

**WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY**



**CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA**

**THE WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY**

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**VERBATIM REPORT  
OF THE PROCEEDINGS**

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**Monday 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2014**

**WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY**

**WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY**

**19<sup>th</sup> Hearing**

**09:35hrs**

**30<sup>th</sup> June, 2014**

**Commissioners:**

Sir. Richard L. Cheltenham, K.A., Q.C., Ph.D – Chairman

Mrs. Jacqueline Samuels-Brown, Q.C.

Mr. Seenath Jairam, S.C.

**Secretary to the Commission:**

Ms. Nicola Pierre

**Counsel to the Commission:**

Mr. Glenn Hanoman

Ms. Latchmie Rahamat

**Administrator of the Commission Secretariat**

Mr. Hugh A. Denbow

**Attorneys for the People's National Congress (PNC):**

Mr. Basil Williams

Mr. James Bond

## **WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY**

### **Attorneys for Working People's Alliance (WPA):**

Mr. Christopher Ram

Mr. Moses Bhagwan

### **Attorneys for the Guyana Trades Union Congress (GTUC):**

Mr. Brian Clarke

Mr. Selwyn Pieters

### **Attorney for Dr. Patricia Rodney, Asha Rodney, Shaka Rodney and Kanini Rodney:**

Mr. Andrew Pilgrim, Q.C.

### **Attorney for Donald Rodney:**

Mr. Keith Scotland

**Attorney for the Ex-GDF (Guyana Defence Force) Association:** Lt. Col. (Ret'd) Joseph Harmon

**Attorney for Captain Gerald Gouveia:** Mr. Devindra Kissoon

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

### Witness:

Dr. Nigel Westmaas

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## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

### CALL TO ORDER

**Chairman [Sir. Richard L. Cheltenham K.A., Q.C., Ph.D]:** Commission Counsel, are you ready?

**Counsel to the Commission [Ms. Latchmie Rahamat]:** Yes, we are ready, Mr. Chairman. This morning we have Mr. Nigel Westmaas and he is present here today.

**Mr. Chairman:** Is he here with us?

**Ms. Rahamat:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Chairman:** We want to welcome him and invite him to take the witness stand.

*[Dr. Nigel Westmaas entered the witness box]*

**Ms. Rahamat:** My apologies, Mr. Chairman. It is Dr. Westmaas.

**Mr. Chairman:** As they say in Barbados, put a handle on his name.

**Ms. Rahamat:** *[Laughter]*

**Mr. Chairman:** *[Laughter]*

*[Secretary of the Commission administered the oath to Dr. Westmaas]*

**Mr. Chairman:** Well, you may stand. You may sit. You may do half of sitting or half of standing, at your convenience, Sir.

**Dr. Nigel Westmaas:** Thank you.

**Mr. Chairman:** Thank you.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Dr. Westmaas, could you state your entire name for the record?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Nigel David Westmaas.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Could you please indicate where you are currently employed?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Hamilton College, New York, United States.

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**Ms. Rahamat:** What are you employed there as?

**Dr. Westmaas:** A professor in Africana studies.

**Mr. Chairman:** What is it?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Africana studies. Africana.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Before we proceed into your evidence, could you tell us what your qualifications are at this time?

**Dr. Westmaas:** I am a former activist of the Working People's Alliance (WPA) and a current activist as well. I have a Ph.D. in Historical Sociology, a Bachelor's Degree in History and a Master's Degree in Sociology.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Dr. Westmaas, did you join the WPA at some point in time in the 1970s?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, I joined the WPA approximately during some period in 1978.

**Ms. Rahamat:** 1978. What position did you hold in the WPA when you joined that Political Party?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Ordinary member.

**Commissioner [Mr. Seenath Jairam, S.C.]:** Professor Westmaas, how old were you then?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Approximately 20.

**Mr. Jairam:** 20?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Jairam:** Thank you.

**Ms. Rahamat:** As an ordinary member in 1978 of the WPA, did you have any interactions with Dr. Rodney?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, I did.

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**Ms. Rahamat:** At this time, could you please indicate whether you submitted a statement to the Commission of Inquiry?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, I did.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Did you sign that statement?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, I did.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Attached to your statement, there are five appendices.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, there are.

**Ms. Rahamat:** If you were to see your statement again, with the appendices attached, how would you be able to identify it?

**Dr. Westmaas:** By my signature and the content therein.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Do you have a copy of it with you?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, I do.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Respectful application for the Witness to look at the statement he submitted to the Commission?

**Mr. Chairman:** Yes. Please proceed.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Is that the statement which you submitted...

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** ...along with the five appendices and do you see your signature?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Respectful application to have the written statement of Dr. Nigel Westmaas submitted to the Commission as tendered and marked as an exhibit; suggesting NW 1 as the tag?

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**Commissioner [Mrs. Jacqueline Samuels-Brown, Q.C.]:** Can I just see it, please, before it is admitted into evidence?

**Ms. Rahamat:** Grateful, Madam.

*[Court Marshall hands statement to Commissioners]*

**Mr. Chairman:** While the statement is being looked at, what was your Ph.D. in? What was your thesis subject?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Thesis subject was the *Newspaper Press of British Guiana*.

**Mr. Chairman:** The...?

**Dr. Westmaas:** The *Newspaper Press of British Guiana*.

**Mr. Chairman:** Okay, thanks. Did you do it over a particular period, or...?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, from 1796 to 1900.

**Mr. Chairman:** What was the largest number of dailies you had at any one time?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Pardon?

**Mr. Chairman:** The largest number of dailies, daily newspapers.

**Dr. Westmaas:** It varied from time to time. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, probably the highest number was five, approximately.

**Mr. Chairman:** A day?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Dr. Westmaas, between the period 1978 and 1980, could you indicate what positions you would have held within the WPA?

**Dr. Westmaas:** I joined as an ordinary party member – distributing leaflets, engaging the public in public demonstration, picketing. Subsequently, following the assassination of Dr. Walter Rodney, I was asked to act as Centre Coordinator of the WPA Headquarters in Tiger Bay.



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**Ms. Rahamat:** That is what kind of coordinator?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Centre Coordinator. We call it the WPA Centre. I was in charge of the desk. In other words, receiving members of the public, distributing *Day Clean* to activists, and I was responsible for some accounting; also, membership forms, which people came, at that time, in regular numbers to acquire.

**Ms. Rahamat:** At one point in time, I believe Mr. Ogunseye referred to you in his evidence as the archivist of the WPA. Is that true, Mr. Westmaas?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Only in the sense that it is an organic title. It is not an official title. I was always interested in publications. To use an analogy, *'the older you get, the more interested I become'*. Essentially, I collected materials, newspapers, old newspapers. When I joined the WPA, the natural recourse was to collect and maintain repository of documents therein.

**Ms. Rahamat:** In your written statement, Dr. Westmaas, you referred to some personal encounters you had between 1978 and 1980. Do you recall that?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** In fact, you traversed three specific encounters in that statement.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** At this time, I would wish for you to explain and give us some details in relation to the first encounter you had at a public meeting in Campbellville in August of 1979?

**Dr. Westmaas:** That was a public meeting organised by the WPA in Vreed-En-Hoop, on the West Coast of Demerara. A number of activists went up to that area because we are from Tiger Bay so we went on a procession of activists, including myself. I cannot recall how I actually went there. I do not think I went in the same vehicle with Dr. Roopnarine, but I was among the activists who were preparing the meeting to begin. At that point in time, Brother Eusi Kwayana was the Chairman. Brother Tacuma Ogunseye, who gave a testimony here, was also present; Dr. Walter Rodney was present, Dr. Rupert Roopnarine and a number of activists, who I cannot remember at this time. At some point in the proceedings, before the meeting had started, there

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was a hustle and bustle of people who were not connected to the supporters of the membership of the Party who were attempting to dislodge equipment. I was standing approximately 100 feet away from the rostrum from which Brother Eusi Kwayana chaired the meeting. Brother Roopnarine and Dr. Rodney were scheduled to speak as well. At some point, I saw Brother Ogunseye engaging in combat or physical protection of the equipment because some “thugs” were attacking the party equipment, and pulling it down. At some point – I cannot recall clearly – a set of members ran across to our vehicle. I was standing there, and Dr. Roopnarine was agreeing holding. They asked us to *‘put it inside quickly because we want to protect our equipment.’* The activists did so, including myself. Then we noticed, because of that, the attention brought to that vehicle by some other thugs... We noticed a Land Rover being packed with people and some of them were coming across the road to attack the vehicle. Thereupon, Dr. Roopnarine said, “Let’s get out of here with the equipment.” So I jumped in passenger seat, I could not drive at that time, and Dr. Roopnarine and I drove away from the proceedings.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Dr. Westmaas, I will stop you at this point in time. These individuals whom you say were not party supporters or members of the party, were you able to identify who they were?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Not at that time. There were essentially, I learnt later, were people recruited by the Regional Development Office; at that time headed by Joshua Trowett Mootoo – a Minister of Regional Development, I think it was. One name came to mind afterwards of somebody named “Lespar” who is the chief organiser of the “thuggery”, so to speak. Other than that, I cannot recall.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** I am so sorry to have to interrupt, because I missed that. You later learnt that they recruited by...

**Ms. Rahamat:** Could you repeat the name. Who were they recruited by?

**Dr. Westmaas:** The Ministry of Regional Development, at that time headed by Joshua Trowett Mootoo. We later learnt that the thugs that were present at that meeting were recruited by that Regional Development Ministry.

*9.50hrs*

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**Ms. Rahamat:** Now you speak of a van load of individuals coming towards both the vehicles you and Dr. Roopnarine were in.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Were you able to identify the people in that vehicle? Were they wearing any specific type of clothing?

**Dr. Westmaas:** No, they were civilians in a vehicle – a Land Rover.

**Ms. Rahamat:** What, if anything, happened after Dr. Roopnarine said to you, “let us get out of here”?

**Mr. Westmaas:** Well we drove south and going towards the Demerara Harbour Bridge with the intention of taking the equipment back to the party Headquarters and thereby protecting it, but of all the days, the vehicle began to sputter and develop some kind of heating problem and so it was jerking and not moving at a required pace to escape the Land Rover and the Land Rover was gaining on us, and we were realising that by the time we reached the Demerara Harbour Bridge, which was built and completed by 1978, they were in hot pursuit of us. We noticed axe handles and cutlasses out of the side of the doors of the Land Rover. I was looking back, periodically, to see the progress we were making or not making and we noticed... We could have seen weaponry in the vehicle, but it was packed with individuals. We tried to go across the Demerara Harbour Bridge and we were cut off. At that time there were at an open sand area and the Land Rover drove and tried to cut us off from getting access to the bridge so we turned back on to the main West Bank Road and drove for the South towards the place which I am about to refer to, La Grange. When we turned back on to the main road their vehicle also pursued us and so they were gaining ground steadily and at that point either myself or Dr. Roopnarine suggest that we turned into this village, which we did not know at that time was La Grange, because there was a posting, I think a structure, a cross bar structure, which was supposed to protect bigger vehicle from going down small roads and we thought that the size of that post would protect us from the Land Rover, in other words, the Land Rover might not be able to access the road and we proceeded down that road, so we turned into the road at La Grange and drove. It was a bumpy road and we were looking back expecting them to stop and they did not stop, and their vehicle

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managed to get through, make access through, so we knew now we were in life and death situation. We drove another 200 yards. At that point we reached settlements on both sides of the road, in other words, houses. It was a cane field area and approximately 75 to 100 yards separated us. We decided to make a quick move and so we both ran out of the vehicle; threw open the doors, I ran one way and he ran the other, I did not know where he went until later. I ran into a yard. It was a kind of a pasture setting. I remember the owner of the yard was sitting in a hammock and there were chickens around. I ran, probably jumped over the hammock, I cannot remember. I was in total flight and terror at that time. I ran into the yard, over the fence of the back yard into what is called the “punt trench” up to my waist or up to my chest, approximately, into the cane field and then I proceeded to run as far as I can into the cane field which was at that time – I cannot recall – at that time would be may be two miles I guess. I ran to the point where I considered that nobody can find me. I then, subsequently, settled, ate some sugar cane. I broke a stem and proceeded to eat some cane because I knew I was in for long haul and when night came I dug a small hole in the cane and pulled canopy back and stayed there for most of the night until the early morning when I decided this was the time to move. I was thirsty. I drank a bit of the creek water, but it was not safe. Mosquitoes were killing me and so I proceeded back onto the main road, walked down to the Demarara Harbour Bridge, walked over the bridge by dawn, caught a taxi on the East Bank Road. I went back to WPA Office, called my parents and told them I was safe. Walter Rodney subsequently came in with a very concern look on his face... a relieved look, I should say and ask me where Rupert was and so I proceed to tell him Rupert was somewhere there and so they went back over to look for him.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Now, Dr. Westmaas, could you explain to us why it was you decided to run away from these people who were in this Land Rover? Why was there a need to run?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well, the need to run was obviously the meeting was been broken up at Vreed-en-Hoop. The intent of the people was very... It was very clear they intended to break up not only equipment but bodies as well. Brother Ogunseye, who is a Karate expert, engaged them at the La Grange area, but we were in the vehicle, we were unarmed, and we saw hanging out of that vehicle very serious implements, and we decided it was a life and death situation we could not just stand up at the car and say, “hi”.

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**Ms. Rahamat:** What sort or serious implements did you see?

**Dr. Westmaas:** As I indicated before, because the vehicle was packed with individuals, some of the individuals had axe handles and cutlasses in their hands so they were sticking out of the windows. I vaguely remember seeing a weapon as well because I was the person looking back, at the time, to check on progress. Roopnarine was busy trying to drive the vehicle to safety so in that consideration we thought it was definitely a serious situation. There was no option other than running.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** I am not sure when the Witness means when he said he saw weapons, and you clarify that for me, please?

**Ms. Rahamat:** Yes, Madam. When you said you saw weapons, what kind of weapons did you see?

**Dr. Westmaas:** I said “a cutlass” which is an implement used in Guyanese environment to weed and to cut cane. I saw an axe handle or an axe “stick out of wood”. I saw batons or implements of such sort. There were about nine or ten individuals in the vehicle so they were sitting on top of each other, practically, trying to catch us. They were coming with they own safety in mind, I guess.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Thank you. Did the Witness say when this incidence took place?

**Ms. Rahamat:** Yes, Dr. Westmaas, when did this incidence take place?

**Dr. Westmaas:** I think in the statement it says 4<sup>th</sup> September, 1979.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Thank you.

**Mr. Chairman:** This is La Grange?

**Dr. Westmaas:** La Grange, yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Now, Dr. Westmaas...

**Mr. Chairman:** You started with the second incidence and ignore the first.

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**Ms. Rahamat:** Mr. Chairman, I did ask about the first incident and the Witness went to the second.

**Mr. Chairman:** Controlling him.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Yes, you can look at your witness statement to guide you but as you have gone into the second incident which you started to discuss on page 4 of your statement, I would wish to complete this particular incident.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** What is anything did you learnt about Dr. Roopnarine after you return to the WPA Office?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well I have said a set of activist went over with more protection to check for him. I cannot recall if they found him that particular day but the next day after he was found we went back across to check on the status of the vehicle and the vehicle was burnt and thrown into the trench, material was scattered around the place it was shove down into the trench and a sense of... It was completely burnt and the decision was made to burn the vehicle in other words, and to destroy the equipment there in. I learnt a wallet was stolen from it as well, as well as some of the party equipment was gone.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Whose passport was stolen?

**Dr. Westmaas:** I have no idea. It is mentioned in the *Catholic Standard* of that period.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Whose vehicle was this?

**Dr. Westmaas:** The vehicle was owned by Dr. Roopnarine, a green Holden.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Dr. Westmaas, I would refer you to page 3 of your statement the first incident you spoke about that you personally encountered was a public meeting in Campbellville and this is in August of 1979.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Do you care to tell us the details of that encounter?

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**Dr. Westmaas:** Again this was another meeting in a ward of the city called Cambellville where the WPA was part of the Civil Rebellion to organise a public meeting. I do not think at that time that Dr. Walter Rodney was scheduled to speak, but because of the power of his presence people assume that he would speak and there was a massive turned out. I do not think that permission was granted for the use of public address system for that meeting so the police were there in full numbers to prevent it from starting so when people were assembling, I cannot remember the details as it was quite a while ago, but I do know at some point in time he police charged at persons gathered at that point and they were scattered in many directions. Groups of people running in clumps playing a game of “cat and mouse” with the Police stopping when they attacked and ran when... I was in a group with Dr. Rodney and he was running with us and... It was serious, but it was a bit of parody going on in the group because we were laughing at the Police’s efforts to catch us and the group with Dr. Rodney decided, at one point, that we would be caught and we decided to go down at the back of a house in Campbellville on the railway line, I think it was, and we ran behind the house and it wait for the Police to depart and at that point, Dr. Rodney was engaging the 15 of us or so, again details or sketchy, about the situation. I think we played cards. He was a great card player. He took out... We played what was called “trip traul” and we also started to discuss the political situation and at one point he even ventured into some history while we were sitting on a thing called the septic tank which is a receptacle for human refuse and we sat on that while we wait for the police to disburse. Moses Bhagwan, a WPA attorney and also a founding member, was also in the running groups running away and he was caught and we was beaten and his hands was broken by the police so it was a very serious situation, but our group managed to escape and Dr. Walter Rodney was in that specific group.

**Ms. Rahamat:** How many persons were in the group with yourself and Dr. Walter Rodney?

**Dr. Westmaas:** As I said, approximately 15.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Approximately 15. Could you recall any names, other that yourself and Dr. Walter Rodney, at this time?

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**Dr. Westmaas:** There may have been an activist called Mobutu Kamara and Bissoon Rajkumar, Adashina might have been, I am not sure. There are some names that come to mind, but I cannot declare...

**Ms. Rahamat:** ...at this time. In your written statement Dr. Westmaas, in relation to this same that occurred in Campbellville and the running away of your group including Dr. Walter Rodney you said that latter the Prime Minister, Mr. Forbes Burnham, spoke of it at a congress rally. Do you recall making reference to that?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** In what context was it spoken about?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well it was spoken in the context that we were running and Dr. Rodney was sneakers at the time and they probably notice that, but he was running with is and he had sneakers on, as I said he was chatting and joking, so the police obviously, or some segment of the intelligence, saw Dr. Walter Rodney with sneakers so it was reported back to the officials and the then Prime Minister Burnham made fun of it at the congress. He said that Rodney should be sent to the Olympics because he is a great runner and he had running skills and stuff like that.

**Ms. Rahamat:** You quoted a piece from the Biennial Congress on page 4 of your statement.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** ...and it is the first paragraph. Do you care to read that paragraph for us at this time?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes. "Comrades, if you see Rodney ran, if you see this big revolutionary ran.

Comrades I am going to send him to Moscow to take part in the 100 meters. If you see that boy but, Comrades, it is not only the 100 meters he has got take part in because when the decathlon has finished running, he jumped over paling, big revolutionary, and he cleared it. Anyhow Comrades let him have no fear, we do not want him for such petty offences, no petty offences



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after all he is a Leader, all be it of the 'Worse Possible Alternative', but Comrades we had our laughs let us be serious for a moment. What is this all about?"

*10.05hrs*

**Ms. Rahamat:** Those words you quoted from the People's National Congress (PNC) Third Biennial Congress.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Pages 336 to 337.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Whose words are those?

**Dr. Westmaas:** The words of Prime Minister Forbes Burnham as quoted in the report of the PNC Biennial Congress.

**Ms. Rahamat:** At the point in time you were running away.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes?

**Ms. Rahamat:** Were you feeling any fears?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Not the same fear I felt in the second incident which I did mistakenly first because in this group, we were much more secure. The police had batons. They did not have guns. They were attacking, but we were well ahead of them and we were stopping when they stopped and ran when they ran. It was much more fun. When I say fun, I mean it in the contest of seriousness, but we were joking about their access to us.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Before the Witness continues, he read directly from what he said was a Report of the PNC Third Biennial Congress?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

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**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** But on the earlier page, page three, you had also said that the then Prime Minister or President, had made another comment. What is the source of that other comment? You have given us the source and authenticity of the Olympics comments, but you have not given us the source so that we can make an assessment of the other words that you have attributed to the Prime Minister.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Pardon me, your Madame Commissioner, where ...

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** At the bottom of page three of your statement.

**Dr. Westmaas:** That statement is the same statement as indicated on page four.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** You did say on page three that the then Prime Minister said WPA personnel should make their wills?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Oh.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** It does not form part of the quotation.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, you are right.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** So what is the source of that?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes. I do not have the exact source. I have access to when that was said, it was probably in the same speech, but I did not quote it directly.

**Mr. Chairman:** [*Inaudible*] because we did come across that before. It was the same speech of the Biennial Congress.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes. It is at the conclusion of the speech or something like that, so yes, it was my error.

**Ms. Rahamat:** As a young WPA member at the time, Dr. Westmaas.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes?

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**Ms. Rahamat:** As a young WPA member at the time, when did you first hear in this speech that the then Prime Minister had said WPA personnel should make their wills?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well it became a matter of concern or party members began to discuss it at the Executive. I was not on the Executive at the time, but it became a matter of concern that a public statement would be made like that in the public domain. So there was discussion, I think *Day Clean* referred to it. The party newspaper *Day Clean* referred to it and there was discussion, but other than that, I think the WPA took it as a matter of the fact of the struggle at the time.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** I am sorry to be pressing this because that evidence did come forward before.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes?

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** But your direct quotation from the presentation has been helpful. So if it is that there really is a direct quotation of the then Prime Minister saying this, it would be helpful if you produced it.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Okay.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Sources are always important to give veracity.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Dr. Westmaas, at the point in time when the police came and were attempting to disrupt the meeting, why did you run? What did you not stay there?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well, obviously, we knew we could see from the distance that people were being hit with batons and that the crowd was definitely dispersing. There intent was to disperse the meetings and we realised that if you stayed around, you would be hit with a baton. This was confirmed by the fact that Brother Moses Bhagwan's hand was broken. He ran into a yard, similar to our experience, except that he was caught. He ran in to the wrong yard and he was

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caught in the, I think he tried to hide in a chicken pen or coop and they pulled him out and broke his hand with lashes, but Bhagwan was a very tough individual. He did not show any sign of...I did not see it myself, but I heard later that he was very stoic in terms of that attack. So we knew that if you stayed, you would have been hit with a baton or at least stung or whatever.

**Ms. Rahamat:** In running, you were trying to avoid being beating?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Now, Dr. Westmaas, I have with me the Report in the Third Biennial Congress of the People's National Congress, August 22 to August 26, 1979. This has already been tendered into evidence and is marked EK 3. Could you just have a look at the second to last paragraph on this page number 343 and just indicate if that is where you got the quote in relation to "make their wills". Could you read the paragraph, the second paragraph on the page which is the second to last paragraph?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes. "I have given warning in accordance with the mood as I interpret it of the Third Biennial Congress which came to an end this afternoon. I repeat that the People's National Congress stands for peace not conflict. The People's National Congress will never start violence. The People's National Congress did not ask for a confrontation, but comrades as I said on Thursday, the battle is joined, no holds are barred. Comrades they had better make their wills because so far as we are concerned we are not asking them for quarter and we will not give them any. Comrades we are now in the Roman Amphitheater, the lion and the gladiator cannot both survive. One must die and we know that the People's National Congress will live."

**Ms. Rahamat:** That is where you got the quote from?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

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**Ms. Rahamat:** Okay. Now, Dr. Westmaas, in relation to your personal encounters, you went on to speak about a third incident in your statement at page seven.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** I believe it starts on page six and it concludes on page seven.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes

**Ms. Rahamat:** That is a trip to Linden with Walter Rodney?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Could you give us some details of this third personal encounter?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes. Well time has passed and my memory is faded, but I do remember distinctly because of the circumstances in which I was called at a moment's notice to accompany a vehicle. I did not know at the time what the operation was about, but I was asked and I...

**Ms. Rahamat:** When did you receive this call? When?

**Dr. Westmaas:** I cannot recall the distant, I just call it my home, it was either the WPA's office as I usually am, or I was at home and one of the activists called me to ask me if I could do something. I went. I arrived...

**Ms. Rahamat:** What year did this occur?

**Dr. Westmaas:** This occurred at approximately early 1980.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Early 1980?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes. I cannot recall the exactly date. I subsequently went to, I think it was Sea Glimpse which was part of Subryanville, home of WPA female activist Bonita Harris and Bonita Harris's mother's car was in the yard and a woman, who I know her name, but I do not have permission to call her name. I was asked to sit in the front seat and we drove and we picked up Dr. Walter Rodney at some point. At that point, I did not know it was Dr. Rodney. Somebody

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slipped in the back of the car and when we proceeded onwards, I was told we were going to Linden, but when we proceeded onwards, then suddenly, Walter said you know “It is me” because he was disguised as a carpenter. He had a saw, he had paint on his clothes and he was wearing what you call a tope or something like that which he looked like he was a street person. My indication afterwards or my surmise of the incident was that Dr. Rodney and the psychology of the seating arrangement, I was supposed to act as the son of the woman, she was what you could call in that time a classical petty bourgeois female in that time, and I was supposed to act as the son sitting in the front seat. We were going up to Linden to fix her house. In other words, I did not know, I was just going, but I was going there to fix her house and Rodney was the carpenter who was going along with her to assist that process. So we drove and of course Rodney was a very engaging person. We chatted all the way and when we arrived at the toll station which was also a security check point at that time, Walter reverted to sleeping and with his saw and hammer and whatever in the backseat while we went through as mother and son. I think what the psychology of it was that you know the people peering into the vehicle would see a situation where, it is a normal relationship of somebody going to fix a house and they have a carpenter who they are taking along and it worked. We passed through there successfully. When we arrived in Linden, she went to her friends and myself and Rodney went to meet with the WPA activist at Linden. They appeared suddenly out of the dark by prearrangement and we went into a house and we began to discuss the political situation. We returned later that night by the same route and with the same conveyance.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Dr. Westmaas, what exactly was discussed at that particular meeting that you were present at?

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**Dr. Westmaas:** The general situation, the condition of bauxite workers at that time. The need to... I could remember him stating, I do not remember much of the meeting, I do remember it was some key activists at that time at Linden including Cedric Smith, but there was discussion about the conditions of working class at Linden and he mentioned at that time, I think, it was very serious repression and I think he was telling the Bauxite workers to steal themselves, things will change, we have to overcome this period, it is a tough period and so it was a kind of calming exhortation about pacing the social revolt. Then it ended and we came back the same route.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Dr. Westmaas, why was their need for such an elaborate disguise just to get Dr. Rodney to Linden?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Because he was Dr. Rodney and at that time, he was very visible as you saw in the recognition handbook and in the public domain, people recognise him on the street and so if he went to Linden which was traditionally a stronghold of the People's National Congress, that it would be seen as a very very dangerous situation. I think the idea was to go there undercover so as not to receive the wrath of the State at that time.

**Ms. Rahamat:** You said a dangerous situation and you used the terminology "the wrath of the ..."

**Dr. Westmaas:** State machinery at the time.

**Ms. Rahamat:** State at the time. Now, why is it you are using these words and those phrases?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well, because this was the period of the civil rebellion. The previous incident I recall, I made mention of the two incidents were all part of the daily life of WPA activists facing the brunt of State repression. It was a combination of incidents that when you accumulate them in broad outline, they can include physical violence as well as removal of tax on your newspaper and other hindrances including travel. In that environment, I think Dr. Rodney wanted to make it

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clear that it was a period which would past but we have to steal ourselves through that period to recover because when you are faced with a situation when people do not see the activist level at a high point, some people might despair and feel that there is no hope so he was kind of re-instilling hope that even though it was a tough period, that we will come out of it, in that storm. That was the context.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Up until this operation of transporting Dr. Rodney in disguise to Linden, what sort of wrath of the State had you personally experienced?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well I did not... I was an ordinary activist so I would experience the same restrictions of movement and of course physical dangers all of the activists. None of us were privileged in the comparison of a repression and it would be depends on where you are and which point you were at. If you happen to be at a public meeting, there were meetings broken up, for example, *Day Clean*, I was a very prolific seller of *Day Clean*, the party newspaper so I would sell it in many Regions, Georgetown as well as rural areas. Sometime you would face treats of “thuggery”, not all the time, but you would face it, so there is a general environment of fear, so I was no special person, but I knew previous to that, there was some danger in WPA activity, but we were steel.

*10.20hrs*

**Dr. Westmaas:** After a while, when you become a main activist, in other words, you are prepared for anything. If you just arrived, then you received your baptism of fire, but among myself and other Brothers and Sisters, we were the kind of core activities who knew we had to face serious repression. We did not care so much in that sense, so we were steel in that area so we knew that we had to face some difficulty.



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**Ms. Rahamat:** As a young member of the WPA at the time, you made mention a few moments ago, at that time when Dr. Rodney was transported to Linden in disguise, it was in the midst of the Civil Rebellion.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Being a young member of the WPA, what sort of activities were you personally involved in as part of the Civil Rebellion?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Arranging public meetings, announcing at public meetings, sharing *Day Clean* the party's newspapers, picketing.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** [*Inaudible*]

**Ms. Rahamat:** Dr. Westmaas, could you please repeat your list of activities while Madame Commissioner, and other members of the Commission are making a note.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Okay. The duties included peaceful picketing, demonstrations, sharing the party's newspapers *Day Clean* to individual houses and in public domains, organising public meetings which includes sharing hand bills and announcing public meetings. At some point, I was one of the members of the party who was frequently announcing the public meetings so those are some of the activities. As I said before, I was also active in the party's office, so I would be responsible for the distribution of the papers and taking reports from activists who came off the streets to report any incidence they have faced as well as other privations and liberty, but it was a generalised situation. I was not involved in the Executive level, just an ordinary member doing his work in relation to the struggle at that time.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** I think the Witness said that there were threats of "thuggery" to himself when he distributed documents, papers.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** What do you mean by "threats of thuggery"? I do not know?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Okay, depends in which section of the city you are, if you go to, I mean I was part of a group called the "Day Clean Brigade" at one point which means that there will be a

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group of activities who go to specific troubled areas to distribute *Day Clean* which was the party's paper and when you arrived to those locations, usually in areas which traditionally enjoyed the support of the ruling party, that if you went into that area you would face more hostility in areas which you would considered liberated in a certain way. For example, I lived in Prashad Nagar and I am pretty sure I could distribute *Day Clean* in Prashad Nagar without any fear, but if I went with a group to say, Victoria Village at that time or Mocha, you may encounter hostility, so that is a specific threat.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** This was hostility from ordinary citizens who shared, who had a different political loyalty?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, different political loyalty either organised or spontaneous.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Thank you.

**Ms. Rahamat:** You made reference to specific villages like Mocha and what was the other one?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Victoria.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Victoria, now why would you have experienced hostility within these particular villages?

**Dr. Westmaas:** It was not just areas. Victoria Village ...the State felt threat generally, but there were certain areas if you went to that they specifically thought it was territory which was now being engaged by the WPA and thereby you needed to restrict or threaten access to that area so there was some zone for example, over time in which we penetrated and managed to maintain a certain presence which was "accepted by all parties" there were other zones in which you went into with a knowledge that that area is not yet "liberated in a certain way" in which your threat to physical safety would be implicit if not explicit and so you could be attacked by citizens who said "WPA people are coming in here to make trouble", or something like that long that line.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Why was it so important either to the WPA or yourself being part of the "Day Clean Brigade" to get out the *Day Clean* even though there was physical threats and eminent threats in these particular areas?

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**Dr. Westmaas:** As I indicated, the Civil Rebellion knew that there were ups and downs in the Civil Rebellion and we knew that if you try to engage in certain parts of the country that you would face certain kinds of responses from the State, and we knew that that was part of life and you could not determine it in any specific way because it was spontaneous movement situation. The Civil Rebellion was not up and down and there were various types of activities the party did. I was more likely to be engaged in *Day Clean* distribution. That was my forte, but as I said, it was dependent on where you go. I cannot recall all the areas. Other activities faced much more serious threats than I do, but Desmond Ally and the other members of the “Day Clean Brigade”, Osassy and others would face serious problems in East Ruimveldt which is a ward in the city and they were arrested and charged and stuff like that, so there is a lot of activities who faced far more harassment than I faced, personally, but it was a generalised situation, but I cannot recall of all the pieces of that repression in one stream, a singular stream. I, personally, faced threats at Leguan when I went there to sell *Day Clean* one Christmas. We were chased from a particular zone. We escaped without any problem. You make adjustments on the spot, but the entire Leguan was more receptive to us in that particular district or location largely because the persons in that particular area were supporters of the People’s National Congress at that time. It is a very fluid situation which is not necessary hierarchical in a certain way.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Thank you Dr. Westmaas. Were you ever arrested?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** By the Police?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** On how many occasions were you arrested?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Not as many as Tecuma Ogunseye, but I would suggest about three or four times.

**Ms. Rahamat:** What was the reason for your arrests?

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**Dr. Westmaas:** Being in the wrong company, Dr. Roopnarine, Walter Rodney. I was arrested in Line Path Center at the Stelling. I was arrested in New Amsterdam after doing, at one point. I cannot recall all the incidences. I was arrested in Campbellville, I think at one point, I was charged, not charged, arrested at another place. I think it was further up the East Coast, I cannot recall the name of the village. We were put in a cell for the night, again a *Day Clean* situation or a public meeting situation, but I can if you need the *Day Clean* has reports of those incidence, but they were approximately four to five times I was arrested personally.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Were you ever charged and put before the Court for any offenses?

**Dr. Westmaas:** No, I was jailed several times overnight before appear in the Court, but never and this was just for two or three days, I was never charged, no.

**Ms. Rahamat:** You were never charged.

**Mr. Jairam:** Did you say you were arrested because you were in bad company?

**Dr. Westmaas:** I meant it metaphorically, what I meant, my colleagues, Dr. Roopnarine and Walter Rodney if you are in that company, bad company for the opposite side in other words, they were targets and you might be happen to be collateral damage.

**Mr. Jairam:** It was in the course of carrying out your party's activities?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes. I remember once incidence myself, Brother Eusi Kwayana, Dr. Roopnarine, Chico, Kwayana and others were at the Stelling in New Amsterdam and we were all arrested and taken because we were going up to open a WPA office in Berbice and we were all arrested and put in prison for the period of time at least.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** I would really like to know what reason was given when the persons were arrested. What was said to them by the Police? You said you were placed before the Court, but not charged or you were never placed before the Court?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, one occasion I went before the Court, but in those cases the situation, there were so many instances that some Courts were reluctant to....the Police brought you to Court, depend on the Magistrate, he or she would say this is flimsy situation, release you on your own

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cognisance or in other cases more activities were actually charge. Tecuma, again, Dr. Roopnarine, Karen De Souza and others would actually be charged. I just went temporarily before Court and release on your own cognisance.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** What were you told when you were arrested? Please try to take it one by one, if you can remember at all. What reason did the Police give because the Police too have caused of arrest and detention too in certain circumstances so we need to assess what was said, what was the perception of the Police when you were taken into custody and detained?

**Dr. Westmaas:** It would be difficult to recall. The Police sometimes acted on the orders of above and they themselves did not know what they were charging you for or arresting you for. They would sometimes be bewildered, we just have to take these WPA people to Court so I cannot recall distinctly. I could find the records and substantiate some of my statements, but I cannot, my memory is fuzzy about what they would say because it was so generalised and so uneven that you cannot pin it down to specific time. That time was a different time than an ordinary society, where you go are read your rights like the United States where you said you are read your Miranda rights. In Guyana, at that time, you are just picked up, hustle; you were not given any formal declaration of intent sometimes. It was a different fluid situation at that time.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Thank you very much.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Dr. Westmaas, as part of the Civil Rebellion were you ever aware of the WPA having an arm called the Security Committee?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Only subsequently, I mean well after the death of Dr. Rodney, I learnt of that.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Approximately how long after the death did you learn about that?

**Dr. Westmaas:** I cannot recall, late 1980 or 1981 thereabout when I joined the Executive Committee when we were being debriefed about, we were pursuing justice for Rodney at that time and we were assembling documentation and at that time you had to debrief activists who were not on the inside at that time about the situation so one of those meetings that I was debriefed about the security committee.

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**Ms. Rahamat:** About the security committee?

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** I am very sorry Counsel; I need to get back to these arrests having regards to the Terms of Reference. I am just curious, you gave us one instance of going to a meeting, I think.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, it was the opening of the WPA's office at Line Path, Berbice.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Alright, that is one?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Can you remember or link any of your other detentions or arrests to a particular activity on behalf of the WPA? If you cannot, fine.

**Dr. Westmaas:** *Day Clean* distribution would be one. The distribution of the party's newspapers seems a very dangerous instrument of propaganda and so, if you had it in possession you could be arrested and charged at that time.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Do you recall being arrested while you were distributing *Day Clean* newspapers.

**Dr. Westmaas:** At least one time.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** At least one time? So that takes care of at least two? Can you recall any other specific occasions? Maybe, maybe not I .....

**Dr. Westmaas:** If I searched through the *Day Clean*, I would recall. I do, there were other instances and sometimes these arrests were just for temporary moment or a couple hours and then you were released. You were not taken to Court as such.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Thank you, I think you have been as helpful on that as you can be. I am grateful.

**Mr. Chairman:** The first incidence was at Berbice, the first arrest?

**Dr. Westmaas:** No, I would not say the first; I said one of them.

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**Mr. Chairman:** Yes, one of them. Where was the location of the second? Can you remember?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Line Path, Skeldon, I think it was but we were not there, we were trying to get access there on the Ferry Stelling, and there it was that a set of us was arrested. I think Brother James Herrod from Berbice was also in that group. There about ten to eleven persons arrested.

**Mr. Chairman:** This Line Path is where?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Line Path is Skeldon, Berbice. We had a membership.....

**Mr. Chairman:** Is it also a part of Berbice?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, a village or city.

**Mr. Chairman:** That is enough.

*10.35hrs*

**Ms. Rahamat:** My last question to you is in relation to your knowledge of the Security Committee. Between 1978 and 1980, were you ever privy to any sort of plan of the WPA to overthrow the Government?

**Dr. Westmaas:** The only “plan” was the organised resistance, which I was part of in terms of distributing papers, attending public meetings, getting the word out, trying to unite civilians and political parties to focus on the need for democratic change, but not in terms of any cell or such.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Do you know a gentleman by the name of Allan Robert Gates or Clive De Nobrega?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** And how do you know this person?

**Dr. Westmaas:** I would see this person in the presence of Dr. Roopnarine for a particular period of time.

**Ms. Rahamat:** What period of time would you have seen him present along with Dr. Roopnarine?

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**Dr. Westmaas:** An extended period, it was a difficult ... again, I cannot recall all the ... I just knew that when we attended public meetings or public gatherings or Dr. Roopnarine was travelling that Clive De Nobrega, as I think I knew him at that time, or Gates would be in his presence.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Would this be between 1979 and 1980 that you would have observed him being present?

**Dr. Westmaas:** I think it would be a little bit later than that. I am certain not 1978 or 1979, it would be 1980 and I think beyond 1980, but not 1978 or 1979.

**Ms. Rahamat:** If you were to see Allan Robert Gates or Clive De Nobrega again, would you be able to identify him?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, I would.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Just for the record, do you see him in this room?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, in the blue shirt at the back.

**Ms. Rahamat:** May the record just reflect, perhaps the gentleman in the blue shirt can stand. Could the gentleman in the blue shirt at the back stand? Is that him you are referring to as Clive De Nobrega?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Oh, yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Grateful, have a seat.

**Attorney for the People's National Congress (PNC) [Mr. Basil Williams]:** Mr. Chairman, on this point, is that why Mr. Gates is still here having given evidence already? So that he could be identified by every witness for the WPA?

**Mr. Chairman:** I do not know that he is being identified by any witness or any other witness.

**Mr. Williams:** No, the question is: why is he still here? He has testified ... I would not know that. I mean, you may well ask others here but I do not know that.



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**Mr. Williams:** This is an unusual thing because we have witnesses in here every day before they testify and we now have a witness who has testified and is still here.

**Mr. Chairman:** But there are others who ...

**Mr. Williams:** When they are supposed to be in prison and he said there is no deal.

**Mr. Chairman:** Oh.

**Mr. Williams:** We are going to address you on the Prison Act at a proper time.

**Counsel to the Commission [Mr. Glenn Hanoman]:** I can answer some of those concerns, if I am allowed. Originally, when the warrant was issued to secure the attendance of Mr. Gates, we were unsure exactly as to when he will be giving the evidence, so in a blanket fashion the warrant included all the dates. So, I believe his presence here is more because the Prison Authority does not want to take it on themselves to disobey the warrant issued by this Commission, unless we find a way to alter that warrant that was already issued, I think that the Prison Authority is duty bound to bring him.

**Mr. Williams:** I am not going to deal with that now, Mr. Chairman, with respect. There is a specific provision which deals with prisoners coming out of the prison for inquiries; I am going to address you on that at a subsequent time.

**Mr. Jairam:** Mr. Williams, there have been some concerns, I recall about the activities of Mr. Allan Robert Gates during the time, so I think that it is fortuitous that this Witness was able to identify him and speak about him this morning.

**Mr. Williams:** I do not think that anyone has questioned that Mr. Gates was not the bodyguard for the period of Mr. Roopnarine. I do not think anyone who has cross-examined Mr. Gates has attempted to say that he was not the bodyguard during that period, so that is an uncontroverted fact.

**Attorney for Dr. Patricia Rodney, Asha Rodney, Shaka Rodney and Kanini Rodney [Mr. Andrew Pilgrim, Q.C.]:** People cross-examined is different from evidence.

**Mr. Chairman:** Please proceed with the questioning.

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**Ms. Rahamat:** Grateful. Dr. Westmaas, a little earlier in your evidence, you made reference to the Recognition Handbook.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Could you explain what the Recognition Handbook is?

**Dr. Westmaas:** In my original contact with the Recognition Handbook, it is a grey covered text with a number of names of individuals, primarily if not totally associated with the Working People's Alliance and it has a Foreword which says "That these notes are provided for easy recognition of WPA activists at that time and their supporters."

**Ms. Rahamat:** When was the first time you saw the Recognition Handbook?

**Dr. Westmaas:** I saw the Recognition Handbook sometime in early 1980 or late 1979, I cannot recall. I was entering the WPA office and Dr. Rodney called me behind the counter and he took out a booklet and showed it to me and he kind of half smiled and he said, "Look through it." So I proceeded to turn it and I said, "What is this about?" And he said, "Keep turning." So when I reached to the last page, the note on my presence in that book was noted and he smiled and took it back. So in other words, he was altering me to the fact that I was a part of this text, presumably, he was doing that to other activists, but he had access to it somehow, but he was showing it to me when I came into the WPA office. That was my first sight of the document.

Later on, it was part of the everyday documentation in the WPA office which I had access to.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Dr. Westmaas, if you were to see a copy of the Recognition Handbook for the Working People's Alliance, would you be able to recognise it?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, I would.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Mr. Chairman, my application would be to show TO 2, which has already been tendered to the Witness?

**Mr. Chairman:** Right ahead, please.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

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**Ms. Rahamat:** That is a copy of the Recognition Handbook you spoke about?

**Dr. Westmaas:** A photocopy, yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** A photocopy, could you show us a picture of yourself and your information?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** What page number are you on?

**Dr. Westmaas:** I am on page 41.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Page 41?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Nigel Westmaas, that is your picture and that is your information?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, a picture with when I had hair, yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Okay and the information stated there about you was accurate?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Mostly, yes.

**Mr. Chairman:** Does your inclusion there not suggest that you were more active than you thought you were?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Pardon me?

**Mr. Chairman:** Your inclusion there? What does that suggest? That you were recognized by ...

**Dr. Westmaas:** Oh, yes I was surprised. I think, Rodney showed me in that context too.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Page what?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Page 41

**Ms. Rahamat:** Page 41.

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**Dr. Westmaas:** You know here you are doing work for the party, but you are being watched as well and you are part of a document which is primarily designed to watch us collective in the party.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** I am glad the Witness added that because until then, I was not sure if it was a booklet produced by the WPA noting its members or produced by other outside organisations targeting the WPA.

**Dr. Westmaas:** No.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** No, it was ... my encounter with Dr. Rodney in relation to the text and subsequently, it was viewed as a document which had emanated from the State, designed to process the membership and the supporters of the Working People's Alliance at that time. I associated as such that moment to this moment.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Thank you.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Dr. Westmaas, when you first went through this document, you looked at every single page of the document?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, I did.

**Ms. Rahamat:** When you first went through the document, did you see a picture of Dr. Rodney in this Recognition Handbook?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, I did.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Are you in a position to tell the Members of the Commission why this document now does not have a picture of Dr. Rodney in it?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Because after the death of Dr. Rodney, the WPA was organising a public image in his like for people to remember at the memorial service as well as the public memorials after his death and Brian Rodway, who is a WPA artist and member was subsequently deceased. We had to take it out. In those days, we had no photocopiers in the form we have now. So to stencil that image of Dr. Rodney we required ... we removed physically from the text, so that image was removed from our copy of that booklet and placed on a stencil and blown up because it had

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his hand raised in protest. So, it was a significant artistic production after that and that is why it is not present in the text.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Do you have in your possession, the original Recognition Handbook of the Working People's Alliance?

**Dr. Westmaas:** No, it disappeared. I took a photocopy and luckily, I do so because records in Guyana generally tend to disappear very quickly.

**Ms. Rahamat:** The photocopy you took did not have the photograph of Dr. Rodney?

**Dr. Westmaas:** No, no, no, that is years after, we did not have it, no.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Dr. Westmaas, in your statement, there are several appendices attached; I wish to direct you to Appendix 3. It begins at page 14.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** In here, you have "*General repression against the WPA, our country from 1974 to 1980.*"

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** I would just wish to direct you to page 19 under the heading "1979"

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** You have there, WPA Recognition Handbook appears sometime in 1979 to 1988.

**Dr. Westmaas:** That is an incorrect ... that is my typo. It should read 1980.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Okay, but definitely before Rodney's assassination?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Good. Now, this entire Appendix 3 which speaks to the general repression against the WPA or the country from 1974 to 1980. Who prepared this appendix?

**Dr. Westmaas:** I prepared it.

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**Ms. Rahamat:** When did you do so?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Two months ago prior to preparation to statement or the Commission.

**Mr. Chairman:** I am not too clear here Counsel, I was of the view that was not prepared by the WPA.

**Ms. Rahamat:** No. I am talking about the Appendix, Sir.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Which one?

**Ms. Rahamat:** Appendix Number 4, page 14 of the witness's statement.

**Mr. Chairman:** But the Handbook, for the purposes of the record, let us have that.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Yes.

**Mr. Chairman:** Who prepared the Handbook?

**Ms. Rahamat:** Who prepared the Handbook?

**Dr. Westmaas:** We always assumed it was the State. Some aspect of the State machinery, intelligent services or ... we never had any direct corroboration of exactly which State agency that, but generally speaking, we had always considered it to be the Recognition Handbook used by elements of the police force ... at that time to recognise party members.

**Mr. Chairman:** But you were never able to confirm that?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Pardon me.

**Mr. Chairman:** Were you ever able to confirm that?

**Dr. Westmaas:** No.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Dr. Westmaas, my question was in relation to the Appendix No.3 which is some sort of a timeline...

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

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**Ms. Rahamat:** ... traversing the years 1974 to 1980.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** You indicated you prepared this timeline?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Of events?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Between 1974 and 1980?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** And you did so two months ago?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Approximately, yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Approximately. What did you use in order to compile the information in this timeline?

**Dr. Westmaas:** A number of documents in my possession. The WPA's *Day Clean*, the *Catholic Standard* in my possession, the book published by Father Andrew Morrisson, called *Justice* and a few newspaper reports from the *Guyana Chronicle* and other papers around that period, but more on the side of the *Day Clean* and the *Catholic Standard*. Most of the materials came from those two sources.

*10.50hrs*

**Ms. Rahamat:** ...Dr. Westmaas, I wish to direct you now to pages 18 and 19 of the same appendix three.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** You have listed under the heading 1978 several events which would have occurred during that period, 1978.

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**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** How many of the instances listed here were you personally present at?

**Dr. Westmaas:** I was present at the Parliament in May, 1978. Again, my memory is very fuzzy about the events then. I just knew I was present. It was traversing from the Stabroek Market area all the way to where the Courts are now. I was probably in one of those groups so I did not see the actual incident of Martin Carter being beaten, but I knew I was in the vicinity.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Were you present on any other incident occurring in 1978 that is recorded here?

**Dr. Westmaas:** I was present on the... I mean I visited several polling stations in the referendum of “boycott day” so I knew that there were persons moving around in vehicles to check the status of people voting or not voting. I could recall going to a few polling stations at that time. Those are the only two incidents.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Go back to May 17<sup>th</sup>, did you attend the public rally afterwards? Do you recall?

**Dr. Westmaas:** The public rally afterwards... Where is that stated? Oh, yes! The Committee of Defense of Democracy, Yes, I probably attended that because there were very few public events at that time when leading WPA members would not attend so if there was a vast meeting in the Committee of Defence of Democracy, it meant that the WPA was involved and it meant that most of the senior activists would be present. I was not a senior activist then, but I was a participant in that rally.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Thank you.

**Mr. Chairman:** Who were “they” who broke up these meetings on 17<sup>th</sup> May with sticks?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Again, I can only assume it was a combination of members of the House of Israel and maybe elements of the State at the time. We could not determine exactly. The collateral word we used at the time was “thugs” and you did not differentiate between agencies that comprised of “thuggery” at that time. We could just assume. Some of our members began to recognise some of them so we would hear, from time to time, somebody identifying one of them



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or two of them in the group. Generally speaking, you could not determine the agency from which they emanated. Like I said, it was a very fluid situation.

**Mr. Chairman:** Were they dressed in any particular way, distinctive and consistent?

**Dr. Westmaas:** No, ordinary... Expect in some cases when the House of Israel turned up at the Court which was mentioned already in the testimony. There were mostly civilian clothes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Could you continue on page 19 where you highlighted some incidents occurring in the year 1979?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** I was directing you earlier because you listed the recognition handbook as being aware of that in 1979 and you corrected it to 1980.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Could you go through the list and indicate which of these incidents highlighted during the year 1979 that you were personally present at?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Not all of them are incidents. Some of them are searches and the formation of groups so I would not have been present at the formation of a group, but on 14<sup>th</sup> July I was outside of the Magistrate Court in the event which resulted in the death of Father Darke, but I was not present at some of the activities here. Some of the activities are just in the form of alert or in the form of searches which I would not have been present at. I was not a part of the patrons who were searched in the Metropole Cinema, for instance, I was not there.

**Ms. Rahamat:** You were not there. You got the information about these activities from where?

**Dr. Westmaas:** I culled them from a combination of *Day Clean*, the *Catholic Standard* and the booklet *Justice*, by Father Andrew Morrison and maybe one or two reports from the Guyana Human Rights Association.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** In relation to Father Darke's death, did you actually observe any attack on him or any circumstances pertaining to his death?

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**Dr. Westmaas:** No. Moving back and forth, I was in charge of the party's office. I did arrive on the scene, but I cannot recall the details. I heard he was killed subsequent to his death.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Thank you.

**Mr. Jairam:** May I just stop, Professor? You used the word "propaganda" earlier. You said you used at the source documents the *Catholic Standard* and the *Day Clean*. Those publications, did they report the news in an unbiased, objective way or were they propagating some kind of angle in order to put pressure on the Government?

**Dr. Westmaas:** The *Catholic Standard* was a bona fide newspaper, in the classic sense of the term. *Day Clean* was partially illegal at that time or mostly illegal and it was just one sheet of paper; it was just back and forth. It could not report on every event. Secondly, obviously, it would have reported on events that happened to affect the WPA at that time. You would not have had substantial information to put in a one page document. The *Catholic Standard* was helpful in the sense that it reported generally from its own position, acting in a certain way as a human rights monitor. It reported very substantially on any event that occurred in that period so if you wanted a source of quote and quote objective analysis you could probably go to the *Catholic Standard* but of course the state did not consider it such; they considered it antigovernment at the time.

**Mr. Jairam:** Thank you.

**Mr. Chairman:** At page 18, you are dealing with Wednesday, 17<sup>th</sup> May, and you are dealing with public rally of the committee in defense of democracy...

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Chairman:** ... "they broke it up with sticks and noise". Who was "they?"

**Dr. Westmaas:** This is a quote from *Day Clean*, of April 1978. "They" would presumably refer to the supporters of the ruling Party at the time.

**Mr. Chairman:** "...after dancing and shouting 'Burnham Fever'." What is that?

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**Dr. Westmaas:** As I said, that would usually be related to activists of the ruling Party at the time, making their presence felt.

**Mr. Chairman:** No, but what words would they have been using that they are calling “Burnham Fever”?

**Dr. Westmaas:** What words we have been using or they? They would be shouting “We have fever! Burnham fever!” In other words, it is a response to their support for the Prime Minister and the Government at the time. It was a general quote sometimes used in their rallies to whip up their crowd; they would use the term “Burnham Fever”. It was a reference to that. I had no part in configuring it.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** I would like you to clarify something for me.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** You said that this event occurred on the 17<sup>th</sup> May but it is reported in *Day Clean* in April. Could you explain that?

**Dr. Westmaas:** There is a particular section of the quote which is quoted from *Day Clean*, the bottom part. The top part is reference to rally itself in defense of democracy. That is an error there.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** So, the *Day Clean*... Could you explain more fully? The reference to *Day Clean*, volume two, number 35, April 1978...

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** ...is really just the quotation that you have given?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Okay. So, what you have as having occurred on 17<sup>th</sup> May, what is your source, your being present at the meeting as you said, or some other source?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Now this is a combination of quotations from the actual *Day Clean* and *Catholic Standard* of the time and my summary of the main events.

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**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Okay. So, this would have been from a newspaper of a later time...

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** ...than April, 1978?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Having regard to, I believe, the fourth Term of Reference, you have particularly noted "about 16 persons were beaten, mainly Indians". What is the significance of that?

**Dr. Westmaas:** This, again, is a direct quote. It was not my insertion.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** But you were around at that time. Why would it have been relevant to name the ethnicity of the persons?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Oh, well, yes. In the context, as I said, I attached to this document I prepared a seminal article by Brother Eusi Kwayana called *Racial Insecurity in the Political System* because if you were living in Guyana at that particular time, as now, the intercurrency of race and racial insecurity was present and the identification and location of individuals who attended meetings could be ascribed to a particular Political Party or political support group. If this report suggested Indians were beaten, then it would suggest there was an ethnic input into the attack on that particular group of people. In other words, they were seen as "the other" in relation to the struggle at the time.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** The other? Please be specific.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, okay.

**Mr. Chairman:** You have given us a lot of words. Speak with direct...

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes. Well...

**Mr. Chairman:** 34 years after....

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**Dr. Westmaas:** 34 years after, the ethnic situation in Guyana remains the same. Indians and Africans have historically had politically volatile relations, especially at elections. This, Brother Kwayana refers to from the 1957 period, and I could extend it to the current time. If a group of persons were attacked directly in that period and they were mainly Indians, then it would suggest that there was a racial or ethnic impulse to attack those sets of people because they belonged to citizens who did not ascribe to the policies or behaviour of the PNC at the time.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Dr. Westmaas, just as we are on the point and the question was asked about the *Catholic Standard* verses the *Day Clean*, you had submitted to the Commission an article from the *Catholic Standard* dated 16<sup>th</sup> September, 1979. Do you recall that?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** this article was discussing the Vreed-En-Hoop incident?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** My respectful application would be to have a copy of this article shown?

*[Court Marshall handed document to Witness]*

**Ms. Rahamat:** I believe copies were distributed this morning. *The Catholic Standard: More PNC violence at WPA meeting* is the heading. Is that a copy of the article you submitted to the Commission?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** My respectful application at this time would be to have the article tendered and marked as an exhibit; suggested tag NW 2.

**Mr. Chairman:** The document is so received and so tagged.

**Ms. Rahamat:** This is the coverage that the *Catholic Standard* had given to incident occurring at Vreed-En-Hoop, which you spoke about?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

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**Mr. Chairman:** This is 16<sup>th</sup> September, 1979?

**Ms. Rahamat:** Correct. You also submitted to the Commission an article from the *Sunday Starbroek News* dated 24<sup>th</sup> June, 2007, which is a short history of the *Day Clean*.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** If you were to see a copy of that article would you be able to recognise it?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, I would.

**Ms. Rahamat:** My application is to have a copy of this article shown.

*[Court Marshall showed the Witness the article]*

*11.05hrs*

**Ms. Rahamat:** Is that a copy of the article detailing a history of the *Day Clean*?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well not detailing given a short history of the day clean, yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** ...and the *Day Clean* was in fact the WPA newsletter at the time?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** My respectful application is to have this document tendered and marked NW 3.

**Mr. Chairman:** Received and so marked.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Dr. Westmaas, you also submitted, and this is just for the matter of the record, two other documents to the Commission?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** One is a statement by Dr. Walter Rodney?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Where did you get this statement from?

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**Dr. Westmaas:** It was a statement done and handed out at the time. I cannot recall where it came from. It was in the WPA archives. It is a statement made on a single sheet of paper, but published by Dr. Rodney. I cannot corroborate if it was published by any other news agency, but it was certainly circulated at the time as a reason his leave not been able to teach at the University of Guyana (UG).

**Ms. Rahamat:** This is dated the 18<sup>th</sup> September, 1974, Georgetown, Guyana. I respectfully ask that the document be shown?

*[Court Marshall took document to the Witness]*

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Is that a statement that was written by Dr. Rodney?

**Dr. Westmaas:** ...Dr. Rodney and handed out... I do not remember if it was a press conference because I was not around at that time but it was subsequently in the WPA archive and it was a known document used at various times; a statement he made about his situation in regard of the University of Guyana.

**Ms. Rahamat:** From your interaction, both with Dr. Rodney and your involvement with the WPA between 1978 and 1980, is that document, that statement, one which Rodney actually told you or the member that is his position on his employment?

**Dr. Westmaas:** He did not tell me at that time. I did not had any conversation on this is the document reflecting his position at that time.

**Ms. Rahamat:** At that time?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, it was a public statement handed out at a press conference but then again it has no citation of exact publication as such.

**Ms. Rahamat:** I would respectfully be asked that this document be tendered and marked as an exhibit with the suggested to it MW 4 tag.

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**Mr. Williams:** Yes, but you know, where are we going? Dr. Westmaas is not owning the document from any personal basis so where are we going with it?

**Ms. Rahamat:** Counsel, are you objecting to it being tendered?

**Mr. Williams:** Well, I have not heard of it before, Mr. Eusi Kwayana gave evidence in his scope for three days, in chief, he never refer to it. This is a plain document.

**Ms. Rahamat:** At this time I would respectfully rely on the witness's *viva voce* evidence that through the years he has been the one who has been given the unofficial title of activist and has been collecting several writings from the WPA over the time and I would rely on that as the basis to have this document tendered.

**Mr. Williams:** Well all I am saying is that the Witness has not, in any manner, affirmed personal knowledge of this document. He says he thinks it could have been handed at a press conference, it is a ball document.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Counsel, do any of you have a note of what exactly the Witness said in relation to this document?

**Ms. Rahamat:** Yes, please your Honour.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Perhaps you should have checked it.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Madame, might I ask the Witness again in relation to this particular document...?

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** My note says that the witness said it was a statement made by Rodney before his time, but it was in the archives of the WPA and he went on to say "it was certain common knowledge..." I did not get the rest that is why I was trying to get your assistance.

**Ms. Rahamat:** I can elicit that again from him, as it pleases you Madam, unfortunately, I do not have a note of that continuation. Dr. Westmaas, you had stated that it was a part of the WPA's archives and that it was a known... and Madam, did not get the ending of what you were saying. Would you at this time clarify what you were saying? It was known as what?



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**Dr. Westmaas:** It was a document produced by Dr. Rodney in or around 1974, the date is given on it – September, 1974 in the WPA Archives. I thought because of the discussion previous to my testimony that the Dr. Rodney incident came up and that I would tender it to the Commission. It was not published in any public official media. It was a statement made and circulated by Dr. Rodney possibly to the press at that time but I have no further knowledge of its status except that I know from the contents that it does belong to Dr. Rodney.

**Ms. Rahamat:** In light of that my application remains the same to have the document...

**Mr. Williams:** ...but application remains the same... What document is it reproduced in that is officially WPA? Is it in *Day Clean*, is it in the *Catholic Standard*, is it in the national newspapers? What are we going to do, bring any scrap paper in here and say it is in the archives? The Witness is showing great uncertainty about this document and I do not know what this archive is. Was the National Archives? It is some private archive? How do you establish it?

**Mr. Chairman:** Is there evidence that it was authored by Rodney?

**Ms. Rahamat:** I believe the Witness said it was distributed by Dr. Rodney at a press conference.

**Mr. Chairman:** ...as his document?

**Ms. Rahamat:** ...as his document.

**Mr. Williams:** He did not. He said it was handed out at a press conference. Which press conference was it? We have had documents laid over here by the WPA this document was not in it; a realm of documents, so we come now with a document that is balled. The Witness is unsure about it.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Members of the Commission, if I may, I do not believe that the witness is unsure about it. The witness is saying that he got it from the WPA archive and it is a document that he recognised to be the position of Dr. Rodney that was shared out at a press conference.

**Mr. Chairman:** But it is headed “statement by Dr. Walter Rodney”.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** Mr. Chairman, respectfully, I think the Witness needs to indicate whether he is aware that Walter Rodney accepted this document as something he had authored and whether it

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was published on that basis that understood it to be the basis; that is all. It is either he knows that or he does not know that and...

**Ms. Rahamat:** Dr. Westmaas, do you know this document which is headed “statement by Dr. Walter Rodney” to be made by Dr. Rodney?

**Dr. Westmaas:** I know it to be made by Dr. Rodney but as Counsel Williams indicated it was not formally published in any newspaper or official document that I know of at present. It may have been referred to in the *Caribbean Contact* at the time, but as I said in was a statement in that period of time people would make statements are not put it in an official document. It was circulated at a press conference. I do not have any information other than that.

**Mr. Chairman:** The body of it suggest that it was written by him and the statement that I have says “statement by Dr. Walter Rodney”. We will receive it and give whatever weight we regard as appropriate.

**Mr. Williams:** Mr. Chairman, I could bring a document like this tomorrow “Statement by Dr. Walter Rodney”. Anybody could bring a statement like this.

**Mr. Chairman:** But that is not the reality that we have that anybody could do anything.

**Mr. Williams:** No, but the reality is... I respect Dr. Westmaas and his skill and he has not given us any assurance that he could vouch for the document other than he could have said that it is something could have been in the archive not forgotten we have been given documents from the WPA as part of their publications. I do not think I contested any of them. All you have here is something printed that anybody else could have done and then...

**Mr. Chairman:** Well we will examine it in the context of the evidence and all the other documents and determine what weight, if any we will be given.

**Mr. Williams:** I am guided, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Chairman:** I do not think we should be delayed on that issue.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Grateful. Dr. Westmaas, you continued in appendix three to detail some events during the year 1980 and this begins at page 21.

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**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Between January and June were you present at any of the events that you listed here?

**Dr. Westmaas:** No, as I said, it was a combination factual incidences which does not mean that my presence would be necessary in any form, for example, “WPA Members arrested for selling *Day Clean* on a home search in Bartica” I would not have been present there and the others are reports of police arrest of Dr. David Hinds at Timehri and WPA activist Nazir Khan at La Grange, but I was not present at an event which was apart from my experience.

**Ms. Rahamat:** I wish to direct you to, I think it is, the third paragraph under the heading 1980 on page 21 where it says, “Some weeks ago Police Commissioner Barker made a statement. He said that if some people choose to establish their head quarter in Tiger Bay we have a special squad to deal with that area” and this you reference from the *Day Clean* volume 4, number 2, 25<sup>th</sup> January, 1980?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** What do you understand by the statement whose Headquarters established in Tiger Bay?

**Dr. Westmaas:** That would have been the Working People’s Alliance Headquarter.

**Ms. Rahamat:** And what would have been the reference to the special squad to deal with that area? Are you aware of there being a special squad?

**Dr. Westmaas:** I was aware of the Special Squad but I do not think the context of this statement, I would not know what he was referring to. We knew of a Special Squad what we called the Dead Squad which was assigned to restrict not only WPA, but other activist in the country but in his specific statement he refers to a special squad which I may not have any prior knowledge of.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Before you proceed, you said, “WPA activists and other activist in the country”. Who are the other activists you are referring to?

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**Dr. Westmaas:** Well as you see from the testimony, from time to time PPP activists would be, every now and then, arrested and charged at the same line with the WPA and activist or supports of the Catholic Church and other organisation, like the Anglican Church, may have be harassed at that time so it was a general statement referring to members outside of the WPA group who could have also been subject to harassment.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** This is the first time I am hearing about the Anglican Church, not want to usurp your position as Counsel but tell me about that...

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well I do not have any specific... but the Committee for Defense for Democracy was established prior to the referendum in 1978 and subsequent organisation which came together as a collective as to speak to and refer to and to complain about human rights violations would include members of the Catholic Church, members of the Anglican Church, business strata and other interested parties, so there were several groups like that. The Committee of Defense of Democracy was one Compass was another one which included people from the church and the private sector who, along with WPA and the People's Progressive Party (PPP), would protest incidents in the country and from time to time you would get reports from church members and so been harassed as well.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** This group, Committee of Defense for Democracy, continued into 1978-1979?

**Dr. Westmaas:** The answer is "yes". There was no defining moment when it disappeared or when... It was formed around March, 1978 or there about.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** March 1978? You said 1974 earlier Committee of Defense for Democracy?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, Committee of Defense for Democracy.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** that was formed...

**Dr. Westmaas:** That was designed mainly deal with the impending referendum?

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** That was 197...

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**Dr. Westmaas:** 1978.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** I heard 1974. I must have misheard, sorry.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Thank you very much.

**Mr. Chairman:** Counsel, put in context for me, Tiger Bay.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Grateful, Sir.

**Mr. Chairman:** We have had Linden as an old PNC strong hold. What is the significance of Tiger Bay?

*11.20hrs*

**Ms. Rahamat:** I will be grateful, Sir. Dr. Westmaas, the reference to the area Tiger Bay, first and foremost, just indicate which part of Guyana, Tiger Bay is located?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Tiger Bay is located in Georgetown, Guyana. It is between Water Street and Main Street in a certain ward of the city, approximately a little further north of where Guyana Stores is. But historically, it was a depressed area where working class people usually live. Those working class people usually worked in the Bond area, that is the shipping area and mostly it was a poor and depressed area. At the time of the formation of the WPA, there were several constituent organisations which worked in that area. One of them was called MAO, the Movement Against Oppression. This group included people who would later become members of the WPA and they worked in solidarity including Brian Rodway and others, including solidarity with the poor people of that particular zone. In the course of 1972, a young man was shot called "Caesar", I forgot his first name. His shooting galvanised MAO and other groups to protest the treatment by the Police of usually young black males in that particular part of the city,

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a trend which continues to this day. The MAO was formed to represent Caesar, I think it was Keith Caesar and that symbolised the nature of that particular zone so it was out of that the WPA became interested in locating its Headquarters in a depressed part of the city, largely around the vision of Eusi Kwayana and Dr. Walter Rodney because Rodney had his own historical linkage with poor people in Jamaica and elsewhere, where he went to the “dungles” in Jamaica, the poor people. He was one of the first strategy members in Mona Campus other than Dr. Rex Nettleford to go directly and meet Rastafari and as that symbolism, I think, was brought into the modern period when the WPA was formed that we must locate ourselves among the poor and the oppressed and the powerless. It was out of that the word Tiger Bay became synonymous with poor and synonymous with crime and synonymous with WPA, when WPA had its centre there.

**Mr. Chairman:** Tell me, what do you make of that statement they attributed to the Commissioner of Police Barker, “if some people choose to establish their Headquarters in Tiger Bay, we have a special squad to deal with that area”.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well again associating it with the nature of the area, the tone of that suggests that why would a political party put its place in what the police would call a “lumpen” area at that time, *lumpenproletariat* is the term often used. Why would a political party go there except if it is not to associate with disturbance? Disturbance of two kinds, one political and secondly crime. So it was in that context I think he made that statement.

**Mr. Chairman:** Speak to me directly and speak to all of us, what do you mean by political disturbance? Putting up a Headquarters there would create political disturbance?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well because again the antecedent was the Caesar incident. When the Caesar incident occurred, a number of groups went into Tiger Bay to give solidarity to the residents of that area to protest the shooting of this unarmed youth who was caught in a bond and shot by the

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Police. The general conception of the Police for that area is usually one of a crime ridden area and the political variant of that came out when the WPA sought to choose its Headquarters there so you had that mix of the political and the social coming together. Hence the term choose to establish their Headquarters in Tiger Bay, is the contempt for that area is implicit in his statement.

**Mr. Chairman:** What about the contempt for the WPA is that implicit in his statement?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Contempt for both the WPA and the “lumpen” population of that particular vicinity of the city.

**Mr. Chairman:** Very well.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** The WPA was establishing groundings with the people in that area?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes. “Grounds” is the term used, groundings as in Jamaica, groundings as in Guyana.

**Mr. Chairman:** You seem to have forgotten?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Pardon?

**Mr. Chairman:** You seem to have forgotten the language of the time, man.

**Dr. Westmaas:** No. I am still grounded.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** Mr. Chairman, page 11 of the Witness’s statement, the appendix one refers to the name Keith Caesar 1972.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Keith Caesar.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** And the shooting at Tiger Bay.

**Mr. Chairman:** Do you know of the Keith Caesar shooting Tiger Bay?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Chairman:** 27<sup>th</sup> October?

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**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, 1972.

**Mr. Williams:** Mr. Chairman, I do not know the “lumpen” referred to by Dr. Westmaas, you mean “lumpen” as meaning *lumpenproletariat*?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, it is not a negative term in so far as Marxist conceptions are. “Lumpen” is just used in an area as Madame Commissioner mentioned, groundings in the concepts of Jamaica when Rodney came across, he assumed that as a revolutionary part of humanity not to be discredited. It is in that context it is used as lumping proletariat, but it is not negative in so far as we are concerned, in so far as Mr. Barker was concerned it was a bad area for a political party to locate itself.

**Mr. Chairman:** Who would have made that judgment, the police or the political party?

**Dr. Westmaas:** What judgment? The judgment...

**Mr. Chairman:** That as to whether it is a good place for they to locate or a bad?

**Dr. Westmaas:** From our perspective or the perspective of the police?

**Mr. Chairman:** What was your perspective, the WPA?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Our perspective, we were happy to be located there at the time. It was the general trend. We got to such an association that “nobody troubled us in that area”, there was a period where you could be robbed if you walk through at certain points, but WPA members were kind of immune to that because of our solidarity with and location in that area. Although, some of the residents resented our presence there because more police attention was brought to the area. That was a double whammy so to speak, but certainly our conception of going there directly was to locate ourselves near the poor and the powerless in so far as the groundings were concerned.



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**Mr. Chairman:** We understand all of that, but I did not understand why the Commissioner of Police should determine whether it is a good or a bad area?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well it is a conception that is still present among the conceptions of the areas where the poor live. It is generally a historical pattern of people having contempt for poor areas where there is crime and criminality as well as bad social conditions so it is not surprising that Mr. Barker would make that comment in the context of that time. In so far as the other, that is the poor and the powerless were located...

**Mr. Chairman:** Are you sure that is the proper interpretation...

**Dr. Westmaas:** I am only assuming it. I am giving an interpretation.

**Mr. Chairman:** Well alright.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** Mr. Chairman, I do not know if it brings to mind what your Jamaican colleague would remember as "can anything good come out of Trenchtown?" as Bob Marley would have intoned.

**Mr. Chairman:** I do not think that is the appropriate interpretation, but I am happy to hear that. We can go ahead.

**Mr. Williams:** Sir, I will give you the appropriate one when my turn comes why Mr. Barker said that.

**Mr. Chairman:** Well, we look forward to that Sir. We are close to 11.30hrs, if this is a convenient point...

**Ms. Rahamat:** It is a convenient time Sir.

**Mr. Chairman:** We would be happy to do so. How long do you think it should be?

**Ms. Rahamat:** 20 minutes.

**Mr. Chairman:** Alright 25 minutes.

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**Mr. Williams:** *[Inaudible]* break Sir?

**Mr. Chairman:** 25 minutes so we come back just about five minutes to midday, thanks.

**Hearing Suspended at 11.28hrs**

**Hearing Resumed at 12.10hrs**

**Mr. Chairman:** Counsel, please proceed.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Dr. Westmaas, you are still under oath. Before we took the break, we were looking at the timeline that is attached and marked appendix three in your statement. Before we move on, I just wish to clarify in relation to the year 1980.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes?

**Ms. Rahamat:** In the year 1980, on page 22. It would be the fifth paragraph on page 22 where you say according to the *Day Clean*, in 13 days at least 39 persons were arrested on suspicion of political action hostile to the rulers and held for periods ranging from two hours to more than one week before being charged or released and you referenced the *Day Clean*, volume four, #17, 13<sup>th</sup> June, 1980. Could you please indicate if you are aware of whom these 39 persons are by name?

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Or any of them.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Or any of them?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Some of them were WPA activists from the West Coast of Demerara including I think Ivan Sookram, Adwan...I cannot remember the names, but several of them were WPA members from the West Coast of Demerara. But I cannot remember all of the other names. I would have to check my records.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Alright. But more in particular on suspicion of political action hostile to the rulers, can you enlighten us as to what sort of action might have been hostile to the rulers?

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**Dr. Westmaas:** Again, I cannot elaborate on that. The environment around that period was very very tense and the ascriptions of what is hostile did not emanate from us. It came from the other side, so to speak, so I would not be able to speak confidently what their interpretation of hostile was.

**Mr. Chairman:** But is this the language of a particular charge or this is your understanding of what they were held for?

**Dr. Westmaas:** This is not my quote. This is a quote directly from *Day Clean*. I did not write this.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** But as a member of the WPA and the *Day Clean* being a publication of the WPA. What did you understand that the WPA understood to be political action hostile to the rulers?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well it would have been the fact that it was still in the era of the civil rebellion and there were a lot of attempts to expand the party in various regions of the country including the West Coast, the East Coast, Berbice and elsewhere and given the trajectory of the development of the worries of the state about the party's expansion, I would imagine that this refers to that hostile action because as again it is their configuration. I can only assume it meant that the party's expansion was becoming at a rate which is dangerous to the ruling party at the time and hence the ascription of hostile. There were other references to hostile behavior prior this particular period, the period under which those incidents are referred to; one on the West Coast and the one in Campbellville, state media would often say "hostile opposition forces", so it was a general term used that time.

*12.16hrs*

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** What does he mean by State media, I am very sorry.

**Dr. Westmaas:** State media would include the *Guyana Broadcasting Corporation*, *Radio Demerara*, *the Guyana Chronicle*; I cannot recall any other national newspapers at the time, but

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yes, the State media. At that time paramountcy was, the party was picking up and most of the State media was controlled or influenced by the ruling party at the time.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** You listed the *Guyana Chronicle*, the *Guyana Radio*...

**Dr. Westmaas:** The *Guyana Broadcasting Corporation*.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** You listed three things, I do not remember....

**Dr. Westmaas:** And *Radio Demerara* which is another radio.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Thank you.

**Mr. Chairman:** Counsel, we are going to rely on you to see if you can, what legislation permitted these seeming violations, though there was legislation that give considerable latitude, as I understand, I think Mr. Williams had made reference to it.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** National Security Act.

**Ms. Rahamat:** National Security Act. Yes, I can address that...

**Mr. Chairman:** You could have been held for up to a week or even more.

**Ms. Rahamat:** I can address that Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Chairman:** I do not think we have that among out papers. We do? Some of mine have left in Barbados. I noticed you have walk with a truck load.

**Mr. Jairam:** [*Laughter*]

**Mr. Chairman:** Perhaps that is wise. National Security Act.

**Mr. Williams:** We do not have it amongst any papers here. You have not given it to us.

**Mr. Jairam:** We as Commissioners [*inaudible*]

**Mr. Williams:** We would be grateful for copies.

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**Ms. Rahamat:** We can make arrangements for copies for Counsels. Dr. Westmaas, in 1980 you traversed several persons being arrested and their homes being searched under the National Security Act?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** For example, if you look at 7<sup>th</sup> June, 1980 “party of seven Police searched a home of Ms. Olga Bourne. Under the National Security Act Ms. Bourne taken to Criminal Investigations Department (CID) Headquarters, she was held for three hours”.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Are you familiar with the National Security Act at that time?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Really in general with National Security Act the provisions are in the legal frame of reference outside of my competence.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Your understanding...

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** ...of the use of this Act between 1978-1979, what was your understanding of the use of the Act?

**Dr. Westmaas:** My understanding, it provided powers for searches and seizure and other processes of preventing the opposition of doing certain things.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Who had these powers?

**Dr. Westmaas:** The State as represented by the Government of Guyana at the time.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Were you ever subjected to any of these searches under the National Security Act?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, I was.

**Ms. Rahamat:** What was subjected to searches?

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**Dr. Westmaas:** Pardon?

**Ms. Rahamat:** What was suggested, your home, car, what?

**Dr. Westmaas:** My home searched, I cannot recall again, I am sorry, I cannot recall the exact date and time but a party of five Police entered my home and searched my room that of my father and the rest of the house. They did not stay long. They particularly focussed on my room and then they left.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Did they indicate what they were searching for when they came to your home?

**Dr. Westmaas:** I think at the time it was arms and ammunitions?

**Ms. Rahamat:** Did they find anything from their search?

**Dr. Westmaas:** No.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Did they produce any document, any Warrant, any order from the any Minister, anything at all?

**Dr. Westmaas:** No, those days, I must be honest, I do not remember but I do think they would have shown a badge indicating that they were Police Detectives but generally speaking they had the right to come in, even at that time I was stopped several times and there ..... you would just assume that they were the State Police and you cannot do anything because they have a gun in their waist and stuff like that.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Your recollection is that no document was shown to you and it was not usual in those times? Is that what you are saying?

**Dr. Westmaas:** My recollection is that my memory is fuzzier about whether or not a document was produced to indicate that they want to search the home under the National Security Act, I cannot remember.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Thank you.

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**Ms. Rahamat:** Dr. Westmaas, I would wish at this point in time to move off of appendix three and take you back to your written statement at page seven of his written statement. You have a paragraph which has the heading “WPA membership role and the Gregory Smith text”.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Do you care to give an explanation as to what role you believed Gregory Smith may have had in relation to being a member of the WPA?

**Dr. Westmaas:** He was not a member of the WPA.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Why are you saying that he was not a member of the WPA?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Both in the context of our membership role of the WPA and secondly, in terms of the subsequent assessment of his role with Dr. Walter Rodney and others. Many of the members did not know of his existence.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Did you know of his existence?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Never, no.

**Ms. Rahamat:** But having read his text....

**Dr. Westmaas:** Even before I read his text, I knew of his existence because by the 30<sup>th</sup> June or thereafter *Catholic Standard* and other reports began to identify a person called “Gregory Smith”, but it was confirmed by the publication of his book, I read it in the context of his being the Author of that particular text to what I referred to.

**Ms. Rahamat:** You stated in the very paragraph with this heading, the first is the statement on page 23 where Smith states “Brother Yarding gave me a form to fill”.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** “The form was about 6 inches by 4 inches and I filled in my name, date of birth, address and occupation. A membership secretary of the party at the time...”

**Dr. Westmaas:** “At one time”

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**Ms. Rahamat:** “At one time as a *de facto* archivist I can categorically confirm based on my perusal of our WPA records that there is no Gregory Smith on the membership role of the party at any point in time”.

**Dr. Westmaas:** That is correct.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Having read Gregory Smith’s book and him claiming to have full up a membership form you then made checks of membership role of the WPA?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Just explain for us what the membership role of the WPA is?

**Dr. Westmaas:** It is an assembly of documents overtime in which we process membership and name them in various districts of the country to the general term referring to the entire WPA membership over a period of time. At the point in which I became membership secretary, was not the period in which Smith claimed occurred, but subsequently I had access to the records as membership secretary and in all of my perusal, there is no such name as “Gregory Smith”.

**Ms. Rahamat:** In this paragraph dealt with, you can clarify or contradict based on your own knowledge positions in the party over time?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** At least two facts that were stated in Gregory Smith’s book. What is the second aspect you dealt with in the second paragraph under that heading?

**Dr. Westmaas:** The names of the membership?

**Ms. Rahamat:** Correct.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Of the names mentioned by Gregory Smith’s book and Ann Wagner’s book list a few names including Brother Morris, Brother Winston and Yarding and others. I have no recollection of those names in the membership role.

**Ms. Rahamat:** You made a physical check of the role?



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**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, I did.

**Ms. Rahamat:** You did not find those names?

**Dr. Westmaas:** No.

**Ms. Rahamat:** This is another aspect which you are contradicting what is stated in Gregory Smith's book? Correct?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Your statement moves on to deal with a section where you headed "Why the assassination" and it starts again on page seven and you proceeded to give your view. Is that so Dr. Westmaas?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Correct, could you now at this time just give us details as to why in your view there was a wide assembly of origins and contexts that led to the challenge posed by the WPA especially the period 1978/1980?

**Dr. Westmaas:** This section of the, parts of the statement to this Commission, was called from my own research in preparation for a book on the WPA history between 1974 and 1985 and as a result of that sections of extract of this information was placed or summarised for the convenience of my statement to the commission.

**Ms. Rahamat:** You can use your statement as a guide and just proceed to tell us according to your own interpretation what led to the assassination.

**Dr. Westmaas:** In my research and the origins and activities of the WPA overtime, or the challenge it posed, I proposed several things or several origins or challenges it made the WPA a threat to the State at the time and one of them of course was the actions of the WPA in terms of the multi-racial challenge not only to the People's National Congress, but also to the People's Progressive Party at that time, but the principle opponent was People's National Congress and what I mean by multi-racial challenge is that the WPA, from its outset organised deliberately, morally, politically and socially to activate or a resurgent, I should say, of racial unity in Guyana

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which was lost at least for a generation and this work started prior to the arrival of Dr. Walter Rodney. It actually begun by a consequence of events of organisations which made up the WPA subsequently including the Indian Political Revolutionist Associates headed by Moses Bhagwan, Attorney-at-Law who now resides in the United States of America. Secondly ASCRIA, African Society for Cultural Relations Independent Africa which was of the co-elders of which was Brother Eusi Kwayana and other organisations including the Working People's Vanguard Party (WPVP). These organisations began to work with each other prior to 1974 when the WPA occurred and principally the two architects, I would say, are Moses Bhagwan and Eusi Kwayana who met secretly to try to develop a relationship across racial lines and subsequently to develop an organisation which can address the racial problem in Guyana. My point about multi-racial challenge, when the WPA arose, it consecrated and developed and expanded those initial conceptions of Moses Bhagwan and Eusi Kwayana in their initial fore years into the team and it became more principally and programmatically organised to reach out to the majority of people of Indian and African descent and Amerindian descent in Guyana. It is out of that that I suggest that multi-racial challenge provoked certain responses from the power of being not exclusively the People's National Congress but also the People's Progressive Party.

**Ms. Rahamat:** You also spoke about a democratic challenge? Do you care to explain this democratic challenge?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes. The democratic challenge was an ongoing process which not necessarily included at all times, the WPA. It goes back of course to the 1960's, but comes into 1973 elections which from all intent and purposes and from international observers and local observers suggest it was rigged and out of that process, a number of organisations including then the WPA which was formed before began to challenge the bonafiders of the erosion of democratic rights in Guyana in all forms; State media, electoral, freedom of information, freedom of movement, freedom to hold public meetings and all of those things. Of course, it was a slow development or at one moment. Out of that democratic challenge, came public demonstrations, the coalition of forces and the arrival of street protests and in that context I would suggest that the response of the State was equivalent or contiguous with that response by the broad mass of organisation and people from 1973 onwards. Of course, it included very principled referendum boycott and

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referendum struggles which I mentioned earlier the Committee in Defence in democracy arose but out of that democratic challenge, came the consequences of the broad, among other challenges.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Dr. Westmaas this Commission has five Terms of Reference and Terms of Reference II says this “that the Commission is mandated to require into the cause of the explosion in which Dr. Rodney died whether it was an act of terrorism and if so, who were the perpetrators”. Dr. Westmaas, in your opinion, who do you believe were the perpetrators or the explosion causing the death of Dr. Rodney?

*12.31hrs*

**Dr. Westmaas:** Based on all of the information over time that was gathered by the WPA and other interested parties and by evidence from various sources, I will suggest that the regime in power at the time was responsible.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Did you view this as an act of terrorism or would you classify it as an act of terrorism and, if so, why?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well, any act that results in the dismemberment or disfigurement of an individual by virtue of a device or by gunshot or by whatever the device is an act of terror once it is not “legally executed by the State” meaning that usually somebody is brought before the Court and sentenced for crimes that are committed. Then even if it is illegal in the moral sense, it is at least legal in the political, social and constitutional sense. In the case of Dr. Rodney’s demise, he was not afforded any legal proceedings to clear his name or defend himself, but was killed by the process of a device.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Dr. Westmaas, do you believe that between the period 1979 to 1980, you and other members of the WPA, including Dr. Rodney, were under surveillance?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, I would indicate that by the fact that the Recognition Handbook, my own personal observations of activities of people of the time. I could give you one specific incident, surveillance wise, by the Head of the security service at the time, Laurie Lewis. Laurie Lewis lived in my area in Prashad Nagar and we would pass each other, I should say, he drove a ... I

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cannot remember if it was a Lada... but he lived not far from me and he drove to Ogle on the East Coast were, I subsequently learnt, the intelligence services coordinated activities. I was an early morning jogger and I would normally pass him on the way, either coming back or going, and he would usually put out his hand and greet me and give me the 'V' signal. On one occasion, at a particularly tense time, I gave him back the 'V' signal and he turned his car around and drove it straight up to my feet and walked me to my driveway revving the engine. He was in the car alone and he watched me go into my gate and then he watched me for a while, then he drove away.

The next day he was back to his old *bonhomme* self and showed me the 'V' signal and was grinning. I would only imagine that that was an act to test my mental or something, I do not know, because we lived in the same area. Maybe, he was concerned of his own security, but it was once incident which suggested to me that the State surveillance was very active and even me, just an ordinary member, was subject to that surveillance.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Do you know what organisation Mr. Laurie Lewis was part of?

**Dr. Westmaas:** I knew he was an Assistant Commissioner of Police but in terms of the organisation itself at Ogle there was a very loose notion or antidotal notion that it was intelligence services which he coordinated. We just heard this by rumor but, the way in which he drove up there and the way in which organised his activities and such suggest to me there was some truth in that observation that Assistant Commissioner and of course surveillance and security was his forte.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Are you aware of whether the Guyana Defense Force was conducting any surveillance of yourself and or the other WPA members?

**Dr. Westmaas:** In terms of the military, I would have to say I do not know.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Are you aware of any member of the Guyana National Service engaging in surveillance of yourself and or the other members of the WPA?

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**Dr. Westmaas:** Not to my knowledge in the specific sense of National Service being a principal organ of that surveillance but in general, organs of the State that were coordinated together, so in that, it would be implicit that they would be part of it, but I am not sure.

**Ms. Rahamat:** These organs of the State that would coordinate, could you identify them?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well again from anecdotal and of course some perspective after with written documents and stuff like that, you would suggest the Guyana Defense Force military intelligence, the Guyana National Service, in respect of the fact that its leadership were former military officers, the Guyana Police Force, at least the CID under “Skip” Roberts and maybe other agencies which were not named who were part of that broad... I do not know what their relationship would be but generally speaking they would be coordinating officers who would deal with their intelligence. Names came up at times of who these individuals were subsequently, after the fact, not when I was active, but afterwards.

**Mr. Chairman:** You had an opportunity to as Mr. Laurie Lewis what that was about.

**Dr. Westmaas:** No, he knew and I knew that we were... If you know Laurie Lewis, and I think witnesses before mentioning him, he represented himself, he came from the Queens College so he knew members of the opposition and I learnt later that his intelligence services began very early in the 1960s when... Again this is anecdotal, I do not have any evidence of it but he fed intelligence to Janet Jagan at times and subsequently became linked to the post-colonial Guyana Government and worked his way up, securing the loyalties of various Governments, all the way up to 1995, so he traversed a number of political organisations in Guyana and he presented himself, as I said, in a very friendly way in certain ways. I noticed both aspects of Laurie Lewis at that time, that he lived in Prashad Nagar, the friendly aspect and the threatening aspect in that particular incident but we worked with each other in a certain way because we lived in the area. He probably knew more about me than I knew about him.

**Mr. Chairman:** How in the end did you interpret that act that you just referred to?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Pardon? How did I what?

**Mr. Chairman:** Interpret the Act that you referred to?

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**Dr. Westmaas:** Ohh! That act. I think it was at a high point of repression, it was presumably early 1980 when WPA activists were being searched and my interpretation of it would be that he was uncertain of my position in the WPA at that time, insofar as he considered a threat and so he would test my metal, so to speak to see. I presume he knew that my father was a member of the official opposition. My father worked as a secretary to Dr. Jagan and I was on the opposite side, so we shared the house of differences but Laurie Lewis, himself, I think regarded, probably as Prime Minister Burnham, the PPP as an official opposition which posed not the type of threat that the WPA posed, so I think Laurie Lewis's reasoning was, I have to test Westmaas' metal in respect of his association with WPA because we know all the WPA members have been locked up for "threats against the State" and so, I think I fit into that configuration. That moment was him testing me or testing my metal in relation to security, especially maybe his own security because he lived in Prashad Nagar quite close to me.

**Mr. Chairman:** So what impression you thought you conveyed about your metal?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Oh! Well, my metal was tested the cane fields at La Grange so after that nothing could scare me so I was not scared by him at all, I walked very calmly into my gate, I looked back at him and he had a way of peering at me for a long time. He stayed there for about five minutes and then drove off and the next day he was back to normal, so I think I passed the metal there.

**Mr. Chairman:** He is behaving like a kind of sports mega?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Pardon me?

**Mr. Chairman:** Very well, please go ahead.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Dr. Westmaas, at any point in time between 1978 and 1980 were you ever aware of the WPA gathering arms and ammunition?

**Dr. Westmaas:** No.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Were you ever given any arms or ammunition by any member of the executive of the WPA?

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**Dr. Westmaas:** No, never.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Did you ever see any of the WPA members with arms or ammunition?

**Dr. Westmaas:** No.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Dr. Westmaas, were you aware of any plot to arrest the then Prime Minister, Mr. Burnham?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Absolutely not. At that time I would have considered it inconceivable.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Did you mean by the State forces or by civilians, I am not sure if...

**Ms. Rahamat:** Yes, by the WPA.

**Dr. Westmaas:** I understood that you meant WPA at that time and it would have been inconceivable to arrest Mr. Burnham.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Why are you describing it as inconceivable?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Because we may have been in the amphitheatre, as he said, but we were minnows in the amphitheater; we did not have the securities and the powers that the State possessed at that time, we could not possibly overthrow the State in that particular period.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Were you aware of what the WPA intended to achieve by their civil rebellion?

**Dr. Westmaas:** The civil rebellion did not include exclusively the WPA. The WPA was a major part of it but the intention of the civil rebellion, as the term stands, was a combination of forces and protests and significations in terms of documents which urged the State to produce the situation where democratic practice was available to the masses of the population and the wherewithal to achieve future free and fair elections as well as democratic practices which involved media, civilian liberties and other issues so we were in that conception of the civil rebellion, meaning a civil rebellion against an erosion of democratic rights at that time.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Just for the record, in Appendix 5 of your statement you made reference to three articles which are attached to your statement.

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**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** One written by Mr. Eusi Kwayana...

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** ...and two of these articles that were written by you.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** The first one, could you please just give us an overview of that particular article which is attached to your statement?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Chairman:** But there are two, which one?

**Ms. Rahamat:** The first one, "Resisting Orthodox".

**Dr. Westmaas:** No, that is not by Eusi Kwayana. If you want me to refer to Eusi Kwayana...

**Ms. Rahamat:** The first one written by yourself.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Oh! Myself, sorry. Okay. "Resisting Orthodoxy notes on the origin and ideology of the Working Peoples Alliance was written by me in 2000..."

**Mr. Chairman:** You are speaking far too quickly.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Okay, sorry. "Resisting Orthodox notes on the origins and ideology of the Working Peoples Alliance was written by me while I was doing my Masters at Binghamton University and it was subsequently published in 2004. It comprised sections of my research on the formation and legacy of the WPA and it included, most specifically, the period prior to the WPA's organisation and arrival from 1974 to 1979 and it discussed the component parts of the WPA that arose then including MAO, IPRA (Indian Political Revolution Associate), ASCRIA that I mentioned earlier, the WPVP, which subsequently left the Alliance and individuals, including Dr. Roopnarine, Andaiye and Dr. Walter Rodney, who came into the Party as individuals.



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This article summarised that history and gave some indications of the WPA's philosophy and political practice over a period of time.

**Mr. Chairman:** I seeing here mentioned that this *Small Axe* No.15, March 2004.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, *Small Axe* is a publication emanating from the United States; I cannot remember the editor's name, David Scott. It is a formal publication.

**Mr. Chairman:** Does it still exist?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, it still exists in an online format.

**Mr. Chairman:** Okay, well the second one is published in *Caribbean Studies* and we know of that.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, *Caribbean Studies*...

**Mr. Chairman:** ...for the last 40 years or more.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, *Caribbean Studies* have been around for quite a while.

**Mr. Chairman:** Yes.

**Ms. Rahamat:** And the last article, just give us a brief overview as to what you would have focused on in that particular article.

*12.46hrs*

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well this article, it includes the period under the first article I mentioned. It predates it more specifically to get the seminal origins of the philosophy of the new political culture which derived from a set of circumstances in the 1960s. More precisely, the formation of what is called a "The New World Group." It included George Beckford, an economist; Norman Girvan of Jamaica; Clive Thomas; David De Caires; and other academics; Tim Hector from Antigua. They were interested in developing a political consciousness coming out of Independence which challenged the orthodoxies of the old era, both Colonial and also the Marxist project which was intended to be very schematic in the interpretation of the Caribbean. The New World Group, I was analysing it in the context of its history up to the 1970s when the

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WPA was formatted. Its streams of that era could be noticeable on how it affected people like Clive Thomas, Walter Rodney, Eusi Kwayana, and I, Dr. Roopnarine and others; in terms of their return to some of those seminal concepts, and make into a more political agency. In other words, the New World ideas were now being formulated in the form of a real political action, apart from being theoretical. The second aspect has to do with the turbulence of the 1960s of which Walter Rodney was a very significant part. In Jamaica, there are two episodes; where the Jamaican intelligence services had warned themselves and others that Dr. Walter Rodney posed the most significant threat of any individual in the region, at the time. This applied more specifically in 1968, when he was ejected from Jamaica after teaching, going to Montreal. He was ejected because of his influence in Jamaica at that time. 1968 was also seminal in the sense that many events were happening around the world which made it a very powerful era and year; powerful possibility for the future, especially the radical future. The Tet Offensive was on; Malcolm Luther King was assassinated; and there were many other events around the world which was showing. Even events which were counted to that tendency including the invasion of Czechoslovakia.

**Mr. Chairman:** Dr. Westmaas, the second person within a fortnight or so I have heard discussing the new world group that you mentioned a dozen or more names there just now have happened two weeks ago, too. No mention was made of the man who –and I was there in Mona at the time- who I regarded as the most prominent of the people at the outset, Lloyd Best.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Oh yes, Lloyd Best is in my article. Sorry. I mentioned a few of them. He was the Principle. Actually he worked with David De Caires in Guyana to publish New World publications. You are right; Lloyd Best would be the most...

**Mr. Chairman:** I just wanted to be sure that I did not get it wrong and misconceive what was happening around me.

**Dr. Westmaas:** No, no. Mr. Lloyd Best was the very Principle and Architect in the new world group, yes.

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**Ms. Rahamat:** Dr. Westmaas, haven't written these articles and traversed the period; what effect, if any, did the death of Walter Rodney have on the civil rebellion, and the WPA's programme to have democracy changed within Guyana?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Obviously, the removal of somebody of his stature has stymied the movement in very significant ways. You had to operate on a basis of his legacy. We tried to keep his legacy alive consistently; but the man himself was not there and it could not translate in the same way that he did. The WPA actually grew in scope and size organisationally from 1980, than it was before. In other words, it is stronger in the mass way. In the 1978/1980 period, it grew better, stronger more organisationally by 1982, onwards, up to 1992. The most significant year I think of its strength, was probably in 1985, when they challenged the then Desmond Hoyte regime. Desmond Hoyte made a statement which showed that the WPA had become very significant in the society. He made a statement which said, "We must contain the WPA." It also affected the other principled opposition party –The PPP- who felt the multiracial challenge of the WPA and other brothers and sisters of WPA can testify. Wazir Mohamed and others who worked in the Berbice area can tell you that Janet Jagan broke down at one time and appealed to supporters of the PPP to stop joining the WPA. It affected both groups. I will say that Rodney's presence helped that. We could have not have done it with his presence prior to this, but we developed it. His death affected us all, definitely.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** I am not sure what the Witness is saying. It is that Dr. Walter Rodney was a stumbling block to the gross of the WPA...

**Dr. Westmaas:** No. I am not saying that.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** ...or is he saying that his death ignited and made persons more active. You have not told us how it is that Dr. Rodney Walter's death lead to these things.

**Dr. Westmaas:** When somebody is removed from the scene, it does not mean that their ideas are not present. We, in association with when Rodney was alive, and his seminal documents, and his presence in the memory of people; we worked on that legacy to develop the party in a more profound way. All I was talking about in terms of his... I was not suggesting that we benefited in a certain way from his death, but I am suggesting to you that his ideas, his principles, his main

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political documents and the memories of those activists who worked with him, who remained with him in that party, allowed us to carry on his legacy, and the legacy of the movement to a very high proportion after his death.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Thank you.

**Ms. Rahamat:** Unless I could be of further assistance, I believe these are the extent of my questions for Dr. Westmaas. Thank you.

**Mr. Chairman:** Mr. Ram, are you going to go first?

**Mr. Pilgrim:** I think we agreed amongst ourselves, Chairman that I will go. I am very brief.

**Mr. Chairman:** Yes, Mr. Pilgrim.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** Can you tell us, Mr. Westmaas... I am hoping that I am saying “West-must”, not “West-maas”...

**Dr. Westmaas:** People say Westmaas too, it is fine.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** Okay. At the time of June 1980, the Court’s system in Guyana was fully of operational, the Courts?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** And the Police Force, although you may have your view of the Police Force, it was still fully operational?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** Okay. In one of your articles –I think it is the one with the caption *Project Muse Resisting Orthodoxy Notes on the Origin* etcetera...

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** ...you made some references to CLR James....

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

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**Mr. Pilgrim:** ...and I am going to take you there. Chairman, this is one of the three articles which were appended to the statement of the Witness and it has a caption *Project Muse* with an “M” on it.

**Mr. Chairman:** Get ahead. You do have a lot of paper for us.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** Grateful to you. Page...

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** *[Inaudible]*

**Mr. Pilgrim:** I think it was listed in his statement as –not so much as an appendix- a reference for three articles.

**Mr. Chairman:** Let me see the front of it again, because it...

**Mr. Pilgrim:** It has got a little “M” ....

**Mr. Chairman:** Okay.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** ....initially we received the statement with three articles attached and this was the first of the three.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** *[Inaudible]*

**Mr. Pilgrim:** I think it is presumed to be part of but....

**Mr. Chairman:** Well, for the purposes of the public and those who do not have the papers before the; just quote from it what you want to put to him.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** Certainly, Chairman. On page 66 of that article –Do you have the article before you, Sir?

**Dr. Westmaas:** No, I do not have it.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** Someone help him with a copy of that.

*[Court Marshall handed the Witness the article]*

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**Ms. Rahamat:** If I may, Madame Commissioner, it was tendered as a part of the appendix number five.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Thank you.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** Appendix number five has three articles I think, and this is one of the three.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** At page 66 of that towards the bottom, the last paragraph. “The stalemate at the domestic level was a setting in which the WPA arose to challenge both the socialism of the two vehement and the role in racial division...” Do you see where I am?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** I am really interested in CLR James.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Okay.

**Mr. Scotland:** There seems to be some construction going on here.

**Mr. Hanoman:** If I may explain; the bathroom door is locked. It is disturbing us, could I ask for one minute for the contractor to get it sorted out?

**Mr. Pilgrim:** No, we were just concerned. We did not want anyone to think anyone was breaking in.

**Mr. Chairman:** As a public place, you know the bathroom door should long be open. I think now and again that happens. I do not know why. We will pause just for a minute or two.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** Grateful.

**Mr. Chairman:** I thought you had skill, Commission Counsel that you were open to apply to the opening.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** If not skill, a strong shoulder, Chairman.

*[Laughter]*

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**Mr. Pilgrim:** In the interim, Chairman, France and Nigeria are love all at half time.

**Mr. Williams:** Thank you.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** However, West Indies are struggling.

*[Laughter]*

Chanderpaul is out. It is 86.4 and we chase 308.

**Mr. Scotland:** There is Hope. Bravo is batting.

**Mr. Chairman:** What is the fate of Braithwaite?

**Mr. Pilgrim:** Braithwaite, I am afraid, Sir, went earlier. I think he got about 20 odd, Gail got about 11. We are not doing as we would like. My learned Friend to my right takes hope in the fact that his Trinidadian colleague is still at the crease. I think Bravo is out too.

**Mr. Jairam:** I think there is the possibility of rain.

**Mr. Chairman:** I think in the end *[inaudible]* might rescue you. We call that rain, man.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** Bravo and Ramdin holding pass. Bravo is at 29, Ramdin on 16.

**Mr. Scotland:** Have no fear, Chairman, we are here.

**Mr. Jairam:** Trinidad and Tobago is here.

**Mr. Chairman:** I am told that the door is now open, and to that extent, we are free to proceed.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** Grateful.

**Mr. Williams:** Chanderpaul is gone, all hope is lost.

*[Laughter]*

**Mr. Pilgrim:** Mr. Westmaas, we are at page 66. I was saying that we are looking at another famous Trinidadian, CLR. James.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

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**Mr. Pilgrim:** The second sentence there begins “The WPA’s emergent cannot be detached from regional and world-wide developments including the global upsurge in 1968, the Black Power Movement. The emergent of the new world group of the sixties, the February 1970 revolt in Trinidad, the overarching influence of the work of CLR James of the general ferment and rethinking evident in academia...”

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** I just want to set that background and go a little further down and really go overleaf to page 67. “The impact of CLR James was likewise evident in the framing of Rodney’s philosophy of the self-emancipation of the working people; a slogan later adopted by the WPA. Rodney claimed that James provided him with methodological tools to grapple with the Marxist ideology; and that he (James) stood out and seemed to be making more sense than others.”

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** These are your words; your assessment.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** Would you be aware at all if Walter Rodney actually had contact with CLR James?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, very significant contact. I think he saw James as kind of a mentor. I cannot recall the exact times and dates, but I knew that he frequently met with James, and also read his publications.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** We appreciate that you may have a person as a mentor, but necessarily have contact. You are saying that you were aware that they had actual contact.

**Mr. Chairman:** We have received evidence, and we have come across it too, with documents presented. He frequently visited James at his house in London.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.



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**Mr. Pilgrim:** That is my understanding as well, Chairman. I just wanted this witness to offer some corroborative support. In light of EK 9, which we had from the witness, Mr. Kwayana, there was a quotation from CLR James which is at page 141 of EK 9; in which CLR James quote himself as saying that he told Walter Rodney “be aware of assassination because Burnham will kill you because you are the one who can represent the people against him” so this is consistent with your knowledge that the two of them had a personal relationship?

*13.01hrs*

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** In your article *Caribbean Studies*.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** At or about page 116... This one, Mr. Chairman, is also one of the articles for to in Appendix 5, one of the three. This one is Caribbean Studies and this is the cover.

**Mr. Chairman:** What does that cover represent?

**Mr. Pilgrim:** I would perhaps have to ask Mr. Westmaas if he could tell us whether there appears to fact that there appears to be a naked lady sitting on the edge of a...

**Dr. Westmaas:** The cover of a journalist has a specific feature might represent the art work of the principle documents because my article was just one of several in that particular journal so I do not have any role in the cover art, so to speak.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** At page 116 of that article, you have a copy with you?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** At what would be the second paragraph “It was in this context that Walter Rodney made his reappearance on the Guyana stage. Lewis, 1998, recounted the historian’s application to the University of Guyana for a place of as Director of Caribbean Studies from Tanzania. Lewis cites the assistance of the registrar of 1972 response to Rodney famously terms Memo. No suitable vacancy in the Department of History for someone with your qualifications and

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experience. Your letter is on file and as soon as there is a suitable opening you will be given due consideration. The post, Director of Caribbean Studies, was offered to another candidate.” I was just wondering if you had any specific knowledge, through your research and so on, who in fact this other candidate was and any of those circumstances, if you have any information about that other party who got that post.

**Dr. Westmaas:** There was talk of one Mohamed Insanally, but I am not sure if it refers to Mohamed Insanally because he was also denied post at the University of Guyana as An academic, but I am not sure if this refers to him. I cannot reconfigure the time line. I forgot the time line.

**Mr. Chairman:** Mr. Pilgrim, if I am hearing you correctly, this is the first time that I am learning that Rodney had applied for position other than that of Professor of History.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** I understand that he applied, well, for two different positions this is picked up in this reference here as well.

**Mr. Chairman:** Have you heard of that as well before?

**Mr. Pilgrim:** Only in the statement that we got earlier today, I think there is a reference to both. A little further down in the page Dr. Westmaas, “the PNC regime most likely felt unease Mr. Rodney track record as a militant and his banning from Jamaica in 1968. A position of professor in the History Department was on offer by 1974 and the Department had voted for Rodney’s enrollment”. What did you understand the department’s role to be?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well at that time a Department at the University of Guyana had some semblance of independence as an academic institution and I assume that there would be voted in favour of Rodney retention. Who would refuse, for example, somebody who wrote *How Europe undeveloped Africa* and *The History Of Upper Guinea Coast* and was so world renown so my conception of this would be that their independence was at work here but the Board of Governors thought otherwise.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** And as you understand, the Board of Governors had the final say.

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**Dr. Westmaas:** Well I cannot speak to the technicalities of the University system at that time but, generally, speaking, yes.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** Then, towards the end of that page “Rodney applied and was turned down” as Lewis’ note quote “the Burnham mites on the Board of Governors of the University of Guyana had overturn the decision if the academic appointment Committee. Rodney owns version differs with that of the academic council.”” Then the quotation... This was a quotation directly from Walter Rodney as I understand it?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, if you look at number 41 it might give you the citation at the back of where that quote was actually taken from. It was taken from statement by Dr. Walter Rodney 18<sup>th</sup> September, 1974, the document to which referred to earlier.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** You would have written this article when?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well usually you sent an article prior to its publication so this was published in 2009, I would have sent this is 2008 or there about.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** The quotation from Dr. Rodney, you would agree with me, is consistent with what appear to be his desire to give something back to the Guyanese people?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Oh yes, very much so.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** And lastly, from your understanding of what Walter Rodney was involved in whilst he was in Guyana in that period after his return, do you know how he managed to survive at all? I mean in terms of work.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, well being a professor even that time I think he had books, may be royalties from books published from abroad, I would not know of his personal but friends would support him but I imagine his role as a professor on lecture circuits he receive fees enable him to continue but he drove a small mini so was obviously not on that high end of a lecturer survival in that time.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** But you also aware that he made reference to the fact that he had actually done some appointment outside of Guyana even in this period?

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**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, I heard that. He went to Germany and a few other places prior to that.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** I ask, quite frankly because I understand quite clearly on his death certificate he was unemployed and I wonder if you aware that he did do work.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well he did work as one of my colleagues, Andayie, would suggest, he worked everywhere. When he was on the stelling he wrote. When he was in the office I saw him many – in the WPA's Office – with his shirt off writing some history or other. When we were behind on the septic tank he was speaking about history. Any engagement with Walter Rodney involved academia and the political struggle so I would imagine that you are correct that he was actually not being gainfully employed but he was actively working in terms of his scholarship.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** You think it would be fair to describe him as a historian?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Oh yes, certainly, most certainly.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** ...and an academic?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, certainly.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** I am grateful. That is if for me, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Chairman:** Who is next?

**Attorney for the Working People's Alliance (WPA) [Mr. Christopher Ram]:** Good afternoon Mr. Westmaas.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Good afternoon.

**Mr. Ram:** Mr. Westmaas, are you planning to write any full length book on historical events in Guyana?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes. Two.

**Mr. Ram:** Two and what are these?

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**Dr. Westmaas:** My manuscript which I got my PhD for in terms of the historical press in Guyana, British Guiana and Dutch Guyana 1796 to 1900, which I plan to publish, and a history of the WPA between 1974 and 1985.

**Mr. Ram:** You obviously have assembled much of the material for the first publication you referred to, for post-publications?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Which one, the press?

**Mr. Ram:** The press.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Ram:** What about the information for purposes of the second publication *The History of the Working People's Alliance*?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Pardon, I did not get the question.

**Mr. Ram:** The material for the second publication that you proposed...

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well part from the WPA Archives the General Archive, the *Catholic Standard* and my own recollections I have, I think, approximately three chapters finished, I have to complete two more but because of circumstances I could not finish it and academic life is very stressful at times and I have had some medical issues so I could not complete it, but it is in the works and I think the fortuitous nature of this Commission give me a lot more sensible reasoning and I have to contemplate prior to those chapters that I have developed so this would be very helpful.

**Mr. Ram:** So you are saying, in terms of assembling material, it is probably more than 50 per cent completed.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes. About approximately 60 per cent completed, yes.

**Mr. Ram:** Can you Dr. Westmaas, whether the information in your written statement and oral evidence was assembled specifically for purposes of this Commission of Inquiry?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, the material that I have in this statement?

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**Mr. Ram:** The information that you have was it assembled specifically for this or did this come from the material you were assembling for the book?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, certainly, the material that I am assembling I pulled that extract from it to conceive of this statement yes, I did; the personal statements, the information the timelines and the *Day Clean* reports are all already in my manuscript.

**Mr. Ram:** So is it correct to say, Dr. Westmaas, that the material and oral evidence offered here is not specifically influenced by the Term of Reference of this Commission?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, you are right. Correct.

**Mr. Ram:** Would you confirm that the attachments all precede the announcements of the Terms of Reference?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Oh yes.

**Mr. Ram:** I am going to ask you your opinion as an academic and as a writer whether, in your professional opinion, the information that you have presented meets the standard expected of a writer of a historical event?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well it says “self-praise is no recommendation”, but I would suggest “yes”, to a great extent.

**Mr. Ram:** I now wish to ask you a few specific questions. You said in your witness statement that you attended free history classes offered by Walter Rodney that is in the last sentence of paragraph one of the statement.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Ram:** Can you tell us the content of those classes or the tuition?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well I cannot remember the exact person, but I learnt of these classes because the hand bill, as you saw in the attachment, was handed around and being somebody who was thinking politically at that time although my thoughts have been formulated, I wanted to go and Dr. Rodney free classes were big pull. Somebody took me by car to Aubrey Barker... to South

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Ruimveldt to attend those classes. At that time I was working with an insurance company I was the messenger boy so I...

**Mr. Ram:** My question was the contents of the course.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Oh yes, I am coming to that. When I arrive there we were given a handout and the content was usually about Marxism and historical periodisation. In other words, it was a combination of the classic text of Marx, Engels and other Marxist historians and as well as Guyanese history so he began with Guyanese historical processes which led to the development of the modern politics but using a Marxist methodology so what he did was to conflate the methodology with the analysis Guyana's history which was his forte so "yes", in that context.

**Mr. Ram:** Would you say that the contents were essentially intellectual and academic?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, but Walter Rodney had a way of conveying his academic potential and his ideas in a very fluid and accessible way so even though it was conceived academically it was received very easily by the participants, at least most of the participants.

**Mr. Ram:** In your statement, Dr. Westmaas, you said the context between 1978 and 1980 was one of social and political upheaval. To what extent, so far as you can recall, was this upheaval influenced by economic factors?

*13.16hrs*

**Dr. Westmaas:** Very much so. There are many factors as you hinted there, but the economic factor was very principled in the civil rebellion. It was a period of some shortages in food production. There was an international economic dimension after the 1973 change in the gold standard. The international economy went into a tailspin and mainly, Third World Countries have felt the effect of it especially in the oil crises, and that generated impacts at home. So what happened was a combination of the external economic world system factor and the local economic factor where decisions of a particular Government can alter or redefine your standard

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of living and in that context, it was not doing too well for the ordinary people in terms of economic living.

**Mr. Ram:** I know you are a historian and not necessarily an economist and you were very young then, but could you say, Dr. Westmaas, how the economic conditions manifested themselves, supply of goods and services, level of wages and salaries, etcetera?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well there was the minimum wage, but it could not, I cannot remember the exact minimum wage, but obviously, that was the period, and I had the discussion with somebody yesterday who was talking about rice flour and other inconveniences of that period when you could not access, what we call historical “food”. The traditional Guyanese food, because of the banning on certain, by economic means, so the architects of the economy had decided to restrict certain items in order for the economy to stabilise itself, but in so doing, it spiraled outwards and affected the ordinary people, man and women in the street. It affected them very badly in terms of their wages, means of living, housing, food and other hindrances.

**Mr. Ram:** You have had access to the archives of the Working People’s Alliance. Can you say whether the Working People’s Alliance did any analysis of the economic situation in Guyana during the period covered by this Commission of Inquiry?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Very much so. I mean Dr. Clive Thomas was a national economist, but also a party economist and he was part of the New World Group and his analysis was very present in our publications and in *Day Clean* and so too was Eusi Kwayana, who was also very very skilled in economic analysis. You had Dr. Morris Odell as well in our ranks and we generally...

**Mr. Ram:** Dr. Morris Odel, you are mentioning these names perhaps if you could just give some indication...



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**Dr. Westmaas:** Dr. Clive Thomas was an executive member of the WPA. A founding member...

**Mr. Ram:** And a professional...

**Dr. Westmaas:** And a professional economist, world renowned and Caribbean economist. Dr. Morris Odell was, I think was a former economist in the Central Bank of Guyana, something like that. I do not know his current position, but he was also an economic of some different dimension to Dr. Clive Thomas, but yes, those two happen to reside in the rank of the WPA and they happened to give of their input, economic analysis, but not exclusively. The working people on the street also helped with analysis and Brother Eusi Kwayana was very incisive in breaking down economic analysis for people in *Day Clean* and elsewhere.

**Mr. Ram:** I understand you provided the Commission with several resource materials. Did you provide them with any material on the economic conditions prevailing at the time?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes. I think I supplied a document by Dr. Clive Thomas written via the University of Guyana Staff Association at that time. University of Guyana Staff Association, which was a union, and he wrote an analysis of the economic conditions in 1980 via the union. It was published via the WPA.

**Mr. Ram:** Dr. Westmaas, earlier this morning you referred to a vehicle owned by, I think you said Dr. Roopnarine, GZ 9244.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Ram:** Is that the same vehicle that is numbered serial number ten in the WPA recognition handbook?

**Dr. Westmaas:** I will have to look at that I cannot be certain.

*[Court Marshall took the WPA recognition handbook to the Witness]*

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**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, Holden Station Wagon GZ 9244, dark green, frequently driven by Omawale and Rodney. I am not sure if it is Dr. Roopnarine's vehicle, but remember I was young at the time and I drove in the vehicle, he was driving it. I assumed it was either Dr. Roopnarine, Jocelyn Dow or Omawale's vehicle, but it was driven by Dr. Roopnarine.

**Mr. Ram:** You referred specifically in your witness statement to three incidents, you numbered them incident one, two and three.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Ram:** Can you recall whether these incidents were reported in the national media?

**Dr. Westmaas:** One of them was...well two of them were. One of them more specific to the incident in La Grange in the *Catholic Standard* which was tendered and the other one in Campbellville was reported by the state media and also reported by the *Day Clean* but not specific to my role as such.

**Mr. Ram:** Was the state media in the habit of reporting on these incidents involving the WPA and other political and social groups?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, they would report on it.

**Mr. Ram:** What would be the nature of their reporting?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well it is hard to say. There are so many reports and the nature of the reporting would usually be configured in the context of the state's version of events. That is what I could suggest to you, but there may have been objective reporting on some of the incidents, but generally speaking if you got a report about Campbellville meeting, it would configure it that the WPA tried to hold an illegal meeting in Campbellville and hence, they needed the Police to break it up. But from our perspective, it would be that we were denied the possibility of holding a meeting in that particular zone.

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**Mr. Ram:** In your chronology of events, you referred at times to two particular groups CDD.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Ram:** That was essentially made up of political parties?

**Dr. Westmaas:** No, not only political parties. It political parties, including individuals, the churches – Catholic church, the Anglican church, maybe the Muslim Anjuman and a few other groups. It involved professionals who worked in the professional agencies management like the architects and business people and things like that. Yes, organisational like that and individuals.

**Mr. Ram:** You referred to another group and that is in April, page 19 of your statement.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Ram:** COMPASS.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Ram:** Which you indicated was composed of trade union leaders, public sector managers, church men and business men.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Ram:** Could you name some of these persons? Can you recall?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well it was formed 1<sup>st</sup> March, 1979 approximately and it included people like Pat Thompson from the Bauxite Company, perhaps Malcolm Taharally, a few other senior insurance executives, Albert Rodrigues – architect. I cannot remember a few of the other people. Colin Cholmondeley, Bishop Randolph George.

**Mr. Ram:** Colin Cholmondeley would be this?

**Dr. Westmaas:** I do not know what his designation was at the time, but I knew he was somebody very influential in public life.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Ram:** My final question to you, Dr. Westmaas, I notice you credit, am I assuming the Police with transportation of 25 WPA activists to Mocha. Was the Police in the habit of facilitating transportation for WPA activists?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Of course. Yes, I cannot give the specific times and dates, but it happened over time in various years.

**Mr. Ram:** Could you say the nature of that transportation and why they would have been taken to Mocha? So I have two questions, the nature of the transportation and why they would have been taken to Mocha.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well there is one specific incident where I know Brother Sassy Omo, Engosie Moses who are the WPA members, Obuta Kamara and a few others were taken up to Mocha and deposited thereafter. I think the protest was about Eusi Kwayana's sentence for printing and publishing *Day Clean*. There was a protest outside the Magistrates Court and they were picked up and taken to the back of Mocha and left there. I presume Mocha because one it was rural and two it was purportedly a strong hold of the People's National Congress.

**Mr. Ram:** Is it correct to say as well, is it the Mocha on the East Bank of Demerara, which is a remote village off the East Bank Highway?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** What distance?

**Mr. Ram:** Sorry, Madam?

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** What distance?

**Dr. Westmaas:** My geography is very bad...

**Mr. Ram:** Would it be the public road, providence is probably about six miles?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Given or taken, I do not want to go on a limb on that.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Ram:** Madame Commissioner, if I may, I think it was about six miles and then the village itself, the turn off into Mocha, is about six miles from Georgetown and Mocha itself was probably five miles down a mainly lonely road.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes very lonely.

**Mr. Ram:** Was return transportation provided?

**Dr. Westmaas:** No. Activists had to walk back onto the main road and get to the city. I do not know the specifics of the incident. There were two of them, one was at Mocha and one was at Linden. Activists were taken to Linden and deposited in the, I do not like to use the word jungle, but deposited in the interior areas of Linden and they had no recourse but to walk back to Georgetown.

**Mr. Ram:** Was that in fact a form of harassment by the authorities?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Most certainly.

**Mr. Ram:** These arrests would have been carried out by security forces?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, most likely.

**Mr. Ram:** Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, I have no further questions for this witness.

**Mr. Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Ram.

**Mr. Ram:** Unless I can be of further assistance, I take my leave.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** Mr. Chairman, I am speaking from around the corner.

**Mr. Chairman:** Yes, Mr. Pilgrim.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** On behalf of my learned Friend, Mr. Brian Clarke. I understand he had a pressing personal matter to address this afternoon and left a little bit early, but he also indicated that he had no questions for this Witness and therefore is covered in that sense, grateful.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Attorney for Mr. Donald Rodney [Mr. Keith Scotland]:** Mr. Chairman, I am very willing to go now. I am prepared.

**Mr. Chairman:** Yes, we are willing to receive you.

**Mr. Scotland:** Thank you. Could the witness be shown the *Assassination Cry of a Failed Revolution*, please, particularly page 23.

*[Court Marshall took the book 'Assassination Cry of a Failed Revolution' to the Witness]*

**Mr. Scotland:** Dr. Westmaas, you told Commission Chairman and in your witness statement that with respect to Gregory Smith, which is at page nine of your witness statement

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** That you as the membership secretary of the party at one time and as *de facto* factor archivist, "I can categorically confirm based on a perusal of our WPA records that there was no Gregory Smith on the membership role of the party at any point in time". Do you recall that?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** May I show you the book, written and co-authored by the Smiths' and particularly, where he claimed and what he claimed, he put his name as registered to the membership.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** He says do you see chapter three.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes

**Mr. Scotland:** Do you see the second paragraph?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** Could you read the second paragraph beginning with Brother Yarding, please?

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

*13.31hrs*

**Dr. Westmaas:** “Brother Yarding gave me a form to fill. The form was about 6 inches by 4 inches. I filled in my name, date of birth, address and occupation. I give the name William Smith and told them that everyone knew me as Gregory. I then explain to them how I got the name Gregory”.

**Mr. Scotland:** Pause. In your statement you said that your checks revealed no enrolment of Gregory Smith on the membership role?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** What about William Smith because according to him in this document that he said he gave his name as William Smith? What about William Smith? Did you check for William Smith?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, there was no William Smith on the records.

**Mr. Scotland:** There was no William Smith on the membership?

**Dr. Westmaas:** No.

**Mr. Scotland:** Relative to your knowledge, your investigation and your records this statement would be an untruth?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** Let us look at the same page 23 and I want to go over one area, but with a different angle. You stated that the names referred to by Gregory Smith and can I take them all together and I will ask you the question?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** At page 23 he referred to one “Brother Yarding”?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** Could you go to page 43? He refers to one “Brother Fowler”.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** Could you turn over, said page? He refers to both “Brother Morris”... Those are the names he referred to Morris, Yarding and Brother Winston at page 38, yes?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** According to the archives, there are no persons who were at the time on the role of the WPA with those names.

**Dr. Westmaas:** No, we had a name Morris, but...

**Mr. Scotland:** That was Dr. Maurice Odle.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Maurice Odle so the spelling would be M A U R I C E, yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** I am quite sensitive to the different accents.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Okay. [*Laughter*]

**Mr. Scotland:** But Maurice and Morris are two different names altogether.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Altogether, yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** Whether you are in Barbados, Bridgetown, Jamaica, Kingston Maurice and Morris are two different names.

**Dr. Westmaas:** ...and spelt differently too.

**Mr. Scotland:** Good, so could you tell me....

**Mr. Chairman:** Other than in pronunciation?

**Mr. Scotland:** Apart from the pronunciation, there are two different names and in fact Maurice in Guyana is pronounced as Mau-rice, correct?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** Morris is pronounced as Mor-ris?



## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** That distinction is taken care of and not lost in translation.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Correct.

**Mr. Scotland:** Therefore your official records do not have...

**Dr. Westmaas:** Neither.

**Mr. Scotland:** Do not have any of those names?

**Dr. Westmaas:** No.

**Mr. Scotland:** Hold on, there is another phenomenon. Do you know officially you can refer to persons one way...

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** ...but in the day to day operations they take on another name?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** At any time of the existence of the WPA between 1979 and 1980, were any members of the WPA referred to by any of those names?

**Dr. Westmaas:** No. Not to my knowledge.

**Mr. Scotland:** That would also be another untruth or several untruths coming out of this book written by Gregory Smith and his sister, correct?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** I noticed...

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** I am sorry. How many names have you put to him?

**Mr. Scotland:** Four, Yarding, Maurice, Fowler, Winston.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Thank you.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Scotland:** Did you pick up any other names referred to in his book relative to assistance from the WPA in his involvement?

**Dr. Westmaas:** No. I checked through and found those four.

**Mr. Scotland:** Therefore, as far as it relates to his recollection of involvement of those persons, it would be true to conclude that those were fictitious?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** From the records?

**Dr. Westmaas:** From the records.

**Mr. Scotland:** ...and from the reality of references?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** Something struck me and I was very saddened by it. I noticed that the interest that I represent, Donald Rodney did not make the recognition hand book of the Working People's Alliance?

**Dr. Westmaas:** [*Laughter*].

**Mr. Scotland:** His name is not there?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** Could you check for me, I can suggest to you, at the time he know he drove motor vehicle number PBB 2349.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** Would it be true to say that even his vehicle did not make the starting line-up of this document, the recognition hand book?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Scotland:** May I continue. Donald Rodney, neither name nor picture is there, and his vehicle number is not on this official document?

**Dr. Westmaas:** No.

**Mr. Scotland:** Let us Donald Rodney into context. In means then and tell us, was he ever as role as Archivist and Chronicler of the WPA, was he ever a registered member in 1980 in the WPA?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Not in WPA, he became a member, a very active member subsequently.

**Mr. Scotland:** Subsequent to June, 1980, and when we speak of June; we speak of 13<sup>th</sup> June, 1980...

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** Up to that point he was not an active member?

**Dr. Westmaas:** No, he was not.

**Mr. Scotland:** His name was not registered on the role of the WPA?

**Dr. Westmaas:** No.

**Mr. Scotland:** His involvement up to the 13<sup>th</sup> June, 1980, was really that he is the blood relative of the late Dr. Rodney?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** On the night of 13<sup>th</sup> June, 1980....

**Mr. Chairman:** Is that the euphemism for a brother?

**Mr. Scotland:** It is another way of putting it. "He is the brother".

**Mr. Chairman:** [*Laughter*]

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes. [*Laughter*]

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Scotland:** On the night of the 13<sup>th</sup> June, 1980, he is giving his brother a drop?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** He is below the radar of the State. They were not on to him because he is not involved in anything that would make him a subject of State enquiry. Is that not so?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, that is correct.

**Mr. Scotland:** In fact, your research after both as an academic and a member of the WPA and thereafter, as an Executive member, was that really and truly, the planners, whoever were the orchestrators of this dastardly event, were not expecting Donald to be there that night.

**Dr. Westmaas:** That is my understanding.

**Mr. Scotland:** Quite frankly, he was lucky to escape with his life by running away...

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** ...to Ms. Karen De Souza, running to her house.

**Dr. Westmaas:** And Andaiye.

**Mr. Scotland:** Yes. Let us go back to Donald Rodney and his....

**Mr. Chairman:** Was that a submission or a question?

**Mr. Scotland:** Is a question which he answered.

**Mr. Chairman:** Very well.

**Mr. Scotland:** ...which he answered. Did you answer my questions?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, I did.

**Mr. Scotland:** Okay, just making sure. With Donald Rodney, not every being a member of the WPA that night, I want to take you to one of the Terms of Reference and one of the documents you presented to this Commission. *Caribbean Studies*, Volume 37... Was that Appendix 5 in a

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

bundle? Mr. Chairman, Madam Commissioner? This article again, we put it in the context, was written by you, yes?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Chairman:** Which article for the benefit of the public?

**Mr. Scotland:** The articles entitled *Caribbean Studies 1968 and the Social and Political Foundations and Impact of the New Politics in Guyana*.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** Could he be shown the article please?

**Dr. Westmaas:** I have a copy.

**Mr. Scotland:** You have it?

**Mr. Williams:** That is appendix... Exhibit...?

**Mr. Chairman:** He has provided it.

**Mr. Williams:** What is the Exhibit?

**Mr. Scotland:** Number five to his statement.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** It is NW 1, Exhibit 5 attached to the statement.

**Mr. Scotland:** At page 118 and going over to page 119 you have a writer and I will get to the writer... Could you read the statement made by a writer crystallising Burnham's control over the State?

**Dr. Westmaas:** It was written by George K. Danns, an academic at the University of Guyana.

**Mr. Scotland:** Yes.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Statement reads...

**Mr. Chairman:** Spell "K. Danns"

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Dr. Westmaas:** D-A-N-N-S. George K. Danns, a sociologist.

**Mr. Scotland:** Yes, read it please.

**Dr. Westmaas:** “As Leader of the ruling PNC Party, Prime Minister Burnham has the power to appoint the Deputy Leader, Party Chairman, General Secretary and the Editor of the Party’s newspapers. His total dominance of the ruling Party is matched by his ruling dominance over key State institutions. Burnham is Prime Minister, Minister of Defence in Charge of all Security Forces, Chairman of the Defence Board, Minister of Education, President of GUYS-TAG, the governing body of the public corporation and public enterprises. He is also the President on leave of the Guyana Labour Union, the oldest Union in the Caribbean. All in all, he is the most powerful individual ever in the history of Guyana and perhaps the entire Commonwealth Caribbean.”

**Mr. Scotland:** This quotation was adopted by you and put as part of your article?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** Do you associate yourself with the varsity of this quotation? Is it a true quotation? Is it a true depiction of Forbes Burnham in 1979/1980?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, it is.

**Mr. Scotland:** More importantly I would like to turn you to something even more pointed; page 128, the quotation itself or the reference in your article made by George K. Danns, number 47 is your bibliography reference, yes?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** Tell this Commission the statement quoted in *New Nation* in 17<sup>th</sup> November, 1973, where the then Honourable Prime Minister, Mr. Burnham, said something about the Party as it relates to God.

**Mr. Williams:** Which page?

**Mr. Scotland:** Page 128...

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Williams:** Of what?

**Mr. Scotland:** ...of the same document reading lines five from the bottom. Mr. Chairman, does the Commission have it?

**Mr. Chairman:** You get ahead, yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** Go.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Go ahead?

**Mr. Scotland:** Yes, please.

**Dr. Westmaas:** “Sir Danna also sites *New Nation*, 17<sup>th</sup> November, 1973 organ of the ruling Party at the time as quote in Burnham thus...”.

**Mr. Scotland:** State the quote.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Okay, “...thus God says before you were, I was. The Party says to the Government before you were, we were. The Government has got to be in our system a subordinate agency to the Party.”

**Mr. Scotland:** What did you understand and I am going to the Terms of Reference (ii), (iii)... Well particularly Terms of Reference (ii) and (iv) of this Commission, how would you translate this statement made in 1974?

**Mr. Chairman:** Which one, “God says before you were, I was”?

**Mr. Scotland:** Yes, the entire statement and especially the party say to the Government “...before you were, we were. The Government has to be in our system a subordinate agency to the Party”.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, I would ascribed this to the notion of paramountcy of party which was spoken to the Commission prior to my presence here today and generally reported on at that time by the Opposition and other forces in Guyana or is a symbol of paramountcy or statement of paramountcy.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Chairman:** That is the second statement? What the Party to the Government says "...before you were, I was"? What about the first one "God says before you were, I was." What about that? Is that paramountcy to you?

**Dr. Westmaas:** I am just ascribing to collective statement. I am not perusing it section by section. My reference was to the entire statement but the statement "God says before you were, I was" it is a statement of metaphor presumably for his power in the Party at the time.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Would you say it is a metaphorical adoption and an adaptation of the principle of God?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Being supreme?

*13.46hrs*

**Dr. Westmaas:** Being supreme, yes. I am not a biblical scholar, but yes I would assume that.

**Mr. Chairman:** You would not regard it as blasphemous?

**Dr. Westmaas:** No, because I am not biblically oriented. I would not ascribe myself as a person who could state that that is blasphemous, in other words.

**Mr. Chairman:** Well, you are sociologically ...

**Dr. Westmaas:** In theory, yes, it is blasphemous.

**Mr. Chairman:** But you are sociologically oriented.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Sociologically, yes.

**Mr. Chairman:** What would you say view from in those eyes?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well obviously it's a statement and it describes godly powers to an individual on earth. So, yes in that sense.

**Mr. Scotland:** I know you come from the overnight, man.



## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Chairman:** Continue, Sir.

**Mr. Scotland:** Much obliged, Mr. Chairman. Now, you also placed on record the article from the Stabroek ...

**Dr. Westmaas:** *Stabroek News*.

**Mr. Scotland:** ... Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> June, 2007, NW3 which contains really a history of the *Dayclean*.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** Now we have heard from Brother Eusi Kwayana and we have heard from Brother Ogunseye and we are now hearing from you.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** This article ... we are trying here to condense a time and space in history.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** Would you say that this article gives an accurate record and history of the events leading to the advent of the *Dayclean* in Guyana?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** Tell us ... Mr. Chairman, does the Commission have NW 3?

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Yes, we do.

**Mr. Chairman:** Yes, I think I had seen it this morning, *A short history* ... that is the title?

**Mr. Scotland:** Yes. Look at the column 3; lines 7 if you can read it ... you do not have the article?

**Dr. Westmaas:** No.

**Mr. Scotland:** Could he be provided with the article?

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Chairman:** Moses Bhagwan?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Bhagwan.

**Mr. Chairman:** Bhagwan?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes. So where is it at?

**Mr. Scotland:** Column 3 ... so, you are going *Nigel Westmaas*, that is column 1, *gone into turbulent* that is column 2, *immigration*, that is column 3, yes? I am going across.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** On the first page?

**Mr. Scotland:** On the first page. You are one the first page, yes?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** Now, go down from line 6 from the bottom, “When the WPA attempted to uplift ...”

Do you see it?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** Could you read that for me please up to the end?

**Dr. Westmaas:** When the WPA attempted to uplift the consignment of newspapers, an order suddenly appeared in the Official Gazette that essentially gave the Minister new powers to prevent imports of “any printed matter which in the opinion of the Minister is prejudicial to the defense of Guyana, public safety and public order”

**Mr. Scotland:** Are you telling this Commission in context that the first batch of 10,000 were imported from the Tapia House ...

**Dr. Westmaas:** In Trinidad.

**Mr. Scotland:** ... in Trinidad, yes and it is about to clear customs ...

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Scotland:** You get something from the Official Gazette, yes?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** And then the involvement of the controller of Customs and then in your statement, you said, it was Nazi style ... you said that in your statement.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** Could you tell this Commission, which arms of State would have been involved ... well, firstly, would you have seen this as a repression of freedom of the press?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, widely so.

**Mr. Scotland:** And especially the Press who were in operation to the ruling party?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** Which arms of the State, would have been involved in this exercise?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Well, again I will note legally proceed ....

**Mr. Scotland:** Well, the Gazette, that would not come from any ordinary "Joe".

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes that would come from the representative of the State who designed laws and legal procedures.

**Mr. Scotland:** Right? What about the Controller?

**Dr. Westmaas:** The Controller of Customs would also fall under that heading because they are consigned to deal the documents, themselves.

**Mr. Scotland:** What about the burning?

**Dr. Westmaas:** The burning .... I presume the Controller of Customs, at the time ... I do not know if any other agencies were involved, I do not know.

**Mr. Scotland:** Would you say that the prevailing atmosphere as it relates to the Press and opposition to the powers that be at the time?

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Dr. Westmaas:** But it was developing, it was not ... it got worst later. That is the origin or the beginning of the repression of *Dayclean*, so in that particular time, there was a certain semblance of freedom of the Press, but that is an act which began to develop into ...

**Mr. Scotland:** And of course, you did use the thriving free Press in Trinidad to try to assist you?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, I did. *[Laughter]*

**Mr. Scotland:** Now, I want to move on to another aspect and to clarify a certain issue. On the night of the demise of Dr. Rodney, was there a pamphlet titled *Hickory, Dickory, Doc*? I have heard about it, but I have never seen it.

Firstly, could you confirm that you actually saw the existence of that?

**Dr. Westmaas:** I saw the existence of a reproduction of the *Hickory, Dickory, Doc*, yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** Mr. Chairman, has anyone produced that document to this Commission?

**Mr. Chairman:** We have never seen it, if you have it.

**Mr. Scotland:** Dr. Westmaas.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes?

**Mr. Scotland:** May I impose on you; well firstly, do you have in your possession a copy of that document?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, I do.

**Mr. Scotland:** Would you be so kind ...

**Mr. Chairman:** You have it in your pocket?

**Dr. Westmaas:** It is on this thing called a jump drive. *[Laughter]*

**Mr. Scotland:** Could you jumpstart it and have a copy for this Commission first thing in the morning?

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, I can.

**Mr. Williams:** But on what basis? Who is the author of the document? What are we doing? I keep asking this question all the time.

**Mr. Scotland:** Mr. Chairman, this document has been referred to on several occasions.

**Mr. Williams:** I never heard of it.

**Mr. Scotland:** I will ...

**Mr. Chairman:** It has been referred to at least once previously, I do not know about several occasions.

**Mr. Scotland:** Yes! More importantly, Mr. Chairman, it affects because remember, my client was charged with having in possession explosives. This document may very well be relative to his ... so it is very important to me.

**Mr. Chairman:** You are trying to defend him here on that charge?

**Mr. Scotland:** I ...

**Mr. Chairman:** This is not the forum to defend him, you know.

**Mr. Scotland:** I intend to use your Terms of Reference as far as is allowed in the Law to put certain things on record. Mr. Chairman, may I ask that this Witness, through you, to reproduce that document for us tomorrow, please?

**Mr. Williams:** Mr. Chairman, I object. I want to make this point now. This Commission cannot be used as a place where every piece of scrap paper that is picked up or heard about, becomes evidence. Lawyers must lay the evidentiary basis for the admission of a document, and if you wish me to read the Terms of Reference, it speaks clearly to following the rules of our Constitution and laws of evidence, etcetera. So, I do not know where we are adopting this *laissez-faire* attitude about the tendering and admissibility of documents in evidence in this Commission of Inquiry.

**Mr. Chairman:** Well ...

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Williams:** There is no attempt being made to lay any foundation.

**Mr. Chairman:** Yes, but Mr. Williams, the hour for the production of the document has not yet come. He is talking about ...

**Mr. Williams:** As it pleases you, Sir.

**Mr. Chairman:** ... produced tomorrow.

**Mr. Williams:** I am guided by you, Sir.

**Mr. Chairman:** Tomorrow we will deal with that, not today.

**Mr. Williams:** Sir, you do not put off for tomorrow what could be done today.

**Mr. Scotland:** Mr. Chairman, I agree and I would like to answer.

**Mr. Chairman:** No, there is no need to answer that now. When you come tomorrow, we will hear the argument and we will rule.

**Mr. Scotland:** As you wish, Sir.

**Mr. Chairman:** We will not determine that today.

**Mr. Scotland:** But, Mr. Chairman, I do not have the power of asking the Witness to produce documents. The Chair has that power.

**Mr. Chairman:** Well, you have asked him and we will see how he will respond.

**Mr. Scotland:** Could you produce that document for us tomorrow, please, Sir?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, I can.

**Mr. Scotland:** Yes, you can.

**Mr. Chairman:** That has nothing to do with admissibility, you asking him that. We will deal with that tomorrow.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Williams:** Mr. Scotland is attempting to manage this Commission, Sir. Notwithstanding what you have said, he is talking to the Witness.

**Mr. Chairman:** I note that he is not alone in that respect. *[Laughter]*

**Mr. Scotland:** Mr. Chairman, you have lumped me in an exercise for which I claim complete innocence. I am attempting to get a document that may be of assistance. *[Laughter]*

Now, tell me, you said that Donald Rodney became a member of the WPA after the events of June, 1980.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** And it will be true to say that it is only then that he became actively involved in the activities of the WPA.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Scotland:** I have noticed, Dr. Westmaas, that several persons who I would be considered luminaries, who are “sons of Guyana” Post-1980, now must make their living abroad, Eusi Kwayana comes to mind, you come to mind and several others. Do you think that the events of 13<sup>th</sup> June, 1980 have had any fuel for such an exodus? - A “brain-drain” that I would call it?

**Dr. Westmaas:** A qualified “no” because my exodus and that of Brother Eusi Kwayana and others, occurred much later. I left Guyana in 1999, very reluctantly to come back, but events took over, Brother Eusi Kwayana, similarly left in 2003 or 2005, I cannot remember, but the lineage of Guyanese history maybe a factor ... the economic situation.

**Mr. Scotland:** It may be a factor.

**Dr. Westmaas:** But directly speaking, no, I would not suggest that.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** To be fair to Mr. Eusi Kwayana, he was very specific, he gave this Commission evidence as to why he left and it related to a particular situation that developed in his village, if I recall. He did not relate it to the events of 13<sup>th</sup> June, 1980.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Scotland:** Thank you, Madame Commissioner. Mr. Chairman, subject to the production of that document, those would be my questions for this Witness.

**Mr. Chairman:** I saw you looking up; I thought you wanted to apply for an adjournment.

**Mr. Scotland:** No, just the production of that document and I can wrap up thereafter.

**Mr. Chairman:** I thought you wanted an adjournment on the grounds that the lights were fading. Very well. Who is next? Mr. Williams?

**Mr. Scotland:** Mr. Williams is here.

**Mr. Williams:** Yes, Sir, I am not sure ... is Mr. Scotland saying that he wants to bat after me? What is he saying?

**Mr. Scotland:** Mr. Chairman, subject to the production of the document ...

**Mr. Chairman:** Yes, he is finished in relation to what we may have ...

**Mr. Williams:** Okay, Sir, I do not know how long we are going but I could start by asking a couple of questions, if you wish me, but it is 13.50hrs.

**Mr. Chairman:** You fear that if you go to the crease, you may get out before 14.00hrs?  
*[Laughter]*

**Mr. Williams:** Sir, well, I was overnight watchman ...

**Mr. Chairman:** On several occasions

**Mr. Williams:** For nearly an hour on previous occasions and as you said, Sir, I did not lose my wicket.

**Mr. Chairman:** I notice that you only played one ball in every six. *[Laughter]* Alright well try your hand now and see what technique may have got, Mr. Williams.

**Mr. Williams:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Commissioners, Dr. Westmaas.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.



## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Williams:** Generally speaking you have given personal experience in relation to those occurrences in La Grange, Campbellville, and etcetera.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Williams:** Except for that, the rest of our testimony really, I do not want to say it is anecdotal but it is basically a kind of historical account.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Williams:** But you cannot reprobate in relation to a lot of those occurrences that you spoke about. You can vouch for them personally.

**Dr. Westmaas:** They are in the public record, so my presentation of the public record is implicit in ...

**Mr. Williams:** Right but it is not your personal experience?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Not directly, no. Not all of them.

**Mr. Williams:** Yes, now, there are some ... I do not want to detain you too long but there are some things I need to deal with that have been recurring. You were just asked about this question of paramountcy. I think we have this extract from the *Declaration of Sophia*, I have an original copy. I would like to refer the Commission and if Dr. Westmaas can have a copy too of that Exhibit.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** That was EK 1.

**Mr. Scotland:** EK?

**Mr. Williams:** It was something like that.

**Mr. Scotland:** *The Sophia Declaration?*

**Mr. Williams:** Yes, 14<sup>th</sup> December, 1974. I refer you to Chapter 2, page 11.

**Dr. Westmaas:** I do not have it in the form that you have it, so you are going to guide me through.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Williams:** You have anything beginning from 1 to 11 or anything like that?

**Dr. Westmaas:** No, the pages as blank for numbers but if you give me the chapter, I will find it.

**Mr. Williams:** Chapter 2.

*14.01hrs*

**Mr. Jairam:** Mr. Williams, is yours the address to the Congress?

**Mr. Williams:** This is an original copy.

**Mr. Jairam:** Okay, I see.

**Mr. Williams:** I have chapter two here, *The Role of the Party*.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Exactly.

**Mr. Williams:** Okay.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Get some time you could make that original available so that the Secretariat could copy it.

**Mr. Williams:** I suppose so but they have a copy, they have copies. Mr. Westmaas has referred to...

**Mrs. Samuel-Brown:** Yes, but it is just not as properly annotated as your seem to be.

*[Laughter]*

**Mr. Hanoman:** And I think the cover is also very important. It has Mr Burnham's face very prominently displayed on the cover which may be evidentially significant.

**Mr. Williams:** EK 3, I think the exhibit is, Madame Commissioner. Dr. Westmaas, might I respectfully refer you to the second paragraph on page 11?

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** For the record, apparently it is being said that it is EK 5 and not 3, just for the record.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Williams:** Well, Mr. Scotland, you did not mean to mislead me. Yes now could you read paragraph two?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Again, I have it in a different format so if you give me the guideline.

**Mr. Williams:** Could you just allow him to read this.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes. Begin "it was agreed"

**Mr. Williams:** Yes the second paragraph.

**Dr. Westmaas:** "It was agreed, after lengthy discussion, that the emphasis should be on mobilising the Nation in every sphere and not just merely for periodic elections and in support of specific actions and programs. It was also decided that Party should assume, unapologetically, its paramountcy over the Government which it is merely one of its Executive arms."

**Mr. Williams:** Thank you. Dr. Westmaas, a thread that has been running throughout the evidence of your colleagues in this Commission of Inquiry is that that meant that the PNC had control over the State. Is that your understanding of the thrust of the evidence so far in this Inquiry?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes to a great extent.

**Mr. Williams:** Now having read that it is the paramountcy over the Government which is mainly one of these Executive arms. Do you agree with me that this is referring to only one arm of the State? The Government specifically is mentioned. Are you seeing it there?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, specifically, yes they are referring to that in this statement.

**Mr. Williams:** Government. Do you agree with me that a state has three arms? Certainly those organise along the Westminster model line. We have three arms. You have the Government; you have the Judiciary and the Legislature. Do you agree with that?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Jairam:** The Executive.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Williams:** Well the Government is the Executive. Mr. Chairman, I do not know...

**Mr. Hanoman:** I think a false premise is being put to the Witness. I think the Government comprises much more than the Executive.

**Mr. Williams:** Perhaps, Mr. Chairman, Counsel for the Commission could enlighten us about what he is saying. I have said that the state has three arms once used in our Westminster model Constitution and those arms are the Government or Executive; the Judiciary, and the legislator. Is he contesting that?

**Mr. Hanoman:** Yes, the Executive and Government are two different concepts. The Government is much more than the Executive.

**Mr. Williams:** Well, Mr. Chairman, it is the first time I am hearing that.

**Mr. Jairam:** Mr. Williams, I do not pretend to know more Constitutional Laws than you do, but I am a student of the Constitution. As I understand it no one has ever propounded that the three arms of the State comprises of the Government. I have known it to be the Executive, the Judiciary and the Legislative.

**Mr. Williams:** Mr. Chairman, I do not think we are at cross purposes. Executive and Government, they are used interchangeably in describing that arm of the state.

**Mr. Hanoman:** The Government includes the Opposition.

**Mr. Williams:** Since that intervention... Could I proceed? My learned friend could deal with that when he is re-examining. I reiterate that under our constitutional model of governance, the three arms of the state are the Government/Executive, the Judiciary...

**Mr. Chairman:** I think you are better off getting on with the question, you know?

**Mr. Williams:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Chairman:** The witness understands...

**Mr. Williams:** Therefore, that statement in the *Declaration of Sophia* does not refer to the Judiciary. Do you agree with that?

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, it does not state that it refers to the Judiciary.

**Mr. Williams:** Also, do you agree it does not refer to the Legislature?

**Dr. Westmaas:** As stated here, no.

**Mr Williams:** Now...

**Mr Chairman:** Has he answered?

**Mr Williams:** Yes, Sir. It does not refer to the legislator either. Now this statement, is this statement not consistent with the Marxist theory, certainly the theory that was in Europe about the Party being in control of the Government or Executive?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, generally speaking but there is no one stream of Marxist theory. There is a developing theory which I earlier mentioned which comes out in new world movement which eschews the paramountcy or the power of State over every part of society.

**Mr. Williams:** No, but we are not talking about every part of society. That statement clearly states the Government. It does not mention the Judiciary; it does not mention the Legislature. It is a clear statement. This statement, being consistent with Marx's dogma, maybe not of the stream that you mentioned just now, but it is a stream. Do you agree with that?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Williams:** This would not have been unusual for a Government professing to be a Marxist Government or a Socialist Government?

**Dr. Westmaas:** No, not unusual for that.

**Mr. Williams:** In addition to that...

**Mr. Chairman:** Are you dealing with paramountcy now...

**Mr. Williams:** It is paramountcy that I am dealing with.

**Mr. Chairman:** ...but does that not refer to the Party rather than the Government, the Party controlling?

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Williams:** But that is what I am talking about, the Party's control of the Government; not the party's control of the Judiciary or the Legislature. This is telling you clearly that the Party is what creates the Government in the first place. We have elections and they are contested by political parties... Let me pose questions to you. Do you agree in our system Political Parties contest elections?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Williams:** And the successor forms the Government.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Williams:** And is it not that context this statement is made...? In fact, this statement referred to by my learned Friend when he referred it to you just now about God. Do you remember that?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Williams:** All he is saying there is that the Party exists before the Government and it is the Party which creates the Government. Is that not correct?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, you are asking me if it is correct insofar as it relates to State control over Government.

**Mr. Williams:** Not State control, party paramountcy.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Okay, yes.

**Mr. Williams:** So, to me it is a clear statement, I do not know where all the difficulties arose... let us continue.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Okay.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** If you invite an answer surely the witness must respond.

**Mr. Williams:** No, the witness has answered me already. He is now volunteering.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** So you want to cut him off at that point?

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Williams:** No, I do not wish to cut you off either. [*Laughter*] Yes, Mr. Chairman... The learned Queens Counsel apparently is trying to throw me off track; something pretty difficult.

**Mr. Chairman:** You are not known to be easily thrown off balance.

**Mr. Williams:** Exactly.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** Mr. Chairman, I think that my Friend is in full flow now, much like Chanderpal was earlier today before he lost his wicket, but it, now being 14.05hrs, is, I think, an appropriate time for us to take the afternoon break.

**Mr. Williams:** But before we do that...

**Mr. Chairman:** We might just be able to get...

**Mr. Williams:** The last question in...

**Mr. Pilgrim:** ...another political speech perhaps before we complete.

**Mr. Williams:** Let us finish with him perhaps. Therefore, are you aware as a historian, certainly that the Government attracted critical support from the main and official opposition of day?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes, I am aware of that.

**Mr. Chairman:** Where, from the PPP?

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes!

**Mr. Williams:** This is from the PPP.

**Mr. Chairman:** You ever got to know the basis of that?

**Mr. Williams:** Mr. Chairman...?

**Mr. Chairman:** I have read that, but did we ever get to know the basis of the support?

**Mr. Williams:** Yes!

**Mr. Chairman:** What motivated it?

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Williams:** No... You want to know if you will get to know the basis.

**Mr. Chairman:** If you could.

**Mr. Williams:** There was a basis for it because there were all professing various approaches to Marxism, Socialism. I think the PPP were Marxist-Leninists and always felt the PNC was a softer approach to that and wanted them to...

**Mr. Chairman:** Are you sure that the staginess was not referred to? Staginess is referred to harsher, not softer. Anyhow, you get along.

**Mr. Williams:** We could not describe the PNC at that time in any manner as staginess. Basically this is the situation what we have here. Mr. Burnham made a statement at the Congress, it is here. He spoke about what is a common socialist practice of the Party taking paramountcy over the Government that it created. It does not speak to any other arm of the state. So there was no complete control of the State. I am putting that to you; that there was no complete control of the arms of the state, which include the Judiciary and the Legislature by the PNC during that period.

**Dr. Westmaas:** I would beg to differ, in some respects because there was manipulation of both the Legislature, and the Judiciary. In so far as *Day Clean* and other cases were concerned during that period.

**Mr. Williams:** In so far as...?

**Dr. Westmaas:** ...as cases *Day Clean* Newspaper, and arms and ammunition charges and other events at that time.

**Mr. Williams:** That showed what? Paramountcy over what?

**Dr. Westmaas:** I am not saying it is paramountcy. You were asking me if it shows that the paramountcy controls the Legislation. You asked me in a different way. I am suggesting to you that I do not agree fully. There was controlling insofar as *Day Clean* and other repressive acts at that time, on the Opposition...

**Mr. Williams:** But do you agree that would have been in realm of governmental acts, if they occurred?



## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Dr. Westmaas:** Yes.

**Mr. Williams:** That is the point I am making to you; but this sweeping statement that there was Party control over the State; was that not true? There was no control over the Judiciary nor the Legislature. That statement expressed the socialist approach that the Party that created the Government should be paramount to Government or certainly controlling the levers of the Government and that happens in every country of CARICOM today.

**Dr. Westmaas:** But you mentioned the PPP and PNC had a pact.

**Mr. Williams:** No, am saying the PPP gave critically support.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Critically support, yes, but in that particular period of time the WPA opposed that formation. We were opposed in terms of democratic principles. In other words we were coming from a different Marxist trajectory.

**Mr. Williams:** Chairman, this is a good point for us to break.

**Mr. Chairman:** But remember before we go that the evidence last week from one witness was that half of the judicial officers appeared to have been responding to the paramountcy document.

**Dr. Westmaas:** Sir, but that cannot be proved. That is opinion.

**Mr. Chairman:** Well... We get any judgements, perception...

**Mr. Williams:** The first thing we have gotten over is that this sweeping statement that paramountcy meant the control by the PNC of the State. The State is subdivided into three arms and the only arm it spoke about is the Government, the arm of the Government.

**Mr. Chairman:** But I am telling you a witness says that in his judgement half of the judicial officers were affected by paramountcy.

**Mr. Williams:** Sir, which witness is that?

**Mr. Chairman:** I do not remember now...

**Mr. Scotland:** Mr. Ogunseye. He was not here...

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Williams:** But he has not been cross-examined. That is the problem we are having all the time.

**Mr. Chairman:** I am talking about the evidence thus far on record.

**Mr. Williams:** Sir, the evidence-in-chief.

**Mr. Chairman:** When you are finished with him we might have an amended view or a confirmed view but I am telling you what is on the record today. *[Laughter]*

**Mr. Williams:** Sir Richard Cheltenham, you were not only a Lawyer of substance in this Region but a Minister. I am sure you are aware that Barbados has the Westminster styled constitution which speaks about three arms of the State. I am sure about that. I know you do not want to throw your hat into the ring ...

**Mr. Chairman:** No...

*14.16hrs*

**Mr. Williams:** ...as yet.

**Mr. Chairman:** My saying anything different from what you are saying except...

**Mr. Williams:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Chairman:** ...for the Witness, who interpreted paramountcy, going as far as impacting the Judiciary. Anyhow, we can pursue that.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** I would like to offer Mr. Williams some critical support in terms of his application for an adjournment, Sir.

**Mr. Chairman:** Only in that respect, I note.

**Mr. Pilgrim:** Only in that respect.

**Mr. Williams:** Sir, the Learned Queens Counsel is very chirpy this afternoon.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Scotland:** Mr. Chairman, just as a matter of housekeeping, it looks like we would be finished with this Witness earlier tomorrow so could we have Mr. Ogunseye here on standby, please, so that we can get on with the Commission's work.

**Mr. Chairman:** Mr. Williams, are you likely to be long with the witness?

**Mr. Williams:** I think my learned Friend wants to find out how long I am going to be. All I would say to you and the Commissioners, Sir, is that I would take my time with Dr. Westmaas, who I consider to be an important witness.

**Mr. Chairman:** Very well, Mr. Ogunseye needs to be here in any event. Yes, I am happy to see you, Sir, very well.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Before we take the break, I hope I am not interrupting, please, Mr. Chairman, I was wondering whether my Friend Mr. Williams would consider donating *The Sophia Declaration* in its original form, perhaps there are other copies that he has access to, but if he cannot donate it, we certainly would like to make a photocopy of it with the cover and everything. We can do that in about 15 minutes.

**Mr. Williams:** I will respond to that in the morning. I would not chance giving this to Mr. Hanoman over the break at the end of today's proceedings.

**Mr. Chairman:** I know you often have to consult overnight. I hope that is not a matter that calls for consultation.

**Mr. Williams:** Perhaps, I should look to see if there are any indentations in the book.

**Mr. Scotland:** Mr. Chairman, is there any possibility he can bring copies of the flyers too?

**Mr. Williams:** Which flyers?

**Mr. Scotland:** *Hickory, Dickory, Dock.*

**Mr. Williams:** ...like Br'er Anansi stories.

**WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY**

**Mr. Chairman:** Until tomorrow at 9:30hrs we stand adjourned. Thanks. Have a good afternoon.

**Adjourned Accordingly at 14.19hrs**