

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

### CALL TO ORDER

**Chairman [Sir. Richard L. Cheltenham K.A., Q.C., Ph.D]:** Fellow Counsel, members of the public, we propose starting in about five minutes so we need to get ourselves ready. Due to the rain this morning and the difficulty of some of the support personnel in getting here and because of the Commission having to deal with some housekeeping matters as well, we are starting a little late. We are apologise, but we are... Commission Counsel, are you ready?

**Commission Counsel [Mr. Glenn Hanoman]:** Yes Mr. Chairman, Good Morning.

**Mr. Chairman:** Will the witness, Mr. Robert Gates...

**Attorney for the People's National Congress (PNC) [Mr. Basil Williams]:** Good morning, Mr. Chairman and Commissioners. Before Mr. Gates starts, could I enquire about the Witness who is out of Miami and whose name was called yesterday who was the Crime Chief at the time, Cecil "Skip" Roberts? He has given a statement. He was flown down into Guyana and the question is why he has been skipped in terms of giving evidence before us before we rise today? We would have thought that since the Government spent money, taxpayers' money, to bring him in that he would have been given evidence before the end of this secession and I understand is because somebody does not like what he has written in his statement and we cannot do that. If you are going to spend taxpayers money to bring in a witness out of Florida... this is a search for truth, it is not a prosecutorial exercise.

**Mr. Chairman:** I, Counsel, have not seen the statement. I am not in a position to comment on what you are saying.

**Mr. Williams:** Sir, could your Counsel indicate to us.

**Mr. Chairman:** I do not know. We will deal with that matter any response we have you, you will get it after the brake.

**Mr. Williams:** Thank you Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Chairman:** We are going to proceed. I just want to assure you that nobody here, none of us as Commissioners, wish to be involved in wasting taxpayers' money. We want to get ahead with

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our business with as much expeditious and thoroughness as we can so I would ask you to hesitate in even making any suggestion or hint to that effect.

**Mr. Williams:** No, Sir. It could not be you. It is the Counsel that took the statement. The Counsel has relates to Mr. Roberts and money was spent to bring him into Guyana and how could we rise here...? Do we have to spend money to bring him back here again?

**Mr. Chairman:** I do not know what the difficulties are. I will investigate and if there is a response that we can give you before we brake we will give you the response, but for now let us keep an open mind I do not know the facts.

**Mr. Williams:** Much obliged, Sir.

*[Mr. Allan Gates entered the witness box]*

*[Secretary of the Commission administered the oath to the witness]*

**Mr. Hanoman:** Good morning, Mr. Gates.

**Mr. Allan Gates.** Good morning, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You are free to stand or sit as you please.

**Mr. Gates.** I prefer to stand.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Could you first of all explain to us all the various names you have and how do you come about having all of those names?

**Mr. Gates:** I was born...

**Attorney for the Guyana Trades Union Congress (GTUC) [Mr. Selwyn Pieters]:** Good Morning, Sorry. There is an interruption before Mr. Gates begins his evidence.

**Mr. Chairman:** Yes, Counsel.

**Mr. Pieters:** Mr. Chairman, before the witness begins his evidence understood this morning, from Mr. Pilgrim, there is a preliminary issue to be raised.

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**Mr. Chairman:** Mr. Pilgrim has not raised any such issue so why are you indicating who will raise an issue. Mr. Pilgrim can speak for himself. I do not quite follow that. Please proceed, Counsel. Mr. Pilgrim has not raised any issue. Please proceed, Counsel.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Yes, could you explain to us why you have so many names Mr. Gibbs, if I can call you that?

**Mr. Gates.** I was born, and I was given the name Clive De Nobrega Gibbs. After joining the Guyana Police Force and my departure, I was subjected to certain acts of persecution, victimisation and that forced me to change my name in 1992 to Allan Robert Gates so “Clive De Nobrega Gibbs”, “Clive De Nobrega”, “Clive Gibbs” are all the same. I have abandoned that name by Deed Poll and have taken the name “Allan Robert Gates” so it is not four or five names.

**Mr. Hanoman:** If you are to see a copy of that Deed Poll, you would be able to recognise it?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Could, I please, ask for the Deed Poll document which I just received this morning to be shown to the Witness, we have already handed copies to the Lawyers a few minutes ago.

*[The Court Marshall took document to the Witness]*

**Mr. Chairman:** I am not sure we as Commissioners have been shown it though.

**Mr. Hanoman:** We just got it very recently and copies are being made available now.

**Commissioner [Mrs. Jacqueline Samuels-Brown, Q.C.]:** Perhaps in the meantime like the other witnesses, the particular Witness may be informed that he could sit if he wishes.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Is that the Deed Poll you handed to me this morning?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes, Sir.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** May I see the document, please?

*[Court Marshall took document to the Commissioners]*

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**Mr. Hanoman:** I am sorry, Madam Commissioner.

**Mr. Chairman:** Are you sure Mr. Williams, you do not want to take temporary leave and not disturb our proceedings?

**Mr. Williams:** Sorry.

**Mr. Hanoman:** May I continue?

**Mr. Chairman:** Just once second. We are just looking at the Deed Poll. You should now have it received and marked.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Could I ask that this be given the tag RAG 1, please? AR... The difficulty is that which initial now we should use.

**Mr. Chairman:** Take the name given today that is all. The name that he is giving us today is the name we will use.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Would that be CG 1?

**Commissioner [Mr. Seenath Jairam S.C]:** No, his name is Allan Robert Gates.

**Mr. Gates.** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Jairam:** What is your name?

**Mr. Gates.** Allan Robert Gates, that is on my identification card. It can also be tendered if so desired.

**Mr. Jairam:** Thank you.

**Mr. Hanoman:** That would be ARG 1, I believe.

**Mr. Chairman:** Thank you. The Deed Poll document is received and so tag, RG 1. Please proceed.

**Mr. Hanoman:** In relation to the name given to you at birth... Was your birth registered by certificate of birth?

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**Mr. Gates.** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** If you see that document could you recognise it?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** I am asking permission to show this Certificate of Birth to the witness, please?

*[Court Marshall took Certificate of Birth to the Witness]*

**Mr. Hanoman:** Copies of it is being made and distribute as we speak.

**Mr. Gates.** Yes this is...

**Mr. Hanoman:** For continuity can I ask that this be tendered and marked and tagged ARG 2?

**Mr. Chairman:** Yes, it is received and so tagged.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Mr. Gates, I wish to get one thing out of the way very quickly. Are you presently a prisoner at the Georgetown Prison in Camp Street.

**Mr. Gates.** Yes, I am presently serving for 48 months on what I would call 'trumped-up charges' to prevent me from testifying here. The matters were all civil in nature and the police somehow or the other manipulated them, if that is the correct word.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Before you confuse us you are serving a prison sentence of 48 months in relation to what offense?

**Mr. Gates.** Allege obtaining by false pretence.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Obtaining by false pretence.

**Mr. Chairman:** What is the sentence please?

**Mr. Hanoman:** 48 months is the sentence imposed?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes, Sir.

*[Inaudible]*

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**Mr. Chairman:** For obtaining money by false pretenses?

**Mr. Williams:** Very light, Mr. Chairman. I agree without you.

**Mr. Chairman:** Pardon.

**Mr. Williams:** Very light for that offense.

**Mr. Chairman:** I made no such comment, Mr. Williams.

**Mr. Gates.** I wish to draw to the Commissioners' attention as legal luminaries that during that trial which took three years, I was never served with any statement so as to know beforehand what the accuser was saying.

**Mr. Chairman:** This is not the place to retry your case, I think.

**Mr. Gates.** No, I do not want people to see me differently.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Very well, Mr. Gates.

**Mr. Chairman:** I take it as if you were aggrieved with the sentence or the conviction and sentence you have appealed your matter.

**Mr. Gates.** I have an application pending before the Chief Justice.

**Mr. Chairman:** Very well, but we are not here to retry that matter. This is another matter.

**Mr. Gates.** Okay.

**Mr. Hanoman:** I would wish for that to be on the record so I would like to ask the conviction... You are saying to us that you have taken legal proceedings, questioning that conviction?

**Mr. Gates:** A motion to quash.

**Mr. Hanoman:** To quash the conviction?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes Sir, presently before the Chief Justice.

**Mr. Chairman:** Why are you getting into that though, Counsel?

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**Mr. Hanoman:** I wish to make full and frank disclosure.

**Mr. Chairman:** There is nothing full and frank about that. That matter is before the Court so he says the "Court of Appeal". Why are we getting into that? We are not competent to get into that.

**Mr. Hanoman:** As it pleases you, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Chairman:** Let us get on.

**Mr. Pieters:** Mr. Chairman, while we were on that point perhaps what we could have done seen that this Witness brought this into a play is a full copy of his criminal record, if it is available.

**Mr. Hanoman:** I am sorry, but we do not have the criminal record available.

**Mr. Chairman:** But is there reason to believe that he has other than the conviction he gave us?

**Mr. Hanoman:** I will ask.

**Mr. Chairman:** But he should be asked if he had any other convictions.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You have any other criminal convictions besides the one you have mentioned?

**Mr. Gates.** I was charged for murder and that was...

**Mr. Chairman:** No, do you have convictions, not charges.

**Mr. Gates.** No, Sir, other than this.

**Mr. Chairman:** No convictions?

**Mr. Gates.** No.

**Mr. Chairman:** That does not prevent you Counsel from carrying out your own check.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Very well. You joined the Guyana police Force in June, 1977?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Having joined the Guyana Police Force, can you give us a little idea what your immediate tasks were?

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**Mr. Gates.** Having completed my initial six-month training, I was sent to the Beat Duty Centre on Water Street to do the normal Beat Duty after which I was selected to attend the Criminal Investigation Induction Course. Subsequently, I was sent to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) Special Squad.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Explain to us...

**Mr. Jairam:** Counsel, may I, just for clarification, Mr. Gates...

**Mr. Gates.** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Jairam:** Would you be so kind to tell us what name were you enlisted in the Police Force as?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Jairam:** What was your name?

**Mr. Gates.** Clive Gibbs, Sir, because they said that my mother was not married to my father, my father was De Nobrega, my mother was Gibbs...

**Mr. Chairman:** Mr. Gates, you are giving too much information. What name were you enlisted as?

**Mr. Gates.** Clive Gibbs.

**Mr. Chairman:** Do not carry it back to your grandmother and your grandfather and so on, just be relevant.

**Mr. Gates.** Clive Gibbs.

**Mr. Chairman:** "I was enlisted as Clive Gibbs." That is the answer.

**Mr. Jairam:** And what was your regimental number?

**Mr. Gates.** 10318.

**Mr. Jairam:** ...and Clive Gibbs, right?



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**Mr. Gates.** Yes Sir.

**Mr. Jairam:** Thank you very much. Sorry, Counsel.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You were about to tell us that you went to work with the Special Squad of the Police Force.

**Mr. Gates.** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Could you explain for us what was the special squad was tasked with in those days?

*09.46hrs*

**Mr. Gates:** The Special Squad, in those days, was setup to go after the “bad guys” and in some cases, eliminate them. They were...

**Mr. Hanoman:** What do you mean...? Hold on...What do you mean by “eliminate them”?

**Mr. Gates:** Execute them.

**Mr. Chairman:** In some cases, not all cases?

**Mr. Gates:** Not all cases.

**Mr. Chairman:** In some cases.

**Mr. Gates:** The ‘bad guys’. The really ‘bad guys’. That unit was divided...

**Mr. Hanoman:** That was the official function of the squad?

**Mr. Gates:** No. That was not the official function. The official function was something similar to the “Black Clothes” or a SWAT Unit. It was a body of 13 specially trained men.

**Mr. Hanoman:** 13. You were one of the 13?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes.

**Mr. Chairman:** I did not understand what he said to be the official function.

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**Mr. Gates:** It was a unit that was tasked with going after the ‘bad guys’; arresting them because the normal CID men would carry small arms and they would not be able to confront them and to take certain course of action in the event they retaliated so that unit was formed to deal with that kind of stuff.

**Mr. Hanoman:** When you joined, where was this unit based?

**Mr. Gates:** It was not based at the current CID Headquarters. It was based at Police Headquarters in a flat separate building

**Mr. Hanoman:** Police? This would be at Eve Leary?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, where the Commissioner’s Office is.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Yes.

**Mr. Chairman:** Is that in Georgetown that he is talking about, Police Headquarters?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir. Police Headquarters, Eve Leary, Georgetown.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Who, at the time you joined, was in charge of this special squad?

**Mr. Gates:** Inspector London.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Do you have a full name to give us?

**Mr. Gates:** Ulrich London.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Ulrich...

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** In giving the location, did he say they were located in a special flat?

**Mr. Gates:** In a separate building, in the compound of the Police Headquarters.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Just for the sake of the records, the compound you speak about is a compound with several buildings inside?

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**Mr. Gates:** Yes. You had the Commissioner's Office. You had Welfare Office. You had Finance Office, Tactical Services Unit, and it was a building close to Rabbit Walk; a flat concrete and wooden building.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Would you say that this building was detached from the rest of the buildings in the compound?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** In relation to the issue that we are dealing with in this Commission, can you tell us about the period in 1979, while you were in the Special Squad Office, what happened?

**Mr. Gates:** I cannot remember the exact month, the year was 1979, that is all I can recall, I was in charge of the Special Squad Office when Dr. Rupert Roopnarine...

**Mr. Hanoman:** Well...sorry to cut you. What rank were you holding at the time?

**Mr. Gates:** I was a Constable at the time. I was placed in charge...

**Mr. Hanoman:** Was it strange for you to be a Constable and in charge?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir. The functions at that time were to book in and out ranks going on different duties, to receive calls and to notify the patrol of any developments.

**Mr. Hanoman:** So when you say in charge, you were temporarily running that Special Squad Office for the period?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir, on that day.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Now, I have to back track a little bit. I omitted to ask you... Did you submit a statement to this Commission of Inquiry? Is that correct?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, I did, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Which you signed?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir.

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**Mr. Hanoman:** And if you see your signature, you can verify it on the statement?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes I can.

**Mr. Hanoman:** I wish to show the statement to the witness. I omitted to do so at an earlier stage.

**Mr. Chairman:** Please proceed. You have one to put before him?

**Mr. Chairman:** Show it to Counsel. Always respect that courtesy.

*[Court Marshal showed the statement to all Counsel and then to the Witness]*

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, that is the statement that I signed. I recognised it from my signature and the contents.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Could I ask for that statement to be tendered as an Exhibit ARG 3?

**Mr. Chairman:** When was that statement dated?

**Mr. Hanoman:** I am sorry the statement is dated the 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2014 and it was taken at the Georgetown Prison, Camp Street.

**Mr. Williams:** Mr. Chair, should this not be RG 2? I do not know that the birth certificate was tendered?

**Mr. Jairam:** I was.

**Mr. Williams:** It was? So that is RG 2?

**Mr. Hanoman:** I think Mr. Williams was speaking to the Witness, Norman McLean, at that point, so he did not hear that.

**Mr. Williams:** Thank you.

**Mr. Chairman:** Thank you too.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You were about to tell us about a period in 1979 when, as you said, you were in charge of the Special Squad Office, can you tell us what happened?

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**Mr. Gates:** For that day.

**Mr. Hanoman:** For that day.

**Mr. Chairman:** For a day.

**Mr. Gates:** ...because I had other duties, when not working at this Special Squad Office.

**Mr. Hanoman:** I see. Yes, 1979, you were in this Special Squad Office.

**Mr. Gates:** Like I said, I cannot remember the month. I can remember the year; when Dr. Rupert Roopnarine was brought into custody for allegedly burning down the Ministry of National Development. Prior to him coming there, I was given certain instructions by my commanding officer, Inspector Ulrich London, at the time, not to allow him any phone calls, visits, etcetera.

**Mr. Chairman:** Not too fast...go ahead please.

**Mr. Hanoman:** If you were to see Mr. Rupert Roopnarine would you be able to recognise him today?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, fine gentleman, very good man, sitting in a green shirt.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Could the record show that the Witness has pointed to... I do not know if he can give him name.

**Mr. Gates:** He is sitting right there.

**Mr. Chairman:** I think Dr. Roopnarine, in so far as he is here, may just wish to stand so that we are sure... Thank you, Sir. What I did not get from the witness, I am sure he gave it but he was going a little rapidly, speaking a little quickly, was who gave him the instructions.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You were given certain instructions about how to treat Dr. Rupert Roopnarine, who gave you those instructions?

**Mr. Gates:** Inspector Ulrich London.

**Mr. Jairam:** He said his Commanding Officer.

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**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Commanding Officer, he was in charge of the Special Squad Unit, so he could have been deemed a Commanding Officer, Officer in Charge. He had different designations.

**Mr. Chairman:** Not to allow any calls?

**Mr. Gates:** Officer in Charge, Commanding Officer...

**Mr. Hanoman:** But the instructions specified Rupert Roopnarine or those were general instructions?

**Mr. Gates:** No. It was for that particular prisoner.

**Mr. Hanoman:** I see.

**Mr. Chairman:** Okay, go ahead please.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Go ahead please.

**Mr. Gates:** I must admit that during the period of my shift, we had several conversations.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Mr. Roopnarine, as you understood it, was in custody?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes.

**Mr. Hanoman:** And he was being kept at what part of the building?

**Mr. Gates:** There were no enclosed rooms. It was an open building like this but smaller. I was at my desk and he was sitting not too far away.

**Mr. Hanoman:** He was not behind bars or in a cell or anything like that?

**Mr. Gates:** No. The Special Squad Office does not have cells.

**Mr. Hanoman:** I see. You had interactions with Dr. Rupert Roopnarine?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, as to why he was arrested. I was concerned about the special instructions given. I wanted to know if the prisoner was a high risk prisoner because I had never heard his name before getting involved in any criminal act, so we had several conversations and I think there was an opening during the discussion that he wanted a bodyguard.

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**Mr. Hanoman:** You considered the instructions from Mr. London to be unusual?

**Mr. Gates:** Unusual, yes, I would say.

**Mr. Hanoman:** And that is what sparked your interest?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Did you believe those instructions to be lawful instructions?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, it can be if the person is a threat to national security.

**Mr. Hanoman:** So you came to learn that Dr. Roopnarine wanted to have a body guard?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Were you offered that position?

**Mr. Gates:** Well, yes. I will say I was offered that position, if I was to separate myself from the Guyana Police Force.

**Mr. Hanoman:** And you were receptive to taking up that job?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, I was receptive because during that evening, after listening to what he had to say I became very sympathetic, if you were to use that word.

**Mr. Chairman:** You are muffling your words. You told him that you were sympathetic and then... *[Inaudible]*

**Mr. Gates:** No, I was very sympathetic.

**Mr. Chairman:** You lost your clarity. Let me give you one tip. When I first started public speaking, I was told that the first requirement is to open your mouth.

**Mr. Gates:** Okay, Sir.

**Mr. Chairman:** You cannot speak with your mouth closed. You have to open your mouth. Alright, always remember it. "I was receptive..."

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**Mr. Gates:** I was very sympathetic towards the cause and what they were going through in their struggle for justice and equality and whatever.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You were sympathetic...

**Mr. Gates:** Towards the cause of the WPA.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Towards the cause of the WPA.

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, because I know what they were going through.

**Mr. Hanoman:** What were they going through?

**Mr. Gates:** Well, they had surveillance effected on them.

**Mr. Hanoman:** How are you aware of this?

**Mr. Gates:** Because prior to...

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Wait.

**Mr. Hanoman:** I am sorry.

**Mr. Chairman:** I think you had interrupted him, quite unwittingly no doubt before he had concluded.

**Mr. Hanoman:** No. I thought I had received a signal not to go so fast.

**Mr. Chairman:** Yes but you had stopped the witness from continuing speaking. You asked another question before he was completed.

**Mr. Hanoman:** I apologise.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** He had started to say something about equality and justice and you had interrupted.

**Mr. Chairman:** There was surveillance and you interrupted.

**Mr. Hanoman:** How did you become aware that...



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**Mr. Chairman:** No. First let him answer? What is it that they were going through that made him sympathetic? That is the question.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Good. You have heard.

**Mr. Gates:** ...because a member of the Special Squad Unit, which was later given the name Death Squad, maybe because of the way we carried out our duties and assignments...

**Mr. Hanoman:** We will need for you to be more specific. What do you mean by that? The way you carried out your duties? What exactly was being done to the WPA?

**Mr. Gates:** No. I said the Special Squad had three sections; there were four men who were responsible for... They were given orders in the event...

**Mr. Chairman:** Mr. Gates, I do not want to stop you but focus on what is going on. You started to say why it is that you were sympathetic to the WPA...

**Mr. Gates:** But then he asked me why it was...

**Mr. Chairman:** ...because of what they were going through. You started to say that they were under surveillance and you were interrupted. I intervened to make sure you were permitted to complete what you were saying. Please complete that first.

**Mr. Gates:** Whenever there are meetings and surveillance was done at certain residences of known WPA activists... Whenever there were meetings members of my unit would be at the meetings to record what was being said and we took notes and meetings were being broken up on many occasions by persons from my unit. Based on those things I realized it was not too right. They had a right to freedom of expression, freedom of association and those rights were being denied.

*10.01hrs*

**Mr. Hanoman:** You used to help break up meetings and carry out surveillance, you personally?

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**Mr. Gates:** My unit was tasked with intelligence gathering. I was not one of the guys who would go out and execute people. Like I said, they were in each unit, several persons. Each section, for instance, if I may go one...

**Mr. Chairman:** Yes, you may.

**Mr. Gates:** The section that dealt with executing persons was headed by Sergeant 8755 Andrews better known as "Agent".

**Mr. Hanoman:** These sections and units that you are referring to...

**Mr. Gates:** Yes.

**Mr. Hanoman:** ...are sections and units within the Special Squad?

**Mr. Gates:** Within the Special Squad. If you wish I may go on to name the other persons in the unit. Agent...

**Mr. Pieters:** Excuse me, Mr. Chairman, can you ask the witness to spell the name of the officer that he just provided?

**Mr. Chairman:** I did not hear that, Counsel?

**Mr. Pieters:** The name of the officer, can he spell the surname of that officer.

**Mr. Chairman:** I got it as Andrew.

**Mr. Gates:** Andrews, A-N-D-R-E-W-S.

**Mr. Chairman:** Yes, Andrews.

**Mr. Gates:** His regulation number was 8755.

**Mr. Chairman:** That is understood that he Headed the Death Squad?

**Mr. Gates:** No, he did not Head the Death Squad. He Heads the Unit that dealt with executing persons.

**Mr. Chairman:** The whole unit was known as the Death Squad, the entire...?

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**Mr. Gates:** Yes, the public gave us that name.

**Mr. Chairman:** The public gave it that name, okay.

**Mr. Gates:** ...and his second in command was Corporal 8005 Cuffy.

**Mr. Pieters:** Mr. Chairman, did we ranks for 8755 Andrews?

**Mr. Gates:** Sergeant.

**Mr. Williams:** I must say, Mr. Chairman, we are all over the place. I thought that he indicated it was a 13-man squad, now I think he has suggested that was sub-divided into units...

**Mr. Gates:** Into units, I said that. I said there was the execution unit and then I was stopped because there was execution, patrol and intelligence.

**Mr. Jairam:** I think the Witness, to be fair to him, had begun giving us that the Squad was divided by three units.

**Mr. Gates:** Yes. That is what I said.

**Mr. Jairam:** He was interrupted because some of us were not picking up. You are muffling your voice. Please take your time and try to speak clearly so that we can all follow you. Okay?

**Mr. Chairman:** And remember the lesson, open your mouth.

**Mr. Gates:** Do you want me to speak louder, Sir.

**Mr. Chairman:** Not louder but for clarity. As soon as you drop your top lip... Very well, thanks.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Could we deal with the units, specifically. You spoke about one unit to which you were calling the execution unit. You mentioned in that unit there was a Sergeant Andrews and other Policeman....

**Mr. Gates:** Also known as "Agent".

**Mr. Hanoman:** Also known as "Agent"...

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**Mr. Gates:** Corporal 8005, Cuffy...

**Mr. Hanoman:** Yes.

**Mr. Gates:** ...Constable Leon Payne and Constable Lawrence Fanfair.

**Mr. Chairman:** F... what...?

**Mr. Gates:** F-A-N-F-A-I-R.

**Mr. Chairman:** Fanfair, thanks, go ahead.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Were those the only persons in that particular unit?

**Mr. Gates:** No, those were the only persons in that particular unit that dealt with the executing people.

**Mr. Hanoman:** That is what I mean, in the execution unit.

**Mr. Gates:** Yes.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You said there was another unit?

**Mr. Gates:** A patrol unit.

**Mr. Hanoman:** A patrol unit.

**Mr. Pieters:** Mr. Chairman, before we move on he gave the regimental number of the Sergeant and the Corporal. We do not have the regimental numbers of the Constables?

**Mr. Gates:** I do not remember them. I cannot recall their numbers.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Can you identify who comprised the patrol unit at the time?

**Mr. Gates:** That was headed by Sergeant 7934, Albert Matthews.

**Mr. Jairam:** 7...

**Mr. Chairman:** ...934.

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**Mr. Gates:** 7934, Albert Matthews.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Who else?

**Mr. Gates:** ...assisted by Corporal 9622, Leyland October.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Yes, any other names?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, two other names, I respectfully as permission to consult with my notes. I have some notes here.

**Mr. Pieters:** Which is an issue...

**Mr. Gates:** To get the other two names because these things, the leading elements you remember their names and their numbers.

**Mr. Williams:** Notes or the statement?

**Mr. Gates:** Not my statement because I never mentioned... This information I am giving is not in my statement.

**Mr. Pieters:** Mr. Chairman, this raises and preliminary issue that I have dealt with and I am sorry that I have to deal with it today again, but I might as well deal with it right now. The Witness tells us that he has notes. Sir, could you produce your notes so that the Commission can see it?

**Mr. Gates:** Like I said...

**Mr. Pieters:** Sir, please do not respond. Mr. Chairman....

**Mr. Chairman:** Be careful, Counsel, you cannot manage the Commission. Always remember that. You can raise questions, make submissions, but you cannot manage the Commission so you cannot now be telling him "take out your notes so that we can see it". That is not your role.

**Mr. Pieters:** I agree.

**Mr. Chairman:** If you have a point of objection, make it, but remember you cannot be a Commissioner. You have not been so appointed.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Pieters:** Mr. Chairman, at the present time my request by way of an oral application is for Mr. De Nobrega's police file, for any notes that Mr. De Nobrega would have taken in his Police issue memo book while he was a member of the Guyana Police Force for the material time in question. For his certificate of discharge, when he left the Guyana Police Force and for his fact file that would have been held by the Guyana Police Force. Those are all materials that should have been properly before the Commission, in my respectful submission, prior to this Witness giving evidence; particularly his memo book of any notes he would have taken at the material time in question.

**Mr. Chairman:** I did not understand the Witness to be saying anything about notes taken many years ago when he was a Police. I understood him to be saying that he did make some notes for the purposes of today.

**Mr. Gates:** Yes.

**Mr. Chairman:** Yes. The time has not yet come when he is attempting to refer to those notes. He did say he has some notes. Until that time comes, and it may never come, why am I to ask him about that?

**Mr. Pieters:** Mr. Chairman, what you are being asked about, you are being asked about a person who functioning in an official capacity as a member of the Guyana Police Force appearing before the Commission. The Guyana Police Force issues memo books to its members and this man is coming to give evidence as to his official duties at the material time and the request is that any notes that this man would have taken while as a Guyana Police Force member be produced. He already mentioned that he was in intelligence and that they took notes so attempts have to be made to the Guyana Police Force to get those notes, and there was warning since 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2014, that this person was coming before the Commission. So I guess the issue is why was all of the materials necessary for this person's evidence not here; at least that is the position from the GTUC perspective that any notes, any documents pertaining to the witness service within the Guyana Police Force and the Special Squad should have been here, and it is not here and the Witness has given evidence and there is nothing to corroborate it.

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**Ms. Samuels-Brown:** The Chairman is going to respond, but I am wondering if Mr. Pieters was here when the Office from the Guyana Police Force gave evidence. Were you here Mr. Pieters?

**Mr. Pieters:** No, I was not, but I read the transcript.

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

*[Commissioners in discussion]*

**Mr. Chairman:** Counsel this Witness has given evidence from his recall which he says is clear. When it is not he has so indicated as on the occasion when he said he did not remember all the persons who were in a particular division or section of the Unit, but he remembered who Headed it and was the Deputy. We have been given the assurance by Superintendent Lewis who I think was our first witness or the second...

**Attorney for Dr. Patricia Rodney, Asha Rodney, Shaka Rodney and Kanini Rodney [Mr. Andrew Pilgrim]:** Leslie James.

**Mr. Chairman:** Leslie James, sorry. Senior Superintendent Leslie James is currently conducting a search for all the relevant materials as it relates to witnesses and events. I have earlier today suggested that even though the Witness, Mr. Gates, has given us only one conviction or two that they should carry out their own search and make all of that information available to you, but thus far, the Witness is speaking from his recall and when is unclear he is careful, and he has been today, to say so; he cannot remember who the other two officers were, for example. We have taken note. We assure you that the search is continuing and that when we get the results of the search we will share all information with you. If reaches a point where a witness has got to be recalled that will be done, but for now, we will proceed on the basis on his recall and clear recall. When you are in any doubts, Mr. Gates, of anything you are saying please so indicate as you have done already. Thanks.

**Ms. Samuels-Brown:** Sorry, I just want to raise another matter because I think the Witness is a little bit unclear as to how to proceed. You do not need, Witness, to respond directly to comments by Counsel just answer the questions asked of you by the examining Counsel and the

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

Chairman, himself, will deal with any objections or questions asked. We will get on much faster if you just direct your attention to the examining Counsel, okay.

**Mr. Hanoman:** If I may, you just said to us that you made notes. Could you tell us when you made these notes?

**Mr. Gates:** Actually, I made it before coming to the Inquiry because I had to search my memory to remember the other persons. Like I said, I remember the lead persons in those sections. We never worked together, they had their separate duties.

**Mr. Williams:** I think you Counsel really does not accept that... The Commission Counsel, he does not recognise that you had asked that question of the Witness.

**Mr. Chairman:** He does not...

**Mr. Williams:** He did not recognise that you had asked that question of the witness and the witness had answered.

**Mr. Chairman:** I do not know why it is being asked, quite frankly. Please, everyone, pay attention as closely as you can, including Commission Counsel, all, plural, and please get ahead with the witness. Why are we getting into that? He did not say that he wants to rely on any note yet. That hour has not come. Just get ahead from its clear recalled, please. Do not get side tracked, Counsel.

**Mr. Hanoman:** My question to him was when he made the notes.

**Mr. Chairman:** Why is that relevant now? That hour has not come. He is relying on clear-recall. He is not attempted to rely on any note he made so can we get ahead.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Some of the names of the persons who were in those units you are now unable to remember?



## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

*10.16hrs*

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, I cannot really recall. As I said, on a daily basis, we had separate assignments, so I knew them, but the name, I made notes whenever I remembered, I have those which are in my possession.

**Mr. Hanoman:** If you were to refer to those notes, you will now be able to mention ...

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, I can give you the other

**Mr. Hanoman:** ... who were in the units?

**Mr. Gates:** ... two names for the Patrol units. I mean, the patrol unit was a set of decent guys who just went out and arrested persons, and brought them and placed them before the Courts.

**Mr. Chairman:** But Counsel, he has already given us that the Patrol Unit was headed by 7934 Sergeant Albert Matthews and he was assisted by Corporal 9622 ...

**Mr. Gates:** ... Leyland October.

**Mr. Chairman:** ... Leyland October, do we necessarily need more? If it had five people, did he need to give us all five?

**Mr. Hanoman:** Mr. Chairman, if you feel it is not relevant.

**Mr. Chairman:** Why do you not get it on? Counsel, with respect, get on!

**Mr. Hanoman:** Very well. Could you tell us what was the purpose of that unit?

**Mr. Gates:** Which unit? The entire unit?

**Mr. Hanoman:** No. The last unit that you were speaking about was the Patrol Unit.

**Mr. Gates:** There is the patrol unit and then there is the Intelligence.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Can you tell us what the function of the Patrol Unit was?

**Mr. Gates:** The Patrol unit was to, if they received a call that there was a robbery or a wanted person for certain offences that can be considered not to serious. They would go arrest them and

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

bring them, charge them and put them before the Courts and go give evidence; that was the basic purpose of the Patrol unit.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Perhaps you did not hear what he did say of these two persons, whose names he could not remember, “these were decent guys who just went out and arrested persons”. Is that what you said?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Ma’am.

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

**Mr. Hanoman:** The other unit you spoke about was the Intelligence Unit. Can you remember who headed up those units?

**Mr. Gates:** I headed that unit, as a Constable and the other persons in that unit were civilian employees.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Were?

**Mr. Gates:** Civilian employees who gave us information as Informants.

**Mr. Hanoman:** What was the function of your unit?

**Mr. Gates:** My unit was to go out there and gather intelligence on criminal activities, to gather intelligence on political activities, anything that would affect the smooth running of the country, you know. That information would be passed to the boss and he would decide whether to send the Special Branch or whatever.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Could you pause for a minute? Thank you.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You were supposed to provide intelligence on opposition parties as well as the PNC party?

**Mr. Gates:** No, Sir, not the PNC.

**Mr. Hanoman:** So who ... your efforts were directed at which ...

**Mr. Gates:** The PPP and the WPA, those were the two.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Hanoman:** Those were the only two parties?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, well the WPA was more or less attracting more attention than the PPP because, I do not think that they were ever seen as a threat to the stability of the country, at the time.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** They who?

**Mr. Chairman:** The WPA.

**Mr. Gates:** The WPA.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** The WPA was not seen as a threat?

**Mr. Gates:** No, they were seen.

**Mr. Chairman:** As a threat.

**Mr. Gates:** As a threat to the stability of the country.

**Mr. Hanoman:** So your intelligence gathering of that kind was focused primarily on the WPA.

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** As a result of your conversation with Dr. Rupert Roopnarine, did you do anything and if so, what?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir. I must admit that I was so anxious to be a part of the WPA that the very next morning I wrote my resignation and informed my Officer-in-Charge, Inspector London and he advised me to take it to the Crime Chief, Mr. Cecil "Skip" Roberts also known as Cecil Alexander Roberts., then Deputy Commissioner of Law Enforcement.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You are unable to give us a precise date?

**Mr. Gates:** I cannot remember, but it was sometime during 1979.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Sometime in 1979?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, maybe ...

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Hanoman:** Is that the best you can do?

**Mr. Gates:** Pardon me?

**Mr. Hanoman:** That is the best you can do ... sometime in 1979?

**Mr. Gates:** Maybe sometime after the burning down of the Ministry of National Development, because it was on that day that I met him, so it had to be that month. I cannot remember the month but it was the same time that Dr. Roopnarine was in my custody.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Could it have been in July 1979?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, it could be after June.

**Mr. Hanoman:** If the burning down of the Ministry happened in July 1979, it is in July of 1979 that you would have ...

**Mr. Gates:** Yes.

**Mr. Hanoman:** ... handed in ...

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** ... gone to Mr. Roberts?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Williams:** No.

**Mr. Chairman:** He said ...

**Mr. Williams:** He "handed in" is separated from "have gone to Mr. Roberts."

**Attorney for Donald Rodney [Mr. Scotland]:** Well he is going to Roberts to hand it in!

**Mr. Chairman:** He said it was after the burning down of the building.

**Mr. Williams:** When did he resign?

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** He said after the burning down ...

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Hanoman:** When did London tell you to take the letter of resignation to Skip Roberts? The day after the burning down?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, the day after around 9am.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Okay and you immediately took it to Mr. Roberts?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, I took it to Mr. Roberts on the same ...

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** I am unclear and perhaps it is because the witness is going so fast. I thought he said that he wrote his resignation and Mr. London told him to take it to the ...

**Mr. Gates:** Deputy Commissioner Law Enforcement.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** So he told you to take it.

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Ma'am.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** It was not that he took it?

**Mr. Gates:** No, Ma'am.

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

**Mr. Gates:** I took it.

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

**Mr. Hanoman:** Okay, tell us what happened after he told you to take it.

**Mr. Gates:** Well, his office like I said was a separate building. He was housed in the same building with the Commissioner of Police then.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Who was this?

**Mr. Gates:** Cecil Alexander Roberts.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Okay.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Gates:** Upon entering the office, he looked at the document and the first thing he asked, where did you work last night. I said, “well Dr. Roopnarine was a guest of the police”, and he started using threats and intimidation, ‘like he is going to charge me for treason” and a whole set of stuff he started saying. Then he said, you know what? You are the man we want. Then there were three telephones on his desk, I can remember, a black, a white and a red.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Can you pause, I am trying to get that.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Yes, can you please slow down a little bit, please.

**Mr. Chairman:** Our last notes is that “he started making threats and said he would charge me for treason”. Can you pick up the story from there, Sir?

**Mr. Hanoman:** Tell us how you felt.

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, well I felt based on ... I cannot remember the exact things that he said, but I became afraid and then he said, “You are the man we want, you are going to go and work as an undercover agent in the Party”.

**Mr. Chairman:** He is in lower tones now; we cannot hear him at all.

**Mr. Gates:** Well, he said, “you are the man we are looking for. We will make arrangement for you to be an undercover agent in the WPA”.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Were you asked and did you indicate the reason for your wanting to resign?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, I told him. I said the offer might be a little more lucrative.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Which offer?

**Mr. Gates:** From Dr. Roopnarine.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You disclosed that you had been offered the position of ...

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, after I was threatened and I became scared; I divulged everything in the conversation.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Can we know what was the reason he put in his letter of resignation? Or did he put a reason at all?

**Mr. Gates:** “For personal reasons”.

**Mr. Chairman:** Counsel, could we take the story from “You are the man we are looking for” and find out what he understood that to mean and move on from there?

**Mr. Hanoman:** You had started to mention that when he said those words to you, that there were three telephones on his desk.

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, there was a white, a black and a red. After telling me that we will cease this opportunity to make ... I cannot remember his exact words, you will be an undercover agent in the WPA, then he picked up the red phone and he pressed a button. I cannot remember but it was two or three digits.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** I did not hear what he said.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You have to be a little clearer.

**Mr. Chairman:** You dropped your voice.

**Mr. Gates:** When he picked up the receiver on the red telephone ...

**Mr. Hanoman:** Yes.

**Mr. Gates:** ... and dialed some numbers, I cannot remember how many digits he dialed , then he said ... can I continue?

**Mr. Chairman:** Yes.

**Mr. Gates:** Then he said, “Comrade Leader, we have gotten the man”. I do not know who he was referring to at that moment.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** I am going to make a suggestion, Sir.

**Mr. Gates:** Yes.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Watch the Chairman's hands and that will give you a guide as to how fast to go.

**Mr. Gates:** Okay, thank you very much.

**Mr. Chairman:** "Comrade Leader, we have gotten the man..." go ahead, please.

**Mr. Gates:** Then he put the phone down.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Those were the only words he said?

**Mr. Gates:** No, but he spoke after then.

**Mr. Hanoman:** No, on the telephone, on the red telephone.

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, he said "Comrade Leader, we have got the man."

**Mr. Hanoman:** Okay.

**Mr. Gates:** Maybe he spoke to whoever afterwards, but I am telling you what will follow after then.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Having said, "Comrade Leader, we have gotten the man" did he remain on the telephone as though listening to anything?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, about a minute and he shook his head and he put the phone down. I do not know if they had prior discussion or ... but I know that discussions followed after, I would suppose.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Alright do not speculate.

**Mr. Chairman:** But I do not know if he was attempting to say who this man ... he said '*maybe*' then we lost him.

**Mr. Gates:** No, I said after then when he put the phone down, he said, "As you can see I just spoke to ..." I think the word he used was the "Comrade Leader", I said, "Who is that?" He said, "Mr. Burnham"



## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Hanoman:** Yes?

**Mr. Gates:** I am in no position to say whether he did in fact spoke to Mr. Burnham or he bluffed me.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Yes, tell us what happened after.

**Mr. Gates:** He told me, he would arrange a bogus letter of dismissal.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Could the Witness pause? We are trying to get what the Witness is saying.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Alright.

**Mr. Chairman:** Did he say he asked him who was the Comrade Leader?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes and he did, he said, "I just spoke to Mr. Burnham."

**Mr. Chairman:** Please proceed.

**Mr. Gates:** He then told me that he would arrange with the relevant police department to have me issued a fake letter of release from the Guyana Police Force.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Go on please.

**Mr. Gates:** He told me to inform Dr. Roopnarine that within a month's time, such letter would be available because it takes some time to ... certain procedures have to be followed.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** It takes some time to what?

**Mr. Hanoman:** What ...

**Mr. Chairman:** To inform Dr. Roopnarine that within a month's ...

**Mr. Gates:** ... within a month's ...

**Mr. Chairman:** Yes, "the letter will be ready".

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Within a month's what?

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

*10.31hrs*

**Mr. Gates:** Within a month I will be given this fake letter of release from the Force.

**Mr. Chairman:** Go ahead, Counsel.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Did he explain to you what you are expected to do with that fake letter?

**Mr. Gates:** To present it to Dr. Roopnarine.

**Mr. Chairman:** He told you that or that is how you understood...

**Mr. Gates:** No, he told me. That was specific instructions –upon receiving it at his office, take it to Dr. Roopnarine.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Did he discuss with you, in greater details, what you were expected to do?

**Mr. Gates:** He told me when I received the letter, I will be given certain instructions, and I will be introduced to some other players.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Did he discuss with you how you were going to be paid, and things like those?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, he did tell me. At the time my salary was \$365 per month.

**Mr. Scotland:** Mr. Chairman, just a suggestion, please. If the Witness has a witness statement that is in, and certain things of minute details which may raise inconsistencies; maybe he can look at it so we do not have –was it 360, or 365? Line four from the bottom, page one. You know, we spent four hours on that.

**Mr. Chairman:** Does he not have a statement before him?

**Mr. Scotland:** I do not know.

**Mr. Chairman:** He should have been armed with the statement. It is his statement.

**Mr. Scotland:** Agreed, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Can you recall the details of how much money you were earning, and so on, at the time; or do you wish to refer to your statement?

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Gates:** It was between 350 to 365; I cannot recall, it is somewhere in that vicinity. 350, yes, that is correct.

**Mr. Chairman:** The paragraph is page two of the statement, please.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Yes, so your salary was in the vicinity of 350 to 365, you are saying?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, the 350 was the basic.

**Mr. Hanoman:** That was your salary at the time. And what was the offer made?

**Mr. Gates:** The offer.... The increase?

**Mr. Hanoman:** Yes.

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, because Skip Roberts told me –I do not know whether he was bluffing me, or not- I would make a raise available to you for you to be promoted from Constable to Sergeant, with a \$500 increase; which I knew at the time was the pay of a Superintendent Police.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Those terms of employment were attractive to you?

**Mr. Gates:** Very much, Sir. In those days, that was a lot of money.

**Mr. Hanoman:** During your interactions with Mr. Roberts, was anybody in his office; was anybody else present?

**Mr. Gates:** Inspector London was in and out. He was not there all the time.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Okay. Before leaving that office, did you agree to take up the task....

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** ....that you felt Skip Roberts was giving to you?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir. I did.

**Mr. Hanoman:** In furtherance of that task, what else did you do?

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Gates:** I informed Dr. Roopnarine that I will be given the letter, and I spent some time –I hung around the office in Tiger Bay.

**Mr. Hanoman:** What office in Tiger Bay? You need to be specific.

**Mr. Gates:** The office of the WPA.

**Mr. Chairman:** Counsel, he informed Dr. Roopnarine of what?

**Mr. Gates:** I did not tell him the letter was fake; I told him I will get my release from the GPF in a month's time.

**Mr. Chairman:** Of your release?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** After leaving Mr. Roberts' office, you made contact with Dr. Rupert Roopnarine?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Is it correct to say that at that stage you told him that you left the Police Force, and you will be getting your letter of dismissal, or discharge?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** What was the reaction of Dr. Rupert Roopnarine to that?

**Mr. Gates:** Normal, I did not see signs of...

**Mr. Hanoman:** Was he happy to have you on board?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** So, you started to go to the meetings at the WPA's office in Tiger Bay. After going to those meetings you....

**Mr. Gates:** Not meetings, I visited the office.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Hanoman:** Oh, I am sorry.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Yes, his evidence was, "I spent some time at the WPA's office".

**Mr. Hanoman:** That would have been in the company of Dr. Rupert Roopnarine?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Did you report on activities to Mr. Roberts or anyone else after going to those...

**Mr. Gates:** No, I was given instructions... I was introduced to one "Chico", known as Chester.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Who introduced you?

**Mr. Gates:** Mr. Roberts and Mr. Henry Chester.

**Mr. Chairman:** Who is this Chester? Let us get the logic sequence. Do not leave out anything.

**Mr. Gates:** Mr. Chester was an Inspector at the CID headquarters, at the time.

**Mr. Hanoman:** The person 'Chico', do you know who he was?

**Mr. Gates:** He was a guy I used to see around CID quarters in plain clothing. I do not know what his role was. He was on the road at different places at different times. I guess he was an active operative of one of the intelligent services.

**Mr. Hanoman:** So that introduction was made by Skip Roberts, where?

**Mr. Gates:** At his office.

**Mr. Hanoman:** That would have been around what stage?

**Mr. Gates:** Some time in 1979. I know I received the letter about three weeks after.

**Mr. Hanoman:** So it was after you got the letter that these introductions were made?

**Mr. Gates:** No, before.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Before. The introduction, what else did that involve, if anything?

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Gates:** I was given a code name.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Which was?

**Mr. Gates:** Condore.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Go ahead.

**Mr. Gates:** I was further told I should report to Ogle to have a meeting with Mr. Laurie Lewis.

**Mr. Chairman:** You are dropping your voice.

**Mr. Gates:** I was told to report to an office that the joint services –the joint intelligence agency operated from. Maybe one of the buildings, it was a building owned by GuySuCo- Mr. Lewis used for that purpose.

**Mr. Hanoman:** At that time, Mr. Laurie Lewis was attached to what organisation, if any.

**Mr. Gates:** As far as I know, he was the Head of the Joint Service Intelligence. That is my information.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Do you know whether Mr. Laurie Lewis was a Police Officer, at the time?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, I think his rank was Deputy Commissioner.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Do you know which department of the Police Force he might have been in?

**Mr. Gates:** Prior to that, I knew he was seconded to the Guyana National Service. He served as assistant general director training. After that, he was brought back to Head the Joint Services Intelligence. I understand he was also overseeing the special branch.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Okay, so....

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** I am sorry, I did not get all of that, and I need it. He was seconded to the Guyana National Service as what?

**Mr. Gates:** Assistant General Director training.

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

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Hanoman:** You also mentioned special branch?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, I think he was overseas. That came under his command – Special Branch Headquarters.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You were instructed to go to Ogle, and you went to Ogle?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Could you explain where the building was when you went; describe that building?

**Mr. Gates:** It was in the evening. It is the same road heading to the airstrip. It was one of those buildings. I cannot recall now, because it was in the evening. Chico picked me up in a vehicle, one of those ladder cars. I was sitting in the back seat so I did not pay much attention, too. The vehicle drove into the Compound, I got out.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Slow down a little, please.

**Mr. Gates:** I know the building was owned by GuySuCo.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Was it a wooden or concrete building?

**Mr. Gates:** A wooden building, at the time.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Can you describe it?

**Mr. Gates:** It was white in colour. I would say it was a two flat building; reasonably large building. Downstairs had a room. Upstairs had offices. It had an inner step leading up to the building.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Tell us what happened when you arrived at that building, please?

**Mr. Gates:** When I arrived there, I met Mr. Laurie Lewis and Mr. Chester, and Chichester –I think was Chico- he was there.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Chester and Chichester are two different persons?

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Gates:** Chester and Chichester are two different persons.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Mr. Henry Chester, Inspector?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, inspector at the time.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You are also saying that another person, Chichester, was the person called Chico?

**Mr. Gates:** Chico.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You met with only the two of them, or...

**Mr. Gates:** I think for that first meeting, yes. It was Mr. Chester, Laurie Lewis, Chico...

**Mr. Hanoman:** Tell us what was discussed at that meeting.

**Mr. Gates:** I was given certain instructions to make notes...

**Mr. Hanoman:** Who gave you?

**Mr. Gates:** Laurie Lewis.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Gave you instructions.

**Mr. Gates:** ...whenever I am in company with Dr. Roopnarine, I should make not of persons he is in contact with; where he goes for the entire day; where he goes for lunch; an entire report on his activities for the day.

**Mr. Hanoman:** So you were required to make written notes?

**Mr. Gates:** Written reports and I submitted them to Chief on a daily basis. I did that and handed it over to him in the evenings, at different points in the city.

**Mr. Hanoman:** How would you know where you had to meet him and hand over these reports?

**Mr. Gates:** That would have been known the day before.

**Mr. Chairman:** He said he submitted daily reports?



## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Chairman:** To whom?

**Mr. Gates:** Chico.

**Mr. Chairman:** Chico.

**Mr. Hanoman:** So, you did that for how long?

*10.46hrs*

**Mr. Gates.** I did it for a couple of months until the death of Dr. Rodney.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Was that all that you were required to do just make notes about what Dr. Roopnarine was doing?

**Mr. Gates.** No I was also to, because remember I was just dealing with Dr. Roopnarine, try to see if I can recruit moles in the WPA; I mean established we recruit people who are informants.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Were you able to do that?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes, I recruited two persons.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Could you give us the names?

**Mr. Gates.** One, I think was a guy name, I cannot remember exactly his name, either Safo or Osafo and the other one was Bunny. He was supposed to be Walter Rodney's body guard.

**Mr. Hanoman:** How were you able to recruit them?

**Mr. Gates.** I have discussion with them. I first got intelligence people to check to see how vulnerable to their social status their...how they were living and we penetrated that aspect.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Sorry, what I am asking you is: how do you identify who would be the correct person?

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Gates.** I realised that Bunny was with Dr. Rodney at most of the places he went at the time and so I thought he would have been, he would cover the activities of Dr. Rodney. Wherever he went and who he spoke to.

**Mr. Hanoman:** So why these persons who were close to Walter Rodney share information with you.

**Mr. Gates.** For me, this guy Bunny was more or less a street element who was just looking for a dollar and if he can get an extra dollar...

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Sorry, can I clarify, what this Bunny already Dr. Rodney's Body Guard?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes. He was.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** I having observed this, I think your evidence is you got intelligence people to check him out.

**Mr. Gates.** Yes, before I approached him.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Before you approached him?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Thank you and who are these intelligence people who you are referring to?

**Mr. Gates.** Those were people who were working under direction of Chico. I do not know who exactly Chico sent to do a background check on him.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** So you asked Chico to have a background check on them?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes, because I told him that this is a good man for us.

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

**Mr. Hanoman:** So you offered him money and he accepted the offer?

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Gates.** Yes. I cannot remember the amount but he was paid based on the kind of information he provided and you would be the person giving him the money?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes.

**Mr. Hanoman:** And how you would get this money?

**Mr. Gates.** I would meet him at the WPA office from time to time and told him look we are going to meet at Wagon Wheel or Egyptian Lounge at the time, now Sidewalk Café, I met him at different places at different times.

**Mr. Hanoman:** What I was asking you is where did you get the money from to pay him?

**Mr. Gates.** Well it was given to me by Chico.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You spoke about Safo or Osafo.

**Mr. Gates.** I cannot remember the exact name, but that was a guy who used to be around the WPA office at the time doing a little handy man work at the time, a young fellow.

**Mr. Hanoman:** So you approached him and offer him money as well.

**Mr. Gates.** And he also accepted. He would have given me information as to... because when I would have been with Dr. Roopnarine, at that time he was lecturing at the University of Guyana, so when I am on my body guard duties Osafo used to be around doing odds and ends jobs too. He would have been able to tell me who and who visited the office.

**Mr. Hanoman:** So he would have been stationed around the Tiger Bay, WPA office?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes, sometimes is at different locations, other than the office in around other buildings in close proximity because as I said he was not a permanent employee doing odds and ends.

**Mr. Hanoman:** So what useful information he was able to give you?

**Mr. Gates.** Well basically who and who came to the WPA Office.

**Mr. Hanoman:** I see.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Gates.** Because at the time it was not secret the WPA had... Joint Services.

**Mr. Chairman:** What was those secret?

**Mr. Gates.** The WPA had also infiltrated the police and the Army, so a lot of them used to go undercover and meet with officials from the WPA to give information and... it was a both side something.

**Mr. Hanoman:** So people were working as double agents and triple agents?

**Mr. Gates.** I would call it that.

**Mr. Chairman:** I thought Counsel, you had established from the evidence, tiple at that time, double agents, but is there any evidence of triple?

**Mr. Gates.** I do not know if they were recruited by others, it was possible.

**Mr. Hanoman:** At the time you were doing all of this, you were receiving money from Dr. Rupert Roopnarine?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes, I used to get pay from Dr. Roopnarine, I used to get pay from the police. Chico used to bring allowances from time to time.

**Mr. Chairman:** Order! Remember we are happy to have you here, Members of the public, but the conditions of which you are here is that you conduct yourself well. Do not disrupt our proceedings so that there would be an inaccurate recording of what is being said. Thank you.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** I am sorry, are the allowances were in addition to the Sergeants through Superintendent's pay he would be getting or part of it?

**Mr. Hanoman:** No, that is what I understand it to be could you please go over that?

**Mr. Gates.** Well like ever week Chico would come and say look this is some extra allowances so I said...

**Mr. Hanoman:** And that would be... You were getting your eight hundred and something dollars as a sergeant officially through the Guyana Police Force?

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Gates.** Yes.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You were getting another sum of money through Chico?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes.

**Mr. Hanoman:** And then you were getting Dr. Rupert Roopnarine's money. How much money Dr. Rupert Roopnarine was giving you?

**Mr. Gates.** Well different amounts depend on how well he was doing. The minimum would have been \$1,500.

**Mr. Pieters:** Mr. Chairman, just for my notes, it it be \$1,500 per week or \$1,500 per month?

**Mr. Gates.** It might work out to that per month.

**Mr. Hanoman:** In your statement, you mentioned the name Breznev could you expand on that please?

**Mr. Gates.** When I consulted and thing my memory, the correct spelling was Braz..., Brazhnev.

**Mr. Chairman:** Correct spelling of what?

**Mr. Gates.** Of the name he is going on to...

**Mr. Hanoman:** Tell us about Brazhnev?

**Mr. Chairman:** Braz...

**Mr. Gates.** Brazhnev.

**Mr. Chairman:** Put him in context.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Yes, who is this person and why is he important?

**Mr. Gates.** Well I was taken to the Pegasus Hotel by Chico and he introduced me to this guy who claimed to be a former... Officer of the Braznev told me, he could have spoken English not too fluent.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Hanoman:** You met him in a public area or in a room or what?

**Mr. Gates.** No, we were at the pool side, me himself and Chico. The Chief Security, at the time he passed by and said “hello” and he was a senior police officer.

**Mr. Hanoman:** The Chief Security of the Pegasus Hotel?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes, at the time.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Oh I see.

**Mr. Williams:** That was who?

**Mr. Gates.** Rondolph Miggings.

**Mr. Hanoman:** What was that meeting about?

**Mr. Gates.** Well he introduced himself to me and told me that he was being retained or contracted by the Government of Guyana and the Guyana Police Force to provide me with technical advice during my undercover mission with the WPA.

**Mr. Chairman:** Counsel, did he elaborate on the nature of the advice?

**Mr. Hanoman:** What type of advice he said he would give you? Technical advice on what type...?

**Mr. Gates.** On the electronic devices. Because there was a need, apparently, they did not want to rely on my reports alone so I was asked to plant two devices, to different places.

**Mr. Hanoman:** What were you understand those two devices to be capable of doing?

**Mr. Gates.** They were sound activated recorders being monitored from using some high frequency... I do not know. But I was given two different devices to put at two different places.

**Mr. Chairman:** The man gave them to you?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes, he gave them to me.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Could you describe the devices for us?

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Gates.** It two little recording devices, one of it was round like this... like I always Laurie Lewis always told us to operate at all time on a need to know basis. You do not ask too many questions; just carry out whatever instructions given to you. But I know the back of one the devices that I was given to place in Dr. Roopnarine's car, the back had a magnetic... so if you put on any iron surface, it would stick there.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** He said it was round?

**Mr. Gates.** A round Device.

**Mr. Hanoman:** About what size, just for the record?

**Mr. Gates.** About this.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You cannot show us, give us an idea, is that about, round, with a diameter of about an inch?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes, I would say about an inch, inch and a half.

**Mr. Hanoman:** So those two devices were similar?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes Similar.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You collected those devices and they told you where they wanted you to put it?

**Mr. Gates.** One was to go in his car.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Who told you where to put it?

**Mr. Gates.** Braznev in the company of Chico.

**Mr. Hanoman:** And so where were you told to put these devices?

**Mr. Gates.** One was to be placed in the inner part of Dr. Roopnarine's Car, at that time he used a Volks Wagon Vehicle.

**Mr. Hanoman:** And the other one?

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Hanoman:** That was to place at a strategic point in the building housing the Working People's Alliance.

**Mr. Hanoman:** At Tiger Bay?

**Mr. Gates.** At Tiger Bay.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You managed to plant the devices as instructed?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes, they were successfully planted.

**Mr. Hanoman:** At what time these devices would have been planted, if you can tell us?

**Mr. Gates.** That would have been the early 1980s probably I cannot recall, early 1980, February, March, I cannot recall exactly.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Can you recall when you met Breznev at Pegasus Hotel...

**Mr. Gates.** It had to be around January, the Christmas period was just ended. Early January, it would be the first week.

**Mr. Hanoman:** The first week in January, 19...

**Mr. Gates.** ...80.

*11.01hrs*

**Mr. Hanoman:** 1980. How many times did you meet with Breznev or Braznev?

**Mr. Gates:** Sometimes three/four times per week.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Who would be present at these meetings? Different persons or it was always the same?

**Mr. Gates:** Well, Chico, sometimes I am alone with him, other times Chico would be around. On several occasions, it was just myself and Breznev.



## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Hanoman:** You have told us about what happened at the first meeting that you were given these devices to plant. Can you give us an idea of what happened at subsequent meetings?

**Mr. Gates:** We discussed... at one time he told me he is getting good, he is receiving the information clearly at one time I asked him...

**Mr. Hanoman:** Which information you felt he was talking about?

**Mr. Gates:** The device was a sound activated device so he said he was picking up some stuff on it and he was getting some good intelligence.

**Mr. Hanoman:** From your conversation with him you felt that he was the person that was listening to...

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, he was listening. I do not know if there were others because there could have been other receiving bases and knowing the man Mr. Laurie Lewis, he would have had to have access to listening to those devices, the transmission.

**Mr. Hanoman:** So he was telling you that he was getting good intelligence?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes. On the movements from whatever Dr. Roopnarine might have said, from whatever persons...

**Mr. Hanoman:** From listening and...

**Mr. Gates:** Yes.

**Mr. Hanoman:** What else did you discuss if anything?

**Mr. Gates:** No. I asked him, when they have had full use of these device, how will they be moved?

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** You asked him what?

**Mr. Gates:** Well they would not be there permanently. They would have had to be removed at some time.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Chairman:** Yes so what did you ask him?

**Mr. Gates:** I asked him, well you know sometimes I am not around to remove them or there came a time when because when you are on an undercover mission, the cover can be blown at any time. So I asked him just in case my cover was blown, which I think at some point it was, how would these devices be removed because at some time people might go to clean a car...

**Mr. Hanoman:** Please do not drop your voice.

**Mr. Gates:** No, at some time persons might find these devices. He told me that these devices were of such a nature that using some radioactive something; it can be destroyed from a distance. I do not know how he would have done that. He said not to worry; he would take care of that.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Excuse me; I understand from all that you have said, although, you have not said it directly, that your concern was the devices being found while you were still working undercover, by say a cleaner as well as how the devices would be removed if your cover was blown? Am I understanding you correctly?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, that is correct.

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

**Mr. Jairam:** Counsel, may I suggest only if he needs to look at the statement to assist him, the statement might be distracting him from telling his story.

**Mr. Hanoman:** I am sensing that myself.

**Mr. Jairam:** If he needs to look at it, fine.

**Mr. Chairman:** It causes you to be looking down from time to time and then you drop your voice.

**Mr. Gates:** *[Inaudible]*

**Mr. Hanoman:** Thank you, Mr...

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Williams:** I think Mr. Chairman, he drops his voice when he is about to make a departure.

**Mr. Chairman:** Another theory that is.

**Mr. Williams:** From the truth.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Okay, so you have told us all that you can tell us about what you and Breznev would have discussed according to your mission?

**Mr. Gates:** Up to that point when the crowd became larger.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Could you tell us now a little bit about your interactions with Dr. Rupert Roopnarine, during the period of your mission?

**Mr. Gates:** Well I sensed and I think Dr. Roopnarine admitted that publically, they were procuring arms and ammunitions for whatever purpose and the police knew that so I guess both the police and the government felt...

**Mr. Hanoman:** No. Dr. Rupert Roopnarine told you that they wanted to acquire arms and ammunitions?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes. I knew they were acquiring because I pick up some ammunition one night. 5762.

**Mr. Hanoman:** I though you would have wanted to hear this, but could you go ahead.

**Mr. Gates:** I said I knew because I personally picked up, I cannot remember exactly where it was but then it was one of these five pound milk powder tin, I think with approximately 100 .762 rounds of ammunition. I collected them. I had them at my home for a period of time. It was passed to my superiors who did some stuff with them and passed it back to me, to give it back to them.

**Mr. Hanoman:** How do you know they did some stuff to it?

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Gates:** Because I was told that Breznev would do some stuff to them. He was an expert, so whenever he was put in use...

**Mr. Hanoman:** What did you understand this stuff to be? Could you explain what stuff would be?

**Mr. Gates:** I was told that the rounds would be over packed so that whenever they go to use the fire arm, there would be an explosion. So I collected the rounds, I had them for a while maybe a week, two weeks.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Let us back up a little bit, Dr. Rupert Roopnarine, sent you somewhere to collect these rounds?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, he did.

**Mr. Hanoman:** He personally?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes. I cannot remember who it was, I cannot say I picked it up from, but it had to be some army guy.

**Mr. Hanoman:** When you collected those rounds, you reported it to your superiors?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, I did.

**Mr. Hanoman:** And then you gave the rounds to Breznev?

**Mr. Gates:** No. Chico collected them and took them to Breznev.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You were with him?

**Mr. Gates:** No, I was not with him. He brought it back a week or so after.

**Mr. Hanoman:** During that time Dr. Roopnarine was not asking you where ...

**Mr. Gates:** No. The rounds were not, he did not request them back, until a certain time after. I knew I would have had them keeping.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Hanoman:** So as you understood it, what Dr. Roopnarine wanted you to do, was to collect the rounds and keep it safely for him?

**Mr. Gates:** That is right.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Until he needed it.

**Mr. Gates:** That is right.

**Mr. Hanoman:** I see. You gave these rounds to Dr. Rupert Roopnarine eventually?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, I gave them back. I did not keep them.

**Mr. Hanoman:** After you thought that they had been doctored?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, well let us put it that way.

**Mr. Hanoman:** This would have been around what period?

**Mr. Chairman:** You were using clear language when you said after they had been doctored. You ought not to be suggesting any obscurity to the story. You should choose more careful language.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** And the problem was you say after you doctored them, his evidence was that he passed them onto a second person and he was told that they would be over packed so that when they were going to attempt to use them, there would have been an explosion. It was he who did the interference or the...?

**Mr. Hanoman:** I do not think that I had put that to him but I am guided.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** You did.

**Mr. Hanoman:** I did? Just for clarity, you were not personally involved in over packing any ammunition?

**Mr. Gates:** No. I do not have such expertise, Sir.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Hanoman:** But at the time you collected it back, you felt that process had been done by somebody else?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, I did.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Besides collecting ammunition for Dr. Rupert Roopnarine, do you have any idea why ammunition would have been important to Dr. Roopnarine from speaking with him?

**Mr. Gates:** Based on the intelligence gathered, they were planning some sort of action against the government of Guyana, at the time. Whatever, whether it was, how I should put it because they were being attacked, their meetings were being broken up...

**Mr. Chairman:** Who are they?

**Mr. Gates:** The WPA, meetings were being broken up by different elements, it could either be used to retaliate or to overthrow the government of Guyana. I cannot, I do not have the evidence.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Was it conveyed to you whether these ammunitions would have been used specifically for a defensive or an aggressive purpose?

**Mr. Gates:** I was not told that directly but from the information I gather that it could be used for either of the two.

**Mr. Hanoman:** So that is from your own opinion that it could have been used both ways?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You have only mentioned ammunition; did you ever collect any guns?

**Mr. Gates:** No not at that stage. No, I never.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** I am sorry, I missed that through my own fault, could you tell me what he just said Counsel?

**Mr. Gates:** No, I never collected any other guns.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Hanoman:** Other than ammunition I do not think that he has...you ever collected any explosives on behalf of Dr. Rupert Roopnarine?

**Mr. Gates:** No, I never collected any explosives.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Apart from the over packed bullets?

**Mr. Hanoman:** I rest, I am grateful, that too can be considered an explosive. Do you know a man by the name of Gregory Smith?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, we are from the same area in the Berbice River.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You came to know him because you grew up together?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, we grew up together. He was a little older than me. We lived like two miles apart. They originated from a place called...

**Mr. Hanoman:** Exactly where?

**Mr. Gates:** Develtd. D-E-V-E-L-D-T. 68 miles up the Berbice River.

**Mr. Chairman:** D-E-V?

**Mr. Gates:** E-L-D-T.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** You said he was a little older than you?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, I should think so, yes. He was in a higher class, older than me. I knew his entire family.

**Mr. Chairman:** He was also related to you?

**Mr. Gates:** No, he was not.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Can you tell us then about his family and you knew him during your childhood?

**Mr. Gates:** Pardon me?

**Mr. Hanoman:** You knew him during your childhood?

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, but his parents I understand used to live a little more up river. So he grew up with his uncle George that was in the 1960s. 1963/1964 sometime around that time. He grew up with his uncle George. His cousin Desmond and I went to the same school. Desmond and I were closer. But I knew him, we were not that close but I knew the family, his uncles, and his cousins who he grew up with.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Who left the area first?

**Mr. Gates:** I would want to think he left before me and I heard he went and joined the Guyana Defence Force that is the last thing I heard. I saw him in and out after I joined the force.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** I heard he went and joined the?

**Mr. Gates:** The Guyana Defence Force.

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

**Mr. Hanoman:** You were younger than him?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes.

**Mr. Hanoman:** And you at some point after you went and you joined the Guyana Police Force?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** So you came to Georgetown to do that?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, I came to Georgetown.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You ever say Mr. Gregory Smith in Georgetown?

**Mr. Gates:** I saw him several times in and out, we did not really have... in and out hi, hello, what are you, how are you doing, from time to time, maybe months, sometime a year, two years, three years.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You knew him by that name "Gregory Smith", or any other names?



## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

*11.16hrs*

**Mr. Gates:** We used to call him “Smithy”, plus in school you used your surname. I know some people called him “William”, some people called him “Gregory” but I called him “Smithy”.

**Mr. Hanoman:** At some point in time during your mission...

**Mr. Gates:** Yes.

**Mr. Hanoman:** ...did you ever meet Gregory Smith in that period?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, I met him once.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Please tell us the circumstances of that meeting.

**Mr. Gates:** It was sometime in maybe around April/May of ... March/April 1980, sometime around then. I cannot recall exactly when it was. I had accompanied Dr. Roopnarine to a residence in South Ruimveldt. I think he went to see Dr. Rodney.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Dr. Walter Rodney?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes. He went upstairs and I was downstairs and Gregory Smith emerged from the lower flat of the building. I think there was a room. I cannot remember exactly, it was such a long time... it was the first or last... I do not know what he was doing there at the time. May I continue?

**Mr. Hanoman:** Yes, please.

**Mr. Chairman:** I want to know who was upstairs. Do you know who was upstairs?

**Mr. Gates:** I know Dr. Roopnarine was upstairs. Dr. Rodney was upstairs. I do not know who else.

**Mr. Chairman:** Thank you. Go ahead.

**Mr. Gates:** I was pleasantly surprised to see him there so we went to a corner in the yard and I ask him “Are you still with the army?” Like I said we knew each other. He said “yes”, he was still in the army. I said “Are you on an undercover...?” He said “no” and that he is doing some

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

stuff and I told him well I am also doing some stuff also, some undercover stuff, and we arranged to meet. I think it was the next evening...

**Mr. Hanoman:** Could we put this in context, this was around what date?

**Mr. Gates:** Like I said I cannot recall the March/April, something around then in 1980. I cannot recall.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You got the impression from Smithy...

**Mr. Gates:** Yes.

**Mr. Hanoman:** ...that he was still employed in the GDF?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, that is what he told me.

**Mr. Hanoman:** That is what he told you?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes. And we had arranged to meet the next evening at the Egyptian Lounge, now the Sidewalk Café.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Is this in Georgetown?

**Mr. Gates:** Middle Street, Georgetown.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Okay, but why did you all make that arrangement?

**Mr. Gates:** I do not think our superiors would have been happy if they knew that we were meeting each other because it was a serious breach of security if my cover was... or if I left the job or left the assignment I could have blown his cover; a number of reasons, so we decided to meet next evening at the Egyptian Lounge to exchange intelligence and further discuss exactly what we were getting into, what we were doing.

**Mr. Hanoman:** What was the purpose for you meeting with him? Was it in furtherance of the mission of the Guyana Police Force or was it a personal...

**Mr. Gates:** No, remember I do not want to talk to him for too long at Walter Rodney's residence so I said "Let us meet. We got a lot to talk about."

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Chairman:** Help me, when you took him aside in a corner, Dr. Rodney and Dr. Roopnarine were upstairs?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Chairman:** You see him and you were “pleasantly surprised”, as you said to see...?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, well to see him at that particular residence.

**Mr. Chairman:** ...and you took him aside in a corner?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Chairman:** You asked him what he was doing there. What was his reply?

**Mr. Gates:** He said he is doing some stuff.

**Mr. Chairman:** Some stuff, what did you understand that to mean?

**Mr. Gates:** I do not know Sir. Like I said, he was not too comfortable with us having a long conversation there; that is why we arranged the next evening to meet.

**Mr. Chairman:** This is what we called sense perception evidence. What did you understand him to be saying to you “he is doing some stuff”?

**Mr. Gates:** I imagine he was doing the same thing I was doing. That is what crossed my mind.

**Mr. Chairman:** You felt so?

**Mr. Gates:** I felt so.

**Mr. Chairman:** I did not understand how is it that you said the purpose was to exchange some information... You thought he was on the same mission as you.

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, after he said he was still in the army I know he would not risk his job to...

**Mr. Chairman:** Very well.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** And before you continue, may I ask, describe his appearance at the time, was he clean shaven, was his hair low cut? I am curious.

**Mr. Gates:** He had some beard on his face, semi-afro hair style.

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

**Mr. Jairam:** Give us some more description of him. How tall, what complexion?

**Mr. Gates:** He was darker than I am, maybe. He was a little “clear” but at the time, I saw him he had complexion like this, dark brown.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** How much beard?

**Mr. Gates:** No very much, like he did not shave for about three days...

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** At the sides of the face and under his chin?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, at the sides and under his chin.

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

**Mr. Jairam:** At the time, just for clarification, did you know soldiers wearing beard?

**Mr. Gates:** No, except if you are working in the intelligence arm.

**Mr. Chairman:** You said the exception would be if they are working in intelligence?

**Mr. Gates:** In the intelligence arm of the Army, or unless he is suffering from some form of infection in the face, then you can be given permission to not to wear a beard, if shaven would have further...

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** ...for health reasons?

**Mr. Gates:** ...for health reasons.

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

## **WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY**

**Mr. Chairman:** I think might about to move on to another area. You tell me because I was thinking of a convenient moment at which to take the mid-morning break.

**Mr. Hanoman:** I am happy for the break now, pleases Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Chairman:** Okay, thanks

**Mid-Morning break at 11:24hrs**

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

### Hearing Resumed at 12.04hrs

**Mr. Chairman:** Mr. Gates, I think what was happening towards the end of the morning session, as we approached the break, you were by then speaking from the far corner, some feet away from the microphone and you were not being picked up clearly. It can happen when you have been on your feet for a long time, but make sure that, more often than not, you are close to the microphone. If you are speaking here and it is there we may not hear you well or at not. Alright?

**Mr. Gates:** Okay.

**Mr. Chairman:** With that, Commission Counsel, you can proceed.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When we took the break, you had mentioned to the Madame Commissioner that Gregory Smith had told you that he was still in the GDF, but that you had seen him sporting a beard and an afro.

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Just for completeness, was that what would have clued you in to the fact that he might have been doing some sort of undercover work? Those two combined...

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, that was one of the reasons.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Okay. Now, you had arranged, you said, with him, to meet, I think the... Was it the next evening?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, I should think so, the next evening.

**Mr. Hanoman:** ...the next evening at the ...

**Mr. Gates:** ...Egyptian Lounge.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Egyptian Lounge. This meeting was intended to be held in public or it was a secret meeting or...?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, I would say a secret meeting.

**Mr. Hanoman:** And you felt that you could have such a meeting at the Egyptian Lounge?

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**Mr. Gates:** Yes, because I knew the person running the Egyptian Lounge, Mr. Ronald Bostwick.

**Mr. Hanoman:** And that knowledge would have facilitated this secret meeting?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, I asked him to put us in a private area.

**Mr. Hanoman:** I see. Could you tell us now the full details of that meeting? You did have the meeting with Gregory Smith at the Egyptian Lounge?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, I did, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Okay, could you give us the full details?

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Could you just hold for me for a minute let me catch up?

**Mr. Hanoman:** Sorry.

**Mr. Gates:** Sorry about that.

**Mr. Chairman:** Please proceed.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Could you give us the full details between yourself and Gregory Smith? You were the only two people in the meeting, correct?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Okay.

**Mr. Gates:** I started by stressing the need, seeing that we are from a remote area and we have both been identified after he told me that he was working, he is still in the army and he is doing some technical stuff for the WPA because his expertise... He was a technician. Him having told me that, I told him that it is important for us to share intelligence because at the end of the day whenever you were an undercover agent there are times when your employer might lose confidence in you or you might not want to carry out certain illegal or unlawful instructions given to you and then you can find yourself being killed so I said it is very important that we meet regularly, "share intelligence about what I am doing and what you are doing". It was at that meeting ...

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**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Could you please pause for me? Thank you, it was at that meeting that...

**Mr. Hanoman:** You said that he gave you an idea of what he was doing, you also told him what you were doing, is that correct?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, I did.

**Mr. Hanoman:** In terms of your undercover operations and so?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Okay.

**Mr. Gates:** Not everything in detail, but basically, I was an undercover agent and I was assigned to Dr. Roopnarine and what I had been asked to do, in terms of reporting on a daily basis, the movements and activities of Dr. Roopnarine. So he said he was doing some technical stuff for Dr. Rodney, maybe, with him being an electronic...

**Mr. Hanoman:** Did he tell you what sort of technical help he was giving Walter Rodney or are you now going into assumptions?

**Mr. Gates:** No. He did not say at the time but during the conversation, he did say.

**Mr. Hanoman:** What did he say?

**Mr. Gates:** He said that he was assembling walkie-talkies for the WPA.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Your understanding was that he was assembling the walkie-talkies and at whose request?

**Mr. Gates:** He said Dr. Rodney's.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Tell us what other information he would have shared with you.

**Mr. Gates:** I did ask him who he was reporting to and he told me he was reporting to Norman McLean. That is what he said. Later, during the conversation, I also learnt that he had...

**Mr. Chairman:** Not too fast. Regulate the pace as best you can, Counsel.



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**Mr. Hanoman:** Thank you.

**Mr. Chairman:** Go ahead.

**Mr. Gates:** During the conversation I also learnt that he paid weekly or twice weekly visits to Breznev at the Pegasus, where he also received advanced technical directions, if you want to call it that.

**Mr. Jairam:** Who was Norman McLean?

**Mr. Gates:** He was head of the Army at the time.

**Mr. Jairam:** Do you know his rank?

**Mr. Gates:** Major General or Brigadier General. I cannot remember what it was at that time. I think Brigadier General.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Go ahead please, witness, you were telling us that he told you that he would... Did he mention that person by name, "Breznev", or how...

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, he said he was meeting with a Russian guy at the Pegasus and during the conversation it was confirmed that we were both meeting with the same person.

**Mr. Hanoman:** How? It was confirmed by a description? He gave you a description of the guy as well as the name?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes and on one occasion we were both there at the same time. We did not see the guy together; on one occasion.

**Mr. Hanoman:** I see. He explained to you why he would have been meeting this Russian?

**Mr. Gates:** Well, as he put it, for superior technical... Well the guy was more advanced than him, technically, to do whatever he was doing so he said he would visit him from time to time but after that we never met at the same place.

**Mr. Hanoman:** He mentioned to you that he was reporting to Norman McLean. Was that the only person that he said he was reporting to?

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**Mr. Gates:** He said that he was reporting to other persons also.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Did he mention the names?

**Mr. Gates:** He said Chico and somebody else, I cannot recall.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Did he explain to you, where this reporting was taking place, or the manner of it?

**Mr. Gates:** Well, like me, he was meeting these officials at different places as scheduled by them. I did not go into details to find out exactly where and where. Mostly, it would be neutral places, if you want to call it that.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Okay. So you had several meetings ...

**Mr. Gates:** After then we met regularly on weekends.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You and Smith.

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, whenever I had no assignment with Dr. Roopnarine, if he was not going anywhere or if he did not choose to take me where he was going.

**Mr. Hanoman:** In order to set up the meetings with Smith...

**Mr. Gates:** No, we would...

**Mr. Hanoman:** How would...

**Mr. Gates:** No, we would decide at the meeting when next we would meet and where. Of course it would not be the same place.

**Mr. Chairman:** Counsel, could you get some illustrations on these neutral places.

**Mr. Gates:** We are talking about like the Egyptian Lounge, Wagon Wheel...

**Mr. Hanoman:** Explain what Wagon Wheel was at the time, please?

**Mr. Gates:** Wagon Wheel was a bar situated at the corners of Carmichael and, it used to be, Murray Street, now Quamina Street.

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

**Mr. Gates:** Now Quamina Street.

**Mr. Chairman:** Spell that for the purposes of the record, Wagon Wheel.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Q-u-a... Wagon Wheel?

**Mr. Chairman:** Yes.

**Mr. Hanoman:** W-a-g-o-n.

**Mr. Chairman:** Wagon?

**Mr. Hanoman:** Wagon. Sorry, Wagon Wheel. What type of place was this?

**Mr. Gates:** It was a bar area. It sold alcohol and...

**Mr. Hanoman:** You have mentioned Wagon Wheel, Egyptian Lounge.

**Mr. Gates:** Yes.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Which was also a bar?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, a kind of disco, the seawall bandstand.

**Mr. Chairman:** Seawall...

**Mr. Hanoman:** Where is the seawall bandstand?

**Mr. Gates:** Just behind Police Headquarters.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Any other place?

**Mr. Gates:** We met once at the Promenade Gardens.

**Mr. Williams:** Those lovers' places you used to meet.

**Mr. Gates:** It was an undercover meeting.

**Mr. Chairman:** I did not hear where that was.

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**Mr. Hanoman:** At the Parade Ground, this is where?

**Mr. Gates:** The Parade Ground and Promenade Gardens.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Promenade Gardens?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, we met once at the Parade Ground, an evening.

**Mr. Hanoman:** And the Promenade Gardens is a...

**Mr. Gates:** There was a basketball match going on at the Parade Ground.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Okay.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** I think that clarification that the match was going on was to meet a comment that came from Counsels table that these were places of romance.

**Mr. Williams:** Love nests.

**Mr. Gates:** No, I would not say that.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** So, it is clarified.

**Mr. Gates:** I would not say that. *[Laughter]*

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** I think it was an important clarification that the witness provided.

**Mr. Hanoman:** The purpose of the meetings was the continuous...

**Mr. Gates:** Yes.

**Mr. Hanoman:** ...sharing of ...

**Mr. Gates:** ...intelligence.

**Mr. Hanoman:** ...as opposed to romance.

**Mr. Gates:** Yes.

**Mr. Hanoman:** That was a joke.

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**Mr. Gates:** Yes, we were both straight men.

**Mr. Hanoman:** It is just a joke. These meetings had a specific time period? They would normally last for about how long?

**Mr. Gates:** Sometimes an hour or half an hour. It depends on our schedule at the time.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Let me ask you this: Did you ever have telephone contact with him? Did you ever call him at his house?

**Mr. Gates:** No, I never did. Telephones were not to be trusted in those days. Most people's phones were tapped.

**Mr. Hanoman:** I see. Did you know that for a fact?

**Mr. Gates:** I know.

**Mr. Hanoman:** How?

**Mr. Gates:** Obviously if I had a landline, which I did not have at that time, my phone would have been tapped. Laurie Lewis trusted nobody and he would want to tap in on what I was doing and what others were doing.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** The issue of tapped telephones had come up elsewhere, could you please find out from the witness, Counsel, if you would, on what basis he has given us that evidence in terms of saying it was of his own knowledge?

**Mr. Hanoman:** Yes. How did you know that phones were tapped in those days? Did you have firsthand experience with that?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes and I know certain persons who were employed with the Guyana Telephone Corporation at the time who worked in the apparatus room who would from time to time be asked to record certain conversations coming from some line or the other. I had a very good friend that worked there. He had a relationship with Laurie Lewis; when I say "relationship"... professional. Whether it is official or unofficial, I do not know, but he would...

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*12.19hrs*

**Mr. Hanoman:** So, this friend, if I understand you, confided in you...

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** ...that he had been requested by Laurie Lewis to tap specific phone lines?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, specific lines, lines identified... In those days, the system was not as advanced as it is now. There was the old apparatus room where you had to hook up a speaker and listen in and record. I do not know... He was explaining to me briefly.

**Mr. Chairman:** Counsel, I just thought that it was in the interest of all of us that he should have been asked who instructed him to do that. You put the answer in his mouth – not that he might not have given that - but we have to make an assessment of all the witnesses, Mr. Gates included. It is important that he be allowed to tell his story.

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

**Mr. Chairman:** You appreciate what just happened just now? Perhaps your junior can tell you.

**Mr. Hanoman:** I may not have been conscious of it, but if I did put words in his mouth...

**Mr. Chairman:** You did put it in his mouth that Mr. Laurie Lewis gave him that instruction. Let him say those things himself so the neutral question would be “who gave that instruction”.

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

**Mr. Chairman:** Very well.

**Mr. Hanoman:** ...may have felt I was summing up. The Guyana Telecommunications... You said it was the....

**Mr. Gates:** ...Corporation, GTC.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Just for the purpose of the record, the GTC - I do not want to suggest an answer - they were...

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**Mr. Gates:** It was Government owned, I think.

**Mr. Hanoman:** They were the...

**Mr. Gates:** They were the only landline provider. I think it still is.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Did you mention the name of your friend?

**Mr. Gates:** I would not want to, Sir; other than just saying Mr. Young.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Pardon me?

**Mr. Gates:** Mr. Young, that is all.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Mr. Young.

**Mr. Chairman:** I would not press either. Mr. Young, is that a code name?

**Mr. Gates:** No, that is his name, but I would not call his name.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** While we are just pausing; nowadays we do not just depend on that. We have satellite surveillance which is used all over the world.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You referred to a meeting at the Parade Ground during a basketball game. Could you tell us a little bit what happened during that meeting? First of all, when was it, what time...?

**Mr. Gates:** It had to be between 19:00hrs and 20:00hrs.

**Mr. Hanoman:** That would have been what month and year? Can you help us?

**Mr. Gates:** That would have been around April of 1980.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Tell us what happened during that meeting.

**Mr. Gates:** He told me that Walter Rodney wanted him to build a high frequency walkie-talkie that would have been able to cover certain distance. He told me that he does not have the expertise and when he informed his superior, they told him that they would have the walkie-talkie made in Russia.

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**Mr. Hanoman:** Did he tell you what superior he had informed?

**Mr. Gates:** Well, he said Chico, Laurie Lewis, Norman McLean.... He said that he reported to a number of persons.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Did he mention to you...

**Mr. Gates:** No, at that stage, he said the superior.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Oh, I see. Is that all that he told you?

**Mr. Gates:** No, he said that his superior said that he would use the opportunity; rather than him delivering a walkie-talkie, they would deliver an explosive device.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Go ahead, please.

**Mr. Gates:** He also told me that he would have been paid GYD\$1 million, in those days, and free access out of Guyana for him and whether he had a wife or whoever. He never discussed that with me...

**Mr. Chairman:** You are dropping your voice, please.

**Mr. Gates:** He never discussed that with me, whether he had a wife at the time. We never really discussed that. He said when he would have complied with their instructions, to pass this explosive device to Dr. Walter Rodney; he would have been given \$1 million and free passage out of Guyana.

**Mr. Hanoman:** What did you say, when he told you that?

**Mr. Gates:** I advised him not to do such a thing, because I told him in most cases he would be killed after carrying out such instructions.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You were advising him that... Who would kill him?

**Mr. Gates:** The same people who gave him the instructions.

**Mr. Hanoman:** That advice was friendly advice or...?



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**Mr. Gates:** I would say “friendly” because I knew what he was dealing with.

**Mr. Hanoman:** After that meeting, when next did you see him?

**Mr. Gates:** I never saw him back until... I do not know if you want us to go to that...

**Mr. Chairman:** Counsel, before you get there, who was the superior to whom he reported, the gentleman of whom he spoke, who gave the instruction, who said they would have to do it with a device?

**Mr. Gates:** At that particular meeting, he never gave a name. He said his superior. I was so concerned about what would happen after. I told him not to do it.

**Mr. Chairman:** You were talking to this gentleman so you must have some sense of whom...

**Mr. Gates:** I know Chico at that level. Chico could have probably been an Inspector or an Assistant Superintendent. That rank would have been too low to... That is just my.... It could have either been Laurie Lewis or Norman McLean.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** ...or who?

**Mr. Gates:** Norman McLean.

**Mr. Chairman:** That was your sense at the time?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes because he said he was reporting to three persons. When he said his superiors, he could have either been talking of one of the two because Chico...

**Mr. Chairman:** That is how you felt, okay, that is enough. You felt that it was either one or the other.

**Mr. Gates:** Chico Chichester was like a “runner”.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** I know he did not tell you who gave him the instructions in relation to the device but you said he said that he had reported to three persons. Chico was one?

**Mr. Gates:** Chico.

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**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Did he give you the names of the other two persons on any other occasions to whom he reported?

**Mr. Gates:** He did mention it.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** And these were Laurie Lewis, and...

**Mr. Gates:** Norman McLean. That is what he said.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** That is what he said. Thanks.

**Mr. Chairman:** On the occasion he mentioned the superior, in that context, you felt it was either Lewis or McLean? What his words are is your evidence there, on that point.

**Mr. Hanoman:** After that meeting, you said you next saw Gregory Smith when?

**Mr. Gates:** I had some problems because I was also given...

**Mr. Hanoman:** Just answer the question, please, and we will move on. After that meeting, when next did you see him again, approximately?

**Mr. Gates:** Sometime in June, a couple days after Walter Rodney died.

**Mr. Chairman:** Normally I would give him a lot of latitude now. He is at a very critical stage of his testimony. Maybe he wants to tell you something that might be helpful.

**Mr. Hanoman:** I am guided. Did you want to say something, Mr. Gates?

**Mr. Gates:** I would say around that same period Dr. Roopnarine was a frequent... There was a guy named Arnold Rampersaud...

**Mr. Jairam:** Do not go too fast, please.

**Mr. Chairman:** Around that same period...

**Mr. Gates:** Dr. Roopnarine used to visit a guy named Arnold Rampersaud, a former PPP activist who was charged for murder.

**Mr. Chairman:** Arnold Rampersaud?

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**Mr. Chairman:** Yes, Arnold Rampersaud on the Corentyne.

**Mr. Hanoman:** The Corentyne is in Berbice, Guyana.

**Mr. Gates:** Berbice, Guyana, Region No.6.

**Mr. Chairman:** Yes, go ahead.

**Mr. Gates:** I was given certain instructions that when we got there to lure Dr. Roopnarine. I was given a magazine with some over packed rounds...

**Mr. Hanoman:** By whom?

**Mr. Gates:** Chico, and Brezhnev that was there, also.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Where was this given to you?

**Mr. Gates:** At the Pegasus.

**Mr. Chairman:** Counsel, listen carefully. "I was told to lure", who?

**Mr. Gates:** Dr. Roopnarine, while we were at Arnold Rampersaud.

**Mr. Chairman:** You were told to lure Dr. Roopnarine...? You never completed that. "I was told to lure..."

**Mr. Gates:** ...Dr. Roopnarine into using the G3 submachine gun. To teach him... To tell him I am going to give him some practice lessons.

**Mr. Chairman:** I am losted. You have lost me. "About that time... about that period, Dr. Roopnarine used to visit a guy called Arnold Rampersaud in the Corentyne..."

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Chairman:** "In Berbice, Region No.6, a former PPP activist..."

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, he was charged for murder of a policeman.

**Mr. Chairman:** "I was given a magazine by some overpowered rounds..."

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**Mr. Gates:** Yes, with some over packed rounds that would have exploded upon firing.

**Mr. Chairman:** Did you tell us who gave you that?

**Mr. Gates:** It was handed to me by Breznev and Chico was there.

**Mr. Chairman:** Were you told what you had to do with them?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, lure Dr. Roopnarine to teach him to do some light firing with a G3 weapon.

**Mr. Jairam:** Teach him to what?

**Mr. Gates:** Fire the G3.

**Mr. Chairman:** Yes, please proceed, yes.

**Mr. Gates:** I was given certain instructions as to.... Not all of the rounds I was told is over packed; to put the weapon in single fire mode and I should fire the first –I cannot remember if it was- seven or eight rounds.

*12.34hrs*

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** You are saying that not all of the rounds were over packed?

**Mr. Gates:** I was told that the first ten were not over packed. So you could have put the weapon in single fire.

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

**Mr. Gates:** I would then demonstrate firing the first seven and then pass the weapon to Dr. Roopnarine and then stand at the back of him.

**Mr. Chairman:** Did you carry out the instruction?

**Mr. Gates:** I did not carry out the instruction; I absconded, because Dr. Roopnarine was a good man. He was very nice to me. I could not harm him.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Just out of interest, were you told how far behind you should stand?

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**Mr. Gates:** Yes, I was told. As soon as he had put the weapon then, in rapid fire, stand at the back of him –I suppose he would not have known how far behind I was behind him....

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** How far behind were you to stand?

**Mr. Gates:** ...and when I gave the command to fire, back pedal...

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** How far behind were you to be?

**Mr. Gates:** I would say six feet.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** I see.

**Mr. Gates:** By the time he applied first pressure –if you are firing at a target- the weapon would have exploded.

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

**Mr. Gates:** The rounds were over packed... and blow his head off.

**Mrs. Jairam:** If what you say is true Dr. Roopnarine is lucky to be alive.

*[Laughter]*

**Mr. Gates:** Well, there were several attempts made on his life, not by me.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Were you to be given any reward?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, I was also promised a million dollars, and safe passage out of the country.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Okay, so you were given...

**Mr. Jairam:** One second. Do you recall the exchange rate at that time?

**Mr. Gates:** I think it was \$4.15 (four dollars and 15 cents) if I can recall. I am not too sure; between \$4 to \$6.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** I think it would be useful to know, if he is able to say, who made this promise to him, Counsel.

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**Mr. Hanoman:** Who told you about this million dollars and safe passage?

**Mr. Gates:** Chico, who was very close to Laurie Lewis, he said Mr. Lewis would arrange that?

**Mr. Hanoman:** You ever collected the million dollars?

**Mr. Gates:** No, Sir. I absconded. I went into exile.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Alright. You did collect the magazine with ...

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, I did collect the magazine.

**Mr. Hanoman:** ...those rounds in them?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Having collected it, when did you next do with them?

**Mr. Gates:** I traveled to New Amsterdam, and I boarded the Ferry and headed up the Berbice River; 68 miles up, to a place called Sand Hills.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Were you alone, or you...

**Mr. Gates:** No, I had my wife then with me.

**Mr. Chairman:** Counsel, I want us to go back...

**Mr. Hanoman:** Okay.

**Mr. Chairman:** He was also asked who was it that promised the million dollar and the safe passage out, and the answer that he gave was, "I was not sure about it."

**Mr. Hanoman:** I think he has said that Chico had made the promise.

**Mr. Chairman:** Perhaps we should ask him to say it himself.

**Mr. Gates.** Chico on behalf of Laurie Lewis.

**Mr. Chairman:** Chico on behalf of LaurieLewis.

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**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** He said that, "It was Chico who told me..."

**Mr. Chairman:** He was the man to deliver?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Tell us why you were heading up the Berbice River, please?

**Mr. Gates:** Because like I said Dr. Roopnarine was a good man, I would never ever cause harm to him. Sir, I was heading there as you would call it to get away from my superiors and for my own safety because as I knew that once you refused an order like that and the Press get a hold of you in those days it caused embarrassment to a lot of people so for my own safety I headed up the Berbice River.

**Mr. Chairman:** Did you fear that you might have been a victim of the Death Squad?

**Mr. Gates:** If I am given the opportunity, we will come to that when I got back to the City.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Where did you go? You headed up the Berbice River? Did you say with your wife?

**Mr. Hanoman:** Yes.

**Mr. Hanoman:** And who else?

**Mr. Gates:** And my one year old daughter.

**Mr. Hanoman:** One year old daughter.

**Mr. Gates:** Between six to nine months old, she was at the time, I think at the time.

**Mr. Hanoman:** And you arrived at your destination which was Sand Hills Berbice River. And is there any particular reason why you choose that area to go to?

**Mr. Gates:** Because I knew the area like the palm of my hands... I was born there, grew up there, so I knew the jungle like the palm of my hands. I knew they could not find me.

**Mr. Hanoman:** So the area, Sand Hills, it was a jungle area?

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**Mr. Gates.** Yes, jungle.

**Mr. Hanoman:** And that a place, at the time, felt safe?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes, I felt safe.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Counsel he did mention if I am not that he had in fact collect the ammunition, I am wondering what became of that if he could say.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Could you answer that question?

**Mr. Gates.** I threw it in the Berbice River.

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

**Mr. Hanoman:** How were you able to maintain. How were you planning to maintain yourself having arrived at...

**Mr. Gates.** I had a brother who was involved in logging so I helped him around; he provided food, other basic stuff did you had a house there?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes, there was a house to the front of what you called the river side.

**Mr. Hanoman:** How long did you spend having arrived there, how long did you spend there?

**Mr. Gates.** I think it was around the 14<sup>th</sup> when I heard on the radio on the same evening that Walter Rodney was killed in some bomb blast.

**Mr. Hanoman:** When you heard that did anything come to your mind?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes, my mind ran straight to Gregory.

**Mr. Hanoman:** To who?

**Mr. Gates.** Gregory, Smitty. I was wondering, "did he do it".

**Mr. Hanoman:** Why were you wondering that?



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**Mr. Gates.** Because we had the discussion when I tried to convince him not to do it, he kind of promised me that he would not, but then it was a half-hearted something because I told him, his family.

**Mr. Hanoman:** When he promised you that he would not put an explosive device you felt that it was a half-hearted promise.

**Mr. Gates.** No, that he would not deliver it to Walter Rodney. Even if they gave it to him I told him exactly what I was doing.

*[Inaudible]*

**Mr. Hanoman:** I see. So you were saying that when you heard that Walter Rodney had in fact had been killed by explosion your mind ran to Gregory Smith?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** And what next did you do, if anything?

**Mr. Gates.** I think was the next day or two days after, I saw a yellow BELL, I think was the 406 chopper circling the area.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You mean a helicopter?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes, Helicopter, Sand Hills in the Berbice River and I knew Smitty's relatives were at De Veldt which was like just four miles from where I was.

**Mr. Chairman:** You were given the colour of the helicopter?

**Mr. Gates:** A yellow. When I saw the chopper, I thought they were looking for me.

**Mr. Chairman:** It was a yellow helicopter?

**Mr. Gates.** Yellow helicopter.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You knew of the existence of yellow helicopter in Guyana at that time?

**Mr. Gates.** They were operated by the Guyana Defence Force (GDF).

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Hanoman:** So when you heard these helicopters what happens?

**Mr. Gates.** Well I became fearful because I thought at one time they might have been looking for me because I did not think that Gregory Smith would have try to come back De Veldt where his relatives were from so early. So I went further into the jungle and I came out... No, before I went in, I saw his cousin Desmond in a paddle boat. That was his first cousin.

**Mr. Hanoman:** This is Gregory Smith's cousin that you spoke about earlier?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes, Desmond Smith, I saw him in a paddle boat.

**Mr. Chairman:** What was his name?

**Mr. Gates.** Desmond Smith.

**Mr. Chairman:** Did the two of you have a conversation?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes, I asked him when last he saw his cousin Gregory.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Why you asked him that?

**Mr. Gates.** Because as I said I heard was killed, we had a discussion and the chopper who was... so I ask him to find out if he was in the area because like me that would be the most natural place to hide.

**Mr. Chairman:** The two of you had a conversation?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes and he said Gregory was in the area he was at De Veldt and he looked very nervous. He did not say when he arrived or...

**Mr. Hanoman:** Let me ask you something this area at Sand Hills, how far is it from Kwakwani?

**Mr. Gates.** I would say about two hours; I would say an hour and 45 minutes by speed boat.

**Mr. Hanoman:** One route that you can take to get to Sand Hills would be plane to Kwakwani and then by boat to Sand Hills?

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Gates.** No, from Sand Hills you can use a boat proceed up river or there is a trail taking you out to Linden and from Linden, you can head to Kwakwani.

**Mr. Hanoman:** If you want to get from Kwakwani to Sand Hills, how many different ways?

**Mr. Gates.** Pardon?

**Mr. Hanoman:** Give us the route please?

**Mr. Gates.** You could either come down river by boat.

**Mr. Hanoman:** This is down the... which river?

**Mr. Gates:** The Berbice River. Kwakwani is further up; Sand Hills is before like an hour and a half with a speed boat. If you were to use a tractor which was commonly used at that time you can drive from Kwakwani to the Linden Highway and then there was another route that is a place called Meddy's Hideout, you take that road and it can take you to and from Sand Hills.

**Mr. Chairman:** Before you go any further apart from the colour of the helicopter it was you saw?

**Mr. Gates.** Yes Sir.

*12.49hrs*

**Mr. Chairman:** Was there any other marking on it?

**Mr. Gates:** I did see a number.

**Mr. Chairman:** No, that led you to believe that it was the Guyana Defence Force?

**Mr. Gates:** I knew the army helicopter because in those days, private entities would not have a Bell 406.

**Mr. Chairman:** Did not have?

**Mr. Gates:** A Bell 406. No private company owned a Bell 406.

**Mr. Chairman:** I did not hear the last word. No private company had a?

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Gates:** A Bell 406 helicopter.

**Mr. Chairman:** A “Bell force”?

**Mr. Gates:** A Bell 406 chopper.

**Mr. Hanoman:** So when you looked at this helicopter you could tell that it was a Bell 406?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, because it passed very low.

**Mr. Williams:** Passed very low?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, just above the trees.

**Mr. Williams:** So you saw who was flying?

**Mr. Gates:** I did not look. I was scared.

**Mr. Hanoman:** I think this time is for me to question the Witness. Mr. Williams, will get his chance later. I think it is a bit rude for any of my colleagues to be asking questions of the witness during my exercise.

**Mr. Williams:** No, we are seeking clarification.

**Mr. Chairman:** Do not bother with the rudeness. We might have all been rude along the way. Do not bother with the rudeness.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Very well. Now, are you expert enough to know the difference between a 406 and a 412 Bell helicopter and the different types of helicopters?

**Mr. Gates:** Because I saw them parked in front the Army compound and I think there was some marking on them. Well, I might not be able to accurately distinguish between the 406 and the 412 but I knew it was a Bell.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You knew it was a Bell?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You know what the Bell 206 looks like?

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Gates:** Like I said, I cannot recall. The most used one at the time, I think, was the 406 so I assume that it had to be the 406.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** You led him there so I think I should explore it some more. You said you may not be able to distinguish between a 406 and a 412 and both were used by the Army or one of them?

**Mr. Gates:** I cannot say. I mostly heard about the 406.

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Thank you and from what you observed it seemed to be a 406 to you?

**Mr. Gates:** It seemed to be.

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

**Mr. Gates:** I might not be accurate.

**Mr. Hanoman:** I think we were at the stage where you went further inland after hearing the news that Walter Rodney had died. You met Desmond Smith. You had a conversation with him and what happened after this conversation?

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** He did not tell us the conversation you know, perhaps you...

**Mr. Hanoman:** Could you...

**Mr. Gates:** Yes I said...

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** He told us about a part of the conversation.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Tell us about the full details of that conversation.

**Mr. Gates:** We did not speak for long because he just slowed down, kind of. I asked him if Gregory was in the area. He said yes he was and he is acting very nervous. He said he did not really get an opportunity to talk to him because he was moving from one place to the next, like if he is losing it, so he said he had to leave to go on an errand so we did not have a lengthy discussion on it.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Hanoman:** Having obtained that information what was your next step?

**Mr. Gates:** I went further in because I said the area in surveillance might become more intense so I thought it best...

**Mr. Hanoman:** Now, I am being alerted to the fact that there was a portion of your evidence on page four, I know we have been interrupting you, so could I ask you to refer to page four of your evidence, your witness statement? Now, there is a paragraph there that speaks to you informing somebody about where you were going.

**Mr. Gates:** Okay.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Can you give us a little information about that please?

**Mr. Chairman:** That is not what I was drawing your attention to.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Sorry.

**Mr. Chairman:** You had last been questioning him about the conversation he had with Desmond.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Yes.

**Mr. Chairman:** Who slowed down, but was passing him in a boat. It is recorded there; you wish to attract his attention to it? That is his statement. You are seeing it, Sir?

**Mr. Hanoman:** I am seeing the paragraph you are referring to.

**Mr. Gates:** That is what the second paragraph? While departing...

**Mr. Hanoman:** Now, in speaking about Gregory Smith, when you were speaking with Desmond Smith, about...

**Mr. Chairman:** Counsel, has he found the paragraph that you referred to? Help him to find it. Identify it with clarity.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Hanoman:** The bottom half of page four, starts with “Sometime around mid-June 1980”.  
Do you see that?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Going a bit beyond that there is a reference there to the conversation you had with Desmond Smith...

**Mrs. Samuels-Brown:** Five lines down.

**Mr. Hanoman:** ...five lines down. The first time we see the name Desmond Smith being mentioned on that page, do you see that?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Would it be correct to suggest to you that Desmond Smith told you that...

**Mr. Chairman:** You could let him read what he wrote and find out?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, that is correct.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Please go ahead and read what Desmond Smith told you, according to your statement.

**Mr. Gates:** Desmond Smith told me that Gregory arrived the day before and appeared to be very nervous and he told him that the Government was looking for him to kill him. Sorry I forgot to... I omitted that I did not remember.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Does that?

**Mr. Chairman:** Well, I think he has said that he had forgotten that. You are ready for questioning?

**Mr. Hanoman:** Yes. Okay, you went further into the interior and where did you go exactly?

**Mr. Gates:** Further down, like about 20 miles down into the jungle.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You had a particular destination in mind or were you just running...?

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Gates:** It was the logging area. You had several camps further down.

**Mr. Hanoman:** That is where you were going. Why did you choose that particular location to go to at that stage?

**Mr. Gates:** Because it was more forested and not easily accessible if persons... Choppers could not land there but they could have landed on the water front.

**Mr. Hanoman:** I see. You had a support group in that area? How were you going to maintain yourself? Did you think about that?

**Mr. Gates:** No. Like I said it was my brother's operation. He had workmen down at the back.

**Mr. Hanoman:** What is your brother's name?

**Mr. Gates:** Arthur. Arthur De Nobrega.

**Mr. Hanoman:** So you arrived there. Does the place have a name?

**Mr. Gates:** No, it was just we call it the "back dam". It is Sand Hills but it is the "back dam".

**Mr. Hanoman:** "Sand Hills backdam" would be... So you arrived there. How long did you remain there?

**Mr. Gates:** I would say for about three week to a month, if I can recall.

**Mr. Hanoman:** When you left... why did you leave?

**Mr. Gates:** Because I thought everything had died down and it was time for me to return to the city to find out what was going on.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You felt that the three week period was a sufficiently long period or...

**Mr. Gates:** No. I cannot recall the exact... It might have been longer than that... It might have been longer. It was such a long time... I really cannot recall... No. After three weeks I returned to the front.

**Mr. Hanoman:** I see.



## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Gates:** But I spent approximately six months.

**Mr. Hanoman:** When you say the front you mean to the water said of sand hills?

**Mr. Gates:** To the water front.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Sand hills water front?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes and I spent about six months.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You spent about six months there?

**Mr. Gates:** Before I returned to the city.

**Mr. Hanoman:** What was the purpose for your returning to the city?

**Mr. Gates:** I wanted to find out first my real status with my employers, whether I was...

**Mr. Hanoman:** You have to specify which employers at this stage.

**Mr. Gates:** The Guyana Police Force.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Can you put a date to that period when you came out?

**Mr. Jairam:** Counsel, if you direct the witness to the statement immediately under that passage.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Could you help me with the...?

**Mr. Jairam:** Page four.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Just below to where you were just referred, I think there is a date mentioned there that around October 1980...

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, it could be October/November.

**Mr. Hanoman:** "...I travelled back to New Amsterdam..." would that be correct?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** That "around October 1980, I travelled back to New Amsterdam in order to ascertain my status with the Guyana Police Force". You felt that you could go to New Amsterdam and discover that?

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Gates:** No, at least I could have gotten a telephone call to the Office of the Commissioner.

**Mr. Hanoman:** So when you went to New Amsterdam, around October 1980, you made that telephone call that you spoke about?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, I called...

**Mr. Hanoman:** Who did you call?

**Mr. Gates:** I called Mrs. Jilkes. She was the Commissioner's Secretary. I knew her well, so I called her and she told me, "Yes, you were read out in the force orders". Normally, there is a force order where mention is made of who was promoted, who was dismissed, who was transferred. She said yes she saw it in the force orders.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Saw what?

**Mr. Gates:** That I was discharged from the force in the best interest of the public or something like that.

**Mr. Hanoman:** So having heard that from her, what was your next step?

**Mr. Gates:** Well I sent my wife and daughter by car back to the city before I left and I came down in a "greens trucks" from Black Bush, just to be a little cautious, knowing Mr. Lewis.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Having heard that you had been dismissed from the Guyana Police Force...

**Mr. Gates:** That is not the end of it, Sir.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Okay, sorry.

**Mr. Gates:** I knew sometime or the other Laurie Lewis would have wanted to see me for debriefing... for a lot of things.

**Mr. Hanoman:** So you headed... Describe your journey to Georgetown?

**Mr. Gates:** Well I travelled on the last both, in those days was 21.00 hours. I arrived in the city about mid-night.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Hanoman:** We have to be clear. Everybody does not understand. You are at New Amsterdam. The boat you are speaking about is a ferry?

**Mr. Gates:** A ferry that cross from New Amsterdam to Rosignol, and there was a truck carrying greens from Black Bush to Bourda market so I hitched a ride. May I go on?

**Mr. Hanoman:** Yes, please.

**Mr. Gates:** I arrived at my mother's residence at 19 Hadfield Street, Lodge, at approximately midnight. At about 4.00hrs to 5.00hrs I heard a knock on the door. When I peered through the window, I saw Sergeant 8755 Andrews, also known as "Agent", standing in front of the door. He told me that Mr. Skip Roberts wanted to see me. I told him that I will go the next day or something like that and he said he has to wait to escort me there. When I got outside I realised that the house was surrounded by heavily arm ranks of the Tactical Services Unit.

*13.04hrs*

**Mr. Chairman:** Do you recall a number of people or persons who were there?

**Mr. Gates:** I would say in excess of 20 ranks from the Tactical Services Unit.

**Mr. Chairman:** Was one of the divisions of the so called the Death Squad?

**Mr. Gates:** No, Sergeant 8755 came with about three or four persons. Corporal Cuffy... I knew that they did not come to kill me.

**Ms. Samuels-Brown:** Are you making a distinction between the Tactical Service Unit and the four who accompanied...?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, two separate units. One was from my unit, the Special Squad which was known as the Death Squad. The Tactical Services Unit is a separate unit which was tasked with... If there is a riot, stuff like that they would get involved and deal with it.

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

**Mr. Chairman:** Go forward with the narrative, Counsel

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Hanoman:** Please continue.

**Mr. Gates:** I was....

**Mr. Hanoman:** Go ahead, sorry

**Mr. Gates:** I was escorted to CID Headquarters at the location by then had been changed. It was now on Camp Road close to the seawall and taken to the Office of the Deputy Commissioner of Law Enforcement.

**Mr. Chairman:** I did not get that name.

**Mr. Gates:** Deputy Commissioner of Law Enforcement, Cecil Alexander Roberts known as ‘Skip’ Roberts. At the office I met Mr. Roberts and Mr. Laurie Lewis. ‘Skip’ said to me “welcome back”.

**Mr. Chairman:** Did you say anything in response?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes. I greeted them and he said “we want you to return”. He said “Dr. Roopnarine is looking for you”. That was is exact words.

**Mr. Chairman:** I lost you there. Did he say who was looking for you?

**Mr. Gates:** Dr. Roopnarine. That is what he said. He said he want me to go back and continue with my undercover assignment.

**Ms. Samuels-Brown:** “Dr. Roopnarine is looking for you”?

**Mr. Gates:** That is what he said.

**Ms. Samuels-Brown:** He said “Dr. Roopnarine is looking for you”.

**Mr. Gates:** Yes.

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

**Mr. Hanoman:** What did you say?

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Gates:** I told him that I do not want any part of the Guyana Police Force or anything more to do with that kind of stuff. He told me that I can leave. As I exited his office...

**Mr. Chairman:** You are going too fast.

**Mr. Gates:** Okay, Sir.

**Mr. Chairman:** You told him that you do not want to have...

**Mr. Gates:** Any part of...

**Ms. Samuels-Brown:** His words were "with that kind of stuff".

**Mr. Gates:** I did not want to get into any more undercover operations for the Guyana Police Force.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You are not quoting. You are just giving us the effect to what was said?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes. That is what I said to him. I do not want to have any more involvement in that kind of stuff.

**Mr. Chairman:** Did he respond to that?

**Mr. Gates:** He said, "Okay, you can go".

**Mr. Chairman:** Who said that?

**Mr. Gates:** Skip Roberts. As I left the office and was proceeding downstairs I was confronted by two Indian men and three Negro men, one of whom I learnt to be, I think, was at the time from Special Branch...

**Mr. Chairman:** Two Indian men?

**Mr. Gates:** Two Indian men, I never learned their names but I knew the person who was in charge.

**Mr. Chairman:** You knew one of the two who were in charge?

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Gates:** One of the four. It was four of them coming towards me. I was coming down the steps.

**Mr. Chairman:** There were two Indian men?

**Mr. Gates:** Two Indian men and three Negroes, sorry.

**Ms. Samuels-Brown:** That would make five.

**Mr. Gates:** Four and one, Mr. Tappin and four others.

**Mr. Chairman:** You have lost me, I am afraid. You were coming down the steps. Take the story back from there. You were coming down the steps...

**Mr. Gates:** I was coming down the steps when I saw Mr. Tappin – I did mention his name – Mr. Edington Tappin, who was an Inspector at Special Branch, who was accompanied by two Negro men and two Indian men; five – three Negroes and two Indians.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Tappin was Negro?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, he was.

**Mr. Chairman:** That is clear now.

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Chairman:** I am trying to get clarity from you.

**Mr. Gates:** I was told by Mr. Tappin that they need to have a chat with me. I was escorted downstairs and placed in the back seat of a car, two men on both sides, the driver...

**Mr. Chairman:** Who escorted you downstairs?

**Mr. Gates:** Mr. Tappin and his men.

**Ms. Samuels-Brown:** Do you mean the four other men?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, the four other persons.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Chairman:** You were placed or you got into the back of the car?

**Mr. Gates:** No, they pushed me into the back of a car. One Indian guy sat here and another one and Mr. Tappin in front with the driver. I do not know where the other person went.

**Mr. Hanoman:** So you did not voluntarily go into the car?

**Mr. Gates:** No, because I was smelling danger.

**Mr. Hanoman:** You were pushed into the car?

**Mr. Gates:** Yes, I was pushed into the car and blindfolded.

**Mr. Hanoman:** What caused you to feel that you were in danger?

**Mr. Gates:** Because the look on these guys faces.

**Ms. Samuels-Brown:** Did he use the word "blindfolded" a while ago?

**Mr. Hanoman:** Yes.

**Mr. Gates:** When I was pushed into the car and I sat down, one of the Indian guys on the right he put a blind-fold over my head.

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

**Mr. Hanoman:** You were not arrested officially, officially arrested as far as you know?

**Mr. Gates:** No, I was abducted.

**Mr. Chairman:** Order, order please.

**Mr. Hanoman:** Should I precede, Mr. Chairman?

**Mr. Chairman:** Yes, come to the first convenient next point I wish to stop because I have got to go and I believe other too.

**Mr. Hanoman:** This sounds to me like a very good convenient point.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Chairman:** Very well. Commission Counsel and members of the public we are having a shorter day today than we have had in the recent past because two or three of us, Counsel, who have go to get a 3 O'clock flight out so you will forgive us today. We were able to cover a lot of ground. In normal times we would have gone for another hour but we are stopping today at 13:15hrs. I need to advise you that we have now come to the end of two weeks of public hearings and we are going to break and I am giving you the dates for the next two-week session. We will next start on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> June and we go until the 2<sup>nd</sup> July. We will be short of two weeks but two of our Commissioners have unavoidable dates in the other two days so we will stop on the 2<sup>nd</sup> July. That would be the next session of public hearings. I want to thank you, Mr. Gates, for coming forward. We will expect to resume with you either on the first day or the second. You will be so advised. You are bound over until then. I want to thank the members of the public.

**Mr. Williams:** Mr. Chairman before you do that we did raise the question and you are hearing the name of Mr. Skip Roberts being called regularly and as I indicted to you, in fact, I have a note here that suggests that since he had come in and had expected to be called certainly before Mr. Gates or even Major General McLean, I think he has not been called as I said and it appears that we would not be see him again but that was tax-payers money I am talking about. I do not know if you can have an explanation now....

**Mr. Chairman:** I do not think that you are being fair putting it that way because even though he is in it is perhaps only appropriate that he should follow this witness. Given what has happened it is perhaps only appropriate that he should follow this witness and have an opportunity while it is all fresh to answer because his name has been called on several occasions. It is perhaps a good thing in any event he would have to be recalled by way of a summon letter since his name would have been called in several instances that implicated him so it is good that he should come after the witness and give us his side of the story so do not bother to put out that it is tax-payers money lost.

**Mr. Williams:** No, Sir but it just shows...

**Mr. Chairman:** As it has happened, it is wholly appropriate that he should follow the witness.

**Mr. Williams:** But why do you have to encourage him to come then?



## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Chairman:** I did not know myself.

**Mr. Williams:** He has to come again then.....

**Mr. Chairman:** I did not arrange that but the way it has happened it is perhaps not...

**Mr. Williams:** It is not a trial...

**Mr. Chairman:** ...inappropriate.

**Mr. Williams:** It is not a trial that he needs to return to deal with any issues, he gave his evidence.

**Mr. Chairman:** It is a Commission but according to the rules of the Commission it is laid down by Lord Summon that is why it is called a Summon Letter. He would have had to come anyhow to clear his name if he can and give an explanation of the many instances which his name has been called.

**Mr. Williams:** So he could not do that upfront. If he testified before these two witnesses...

**Mr. Chairman:** He might not have known what the man was going to say against him.

**Mr. Williams:** That is why I am asking you; any witness who has been implicated would be recalled?

**Mr. Chairman:** All I am trying to correct is the message you want to get out that tax-payers' money has been wasted.

**Mr. Williams:** [*Laughter*] Sir, I do not want to get no message out.

**Mr. Chairman:** It is not fair to the Commission and all of you who are taking part of these proceeding will appreciate wholly and fully what has happened in any event Mr. Roberts would have had to come back.

**Mr. Williams:** Why bring him now and then send him back?

**Mr. Chairman:** I did not control that. It is unfortunate perhaps but in any event he would have to come back. So do not mislead the public.

## WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Williams:** Would your subpoena work to Florida, Sir.

**Mr. Chairman:** Pardon?

**Mr. Williams:** Would your subpoena extend to Florida?

**Mr. Chairman:** We have no powers...

**Mr. Williams:** That is the point.

**Mr. Chairman:** ...outside of our boundaries.

**Mr. Williams:** So he might not come at all.

**Mr. Chairman:** I think he would find it wholly and in his interest to come.

**Mr. Hanoman:** I also wish to point out...

**Adjourned Accordingly at 13:19hrs**