

Note to self: look into [Friedrich Martens](#), See also: [2023 Guayana Esequiba crisis](#) and [2023 Venezuelan referendum](#).

*Regarding the recent [ICJ ruling](#) (presided over by former State Department employee, [Judge Joan Donoghue](#)) on the Venezuela-Guyana border dispute and the 2020 Guyanese general election: I have come to the conclusion, based on my research, that the USG—along with the UK Foreign Office and Canada—interfered in the 2020 election, in order that their favored candidate (Irfaan Ali of the People’s Progressive Party/Civic) would become President, and that the disputed territory, of Essequibo, rightfully belongs to Venezuela.*

## Research:

### [While No One Was Looking: America, Guyana, and Venezuela](#)

“On March 2, 2020, the people of Guyana went to the polls. According to the Carter Center, at first things went really well. And then they didn’t. **At the close of the day, President David Granger had been re-elected.** But, though nine of ten districts reported cleanly, the largest district was mired in confusion. And the promise became chaos.

...

“**The US was a leading voice in the call for a recount and the US applied a great deal of pressure on Granger to hand over the office of President.** Two weeks after the initial count, [Secretary of State Mike Pompeo warned Granger](#) not to form an ‘illegitimate government’ based on ‘electoral fraud’ or he would ‘be subjected to a variety of serious consequences from the United States Government.’ Then, on July 15, five weeks after the June 7 recount was completed, [Pompeo announced](#) ‘visa restrictions on individuals who have been responsible for, or complicit in, undermining **democracy** in Guyana.’

“After undermining democracy, declaring fair elections frauds and supporting coups in Bolivia and Venezuela, why is America so concerned about fair elections in Guyana?

...

“**Ali’s willingness to cooperate with the US, who is actively and aggressively pressing for regime change in Guyana’s neighboring Venezuela, is in sharp contrast to Granger’s reluctance.** [Granger rejected a request](#)\* that came just after the March election from **Voice of America for permission to use Guyana to broadcast into Venezuela.** Just after the new election results, **Ali agreed to partner with America against Venezuela.** [Granger’s campaign manager suggested](#)\* that the Guyanese election ‘seem no longer to be about the Guyanese people but about other interests.’

“Miguel Tinker Salas, Professor of Latin American History at Pomona College, and one of the world’s leading experts on Venezuelan history and politics, told me in a personal correspondence that ‘**The US has been attempting to manipulate relations between Guyana and Venezuela, especially the long standing border dispute between both countries over the issue of the Essequibo which Venezuela has historically claimed.**’ He added the

reminder that **'Pompeo was recently in Guyana and Suriname to promote the US policy of isolating Venezuela.'**

"But, as Miguel Tinker Salas' comment points out, **the US has more than Venezuela in its sights. It also has its sights on the oil discoveries in the disputed waters of the Essequibo.** As Miguel Tinker Sala told me, **'Add to that oil, and the role of Exxon which is still smarting over their exit from Venezuela and you have the conditions which allow the US to exacerbate tensions between both countries.'** But to understand the important role of oil in the US's interference in the relationship between Guyana and Venezuela requires an understanding of two hundred years of history. And a half century of hypocrisy.

### **"History**

"The border dispute that the US is exploiting and manipulating was born almost two centuries ago in 1835 when the British gently eased over the western borders of the Guyanese colony it had inherited from the Dutch and **usurped a large portion of land from Venezuela.**

"In 1899, the matter of the disputed territory came up before an international tribunal. **But the tribunal ruled in favor of Britain and granted British Guyana control over the disputed territory.** Of course it did: **the tribunal was stacked.** Rather than being an impartial tribunal made up of Latin American countries as it should have been, **the dispute was adjudicated by an international body dominated by the United States and – of all countries – Britain. Britain was hardly a disinterested party. Worst of all, Venezuela was not permitted a delegate to the tribunal! The Venezuelans were represented by former U.S. President Benjamin Harris.**

"Needless to say,' Miguel Tinker Salas says in his book Venezuela: What Everyone Needs to Know, **Venezuela's 'prospects of prevailing in a tribunal dominated by foreign powers appeared slim.'** And slim it was. **The tribunal, which was dominated by Britain and excluded Venezuela, ruled in favor of Britain and against Venezuela.** The tribunal issued its decision without any supporting rationale. **The ruling gave Britain possession of over 90% of the disputed territory it had stolen from Venezuela sixty-four years earlier.**

"Years later, it would be revealed that the tribunal was not only stacked, it was fixed. The official secretary of the American represented Venezuelan delegation to the international tribunal, **Severo Mallet-Prevost\*\***, **confirmed Venezuela's allegation when he revealed in a posthumously published letter that the governments of Britain and Russia influenced the president of the tribunal to exert pressure on the arbitrators to rule in Britain's favor.**

...

"But this is not the first time. As Miguel Tinker Salas said, **Exxon 'is still smarting over their exit from Venezuela' in the Hugo Chavez years.** So, despite the Treaty of Geneva, Guyana has begun extracting oil in the disputed territory. In 2015, ExxonMobil made a huge oil discovery in the very waters disputed by Guyana and Venezuela. **In order to get around the laws enacted by Chavez that nationalized the oil and natural gas industries of Venezuela that**

had previously been controlled mostly by American oil interests, ExxonMobil and Guyana simply asserted that the oil was in Guyanese territory. That assertion was made in flagrant defiance of the Treaty of Geneva, which stipulated that neither country could act in that territory until the border had been resolved. America can now portray Venezuela as an aggressor, attempting to steal oil from its tiny, impoverished neighbor.

“So, the US is concerned with Guyana as a tool for exerting pressure on Venezuela both for regime change and to steal ~~back~~ the oil that Chavez ~~took back~~ [nationalized] to use for his own people: oil reserves so large, they could now make Guyana one of the richest countries in the world.”

[Continue reading...](#)

\*[2020] [Guyana's long election deadlock stirs fears of civil war](#)

“Opposition leader Bharrat Jagdeo told the Financial Times that war was unlikely but if the Granger government ‘refuses to leave office, people are not going to take it lightly’. **He said some in the country were ‘working aggressively to divide our people, particularly along racial lines’.** [divide and rule]

“Last week Mr Granger’s campaign manager, Joseph Harmon, claimed that ‘dark forces are threatening to pull us apart’.”

“In an apparent reference to next-door Venezuela, [he said](#) the disputed elections ‘seem no longer to be about the Guyanese people but about other interests’. **The Granger government believes the US is trying to use Guyana in its [bid to topple Nicolás Maduro](#) as Venezuela’s president.**

...

“The election has exposed Guyana’s long-simmering racial tensions. Mr Granger has relied on support from the Afro-Guyanese community that makes up 30 per cent of the population while Mr Jagdeo’s PPP is backed by Guyanese of Indian descent. They make up about 40 per cent of the population.”

\*\*Wikipedia: [Severo Mallet-Prevost](#) [in Spanish, [CIA-edited](#) English Wikipedia only mentions him under [Curtis, Mallet-Prevost, Colt & Mosle](#), which does not disclose the following\*\* 📌]

\*\*[2009] [Memorandum by Severo Mallet Prevost](#)

\*\*[2008] [The sovereignty of Venezuela on the Guayana Esequiba.](#) [in Spanish]

[2020] [US Congressional Representatives condemn Trump’s interference in Guyana elections](#)

[2020] [UK under pressure to join US sanctions on Guyana](#)

“The discovery of oil off the country’s coast is destined to transform its economic fortunes, raising the political stakes even higher.

After the recount, the chief executive of Guyana’s electoral commission, Keith Lowenfield, disqualified 120,000 votes, nearly a fifth of those cast, handing the contested victory to Granger.

“Last week, the [Caribbean](#) court of justice, Guyana’s final appellate court, overruled Lowenfield. But now another legal challenge has been declared in an attempt to prevent the commission from declaring Granger’s defeat.

...

“Pompeo’s move has been endorsed by the **US Senate foreign relations committee**. **Canada** also said it would use all the tools at its disposal to demand a swift and transparent conclusion to the election process.

“Two UK Foreign Office ministers, Tariq Ahmad and Liz Sugg, have made successive calls for Granger to accept the result.”

[2020] [Anger over World Bank’s \\$55m pledge to Guyana’s fossil fuel industry](#)

“‘The World Bank’s public assistance to upstream oil development in [Guyana](#) is a blatant contradiction to Guyana’s climate change priorities and the bank’s commitment to the Paris climate agreement,’ said Heike Mainhardt, a senior advisor at Urgewald, a German non-governmental organisation that has tracked the projects. ‘I am perplexed by the [\[USG-controlled\]](#) World Bank’s disregard for its own warning.’

...

“Oil production has become a significant issue in the run-up to Guyana’s election in March, after criticism of the incumbent government run by President David Granger.

“This month **Global Witness**\*\*\*, a corruption monitor, said a 40-year deal agreed between the government and ExxonMobil for drilling rights would [deprive the country of \\$55bn](#). The Guyanese opposition has maintained that it would not renegotiate the ExxonMobil contracts.”

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[2020] [Guyana votes](#)

“As Pres. David Granger and main **opposition candidate Irfaan Ali of the People’s Progressive Party (PPP)** step up campaigning with less than a week left, there are major concerns among international observers and the two major parties about the number of eligible voters on the voters list. In all nine parties met the criteria to contest the elections for the 65 seats in the single chamber parliament.”

\*\*\*[Global Witness Donors](#) (Fronts that I know of, offhand):

The Alexander Soros Foundation (George Soros), Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Ireland, Ford Foundation, The Foundation to Promote Open Society (Open Society

Foundations-George Soros), Luminate (Omidyar Network-Pierre Omidyar), Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Hewlett Foundation

[/end [blog post](#)]

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### [World's Biggest New Oil Find Turns Guyana Upside Down](#)

“Amid mounting criticism of the terms, Guyana’s resources ministry recently hired U.K. law firm Clyde & Co. to examine the circumstances leading to the 2016 deal. It found that Exxon pressured Guyanese officials into signing the deal in a short time frame, ‘presumably because knowledge of a ‘world class’ discovery could have altered the government’s negotiating position,’ according to a copy of the Jan. 30 investigative report reviewed by the Journal.

“The resources minister, Raphael Trotman, a close political ally of Mr. Granger’s, agreed that Guyana might have secured better terms with Exxon with a lengthier negotiation, but called the rush to sign with the American oil giant necessary due to hostilities with neighboring Venezuela, which in the past had sent naval vessels into Guyanese waters in a dispute over the territory where the oil was found.

“Exxon declined to discuss whether it pressured Guyana’s government. It defended the deal as fair for a first-time producer such as Guyana.

“‘It offers globally competitive terms,’ said Exxon spokesman Casey Norton. ‘It was done at a time where there was significant technical and financial risk.’

“The deal comes at a good time for Exxon, which has been [struggling to maintain its leading status](#) among global oil companies in recent years. Exxon expects a return of at least 30% in Guyana, more than double the 15% return the industry regards as the lowest necessary to justify investment.

“Since first striking oil there in 2015, the Exxon-led consortium, which also includes [Hess](#) Corp. and China National Offshore Oil Corp., has repeatedly raised estimates for how much it can recover, and recently upped it to more than 8 billion barrels. The first vessel carrying Guyanese oil, which is extracted 120 miles offshore and sold directly to market, set sail last month.

“The dispute over the contract has sharpened divisions in Guyana, which has been riven by racial tensions among its citizens, mostly descendants of African slaves and indentured laborers from India, since becoming fully independent from Britain in 1966. Before the discovery of oil, the country’s biggest industries were gold mining and rice and sugar farming.”

...

“Global Witness’s report prompted a response from the People’s Progressive Party, the group of largely Indian Guyanese that had held power for two decades before a multiethnic coalition won a one-seat majority in the country’s parliament and made Mr. Granger president in 2015.

“‘We were underserved in the negotiations,’ said Bharrat Jagdeo, a former president and head of the opposition party, in a public statement after the report’s release. ‘Guyana did not get its fair share of the deal.’

**“That in turn led Mr. Granger’s government to accuse Global Witness and other outsiders of interfering in the March 2 election.**

“‘This timing cannot be seen as a coincidence and it appears as though it is seeking to influence the electoral outcome,’ it said in a response to the Global Witness report. ‘It is time that the people of Guyana enjoy the right to self-determination and their own destiny without interference of foreign influences.’

“First discovery

“Guyana initially signed an exploration agreement with Exxon in 1999. While an assessment by the U.S. Geological Survey had estimated more than 13 billion barrels of crude below the seabed, which wraps around the shoulder of South America, Guyana logged some 40 dry wells before Exxon made its first discovery in 2015, according to Robert Persaud, Mr. Trotman’s predecessor as natural resources minister.

“Previous governments had struggled to keep companies interested in exploring due to hostilities with neighboring Venezuela and Suriname, both already oil producers. Each had sent gunboats, seeking to reclaim disputed waters from Guyana, which has no navy, paralyzing operations for long stretches. An earlier Exxon partner, [Royal Dutch Shell](#) PLC, pulled out in 2014, selling its shares for \$1.

“Mr. Granger took office in May 2015, days before Exxon’s first find. Within three months, Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro issued a decree rekindling a century-old border controversy, claiming two-thirds of Guyana. Seeking international support, Mr. Granger turned to his oil partners, publicly arguing that major companies from the U.S. and China would serve as a deterrent to Venezuelan aggression. A case over the border dispute is currently with the United Nations’ International Court of Justice.

...

“The new deal wasn’t made public for months. The government has said it wanted to keep the deal quiet in the midst of its border arbitration case with Venezuela, and that legal fees are being paid for with the signing bonus.

“The Clyde & Co. report found that Mr. Granger, the president, chaired a meeting with an Exxon representative six days before the new deal was signed. But three advisers to the president told the Journal that Mr. Granger only learned of the new terms in early 2017, when one of them suggested a contract renegotiation to Exxon and was told by the company that a new pact, extending to 2026, had already been inked.”

[David Hinds sees plot to effect regime change](#)

“For Political Scientist Dr. David Hinds, the “plot” to remove the A Partnership for National Unity + Alliance For Change (APNU+AFC) administration may have been hatched approximately two to three years following the discovery of oil in Guyana. In fact, Guyana’s first oil find was made

in May, 2015 by U.S oil giant ExxonMobil, just days after the 2015 General and Regional Elections, in which the APNU+AFC had effectively brought the People's Progressive Party/Civic's (PPP/C's) 23-year reign in office to an end.

“Just five years into office, it would appear that forces locally and internationally want the APNU+AFC administration out of office at a time when Guyana is expected to experience unprecedented development. The relentless push to remove the APNU+AFC government, Dr. Hinds said, is not necessarily linked to any ills committed against society, since there are none or the ‘undermining of democracy,’ but because **with David Granger as President it may be difficult for major external players to have control over Guyana’s ‘black gold.’**”

“Dr. Hinds, while **pointing to the 1960s**, said ‘geopolitics’ is among factors linked to the highly controversial March 2020 elections here in Guyana.

“‘What is happening to Guyana is part of the Resource Curse. It is normal for small countries to become victims of their own success once their interests do not fit into the agenda of global powerhouses. Politics are [sic] usually used as the clearing house for larger economic and geopolitical interests,’ Dr. Hinds told this newspaper.

“He added: ‘No small country with the amount of oil that Guyana has will be left alone by the big countries. Big countries operate from a feeling that small countries like Guyana do not have the capacity to deal with that amount of wealth and that they the larger countries have that capacity. So, they are treating it not as Guyana’s potential wealth, they are treating it as their potential wealth, their source of accumulation of wealth and prosperity.’

“According to him, that is the source of the uneven economic development visible in the world today. **He noted that these major powerhouses think it is their interest to determine who governs Guyana. ‘They would want a party in government that they are better able to control,** and this is the crux of the matter,’ he posited.

“In addition to oil, he posited that countries such as the U..S have a keen interest in in Guyana’s western neighbour Venezuela, which has been dubbed ‘a pariah state.’

“**‘We are here again,** where Guyana is now caught in the middle of geopolitics which include the larger countries, such as **America, Canada and Britain and the rest of Europe. We are caught in between the western powers and Venezuela’** the political scientist said.

“**‘He believes that in an effort to thwart the will of the Guyanese people, a plot was hatched to get the Bharrat Jagdeo-led PPP/C back in government. ‘I am of the firm opinion that this plot has been going on for two-three years. The coalition was busy governing [and] it seems not to have been aware that there was this plot to impose regime change. The plot is to manipulate Guyana’s vulnerable electoral architecture to install one political force over the other,’** Dr. Hinds said.

“Just recently, in **June, 2020**, **Brittany Kaiser – a Cambridge Analytica Whistleblower disclosed how Cambridge Analytica was contracted by the PPP/C in 2013 to control the course of elections in its favour.**” [[The Red Line](#) w/ Brittany Kaiser (Cambridge Analytica Whistleblower) Ivelaw Griffiths (International Institute for Strategic Studies) Michael Unbehauen (US Army/Acamar Consulting)]

...

“**The former Cambridge Analytica Programme Development Director said the then PPP/C President, Donald Ramotar, paid Analytica G\$80M for its services for the manipulation of data.**

“According to Kaiser, **Cambridge Analytica, on behalf of the PPP/C, executed a behavioural poll and a Target Audience Analysis (TAA), which in other words, is large-scale national research which includes qualitative and quantitative studies and surveys so as to understand as much as possible from the population – from their politics to their culture to their affiliations and decision-making patterns.**

“**Kaiser said that the PPP/C used the information for its advertisement and communication strategies and had a satellite team both in-country and internationally from the London Headquarters.**”

...

“**However, even with Cambridge Analytica’s assistance, the PPP/C lost the elections in 2015.** But the party regrouped and months after moving a no-confidence motion against the Granger administration, it contracted **Mercury Public Affairs — an American firm – in March 2019.**

“The firm was embroiled in the probe into alleged Russian interference in U.S. elections but was nonetheless hired by the PPP/C to help run its elections campaign. At the time, **Leader of the Opposition, Bharrat Jagdeo, described the move to hire Mercury Public Affairs as ‘proactive.’ Jagdeo, the head of the PPP/C, has acknowledged that the firm was contracted for G\$34M to lobby U.S. support for his party.**

“It is believed that between Cambridge Analytica and Mercury Public Affairs, the PPP/C not only successfully acquired mass regional and international support, but also utilised the data garnered to facilitate voter impersonation.

“While elections in Guyana were dubbed ‘free and fair’ when thousands of Guyanese went to the polls on March 2, 2020, it quickly descended in chaos following allegations of fraud levelled against the Region Four Returning Office Clairmont Mingo. **The electoral dispute, which sparked a series of court actions first initiated by the PPP/C, resulted in a national recount – the first of its kind in Guyana – following international pressure.**”

“However, notwithstanding the fact that the recount exercise, which was observed by a high-level Caribbean Community (CARICOM) delegation, unearthed an overwhelming number of irregularities and cases of voter impersonation – some of the world’s major players – the **U.S,**



**Canada, United Kingdom, the European Union, the Organisation of American State (OAS), the Commonwealth, the Carter Centre and even CARICOM have come out in support of the PPP/C**, saying that the Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM) should declare the results of the elections based on the recount.

“These are forces that have come together in a systematic manner. **It is not every day that a mini-state like Guyana attracts the attention of all those international forces, all those international organisations– that doesn’t happen by accident.** So the fact that elections are taking this length of time to arrive at an outcome says that these are more than normal elections; it says that the plans to use the electoral process to install a winner has it a brick wall. Hence, the resort to other means such as sanctions’ Dr. Hinds reasoned.”

“Dr. Hinds, the threat of sanction forms part of the plot. ‘Since when going to the court is tantamount to undermining democracy? Everyone knows that is not the issue at hand. Remember it was the PPP that first went to court. My sense is that the longer the standoff goes on, the more the plot is being revealed. **We are already learning of approaches to the government to use Guyana to broadcast to Venezuela**, and the longer it goes on, more and more the plot will come out. So that is why they are trying very hard to get the coalition to say that they have lost,’ the political scientist submitted.

“He said it is instructive to note that the local and international forces in a relentless pursuit to remove a government that has an unblemished human rights record. ‘No political activist opposed to the government has been locked up, no political opponent has been assassinated; extra-judicial killings has [sic] been eliminated; Guyana has had an unblemished human rights record. So they are actually saying that the most democratic government in Guyana’s post-colonial history is ‘undemocratic,’ he posited.”

[Democracy in Danger](#) (Cambridge Analytica & Mercury)

[How Shady Was Cambridge Analytica? Considering the work its parent company did trying to win Caribbean elections ... potentially pretty shady.](#) [SCL Group]

[[The Red Line](#) w/ Brittany Kaiser (Cambridge Analytica Whistleblower) Ivelaw Griffiths (International Institute for Strategic Studies) Michael Unbehauen (US Army/Acomar Consulting)]  
- [YouTube](#)

#### Clips:

▶ Guyana: Ramotar/PPP - Cambridge Analytica (see description)

▶ Guyana - Venezuela Territorial Dispute (see description)

▶ Guyana-USSR Relations + Other Foreign Investors (see description)

▶ Outside Foreign Influences in Guyana 2020 Election (see description)

▶ Cambridge Analytica PsyOps (see description)

▶ Cambridge Analytica PsyOps (see description)

### CSIS—[Guyana: Opportunities and Challenges for the United States and the Caribbean Basin](#)

“On the other hand, after two years of legal and political uncertainty, Guyana’s political and business partners each have strong interests in declaring victory and moving forward with long delayed business. **In the petroleum sector, the Exxon-led consortium, which has contracts involving [eight billion barrels](#) of recoverable oil, has a strong interest in political stability, administrative competence of its Guyanese partner, and juridical security as it continues to ramp up production in the [Liza oilfield](#), while moving forward with other production, such as the [Payara project](#). Other petroleum companies operating in Guyana—including [Anadarko, CGX, Ratio Oil, Repsol, and Tullow](#)—plus others who are interested in operating there in the future, will welcome the increased predictability, political stability, and juridical security of a constitutionally legitimate, internationally recognized government—even though they may not be able to obtain terms with the new government [as favorable](#) as those negotiated by Exxon with its predecessors.**

“On the political front, the United States, the Caribbean Community ([CARICOM](#)), and the European Community, all invested significant efforts in [encouraging and facilitating](#) the democratic transition that ultimately brought the People’s Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) back to power in Guyana. Each thus has a strong incentive to declare success and [move forward with a positive relationship](#) with the new PPP/C government.

“From the outset, the United States consistently demanded that all parties respect Guyana’s own laws and processes defined by [its constitution](#), including the resolution of the dispute over the December 2018 no confidence vote according to those laws, and the subsequent [holding of timely elections](#). The United States also facilitated the sending of non-governmental [observers to the March 2020 election](#), and ultimately [imposed visa restrictions](#) on Chief Elections Officer [Keith Lowenfield and other Guyanese officials](#) who did not respect the ruling of the Caribbean Court of Justice against their position. Indeed, for the United States, the contribution of such sanctions to the restoration of democracy in Guyana was arguably welcome in light of the continued inability of [sanctions and other U.S. pressures](#) to [dislodge the de facto Maduro regime](#) in Venezuela.

“For Canada, Great Britain, and the European Union—[whose ambassadors stood by](#) the United States in [pressuring the Granger](#) government to conduct elections without delay and abide by their results—moving forward with a positive relationship with the Ali government now capitalizes on the principled position these governments sustained during the crisis, and

possibly helps them move beyond [historic issues](#) that have strained their relationship with Guyana since the colonial period.”

...

“On August 6, 2020, President Ali [swore in his 19-member cabinet](#), a combination of young leaders with energy and new ideas, competent technocrats, and experience. President Ali is a **businessman** comfortable talking in practical terms and a creative thinker with a command of detail on the range of economic issues facing the country. **His previous interest and participation in courses at the William J. Perry Center in Washington D.C.\*\*\*\* lends credence to the argument that President Ali’s goodwill toward the United States and the West is longstanding and sincere**, although his loyalty and priority is advancing the interests of Guyana.”

...

“**Hugh Todd**, the new foreign minister, is also a man of ideas, energy, and principle. He is sincerely **open to a positive mutually respectful relationship with the United States**, in the context of the nation’s role as an independent actor and leader in the Caribbean, in the spirit of independence figure Cheddi Jagan, but **without the anti-colonialist baggage of that era.**”

...

#### “The Big Three Western Players

The key role played by the United States, Canada, Great Britain, and to a lesser extent Norway and others in the European Union (EU) in fighting for a democratic transition in Guyana has already laid the groundwork for a stronger relationship than has historically been the case in the post-independent period between these actors and the PPP government. The Ali administration has been consistent in emphasizing its [gratitude for the United States’ contribution](#) in restoring democracy, well as its support for a close and positive bilateral relationship with the United States, and the ongoing role of the latter as an advocate for **democracy** and prosperity in the region. Guyana’s diaspora in the United States (as well as in Canada, Great Britain, and the European Union) also strengthen the importance of positive government-to-government ties with the United States and these other traditional Western players.

...

**With respect to security, the Ali government looks to the United States for support in Guyana’s [territorial dispute with Venezuela](#) over the Essequibo region** when the International Court of Justice reconvenes at the end of 2020 to take up the case, and as a potential ally if the Venezuelan military continue to violate Guyana’s waters or territory [as it did in December 2018](#). Similarly, as Guyana faces natural disasters, narcotraffickers, and incursions from armed groups associated with illegal mining in neighboring Venezuela, **U.S. security assistance, including material support, the Tradewinds regional security exercise, and cooperation with the U.S. Coast Guard continues to be important.** With respect to development, the **Ali government looks to the United States for economic assistance and governance strengthening programs, as well as U.S. government support for private sector investments through vehicles such as the [Development Finance Corporation](#) and the American Chamber of Commerce.** A positive relationship between the Ali government and the U.S. Department of State will also be strategically important as the former deals with oil companies such as the Exxon-led consortium.”

...

## **"Venezuela**

One of the early tests for Guyana's foreign policy will be Venezuela. **The Ali government has already made clear its rejection of the claim to legitimacy of the de facto Maduro regime, and [its agreement with the Joint Declaration of Support for Democratic Change in Venezuela](#) in August 2020. While the Ali government's position is congruent with that of the U.S. government,** its support derives from its own experience, emphasizing that in Venezuela, like Guyana, the voice of the people in choosing their leader should be respected and not hijacked by an incumbent government that wishes to maintain its position of power in order to reap the benefits associated with control of oil revenues and other perquisites of office."

...

"The new Guyana has the potential to be a positive example of the possibility of successfully blending constructive values of **free markets, transparency, and rule of law**—with a healthy path for economically engaging with the PRC. In the context of PPP party father and independence leader Cheddi Jagan and the innovative new generation of PPP leaders, the Ali government has the potential to carve out a prosperous path long sought but seldom achieved in Caribbean politics, working in a positive fashion with the West and embracing, on its own terms, the most relevant and productive of its values: achieving independence and dignity without succumbing to the self-destructive trap of a corrupted, radicalized populist left."

...

"It is **difficult to think of another case in recent memory when the United States has applied consistent pressure—as it did with the outgoing Granger government—for a friendly government to renounce its power in the interest of democracy,** paving the way for the return to power of a party with which it previously had concerns. For its part, in its initial communications and posture, the **Ali government has done everything to put its best foot forward to begin its relationship with the United States, the international community, international investors,** and its own people in a positive fashion. The blossoming of that hopeful beginning into a positive, respectful relationship that advances Guyana's development, Caribbean leadership, and good governance in the region, would be a befitting tribute to the legacy of the Party's father and independence leader Cheddi Jagan."

\*\*\*\***"William J. Perry Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies is a U.S. [Department of Defense](#) institution for defense and security studies in the Western Hemisphere...Notable alumni: His Excellency Brigadier (ret.) [David A. Granger](#), President of Guyana" - [Wikipedia](#)**



[Carter Center financials](#)

**History:**

[Jonestown: An International Story of Diplomacy, Détente, and Neglect, 1973–1978](#)

**'Locally Jim Jones and his aides manipulated a border dispute between Guyana and Venezuela with the aim of setting up a de facto buffer state in the form of the Peoples Temple Agricultural Project. In 1973 Peoples Temple capitalized on Guyanese fears of a Venezuelan invasion to receive a lease near Port Kaituma in the North West District of Guyana, twenty miles from the Venezuelan border. Guyana and Venezuela had been embroiled in a border dispute that dated back to a seventeenth-century conflict between the Spanish and the Dutch. The dispute, over a segment of land known as the Essequibo region, was especially significant to the Guyanese because the Venezuelans were claiming nearly half of Guyana as their own. Relations between Guyana and Venezuela were tense.'**

...

In 1973 **Guyana was a founder of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM)**, a union of Caribbean nations that allowed the mini-states to present a larger and more united front to the world. Through CARICOM, Caribbean states were able to ease travel restrictions between nations, cooperate on research, lower trade barriers, discuss mutual security arrangements, and collaborate as a bloc in order to sell their exports at higher prices. Unlike the failed West Indies Federation, CARICOM was an international organization of states rather than a single state itself. In 1974 **the PNC aimed to use CARICOM as leverage against Venezuela. Guyanese foreign minister Sonny Ramphal sought to "sound out other governments" in the Caribbean, "promote further the concept of 'Caribbean identity,'" and "by this means engage Venezuela in constructive Caribbean role which will act to inhibit GOV from pursuing its Essequibo territorial claim."**

Excerpts from [Peoples Temple and Jonestown in the Twenty-First Century](#) by Rebecca Moore.



the inner circle of the Temple and amongst the most trusted members of the congregation intensified. Jim Jones became increasingly dependent on drugs.

Behind closed doors, a hierarchical leadership structure orbited around Jim Jones. An inner circle that included Marceline Jones, several White women administrators (some of whom were his mistresses), and a few White male associates comprised the next level, protecting the leader and implementing his orders. The Planning Commission (PC) made up the third level. Begun in Redwood Valley, the PC increased in size and stature in San Francisco. Membership grew from about thirty-seven in 1973 to roughly one hundred by 1977; the majority of those in positions of responsibility, such as finance, counseling, or public relations, were White (Moore 2018a: 36). The PC made decisions about policy and planning, but also served as the locus for the most severe punishments, including sexual shaming and abuse. Jones's apparent obsession with sex and his claim to superlative powers, coupled with the obvious racial disparity in leadership, provoked the departure of eight young adults in 1973. They wrote an eleven-page heartfelt letter to their leader, criticizing "staff," as Temple leaders were called. They complained of the preoccupation with sexual matters, the racism inherent in staff promotions, and the lack of revolutionary commitment, pointing out the many instances of double standards and hypocrisy along the way ("The Eight Revolutionaries" 1973).

Nineteen seventy-three was also the year that the Temple board of directors passed a resolution to establish an agricultural mission in Guyana ("Resolution to Establish Agricultural Mission" 1973). Early the next year, a group of pioneers traveled to the Northwest District of Guyana to begin developing the project: clearing out jungle, excavating roads, and constructing buildings. Activity commenced even before the Temple signed a lease for 3,852 acres with the government of Guyana ("Guyana Land Lease" 1976), although Temple leaders and Guyana officials had been in negotiations for two years. Peoples Temple would gain a haven for its members outside the United States and Guyana would settle a group of Americans near its disputed border with Venezuela. It seemed to be a win-win situation for all parties.

## Guyana

Getting a clear understanding of life in Jonestown depends upon the sources used. The journals of Edith Roller, who lived and died in Jonestown, paint one picture (Roller 2013). Memoirs by Hyacinth Thrash, Leslie Wagner-Wilson, Laura Johnston Kohl, and Eugene Smith depict another (Thrash 1995; Wagner-Wilson 2008; Kohl 2010; Smith 2021), and that of Deborah Layton something

members were ready for the apocalypse but not for dictatorship, so they “have to be prepared to go to *other* places in the world if a dictatorship takes over, because I *told* you ... not one of my children’s gonna end up in a concentration camp” (FBI Audiotape Q958 1973, italics in original). Jones proposed buying a plane to help people escape the Babylon in which they were living. “I don’t want to *leave* this country – this is our country – but I don’t intend to stay here if they take it over with a dictatorship.” Fears of a dictatorship were not entirely unfounded given revelations of the secret COINTELPRO actions that the FBI conducted against African American leaders, leftist groups, and the Communist Party between 1956 and 1971. Throughout the 1970s, Cold War politics rationalized unconstitutional and illegal behavior by many government bodies and individuals charged with enforcing the law.

In the 1973 exhortation to move, Jones alluded to Marcus Garvey (1887–1940) and the Jamaican leader’s quest for freedom abroad. Active in the 1920s, Garvey was the founder of the Universal Negro Improvement Association and a proponent of Blacks moving back to Africa, where they would be welcome. On other occasions, Jones turned to many themes familiar to African Americans: exile and exodus, the Great Migration from the American South to the North, the Babylon that is America, but especially the Promised Land – the term that became shorthand for the agricultural project in Guyana and that summarized the hopes and aspirations of those in the Temple. “To him, the convergence of different oppressed people’s plights underscored the need for flight to safe haven” (Hall 2004: 176). By the end of 1973, an advance team made up of key Temple leaders and Jones himself met with government officials in Guyana. Work began on the agricultural project in early 1974.

### Politics in Guyana

Guyana had its own reasons for welcoming a group of US expatriates of largely African descent. Less than a decade after independence in 1966, the tiny nation on the north coast of South America faced severe economic problems. Prices for its sugar-related products were down and an embargo on the export of oil imposed by Arab oil-producing states drove prices up (Guinn 2017: 293–4). Infusing millions of dollars into the Guyana economy, Peoples Temple provided more financial aid to the struggling nation than did the US government (Poster 2019). A border conflict with Venezuela to the west also raised concerns. Placing a group of Americans in the disputed area – already being developed as “Venezuelan Guayana” by the Venezuelan government – might well discourage actual military intervention and was “less expensive than buying bombers and bazookas and building air-raid shelters” (Crist 1981: 110–11, original



spelling). Moreover, the majority of Guyana's eight hundred and fifty thousand residents lived along the coast or near one of the many rivers. The government of Guyana sponsored its own agricultural projects away from population centers in the hope of relocating some of its citizens. A successful settlement by Americans in the interior might demonstrate to the Guyanese the possibilities inherent in such development, especially to those living near the leasehold. Influenced by its close ties to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and its philosophy of self-reliance, self-discipline, and self-sacrifice, Guyana's government hoped to retrain and relocate people into agricultural production (Taylor 2015).

There was some irony, however, in Peoples Temple trading a presumed dictatorship in the United States for an actual dictatorship in Guyana. The leaders of the Peoples National Congress (PNC), the ruling party in the 1970s, were indebted to covert intervention by the United States and the United Kingdom to rig the elections that led to independence (Poster 2019). Opposition parties were repressed and political opponents were harassed, beaten, exiled, and – in the case of outspoken Black activist Walter Rodney – assassinated. The difference, it seems, was that the Temple supported the PNC, bestowing party leaders with gifts and pumping money into the Guyana economy in exchange for the privilege of living outside of government oversight. “A free state of Jones” existed in which a “government within a government” ruled (Poster 2019: 319, 322). Temple aides who lived in Georgetown acted more or less as diplomatic envoys between Peoples Temple and foreign governments, meeting regularly with officials, including ambassadors, at the Cuban, North Korean, and Soviet embassies. They also maintained frequent contact with ministers in the Guyana government.

Although the government of Guyana and Peoples Temple reached a tentative agreement to start clearing land in 1974, it was not until February 1976 that the parties signed a formal lease for twenty-five years granting the use of 3,852 acres at the rate of twenty-five cents per acre (“Guyana Land Lease” 1976). When US ambassador Max Krebs visited the settlement in March 1975, he found a six-mile-long swath of roadway leading to the projected center of the agricultural project, 25 acres already under cultivation, and a “relaxed and informal” atmosphere among the pioneers. “My impression was of a highly motivated, mainly self-disciplined group, and of an operation which had a good chance of at least initial success” (Krebs 1978: 135). In May 1976, another embassy staff member observed a dozen tractors and heavy agricultural equipment, 100 acres under cultivation, with more land being cleared, and about six “rustic buildings” (Matthews 1978). Don Beck, one of the pioneers, went to Jonestown in summer 1976 to provide schooling for the



Excerpts from “Venezuela: What Everyone Needs to Know” by [Miguel Tinker Salas](#), Venezuelan crisis of 1895, Venezuelan crisis of 1902–1903 [Cipriano Castro, President of Venezuela from 1899 to 1908]:

and promoted the growth of an administrative bureaucratic class begun under Guzmán Blanco. Castro also negotiated the first asphalt and contracts for oil exploration in Venezuela, initiating a process that would eventually transform the country. The most important concessions the government made occurred in 1907, when they granted over four million hectares in Zulia, near Lake Maracaibo, that were eventually acquired by British and Dutch interests who monopolized most production sites in the region. Even though he oversaw these first concessions, Castro's wariness toward foreign powers and the promotion of economic nationalism would distinguish him from the subsequent openly conciliatory policy adopted by his successor, Juan Vicente Gómez.

#### ***Why did European powers blockade Venezuela in 1902?***

On December 7, 1902, the Venezuelan government received an ultimatum from the British and German governments to pay a series of purported claims or face a naval blockade of its ports. After consulting with the United States, the European powers, including Italy, demanded repayment of loans made to the government that included, among others, funds for the construction of a railroad and losses suffered by their citizens during Venezuela's recurring civil wars. On December 11, British and German ships began the blockade, stationing ships at the country's principal ports, including Maracaibo, Puerto Cabello, and La Guaira, where they seized several Venezuelan naval vessels. They also landed troops to withdraw diplomats, and in Puerto Cabello they bombarded the Venezuelan fort that guarded the entrance to the port.

The blockade occurred on the heels of another international humiliation for Venezuela. In October 1899, an international tribunal in Paris granted London control over disputed territory in the neighboring British colony of Guyana, angering Venezuelans and increasing tensions with European powers. Venezuela had initially hoped to submit this dispute

to mediation by a body consisting of Latin American nations. Instead, an international body dominated by the United States and Britain, with no Venezuelan delegate, adjudicated the issue. Former US President Benjamin Harrison represented Venezuela; however, needless to say, the country's prospects of prevailing in a tribunal dominated by foreign powers appeared slim. In their unanimous decision, offered without supporting rationale, the United States, British, and Russian judges ruled against Venezuela. In the parlance of the period, the tribunal "allowed" Venezuela to retain the Orinoco river delta in return for accepting the decision that sustained British claims to over ninety percent of the territory. Venezuela probably received control of the Orinoco River delta because the United States did not want Britain to control access to the second most important waterway in South America.

Although commercial oil production had not fully materialized, Venezuela nonetheless retained geopolitical importance as a gateway to the Caribbean and a rich source of natural commodities. Even before the formal blockade, tensions with the Europeans increased. Germans and British represented the principal foreign interests operating in Venezuela, and German merchants dominated the trade in coffee through the port of Maracaibo. German reconnaissance of the coast of Venezuela had also intensified. Rumors circulated that Germany sought a coaling station on a nearby island and on several occasions foreign seamen clashed with Venezuelan authorities while their ships were in port.

Accustomed to dealing with more accommodating political leaders in the region, the Europeans and the United States disliked Castro's firm stance. Depictions of Castro in United States' diplomatic cables and in the foreign press accentuated his dark skin and described him as an impertinent child, possessing a Napoleonic complex, or worse depicted him as a "megalomaniacal tropical dictator" incapable of governing his country. Criticism of Castro constantly brought up his goal to reconstitute the Gran Colombia, a not-so-subtle



criticism of Simón Bolívar and Latin American unity in general. Traditional historiography, from both the left and the right, tends to reproduce these characterizations. Castro's place in history has been reevaluated by some contemporary scholars, and the Chávez government stressed his nationalist economic policies and distrust of imperial powers. At the time, the racially inspired slanders and other affronts did not keep Venezuela's plight from drawing sympathy from Argentina, Peru, and other Latin American countries concerned about the precedent implicit in the ability of foreign powers to invade a country in order to collect claims made by its citizens.

Facing the blockade shortly after assuming power and confronting a drop in the price of coffee as well as several internal rebellions, the Castro government sought to rally nationalist sentiments. Castro proclaimed the need to uphold "National Unity" in the face of international aggression, declaring in a speech "Venezuelans, the boot of the insolent foreigner has profaned the sacred soil of our country." In Caracas, several thousand people volunteered to join the military while others burned foreign flags and lashed out at British and German citizens and their interests. Castro also promoted restraint: according to the *Times*, he declared that "however great our indignation, we must behave as a cultured and civilized people, especially when the most powerful nations of Europe are behaving like real savages."

Beyond the naval blockade, European interests previously had lent financial support to Manuel Matos, a former banker who led a "Liberating Revolution" against the government. With financing from British, French, and German interests, Matos obtained a ship and weapons and provided them to local *caudillos* seeking to get rid of Castro. They clashed with government forces commanded by Castro at the battle of La Victoria that ended after a month in Matos's defeat and hundreds of casualties.

Despite the use of nationalist rhetoric, in the end Castro accepted a proposal made by Caracas's leading merchants to

have United States envoy Herbert Bowen mediate the crisis. Castro had proposed setting aside thirty percent of income from the customs houses at Puerto Cabello and La Guaira to pay the foreign debt. Although the United States had initially accepted the British and German blockade it feared losing control in the region. At the behest of Venezuela, it mediated a largely symbolic solution between the parties that resembled Castro's original proposal.

In the aftermath of the experiences with Venezuela, the Theodore Roosevelt administration issued its famous corollary to the Monroe Doctrine in 1904 asserting the United States government's rights to police the region, manage finances, and exclude the Europeans. Despite the controversy, the incident established Venezuela's presence in the region, and after the crisis, Castro sent representatives to England to improve Venezuela's image in Europe.

***What were social and racial conditions like on the eve of the twentieth century?***

The majority of Venezuelans had experienced little significant improvement in their lives since gaining independence from Spain at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Coffee continued to dominate agricultural exports and increase the value of land in productive areas, displacing the production of traditional subsistence crops. Despite extensive territory, throughout much of the nineteenth century the country's arable land under actual cultivation remained exceedingly small, mainly concentrated in pockets in the Andes and the central valleys of Venezuela. With few roads in operation, access to the Caribbean provided the most efficient form of transportation for areas in proximity to the coast.

Cities linked to the coffee export economy such as Carúpano in the east, San Cristobal in the west, the port of Maracaibo, and the capital, Caracas, acquired the outward veneer of progress, including electrical lighting, paved streets and sidewalks,

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