

JOURNAL JULY-AUGUST 1973

TRIP TO GUYANA, SURINAME, TRINIDAD,  
(BARBADOS, PUERTO RICO) JAMAICA

Sunday, July 8, 1973. Arrived in Georgetown around 2 a.m. A minor hitch developed at Immigration. The officer asked, "What is your occupation?" "Professor." Furious writing ensued. Then, "What do you teach?" "Anthropology." More furious writing. Then, "How long do you intend to stay in Guyana?" "Three weeks." More writing. Finally he returned my passport and told me he could only give me two days, but I could go see a Mr. Leila at the Ministry of Home Affairs about extending it. He refused any further explanation. A minibus took me and two other passengers into town, Dr. Betty Lanham (an anthropologist) and a young black Gyanase who was returning home for the first time in eight years. The driver took me to the Roraina Guest house but it was full, and so I went with Dr. Lanham to the Park Hotel. The difference in price is considerable: G\$8 for the guest house (without meals), and G\$25 for an air-conditioned room at the Park with 3 meals. But the Park is a grand old colonial wooden structure with a large veranda, and so very pleasant.

suspicious  
immigration

accomodatio

G\$ 2 =  
\$1 US

I slept until around 10 and then went out to explore the town. The hotel manager, an East Indian, warned me to leave any valuables in the hotel safe. Last night Dr. Lanham had remarked that there were relatively many people out ~~max~~ late--it is not safe on the streets of Georgetown at night. I first walked to the Atlantic Ocean by the Pegasus Hotel (the plague says Burnham opened it)--it costs, I subsequently found out, \$G 43/day. There was a small univiting beach or rather mud flat on which some children were playing. Otherwise the streets were deserted this Sunday morn. I walked back towards the Demarara River via Water St. by the warves and warehouses, where at least a few rum shops were open. Two young boys, aged about 17, black, suddenly came up behind me and one grabbed my wrist-watch, the other my camera. I struggled and shouted but no one came to my aid. The camera strap broke, the wrist watch following, and the two split in different directions. I went after the one with the camera and nearly caught him as he dodged up an alley. He threw the camera over his shoulder: it landed on the pavement and split apart at the base of the lens. People then commisserated with me, but there was nothing to be done as no one would help in identifying the boys. A shame to lose my alarm wrist-watch which I had gotten such a bargain on in Kuwait, and the camera (a Pentax) is out of commission, possibly irreparably. But then I guess I was a fool to have made myself such an obvious pigeon, something I normally do not do: I have always done my scouting without camera, and this should reconfirm the habit. In any case, this was my introduction to the infamous area of Georgetown, known as Tiger Bay.

Tiger Bay

I returned to the hotel for lunhh and there met a 76 year old man who looks and acts much younger. Originaly Guyanese, he left home at 18 for the US. He has been visiting here for two weeks, one at the Pegasus and one at the Park; he is flying back to N.Y. tonite. His second wife, a German stock broker, died leaving him well off; he was in real estate. He says Guyana is really improving, but it is still incredibly poor; I should have seen it ten years ago. He is anti-black (light skinned himself, possibly

Portuguese): the "niggers" (sic) do not want to work, and are envious of the East Indians who work and are better educated. The place is really run by the Chinese but ~~that~~ they have no political power (the President is Chinese but that is only a figure head job). Burnham is OK and has done a lot, supported and directed by the US. There is a great deal of violence (esp. East Indians getting beaten up by blacks) which will increase as the elections get closer. It is not a good idea to talk politics now because people get so worked up and fights invariably break out. There is no work, tremendous unemployment, and prices are such that he does not see how people make ends meet. (But his examples were luxury items that perhaps the Guyanese are better off without: Nestles cocoa and tins of tuna). So people eat lots of fish and bananas. There is also tremendous prostitution. A lot of violence against the haves: a woman guest of the Park even got beat up at the entrance to the hotel. (The doorman carries a billy stick.) So I am lucky I did not get hurt, beat with a pipe or stabbed. He introduced me to a man from Connecticut working on a construction contract for the Government who said a number of his men have been subject to similar attacks and for this reason he does not wear a watch.

Guyanese  
expatriate

The Sunday Graphic is full of election charges of irregularities in overseas balloting in Suriname, Trinidad, UK and USA; two kinds of charges: (a) there is the problem of accurate registration lists--people are listed twice, three times; non-existent people appear; other people cannot get registered; secondly in Suriname clerks at the Guyana Consulate allegedly are marking "postal ballots" with Xs next to the palm tree of the ruling PNC--(b) there is something about 18 year old voters: a bill was introduced to lower the voting age to 18 but it never became law, yet in Trinidad 18 year old PNC supporters have received ballots. Overseas voting ends tomorrow a week before the election. In 1968 of 36,745 overseas votes, the PNC received 34,429. Also people in the country can vote by post. In 1968 the PNC won domestically with only a majority of one seat, but gained six more from the overseas vote. PNC: 174,339 votes (55.81% and 30 seats), PPP 113,991 votes (36.49% and 19 seats); UF 23,162 votes (7.41% and 4 seats); GUMP = Guyana United Muslim Party got 899 votes (0.29% and no seat). The paper carries a letter from Cheddi Jagan that persons educated in socialist countries are unable to get jobs in Guyana, fulfilling an early pledge of Burnham but in 1972 Burnham pledged himself to fair employment policies. There are also charges by the Association of Legal Practitioners (a break-away faction of lawyers) that the police are arresting and harrasing PPP activists and not allowing lawyers access to detainees. There is a strike at the Guyana Bauxite Co. (Guybau) over the firing of a mechanical repairman who was convicted of assaulting a foreman. (The strike was settled on Tues, 10 July--after a seven day strike--with an agreement to allow a Univ. lecturer, Harold Lutchman, arbitrate.) (In 1968 the Makenzie Dist., officially Upper Demarara District)-voted 10,350 out of ~~10,520~~ 10,520 for the PNC--an almost entirely black labor force, with the few Indians leaving for fear of their lives). Dr. Kenneth King, Minister of Ec. Development, in a campaign speech said the two most important functions of Government are law and order and economic development, and when the PPP was in power it demonstrated it could do neither. The Mirror newspaper (affiliated with the PPP) charges it is being harrassed over newsprint imports, and the Government responded that it is releasing the newsprint but impoundment was proper as the shipment was illegal.

newspaper  
election  
charges

I met Dr. Betty Lanham again at tea (U. of Indiana, Pa.). She has taught at U.S.G. but is basically a Japan expert, culture and personality interested in Guyana as a contrast to Japan. She nearly had the same

Betty  
Lanham



problem at immigration but when she said she had taught at the Univ. he gave her a month. She thinks they are worried about bonafide research, and not allowing in a lot of unprepared students to write poor stuff. She did think it a good idea to contact the people in the Gvt I knew before going to the Ministry. She then started in on the U.S.--we should have a parliamentary system because the American people are too stupid (sic) to vote on policies and a parliamentary system would bring good people like Johnson to the fore. She was at the LSE in the 40s and was impressed by Laski.

Monday, 9 July. I tried to call Frank Pilgrim at the Arts Council but could not get through, so I went to the Ministry of Home Affairs and was told to come back tomorrow which was OK with me as it would give me more time to contact ~~William~~ Pilgrim.

At lunh a bearded fellow came over and asked if I were an anthropologist; with a beard it was not likely that I would be one of the US Gvt advisors or contractors who inhabit the hotel, and Philip Singer is due to send down about 6 graduate students (Singer's child was cured by a local faith healer and he now believes). It turned out, of course, that he is an anthropology grad student, from Alberta, originally American who left the States because of the draft. Dennis Bartels was his name, here is a second Alberta person down here, a native Guyanese, who is doing a comparative study of planation conditions in Guyana (Berbice) and Surinam. Dennis is working at LBI (La Bonne Intention) about 9 miles from town in a mixed Indian/black village of about 10-12,000 pop. of whom some 2000 are sugar estate workers. There has been some violence out that way already and he plans to come into town for the elections and the following week when work will be impossible. Re. Muslims, there are two groups in his village, one PNC and one PPP and there has been trouble about this; the election of the Anjoman officials was packed by Burnham men and the police then refused to let any more people into the meeting, so PNC officers were elected against the majority will. The case is being brought to court, and a Muslim orphanage in Georgetown has been emptied, the children mysteriously taken somewhere into the Corentyne Coast for safekeeping. The PPP is campaigning to return things to the way they were when in office (if not in power), esp.: (a) agricultural support, esp. for the rice industry--i.e. under Jagan rice farming was booming with sales at good prices to Cuba. Burnham with one stroke convinced the US of his anti-communism and did an anti-East Indian thing by cutting off this trade to Cuba, and also introducing a new white rice designed to appeal to the North American market--(b) trade with the socialist world--most foreign aid is from the US, Britain, W. Germany, Israel, Korea, and esp. US aid has strings attached; (c) sugar workers union still forms the backbone of Jagan's support but it is not recognized by either the government or Bookers. Bookers has its own union (MPA) and there have been explicit cases of deals between union officials and management. Many foremen etc. belong to the union only to keep their jobs and also belong to Jagan's union. Sugar rationalization of labor did not seem to have involved much loss of jobs and did not seem to be a big political thing. Now they have cane cutting machines which are made locally; Bookers is not very interested in using them as yet since it would involve replanting of the sugar beds. Bauxite seems to be doing OK altho the Americans and Canadians scoff saying it could be run better. Burnham is borrowing money and investing in infrastructure (roads, electricity) rather than jobs. No one is under any illusion about the election; the only question is how much Burnham will rig it. There is all this talk of trying to get a 2/3 majority for the PNC (with 2/3 you can change the Constitution). (Yesterday in the paper a Burnham Minister suggested that a one party state was needed, but this was immediately repudiated. The 2/3 talk may be only a threat or he may

get it and then play magnanimous to the opposition. Dennis drove me around a bit, to the Arts Council (Frank Pilgrim was still not in); past Jakub Ali's butchery (head of the Muslim Anjoman, now squeezed out because he is PPP). All the waiters at the Park Hotel are PPP and he thinks two may be Muslim. Dennis is obviously very pro-PPP. He also drove me past Freedom House (PPP headquarters) and said that till the elections are over he is keeping a low profile and not going in there, but both Cheddi and Janet are very approachable, altho at the moment probably too busy campaigning.

In the afternoon I decided to take the ferry across the Demarara River to Windsor Forest (where RT Smith had worked) in case they kick me out of the country. On the ferry I asked directions from an Indian man, and he turned out to be my afternoon's host. He offered to take me to Windsor Forest in his van, and he knew two of the three names Smith had given me. Abdul Munir Khan now owns an Esso station in Vreed-en-hoop where the boat docks, but he was not there, so we went on to Windsor Forest. My host's name was Gopie; he has a cloth shop in Starbroek Market, and lives just beyond Windsor Forest. Coming from Persia, as it were, I am still unadjusted to the forthright West Indian political talk. Even before we got off the ferry, Gopie began to fulminate about the "niggers". He is a staunch PPP supporter, but does not agree with all of Jagan's policies. In any case, the two people we tried to see in Windsor Forest were PNC supporters and perhaps that had something to do with my lack of success in getting any entre. Munir Khan was not home; Walter was recuperating from an operation and his wife would not let me see him; she and another person in the shop remembered Smith but that was not sufficient to get more than, "Perhaps you can stop back another time". I was going to return to the ferry, but Gopie offered to drive me to his home and show me the difference between Negro and Indian life. We did that and he took me as far as Parika and the banks of the Essequibo. He turned out to be an Arya Samaj priest, speaks Hindi and known some Sanskrit. He is the son of an immigrant Hir (cowherd) from Bihar and was born in a loj (barracks for indentured servants). He always dreamt as a kid of getting a piece of land and growing everything he or his friends could desire. His father before going to work would always touch some soil to his forehead in respect and he himself Believing in Karma finds agriculture the best way of life for through agriculture you help others as opposed to business where you exploit them--you will pay for it (he is a businessman now). E.G. I asked him about obeah--plenty of it and like ~~in~~ business it is all in Indian hands. He wouldnt do it himself as he believes you end up paying for such things (karma, next life), but it is easy--you take some sandlewood and some ...?... and burn them together to give off a special odor and you can fool any Negro. He agreed sadly that his business activity was a retrograde step in terms of his karma. He did raise rice for a while but could not make enough--he has seven kids (one son is studying accounting in London, another is studying Spanish in California, another is studying Spanish at the U. of Guyana, and two daughters are younger.) So he has a shop--provisions--in front of his house. There used to be a market in front of this, but in 1964 they were beat up and left--the Indian shopping center since has relocated. Much of his produce comes from Indian growers on the islands (Wakenaan and Laguan). He contrasts Negro and Indian buying habits: Indian women buy in bulk a week at a time; Negroes buy a little each day: a pinch of salt, quarter pound of salt fish, etc. this is more expensive. In any case, after 1964--in 1965 he got into dry goods in Georgetown, beginning as a peddler. Now he has a stall in Starbroek Market--you pay 60 cents a day (collected weekly) for the stall. He imports cloth mainly from the US, also Japan but their prices are now high, and secondarily from Italy and Europe. Everyone works the black market here (not in cloth, but in controlled items, esp. provisions) since Government controls allow you about a 4% profit on which you cannot live. You get a stiff fine for

Hardeo  
Gopie



overcharging and police traps are set (in court you cannot win since most magistrates are black--he cited some cases of disrupting political meetings in which the black defendants got off but the Indian defendants were jailed). Things have become so shaky in the import business that suppliers will not import unless you present them with a bill of credit. Consignment arrives and the Government charges 10%, allows 16% to wholesalers and 10% to retailers, but out of that you must pay transport and other overhead. Now they have signed this new Carifta-Common Market agreement whereby bulk shipments from Canada and the US come to Jamaica and Trinidad and there are unbulked and sold for higher prices to Guyana and the other islands. Results are that apples from America sell competitively with Guyanese mangoes (instead of building some roads so that the mango industry could be developed) or meat balls tinned in Canada are cheaper than meat from the Rupununi. Burnham spends his money on a new (two year old road) Vreed-en-hoop--Parika asphalt road (the old road is ~~narrow~~<sup>dirty</sup>, narrow and pitted but serviceable) rather than opening up the interior. There is a unused estate land which Burnham wont give to the Indians to develop. Gopie kept repeating that if only the Gvt would give him a grant--say \$10,000--he could develop 100 acres very easily. The Indians on the islands (Wakenaan and Laguan) --the pop. there is mainly Indian--need technical and investment help but that is not forthcoming. Gopie pointed out contrasts in housing and living style: in housing schemes Negroes and Indians were given similar plots and G\$2 thousand, the Negro houses are shacks (unpainted wood, on the ground) and nothing is planted; Indian houses are gayly painted, occasionally a temple, often flags representing Hanoman's conquest of Ceylon, always vegetables and fruit trees, often flowers. A British economist once came through here and Gopie asked him: ~~how~~ take a man who makes G\$21/wk, he has 8 kids (Indians have large families) and a wife and himself to feed, and he is able to save a bit--how does he do it? --answered the economist: he is a better economist than I.. Yet the Indian estate workers dont earn more and still they live relatively well. For each penny earned, save a quarter penny, Gopie's father told him. He took me on the old road past some areas of rioting in 1964--Indians always get the worst: Indians may be more thrifty, better entrepreneurs (they bought out the Portuguese, the English, and the Chinese-- when the Indians came here as indentured servants, trade was in Negro hands, but Indians soon bought them out, partly because Indians work long hours, all day, while Negroes work short hours, partly because Indian wives work too, while Negro women dont), but Negroes seem to be better fighters (partly because they're bigger, partly because they've got guns via the Guyana Defense Forces which is largely black--were it only cutlasses, Indians could fight back)-- showed me homes which have fencing on the windows, plots where houses used to be, houses which were "X-ed" (= exchanged). There are still Indians in these places but they must come to terms with the Negroes and PNC. In Parika further down the road there is road work going on, i.e. Government work: the bosses are Negro, the laborers East Indian; the price of a job is buying a PNC party card, paying PNC dues out of your wages, and voting PNC by proxy. Gopie showed me a building where Negroes congregate to drink and work themselves up before a riot. Gopie commented on his own behavior of saying to the blacks we passed in his own area, "Neighbor, neighbor", but he wouldnt trust them a loan or rent post facto (rather than rent in advance). He says he has never had a black friend. Doesnt believe even educated blacks are capable: Dr. Busia was one of the commission to investigate the 1964 riots and came down as any ordinary black man on the side of the blacks. Indians say "Neighbor, neighbor" but then "sell" the Negroes (i.e. make a killing on them in trade). He pointed out a vocational school built in a Negro area--Indians are afraid to send their kids there. There seems to be clustering of Indian and Negro areas but not rigid segregation. In

Gopie's account though, if you include degrees of freedom of behavior, there is rigid segregation: some streets with Negroes on one side and Indians on the other do show startling contrasts even excluding the case where Negroes chased Indians out of the hovels built for indentured laborers. The situation seems to be that Negroes depend on government jobs, not wanting cane labor nor rice farming. So things have polarized so that all government programs now take care of blacks first. Plans to settle the interior, Gopie argues, will not work as long as Burnham is in power because it is the Indians who would do the farming and they will not go, not trusting the government. Re. bauxite, we are told that there is a world glut, so now when Russia wants bauxite, she gets it at below production costs.

Gopie does not agree completely with Jagan; Jagan is an outright communist and we just do not have the connections and experience to nationalize; we should rather require foreign capital to spend a certain amount of the profits here. If Jagan were to win (and at times he is fairly optimistic that with a coalition with the other two opposition parties, it is possible) there will be trouble (towards the end as he thought about it more, he began suggesting I ought to leave before the elections); but if Burnham wins there will be no trouble but there will be no expansion. The solution to Guyana's problem is he suggested at one point, new leaders: Jagan and Burnham are two polarized, things have become too polarized along race lines. But when asked explicitly he also suggested a coalition between Burnham and Jagan (had their early coalition carried on that would have been the disaster of another Cuba) and a dictatorship to force people to do what needs to be done; and in any case, as a first step the equalization of East Indians in the police and defense forces.

Decline of Indian knowledge: Brahmins keep up caste name but others not much. The youth is rather picking up West Indian culture. Christianity has made greater inroads among Hindus than Muslims due to the closer conception of God between Muslims and Christians. Cremation is very rare; expensive.

Bribery is the saving grace in the system. Although Gopie does not have the problem with controlled goods, if the government wants to harrass him all they have to do is inquire into his tax records and assess him so heavily as to break him and force him out of business. You cant fight in court against black magistrates.

We ended up at his house--a modest cottage behind the store--still well kept up with polished wood floors, pictures of the Buddha, founder of the Arya Samaj, etc. He hopes to go to India in 1975 for the Centenary of the Arya Samaj. In the small garden behind the house he has egg plant (badjun, compare Pers. badenjun) a coconut tree, red peppers, a vegetable patch, etc.). He complemented me with a proverb: we say a well-educated man is simple: we say when a tree has fruit for man it bends down to him like the mango, when it doesnt it grows straight up like a palm. Ah, said I, but what of the coconut? Ah, said he, but the coconut tree is so constructed to make it easy to climb. I was introduced to the son who goes to the U. of Guyana and wants to continue study in the US. The son was very interested in the success of Hari Krishna and Self Analysis (Syracuse based) as a toe hold of Indian culture in the US. He is thinking of going to Berkeley because his tutor went there, but he is worried about the hippie influence. Gopie complemented the life of a scholar as one of a sanyasi--leaving the cares of the world to think and to transmit to others, to turn dark into light. I ate some rice and dal with him. Rice costs G\$1/gallon or 8 pints. I took my leave, taking a hire-car back to the ferry. Gopie warned me that if I got back after dark, I must take a taxi to the hotel, not a Negro taxi but an Indian one (since blacks dont like whites any better than they do Indians), and on second thought, not a young East Indian ethar but an older one like himself (he is 47--had his first kid at age 20). Gopie worried about black men wanting to marry Indian women; says intermarriage is down since 1964.



Carib JNL--73--7

Address: Hardeo Gopie, 194 Ocean View, Uitvlucht, West Coast Demerara, Guyana.

The hire-car (taxi) was driven by a young East Indian, and there was a young woman already in it. They were discussing the election, the woman claiming to be PPP and the boy chiding her: then you are a communist. They turned to me and demanded an opinion. I said I was against most governments in power, which response they liked and got us off onto Nixon and Watergate about which I felt freer to express opinions. We let the girl off and I then asked the boy if he was really a PNC supporter, which question loosened the floodgate. Sure, the PNC is a fine party. It is the only party which can govern the country, which can keep stability. A government which can create riots can stop them. Yesterday Burnham told a meeting that he did not need the Defense Forces to stop riots, he had the Party. A party that can terrorize, that controls the flow of goods and services, sure that is what makes a good party. Never mind that people don't like the policies. Burnham doesn't talk about economics, input and output, the huge national debt; he talks about giving people water and other basic necessities which every government must provide. He is a great manipulator--was even as a student in London, always ready to point out how a riot could be used (says his father was in London at the same time Burnham was a student there). He is utilizing the East Indian split between Hindus and Muslims. The Jagan Government had more black ministers than East Indian, but it had not one Muslim. Burnham screamed about this. His Government has three Muslim Indians, esp. Kazim. And he is giving Government jobs to Muslims (ditch digging jobs, for instance)--he figures the Muslim vote together with the black vote is enough. The leader of the Muslims, a PPP man, was disqualified as a candidate. When I as a taxi driver go in with receipts to the government office, I have to wait until the black clerks finish their cross word puzzle or chess game. Solution may be revolution this time, but there is probably an insufficient base for a successful one. Why vote, I asked? It is a constitutional right, was his reflex response, but then: the question is whether Burnham will get 2/3 this time or not. 2/3 would mean one party rule. There was this business of lowering the voting age to 18--a Jagan and anti-Burnham idea--but when they saw only PNC area youths were being recruited, they voted against the measure and defeated it. (PPP area youths always were told to come back tomorrow and finally that registration was closed.) This is probably the most corrupt government in the world--a Minister was caught stealing \$2 million, 1.5 for Burnham and .5 for himself--was merely put in charge of a lesser post (Electricity Board) until the affair blew over, and then was made Minister again.

E. Indian  
taxi driver  
"supporting"  
the PNC

All in all it seems Smith was prescient in his 1961 book, and it has all worked out as Marxist or superorganic analysis should: Smith (p.173) talks of an unwritten clause in all British grants of independence (followed at least initially by Bustamante and Manley in Jamaica, Grantley Adams in Barbadoes, and Kkruma in Ghana) that the role of government was the creation of a favorable climate for investment, provision of social services, development of basic capital assets such as roads, drainage and irrigation. (Viz. Pindling's comments just before ~~independence~~<sup>Bessewda</sup> independence this last weekend in response to a question about the colonial period: we are going through a change in conception of government as providing the proper climate for private investors to government for people). The B.G. PPP did not accept, maybe did not even understand these unwritten clauses. Hence their treatment even of themselves as Government, as the opposition to London, to demonstrate the limitations of the Colonial Office Constitution and then hence their suspension. It was

Carib Jnl--73-8

Burnham who seized upon the unwritten clause and became the kind of Government which the imperialist or colonial powers (since it is Washington now rather than London) insisted upon (to the point of military insistence). Such roles can be ducked as Castro demonstrated, at great cost (Pyrrhic?). Perhaps it is more possible in the 1970s than in the height of the cold war. In any case, despite the freedom of press and certainly of speech, Guyana demonstrates how "freedom" and "democracy" are hypocritical slogans--an uneasy mirror for the U.S., what with Watergate and the Kolko-Nader et al arguments about the the real locus of power in the US. What the Guyana case does seem to show is the clear counter to those who argue that politics in the Caribbean is a matter understandable only in terms of personalities.

(In the 1964 elections, the voting procedure was changed from constituencies to proportional representation, called PR, or as Gopie's son informed me, BR, for "boss rass").

Tuesday, 10 July. Not an exciting day. A Granadian--he said he was from Granada--attached himself to me--in need of passage money to get to Trinidad. Very articulate, well read, intelligent chap. His story was that he had worked in Grenada on a spice plantation, had read Jack London and decided to travel about like London. So he managed to get to Brazil. He has now just come from Paramaribo where there was a strike beginning with the students and spreading to others--violence and people got killed so he felt it wise to leave. But Guyana turned out to be worse: the race tension here is like nothing he has seen--he cant get a job here what with 40% unemployment and election fever making people not care about jobs. Indians wont give a black man a job. We went into the Michael Forde (Freedom House) bookshop and he picked out all the radical literature for me, but complained of Cheddi and esp. Janet Jagan's racism as can be seen from the fact that 95% of the party is Indian. In Trinidad one would be jailed for calling an Indian "coolie", but here people do it all the time.

articulate  
scrunter  
#1

Went to Stabroek Market to say hello to Gopie. Then finally got through on the phone to Frank Pilgrim who was happy to hear from Smith and said I could use his name. So then I went to see Mr. Leila, demanding to see him and not come back tomorrow, and got a three week extension. Pilgrim called back in the evening. He thinks Munir Khan was PPP but is no longer; Yakub Ali is PPP; Muslims are very divided politically. Hussain Ghanie, leader of GUMP, seems to have dropped from sight, a man he called very courageous. He himself is leaving for Lagos immediately after the elections to run an African Cultural Festival.

Wednesday, 11 July. Went out to see Yakub Ali, the head of the Muslim Anjoman (affiliated with the World Federation of Islamic Missions, based in Karachi). The Muslims here are basically Sunni Hanafi, a few belong to two Ahmadiyya groups (Mirza Ghulam Ahmad), and Smith is right that these grew up early in the last 10-15 years. He passed them off as hypocrites--first when Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is claimed to be a prophet and then when he is used as an easy way of claiming to be Muslim: you can drink, lie and it doesnt matter. There are 112 masjids in the country and each has an associated madresseh where Arabic and Urdu are taught. During Ramazan is the tarwih prayer of 20 rakat; normally pray 5 times a day. There are a few black converts (have nothing to do with the Black Muslims whom we oppose as political opportunists). When the East Indians came there were still a few Fulani Negroes practising Islam and from the guessture of identity despite the difference of origin the

Muslims



Indian Muslims are still occasionally called Fula. But of these Fulani Muslims nothing remains. The whites were opposed to the Islamic practices and forbade them; also perverted the practice by soaking up the slaves' money with rum shops and whore houses. Yakub Ali

In Surinam, I can contact: Islam Ramzan, Dudenrie Straat, Paramaribo

In Trinidad: Faisal Shah, 27 Gomez Street, San Fernando

Haji Sata, High Street, Princess Town, San Fernando

Many people do know where they come from in India--his grandfather was from Bombay and his maternal grandfather from Kalumpur. A friend in the house said his father was from Mysore and a FB, the youngest, is reputed to still be around, apparently in Pakistan. Yakub Ali has several nephews in the States--a mechanic in NYC who was visiting and I met, another who works for DuPont in Delaware.

Do not seem to be any Shiites around, though he did talk of building a taje (multi tiered affair of wood and paper which is carried and then thrown into the sea) during Moharrram (in Guyana? in Trinidad?).

The PNC tried to persuade him to stand for them, but he refused all bribes, and so they picked someone else. If he joins it will be on the basis of conviction, not bribery. And then it will be a personal decision, he cannot direct Muslims how to vote. In any case, it is a shame, had the PNC only behaved decently, they had a chance to win most Muslims, but they did not even try, and there is much discrimination not only against East Indians but Muslims in particular. GUMP was another opportunist affair, and attempt by the leader to get rich.

His butchery is next to the Liberty Cinema, and his home is a block away.

Forgot to ask him about Muslim reactions to Jagan: is communism-Islam an issue?

I then went out to the University to try to find Bill Carr (English Dept--old friend of Smith). He is not there much and should try to find him at home. I did find his house and just glimpsed him swearing as he went in, but when I rang a woman said he was indisposed and I should try in the mornings (drunk?). Carr His house is plastered with PPP posters. Bill Carr

The driver out the the University was an older East Indian: Burnham is great sure. He can build the University, roads, he gets loans--dont know if he will ever repay the loans--but could Jagan get all this? And if Burnham is not returned he will just take his money and go away. He is probably the richest prime minister in the world. This taxi driver has been driving for 30 years, 7 full time in Georgetown. He drives a Toyota (Corona De Luxe), his second, and he swears by it: great car--he has had it for two years, put 40,000 miles on it, and not even a tune-up, he has never changed anything in it, no filters, nothing! It cost him \$10,000 cash (\$5 thou US) He has a daughter finishing a nursing degree in London, wants her to settle in America. Has another in Chicago, also works in a hospital and has two children. If he gets his London daughter settled in America, he will then take a "walk" in America on her funds. E. Ind. taxi

By the very nice park behind the President's house, a black kid in his twenties in shades leaning against the fence (Promenade Gardens) tried the line on me: Spreken Sie deutsch? Oh you look like a German friend of mine. His name was Stevie and he was waiting for a G\$10 box of grass (about the same price as New York only wrapped differently, he said, from Jamaica or Columbia), He had been in the States and expects some muscian friends down from Oregon. Says he plays the drum and bass fiddle. He was with a laconic friend from Surinam. Says he: Man there's no consciousness here: if somebody was to kill the Man, there wouldnt be anybody to take over. The Man goes around unarmed and raps with the people, he can talk to them. Things is so fucked up man people dont know whats going on. Stevie was real cool, willing scrunter #2

Carib Jnl--73--10

to sell, share, or just rap. Another young black came up and was introduced. I ran into him again later in the Promenade Gardens: James Gregory, extremely articulate, speaking to me in polished English, but claims to be self-taught, couldn't afford to go to college. He says he is an accountant with a shipping firm based in Holland. Claims not to be on salary but paid only when there is a ship in port; there was supposed to be one in today, but it is delayed for a week and a half. He has no food at home for wife and two kids. He gives me a history of Guyana's political history and economy. Burnham is shrewder than Jagan and can manipulate and tell what people are thinking with his legal mind. But "cooperative republic" is prostitution, a sham. He bans 160 food import items on the grounds that this will help the balance of payments and stimulate domestic production; but we see no evidence of the latter, and re. the former, we've got a debt of \$500 million and no way to pay it back. There is a 30% unemployment. The sugar industry is still in British hands, even if there are now peasant cane farmers, the factories are in British hands. Solution?--new leaders who would damp down the racial antagonism. But we are all waiting to see what will happen on Monday--the 2/3 majority wanted clearly indicates a desire for a one party state. And Dr. Reid said as much to a member of the opposition. Way out of the cul-de-sac may be revolution--not from below--but an army coup. There are a number of army officers unhappy with Burnham. Pres. gets \$50,000/yr tax free. Ministers get \$85,000 travel allowances.

Black guard in front of the President's house asks if I am a pusher, with a big smile. I said no, but if I were would he want some? Says yes.

Young black guy came into the Ministry of Home Affairs while I was waiting for Mr. Leila, wearing a jacket with peace insignia, jeans etc. He said he was an ex-policeman, now living in the states and learning to be a mechanic (in Calif.)--he was back trying to collect salary owed him, and swore he would not be pushed around by this bureaucracy and corrupt government, he would scream and they would put him in jail, but he was convinced his American employers would get him out. Very bitter about Guyana.

Before dinner I joined Bob at the bar: he works for Kaufmann (a construction firm based in Barbados) which is a World Bank contractor for schools. His job is to make sure money given for schools is spent there and does not end up in people's pockets. He will not give out money without receipts presented first for work done or materials received; as he is doing a number of schools at the same time, there is some cross-check against padding. Burnham's propaganda was that Guyana would build these schools herself as part of the cooperative republic. The World Bank refused funding without non-Guyanese management. Burnham went on the radio and said, "We will build these schools with our fingernails, we do not need the World Bank." The next day he went to the World Bank and said, "Ignore my radio talk; I agree to your conditions; but just let me put up signs at the construction site saying that the work is being done by the Guyana Cooperative Construction Society. He did the same with the Guyana Bank: on the radio he said, we will do it ourselves; the next day he borrowed \$3 million from Chase Manhattan to set it up. The Guyana Bank occupies part of the Chase Manhattan building, appropriately enough. Doug of Wimpy's construction came in. Pattie, an East Indian girl, reports that a canvasser came around and asked her who she would vote for and she refused to say; he was PNC and wanted her to sign a PNC proxy ballot.

Thursday, 12 July. Went to the zoo and botanical gardens: ocelots, tapirs, monkeys, parrots, even a small elephant, a couple of Jabiru. I stopped



by the mosque on Church Street, and was told my best chance to catch the Imam would be tomorrow at 12:30 just before prayer. The old man told me the Ahmaddiyya Mosque was over near the cemetery but I wouldn't find anyone there either until tomorrow noon. I then found a Hindu taxi driver who knew where it was and found Abdul Hamid Ali (better known as Sony Ali) Ahmaddiyya a tailor, who serves as moazzen and caretaker for the mosque as well. His wife just died in October and so after school in the afternoons he must be at home with his ten year old daughter. He was a tailor years ago, but then went into the restaurant business, and only now has gone back to tailoring. He has experienced two break-ins and one choke-and-rob. He told me a little about the Ahmadiyya but did not seem to know too much and took me to see the "missionary", a Mr. Rashid.

Rashid gave this account of the Ahmaddiyya. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was the mujaddid for the 14th (hejri) century. Prophet is a wrong translation of mujaddid; Mohammad was the last prophet, but as it is said in the Quran, each century a new teacher comes to bring back the people who have strayed from the correct path. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad wrote a prize winning essay entitled Teachings of Islam. His follower Khwaja Kamal-ed-din went to London and working from the Woking Mosque in Surrey began the magazine Islamic Review. He also converted to Islam Lord Headly and his sister, which caused a stir in the British Government. Gradually issues of the Islamic Review made their way to Guyana, and also English translations of the Quran. Previously there were only Urdu translations. The first English translation was by three Christian Reverends--George Smales, Rodwell and Parnell. The first complete English translation by a Muslim was by Maulana Mohammad Ali. Now there were differences between these translations and the Urdu versions, and this began to cause debate in Guyana. Two of the issues were: (a) the admissibility of women to the mosque. The East Indians' "Sunni" tradition was to exclude women from the mosque entirely. The Ahmaddiyya practice is to allow women into the mosque but separated from the men by a screen (both Rashid and Sony Ali were surprised and pleased when I told them that this was the practice in Persia) and the interpretation is that women have the same rights and duties as men. (b) The birth and death of Christ: he was not born of immaculate conception and he died a natural death. That he went to heaven and saw God is nonsense. Smith is correct that the Ahmaddiyya as an organization in Guyana is only 10-15 years old. It grew from young men, progressive and rationalistic and made few converts among the elders. There have been four presidents: Rahat, Hussain, Ghanie, Ismail, and now Ya-Sin. Ya-Sin is a big businessman. Ghanie was the founder of GUMP (Guyana United Muslim Party)--and he was eased out of the presidency at that time as there is a clause in the Constitution of the Ahmadiyya that leaders may not engage in politics (beyond the voting duties of a citizen). The Ahmaddiyya are called Ahmadis or Kadiani (after Kadian in India), but they consider themselves merely an educational, missionary organization for the defense of Islam--they will worship in any mosque, behind any Imam. It is the Sunni who refuse to come into the Ahmadiyya mosque. There was a split in the Ahmadiyya over the status of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad--one faction calling him a prophet, the other calling him only a mujaddid. The latter is the organization involved here, with headquarters in Lahore and called officially Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaati Islam. The secretary in Lahore is Masoud Bey. The other organization is Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission based in Rabore, Pakistan, and its leader is the direct grandson of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (i.e. it is a pir organization). The Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaati Islam has now 15 mosques in Guyana. They tried to establish a madrasah here in Georgetown but it is not working. In fact when Rashid first used the word mujaddid, I wrote it out in Arabic and he demurred saying I was ahead of him--he could chant parts of the Quran, with aid of the translation know the meaning--you see our ancestors were not learned men who came here,

but they did bring their religion.

The other faction--Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission--has little following in the Caribbean. They have one mosque in Berbice, and periodically a paid missionary is sent, the one previous to the current one was ~~xxxx~~ even an Englishman called Shir Ahmad Orchard. Their following is much larger in Africa where they can work virgin territory--i.e. little knowledge of the concepts of Islam--and where they use the Christian missionary techniques of hospitals and schools.

In the early days of our organization, Ghanie and others were confused by the two factions, and even helped to bring to Guyana the missionary of the Rabar faction. Our organization, however, does not have paid missionaries. Propagation is voluntary (but in fact, Rashid is well enough supported to be a full time missionary) and includes "revivals" for non-Muslims as well as the xotbe sermons in the mosque. They have their own limited circulation newspaper but now radio programs are planned, and will have a page in the Chronicle every other Friday at \$200 a time. Some converts have been made among the blacks, but it is difficult for East Indians to convince blacks. Malen S.P. Tayo, however, from Ghana was here one year and had great success, especially in McKenzie where he converted 50 Negroes. We have a missionary in California named A<sup>B</sup>dullah, and there was one, now dead, in Mansfield, Ohio, named Moharram Naji. Mohammed Elijah's son, Wallace, was here and was quite suprised by our Islam; apparently it had the same eye-opening effect as did the haj on Malcolm X.

Addresses: Guyana: Abdool Hamid Ali (Sony Ali), 50 A Louisa Row,  
Werk-en-Rust, Georgetown, Guyana

Paramaribo: Al Haj Abdul Rahim Joggoe

Trinidad: Miss Zarina Jusuf (Secty Gen), Prince of Wales Street,  
San Fernando (works in Library)

Aziz Ahmad (businessman: Opel importer) - San Fernando  
Dr. Aziz (Pres.) - Port of Spain

At dinner Dennis Bartels came in. Rumors are beginning to fly about him among both East Indians and Negroes so he thought it better to sleep in town, though he will go out again tomorrow and will take me to look up a Muslim: there are two mosques in the community. He and I discussed Burnham's radio speech tonight--Burnham in a voice of serious sincerity warned against tampering with the voting. "Comrades and fellow Guyanese," he began, challenging the intention of the main opposition party and of the leader of the opposition himself to demonstrate at the polls after the voting is finished. The opposition wants counting of the ballots to be done at each of the polling stations. This has never been done, and with 871 polling places could lead to serious tampering with the votes, and will not be done. Announced that it will be an offense to obstruct at the polling places with penalty of \$1000 plus one year in jail plus debarment from being an elector or eligible to ~~xxxxxxx~~ sit in Parliament for 5 years (identical penalties as for corrupt practices.) The opposition has charged the bogey of a one party state. This fear has been voiced repeatedly in the past but elections have always been held freely and without tampering. The PNC is dedicated to democracy and opposed to a one party state. A one party state may be useful to some countries but does not fit with the traditions of Guyana. It is in fact the leader of the opposition who in the past called for a one party state and totalitarianism. Under the PNC we have had a progressive stable, peaceful and harmonious state. He ended with a thank you and God bless you. Dennis had heard of PPP plans to try to have votes counted at the polling places to prevent what is said to have happened in 1968--troops threw votes away and substituted others on the way from the polling stations to be counted. The suggestion of counting votes at the polling stations was in fact made in the radio broadcast of Jagan last night. The three

Dennis  
Bartels



opposition parties have appealed to the UN Human Rights Council for observers but this has been rejected by Burnham. Burnham now has put the PPP on alert that he will jail them for tampering with his rigging.

Dennis drove one of the waiters home and I went along. We passed an armed jeep patrol. On the 25th there were half-hourly jeeps (the night two National Defence troopers were killed in an accident). Dennis was told by some Canada High Commission people that the original police report had it as an accident: the two were on a motorcycle and got pinched between a truck driven by a PNC East Indian and a car driven by an East Indian. The rumors however had it a political plot by PPP East Indians against the black PNC troopers in an attempt to polarize the voters along racial lines and since there are more East Indians (sic) this would endanger the election for the PNC. There was talk of burning East Indian houses but Burnham men were sent out to cool things off and successfully argued that to burn would in fact do just what the supposed plot intended. We passed a squatters area--where before 1964 it had been only pasture, now Indians live there chased out from Negro areas. We went to Dennis' village and he noted that the road was unusually deserted. The waiter admitted East Indians were worse racists than blacks. The police station of the area is in the black neighborhood as is the new industrial park (shirts, Bata shoes, soap). Re. Indians growing things in their yards while blacks do not, Dennis says this is standard for Indians to tell foreigners--it is true to some extent, but Negroes often do have provisions in back. Rumor got around that Marilyn Silverman (?) who worked in Guyana from McGill (see F. Henry, ed. McGill Studies in Caribbean Anthro) was CIA and no one would talk to her until she called up Cheddi and he interceded in the East Indian villages for her; Dennis feels he may need the same help after the elections.

The Govt keeps postponing publication of the list of voters who will vote by post, past the legal deadline. The Mirror reports on rationing of cooking oil crisis and charges discrimination against PPP and Indo-Guyanese. Further stories of harrassing PPP activists on the excuse of "searching for guns."

Rumors are that one CIA control technique is to get "dirt" on political leaders, e.g. Kit Nascimento, former PPP supporter who said in public that he would never willingly be ruled by sons of slaves and who spit in the face of a black girl, now is a PNC activist and hatchet man--said that Burnham has some dirt on him.

Sony Ali said that a lot of business are being squeezed out by the government controls, and people are emigrating to Canada etc.

Friday, 13 July. I moved out of the Park Hotel into the Rima Guest House (G\$8 a day without food and 14 with food). Then I drove out to LBI with Dennis to look for his chief Muslim, who it turned out is secretary to Yakub Ali. He was not there and so we only talked to his wife, but we did get confirmation that women do not go to the mosque--they are supposed to pray at home; if they do, it is usually in the morning. She had heard of the Ahmadiyya, her brother is one, but she has no idea as to the difference: we believe in Mirza as a prophet and they, I dont know, maybe as God (sic--backwards--or xxx is the situation more complicated than Yakub Ali would admit). There used to be a Negro muslim in the village but he has moved out.

I then took Dennis to the Ahmaddiya Mosque in Georgetown for noon prayer. Thirteen men showed up including a 48 year old "dental mechanic" (makes false

Carib Jul--73--14.

teeth) Negro who has been Muslim since he was 20--he grew up near a mosque and decided he believed in the unity rather than the trinity of God. His wife was born a Muslim but she was raised by Christians, was baptized. The kids are half and half. Another man came in with a bandage on his neck--a victim of choke-and-rob. The prayer style was Sunni: with arms folded over the stomach rather than straight at the sides, thumb out and to ear, and turning to right shoulder and left at end. The xotbe was given by an old man in turban (most wore hats of the Ghandi style and many in white)--merely an ethical exhortation. The moazzen (Sony Ali) gave the call inside the mosque. Rashid says there is one Sufi in Guyana. Fri prayer

I stopped by the archives, but the old records are in Dutch handwriting and I could not find anything that looked like ship lists; it was also dreadfully hot in there, so I did not spend too much time.

There are rumors, according to Dennis, of Indian (Amerindian) migration through Guyana from Brazil to Surinam as Surinam has a more enlightened Amerindian policy. Re. the cattle ranchers' revolt in the Rupununi crushed by the Guyana Defense Forces. They were supposed to put stones on the runway but they forgot one runway and so the GDF could land, and they killed many Amerindian cowboys. There is a rumor that an anthropologist was involved in the rebellious attempt to join Venezuela (the issue had to do with renewal of ranching rights).

Dennis analysis: Burnham's support is in the black civil servants, the people for whom R.T. Smith described the British educational policy to be to transform into a malleable working class. These blacks now since emancipation several generations have been civil servants. Dennis notes a difference in style of protestation between Negroes and Indians; Negroes have grades of respectability and propriety and approximate Madame Bovary; Burnham appeals to nice people and their proprieties and poor blacks try to look up to these standards. Cheddi's support, on the other hand, comes from the lower classes, and the businessmen are forced to support this although on the sly they may rather support D'Aguiar etc. I.e. inverse relation. Elite-family study would be possible and meaningful--old creole families (like the Betancourt-Gomez who own the big department store in Georgetown). Reix Re. class consciousness, use of phrase "we poor people" vs "they" (black oppressors, PNC blacks)--NB Indian and black squatters have united even now just before the election despite PNC pleas to the blacks to hold off for a while and they would be taken care of--want legal right to the land on which they are squatting.

Saturday, 14 July. Dennis and I drove to McKenzie (now Linden after Linden Forbes S. Burnham). First striking impression along the new highway was the white sand (tropical soils par excellence?: it fits the sequence along the open road and trails cut into the sides: sand where there is no vegetation cover--along the forest one could see red (laterite?) soils). A few isolated housing-cum-plots. Passing an agricultural research station, we picked up a hitchhiking girl whose husband works at the station--she was going into McKenzie to try to get a job: they keep telling her to come back tomorrow. She wants to go the US, but now there is a 10% surtax on trips out of the country. Dennis/s Simca he bought from GIMPEX, an import outfit owned by the PPP which used to import most things from Eastern Europe, but there is now a 10% import duty on that. Soviet cloth although now little imported is still the cheapest. We saw an armoured car heading into Georgetown and several lorries of soldiers with rifles, sten guns, and tripod Bren guns.



Dennis re. coup de etat from the right as suggested by James Gregory (scrunter #3): does make some sense, since after all when Burnham nationalized the Alcan operations (both bauxite extraction and alumina production) Alcan, Alcoa, and various U.S. lobbies attempted to get Trinidad to refuse use of its loading facilities and then to get the US to impose quotas on imports to the US from Guyana. Re. Cheddi and rice: he built some modern mills and imported harvesting machinery with the idea of introducing cooperatives which would develop into communes and improve rice production; these are still owned by the Government but are losing money and are not being pushed. With the reduction in rice prices to farmers and the cutting off of exports to Cuba, rice farmers have been going into wage work. The result is a breakdown in the family pattern differences between E. Indian and Negro. What Gopie said is true that joint family pooling of resources and inclusion of women into the labor force characterized the E. Indians (vs the matrifocal Negro pattern)—but now this is breaking down, e.g. such is the finding of the anthropologist from Edinburgh in Windsor Forest, i.e. that since Smith worked here, the East Indians are moving away from family enterprises ~~and into~~ (rice) and into wage labor. Cheddie is under pressure from racists in the PPP to declare the party an East Indian party and to forget the class business; they cite ideological support from the Mahbarata that blacks are intended to be slaves, and that Indians are racially superior. Re. Stokely Carmichel: when he came to Guyana, he came out for black power as excluding East Indians which did not make him popular with the East Indians but also not with the PNC which would like to attract Indian support [and which claims to be solving racism through focussing on bread and butter economics].

Dennis  
Bartels

family  
structure  
&  
economics

racism &  
class  
conscious-

black  
power

In the evening I caught the plane to Surinam, figuring that since I had not really worked myself into any community, Sunday would be pretty dead, Monday and Tuesday would be dead too with the elections and no access for me into the action, and the following week would probably be less than exciting. Too bad tho—had I gotten to Guyana earlier, ~~and enjoyed~~ the coming week could have been most fascinating. I got a ride out to the airport with a guy from the Park Hotel who gave a ride to a woman who turned out to be Jamaican, wife of an oil man (Jamaican white). She and the driver kept up a patter about how in the past it had been fun to go to political meetings but now things have gotten too serious. In Jamaica, she said, things have gotten so serious since they started bringing in guns, trading guns for ganja: things are really dangerous.

"political  
no  
fun"  
anymore

On the same flight I met another (!) anthropologist: Victor O'Donnell: recent Oxford Ph.D. under Maurice Freedman and now at New Brunswick; not part of the E-P clique. He is a former Jesuit formerly in charge of Catholic schools in Guyana. Did his dissertation on Guyana.

Victor  
O'Donnell

SURINAM

Sunday, 16 July. Paramaribo seems as dead on a Sunday as Georgetown. The difference between the towns is striking: Paramaribo at least superficially does seem very Dutch: lots of red brick: real sidewalks and narrow medieval streets, squares: European in the ambience of the center rather than merely colonial. I turned on the radio in the afternoon and happened upon a speech at the conclusion of the Alcoa-Surinam talks. The Alcoa representative complimented the Surinamese on their negotiations and patted Alcoa on the back for being such a good corporate citizen. In the English news summary circulated to the hotels, it is said that Peru is considering selling copper directly to Brazil cutting out Holland as an intermediary and thereby cutting through colonialist siphoning off of profits; but in the same news summary is an item viewing Brazil as a new arm of American

Aluminum

Copper &  
Brazil

imperialism, i.e. Brazil investing (with funds originating in America) all over Latin America.

In the evening I sat out on the veranda of the Palace Hotel where a lot of young folk come to "promenade" without walking and without spending any money. I talked to a young display designer--Glen--a representative of youthful discontent. ~~Surinam~~ Surinam is not so poor as Guyana because much money comes from Holland. He makes 900 guilders/mo. which is about what he could make in Holland, but the country is not dynamic. A contract was signed with the US in 1914 selling cheap bauxite for 100 years. The way the economy is run is like giving Surinam consumer goods as pacifiers. Surinam has internal self-government under the Dutch Queen; as to independence, that is meaningless until we get the educated people who could take over and run Alococa and the other industries. Glen

Monday, 18 July. I went to the Surinam Tourist Development Board and found two very helpful ladies. After a while they asked if I were an anthropologist--I look like one--and were pleased to be told yes. The senior lady gave me the name of an anthropologist who worked with the Bush Negro and currently teaches at John Jay: John Lenoir, 100 Charlton Str., NY NY 10014; tel: 212-924-4659. He is due in Paramaribo in August, and is the guy that Victor O'Connell met and had a message for this lady from. [Jack Como--see 26 July--says he married here and fucked up, floating out on grass.] John Lenoir

A pretty young Dutch girl walked in and turned out to be a Bahai, Charlotte and a contact for Jamshid Arjomande from Yazd, a geologist. She, Charlotte, is a ballerina of working class origin, who has been here two years and became a Bahai here through a friend from N.Y. She is now "married" to a Hindustani and that too is an interesting story. She has a child by him, and he has lived in Holland and went there at age 18. Before he left for Holland, his family forced him to marry so a woman would be in the house to help his mother. He is an only son--there are two other illegitimate sons, but apparently they do not count. The issue came up partly through her recounting of her experiences here and partly through my querying about joint family among Hindus--three points: (1) children should contribute to parents' households, but in this case at least, this does not mean additional pooling of funds. Rather the attitude is to have children so that when they grow up they will support you (income remains stable, they rather than you work). To this family, Charlotte seems rich and she has given her husband's father a boat and motor to encourage him to fish, but he merely uses it for pleasure (he hasn't worked for 1½ years, according to Charlotte). As soon as you give these people anything, she says, they stop working. (2) ~~Surinam~~ Charlotte's husband's first wife is still around and lives with his parents. Charlotte told him she wants him to make a choice: either her or me, she (Charlotte) could not live in a joint household as co-wife. He is not yet "strong enough" to make the decision, for to divorce the first wife would require paying back her parents, etc. (3) Charlotte seems to derive strength to tolerate the two wife situation from Bahaim's teachings about the ladder of adversity and how ~~different~~ different cultures exist without any people being therefore inferior.

Charlotte's household apparently currently consists of a number of people. Her maid and maid's child, as well as several others. She felt odd at first having someone to keep house for her, but as she was so busy she did get a Creole girl. At first she managed to convince the girl to eat with her, but now that the household has grown, the maid has again withdrawn, preferring to eat separately. In Holland there is social security, but not here: instead people here help each other more: when Caroline was pregnant and out of work



this maid bought the food with her own money.

People in Surinam have no work: 2 out of 3. And it is a myth that the races live in harmony and intermingle. They live apart in tension. Although an agriculturally rich country, most of the income is spent on luxury goods. People go to Holland: there is free movement from Surinam to Holland, but Dutch people like herself, who come here must pay a f.750 tax. In Holland if the Surinamese can find a month's work, then they can stop and collect welfare. Conflict is being caused in Holland where there is also a shortage of jobs. Here some men have guns and many youths have knives. There is much drinking to prove masculinity: not to get high but to finish off the bottle. Racial tension like here she has never experienced: she worked in a multi-racial troupe in Holland, but only here did she really become conscious of her color. The E. Indians are now in power and are relatively united versus a fractionated Creole opposition. There will be elections in November. Chinese have the corner provisions stores, Lebanese have the cloth shops, Creoles just relax and ~~do nothing~~ do nothing. Administration is now becoming also more and more Hindustani.

By and large, however, Charlotte seems charmed by Surinam. People here have rhythm. She has to teach them that dance is not merely showing off the body, but also talking, an art as expressive as painting. She is trying to get together a semi-professional group of high-schoolers: 50 guilders a mo. to be paid to them if they work out three times a week. The last performance she had 10 boys and 10 girls, a gratifying turn-out. She has tried to incorporate the local folk dances. The East Indians have only two here out of the vast number in India. Amerindians have only a few and they are mainly ceremonial; Bush Negroes have a few more, also mainly ceremonial. She has danced in N.Y. and Wash. (at the White House) and hopes to go to India to learn a bit more of classical dance.

There is cumfa here too as in Guyana (like Jamaican cumina presumably): a drumming Negro dance to cleanse the soul. E.g. she told the story of a woman in Europe who went to a psychoanalyst and complained of obsession for sweets (that she could not walk into a sweets shop without buying a lot), fear of lightening, and need always to be with friends and not alone. The shrink hypnotized her and learned that in a previous life she had been a man in a concentration camp, a man who had a sweet tooth. One day he got a can of sweet milk and instead of sharing it he drank it. While worrying how to explain his action, bombers wiped out the camp and killed him. Thus the fear of lightening, obsession with sweets and need to be with friends. I.e., the soul must be clean when it goes to heaven, else its troubles are visited on the next generation. Cumfa is a means of cleansing the soul.

Other folklore she is learning: blueing is put by her husband behind the baby's ear to protect vs evil eye, and scissors under the bed vs shaking fever. No one may touch her husband's gun and he gets upset if she steps over it (a gun he uses for bird shooting). An obeah man (E. Indian) warned him that she would face troubles from two sources and she should wear a gold chain with a gold pendant to guard against this. She thought this through and decided troubles are the road to achievement and so she went to the obeahman with her husband to tell him her reasoning: the obeahman's reaction was, you are very strong. Hindustanis do not eat pork (Hindus as well as Muslims, says she). East Indian women don't dance: males dance as girls.

She promised to meet me on the morrow and tell me if she can arrange for me to meet Jamshid.

Wandering around town looking for a cheaper hotel than the Palace, I ran into Victor O'Connell, who has decided to go back home. I found Johnny's Hotel — ~~5~~ 5.50 guilders a day (US \$2.50 instead of \$8.50).

I ran into Glen from last night: he wanted to show me the real Surinam, not the jazzy cars and street fronts. We went to find a black friend who served in the US Army in Vietnam, but he was not in—this was a courtyard off a main street, a compound of shacks of several families. So we went to look up Mistro instead, a short but powerfully built black man. Both Glen and Mistro claim to be members of the socialist party which has one member in Parliament (out of 36 members) and allied to Cheddi, but neither Glen nor Mistro seemed to be very good at explaining what is going on. They seem to blame the Government for inflation; but whatever the Government the little man never wins. Both are personally firm capitalists, or would be if they could only get together some capital: Glen would run a truck to Cayenne and sell bananas. Mistro has bought watches and shirts in Cayenne to sell in Surinam, but was not very successful. He's apparently worked at a number of things; currently he is employed by W.H.O. and his wife at a soda fountain (next to Johnny's Hotel). The current Government is Hindustani dominated: the President is black but power is in Hindustani hands, esp. the Speaker of the House, Lachman. Pringle, the black previous President was better. He was open to the little man, and anyone could see him. He was President three times and resigned over a strike of civil servants et al. similar to the one here recently over pay raises. He died in 1970. Mistro has also worked for a construction outfit building airstrips in the bush, and he tells first hand the following tale of the bush chief:

Glen

Mistro

The work crew's foreman was always after women, and since the Bush women are bare breasted he took this as an invitation. He began playing with the Bush chief's wife. After a day or two, the Bush chief came and said, look don't do that. The foreman paid no attention, so the Bush chief quietly threatened that he would have to carry his balls. One day soon thereafter the foreman's balls indeed began to swell. They swelled so that not only was he in great pain, but he needed help to go to the bathroom and indeed had to pick up and carry his huge balls. All the crew members went to the Bush chief and pleaded with him; finally the chief consented to cure the foreman. He came and with a few crushed leaves cured him: a drop injected, and the rest as a salve.

Mistro himself makes up a tea of lemons and weed ("snake leaf") which is good for all things and especially a hard prick. He has also bought a herbal mix (Tisane from France) but it is not as good as his own. We also makes a cure-all from cotton leaves. Pringle, that reminded him, wanted to grow cotton here and make local textiles.

The East Indians are trying to take over, and a small black party supports them, the leader is a businessman cum sports telecaster etc. The President of the Hindustani party Sethna is derisively called Bobo. Hopefully in November the bush Negro and Creoles will be able to join together. There is a cumfa each Saturday out on the road to the airport: people stab themselves, walk on fire, etc.

Glen's great maternal grandfather was a plantation owner; a German, he apparently gave up after emancipation. His son, Glen's grandfather, says he could have reclaimed two of the four estates but would have had to pay large amounts of tax, and so let it go. Glen's father, a civil servant, is of Portuguese (Madeira) stock. Glen also claims some Chinese blood.

The Chinese are increasing: they are coming now from Hongkong. J. Fernandes is the richest Jew around, has the Coka cola franchise, sodas fountains, 4 movie houses, a sports and appliance store, etc. Kersten was a German [Moravian brother in fact?] who got slaves to bank with him and grew into a big merchant—[the largest department store, hotel, etc.]. The university here has only a medical and law faculty.



Tuesday, 18 July. Lunched with Charlotte and three other Baha'is: a Dutch actor who became Baha'i in N.Y.; an illustrator who became a Baha'i at the U. of Arizona and went to pioneer in Holland where he met his wife, a Surinam born girl of Dutch origin, and so they returned to Surinam but he has not been able to make much of a go, and wants to go back to Holland to get the requisite degrees to be of use in a tropical country.

Eur-Am  
Bahais

In the afternoon, I went out to the open air museum at Fort New Amsterdam. First one takes a minibus along the Suriname River to Leonsburg: some nice houses and a few farms. One crosses the river in a "dug-out" launch. The museum is dedicated to martial affairs, being a fort, but also has some great vegetation and a replica Bush Negro village where one is treated to mangoes. There is a sign indicating expansion plans for exhibits representing the other cultural groups. There was a tour from the Hotel Torarica (the big fancy new hotel) and I was fortunate that they had commissioned a Javanese dance which was marvelous even if no one seemed to know exactly what it was. One tour leader said "magic" and agreed "a little of that too" when I suggested it might have something to do with the Mahabarata.

Ft New  
Amster-  
dam

It began with two lines of men in a stylized dance-march riding paper horses and wearing crowns, white undershirts and colorful knickers. They evidently portrayed a calvary in formation: lines and then circles; and then the two lines engaged in a mock fight with each line kneeling in turn while the other marched around them: o o o This slow pace was kept up with two movements of music by a drummer, two xylophones and a cymbalist. The third movement brought dramatic changes: one after another the dancers seemed to go mad—many fell in a stiff vibrating trance or also as if dead. Three uncostumed directors then came into play with red cloths, talcum powder, words and small bottles (of perfume?). As a dancer would "die", go into a trance, or wild and out of control, these three would come and wipe his face with the red cloth, whisper in his right ear (occasionally both ears) and occasionally have him smell the perfume or talcum. They functioned as transformers, for the militia now became themselves wild horses, chewing grass or leaves or flowers and snorting. There was a small interlude where several came and knelt at the knees of some of the audience with heads bowed but snorting and chewing. They held out their arms, palms together in respect and then with a quick round gesture at the right ear like "crazy". Two and then more became monkeys. One climbed a tree, the other sat eating a coconut. A horseman then broke away and had to be ~~restrained~~ restrained. Another became a snake: moving forward on his stomach, arms by his sides, moving on his shoulders and thighs. One of the monkeys was given an egg in a newspaper and he brought it before the snake, enticing him forward until finally he abandoned the egg to the snake which the latter broke and ate. Another ape ribaldly flapped his balls at some kids. Two ate raw meat like animals and drank water using only their heads like animals at trough. Horsemen continued to suddenly and violently fall on the ground stiff and have to be bent by the transformers back into shape. Although the impression given was of wildness, all the dancers were in control and never touched a spectator, except local kids. Two "clowns" who had marched with the calvary in the first movements, returned to aid the transformers. It all seemed like a lot of impromptu coordinated by the transformers. A little monkey jumped on the back of another, mock fights. One of the dancers was a Creole; the rest Javanese.

Jarang  
Kapang

By watching until not quite the end, I missed the last boat back across the river Suriname, and so had to walk through the village: very nice houses in varying states of paint and repair, a mosque, Indians, and Creoles. Met one William Cornells who claimed to have a boat and would charge five guilders; claimed to be a fisherman. But then he turned out to be a salesman in Paramaribo who needed to get back too—so we split the cost of a boat: I paid 2 guilders, he  $\frac{1}{2}$  a guilder. Then in Leonsberg we met the tour and caught a ride back on their bus. Before catching the boat, he introduced an Indian friend who had a stuffed ocelot which he wanted to sell for 200 guilders (\$110). Back in town we shared some beer and he told me his hard luck story. He is the son of a Chinese father and a Negro mother, and he married a Javanese wife. His father had a pig farm and was bought out 20 years ago by Suralco for 5,000 guilders near Paranam. His house-cum-shop in town is worth 50,000 guilders. Married for ten years, he never had children, so he adopted one, but she cannot walk (now 3 years old). His wife was Muslim and so he became Muslim at marriage.

I then went to find Glen. He was not home but Mistro was watching TV with Glen's family: a program of Indian music with explanation. Last night the TV had a calypso group. Both programs were of Surinamese students studying in the Netherlands, brought back to Suriname to perform. TV is from 7-11 p.m.: programs like these mixed in with American serials (Perry Mason, Alfred Hitchcock, spy movies).

Wednesday 19 July. I bought an instamatic camera. Then I went to find Islamramzan (butchery on Jodenbreestr. 41) and his son Omar. Islamramzan is the head of the Sunni group here, ~~am~~ the President; but at the moment he has been outmaneuvered by a Pakistani Maulana. The Sunnis got a grant from the Dutch (not the Surinamese Gvt) to build an orphanage and school. They then brought this Maulana from Pakistan to teach the kids, and paid him SF.700/mo. Then he wanted to bring his family and have them appointed to various positions in the Institution. Islamramzan refused and tried to send him back to Pakistan, but the Maulana instead caused a split in the community and it is Islamramzan who is boycotting the mosque. Sunni

They insist that basically there is no difference between the Javanese and Hindustanis. Both will pray in each other's mosques, but admitted to some differences: the Hindustanis are Hanafi and the Javanese are Shafi, but it is not clear what if anything that means practically; he offered that there is a disagreement about the direction of the Kaaba for purposes of prayer. [Should ask if women go to mosque for both.] Then I went to find Haji Joggoe, the leader of the Ahmaddiyya: he has sons in Holland (they decided that a country struggling for independence is not a good place to stay: one is a doctor, the other a mechanical engineer). The Haji, himself has a fair-sized cloth shop. He wanted Johnny of Johnny's Hotel to find a car to show me around, but Johnny seemed busy (has four shops, the hotel and the Curacao football team is staying in the hotel now.) Ahmaddiyya

Had lunch at the Taj Mahal: expensive but good. Then I met Glen and he pointed out the Guyanese ambassador (consul?) who said the counting is still going on but it looks like Burnham will get his 2/3 easily. Went with Glen to Paranam, the bauxite port for Suralco and a smaller Dutch Co. Glen says the Dutch hire Javanese and the Americans hire Creole (all a matter of who is doing the hiring). There's not much of a town, workers houses range from not bad to OK, nothing great and nothing really outrageous. Had some patjil - a Javanese snack served in banana leaf of beans, bamboo shoots, peanut butter diluted with peppers—hot and tasty.



Mistro came by: says he heard on the radio of two killings in Georgetown and several more in the hospital. Johnny, he says, started as the best tailor in town from whom all the lads bought shirts and pants. Fernandes, the rich Jew, owns four of the local cinemas. He and a Guyanese shrimp boat captain agree on the vast amounts of money gambled by chinese in matlok, including women, businesses, as stakes. We went to the Curacao—Jai-Hind football match. Jai Hind is one of about seven professional football teams in Surinam and the only Indian one. The fans were predominantly Hindustani. The match was a draw, but the Guyanese shrimp captain says Curacao was using its second string. Next Sunday Curacao plays the best Surinam has: Transvaal. Last Sunday, Curacao beat Robin Hood: people walked out, were vexed, man. Brazil when teams come, walk circles around the local teams.

The evening paper De West confirms 2/3 majority seats for Burnham, two dead, 17 wounded, 70 arrested (official police release on Tuesday).

When we got off the minibus from Paranam driven by a Hindustani, 3 black guys did not pay and gave the black power salute (raised fist). The driver did not contest it.

Thursday, 20 July. Met Rodwell, the fellow Victor O'Connell and his Guyanese friend picked up; he said his mother wished to meet me. So we went to see her in her office: she is in charge of welfare for the dependents of the men who go into the bush for the geological section of the Ministry of Development. I asked if Jamshid Arjomande worked there (the Yazdi Bahai) and was told yes, and so met him. Next I went to the Tourist Bureau and then to Haji Joggoe who directed me to Dr. Jamaluddin. Ran into Glen again: he got less in payment than he expected for a job—spent 20% of it on the lottery on which of course he won nothing; he failed to collect on some shirts he sold to a ~~man~~ policewoman.

Evening, dinner at Robert Bailey's where Jamshid and his Javanese wife were also invited. Jamshid has been here 3 years; married 6 months. He is from Morabad: his dai (wet nurse), one of several, is Nurullah Akhtar Khavari's wife. He went to Marker School when Soroush Lorasp was the headmaster and then to Khosravi. Then he went to Germany and Ireland (Queen's College). He's been back for a visit to Yazd once five years ago, but it is fourteen years since he has left. He says I must have eaten sheep eyes on sol or gahambar: it is cooked and so charred it looks like the meat of the rest of the head, but is fatty and delicate of taste. It is not eaten raw Arab style. He had some zurxane lessons in high school: the exercises are good for the legs and arms but not the stomach—look at the pahlavans, big stomachs. Relatives in Nasrabad are Mehrshahi. He is an only son; his father has died and his mother still lives there. Theoretically he should be exempt from military service because he is supporting his mother and wife, but he would have to prove it: it would be a big hassle in red tape so as to make a simple visit back again very difficult. He would like to get a Surinam passport in a year or so, so that he can get out and around. He runs two geological mapping-cum-prospecting crews. There is a Yazdi Bahai in Cayenne, Trinidad and Jamaica and of course Brazil. There used to be one in Georgetown but shee left. Baha'u'llah begins a new cycle of religions: up till now was the Adamic or Prophetic Cycle, the cycle of the prophets who made promises, the last of whom was the Bab; next is that begun by Baha'u'llah which is the fulfillment of the promises. The Adamic Cycle was 5-10 thousand years; the new cycle will be 50,000 years and new prophets and renewers will come every thousand of multiple of thousand years.