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## GUYANA: A CALL FOR CLASS POLITICS

by Frank Murray, RMT

**Now as we wait for the dust to settle, can we sit back and ask the question: how did it get to this?**

I look back to my Guyanese childhood growing up in New Amsterdam, Berbice, where I had uncles and aunties of all ethnicities and colours. Everyone knew everyone. On the way home from school you could be scolded by a number of your aunties or uncles, knowing fully well that they had your interests at heart - nearly the whole town worked for the Mental Hospital, the Public Hospital or in some other Public Service job.

### Main Street

Main Street would be bristling with activity. Cake sellers, clothes sellers, shop fronts open to the street, each with the local characters that you had to greet by saying "Hello, Mister" or "Hello, Miss" as you passed.

Lying on or just off Main Street there were churches, mosques and temples to serve every creed - Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Hindu, Muslim, English and Scottish.

### Diversity

With all this diversity of life, New Amsterdam was a bastion of the People's Progressive Party led by Dr Cheddi Jagan.

Politics, trade unions, religion, society in all its forms revolved around the local community, and New Amsterdam was just one of many of such communities throughout Guyana.

We had a common enemy; we were in a battle against colonialism and the imperialist forces that for centuries ruled over us.

Guyanese people were very political. Politics

was discussed everywhere and as we pursued a political system that would involve all citizens we were the envy of the whole Caribbean.

Those were the glory days.

Still in my boyhood when I first came to England, I found that quite a few of the prominent black people carrying on the fight for workers' freedom in the UK were from Guyana, one of whom was to become my personal hero.

### Rights

After a particularly bad day at school, being taunted by the white children to "Go back to your own country" - a jeer often taken up against me and other Caribbean pupils - I was watching The Eamonn Andrews Show. That was where I saw a Guyanese man named Roy Sawh take out his Commonwealth passport and read from the inside of the cover, boldly telling Eamonn that he had as much right to be in Britain as anyone.

### Class first

Maybe it is my naivety, but I believe I grew up in a Guyana where you were Guyanese whatever your race, and thankfully my learning was interrupted before the nation got to the "separate races" part. The part where we make one another the enemy and start to put the needs of our colonial, imperialist and local elites first.

Let us reject this race *politricks*.

Let us get back to our class politics for the good of the Guyanese people and of Guyana.

## Guyana Elections 2020

The soap opera of the 2020 Guyana general elections continues to baffle and confuse. One would hardly know whether to cry or laugh, except that this is a deadly serious matter. A law degree is almost necessary to keep pace with the claim and counter-claim arguments that have set Guyana on a path to the Caribbean Court of Justice. That is, if the PPP/C get their way, for the jurisdiction of that court over Guyana's elections is already being questioned and will likely be the subject of legal challenge by the Government.

### Where will it end?

Where all this will end is anybody's guess; only a fool would try to predict the outcome. One thing is clear: APNU is not about to concede defeat anytime soon. The CARICOM observers have passed judgment on the fairness of the elections and have declared the PPP/C winners. One gets the feeling that the game plan of the Government is to have the elections voided and fresh elections called at some future date. The worst-case scenario is for the government to cry foul play and simply refuse to demit office, in what could only be described as a barefaced election coup.

### Broken System

The Guyana electoral system has been broken for a long time. All parties have recognised this, especially when they sit in opposition and see the suffering of their racial constituency. Too much is at stake in these winner-takes-all elections ; the result may determine whether Indo-Guyanese or Afro-Guyanese dominate government during the next period - and which demographic group may then want to get even when/if there is a reversal of power.

### Benefit of All

Politics is a dirty game and only by setting the rules so that no one ethnicity has the upper hand will there be a good outcome for Guyana. The time is ripe for the solution to which all political parties in Guyana must pay more than lip service - a government of national unity, with both major races at the top table, genuinely looking out for the benefit of the masses.

*Luke Daniels, President, CLS*

## US Dockworkers Strike for Justice

The International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) shut down all ports along the West Coast of the USA on 19 June in solidarity with the George Floyd protesters. Thousands of people filled the streets of Oakland, California on 9 June to honor Juneteenth and stand in solidarity with the strike at the Port of Oakland to honor Juneteenth: the date when enslaved people in Texas learned that they were free in 1865, more than two years after slavery officially ended in the United States.

Protesters gathered at the port to hear from Angela Davis and the relatives of Black people killed by police. Marchers then moved to Oakland City Hall, where speakers spoke with urgency of the need for momentum in the global fight against racism.

The police presence at the event was minimal. The ILWU provided their own security and monitored traffic and safety.

*"Thank you for shutting down the ports today, on Juneteenth ... the day when we renew our commitment to the struggle for freedom,"* said Angela Davis, one of the speakers that addressed the crowds at the port in the morning.

*"With the ILWU's history of advocating for the end of police terror and violence we decided to put a call out,"* said Trent Willis, president of the ILWU Local 10 in San Francisco.

Elton Meyers of ILWU Local 10 emphasized the importance of direct action from unions to effect change: *"When their pockets are hurting, that's the only way to make them realize what's going on and how serious the situation is."*

Full report [kqed.org](http://kqed.org)



*Angela Davis addresses the strikers on the dock*

## Statues Removed *by Luke Daniels*

**Finally, direct action on the wave of Black Lives Matter protests, removed the statue of 17th century slave trader Edward Colson. This after years of getting nowhere with the peaceful, legal demands for his removal. Defenders of empire were quick to condemn the direct action of the protestors, saying they should act peacefully, some even arguing he was part of British history and should not be erased.**

I must admit I have a problem with statues on the whole, as I am not too much in favour of hero worship as most do not stand up well to critical scrutiny. For the slave owners and traders some argue that what they did was acceptable behaviour at the time, and they should not be judged by our modern standards. They ignore the many who at the time said slavery was immoral and wrong. But what are statues for except to say that here stands a great person, and you should admire and pay respects to their achievements. Take Winston Churchill for example, most Britons/Europeans would rather hold on to the stories of glory and triumph at defeating the Nazis- ignoring the role the Russians played in that defeat. There can be no reverence for winning a war, with the help of the very brown and black bodies that you later describe as savages. Our leaders today need understand that their deeds will be judged at a high standard. There must be no statues for those who subjected the Windrush Generation to a hostile environment, then declare a Windrush day as though that would absolve them for all the unnecessary suffering they created.

A statue can say a lot, like the one of Queen Victoria sitting prominently in front of the Law Courts in Georgetown, Guyana. Placed there from colonial time only to be removed and unceremoniously dumped at the back of our botanical gardens after British Guiana gained independence from Britain. This by a leader who had no problem naming a whole city after himself and building a mausoleum for himself to boot. As he lay at rest, and with the arrival of a new president, Victoria was rescued, brushed up and again put on display, where she today looks down on all before her. But her fortune may be about to take another turn. Since the Black Lives Matter supporters tore down the statue of slave trader Edward Colson, rolled him down the streets of Bristol and dumped him into the river, some citizens are calling for her removal.

I am not so much in favour of destroying things which have been crafted, so a museum may be a good place for some- here the deeds of these mostly men immortalised in statue may be studied and critically examined. There is also the vexed question of representation, I don't see too many statues of people looking like me around. Women have complained for a very long time about a lack of representation for women, and how long did it take for a statue of a woman to appear anywhere near Parliament? To redress the balance, now might be a good time to replace all those statues taken down with ones celebrating women and diversity.

Statues can be useful for raising awareness about the deeds of those on display- so don't take all down at the same time as we need the discussion to continue, if only to raise awareness and expose those that would defend them. Do not trust anyone who would defend a slave trader statue; however violently they may have been ripped from their stony perch, or how deep and murky the water they may be submerged in. It could never be anything like the treatment of the enslaved Africans who toiled for three hundred years on the plantations in the New World, or the many who perished at the bottom of the deep Atlantic as they made the journey chained and packed like sardines.



*Queen Victoria, Georgetown*

# Black Lives Matter more than Statues

By *Steve Cushion*, UCU

Hundreds of thousands of people in cities across the world are marching to show their solidarity with the protests in the USA against the police murder of George Floyd. His murder by the police was just one more in the long list of such killings in the US, in the UK and around the world, but the response to this latest outrage has been a storm of protest. Black and white protesters, mostly young, have changed the political landscape.

In the UK the government has shown its indifference to ordinary people's lives. The protesters in Bristol who pulled down the statue of slave trader Edward Colston will be cheered by millions of people. But the problem is not the statues but the legacy of the slave trade that those statues were erected to justify.

British capitalism has its origins in the triangular slave trade that saw the growth in British textile production as cloth was taken to Africa to be exchanged for slaves who were then transported to the British colonies in the West Indies and the US to be exchanged for cotton and sugar to be brought back in order to feed and clothe the urban poor as cheaply as possible.

## Racism

Racism, which the supporters of the slave trade used as a justification for slavery, has badly infected British society. The racism of the police, the unemployment figures for young black people, the endless discrimination and petty humiliations of everyday life, the Windrush scandal, all of these things and more have their origins in the wealth and power that the British ruling class gained from slavery.

The British government has a long history of contempt for those victimised by slavery and the ongoing consequences to the descendants of people enslaved under the British Empire. During this period, the enslaved labourers received no wages. In pursuing the case for reparations for slavery, we advance the proposition that not only was slavery important for the development of modern capitalism but that currently existing business corporations owe their very existence to profits made from the slave-based economy

of the 17th and 18th centuries. It is to these modern corporations that we present the bill for 200 years of unpaid wages in the name of the descendants of the enslaved.

## Neoliberal

Successive governments have adopted neoliberal politics that see all social problems as police problems. After decades of austerity, governments have no will or ability to pursue the kinds of social policies that might address crime and disorder without the use of the police; government has basically abandoned poor neighborhoods to market forces, backed up by a repressive criminal justice system. As poverty deepens and housing costs rise, government support for affordable housing has evaporated. As mental health facilities close, police become the first responders to calls for assistance with mental health problems. Modern policing is largely a war on the poor that does little to make communities safer. Instead of asking the police to solve social problems we should organize for real justice and fight to produce a society designed to put people before profit.

## Finish the Job

The protests in the USA have sparked a global response, part of which was the joyful removal of the slave-trader's statue. We need to finish the job and radically change a society that continues to rest upon exploitation of human labour and relies upon racial divisions to maintain the domination of the wealthy few.



## Venezuela: UK's colonialist impulses

by Francisco Dominguez, Venezuela Solidarity Campaign

On 24th January 2019, Jeremy Hunt then UK's foreign minister, after his summoning to the US State Dept., declared the May 2018 presidential election that led to the re-election of Nicola Maduro as fraudulent saying "*The election on the 20th of May was deeply flawed; ballot boxes were stuffed.*"

There are no ballots in Venezuelan elections since they are 100% computerised, so either Hunt seemed not to have been aware of this, or it was an inconvenient fact he decided to omit, or even worse, he may have read a pre-prepared spin. Thus, on 4th February 2019, the Tory government, toeing Trump's line, recognised Guaidó as "*the constitutional interim President of Venezuela*". The hard fact is that at the May 2018 election president Maduro obtained 6,248,864 votes, whilst 2 opposition candidates got 1,927,958 (Henri Falcon) and 988,761 (Javier Bertucci), respectively; that is, Maduro won with 67.84% of the votes cast.

### Legitimacy

A quick comparison shows the legitimacy of Maduro's victory since he won with 67,84% representing 31,7% of the total electoral register whilst Trump got 46% that was 27% of the electoral register, Macri (Argentina) got 51,2% with 26,8% of the total electorate, Juan Manuel Santos (Colombia) with 53,1% a 23,7% of the electoral register, and Piñera (Chile) 54,6% or barely 26,5% of the electorate. So, the UK's position does not seem to hold any water. But on what 'democratic' grounds did the UK government recognise Guaidó?

Juan Guaidó has never stood as a presidential candidate, and the concept 'interim president' does not exist in Venezuela's constitution. So, no democratic, legal or constitutional grounds for the UK recognition exist. The only base is his self-proclamation in a public square in Caracas in January 2019. So from the inception, Guaidó's 'presidency' is totally bereft of any democratic credibility. Furthermore, Guaidó not only openly called on the military to oust the government, but actually did carry out a failed coup d'état in 30th April 2019.

In February that same year, Guaidó, in complicity with the Colombian and US governments, during a Richard Branson-led concert, sought to use Colombian military and paramilitary forces to invade and control Venezuelan territory as a prelude to an external (US) intervention. During the concert Guaidó got the armed protection of Colombian narco-trafficker gang Los Rastrojos, taking smiley photos of himself with them. And, Guaidó and his entourage have been engulfed in colossal instances of corruption leading to a score of resignations, such as his 'ambassador' to Colombia, Humberto Calderon Berti.<sup>1</sup> No concern for democracy, human rights, or crimes have emanated from the UK government about Guaidó's exploits.

### Mercenaries

Not only Guaidó has persisted in his undemocratic practices, but on 3 May 2020 he had contracted US mercenaries to launch an attack on Venezuela's presidential palace, kidnap or assassinate President Nicolas Maduro, the president of the National Constituent Assembly, Diosdado Cabello, and the armed forces commander in chief, then install a de facto Guaidó government and proceed to purge Venezuela of Chavismo by the use of lethal force. That is, he signed a contract to exterminate a political current that has millions of active supporters.

### Interim President

Yet, despite the public and overwhelming evidence of Guaidó's intensely undemocratic and criminal behaviour, the UK government continues to recognise him as 'interim president' The reason is much worse than we all suspected: Venezuela's vast resources. The Canary in an article revealed the existence of a secretive FCO "Unit for the Reconstruction of Venezuela" set up in cahoots with Juan Guaidó in special visit invited by the UK government. The journal obtained this under the Freedom of Information Act. The Canary aptly comments, "one can only guess at what these "British business" interests might be within a country that reportedly sits on the world's largest proven oil reserves." Guaidó met foreign secretary Dominic Raab, and the whole team of FCO high officials in charge of the Americas.

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## Venezuela: UK's colonialist impulses

And, as part of the same operation, The Canary reports that Guaidó's representative to the UK, Vanessa Neumann, "in September 2019, [she] was reportedly secretly recorded "surrendering Venezuela's claim to the disputed Essequibo region in exchange for political support from the UK government"." In other words, the Tory government is actively aiding and abetting US objectives of 'regime change' in Venezuela so as to engage in colonial pillage. All of which had been preceded by the UK's consistent support for Guaidó, thus for example in January 2019, the FCO had "urged the Bank of England to grant Guaidó access to £1.2bn of Venezuelan gold reserves."

### Sharing in the Spoils

Thus it is abundantly clear that the Tory government support for Guaidó has nothing to do with human rights, democracy, liberty or election 'irregularities', the Tories, after all were staunch friends and defenders of Chile's dictator Augusto Pinochet: is all about sharing in the spoils. It has everything to do with the UK playing the role of junior partner to almost all US military adventures to benefit from colonial plunder such as the overthrow of Iran's president, Dr Mohammad Mossaddeq, in 1953, carried for its huge oil reserves which UK oil companies enjoyed until the 1979 Islamic Re-

volution. Or the Iraq war in 2003, the invasion of Libya in 2011, and the intervention in Syria from 2011 to the present, just to mention the most prominent. According to the Stop the War Coalition:

*"British service personnel are operating in at least 30 countries around the world... more than 1,000 British Troops in Afghanistan [...] more than 1,300 in the Middle East, including in Iraq and Syria, both countries that have been brought to the brink of collapse by war and foreign intervention... British special forces are participating in the Saudi-led war on Yemen which had created a desperate humanitarian catastrophe..."*

### Return the Gold

We must demand the UK stops this gross interference in the internal affairs of Venezuela, a sovereign nation, and ceases its violation of international law by illegally retaining 31 tons of gold entrusted to the Bank of England as custodian by returning it to the government that it in practice recognises, and the one that holds the UN seat, the legitimate government of President Maduro.

And, for good measure, we must demand the UK government withdraws the bogus recognition of Juan Guaidó's self-proclaimed 'interim president of nothing', being used for the sole purpose of engaging in colonial looting.

## Remove the statue of slave trader Robert Geffrye from the Museum of the Home in Hackney

Sir Robert Geffrye (1613–1703) was an English merchant, involved with the slave trade. He made his fortune with the East India Company and the Royal African Company and used this money to build the Alms Houses that became the Museum of the Home.

Formerly called the Geffrye Museum, the museum has been re-named, the statue should be removed too.

Robert Geffrye should be condemned to the history books so that we can learn from the shameful past. He should no longer be celebrated with a prominent statue. Take him off the front of the building perhaps stick it down in the basement of the museum as an exhibit where we can teach children about how horrible the slave trade was.



## Report from Jamaica by Paul Ward

### STATE OPPRESSION

There was a demonstration outside the US embassy in Kingston on 6 June in support of the BLM demonstrations taking place in the USA. It was attended by about 100 people, very much linking the oppression in the USA with the continued oppression by the state in Jamaica. The link is timely because in the previous week there were three prominent cases of state brutality reported in the news.

One was an elderly disabled woman, Susan Bogle, shot dead in her bed in August town (several shots) and she lay sleeping under her sheets - the soldiers responsible were in pursuit of a suspect. No sanctions have yet been applied.

An 81 year old, mentally-challenged man, Noel Chambers, in the Tower Street prison died after 40 years with no charges against him. He died in the most awful state, malnourished, covered in bed sores, vermin bites and chinks (bed-bugs). There are 146 others also being held without trial for countless years.

### Shooting

And then another shooting by the police of a man, Jermaine Ferguson in downtown Kingston who people claim was not threatening anyone. They have been insisting that 'Ghetto people have rights too'.

This in addition to ten-year anniversary replays of Tivoli 2010 footage with mothers speaking of how their teenage sons were taken outside and executed by the police / soldiers, and some even inside their houses. It was most definitely about intimidating the whole community and taking out (literally) as many of the young men as possible. The USA was intimately involved in the planning and executing the massacre, possibly on a scale not much less than their involvement in Grenada in 1983.



*Soldiers leave a crime scene where a disabled August Town woman was shot and killed during a police-military operation*

### Ineffective

And INDECOM (the body set up to investigate police killings) is always under pressure by the police authorities to back off, supported at least implicitly by government spokespersons from time to time. The same goes for all the supposed watch-dog bodies in Jamaica with some now absorbed into a completely ineffective 'Integrity Commission'.

If we move the intersection of class and race more towards class in Jamaica's case, the brutality and neglect by the arms of the state are as bad as anywhere else. We still have the paramilitary police force instituted by the colonial power at the time of the Morant Bay rebellion in 1865. Calls in the Tivoli Report for reforms have largely been ignored including the use of body cameras and dedicated guns.....

### FBI in Kingston

Quite alarming now is the news that the USA will establish an FBI office in Jamaica. Their new embassy built in Kingston some ten years ago is a veritable fortress – some suggest a refuge for a US President outside the USA, should the need arise (like right now??) We thought the challenge was a take-over by China (rapidly becoming overtly fascist) but it looks like the USA still wants to run things here. Imperialism live and well.

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## **Report from Jamaica** *continued*

### **COVID-19**

Early closure of the borders in Jamaica, combined with the promotion of physical distancing, the wearing of masks, 'tan a yu yard' messages, curfews, closure of schools and a handful of community lockdowns has limited the pandemic to about 500 cases, with 10 deaths and a (so far) 60+ recovery rate. Very few have become either seriously or moderately ill. The curfews and lockdowns have caused problems for those living in congested communities, with too little time to shop for food, the reduced hours often causing more crowding, rather than less – little evidence of intelligent adjustment to our own local circumstances.

### **Standards of Inspection**

Half of the cases have been associated with one BPO workplace in Portmore (Alorica). It seems that the standards set when most BPOs were inspected early on, including Alorica were clearly insufficient, or were not followed after the inspections took place.

As regards lost incomes, the Ministry of Finance instituted a financial support programme called 'WE CARE'. It provides some level of income replacement for those who have lost jobs because of the pandemic, and a small grant for those unregistered workers in the informal economy. But after the end of June, there will be no more with the financial economy in trouble, debt-reduction targets and borrowing limits relaxed as tax incomes plummet with a 10-15% fall in GDP predicted this year.

### **Tourists**

With local transmissions now reduced to near zero, the government will be opening the borders on 15 June to tourists / all-comers but without effective checks. This is an insult to returning Jamaicans who up to the day before that will be tested and quarantined either at home or in government facilities (if tested positive) for fourteen days – this has been the case ever since the government reluctantly began, in early May, to allow Jamaicans to return.. The government has been put under

pressure by the big tourism players - the vulnerable workers who would of course like their jobs back (despite poor pay, insecurity and no unions) are not so sure. Some have suggested that tourists should present a COVID-19 free document before boarding their plane, based on a test done within three days of departure. The tourists would pay for their tests, just as with vaccination and visa requirements in some counties. But instead it has turned in a race-to-the bottom which may well back-fire if the numbers arriving increase too quickly.

### **Dependency**

The vulnerability resulting from tourism-dependency in the Caribbean is very real. In Jamaica's case it is over 300,000 workers, 12% of GDP and 50% of foreign exchange earnings. I have been suggesting that the government plug the gap in local incomes, and thus local demand, with an injection of 'helicopter money' equal in value to the domestic equivalent of the lost foreign exchange earnings. Helicopter money is the quaint shorthand for the government 'printing' (creating) money that would be paid directly to households - it is unorthodox since it doesn't incur a future sovereign debt being a single entry item in the central bank accounts. In this case it would not be inflationary because there has not been much decrease in the amount of goods and services available to local people. I have suggested that those who have lost their jobs because of the virus be paid 75% of their proven, pre-COVID earnings for initially three months. It can be done but our own bankers (and the IMF) who are in bed with the government would likely not even go near the idea because they would not benefit directly themselves.

### **Food supply**

This injection would help to address the disgraceful problem of 'surplus' food-crops in Jamaica (the food-stuffs that formerly went to the hotels) - now 'surplus' because local people don't have the money to buy them, nor are their mechanisms in place to re-direct their destination. Chickens have been slaughtered in their thousands and crops left in the fields.

# SPEAK OUT TO STOP ANNEXATION NOW



## *Palestine Solidarity Campaign*

The new Israeli Government has said that it intends to annex large swathes of Palestinian land in the West Bank, starting in July, land which was militarily occupied in 1967. This would be the culmination of years of appropriation of land – through the forced displacement of Palestinians, settlement and the annexation of East Jerusalem. Annexation, illegal under international law, is the forcible and unilateral acquisition of territory over which it has no recognised sovereignty and to make it an integral part of the state – in this case, Israel.

Palestinian civil society has made a global call for ‘effective measures’ to be taken to stop this annexation happening. If the measures are to be effective, this means the UK should now, at the very least, be adhering to an ethical policy on all the UK’s trade with Israel, in particular by applying international law on settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory and stopping any arms trade with Israel that is used in violation of the human rights of Palestinians.

In the midst of the Covid pandemic a number of organisations and individuals are cooperating to try to respond to the call from Palestine by making Annexation a live issue on the current political agenda. Israel’s timetable is to annex land quickly with Trump’s support – this means we cannot wait.

If you agree with this and want to support the Palestinian call for action, please indicate your agreement with the following statement in one or more of the ways listed below:

### STATEMENT: SPEAK OUT TO STOP ANNEXATION NOW

*I am speaking out now in order to stop the threatened annexation of Palestinian land by Israel in July, and I call on the UK Government and all UK political parties to support the call of Palestinian civil society organisations for Effective Measures by all States to Stop Israel’s Illegal Annexation of the Occupied West Bank.*

### TAKE ACTION:

Add your name to the statement above by clicking here;

<https://palestinecampaign.eaction.online/stopannexation>

Write to your MP using our template letter. Just click here.

<https://palestinecampaign.eaction.online/parliamentannexation>

Palestine Solidarity Campaign sends its full and unwavering solidarity to the anti-racist uprisings sweeping the United States. We share their anger and frustration at the system of white supremacy, which means black people are murdered with impunity by institutionally racist police forces. We see that the system of racism that disenfranchises African-Americans, rooted in the founding of the United States through the genocide of the indigenous population and the pillaging of wealth through slavery, continues to this day. However, we know structural racism isn’t just an American problem. In the UK, the Institute of Race relations report “Dying for justice“ (2015) identified over 500 people from BAME, refugee and migrant communities who died in a 13 years period in suspicious circumstances in which the police, prison authorities or immigration detention officers were implicated.

We know the only way to defeat racism is through uniting our struggles as part of a global movement for collective justice. To do this we must act in solidarity, recognising that none of us are free until all of us can live with dignity and justice. These cannot just be empty words.



*Israeli police officers detain a Palestinian protestor during scuffles outside the compound housing al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem*

# Comrade Ed Spring – A Tribute

by Jean Tate, Dennis Bartholomew and Frank Murray

It is with great sorrow that we have to inform you of the recent passing of Ed Spring. He was an exceptional fighter in the cause of liberation for all people and one of the many dear friends of Grenada and its Revolution. It is with much sadness that we pay this tribute to such an outstanding figure.

“Comrade” Ed, as he was known to many, was a community organiser, a campaigner for social justice, an artist and a communist. Like many close friends we could not remember when we met Ed. Some had known him from his time in the Communist Party of Great Britain and others from his time as a leader of the Tottenham Community Project (TCP), located on the High Road, a short distance from the football club.

## Hub in the Community

TCP was a vital hub in the community of the area. All sorts of bodies from local restaurants to anti racist and political organisations to union branches and right up to national level used the facilities. Workers on strike always received a welcome and support. You could go in and do the artwork for your pamphlet, flyer or poster with support from the workers there and then get it printed. Ed educated and trained many young people in the area in many skills and much political understanding. The basement held a massive press over which Ed presided. He was a qualified printer and signwriter. Numerous left wing, and other organisations, including Caribbean Labour Solidarity (CLS), proudly bear banners made by Ed. In a very quiet and humble way he supported and encouraged dozens of individuals and community groups in Tottenham.

## Karia Press

Many organisations used the building for meetings, education and organising. For example, Buzz Johnson, the outstanding publisher of Caribbean literature, was given the space to establish Karia Press, which in turn produced over 50 titles on Caribbean, African, and developing nations issues. Ed was instrumental in the success achieved by Buzz.

He was a leader of a group from Tottenham to

Grenada during the Revolution and was a member of a volunteer work group in Cuba in the 80s. In 1983 the US invaded



Grenada and captured the remaining leadership of the Revolution. Ed worked tirelessly with comrades from Grenada and across the world to thwart the US's plans to execute them and later on to secure their freedom. Many nights were spent at TCP with Ed giving of his publishing skills without a thought for himself. Noreen and Alan from the Committee for Human Rights in Grenada (UK) said that he was of great help to the organisation and delivered what he promised and on time. This help was instrumental in preventing the executions and eventually securing their release.

## CLS

Luke Daniels, President of Caribbean Labour Solidarity remarked that Ed held the organisation together when membership and attendance was low, allowing it to remain in existence. “*Without Ed CLS would have folded. Because of him we are now celebrating 42 years of existence*” he said.

Ed's interest and skills extended beyond pure politics to others areas. For example as an amateur photographer he volunteered to make the copies of photos of Bruce Castle, a Tottenham landmark, to contribute to the local history of the area. In August 2011 Mark Duggan, a 29-year-old local man, was shot dead by police in Tottenham. There followed uprisings across the country resulting in considerable damage. The Home Secretary asked for an independent review into the Riot (Damages) Act 1886 and Ed, on behalf of the Tottenham Trading Partnership, contributed to this.

Comrade Ed, we are sorry at your passing and miss your presence. Your memory remain in our hearts.