-------------------|
| Rodrigues | Jean | 1974 to 1977 | Office of the prime minister. For PS, Valerian Lavu | Lives in Canada |
| Sampson | Barbara | 1974 to 1977 | | Lives in USA |
| Sheriff | Brenda | - | | |
| Singh | Radha | 1974 to 1980 | | Lives in Canada |
| Sinkamba Islar | Cleopatra (Brandon) | 1974 to 1985 | Ministry of Agriculture & Rural Development, Lusaka | Lives in USA |
| Tross | Sammy & Gwen | - | - | Lives in Guyana |
| Tucker | Eleanor | - | Guyana High Commission, Lusaka | Deceased |
| Wallace | Anne (Alleyne) | 1974 to 1980 | - | Lives in Barbados |
| Watson | Beatrice (Archer) | 1974 - | - | Lives in Canada |
| Wegman | Lynette | - | | |
| Westford | Pamela | | - | |
| Wilson | Felix | 1974 - | Telecommunications | Lives in England |
| Wilson | Jenny | 1976 to 1983 | Worked with the UN assisting the Govt of Zambia | Lives in England |
| Williams | Godfrey | 1980 to 1981 | Civil Engineer for Roads - employed by Zambian Govt. | Lives in England |
| Williams | Juliana | - | - | Lives in USA |
| Williams | Lynette (David) | 1979 to 1984 | Guyana High Commission, Lusaka | Lives in England |
| Woo | Mariyn | 1974 - | - | |
| Yaw | Valerie | 1975 to 1978 | - | |

APPENDIX 2

RECOLLECTIONS BY FIVE GUYANESE WHO SERVED IN ZAMBIA DURING THE STRUGGLE TO END APARTHEID

Recollections by Mrs. Cleopatra B. Sinkamba Islar

Recollections by Mrs. Bernadette Ngwane,

Recollections by Ms. Villet Fernandes

Recollections by Dr. Ann Angela Alleyne Wallace

Recollections by Beatrice Archer

Recollections by Cleopatra B. Sinkamba Islar

It was April 24, 1974 (see below; I am wearing sun glasses and being escorted by Guyana's Ambassador to Zambia, Mr. Fred Wills) when I took my first step on the African continent with a group of fellow Guyanese. At this very young age of 19, I was nervous and excited at the same time. I had never before left my home or, for that matter, flown on a plane. This was a life changing experience for me and for many of my colleagues.



The way we were...

From a very early age, I often dreamt of exploring the world beyond the borders of Guyana. The opportunity arose after I saw a very small advertisement in the Guyana Chronicle Newspapers requesting Stenographers and Secretaries to work overseas. At that time, I was working at the Ministry of Education in Georgetown, Guyana. I immediately responded to the advertisement and when the opportunity to work as a Stenographer in Zambia was presented to me, I realized then that my dream was finally being realized.

On the day we landed in Lusaka, the news of our arrival was posted in the Times of Zambia Newspapers. We were paired and checked into The Lusaka Hotel, The Ridgeway Hotel and the International Hotel. Some of us were sent to other provinces where there was a need for our services. After a short period of adjustment, we were then moved to permanent government housing, where we began to experience life in Zambia.

I was employed as a Stenographer, assigned to the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Rural Development. I enjoyed my work but missed home terribly. There was also the culture shock that I did not realize would affect me the way it did. Although Zambia's national language is English, Nyanja, Bemba and several other languages were spoken by the locals. Nevertheless, I made friends with the locals and embraced my new environment.

After several months of living and working in Lusaka, I decided to become a part-time Typing Instructor at Regent College. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays after work, I taught a typing class for two hours. This was one of the most rewarding experiences of my early days in Lusaka.

As time went on, I became more knowledgeable about the Rhodesia war. In fact, Zambia played a pivotal role in the decolonization of Southern Africa. Towards the late 1970s, the war in Rhodesia escalated and, although land-locked, Zambia was tied economically to Rhodesia. President Kaunda backed the resistance movement and supported the United Nations (UN) sanctions against the white government in Rhodesia, headed by Mr. Ian Smith. I met several Freedom Fighters from both South Africa and Rhodesia, who took sanctuary in Lusaka during that time. On several occasions, the Rhodesian soldiers crossed over into Zambia in search of the freedom fighters. On one memorable occasion, they flew choppers over the city dropping propaganda pamphlets everywhere.

By this time, I was married with a daughter and pregnant with my second child. It was around 1979; and while I was at home, I heard a very loud explosion which shook me to the core. I remember grabbing my daughter and getting down on the floor. Later, I heard that it was a failed assassination attempt on the life of Mr. Joshua Nkhoma, who was one of the Freedom Fighters. After that attempt, the Zambia government imposed curfews and the paramilitary police took control of several neighborhoods to enforce the curfew.

Several of the expatriates in Lusaka grew closer during that time. We would meet at each other's homes for lunch or dinner regularly. As the war progressed, the curfew became an obstruction to our social activities. One evening, I remember my (late) husband and I were stopped by the paramilitary police after leaving a dinner party. We had offered to take another couple home since they lived in our neighborhood and they did not have a car. This was the most frightening experience of my life. There were

three paramilitary policemen shouting at us to get out of the car. They then demanded why we were on the road half an hour after the curfew started. We tried to explain to them that we had lost track of time and that there was a pregnant woman in the car that we were taking to her home, but they were not interested in anything we had to so say. They ordered us to get out, while pointing their guns into our car. When we got out of the car, they separated us and began speaking amongst themselves in Nyanja. During this time, our pregnant friend who was of the Baha'i faith started praying fervently. After what seemed like an eternity, they returned to us and demanded that we go our separate ways. Our colleagues had to walk the rest of the way home and we were ordered to get into our car and drive home. It was the cruelest experience I can remember during that period of the war. We all made a conscious effort to put it behind us and never spoke about it again.

After Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) gained independence on April 18, 1980, several expatriates rushed over the border to the new Republic of Zimbabwe through Kariba, Livingstone and to the capital, Harare. It was amazing to see the shops full of all the goods that were scarce in Zambia. For many years during the war, Zambia had a serious shortage of items, such as flour, cooking oil, soap powder, rice, to name a few items. However, after the borders opened, these shortages began to disappear. Meanwhile, Zambia continued to support the South African freedom fighters for several years until South Africa gained its independence on 27 April 1994.

I moved to USA in July 1989 and accepted employment with the World Bank Group where I worked for 20 years until retirement on December 31, 2009. This was a positive

move and my experience in Africa added value to my work with the World Bank Group. Although retired, I continue to connect cultures through my new passion as a Travel Specialist. I bring travelers together from various parts of the world to tour destinations that they would not want to experience on their own. So far, I have led group tours to Zambia, South Africa, Alaska and Hawaii and I am currently working on a group tour of Japan for 2018.

My life in Zambia has been an awesome experience that I will always cherish. The music, food, people, art and culture is so rich that one cannot forget this life-changing experience. Zambia was a launching pad for my career as a Global Civil Servant working in international development. Several of the friends that I made in Zambia over 42 years ago have become life-long friends. This was a very special time for all of us.

Recollections by Bernadette Ngwane

We arrived in Lusaka, Zambia in 1972. We were a group of seven: myself, Cheryl Anthony, Kathy Adonis, Juliana Williams, Dianne Carter, Pat Angoy and Lucille Jones. It was an exciting moment to be part of Mother Africa. After orientation, we shared offices with many refugees from South Africa and Zimbabwe. It should be noted that Zambia had cut ties with South Africa and Zimbabwe, due to the war that was aimed at ending Apartheid, and liberating these countries from Mr. Smith, Mr. Vorster and Mr. Botha. In the late 1970s, Mr. Joshua Nkhoma, a Zimbabwe Freedom Fighter, lived at Prospect Area near Independence Avenue on the Western side of State House. He survived a bombing attempt by the Smith's regime, but the Director of Zambia Broadcasting Service did not. The Alick Khatta Road was named after him.



April 22, 1974: Cocktail at the Zambian High Commission during a stopover in London en route to Lusaka.

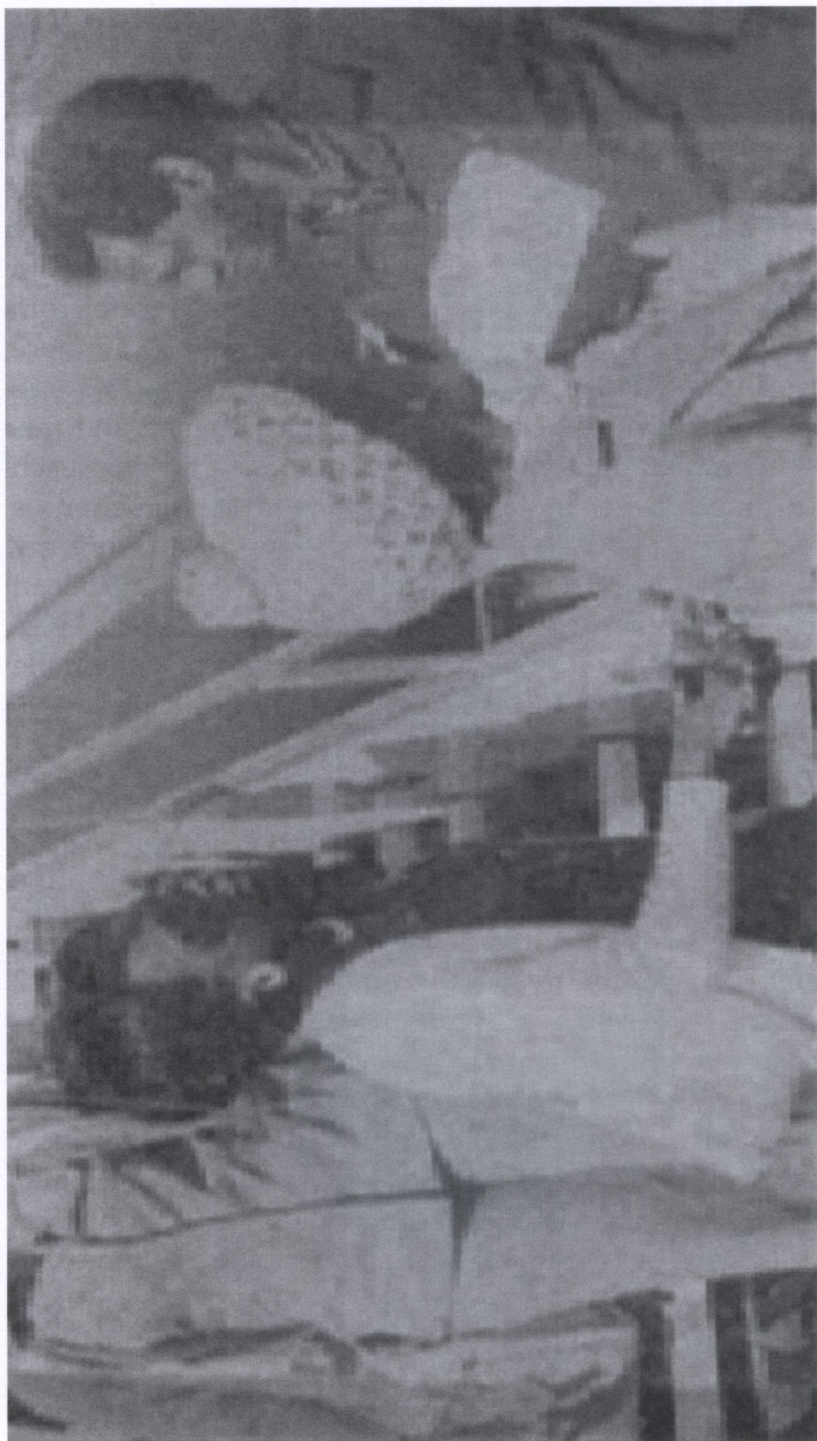
Many others, including Mkushi Chikumbi, were killed in areas outside of Lusaka.

I lived on an 8.5 hectares farm in the area of Makeni, an area out of town, with my late husband and children surrounded by Freedom fighters in the late 1970's. There were war planes flying over our home regularly. Freedom fighters were hiding at our farm in order to be safe from being bombed. I must say here, I learnt how to pray more and fear less. It was quite an experience for me, coming from a land of fun, excitement and entertainment; and this subsequently taught me that peace and caring for each other should never be taken for granted. My experiences are much more, but I will stop here because I am sure my friends have a story to tell. With love to all my Caribbean sisters and brothers abroad and within Zambia, where I still reside as a farmer and Director, taking care of vulnerable women in the outskirts of Lusaka, empowering them, through skills trainings. This is my current passion.

Recollections by Villet Fernandes

I lived and worked in Zambia from May 1974 to December 1984. It was over four decades ago, exactly 42 years having passed, since I left Guyana at an innocent young age of 22 on April 24, 1974, saying goodbye to my limited friends and 'large' family members, with no thought or sense of what the future held for me heading to a country I never knew existed on the World Map. But before my group of 33 were on our way to start what was a memorable ten and a half years stint for me in Zambia, we were allotting two glorious days in London by the Zambian Embassy there.

The recess of my mind keeps throbbing and I fight to recall my life from the moment it all began. It was a Sunday



April 24, 1974: First Step in Africa (Photographs provided by Beatrice Watson and Cleopatra Islar)

morning while my mother read the Guyana Chronicle Newspapers and noticed an ad calling for Stenographers or Secretaries from Guyana to apply for vacant positions to work overseas more specifically in Zambia and she dutifully handed me the paper to see if it was something I would be interested in, since I had always voiced my desire to one day travel abroad. The timing was also perfect as I had just been made a permanent staff at the Guyana Timbers Limited in Houston, East Bank Demerara. I recalled saying to my Mother: "Zambia, where in the world is that" but began thinking, this was as good an opportunity as any to do what I always wanted to: travel. Like the others who applied and received a successful letter, I was elated at the fact that I would be going afar, and, it was far.

Arriving in Lusaka, Zambia on April 29, 1974, made me realized that this was real. I was 'alone' (away from family) so groups of friends were immediately formed since this was now considered 'our new family'. On the other hand, the locals made known their disapproval of our existence by publishing horrible articles in the local newspapers of us being there to "take their jobs away" thus causing much disillusionment. We were dispatched separately to different Hostels/Hotels as our first accommodation until we were allocated Government Housing. That's when life (for most of us) honestly commenced. My initial placement at the Ministry of Agriculture, Lusaka, was as an Assistant to the Permanent Secretary's office, and although short, it was an enjoyable assignment. I was then briefly transferred to the Copper belt, known as Kitwe, in an acting position for the Director's Secretary who went on a month's leave.

Moving back to Lusaka, I took a verbatim incident recording position at Police Headquarters, where a selected



Guyana's Ambassador in Africa, Senior Counsel Fred Wills, greets Guyanese stenographers on their arrival in Zambia to work under contract with the Government of that country.

The ambassador is pictured welcoming some of his countrywomen as they disembark at the airport.

April 24, 1974: Stenographers being greeted on their arrival by His Excellency, Fred Wills.

few were sequestered to take daily incidents for same day publishing from 75 percent of the Provinces. Accuracy and dedication were the key elements of success for this assignment. This position led to me being contracted to work with the Elections Commission (night duty), updating their Voters' List. The latter proved extremely interesting and lasted for 10 months; after which I was transferred to the High Court of Zambia, entrusted to two Judges, Judge Sivanandan and Judge Lawrence, for the purpose of taking verbatim court notes for cases from murder, to divorce, to theft. This was my calling as my mornings could not come quickly enough for me to report for duties; that is how much I loved this job and from where I departed after being there roughly 8½ of my 10 ½ years spent in Zambia.

Yes, English was the official language, with an additional 72 dialects being spoken in Zambia by 72 tribes, the major ones being: Nyanja, Bemba, Tonga, Lozi and quite a few others. The local cuisine/staple food is Nshima made from maize (we know it as corn) and is ground into flour to make a stiff porridge which is eaten with meat and vegetables. It is considered to be rather nutritious. Their principles and beliefs, on the other hand, had to be learnt and adhered to as is of any other country. It is important to understand about Zambians their devotion to "belonging".

Zambians are trained early to consider themselves as belonging to a clan or as members of a close-knit group, nation, or other collectivity. The emphasis is on the family relationships and individual subservience to the family and the community. The first time you meet a Zambian give them a good impression by asking about that person's clan tribe, culture, and children. Avoid asking what they do until you have established a good working relationship with the individual. The use of hand gestures and body

language is also very common. Never rush them for a response to any of your questions. Let them tell you their story. Local and International soccer games are important cultural activities as is the annual Umutomboko Ceremony in the Luapula Province. Funny enough, if you are seeking local interpretation, it is best to ask a Catholic Priest (missionary); they have been in the country for a long time and are highly respected by the local people. They can recommend the best person to assist you in getting to know the local culture. The local chiefs are also great cultural interpreters. Being at the High Court, I was privileged to many confidential matters that came to the court for judicial settlement. This was indeed a special time.

Rhodesia, now known as Zimbabwe and neighboring Zambia, fought a bitter war amongst themselves and this affected land-locked Zambia thus limiting precious food supplies. Hence, we were left with no choice but to hoard available products, a trait still practiced at least by me. In conjunction with the United Nations, all sanctions levied against the Rhodesian Head, Ian Smith were indeed supported by Kenneth Kaunda who also backed the resistance movements. This did not stop them from crossing the border through Livingston to seek out escapees fleeing from Rhodesia.

One late evening as my neighbor (a Zambian) and I sat in deep conversation, we were suddenly disturbed by loud noises which turned out to be bombs being thrown and luckily we knew how to react for: 'shelter in place', a training I was fortunate to receive with her, only a month prior. All blood from my body drained and I froze for a split second before gathering my full thoughts and responding to the situation. We were in shelter for 3 days until calm returned.

Zambia, like any other country, has its ups and downs and we were not in short supply. For fun things to do, it was either weekend trips to neighboring places like: Tanzania/Botswana, to where you can drive or to Kenya, a short hop by flight. There were many weekend organized pot luck parties at which our coming together improved our connection. Weather wise, we had to contend with winter which occurred during May to September. Cold is not my friend and the first year was hard to grapple with. More than a few of the girls 'fell in love', got married, had children and concentrated on their new family relationships. Some still reside in Zambia. I was not fortunate in that regard but still, however, had fun when and where I could. We have now all scattered and parted our own ways, seldom do we connect even with all the updated technology.

However, through our small group called 'Zambian Expats' that has been a possibility for a limited few, and thankfully, is still ongoing. Zambia, I must say, paved the way for me to have a successful career that carried my working life through London (7½ years), Canada (3 years) and presently United States, where I have been living for the past 22 years, of which 18½ were devoted to The World Bank in Washington, D.C. I still continue to be here until the next chapter, whatever it will be. As the saying goes, 'The Best is yet to Come' and my best is coming. Thank you for the opportunity to share my story though short and incomplete due to time.

Recollections by Dr. Ann Angela Alleyne Wallace

I said "17 and a half" in a voice mixed with anxiety, defiance and determination. What would have elicited that response? It was the answer of the Guyana Government

Official to the Zambian recruiter who had asked, "...and how old is this one?" He was standing behind my chair with his hands tapping out the words on the back of the chair as he spoke. The Official looked at the list of names and whatever other data she had and said, "She is 17". I had to put the record straight. After all, it was about six months since my 17th birthday so I was 17 and a half, not 17. The recruiter chuckled loudly and looked at me in total disbelief. At that time, I think I looked like 14 but I firmly grabbed the pen and signed my contract. I was going to Zambia!

Did I know where it was? Not quite, Africa for sure. Did I know what I was going to do there? Yes, I was going to be a stenographer for the Government of the Republic of Zambia. High Commissioner Fred Wills met us at the airport and we had an official reception. There were 33 of us, but my '14 year old' face attracted the press and a reporter asked me why had I come to Zambia. My youthful exuberance and sheer delight to be there prompted me to say that I liked the adventure, but before I could say another word, one of my compatriots, I think it was Audrey, but cannot be absolutely sure, sharply nudged me in the side and said, "you ain't remember; they said not to speak to the press!" I clammed up.

As I write this account, so many memories come flooding back. I remember being accommodated at InterContinental Hotel, watching TV until late at night – wow, no one to say it is time to go to bed so my cousin June-Ann and I stayed up – we were big girls now. Going over to the Ridgeway Hotel to lime with Guyanese and Caribbean nationals who were there from earlier cohorts; going to work in the Ministry of Lands, Natural Resources and Tourism in Mulungushi House (*Editor's Note: Mulungushi Hall*)

wearing micro mini-skirts and high topped boots. After about two months at the hotel and making a contribution for accommodation from my K145.00 per month salary, I and others were moved over to Highland House Hostel. Great, that was just across the road from Mulungushi House, so it was a case of too much to eat for breakfast, strolling across the road to work, strolling back for too much lunch and then too much dinner. The dresses my Aunt Yvonne had guided me to bring to Zambia soon started to do a little 'stick by me' on my frame so I learned to take it easy with Highland House's food.

Oh, by this time I had met the love of my life, Roger. Julianna and Dianne had taken me out to dinner at the Italian Club at the end of April – everything happened, I soon learnt, at the end of the month after pay-day - and there was this guy singing and playing drums. He came over to our table during the break with what I subsequently learnt was an old corny line, "your face is familiar, you look like a South African". He was a South African by birth. We got married in 1977 and had our first child, a girl, Namitasha. Our second child, a boy, Wesu was born in Zimbabwe where we had taken up residence immediately after that country changed from Southern Rhodesia to Zimbabwe.

The war in Southern Rhodesia was a source of serious concern to citizens and residents of Zambia. The border skirmishes were many and Zambia was in an almost perpetual state of emergency. That created many hardships and restrictions on the movement of people. I recall one night walking home from the cinema with my husband. We were bouncing along merrily walking in and out of the shrubbery by the main post office reflecting on and laughing at the movie we had just seen, when a soldier

with a loaded and cocked AK47 accosted us. Our crime? We had walked too close to the post office. Parcel bombs were the order of the day and the post office was under strict guard. The encounter was not pleasant. The only reason we were not locked up was because I went into hysterics and the poor soldier thought I would give birth on the pavement – I was about eight months pregnant with a very active Namitasha who joined the melee sending out little kicks and cuffs that helped to frighten the soldier.

Driving out to Livingstone to see my in laws was always an adventure. The road-blocks were many but each was unique in character. The searches of the car took a different form each time and whereas some of the police officers were amused by my accent, others were not impressed. So whenever we approached a road-block, Roger begged me to keep my mouth shut. They were looking for subversive elements - material and individuals who may have come across from Rhodesia. So this 'coloured' man (that was the official description for him in those days) and his funny sounding wife were not always welcomed. He was fluent in Nyanja, Bemba, Afrikaans and English, and was possessed of no end of charm, so once I stayed out of the chat, and he choose the right language to speak, we got through.

Somewhere between the state of emergency, the bombings, the IMF and the failure of the copper as a high priced commodity on the world market, Zambia found itself with food shortages. Boy-oh-boy, they were sterek! I joined many lines that wrapped around Mwaiseni Supermarket waiting for butter, or cooking oil, or cheese or just simply millie-meal, only to get to the end and find just rows and rows of toothpaste. I witnessed a few instances of people going wild because the food item had run out, but

remember with amazement that 'wildness' did not go too far or for too long. These were some very challenging times. And the war raged on.

The possibility of a bombing in Lusaka was ever present. I remember the huge explosion when the late Herbert Chitepo, one of the most senior officials from the Zimbabwe liberation struggle, was killed in a car bomb. Zambia stood its ground despite the hardships and supported its brothers and sisters from Zimbabwe to the very end.

I often say to people that I grew up in Zambia. I lived there for six years and learnt a lot about culture and its importance to a people. I learnt that skin color was not as potent as culture when seeking kinship. I learnt how to value my own history of being the descendant of a slave and just what we in the Caribbean had lost through slavery. I understood where many of the practices I had left behind in Guyana originated; practices such as respect for elders, children being seen and not heard, and the importance of family, to list a few.

I joined Roger in Zimbabwe at the same time that Bob Marley arrived to sing for independence. For the first time in my life, I actually encountered racism. It was a while for the old guard to come to terms with the new order of things. Racial slurs and deliberate undermining actions were prevalent. Being my good old Guyanese self, I did not take any of it easily.

Roger passed away and I have the most beautiful legacy of my 24th April 1974 arrival in Zambia - Namitasha and Wesu. They have given me seven fabulous grand-children (three from Namitasha and four from Wesu). Namitasha is

an attorney at law with a Ph.D. in Oil and Gas Law, and university lecturer focusing on human rights law as well. She is married to Ken, a geoscientist. They live in Australia. Wesu is a musician and an entertainer presently living in Barbados. He sometimes lives in England and performs in the USA frequently. I work at the Cave Hill School of Business at the University of the West Indies in Barbados that is now my home. Zambia was a wonderful experience!

Recollections by Beatrice Archer

Zambia was a dream fulfilled. As a young girl I always had this wish to go to Africa and live among the lions, giraffe and all the beautiful animals I had read about in Bible stories never thinking that this would come to pass.

Growing up in Leguan a young person had a lot of time to dream and that I did frequently, but I may have been more serious about manifesting my dream than even I realized, for out of the blue this opportunity presented itself for me to go to Zambia in Africa. When I saw the advertisement for stenographers, I applied, again not thinking that I would be successful and even if I were, not sure if I would want to go that far.

I was shortlisted, got the interview, got the job, got my medical - everything was a go and now the big decision. My late mother, whom I loved so much and was so close to me, did not want me to go. I remember her saying that when people leave it is as if they are dead and that made me very sad. At the same time excitement was building up in me. That childhood dream now seems reachable.

I was engaged to be married in June that same year and the plane for Zambia leaves in April. It seemed a no-brainer to postpone the wedding for three years. After all we were

still young, we could wait. My biggest challenge was seeing my mother's pain at the thought of her baby girl leaving the country. I assured her that I'd be fine and that I would be sending money for her regularly I opened a bank account for her at the National Bank and everything was set. As the date drew nearer I watched my mom's demeanor transformed from fear and anxiety to excitement. She was now happy for me and towards the end very supportive and proud of me.

The old men in my village shared their unsolicited advice of how to avoid being taken by a chief and made one of their wives. They talked about the mud architecture and the backward people I would meet. To be honest I was a little apprehensive but didn't let them see it. Then having gotten all my vaccinations, passport, travel documents, clothes and amenities, I was set to go.

It was a beautiful sunny morning on April 20, 1974 in the midst of a storm of emotions at the airport – bawling, hugging, kissing, and tearing off hats etc. as there were about ten or so other girls leaving at the same time, I went through immigration and beyond the gate of no return. I waved my final goodbye to my mom, fiancé and sisters and blew kisses while tears were streaming down my own cheeks like a torrential stream. It was the first time I was going to be flying on an airplane but ignorance is bliss. I was ready for the experience.

The trip from the then Timehri airport to London was about 8 – 10 hours. It was comforting to see other young women who were experiencing the same emotions as I was. Even though I did not know anyone of them I knew we were in this together.

Flying in those days was something in itself to write home about. You were treated royally with lots of snacks and entertainment to keep you distracted from the fact that you were in the air, flying. I loved the feel of the plane taking off and watching out the window that gave you a bird's eye view of the country. Once I settled in and ate my fill, it was time for a nap. I napped until the captain's voice woke me up ordering passengers to put on our seat belts as we were entering a turbulent patch. I remember now the plane was dipping and rocking and rolling but that was so much fun. There was not a fear in me as I said ignorance is bliss. Today this would get a different reaction from me.

It was an early the spring morning the following day we arrived in London. The sun was shining out of a clear sky as I recall. What a betrayal when I stepped off the plane to be greeted by this icy cold air that nearly choked the life out of me. I had never felt that cold before and could not even have imagined it. Yet when we got out of the airport and onto the streets to hear Londoners oohing and cooing about how lovely the weather was while we were feeling as if we were in the deepest part of the Arctic region. It made no sense.

We were received at the airport by the High Commissioner himself who gathered all the girls together in a few cars and took us to our hotels. We were going to remain in London for about five days. Yippee. It was mighty cold and I did not have the proper clothing for that kind of weather. I needed a parka and then some.

The stay in London was sweet. There was a reception for us sponsored by the High Commission. Lovely. I could not believe that this little Leguan girl was treated to this high life. Miracles do happen.

It was in London I met Regina with whom I was paired up to share a hotel room. We hit it off and became friends and decided then that we would share an apartment together in Zambia. Regina appeared to be much more independent than I was and I was happy to find someone like her who was willing to be a roommate. I had never lived on my own before; never had a room all to myself; so the idea of living on my own in a strange place was daunting, but having a roommate put my mind at ease.

When we arrived in Lusaka, we were greeted by the High Commissioner, the late Fred Wills who was awesome to us. He watched out for us and I felt safe with him being around. We were also welcomed by an entourage of young Zambians at their modern airport. It was clean and it was surrounded by a well-manicured garden. Out in the distance, one could spot sky scrapers and modern building in the skyline. I banished the stories of mud hut and kidnapping chiefs from my mind. The young men were dapper. They were well dressed in trench coats, well shined shoes and very easy on the eyes. Most were university students or young professionals. A good friend of mine Cleo met her husband Arnold among these 'welcomers'. He saw the woman of his dreams and hung in there to the end. There's a beautiful love story.

Our apartments were not ready and we were parceled off to various hotels. Regina and I shared a room at the Intercontinental Hotel, one of the best in Lusaka. At first this was the life. We ate three straight meals in the dining room – all covered by the government. After about three months of hotel food I was ready to get out of there and start cooking for myself. I think we stayed in the hotel for about 4 or five months before we were assigned an apartment in The Longacre's.

I worked in three departments – the Civil Service Commission, Public Service Commission and for the Ministry of Agriculture. I met some wonderful people, learned a lot. There were young women from all over the work who came just like us to work in offices and as nurses etc. A lot were from India and Sri Lanka, Trinidad, etc. I matured in Zambia and am very grateful for the opportunity to serve in an African country. I worked with high level officials, even though I myself did not have a lot of experience working but this made a lot of difference and helped to hone my skills. This experience got me to where I am today. I was able to save money that paid for my tuition and lodging in Canada where I studied Journalism.

I was delighted with the ways in which my African brothers and sisters welcomed me home. Some were surprised that people like them lived outside of Africa. However the language sometimes made conversations with the older people a little challenging. I was honored and surprised by the manner in which the Zambians greeted each other by gently clap and curtsying at the same time and showing a lot of respect for their elders.

I am also grateful to the Government of Guyana who made it possible for young women like myself at the time to be ambassadors of good will for our country and gave us the opportunity to see the world and spread our wings. All our lives were changed for the better by this experience. Thank you to Zambia and thank you to Guyana.

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