

Members of the head table, consul general of Guyana, Mr. Evans, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon. We are gathered here today to pay tribute to a great lady, a lady whom I protected while she served as Prime Minister and President of Guyana. I was honored as a member of the Presidential Guards to serve in this capacity.

I was selected to join the Presidential Guards after Comrade Cheddi Jagan became President in 1992 and served as one his Bodyguards until his passing in 1997.

The P.P.P won a landslide victory at the polls and he became the new president of Guyana, his wife Janet, became first lady. Prime Minister Samuel Hinds was sworn in as president, Janet Jagan became prime minister, after a year, elections were held and Janet won the Presidency. Comrades here in the Diaspora I don't want you to forget as soon as Cheddi was declared winner all hell broke loose, it was former President Jimmy Carter who saved the day. During this time, I witnessed the caring, compassionate and fearlessness of this great woman, Janet Jagan. Every morning before we left for the office of the President, she would give me a bag with President Cheddi's breakfast. She would then drive to the New Guyana Company, home of the Mirror Newspaper, without Bodyguards. As First Lady, she rarely traveled around with president Cheddi, she never liked the spotlight. However, she would accompany comrade Cheddi and the grandchildren, whom she loved dearly to the swimming pool, a car was sent to pick up Kellawan Lall's and Gail Texeira's and many other kids to go along with them. Once she was very sick and in hospital, we thought she would have died, a decision was made to fly her to Mount Hope Hospital in Trinidad, that's where she made a full recovery and returned to Guyana, a panic button was installed in her room with connections to the security desk at state House.

The late president Janet Jagan loved to read on a variety of subjects. Several times I had to go into their home to deliver messages or for other reasons and she would always have a few books opened. I often wondered if she reading all those books at the same time.

She wrote a few books also, once I went to deliver a note to her late husband, Mrs. Jagan was reading a book, she took the note from me and went inside to give it to the president, when she gets up I saw another book on the chair, it was, "The secret life of J. Edgar Hoover, late director of the F.B.I, and the other was Salman Rushdie's, The Moors last Sign". When I came to America, I read the former, a book I had wanted to present her was " Inside the Pirates Den. How Castro survived the embargo. I have never seen a computer at State House and I never seen Cheddi nor Janet use one either, I am also a lover of books and I am an avid reader, thanks to Mel Carpen and Chuck Mohan they would shower me with books, lately I was browsing through Barnes and Noble and I picked up a book, when I read the first few pages in the first chapter I was shocked, the book " Safe for Democracy" written by John Prados tells the story of C.I.A operations in the then British Guiana, it even name the players involved. It tells how Burnham's doctor was recruited by the C.I.A, and sent to Barbados for training, how the Trade Unions were financed, and how the C.I.A recruited Bairam Singh Rai and financed his Justice Party, to counter the Jagans, and the role Janet Jagan played in the P.P.P, and her influence in the party and Cheddi, It's a must read for all Guyanese in the political business, you must know your history and what happened to our beautiful country. Those were the dark days of history that pushed the Jagans out of power, but history would repeat itself many years later.

This time, it was Desmond Hoyte, former president and leader of the opposition P.N.C, according to police special branch reports the P.N.C is planning massive street demonstrations, to prevent Janet Jagan from swearing in as president of Guyana, she was then sworn in secretly, after, a small ceremony

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was kept at State House in her honor, as soon as Janet became president all hell broke loose, Desmond Hoyte called for her resignation, as hundreds of P.N.C supporters took to the streets, I remember this is exactly how the C.I.A brought down Mossadegh and replaced him with the Shah of Iran. P.N.C supporters were burning tyres, beating people, breaking stores. The marchers would assemble at the square of the Revolution, next to Cuffy's statue, the African slave that led the rebellion in Berbice, the marchers were addressed by Hoyte and others before taking to the streets their first stop, office of the president and their chants were,, who must go, Janet must go, who must go, Janet must go" and we don't want no white woman rule we" after that a small band of women dressed in white would take up positions on the Vissingen road entrance, they would beat African drums throw flowers and dance, like some type of ritual, their chants were" we gon wuk pon she, we gon wuk pon she" us bodyguards used to call them the judge nights. Janet Jagan wouldn't pay much heed to them, we would use the New Garden street entrance to get out of the Office of the President, to State House, the uniformed guards at state house and the police were briefed not to anger the crowd, only if State House was under attack then we would take action, Janet was briefed of our plans to take her to her residence in Bel Air if the situation worsened, meanwhile, Hoyte and his band of marchers continue to harass the streets of Georgetown for days, at nights, tires and buildings were set alight and again the marchers would end up at the square of the revolution to be addressed by P.N.C members, meetings were kept regularly at Freedom House.

Desmond Hoyte has called for fresh elections and for Janet to resign, instead a deal was reached and the Herdmanston Accord was signed, the P.P.P had to shorten their term in power, but things weren't to stay calm for long, Janet had to go.

It all started on a sunny day. On the 26th of May, 1966 Guyana gained its independence from Great Britain, the celebrations would normally held at the national park, but for security reasons it was held at the parliament buildings. Our advanced team on the ground had reported that everything is in place, the president should proceed on time, some streets were cordoned off to allow free access for the presidential escort to enter parliament buildings, then later on, in another report we were told that a huge crowd has built up, and according to their chatter most of them are suspected P.N.C supporters, the police mounted branch were summoned to keep the crowd at bay and behind police barriers, as president Janet Jagan entered parliament buildings the crowd became hostile and noisy and during the flag raising ceremony, they started heckling the speakers, after the ceremony finished and the presidential escort began leaving parliament, her car was attacked by a hostile mob. Stones were thrown at her car, but security whisked her away from danger. The headline in the newspapers the next day, read, President Janet Jagan stoned while leaving Parliament. The angry crowds burst through the barriers, horse guards were outnumbered, one man stood in front of the escort and tried to block it, a member of our advanced team pushed him out the way, we had to drive with speed and get the hell out of there,

One afternoon, as I was eating and my wife was watching T.V, she said, "Harald come and see this news on the TV, you wouldn't believe this., The news was Janet Jagan resigned as President of Guyana, Bharrat Jagdeo would be sworn in as President and Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces. I grabbed the telephone quick and called State House, my friend answered and said its true Harald we have a new boss, by then I had already resigned and were ready to come to America, I never had a chance to serve with Bharrat Jagdeo. Today, when I read and hear what is going on in Guyana my heart aches, I want to go back and fight the evil that's tearing our beloved

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country apart, if only those in power could listen to us, my Guyana and your Guyana, would be a wonderful and calm place today. Long live the memory of Janet Jagan and the party she helped founded, I hope this be an annual event, so that we can keep the Jagans in our memories forever, ladies and gentlemen, thank you.

Mr. Surujnarine Harald was former bodyguard for the late President Cheddi Jagan, Janet Jagan and Samuel Hinds he served six years in the Presidential Guard, he also worked in the security detail for Queen Elizabeth the 2nd and prince Phillip, former U.S president Jimmy Carter, Caribbean Leaders and African heads of State.