



GOVERNMENT HOUSE.

GEORGETOWN.

BRITISH GUIANA.

11th December, 1964

My dear Premier,

I have received the following personal message for you from the Secretary of State for the Colonies:-

" The Governor has told me that in the course of discussions about the election result you have expressed serious doubts about whether you and your Government should resign forthwith. I do not think that you can seriously maintain that you could get a majority in the new Assembly and I want desperately - as I am sure you do - to see stability in British Guiana. Apart from anything else I am afraid that continued uncertainty may lead to further bloodshed and unhappiness. I do ask you most earnestly to take this into account and to enable the new Government to be formed. We have no wish to resort to Constitutional amendment. But we should have no alternative if you obstructed the formation of a new Government. This is very urgent. That is why I am making this personal approach.

ANTHONY GREENWOOD "

Yours sincerely,

Richard S. Lloyd
Governor.

Dr. the Hon. Cheddi Jagan.

December 12, 1964

My dear Secretary of State:

Thank you for your personal message delivered by His Excellency the Governor, Sir Richard Luyt. I share your concern about the situation here and your hope for stability. Unfortunately, a series of events -- betrayal by the British Government of solemn pledges given at the 1960 Constitutional Conference, lack of adequate and firm support on the part of the police and security forces for my constitutionally elected Government, condonement of ~~and~~ connivance with a secret Opposition Terrorist Organization, the imposition of the rigged system of proportional representation, and election irregularities -- have all helped to cause ^{instability and} a loss of confidence in successive British Governments.

In spite of fiddled constitutional arrangements and gross electoral irregularities -- changed system of registration of voters, extensive use of proxies, etc. -- a majority of the population see the election results as a vote of confidence in my Government. My Party polled 46% of the vote, increasing its share by 3%, whereas the People's National Congress dropped by 0.4% and the United Force by nearly 4%. And the results show that had the election been fought under the traditional system of first-past-the-post, my Party would have won the same 20 out of 35 seats which it won in 1961.

You have sought my cooperation by requesting my resignation. You must know that I have cooperated at all stages and have endeavoured to do all in my power to bring about unity, peace and progress in my country. My refusal to resign is not to be regarded in any way as obstruction. It is merely a continuation of our protest -- you must know that we have contested the general election under protest.

You say you have no wish to resort to constitutional amendment, but that you would have no alternative if I obstructed the formation of a new government. I regret to say that alternatives were open to you and are still open to your Government. Although you inherited a triumphant wrong in the imposition of proportional representation, which your Party in Opposition severely criticized and your

Prime Minister as Leader of the Opposition deemed a "fiddled constitutional arrangement," your Government failed to take steps to postpone the election and to act on the suggestion made by your Prime Minister as Leader of the Opposition in July, 1964, that a Commonwealth team should come to British Guiana to re-examine our situation. In spite of these criticisms you now seek to implement the results of the fraud in British Guiana. Surely, you cannot be unaware that the main beneficiary of the proportional representation system is the ultra-reactionary United Force. The system of proportional representation has allowed this small party representing a very small section of the community to become a wedge between major groupings of the country. Clearly, this is undesirable in Guiana, which has experienced three successive years of communal strife and which needs a large measure of cooperation between the major sections supporting the PPP and the PNC.

I suggest that an alternative is still open to you at this late stage. I propose that you take the initiative of working out a constitutional formula which would provide representation in the Government of the major section of the people now excluded by the freak result produced by the form of proportional representation introduced by your predecessor. This is not impossible.

You must have noted that the imposed system of proportional representation has not achieved what its local advocates and the British Tory Government had proclaimed would have been achieved, namely, that proportional representation would force the major parties to work together. Should you resort to constitutional amendment, this would result in grave dissatisfaction among more than half of the people of British Guiana. Already there is evidence of a rising tide of demand for partition of this country. Unless your Government intervenes to work out an amicable solution, I fear that this demand will grow and create even further problems. There is still time.

I again urge and appeal to you to intercede to bring about a solution mutually satisfactory to all concerned.

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History will no doubt blame the Tories for the fraud committed in British Guiana. If you and your Government acquiesce in this fraud, you will have to share equal responsibility.

Sincerely yours,

Cheddi Jagan
Premier

The Right Honourable Anthony Greenwood, M.P.
Secretary of State for the Colonies
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