

The uniformed Bad Boys of the Guyana Police Force

The uniformed Bad Boys of the Guyana Police Force and their overridden Commissioner

Written by realTalk - Demerara Waves - Tuesday, 25 September 2012

Since 1992, the Guyana Police Force (GPF) has consistently failed in its mandate to protect and serve the people of Guyana. Instead, it has become a most corrupt and brutal force, in the defense of notorious drug lords, lawless and incompetent politicians, and the friends of the friends who enjoy close affiliation with the ruling party. Guyanese continue to be intimidated and terrorized by the bands of uniformed bad boys belonging to the GPF.

That the tragedy of Linden occurred with the police at the center of it ought not to surprise Guyanese. Extrajudicial killings from post 1992 became the hallmark of the GPF. The numbers of extrajudicial killings by the GPF are many from 92 to now. During the mid to late 90s, when the goon squad known as the Black Clothes Police - that later had some of its senior members entangled with a convicted US embassy employee on extortion claims – was shooting persons who were under their beds, some who were kneeling in surrender and others who were in trenches, Guyanese did nothing. They sat in silence while the relatives of these murdered victims cried out for justice.

However, when Yohance Douglas, a middleclass Guyanese youth is shot and killed by the police while heading home with friends after an early Saturday morning basketball game, all voices were raised in condemnation of the police. Protests were organized and public outcry was enormous. The policemen responsible for that incident were reluctantly tried. They are free today, walking the streets. Yohance is still dead!

The tragedy at Linden in July where three innocent protesters have been shot dead allegedly and most likely by the police has now resulted in a Commission of Inquiry (COI) that has commenced its investigation. In the time between the Linden murders and the commencement of the COI, a 17 year old youth in Agricola has been gunned down in cold blood by the police. And the police continue to show stubborn reluctance to thoroughly investigate that incident and severely discipline its perpetrators.

Upon scrupulous questioning by members of the COI team, the head of the GPF has made some very interesting but not surprising remarks regarding the very obvious political interference with the GPF. To state that the Minister of Home Affairs

circumvented the office and authority of the Commissioner of Police (COP) to speak directly to lower ranks of the GPF highlights a significant disregard by the minister for the office of the COP. It also further demonstrates that the minister is running the affairs of his ministry in a highly incompetent and unprofessional manner. Why the government insists on having such a person in charge of national security matters is befuddling as it is perilous.

The COI in its first day revealed quite clearly that the COP is not in control of the GPF. That fact is further supported by the disappearance of the policemen fingered in the recent shooting to death of the Agricola youth. The policemen suspected of shooting the Agricola youth was apparently relegated to desk duty and were to be further placed on close arrest. They cannot be found at the time of writing on Tuesday, September 25, 2012. Are Guyanese to trust the GPF to solve crime?

Both the COP and the Minister of Home Affairs should be fired immediately!

Guyanese do not have any confidence in the GPF. They see members of the GPF as criminals, murderers, extortionists, and the private army of a minister. The GPF continues to cover up the misdeeds of its own refusing to let justice run its course. In this time of the convergence of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), where mobile technology makes it easier to take high quality pictures and video, the GPF cannot continue to fabricate stories about what they believe transpired at a particular crime scene. In this technological age, eye witnesses will have recorded evidence in the form of pictures and videos; concrete evidence that does not lie.

The home affairs minister already has a parliamentary no confidence vote against him. The COP has now demonstrated that Guyanese can no longer have confidence in his ability to manage the GPF. It is time more severe political pressure is applied to have these two gentlemen resign their positions.