

The Suspension of the British Guiana Constitution - 1953 (Declassified British documents)

Editor - Dr.Odeen Ishmael GNI Publications - 2004 © Odeen Ishmael

[See also: [Report of the British Guiana Constitutional Commission 1954](#) and [PPP Leaders in India 1953](#)]

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Posted August 2004

	May - September 1953	October 1953	November 1953	December 1953	
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INTRODUCTION

In October 1953, the democratically elected Government of Guyana (then known as British Guiana) was removed from power by the British Government which was at that time the colonial ruler. What was essentially a *coup d'etat* against the People's Progressive Party (PPP), which had won a landslide victory in the April 1953 election, was engineered through the suspension of the British Guiana constitution by the British Government and the simultaneous landing and deployment of British troops in the country. The Ministers of the Government, as well as the House of Assembly, were dismissed by the British Governor, who proceeded to appoint an interim Government made up of persons who were political opponents of the PPP. Most of these persons had been defeated as candidates in the April general election. In the aftermath, many leading members of the PPP were detained without trial while, under a state of emergency declared by the Governor, civil rights were suspended.

The British Government took this drastic action after it was convinced by some of the anti-PPP politicians, who had lost their privileges after the April election, that the PPP was a "communist organisation" bent on "subverting the Government" and making it an ally of the Soviet Union. The British Government believed the untruths being peddled that the country was in a state of tension and that violence could break out at any moment. When the British troops arrived on 9 October they were very surprised to see people peacefully going about their normal activities. On the same day an international cricket match between Trinidad and Guyana began in Georgetown, and there was no sign of tension or violence anywhere.

As soon as it was clear that the PPP had won the April 1953 election, there developed an increased traffic of official communication between Georgetown and London and also between military offices in London and the Caribbean on the new political situation in Guyana. Many of these documents point very clearly to the fact that the British Government was surprised by the PPP electoral victory, and that it was intent to remove the new left-wing Government from power.

The source of these documents in this collection is the British Archives. They were declassified quite recently and were made available by the British Archives to the Cheddi Jagan Research Centre in Guyana. A few other documents (which were never classified or secret), and whose source is not the British Archives, are included in this collection to add to

the historical perspective. The source for those additional documents is noted below the text.

For convenience, the documents are divided into time periods: May-September 1953, October 1953, November 1953, and December 1953 and after. In general, there is no special title given to any of the official documents. The title of each document shown in this collection has been formulated by the editor of this collection.

THE DOCUMENTS

MAY - SEPTEMBER 1953

1. INTERNAL COLONIAL OFFICE MEMORANDUM ON AVAILABILITY OF FORCES TO PREVENT DISTURBANCES IN BRITISH GUIANA

(13 May 1953)

DRAFT

DEF.123/30/01

Mr. Vernon13/5
Mr. Edmonds 13/5
Mr. Armitage-Smith 13/5
Mr. Mayle

Permt. U.S. of S.
Parly. U.S. of S.
Minister of State*
Secretary of State**

SECRET

Availability of Forces in the event of disturbances in British Guiana.

Source of Forces

The Police Force in British Guiana is up to strength and as far as we know is not disaffected. The lower ranks are predominantly African which may be a factor of importance if, as seems possible, disturbances are caused by East Indians. It is not recommended that Police Forces should be brought in from other Colonial territories.

British Guiana has a local Volunteer Force which would no doubt be the first reserve for the Police in the event of trouble. Its strength is 403.

A U.K. battalion is stationed in Jamaica, under the Commander, Caribbean Area, less one company in British Honduras. An air movement scheme has been prepared, and this should enable these troops to give assistance at short notice.

There is a small strategic reserve available in the United Kingdom for use anywhere in the world, but with military commitments in being or anticipated in Malaya, East Africa, Central Africa and Egypt, the possibility of a unit from this reserve being released for use in the West Indies is so remote as not to merit entertainment.

The Naval Commander-in-Chief, West Indies Station, has a variety of ships at his disposal, but none of them will necessarily be in West Indian waters at any particular time unless the Admiralty accede to any special emergency request made.

Method of calling up troops

The Governor should supply the Commander, Caribbean and the Commander-in-Chief, West Indies Station with an appreciation of the position as soon as he foresees the possibility of needing military aid. The Commanders will then make such troop and ship dispositions as they consider appropriate. The C.-in-C. might, for example, keep a ship cruising in neighbouring West Indian waters. If trouble starts the Governor will call on the Commanders directly for support when he considers it desirable. It will be for the Commanders to ask London for reinforcements if they think the situation warrants it.

It is recommended that the Governor of British Guiana should be reminded to let the local Commanders have an appreciation of the situation if there is any cause to fear disturbances.

[Editor's Notes:

* *Alan Lennox-Boyd*

** *Oliver Lyttelton*]

2. MINUTES OF THE INAUGURAL SESSION OF THE BRITISH GUIANA HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

(18 May 1953)

BRITISH GUIANA

FIRST HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

FIRST SESSION

1953

MINUTES of the Proceedings of the inaugural meeting of the House of Assembly of the Colony of British Guiana held in the Chamber of the Legislature at the Public Buildings, Georgetown, Demerara,

AT 2 P.M. on MONDAY, 18TH MAY, 1953.

PRESENT:

His Honour the Speaker Sir Eustace Gordon Woolford, O.B.E., Q.C.

Ex-Officio Members -

The Chief Secretary, Mr. John Gutch, C.M.G., O.B.E.

The Attorney General, Mr. F.W. Holder, Q.C.

The Financial Secretary, Mr. W.O. Fraser, O.B.E. (Acting)

Elected Members

Mr. W.A. Phang (No. 1 - North West)

Mr. T.S. Wheating (No. 2 - Pomeroon)

Mrs. J. Jagan (No. 3 - Western Essequibo)

Mr. T. Lee (No. 4 - Essequibo Islands)

Mr. E.F. Correia (No. 5 - Bartica and Interior)

Mr. F. Bowman (No. 6 - Demerara-Essequibo)

Mr. Jai Narine Singh (No. 7 - West Bank, Demerara)

Dr. J.P. Lachhmansingh (No. 8 - East Bank, Demerara)

Mr. C.A. Carter (No. 9 - Upper Demerara River)

Mr. A. Chase (No. 10 - Georgetown South)

Mr. C.R. Wong (No. 11 - Georgetown South Central)

Miss J.I.S. Burnham (No. 12 - Georgetown Central)

Mr. F.O. Van Sertima (No. 13 - Georgetown North)

Mr. L.F.S. Burnham (No. 14 - Georgetown North-East)

Mr. Ramkarran (No. 15 - West Central Demerara)

Mr. S.E. King (No. 16 - Central Demerara)

Mrs. J. Phillips-Gay (No. 17 - East Central Demerara)

Mr. C.S. Persaud (No. 18 - Mahaica-Mahaicony)

Mr. S.M. Latchmansingh (No. 19 - Western Berbice)

Mr. W.O.R. Kendall (No. 20 - New Amsterdam)

Mr. Ajodha Singh (No. 21 - Berbice River)

Dr. R.S. Hanoman Singh (No. 22 - Eastern Berbice)

Dr. C.B. Jagan (No. 23 - Corentyne Coast)

Mr. M. Khan (No. 24 - Corentyne River);

Clerk of the Legislature - Mr. I. Crum Ewing

Assistant Clerk of the Legislature - Mr. I.R. King.

Members having taken their places around the table in the numerical order of their Constituencies immediately following those of the Ex-Officio Members, His Honour the Speaker entered the Chamber at 2 p.m. in procession preceded by the Marshal, the Clerk of the House and the Assistant Clerk.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

The Clerk called the roll of Members, all answering as their names were called. The Clerk then reported to the Speaker that all Members were present.

GOVERNOR'S PROCLAMATION UNDER SECTION 82 OF THE BRITISH GUIANA (CONSTITUTION) ORDER IN COUNCIL, 1953.

The Clerk next read the Governor's Proclamation published in the Gazette of the 13th of May, 1953, appointing the 18th day of May, 1953, at 2 p.m., as the appointed day and hour for the first meeting of the House of Assembly.

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE UNDER SECTION 81 OF THE BRITISH GUIANA (CONSTITUTION) ORDER IN COUNCIL, 1953.

The Honourable the Chief Justice, Mr. E.P.S. Bell, administered the Oath of Allegiance to the Speaker and thereafter to the twenty-seven Members of the House.

PRAYERS

Prayers were read by the Most Reverend Dr. Alan John Knight, Archbishop of the West Indies.

Thereafter the Speaker addressed the House.

The Honourable Members for the Corentyne Coast (Dr. C.B. Jagan) and New Amsterdam (Mr. W.O.R. Kendall) congratulated the Speaker on his appointment and pledged the co-operation of the majority and the minority parties respectively, in the discharge of the business of the House. The Chief Secretary on behalf of the Ex-Officio Members of the House also joined in congratulating the Speaker on his appointment and asked that the Speaker's address should be printed and circulated for the information of Members.

ELECTION OF DEPUTY SPEAKER UNDER SECTION 45 OF THE BRITISH GUIANA (CONSTITUTION) ORDER IN COUNCIL. 1953.

The Clerk having read Section 45 of the British Guiana (Constitution) Order in Council concerning the election of a Deputy Speaker, the Speaker explained to the House that the Standing Rules and Orders would have to be suspended to permit of a motion being moved for the approval of the appointment of the Deputy Speaker and also for the election of the six Members of the Executive Council.

The Elected Members then proceeded to vote by ballot for the selection of a Deputy Speaker, the Ex-Officio Members having decided to abstain from voting. The result of the voting was as follows: -

Mrs. Jagan received 17 votes (Member for Western Essequibo)
Miss Burnham received 3 votes (Member for Georgetown Central)
Mr. Wong received 2 votes (member for Georgetown South Central).

One Member abstained from voting, while another Member spoilt his vote.

Accordingly the following motion was moved by the Honourable Member for the Corentyne River (Mr. Khan) and seconded by the Honourable Member for Demerara-Essequibo (Mr. Bowman): -

That the Standing Rules and Orders be suspended to allow of a motion being made for the approval of the election of the Honourable Member for Western Essequibo, Mr. Janet Jagan, as Deputy Speaker of the House.

The motion was carried.

The Honourable Member for the Corentyne River (Mr. Khan) then moved the following motion: -

BE IT RESOLVED that this House hereby approves of the appointment of the Member for Western Essequibo, Mrs. Janet Jagan, as its Deputy Speaker.

The motion was seconded by the Honourable Member for the Corentyne Coast (Dr. Jagan) and carried.

ELECTION OF MINISTERS UNDER SECTION 9(2) OF THE BRITISH GUIANA (CONSTITUTION) ORDER IN COUNCIL, 1953.

The Clerk read Section 9(2) of the British Guiana (Constitution) Order in Council, 1953, providing for the election of six persons from among the elected members to be Ministers.

Members then proceeded to ballot for the election of the six members of the Executive Council.

The result of the voting was as follows: -

Mr. Burnham received - 19 votes.
Dr. Jagan received - 18 votes
Dr. Lachhmansingh received - 18 votes
Mr. Chase received - 18 votes
Mr. Jai Narine Singh received - 18 votes
Mr. King received - 18 votes
Mr. Lee received - 6 votes
Mr. Wong received - 6 votes
Mr. Kendall received - 6 votes
Mr. Carter received - 6 votes
Dr. Hanoman Singh received - 5 votes
Miss Burnham received - 5 votes
Mr. Wheating received - 1 vote.

The Official Members abstained from voting.

The following motion was moved by the Honourable Member for the Corentyne River (Mr. Khan) and seconded by the Honourable Member for the Corentyne Coast (Dr. Jagan): -

That the standing Rules and Orders be suspended to allow of a motion being made for the approval of the election of six members to be Members of the Executive Council in and for the Colony as provided for under the provisions of Section 5 of the British Guiana (Constitution) Order in Council, 1953.

The motion was carried.

The Honourable Member for the Corentyne River (Mr. Khan) then moved the following motion: -

BE IT RESOLVED that, in accordance with the provisions of Section 9(1) of the British Guiana (Constitution) Order in Council, 1953, this House hereby approves of the election of the following Members, viz. : -

Dr. C.B. Jagan

Mr. L.F.S. Burnham

Mr. A. Chase

Mr. S. King

Dr. J.P. Lachhmansingh

Mr. Jai Narine Singh

to be Member of the Executive Council in and for the Colony as provided for under the provisions of Section 5 of the British Guiana (Constitution) Order in Council, 1953.

The motion was seconded by the Member for the Berbice River (Mr. Ajodha Singh) and carried.

ADJOURNEMENT

There being no further business His Honour adjourned the House *sine die*.*

Confirmed,

(Signed) Eustace G. Wolford
Speaker

PUBLIC BUILDINGS BRITISH GUIANA
17th June, 1953

[Editor's note: * without stating a date for the next meeting.]

[Source: Parliamentary Library, Guyana]

3. EXTRACT OF MESSAGE FROM QUEEN ELEIZABETH II TO THE NEW LEGISLATURE OF BRITISH GUIANA

(30 May 1953)

It is indeed a happy coincidence that the year of my Coronation also marks the introduction of a new Constitution in British Guiana under which my peoples will assume more responsibility for their own affairs. . . .

The members of the Legislature have been entrusted with the heavy responsibility of advancing the prosperity and well-being of the territory and I know they will always bear in mind the high trust that has been placed in them in carrying out this task. To them and to my peoples in the territory, I send my greetings on this notable occasion and my good wishes for the success of the new Constitution.

[Source: National Archives of Guyana.

(Quoted from Legislative Council Debates: 30 May 1953)]

4. EXTRACT OF THE MESSAGE FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY OLIVER LYTTTELTON TO THE NEW LEGISLATURE OF BRITISH GUIANA

(30 May 1953)

It gives me great pleasure to send a message of goodwill to the new Legislature of British Guiana on the occasion of its opening session. All who have taken part ever since the appointment of the visiting (Waddington) Commission in the framing of the new Constitution deserve our warm thanks and congratulations. With the opening of a new era in the political development of the territory a special responsibility rests upon the members of the Legislature to work together for the good of the people of the territory and to make a success of the Constitution. It is my earnest hope that the House and the Council will build up a tradition of obligation to the interests of the people of orderly debate and of good government. . . .

[Source: National Archives of Guyana

(Quoted from Legislative Council Debates, 30 May 1953)]

5. EXTRACTS OF THE SPEECH BY SIR ALFRED SAVAGE, GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA TO THE NEW LEGISLATURE OF BRITISH GUIANA

(30 May 1953)

. . . . We are not only witnessing history being made in this country but we ourselves are taking part in its making and our responsibilities to the present and future generations of Guianese are both heavy and immense.

I would first urge upon members of both Chambers and the general public the necessity to study carefully the provisions of the new Constitution. Its terms and purpose represent the most progressive constitutional changes which British Guiana has ever experienced. Here, as in other parts of the Commonwealth, the declared policy of Her Majesty's Government to advance the colonies to the goal of self-government as speedily as their political and economic development will allow has been applied in a most practical manner.

I am aware that the party in power (PPP) have expressed themselves as opposed in principle to the provision for a Second Chamber. They have suggested that it is superfluous, since in any case it has no power effectively to oppose the will of the House of Assembly. But I suggest to you that it is wrong to regard the State Council as an opposition. It is true that its function is to act as a check but I am confident it will exercise its function with discretion.

Similarly, the retention of the three ex officio members in the House of Assembly and the State Council has been criticised.

. . . . I appeal to all members of the Legislature and of the Civil Service to tackle this magnificent opportunity in co-operation and with confidence and enthusiasm and prove to the world that the Constitution cannot only work but will operate adequately and successfully. Only by so doing can we prove British Guiana's fitness for a further forward step towards full self-government.

British Guiana is not the first country in this world to have had radical constitutional and political changes. I have seen similar changes elsewhere, when, as we have, one section of a community have feared the worse because they felt that the speed of progress was too rapid while another section believed that at last all their problems would be solved.

To those who feel that El Dorado has now been discovered I would say you must not expect too early or too easy a solution to your problems. . . .

If labour will give of its best and if capital will deal justly with its employees, the partnership of interests will be more apparent and the general industrial health of this country will be assured. . . .

Finally British Guiana has been described as "the land of six peoples" and a most heartening feature of the recent elections was the absence of racialism. . . .

*[Source: National Archives of Guyana
(Quoted from Legislative Council Debates, 30 May 1953)]*

6. TEXT OF LETTER TO GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA FROM N.L. MAYLE OF THE COLONIAL OFFICE

(3 June 1953)

COLONIAL OFFICE,
The Church House,
Great Smith Street,
S.W.1.
3rd June, 1953

DEF 123/30/1

TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL

At the end of his letter to you on the 30th May Lloyd asked for an estimate of the reliability of the Police Force and the local Volunteer Force in case of riots or disturbances arising out of political developments.

I do not know whether, in reply, to that request, you will be commenting on the question, which you have no doubt been considering, of increasing the efficiency of the Police Force to meet the risks of disturbances or riots, racial or otherwise, attached to the People's Progressive Party's victory at the Election. If not, we should be grateful if you would let us have a report as soon as possible on what is being done to carry out the recommendations made by Muller, in his letter to Gutch on the 24th March, together with your views on any other action which you think desirable in present circumstances to improve Police efficiency. We should be glad if you would include a further report on the extent to which the P.P.P. has supporters in the Police Force.

We have also considered, in a preliminary and quite tentative way, what outside Forces might be available for British Guiana in the event of a situation developing which called for such assistance. We do not of course envisage such a situation arising in the near future

and this is very much a precautionary matter. At the same time, as you are probably aware, the Forces available for reinforcing internal Police and local Forces in the West Indies are not numerous and might not be available quickly. In these circumstances, it seems to us to be a wise precaution to let the Commander, Caribbean, and the Naval Commander-in-Chief, West Indies Station, to whom you would normally apply for assistance, have an appreciation of the situation now and keep them informed of developments. This will prepare them for a request and ensure that they have the necessary background if and when it is made. I hope that you will not think that we are being too pessimistic in considering this matter. If you agree with our views, perhaps you would arrange to keep the Naval Commander-in-Chief, West Indies Station, and the Commander, Caribbean, posted on the situation. We should also like to have copies of the appreciations sent to them.

(Sgd.) (N.L. Mayle)

[To:]
Sir Alfred Savage, K.C.M.G.,
Government House,
Georgetown,
British Guiana

7. SPEECH BY THE CHIEF MINISTER, DR. CHEDDI JAGAN, IN THE BRITISH GUIANA HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY ON 17 JUNE 1953

(17 June 1953)

"WE HARBOUR NO ILLUSIONS"

Mr. Speaker,

This House of Assembly is pleased to record its appreciation of Your Excellency's address delivered at the State Opening of the present Legislative session.

To the Messages of goodwill from Her Majesty the Queen and Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, the House respectfully requests that you convey to Her Majesty and her Secretary of State for the Colonies grateful appreciation and the assurance that we will strive to the utmost for the happiness and well-being of the people of British Guiana and will remove every obstacle which may be placed on the road to peace, progress and prosperity.

The House observes with favour the initiative recently shown by Her Majesty's Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Sir Winston Churchill in attempting to ease the present tense world situation and hope that the same initiative will be shown in bringing about an end of racial discrimination and ruthless oppression of, and aggression against, colonial and native peoples, particularly in South Africa, Malaya and Kenya. In such efforts he can be assured of the full and enthusiastic support of the peoples whom this House represents.

Your Excellency's optimistic views about the new Constitution and in particular the State Council have been remarked. We however, harbour no illusions about the nominated State Council which can only serve the purpose of curbing the will of the people - a reactionary and undemocratic purpose.

The presence of three Civil Servants in the House and their control of the three key Ministries in the Government and the Governor's veto are an anomaly and contrary to the professed democratic principles of Her Majesty's Government. We shall continue to struggle for a democratic Constitution for British Guiana.

The House notes Your Excellency's views that the new Government has been handed a fairly good financial position by the old Administration. However, it is fully conscious of the legacy of privation, malnutrition, unemployment and disease which is bequeathed to us by the old order.

We are aware of the pressing needs of the people and agree with Your Excellency that large capital sums will have to be raised for further development for British Guiana. To this end, we will initiate schemes for the re-organisation of the material resources of the county and for raising capital by way of Government loans, both foreign and local.

The House is fully conscious of the roles which private capital is playing and will play in the development of British Guiana. We will take such steps as will encourage and attract private capital for the development of the country and above all, will guarantee that the Government will honour and fulfil all its obligations and undertakings.

The House, like Your Excellency, is anxiously awaiting the report of the World Bank Mission which recently visited British Guiana and trusts that the report will provide a comprehensive and acceptable plan as to the direction in which development should proceed as well as the means by which the programme can be financed.

The House notes Your Excellency's observations on the need for the development of a spirit of co-operation between "capital" and "labour". The relationship of capital and labour must not be based as hitherto on the whims of the capitalist but on the recognised rights of workers to organise and bargain through the trade unions of their own choice and to take an active part in the running of the industries in which they are engaged.

This Assembly notes with satisfaction Your Excellency's remarks in the encouragement of 'self-help' amongst the people of the country assisted by Government grants and loans as being one aspect of development which should be energetically pursued. To this end, it will seek to democratize all organisations touching upon the lives of the people. Finally, the House wishes to join Your Excellency in your plea for internal harmony which is indispensable to progress and assures Your Excellency that all measures conducive to the welfare of the people of the Colony will receive its full support.

[Source: National Archives of Guyana; also Cheddi Jagan Research Centre, Guyana]

8. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO N.L MAYLE FROM SIR ALFRED SAVAGE, GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA

(24 June 1953)

GOVERNMENT HOUSE
GEORGETOWN
BRITISH GUIANA
24th June, 1953

T.S.63/31
Top Secret and Personal

My dear Mayle,

Would you refer to your Top Secret and Personal letter of the 3rd June (DEF 123/30/01) about the reliability of the Police Force in the light of political developments?

In the first place I do not believe there is any reason to doubt the general reliability of the Police. Ward says that he considers them to be outstanding in both education and physique and high traditions of the Force. During his visit here last December Muller told Gutch that he was very impressed with their morale and efficiency and he confirmed this in paragraph 2 of his letter of the 24th March.

Ward adds, however, that the Police are very conscious of their rights and this factor will have to be more carefully watched than ever in view of political events. We fully appreciate that everything possible will have to be done to increase their efficiency, to look after their welfare, and to remove any justifiable cause for complaint as regards their service conditions. Equally one must appreciate that it is going to be difficult to secure approval of the new Government for any increased expenditure on the Police Force, though it may be possible to induce them to agree to expenditure on the welfare side, the rejection of which would react adversely on their prospects of ingratiating themselves with the Force.

I attach interim report by Ward giving the present position in regard to the various recommendations made by Muller in his letter of the 24th March. Since his arrival here Ward, of whom I have formed a high opinion, has carried out exhaustive investigations . . .

(Signed) Alfred Savage

[To:]
N. L. Mayle, Esquire, C.M.G.

[APPENDIX]

**INTERIM REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS
MADE BY W. MULLER C.M.G., INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE COLONIAL OFFICE**

With regard to the Inspector General's report -

Paragraph 5 - The Special Reserve is now fully equipped with uniform and receives full co-operation from the Commissioner and his officers. Its members are now very keen and the Force is a valuable reserve in aiding the regular Force in crowd control, etc., or in permitting the mobilisation of the regular Force by taking over normal Police duties. I consider this Force should be given every encouragement and units established in other areas when money is available. Its members receive pay for training, parades and duty.

Paragraph 6 - The Depot has been reduced to an absolute minimum consistent with its functions and the maintenance of a small reserve at minimum security level. Steps are being taken to moderate the military side of training but it is to be borne in mind that

Government relies upon the Police Force for the maintenance of internal security and military duties cannot be altogether neglected.

Paragraph 7 - The suggestion here is being implemented.

Paragraph 8 - The whole question of Force messes and [salaries*] is under consideration but a revision will of necessity take time if it is to be established on a sound basis.

Paragraph 9 - Mounted Branch. I agree that units of the Mounted Branch could be usefully employed in certain out-stations but there are administrative difficulties.

Paragraph 10 - The organisation of the Criminal Investigation Department and the investigation of crime generally in the Colony has been revised and the Criminal Investigation Department itself is in the process of reorganisation.

Paragraph 11 - The suggestions in this paragraph are also being implemented.

Paragraph 12 - The increase in the incidence of serious crime is causing concern and is being dealt with in my full report.

Paragraph 13 - I am in full agreement with the suggestions in this paragraph and have been in consultation with the Attorney General.

Paragraph 14 - This is being dealt with in my full report.

Paragraph 15 - This is one of the special duties of the Police.

Paragraph 16 - [*Five lines in text illegible*].

Paragraph 18 - Women Police are being established in the Force.

Paragraph 19 - The absence of proper quarters is the worst feature of this Force.

Paragraph 20 - It has been recommended that the Fire Brigade should be divorced from the regular Force.

Paragraph 21 - The Central Armoury is in the course of construction and a survey of security and arms has been made but again lack of funds precludes the carrying out of the measures suggested.

[Comments] - There is a great deal to be done with regard to the organisation and efficiency of the Force and any measure in this direction is appreciated by the men. The provision of proper housing, an increased number of higher ranks to be filled from within the Force and the general consideration for the welfare of the men are all essential measures. Efforts have, and are being made to increase personal contact between officers and men which is absolutely essential, and it is hoped that an increase of higher ranks at Headquarters will permit the Commissioner and his Deputy to be constantly on tour making contact with all ranks.

9. TEXT OF LETTER FROM N.L, MAYLE OF THE COLONIAL OFFICE TO SIR ALFRED SAVAGE, GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA

(8 July 1953)

TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL

COLONIAL OFFICE,
The Church House,
Great Smith Street
S.W.I
8th July, 1953.

Thank you very much for your letter of the 24th June and assessment given therein of the reliability of the Police Force in the light of recent political developments. We are very glad to have your reassuring reply and we note the action you have taken to keep the Commander Caribbean, and the Commander-in-Chief, West Indies Station, au courant with developments in British Guiana.

2. You do not mention the Local Volunteer Force in your reply. Since this force would presumably be the first reserve for the Police in the event of trouble we should also very much like to have your views on their reliability.

Sgd. (N.L.Mayle)

[To:]
Sir Alfred Savage, K.C.M.G.,
Government House,
Georgetown,
British Guiana.

10. LETTER FROM SIR ALFRED SAVAGE, GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA, TO N.L. MAYLE OF THE COLONIAL OFFICE

(20 July 1953)

Top Secret and Personal
T.S.63/31

GOVERNMENT HOUSE
Georgetown
British Guiana
20th July, 1953.

My dear Mayle,

You enquired in paragraph 2 of your Top Secret and Personal letter the 8th July (DEF 123/30/01) about the reliability of the British Guiana Volunteer Force. In Ward's view they could be relied on, in the event of riots and disturbances arising out of political developments, to carry out the limited function proposed for them, namely that of relieving the police by guarding vulnerable points. He does not consider their discipline and training

for internal security duties sufficiently good for them to be used in an attempt to quell disturbances with which the police had failed to cope and I agree with him that in such an eventuality we should have to rely on military or naval assistance from outside.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) Alfred Savage

[To:]
N.L. Mayle, Esquire, C.M.G.,
Colonial Office,
London.

**11. MEMORADUM FROM MILIRARY COMMANDER IN CHIEF, CARIBBEAN AREA
HEADQUARTERS, TO WAR OFFICE**

(3 September 1953)

TOP SECRET

153523

BY SECURE MEANS

PRIORITY
Recd. 3 Sept '53

From: HQ Caribbean Area
DTO. 021535R September

To: War Office

TOP SECRET

Info: C in C. WI

2961

For MO 3

British Guiana

First. Since elections victory of communist led Peoples (sic) Progressive Party general situation has been uneasy. During last month situation has deteriorated and indicated elected Government intended to precipitate crisis. This is clear from routine intelligence reports by Governor and police. I have not visited colony since elections as this would inevitably have been considered provocative by PPP but asked for appreciation by Governor and SLO. Former has not yet replied but latter reports of considerable number of PPP among police and possibility of widespread labour unrest within next 6 months.

Second. Governor now reports in Secret 338 to Colonial Office calling by union of general strike in sugar industry. Principal instigator is elected Minister of Government. Strike is already partly effective.

Third. I view the situation as disturbing in view of attitude of PPP Government since election and the volatile nature of their East Indian supporters in the sugar industry. Even if PPP Ministers do not want violence it may well come as result of their inflammatory speeches.

Fourth. Our usual IS procedure of sending one company if troops are called out will not be adequate for territory of size of British Guiana. I am therefore planning to move British battalion less company in British Honduras in phases as situation demands. I recommend also preliminary stages of SHERIFF should be studied with British Guiana as objective.

Fifth. Until situation becomes clearer I also recommend DMO's decision to reduce 1 RWF by 100 be held in abeyance.

Message Control

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12. REPORT ON BRITISH GUIANA BY THE GOVERNOR, SIR ALFRED SAVAGE

(There is no date on document, but it was written in early September 1953.)

URGENT

NOTE BY GOVERNOR

British Guiana has a basic sugar economy of restricted output which provides frugal conditions of life for many people, a mining industry which gives good conditions for a smaller number and a growing rice industry which does not appear to be really economic at world prices, and whose workers depend also on sugar and P.W.D expenditure to support poor conditions of life. Coupled with this there is a rapidly increasing population which, unless there is hidden wealth in the interior, will mean poorer standards of living in the future. The generous grants of Her Majesty's Government have done much to assist the local situation but the economic outlook is grim.

I have now toured all the densely populated areas and seen for myself the general conditions of life. There is indeed, as elsewhere, much fertile ground for communists. The vast majority of the people are not communists but there is no doubt that they felt the voice of the common people was not heard in the previous councils of state and they demanded a change. Unfortunately, generally speaking, the only leadership offered was the highly organized P.P.P. party.

Local government, certainly in the rural areas, is almost dead. There is no real leadership among its members.

The District Administration bears no resemblance to that of the African colonies. It started too late. District Commissioners are in the main ineffective and almost ignored by all.

The Press has but little influence on the mass of the people.

The Churches are full and although their leaders do have some influence, in the main they do not affect the lowest income groups as only recently, with notable exceptions, they have appreciated their responsibilities in social affairs.

There is no real political opposition to the party in power. There are too many parties and independents and again no apparent leadership. Attempts are now being made to correct this in relation to the forthcoming bye election.

The European Guianese have not yet recovered from the shock of the elections but they are not prepared to enter politics and indeed anti-white feeling is growing, fed by propaganda, and soon no white candidate will stand a chance of being elected. Unfortunately there is a fairly strong feeling by local Europeans against overseas Europeans. There is no real leadership in the European community. The majority of the leading business men are employees.

In the above circumstances it is not surprising that the P.P.P. not only won the elections but have met with some success in strengthening their position subsequently. It is probably true that some of their supporters are becoming a little critical, particularly in Georgetown, but they are not an effective number. The outcome of the sugar strike may affect the position temporarily.

The party members are a very mixed lot ranging from labourers to professional men and owners of substantial property. The six opposition members are of poor quality.

The six Ministers are said to be made up of three Extremists (Jagan, King and Lachhmansingh) and three Moderates (Burnham, Jainarine Singh and Chase). There is no substance in Lachhmansingh and he is kicked around by his colleagues. The rest are very capable people and I believe far more intelligent than the previous Executive Council. After four months experience I trust only one of them (Chase). Jagan, Jainarine Singh and Chase appear to be working very hard and to a determined purpose to improve conditions. Burnham, whose popularity is said to be waning in Georgetown, is lazy, acid and flippant; King holds paper sup and is vicious in his attacks, while Lachhmansingh flounders helplessly in everything he touches.

Every one of these men has a deep bitterness of feeling against Britain, the past administration and/or against society generally. Jagan, brought up on a sugar estate; Burnham, twice abused publicly overseas for being black; Jainarine Singh, a qualified agronomist, failed to obtain an appointment in this his country; Chase a reasonable trade unionist labelled communist unfairly; Lachhmansingh and King warned off certain sugar estates.

The majority of the other P.P.P. members in the House of Assembly appear to be supporters of the Extremists.

The "behind scenes" work being done by Mrs. Jagan and others is insidious and dangerous. She is a brilliant organizer and is by no means resting on her laurels and in every district where no P.P.P. unit presently exists, an organization is being developed. But no real opposition is being developed.

The sugar estates are to a considerable extent the crux of the situation. It is there that the extremist is well supported. It is so easy for him to point to the dreadful housing and social conditions which exist (and to ignore the improvements) and compare them with the comfortable quarters and the neat compounds and the recreational facilities of the staff who are predominantly European. It is also easy for him to allege unfair profits being transferred to absentee landlords and to blame, as is done, the British Government for the conditions which exist.

I have been in the homes, in the fields and in the workshops, and I believe that many of these people would have responded, and may yet respond, to sympathetic and sane leadership. I did not see one library on the estates I visited so the people read the extremist literature provided by the Party. A swimming bath might cost the companies the interest on the capital involved and although not vital would have reflected an interest of the owners in their workpeople. But it is in the housing aspect where I feel the companies have been so shortsighted. After the special sugar funds were instituted, the companies appear to have taken the line that the contribution of 10/-* a ton to the Labour Welfare Fund was their money and relieved them of the obligation of doing anything further in respect of general housing and unnecessary for them to take advantage of the very generous Income Tax concessions in respect to workers housing.

The attack on overseas officers in the Civil Service is fairly general and has not been relived by the numerous discussions I have had individually and collectively with Ministers. I fear too that there have been many weaknesses in the past in the Establishment Section of the Secretariat for which we are now suffering and that the previous Promotion Board was not objective or sufficient.

The most serious impact from a security point of view are the attacks on police morale. I believe the Force to be loyal but some Ministers (particularly Sydney King) have been provocative and threatening in recent public speeches.

We have not learned much of Mrs. Jagan's recent visit to Europe but from old remarks I suspect that in addition to the Communist literature we shall be receiving visits from overseas communists (not only West Indian) and possibly proposals for appointment of Russian technicians and professional officers at low rates of pay, if not an approach from a company of Russian origin anxious to develop our resources.

There is a lot of racial feeling here. In spite of the nationalistic slogans, there is a deep distrust by the African of the Indian and a physical fear of the African by the Indian. Many Africans hate the white man, while the Portuguese are probably more responsible than anybody for racial feelings. The African feels too that rice, which is predominantly an Indian crop, has received unfair preference in capital expenditure.

"White" clubs are a threat to security. One of these clubs recently blackballed a worthy Chinese citizen.

There is very little social contact between white people and others. At the Coronation Ball at Government House a group of "whites" left early after a "Paul Jones".

[Editor's note: * 10 shillings or half a pound (Sterling) = \$2.40 (Eastern Caribbean currency) in 1953.]

**13. LETTER FROM HENRY SEAFORD, GENERAL MANAGER OF BOOKER'S COMPANIES
IN BRITISH GUIANA, TO JOCK CAMPBELL, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF BOOKER'S
GROUP OF COMPANIES**

(8 September 1953)

BOOKERS SHIPPING (Demerara) Ltd.,

Georgetown,
BRITISH GUIANA.
8th Sept., 1953.

My dear Jock,

I confirm despatch of my cable to you yesterday and receipt of your reply. Very many thanks for replying so quickly.

I want to assure you that there is no question of our panicking or not having confidence in ourselves to handle the present situation. We have had and dealt with many strikes on sugar estates and on the Waterfront, so while they are worrying at the time, it is only in so far as they mean a loss of profits. What is worrying me and my colleagues today is that the present situation can only be dealt with effectively by the Colonial Office and from our conversations with the powers-that-be, it is clear that they do not understand the position. What the majority of the Ministers is trying to do is to cause chaos in the Colony, then go to the Colonial Office and say that it is because they have not complete control, that these things are happening. Their aim is to get rid of all white officials and make life so unpleasant for other whites that they will get out. Schools are to be taught communism and those Masters that don't agree will be fired. Can you imagine what this Colony will be like in 5 years' time if this sort of thing continues. Unless something drastic is done, Bookers will cease to exist as a large firm in 5 years. This is a serious statement to make but I do it in all sincerity and because of my love for this firm. I believe a Deputation is going to the Colonial Office. Details have not been finalised yet. We think (sic) McDavid, Luckhoo and Dare will go with perhaps 3 others, two of whom should be Africans. I think you will be asked to lead the Deputation and I felt that if you could come out and see things for yourself you would be able to put up a better case for us. I have seen H.E. and he is a very worried man. I asked him one or two direct questions about the Colonial Office and from his hesitant and guarded replies I could see that he was not happy about their understanding the present position. Before sending my cable I consulted Woodward, Bane and Lewis and they unanimously thought that the Chairman of the Company should see things for himself. Lewis told me that he and Duncan had discussed that very point on Friday. Frankly I do not think that you or anybody else can do anything out here but I consider the future of Bookers is at stake and I felt that the Chairman should see the position for himself with a view to getting fully primed for the Colonial Office. You can put a far better case than anyone out here or in London provided you know the facts. I do not think your coming would cause any comments as I was told the other evening at Colgrain that you were coming out in October!

Attempts to bring out the Waterfront and Transport have so far failed, but Gov't think the Transport and Post Office will go out on Friday, 11th. There are so many rumours going around that it is as well not to believe any of them and I can assure you that we are

carrying on just as though nothing had happened and that the strike on the Estates was just one of those things that happen periodically. Our estimates are being knocked sideways as just as we were beginning to show a profit on Wharves and Coastal Shipping sugar ceases to come. This, I know, you will fully understand.

Finally, I want to stress again that I don't think anyone can help us on the spot. Help must come from the Colonial Office, and my asking you to come out here was to see things for yourself as Chairmen and to help us with the C.O. I am sorry to say Gov't. Officials are going about with long and frightened faces. I am worried as the devil, but hope I don't show it. You may be interested to hear that Mr. Greave (C.D.C), when he left Colgrain on the night before leaving the Colony, said to Kathleen and me "What a lovely evening. It's the first house we have been to where we haven't heard Jagan, Jagan, Jagan all night". I just mention this to show that I have not the slightest intention of panicking.

My colleagues and I appreciate very much the confidence you have in us and will do all in our power to justify it. Needless to say Bookers are being called on by Gov't. to supply the men for all emergency measures.

Sonny's death was a terrible shock to us all. He wasn't feeling too well on Friday night, although he played bridge at the Club. Jimmy rang us up on Saturday morning to say he was calling in the doctor, Basil Wong. Kathleen then rang up Wong to tell him that we were very worried about his heart and would he please give him a very careful examination. This he did and said his heart and pulse were good, but just to satisfy us all, he would arrange for a cardiograph on Monday morning. On Saturday night at 9.30 Kathleen rang up and was told he was not well, but better and sitting up. At 10.15 Jimmy rang up "Come at once", but we got there too late. I have forgotten the official name, but it was a clot to the heart.

Yours ever,

sd. Henry Seaford.

14. LETTER FROM TIMOTY LUKE TO PHILIP ROGERS OF THE COLONIAL OFFICE (12 September 1953)

SECRET AND PERSONAL

Hastings House,
Barbados, B.W.I.
12th September, 1953

My dear Philip,

I have returned this morning from my first official visits to British Guiana and Trinidad. I will send you an account of my Trinidad visit within the next few days. This letter deals only with British Guiana.

During my week in the Colony, I was able to do a certain amount of travelling (I visited the Torani Canal and the Corentyne drainage and irrigation project); and I had lengthy discussions with Savage, the principal officials, the State Council, the Ministers and various

leading citizens. I do not suppose that I can add much to the information about the local situation already in your possession, but you may like to know what general impressions I formed from my various talks.

The situation is unquestionably most disquieting; indeed, by the time you receive this letter a crisis may already have been precipitated by the general strike in the sugar industry which the P.P.P. called on Sunday, 30th August. As things were at the time of my visit, I formed the opinion that the senior officials are completely disheartened and pessimistic; that the public service is approaching demoralisation; that the business and commercial community are embittered and frightened; and that there is grave anxiety among responsible and fair-minded people like the Anglican Archbishop. I was told that all private investment has ceased; there is, for instance, unemployment in the building industry because virtually all private building has stopped. As you no doubt know, a run has started on the Government Savings Bank.

How has this situation arisen? The P.P.P.'s sweeping victory at the General Election was undoubtedly unexpected either by them or by anyone else. In a sense, the result was misleading, since the party obtained only 51% of the total votes; they owed their victory to the excellence of their party organisation and to the feebleness and fragmentation of the opposition parties. At any rate the P.P.P. found themselves in complete power with no administrative experience and a host of irresponsible election promises to honour. It was to be expected that their initial months of office would, in these circumstances, be a period of confusion and dislocation. I think that most of the leading officials and unofficials (though not all) were genuinely prepared to help the Ministers to fulfil their new responsibilities. Four months later, I was unable to find anyone, apart perhaps from Savage himself, who now believes that the P.P.P. is seriously trying to work the constitution or is likely to be prepared to do so in future. No one, of course, has anything to judge by except the speeches and isolated actions of individual Ministers; they have not so far disclosed their long-term policy at all in relation, for instance, to a future development programme or the coming budget. This, in itself, is not surprising or reprehensible; any new Government might be excused for delaying the disclosure of its plans until it had familiarised itself with the technique of administration and had studied the World Bank's report. In the meantime, however, the general behaviour of Ministers sufficiently explains the growing state of demoralisation I have described.

I gained the impression that, whatever their longer-term objectives, the Ministers are united in an immediate determination to extend the power of the P.P.P. so as to gain effective and enduring control of the country. By the creation and multiplication of cells, they are ceaselessly extending and elaborating the party organisation, in even the remotest part of the country. They are working to secure a monopoly of representation for the trade unions they control. They are wooing the political support of the lower-paid public servants by encouraging them to be disloyal to their seniors. There are already signs that they plan to abolish the dual control of the schools; many of the teachers are P.P.P. in sympathy and it would not be difficult, once they had gained full administrative control for the Minister, for them to bring the education curricula into line with their own ideological principles. They are building up their own Youth Movement, and are openly hostile to such competing organisations as the Y.M.C.A., the Boy Scouts and the Girl Guides.

These totalitarian tactics are familiar enough, though it is a shock to find them reproduced in a British Colony by a small group of arrogant & ignorant young men. It is natural to seek the source of the inspiration behind so effective a political movement, and I suspect that it is supplied by Janet Jagan. Whether or not she is a member of the Communist Party, she is

thoroughly trained in Communist tactics and is, in addition, an exceptionable able, ruthless and energetic woman. I understand that she is not now on particularly good terms with her husband, and that her principal ally in the ministerial group is Sydney King, whom everyone agrees to be the most extreme, intractable and offensive of all the Ministers. It is at present no more than a matter for speculation how far the Ministers are united in either their long-term objectives or their short-term tactics. So far they have managed to maintain a monolithic unity; party discipline is strict and Ministers have formed themselves into an unofficial Council which decides ahead what policy to adopt on all matters coming before the Executive Council. What tensions there may be behind the façade are not evident, and it is at present impossible to say whether there are moderates within the group who may eventually assert themselves. Ashton Chase may be one. Jagan himself is, I think, a rather enigmatic figure; superficially, he is the most intelligent, and certainly the most agreeable and courteous, of the group. In private talks, he gives the impression of having a reasonable and not particular doctrinaire approach to problems, and I suppose that he may be a weak man driven to more extreme courses than he really likes. There were early hopes that Burnham would prove a moderating influence but he, like King, (the other West Indian among the Ministers), has suffered affronts in England that have made him bitterly anti-white and anti-British. Lachhmansingh and Jainarine Singh seem likely to follow the stronger elements in the group.

The position of the civil service is most unhappy. Ministers are conducting a campaign against overseas officials, and the British heads of departments and senior officials in particular have had to endure treatment that makes their position virtually intolerable. Ministers clearly aim at getting rid of them as quickly as possible, and there are signs that they will turn their attention to purging the civil service of those who are not politically acceptable to them.

All this makes a depressing picture. I think, however, that it is important to remember that there is another side to it. Unquestionably there is plenty of material in British Guiana which provides grist for the P.P.P. mill. Savage told me that he is often in sympathy with his Ministers in their desire to make this or that reform, though not with their methods of doing it. In general, local employers have remained old-fashioned in their approach to labour problems; they have done much to improve the conditions of labour but much remains to be done. Some of the housing on the estates, for instance, is very bad indeed. I said above that I thought that the majority of officials and unofficials have originally tried to co-operate with and help the new Ministers. Undoubtedly, however, there has always been a minority of both classes that has made no attempt to do so, and their attitude has served to emphasise the isolation of the Ministers and to strengthen the hands of the extreme elements among them. It is obvious that in these conditions an enormous burden of responsibility rests on Savage himself. When I arrived, I was shocked at his apparent exhaustion, but his spirits are surprisingly buoyant. There is a strong tradition both of loyalty and of respect for the Governor's office in British Guiana, and Savage and Lady Savage, by their simple friendliness and their arduous touring, have done much to foster these sentiments and to earn a special affection for themselves. These may be major assets in the months ahead and I should not be surprised if the P.P.P. turned their attention before long to an attempt to undermine them by public attacks on Savage personally. As it is, he is, of course, under continuous pressure from his Ministers on all sorts of matters, and it is far from easy for him to decide when, within the spirit of the constitution, he should give way and when he should stand firm. On the other hand, he is, inevitably, under persistent criticism from the business community for his "weakness". Personally, I think he has pursued the right and only defensible policy of showing himself conspicuously determined to try to make the new constitution work.

He is, of course, in the best position to judge future prospects and I think he still has hopes though perhaps diminishing hopes, that patient co-operation with the Ministers may induce them to pursue a reasonable and constructive policy within the framework of the constitution. He recognises, however, that Janet Jagan and Sydney King may have no intention of allowing this to happen, and that their object may be to provoke a crisis before their colleagues have settled down to pursue conventional policies and before the Opposition has had time to rally its demoralised forces.

Here lies one of the major difficulties of the situation. The P.P.P. succeeded because the Opposition parties failed in organisation, in energy, and in clarity of purpose. Many of the opposition elements in the country have learned nothing from this failure. They are waiting in paralysed hostility for H.M.G. to rescue them from the consequences of a constitution which they have always disliked and which they are confident must break down. One of the wiser ones recognise, however, that some effect political party alternative to the P.P.P. must be organised, and efforts are being made, by Raatgever among others, to unite the opposition into a single well organised party. But they need time; they hope that a major crisis can be avoided for at least a year or eighteen months. All agree that an early election would merely return the P.P.P. to power - presumably with a "mandate" for radical constitutional changes.

My own discussions with the Ministers were amicable enough. We talked about the implications of the World Bank Report about which (not unexpectedly) they are far from enthusiastic. They told me that they are working on a future development programme, based on the Bank Report, and that their long-term policy will emerge, later in the autumn, from that end from their first budget. Their approach to future development problems revealed nothing of their extreme political ideas; they showed themselves in their talks with me, no more than a group of eager but thoroughly inexperienced young men anxious to achieve everything at once. Jagan, for instance, argued that it was essential to carry out the full Hutchinson £30 millions scheme within the next five years as a grand West Indian operation involving the participation of all British Caribbean Governments and large-scale planned immigration. I carefully avoided political issues, of course, but I felt justified in pointing out the inconsistency of many of their public statements with their apparent anxiety, in their discussions with me, to pursue a development policy dependent for its success on heavy capital investment from overseas. They expressed themselves as unable to understand why the external investor should be reluctant to put funds into the Colony. Had they not given assurances, in their election programme, that external capital would be encouraged and safeguarded on reasonable terms? At any rate, they expressed an unexpected inclination to seek the help of the Development and Welfare Organisation in working out their development programme, and Savage is hopeful that he may be able to induce one or two of the Minister to come to Barbados in due course for discussions on it with my Advisers and myself. He feels that this would have the added advantage of subjecting them to the sobering influence of Grantley Adams and Walcott! He is also, for the same reason, encouraging his Ministers to invite the R.E.C. to hold their November meeting in British Guiana.

I send you this letter with some hesitation, partly because it deals so largely with matters outside my official competence, partly because a [*] visit is not long [**] estimate of so complex a situation, and particularly because the position may have been so radically altered in the week since I left, that parts at least of it may now be out of date. But there has been so much gossip and speculation about the situation in British Guiana that I thought it might be helpful to you to have as careful a summary as I could make of the impressions I gained during my visit. It is easy enough now to see that it would have been

wiser not to have given British Guiana adult suffrage and full ministerial government at a single step. In my view, however, the real significance of recent events in British Guiana lies in the evidence they provide of the dangers inherent in a political vacuum. The P.P.P. succeeded not only by [skilled] organisation, by promising redress of every grievances, and by the wildest promises; they succeeded because the moderate parties failed in every quality necessary for success under a democratic constitution. What has happened in British Guiana can presumably happen elsewhere. I have, for instance, found a number of people in Trinidad who are seriously concerned at the failure of the present political leaders and representatives to organize anything approaching an effective party organization committed to a defined political programme. Conditions in Trinidad re, of course, very different from those in British Guiana, but the fact remains that the opportunity does exist there for a determined party, like the P.P.P., to fill the vacuum left by the present absence of any party system.

Yours ever,

(sgd.) Timmy Luke

[To:] PHILIP ROGERS, ESQ., C.M.G.

[Editor's Notes:

* *One illegible word is missing.*

** *About ten words are illegible in the available copy of the text.]*

15. LETTER FROM SIR ALFRED SAVAGE, GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA, TO SIR THOMAS LLOYD OF THE COLONIAL OFFICE
(13 September 1953)

TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
GEORGETOWN.
BRITISH GUIANA
13th September, 1953

Dear Lloyd,

I apologise for the delay in replying to your letter of the 22nd July but apart from the considerable travelling I have undertaken, the problem is unique and complex and I wanted to have more experience of the Ministers and their actions before writing you fully. Of course I agree generally with the different points of policy to which you refer and I assure you I will keep the Secretary of State well informed of developments. But I feel the real problem is something far more subtle and difficult and will not be solved merely by the use of reserve powers.

The new Constitution has operated now for roughly four months. It is a fact that the P.P.P. have no planned policy and except for Jagan, the new Ministers had had no experience of Government departments or of normal administration. I still think that it is true to say that that they were themselves unprepared for their landslide victory at the polls and had expected to find themselves in the role of a strong obstructive and disrupting opposition. It

was inevitable that the new Government would suffer from growing pains, make some mistakes and until the International Bank Report arrived (which was to be the basis of a planned programme of development and taxation) it would be attacked by the opposition inside and outside the Legislature for not making progress. I say it had no planned policy; although its election manifesto indicated broad lines of policy, it was a scurrilous document which I suggested to each Minister would best be forgotten if we were to obtain the confidence of the country and of overseas territories on whom we should depend for the capital for development.

In early conversations (and indeed subsequently to date) some of the P.P.P Ministers and members of the House volunteered to me privately that they intended to work for a stable and not extremist policy. But all exhibit the deepest bitterness against H.M.G. and the companies and businesses I have ever experienced. Their general line is that all previous governments were dominated by big business and now they intend to dominate the country in the interests of the "working class". Added to this is a fanatical hatred by the African Ministers of the white race.

In spite of the growing difficulties I persisted in a policy of tolerance, goodwill and co-operation, but it became evident that there was little intention on their part to co-operate with me or the other members of Executive Council or, in some cases, with Heads of Departments. This does not mean to say that some progress has not been made but, as I pointed out to Jagan weeks ago, most Ministers appeared to spend most of their time on matters with a political flavour and some on questions affecting the Civil Service which were outside of their constitutional purview. Also it would be fair to say that there have been one or two notable occasions when we have been able to persuade them to drop or defer some proposed objectionable policy particularly in economic matters. As a general rule, however, they face us in Executive Council with their minds made up as the result of previous discussion at what they have recently termed their "Council of Ministers" - (I have asked them to desist from using this expression) - and it is practically impossible to induce them to accept any reasonable compromise. I have no doubt that if they would adopt a more co-operative policy with the officials much more could be achieved.

But whilst in Executive Council Ministers have behaved themselves with a certain amount of propriety (although Sydney King and Burnham have on occasion shown a scarcely veiled insolence of manner), outside it their actions and speeches are quite irresponsible and during the recent crisis have verged on the seditious. In the House of Assembly this week Burnham has spoken of meeting "with sufficient force" any attempt to withdraw the new constitution and of being "willing to shed their blood, if necessary, for freedom".

The obvious question which poses itself is whether or not they intend to continue to work within the framework of the new constitution. I believe that at present some of them do, in the expectation that Her Majesty's Government would concede full self-government in 1956, although it remains to be seen what their reaction would be if and when the State Council imposes a check on any measure put forward by the House of Assembly. But the extremist element, with Mrs. Jagan and Sydney King in the van, appear to believe that by creating disorder and economic chaos they could force the issue of self-government earlier. For the moment there is no doubt that the extremists dominate the position and the moderates, if indeed they are moderates, are afraid to declare themselves publicly and even tend to vie with the extremists on some issues - maybe through fear of losing ground - but their effect is the same. An example of this is the recently formed "African and Colonial Affairs Committee", of which Burnham and Chase are leading lights: one of its objects is probably

to build up their political strength and prestige *vis-à-vis* the Jagan group, but it specialises in vicious anti-British, anti-white propaganda of the worst type.

Hence these party differences do not assist the cause of moderation - rather the reverse. In any case there is no doubt that the governor, the official members of Executive Council and the State Council are the common enemy and it may well be that before you receive this letter a resolution may be tabled in the House saying that the Government is unable to carry out its plans without full self-government.

The technique of the extremists for the present appears to be to press for legislative action only in matters which will not split the party and in the meantime to develop its organisation throughout the country and to obtain party control of every possible human activity. They are hard at work trying to undermine the Civil Service, exploiting every possible cause of discontent, resorting to intimidation: they have their cells and spies in most departments. The police are thought to be 75% reliable at the moment, but here again malcontents are being used as foci for the spread of disaffection. Recognized youth organisations, the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, the Y.M.C.A. and so on, are subjected to attack and the communist Pioneer Youth Movement is being given their official support. In this and countless other directions the foundations of society are being attacked insidiously almost without check.

By this insidious undermining process, the party could in time secure a more or less complete grip of the country, irrespectively of whether I step in, as I shall no doubt have to do before long, and use my reserved powers on this or that individual issue. The crucial question is how long and how far should we allow this process to continue and how can we stop it? It seemed to me that the crux of the position lies with the 51% of voters who put the P.P.P. in power. An effective number might perhaps vote against the P.P.P. on the next occasion through dissatisfaction with their policy, but even here there is the intimidation factor to be reckoned with. My personal policy has been to get among the 51% to demonstrate that I am deeply interested in their well being and constant contact with small groups when travelling try to get their confidence for there are many who would respond to sound leadership. The enclosed notes will give you more of the background.

The 49% who voted against the P.P.P. are completely lacking in effective leadership and cohesion and have little moral courage. Even the prestige which still attaches to the position of Governor here has the unfortunate result that in time of difficulty such as this the "opposition" tend to look helplessly to him for intervention, when the solution really lies in their own hands. Of course it may be that the outcome of the present strike or some other factor will cause a revulsion of feeling against the P.P.P. but in the absence of other leadership, particularly in the sugar areas, they would probably succumb to the intimidation and other pressures which I have mentioned above and drift back. In fact, I am rapidly coming to the conclusion that unless the opposition elements in the country rouse themselves quickly and wake up to their obligations and opportunities, then to retain British Guiana in the Commonwealth we shall have to go back on the new Constitution which would mean the use of force and the maintenance of military forces here for some considerable time.

At a recent meeting with the leading businessmen here I pressed the problem on them and the part that they could play in arresting the deterioration of the situation. Unfortunately, I feel that some of them, supported particularly by the Portuguese community, consider the best solution is to hasten the breakdown of the constitution and to press Her Majesty's Government to go back to a less liberal system.

Also may I say with respect that if Her Majesty's Government considers domestically and at an international level that British Guiana must be kept within the Commonwealth it must give more assistance in the propaganda field on which communist propaganda thrives.

Finally, as regards policy in the event of resignation of Minister from Executive Council and/or from the House of Assembly, I understand the remaining numbers will allow us to continue without a general election but I have asked the Attorney General to prepare a memorandum on this and other contingencies and will forward it as soon as possible.

I realise that this letter is very patchy but you will realise that I am writing under heavy pressure. I should welcome an opportunity for discussion but that is not possible for the present and so I am looking forward very much to the visit of the Minister of State next month.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd) Alfred Savage.

[To:] Sir Thomas Lloyd G.C.M.G., K.C.B.
Colonial Office.

16. TELEGRAM (No. 20) FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA

(19 September 1953)

TOP SECRET

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

TO BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Cypher (O.T.P.) WIS 98/4/02

Sent 19th September, 1953 17.45 hrs.

IMMEDIATE TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL
Personal No. 20

Your telegram Personal No. 37.

Following from Rogers in Lloyd's absence.

1. Legal and Constitutional implications of breakdown have already been under consideration here. Legal Advisers views on main points are set out in following paragraph.

(a) Those provisions of Constitution Order in Council which relate to constitution and powers of legislature can only be suspended, amended or revoked by an Order in Council which would have to be laid in draft before both Houses of Parliament for forty sitting days.

(b) There is doubt whether the Emergency Powers Order in Council, 1939, validly applies to British Guiana, since it could be held to constitute a form of legislature, which can only be done by the special procedure laid down in the British Guiana Act, 1928. This doubt can be removed by an Order in Council under the Act of 1928. See paragraph 5 below.

(c) Emergency laws can be made by Order in Council under the power reserved in Section 94(2) of the British Guiana Constitution Order. Such an Order (provided it did not amend the constitution or powers of the Legislature) would not have to be laid before Parliament in draft. By such an Order, e.g., the provisions of Section 7 of the Order, which oblige the Governor to consult Executive Council in certain circumstances, could be deleted.

(d) The Constitution Order in Council does not give you power to dismiss Ministers, but you have power under Section 10(2) to propose to Executive Council the dismissal of individual Ministers.

(e) You have power under Section 21 to withdraw the responsibility for any Department or subject which you originally gave to any member of the Executive Council and to give it to another member of the Council (other than the Minister elected by the State Council).

(f) If P.P.P. Ministers absented themselves from Executive Council, it would be legally possible to hold meeting without them (provided that no one present drew attention to the absence of a quorum).

(g) You can, after consultations with Executive Council (if necessary, using your reserved executive power), decide whether or not the Legislative Chambers should be dissolved and fresh elections held.

(h) Your reserved executive power should enable you to carry out the administration of the Colony against hostile Ministers. There are possible difficulties in the use of your reserved legislative power in certain circumstances on which I shall be writing to you.

2. I gather from paragraph 4 of your telegram No. 37 that you do NOT consider that dissolution of Legislature and holding of fresh election would meet present needs. We entirely agree. As it seems unfortunately legally impossible to amend or suspend Constitution immediately on breakdown you will have to take all possible action to enable you to carry on Government without P.P.P. Ministers until necessary Order in Council was passed. You would presumably at once transfer departmental responsibilities from P.P.P. Ministers to official members of Executive Council and then use your reserved powers as necessary to carry on administration against hostile Ministers and hostile House of Assembly.

3. We should be glad to know whether you agree with views in foregoing paragraph. It will no doubt be necessary to provide in abovementioned Order in Council for interim Constitution, and also very desirable to prepare statement to be issued immediately on breakdown explaining the reasons for it, the responsibility of the P.P.P. Ministers, and also our intention to set up an interim Constitution with which the Guianese would be fully associated. We shall be telegraphing to you further on these points. We suggest that, in

meantime, you should urgently consider, in consultation with your legal advisers, what provisions are likely to be required on such an Order.

4. Foregoing does not cover an emergency in a particular district which could be tackled by proclamation on that district under Summary Jurisdiction (Offences) Ordinance Part 4.

5. We are putting in hand forthwith an Order in Council removing doubts as to application to British Guiana of Order in Council 1939. This will obviate making by Order in Council of emergency laws, see paragraph 1(c) above. The Order will of course have to be laid for forty sittings days after Houses of Parliament reassemble on 20th October and we do not propose to lay it but rather it to keep it secret until breakdown occurs.

Distribution:

H. 453
Secretary of State
P.S. to Minister of State
Sir T. Lloyd
P.S. to Parliamentary U/S.
Sir C. Jeffries
Sir H. Poynton
Mr. K. H. Davies
Mr. P. R. Maynard
Mr. P. Rogers
Mr. N. L. Mayle
Mr. J. W. Vernon

17. EXTRACT FROM THE NOTES ON THE MEETING OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S COMMITTEE ON SECURITY

24 September 1953

EXTRACT FROM C.O.S. (63) 108th MEETING HELD 24.9.53

TOP SECRET
U.K. EYES ONLY

4. DISTRIBUTION IN BRITISH GUIANA TOP SECRET

THE COMMITTEE was informed that the Colonial Office wished to raise certain matters in connection with the current disturbances in British Guiana.

MR. ROGERS (Colonial Office) said that as a result of the present constitutional situation in British Guiana, the Secretary of State for the Colonies was contemplating removing the powers from local government Ministers and instructing the Governor to fall back on his reserve powers for governing the territory as a Crown Colony: the Governor was being requested to indicate the assistance he might require from outside the territory in order to maintain law and order. The Secretary of State for the Colonies had indicated that he would consult the Cabinet, but it was not yet known in what precise form he proposed doing this.

Mr. Rogers added that the danger in British Guiana was one of mob riots; organized rebellion seemed unlikely. It was possible that the Governor could maintain stability with assistance only from the British battalion in Jamaica.

In view of the difficulties for shipping in the local waters, it might be preferable for reinforcements to be shipped to Trinidad, and thence moved by air into British Guiana. Since the transportation of the unit vehicles for these reinforcements would prove difficult, reliance might have to be placed on the requisitioning of local vehicles, at any rate for the initial stages.

In view of the Colonial Office, it seemed unlikely that the commitment for outside military assistance would be of longer duration than 3 months; however, one could never tell.

SIR HAROLD REDMAN said that both the local volunteer forces and the police in British Guiana were said to be loyal.

In the whole Caribbean Area, there was one United Kingdom battalion of infantry, of which one Company was performing in British Honduras and could not readily be committed elsewhere. This battalion was already at 48 hours' notice to fly in locally chartered aircraft from Jamaica to British Guiana. If it was decided that further reinforcements were required, these could come only from the United Kingdom, either from the one remaining brigade already earmarked for the Middle East - in this connection it was important to note that a critical period had now been reached in our negotiations with Egypt - or else from one of three infantry battalions recently returned from long tours overseas. None of these units was ready for service in the tropics, and a minimum of ten days' notice would be required before embarkation.

The provision of an aircraft carrier to transport these additional reinforcements, should they be required, would very greatly assist matters, since unit vehicles and heavy equipment could then be taken with the men. Air transportation from the United Kingdom would take a slightly shorter overall period, but this would entail the men being without their vehicles.

As a timely show of force might prevent the disturbances becoming acute, it was most important that the Governor should not precipitate trouble by political steps before arrangements for and despatch of the reinforcements had been effected. The important factor from the War Office point of view concerned a proper military appreciation of the situation, indicating the size of reinforcements required, the vehicle problem, together with detailed timings.

SIR JOHN BAKER suggested that military reinforcements without vehicles would not be fully effective. As he saw the problem, there was at present no need to contemplate reinforcements beyond those already in the Caribbean Area. Local shipping could transport the vehicles of the battalion from Jamaica. On the question of an airlift of troops from the United Kingdom, all available R.A.F. transport aircraft were already committed to important schedules. A few charter aircraft might be provided for the purpose, but no vehicles could be transported, and there were inherent political difficulties in the flights involved.

REAR ADMIRAL ELKINS (representing V.D.,F.S.) said that no aircraft carriers were available, due to the present heavy commitments. A frigate was at present at Trinidad: she could proceed to British Guiana. H.M.S. Sheffield was due shortly to relieve H.M.S. Superb in American waters and could also be sent to British Guiana, carrying some 200 troops. But there was one important factor which militated against the use of H.M. ships, and this lay in

the navigational and berthing difficulties in British Guyana. In discussion the following points were agreed:

- (a) No executive action should be taken until more detailed knowledge of the situation was received. In this connection, the Governor's assessment should be awaited, and in addition, the Commander Caribbean Area should be instructed to proceed to British Guyana forthwith with a representative of the battalion in Jamaica with a view to submitting detailed appreciation of the situation from the military point of view, and particularly of the scale and timing of reinforcements.
- (b) It was important that no action should be taken in the United Kingdom which would give rise to undue and premature publicity.
- (c) In the meanwhile, present arrangements for the use of the battalion in Jamaica should stand, and consideration should be given to the use of the frigate now at Trinidad in the area of the disturbances. The Commander-in-Chief, West Indies Station, should be kept closely informed.
- (d) Whatever commitment transpired, Ministerial approval would certainly be required.
- (e) In the event of reinforcements being sent to British Guiana, it was important to ensure that the operation effected surprise; this would entail careful co-ordination of all political and military steps.
- (f) The Governor of British Guiana should be informed of the extreme difficulty facing the United Kingdom on the question of reinforcements generally, and his attention drawn to the consequential need to "nip the trouble in the bud" if possible.

THE COMMITTEE:-

- (1) Invited the Colonial Office to take note of their views, to act accordingly, and to keep them informed.
- (2) Invited the War Office to take action as necessary in (a) and (c) above.
- (3) Invited the Admiralty to take action as at (c) above.
- (4) Take note that Sir Nevil Brownjohn would keep the Minister of Defence informed.

18. TELEGRAM (No. 21) FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA

(24 September 1953)

TOP SECRET

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

TO BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Cypher (O.T.P.) WIS 58/4/08

Sent 24th September, 1953. 19.45 hrs.

IMMEDIATE
TOP SECRET
PERSONAL No. 21

Your telegrams Personal N. 37, No. 49 and No. 51 and my telegram Personal No. 20.

POLITICAL SITUATION

It has become increasingly clear to me from your recent reports including your letter to Lloyd of the 15th September that there was no prospect of Ministers acting responsibly and foregoing their extremist aims. It was clearly right on the introduction of the new Constitution to try to do all that tact, patience and tolerance could achieve to win them away from the extremists and to see whether the responsibilities of office would make them see reason. It is however clear that they have no intention of working the present Constitution in the interests of the people of British Guiana as a whole, but are seeking a one party totalitarian control of the country and a link-up with Russia which we obviously cannot contemplate.

2. Ministers have no doubt been trying to avoid a break until they could acquire more powers and the P.P.P. more adherents. In this way they are gradually undermining our position. We cannot allow this to continue and a halt must now be called. The report of sympathy strikes in your Personal telegrams Nos. 49 and 51, however much Ministers may attempt to disown responsibility for them, completes the justification for immediate action. Their general record is such that I have decided this latest development makes a break inevitable and that we must now act against them.

3. Pending formal suspension of the Constitution the action to be taken as we see it, once adequate force is available, (see Paragraph 4 below), is for you to remove Portfolios from Ministers and to govern on your reserve powers (see paragraph 2 of my telegram Personal No. 20). When you do this it seems to me important that you should at the same time place the dangerous leaders of the P.P.P. under restraint and raid their premises for incriminating documents. Power to enable you to do this will be included in the Order in Council referred to in paragraph 5 below.

4. Before you can take this action we must be certain that you have adequate forces available to maintain law and order. In view of paragraph 8 of your telegram No. 340 I am assuming that outside forces will be needed. I should be grateful for an estimate from you of the numbers needed and what arrangements you propose for deploying them immediately on arrival in the Colony. Meanwhile I am discussing the problem with military here. You should arrange for Commander, Caribbean Area visit you forthwith to discuss details. You will appreciate difficulty of making any reinforcements available from outside the Caribbean and length of time that would be involved.

5. You must also have in this crisis full emergency legal powers for preservation of public order and the maintenance of supplies and services. In view of the doubt referred to in

paragraph 1(b) of my Personal telegram No. 20 whether the Emergency Powers Order in Council of the kind referred to in paragraph 1(c) of my telegram (which need not be laid in draft) should be made as soon as possible giving you such powers. I have in mind applying by reference such of the Defence Regulations as were in force in British Guiana during the war as would appear to be appropriate, but I should be grateful if you would let me know as soon as possible what powers you yourself think you will need. I will attempt to get this Order in Council made in the next 10 days, but it can be kept secret until all other arrangements for making the break are complete.

6. We must also have ready a statement for immediate issue when you take action giving the reasons for the withdrawal of Ministers' powers. I suggest that amongst other things this statement should make it clear that British Guiana was given its new constitution in the hope that it would seize this opportunity to advance along the road to responsible self-government within the British Commonwealth; that the constitution had been perverted by a small clique of Communist sympathisers who sought to impose totalitarianism on the territory and were bringing economic life of the country to a standstill; that the Ministers had abused their authority in various ways which should be listed; that the withdrawal of their powers from Ministers would have to be followed by the suspension of the constitution; that you had the necessary emergency powers to ensure law and order and the safety of property and were proposing to do so; that it was Her Majesty's Government's intention to give the territory a revised constitution which would permit the British Guianese themselves to continue to partake in their own government; and that in the meantime you propose to take all possible measures to improve housing and the other social services and to ensure the rapid economic development of the territory's resources.

7. The Order suspending the constitution will be prepared here and referred to you for comments. This will need to be laid in draft before Parliament, which will be done, if possible, as soon as it reassembles. I propose that this Order should also provide for the setting up of an interim Government. I have in mind a nominated Executive Council (which you could, but need not, consult and whose advice you need not take) and a nominated single legislative chamber including on both bodies as many members of the P.P.P. as will be prepared to co-operate.

8. A Commission of Enquiry will also have to be appointed into the events in British Guiana which have led to this breakdown and to propose a new constitution. Reference might be made to such a Commission of Enquiry in the public statement referred to in paragraph 6 above.

9. Arrival of forces, arrest of dangerous persons, publication of emergency Order in Council and issue of statement, would, of course, have to be simultaneous with withdrawal of powers of Ministers. Meanwhile the greatest secrecy is essential in making these preparations in order that Ministers shall not be warned of our intentions before we are ready. I shall assume in future cypher message that you have arranged for suitable staff to decypher.

10. I should be glad if you would now make all preparations urgently. Please telegraph as soon as possible regarding emergency legal powers (paragraph 5 above) and forces required, including your recommendation as to timing of action if you and Commander Caribbean area regard forces from outside that area as essential despite the difficulties referred to in paragraph 4. I should also be grateful for your detailed plans for carrying out this operation and for a draft statement as outlines in paragraph 6.

Distribution:

H. 453
Secretary of State
P.S. to Minister of State
Sir T. Lloyd
P.S. to Parliamentary U/S.
Sir C. Jeffries
Sir H. Poynton
Mr. K. H. Davies
Mr. P. R. Maynard
Mr. P. Rogers
Mr. N. L. Mayle
Mr. J. W. Vernon
Mr. C. Y. Carstairs
Mr. R. J. Vile
Mr. B. D. Edmonds
Mr. C. J. J. T. Barton
Mr. J.A. Peck

Ministry of Defence - Chief of Staff Secretariat
War Office - Gen. Sir H. Redman, K.B.E., C.B.E.
War Office - Major Barlow, M.O.3
Ministry of Defence - General Brownjohn
Ministry of Defence - Private Secretary to the Minister of Defence
Admiralty - V.C.N.S.
Air Ministry - V.C.A.S.

19. TEXT OF LETTER FROM H. POYNTON OF THE COLONIAL OFFICE TO W.G. AGNEW
(24 September 1953)

24th September, 1953.

As I think you have been informed over the telephone, a serious situation has developed in British Guiana; and though we very much regret it, we are afraid that it is necessary for us to ask for a special meeting of the Privy Council.

There has been a sugar strike in progress in British Guiana for the last four weeks; and it has recently begun to spread to the rest of industry in the Colony. The Ministers who came into power there under the new Constitution are behind this strike action; and there is a danger of the whole situation getting out of hand.

It may therefore be necessary, at short notice, for the Governor to make use of emergency powers to preserve public safety and order and to maintain supplies and services. Unfortunately we have recently discovered that there is doubt as to whether the Emergency Powers Order in Council, 1939, validly applies to British Guiana, since it could be held to constitute a form of legislature, which can only be done by the special procedure laid down in the British Guiana Act, 1928. This doubt could only be removed by an Order in Council made under that Act and laid in draft as therein provided. It would take about eight weeks

before it could come into force. We cannot wait this long since it essential that we should be in a position to give the Governor his emergency powers without delay.

We propose therefore to submit to Her Majesty an Order in Council giving the Governor the necessary powers. This Order in Council is now being drafted, in consultation with British Guiana; and though as I have said we very much regret that Her Majesty should be troubled at this time, we would be grateful if you would arrange for a meeting of the Privy Council on any time of the following days, viz.: 2nd October, 3rd October or 5th October.

(Signed) H. Poynton

[To:] W.G. Agnew, Esq.

20. TELEGRAM (No. 79) FROM GOVERNOR OF JAMAICA TO COLONIAL SECRETARY
(25 September 1953)

TOP SECRET

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECREYARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES.

FROM JAMAICA (Sir H. Foot)

Cypher (O.T.P.)
D. 25th September, 1953.
R. 25th ,, ,, 23.00 hrs.

PRIORITY
TOP SECRET
PERSONAL No. 79

Your telegram personal No. 78.

Situation in British Guiana.

Commander Caribbean Area has consulted me as a result of a communication which be has received from the War Office. I have told him I think that it is conceivable that communist sympathisers in Jamaica might attempt to create some disorder as a result of any action taken in British Guiana, but that I consider police here could cope with any such attempt. I therefore see no objection, as far as Jamaica is concerned, to sending the Royal Welch Fusiliers to British Guiana.

2. I have also told the Commander Caribbean Area that I would have no objection to a company of the Jamaica Battalion being sent to British Honduras to relieve Company of the Royal Welch Fusiliers there, if it were desired to transfer the Welch Company from British

Honduras to British Guiana. I should, however, wish to consult my Executive Council before Jamaican troops were sent outside Jamaica. I do not anticipate that the Council would raise any objection.

Distribution:

Secretary of State
P.S. to Minister of State
Sir T. Lloyd
P.S. to Parliamentary U/S
Sir C. Jeffries
Sir H. Poynton
Mr. K. H. Davies
Mr. P. R. Maynard
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Mr. J. W. Vernon
Mr. C. Y. Carstairs
Mr. R. J. Vile
Mr. B. D. Edmonds
Mr. C. J. J. T. Barton

Ministry of Defence - Chiefs of Staff Secretariat
,, ,, ,, - Lt. Gen. Sir N.C.D. Brownjohn K.C.B., C.M.G.

War Office - Lt. Gen. H. Redman, K.B.E., C.B.E.
Admiralty - Vice Chief of Naval Staff
Air Ministry - Vice Chief of Air Staff

21. TELEGRAM (No. 54) FROM GOVERNOR SAVAGE TO COLONIAL SECRETARY
(25 September 1953)

TOP SECRET

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

CO 1031-1166

This document must be paraphrased if the communication of its contents to any person outside Government Services is authorised.

FROM BRITISH GUYANA (Sir A. Savage)

CYPHER D. 25th September, 1953
R. 25th September, 1953 23.00 hr.

IMMEDIATE
TOP SECRET

Personal No. 54

Addressed Commander Caribbean Area Repeated S. of S. (with reference to paragraph 4 of his Top Secret and Personal telegram No. 21). (Please pass copy to Admiralty for transmission to Commander-in-Chief America and West Indies Station) and to Governor Trinidad.

In view of the deterioration in the political and security situation here and the expected developments, presence of overseas forces will be needed in about 14 days time. Secretary of State has suggested that I should arrange for you to visit me forthwith to discuss details, but I consider this would be unwise, since your presence would be certain to lead to speculation and it is most essential that strict secrecy should be maintained and that the suspicions of the P.P.P. leaders should not be aroused beforehand.

2. I propose therefore that immediate arrangements should be made for my Commissioner of Police to meet you in Trinidad to discuss details of plans. Glad to know what date would be convenient to you. I suggest Captain of the "BURGHEAD BAY" should also take part in the discussions. Secretary of State has asked me for an estimate of the numbers needed to meet the situation and proposed arrangements for them on arrival. I will telegraph as soon as possible on these points.

(Copies sent to Admiralty for transmission to Commander-in-Chief America and West Indies Station)

/Distribution -

22. TELEGRAM FROM WAR OFFICE TO COMMANDER OF BRITISH FORCES IN THE CARIBBEAN

(25 September 1953)

TOP SECRET

BY SECURE MEANS

Despd. 25th September, 1953
EMERGENCY
DTO: 251200 A/Sep 53

From: War Office TOP SECRET

To: Commander CARIBBEAN AREA 77831 DMO/972/3

Exclusive for Brigadier Jackson

ONE H.M.G. is considering drastic political action in GUIANA which may well result in disorder.

TWO Governor has been instructed to consult you forthwith and to report on the additional forces he considers necessary.

THREE You will proceed to GUIANA forthwith with minimum staff which should include rep of 1 RWF to concert plans with Governor. On way to GUIANA you should contact Commanding Officer of BURGHEAD BAY in TRINIDAD in order to be briefed on naval implication before seeing Governor. Understand there are serious navigational and berthing difficulties.

FOUR You will warn CO of 1 RWF confidentially that battalion less HONDURAS company likely to be required in GUIANA in immediate future.

FIVE You will signal appreciation as to necessary reinforcements as soon as possible. You should know that owing to other threats elsewhere it is at this moment highly undesirable to commit SHERRIF battalion to GUIANA. If anticipated trouble likely to be more than can be dealt with by battalion less one company political action may have to be postponed until additional reinforcements can be provided. If latter essential the best you can expect is one additional battalion arriving in GUIANA by approximately D + 22.

SIX Major factor in move of additional unit will be problem of vehicles. You should therefore investigate possibility of local requisition and recommend minimum scale which must accompany unit bearing in mind difficulties of unloading.

SEVEN Greatest secrecy is essential at this stage.

Message Control

23. TELEGRAM FROM HEADQUARTERS OF BRITISH TROOPS IN THE CARIBBEAN TO THE WAR OFFICE

(26 September 1953)

TOP SECRET

BY SECURE MEANS
OF IMMEDIATE

Recd. 26th Sept '53

From: HQ Caribbean Area D.T.O. 25153OR September

To: The War Office TOP SECRET

0077

Personal for DMO

Your 777831 (DMO) of 251200

First. Complying with your para third.

Second. New legislation recently passed by Jamaican Government now allows Jamaica Bn to serve in other colonies in Caribbean. Governor Jamaica agrees in principle subject agreement executive council. This would allow all 1 RWF to concentrate British Guiana if required less elements support company not suitable for this type of operation.

Third. In clearing proposal changing garrison British Honduras with Governor British Honduras. Grateful you clear with Foreign Office.

Fourth. Have not consulted Governor British Guiana but my preliminary reaction from knowledge of country is that police British Guiana volunteer force and complete Royal Welch will be adequate for any anticipated disorders provided police remain loyal.

Fifth. Anticipate reporting appreciation Monday PM.

Message Control

Distribution by MO 3

Copies to: -

S of S MG 1, 3(10)

VCIGS MI 4

VOMG SD 2(2)

DMO AG Co-ord (3)

DSD Q(Ops) 1

D Plans Q(M) 1

D of AP F 1

Col Mov (P)

Mr. Vile, Colonial Office

Air Vice Marshal Pike, Air Ministry

Rear-Admiral Elkins, Admiralty

Mr. B.D. Edmonds, Defence & General Department, Colonial Office

Gen. Brownjohn, Ministry of Defence

24. MEMORANDUM OF FRANK HOLDER, ATTORNEY GENERAL OF BRITISH GUIANA (26 September 1953)

MEMORANDUM

With reference to the Secretary of State's personal telegram No. 20 of 19th September, 1953, the following appear to be the steps which may be taken consequent on a breakdown of the Constitution. There are two distinct stages in this sequence of events. The first stage is that between the breakdown of the Constitution and its formal suspension during which ad hoc arrangements will have to be made as far as practicable under the provisions of the existing Constitution to conduct the affairs of government with a minimum of friction and to take such other action as the circumstances may require. The second stage is concerned

with the actual suspension of the Constitution and the substitution of some other form of government.

2. In respect to the first stage it is suggested that action may be taken along the following lines: -

(a) The directions given by the Governor (*vide Official Gazette* of 30th May, 1953) charging the Ministers elected by the House of Assembly with the responsibility for certain departments and subjects should be revoked [Section 21(1)(b) of the British Guiana (Constitution) Order in Council, 1953]. This withdrawal of the Portfolios of the elected Ministers is affected by the Governor acting in his discretion. Their Portfolios may then be re-allocated among the three *ex officio* members. As a result the Ministers will lose their control over and direction of the everyday action of the departments of government. This control and direction would in practice devolve on the permanent heads of the departments as under the old Constitution.

b) The Ministers would, however still be members of the Executive Council. As such they would participate in the formulation of policy and in the exercise of executive power vested in the Governor or the Governor in Council by the Constitution and by the general law. In the exercise of powers conferred on the Governor or the Governor in Council by the general law the Governor is obliged (subject to certain exceptions) to act in consultation with and on the advice of the Executive Council. This obligation is imposed by the Royal Instructions of the 1st April, 1953 [*vide* Clause 4]. It is suggested that simultaneously with the withdrawal of the Portfolios, the Royal Instructions should be amended by the deletion of Clause 4. The result of such an amendment would be that in the exercise of these powers the Governor would be in the same position, *vis-a-vis*, the Executive Council as he was under the old Constitution [Section 5(1) of the Interpretation Ordinance, Chapter 5, defines the words "Governor in Council" as follows: "the Governor acting with, but not necessarily in accordance with the advice of, the Executive Council of the colony."] The Governor may thus merely notify the Executive Council of the matters to be dealt with and of the manner in which he proposes to exercise the power. In this event the only powers which the Governor will be obliged to exercise on the advice of Executive Council would be those conferred on the Governor by the Constitution Order in Council and not expressed therein to be exercisable in his discretion. These powers are limited in number and many of them are of little importance in the event of an emergency. [*Vide* Section 4; 10(6); 13(1)(a); 18(1); 25(1); 28(c); 27(2)(b); 67(2); 82(1); and 83(1)]. In any event he may in the exercise of any of these powers either refuse to consult with the Executive Council - [Section 7(2)(a)] - or decline to act in accordance with its advice [Section 7(2)(b)].

(c) On the withdrawal of the Portfolios and the amendment of the Royal Instructions certain difficulties remain. It will still be necessary for the Governor to consult with Executive Council in the exercise of his powers under Sections 6 and 7 of the Order in Council and under Section 5(1) of the Interpretation Ordinance. By virtue of Section 18 of the Order in Council the Executive Council must be summoned by the Governor on the request of five members. It may be that with the withdrawal of the Portfolios and the amendment of the Royal Instructions the Ministers will boycott the Executive Council. They may, however, use the Council as a forum to harass the Governor, in which event the meetings of the Council could become a definite irritant to good government. This necessity for the Governor to summon the Council and to consult with it can only be removed by an amendment of the Constitution Order in Council.

(d) The British Guiana (Constitution) Order in Council, 1928 to 1952, provided for the constitution of the legislature of the Colony under the statutory power conferred by the British Guiana Act, 1928. Provisions relating to the constitution of the Executive Council were embodied in the Letters Patent of 1928 and 1943 passed under the Royal Prerogative. The British Guiana (Constitution) Order in Council, 1953, however, embodies provisions relating to both the Legislative and Executive organs of government. Accordingly, it purports to have been made under the authority of both the statutory and the prerogative power in the sense that so much of the Order in Council as relates to "the Constitution and the powers" of the legislature was made under the 1928 Act, while the remaining provisions were made under the prerogative power to legislate for the Colony. The Order in Council established a representative legislature but right of the Crown to legislate for the Colony has been specifically reserved in Section 94(2) of this Order in Council. It is therefore competent for the Queen in Council to amend any of the provisions of the Order in Council under the prerogative power so long as such amendments do not alter "the Constitution or powers of the legislature - established under the statutory power. The value of amending the Order in Council under the prerogative power, wherever possible, is that the Amending Order will not be required to be laid before Parliament for any period of time, but may be made forthwith.

(e) The question arises whether Sections 6 and 7 of the Order in Council may be amended by this procedure. These Sections confer certain rights on the Executive Council a majority of whose members are elected by the House of Assembly. It would appear, therefore, that one of the "powers" of the House of Assembly is that its nominees participate in the enjoyment of these rights by the Executive Council. If this is so the amending Order in Council would seem to fall under the provisions of Section 1(2) of the 1928 Act. The Secretary of State appears to take the view, however, that an amendment such as that contemplated does not alter the powers of the House of Assembly and that accordingly it may validly be made under the prerogative power. If this is so then it is suggested that the operation of Sections 6 and 7 should be suspended so that Section 18(1) and the definition of "Governor in Council" in Section 5(1) of the Interpretation Ordinance be amended by the Order in Council which it is proposed to make. If this can validly be done then all executive authority would be in the hands of the Governor. The legislature as at present constituted would still remain - if only to enable the Governor to use his reserve powers - but the Governor's veto will enable him to negative any undesirable legislation.

(f) It is also desirable that the Governor should by such an Order in Council be entrusted with certain emergency powers. It will not be possible to confer comprehensive emergency powers by this procedure since the Constitution or powers of the legislature may not be altered except under the power conferred by the 1928 Act. Within these limits, however, it is suggested that the Order should provide as ample an emergency power as is possible.

4. These are the steps which appear to be essential in the first stage of a breakdown of the Constitution. In respect of the second stage - that in which the existing Constitution will be suspended - the following appears to be the required order of action:-

(a) An Order of the Queen in Council may be made exempting the British Guiana Act, 1928, from the application of the Statutory Instruments Act, 1946, and so restoring the period of 21 days for the laying of the draft Order before Parliament. This would hasten the process of amendment by nearly three weeks.

(b) An Order in Council may then be made -

- (i) suspending the operation of the British Guiana (Constitution) Order in Council, 1953;
- (ii) removing any doubt as to the application of the Emergency Powers Orders in Council, 1939 and 1952, to British Guiana; and
- (iii) providing machinery whereby the Governor may be assisted in the exercise of his emergency powers.

This Order will have to be laid in draft before Parliament for 21 days before being made. Since Parliament does not assemble until the 20th of October it seems that this Order in Council may not be made before the 10th of November.

(c) With regard to (b)(ii), once the Emergency Powers Orders in Council apply to the Colony a Proclamation of the Governor may be made bringing their provisions into operation. Thereupon the emergency powers therein conferred on the Governor will be vested in him and specific Regulations may then be made for meeting the emergency.

(d) With regard to (b)(iii), it seems that provisions may be made establishing a Commission of Government for the Colony to consist of an appropriate number of persons appointed by the Governor. It is suggested that the three *ex officio* members of Executive Council should form the nucleus of the Council and that its remaining members - probably six - should be drawn from as wide a field as possible. The President of the State Council and the Leader of the Opposition might be appropriate choices and it might be possible to find suitable persons representative of commerce, labour, the rice industry and sugar industries.

It is suggested that in the early stages of the emergency the powers of the Commission should be purely advisory - the entire range of governmental authority being vested in the Governor. If it becomes necessary to maintain the state of emergency for an indefinite period in the light of developments it may then be desirable to confer certain legislative functions on the Commission.; but it is suggested that this might be done more appropriately at a later stage by an Order in Council setting up an Interim Constitution if circumstances so warrant.

F.W. HOLDER
ATTORNEY GENERAL
26th September, 1953

25. NOTE PREPARED BY THE COLONIAL OFFICE FOR THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

(Undated, but probably 26 September 1953)

BRITISH GUIANA

The British Guiana (Emergency) Order in Council, 1953

The British Guiana (Constitution) (Amendment) Order in Council, 1953

The British Guiana Amending Instructions

NOTE
for the Secretary of State

Her Majesty The Queen is already aware, from a note sent to Her Private Secretary on 25th September, that a serious situation is developing in British Guiana. Since that note was prepared the situation has deteriorated further. The sugar workers are back at work; but the Governor stated in a recent telegram that the reliability of the Police and the Volunteer Force is declining every day. For that reason, and also because there is, in the Governor's view, a possibility that the Peoples Progressive Party will shortly stage another demonstration of their strength, the Governor has urged that strong military forces be brought into the Colony as quickly as possible.

Plans are therefore in hand to move such forces in, and to declare a state of emergency in the Colony, simultaneously. The Ministers belonging to the Peoples Progressive Party will be relieved of responsibility for Departments and they and other leaders of the Party will be placed under restraint. It is hoped that by taking action in this way bloodshed will be avoided.

For these purposes emergency legal powers will be required by the Governor, and these will be provided by the British Guiana (Emergency) Order in Council, 1953, which is now submitted.

In addition, the following instruments are also submitted: -

- (i) The British Guiana (Constitution) (Amendment) Order in Council, 1953, and
- (ii) Amending Royal Instructions.

The joint effect of these two instruments is to alter the functions of the Executive Council, which by the provisions of the British Guiana (Constitution) Order in Council, 1953, is declared to be the principal instrument of policy, and to relieve the Governor of the obligation, which, except in certain special circumstances, rests with him, to act in accordance with the advice of the Executive Council. This step is necessary because, although it **is** possible immediately to remove from Ministers responsibility for Departments with which they have been charged, it is **not** possible quickly to remove them from Executive Council. It is proposed that further instruments suspending the present constitution, which will, among other things, make the removal of Ministers possible, shall be submitted in due course.

26. TELEGRAM (No. 58) FROM GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

(27 September 1953)

TOP SECRET

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES.

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Cypher D. 27th September 1953
(O.T.P.) R. 28th ,, ,, 07.00 hrs.

IMMEDIATE
TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL

Personal No. 58

Your Top Secret and Personal telegram Personal No.21.

Following are my comments on paragraphs 6 to 8.

Paragraph 6. Draft statement is being prepared and text will be telegraphed for your concurrence as soon as possible.

2. Paragraph 7. As regards provision in the Order for setting up an interim Government, I have carefully considered with my official advisers what form this should take. In the period immediately following the suspension of the present constitution, I do not think it would be politic, even if it were possible, to enlist the services of any members of the existing political parties. P.P.P. members would agree to serve, whilst to include the opposition politicians on such a nominated body at that (*corrupt gp.* ?stage), even if they agreed to serve, would make them the targets for attack and handicap them in establishing themselves as leaders of reasonable and responsible elements in the community.

3. I would therefore propose provision should be made or:

(a) full executive and legislative powers to be vested in the Governor;

(b) a nominated Executive Council of not more than 10 members (which I could, but need not consult, and whose advice I need not take);

(c) a nominated Legislative Council of not more than 24 members to be appointed at a later stage (see paragraph 5 below);

(d) preservation of the provisions of the Part viii of the existing Order relating to public services.

4. Initially, I would propose to appoint say 7 members to the Executive Council - viz. - 3 or 4 officials and 3 or 4 responsible Guianese citizens, not engaged in politics. Remaining places would be filled later.

5. For reasons given above, I do not consider it would be politic or indeed possible to set up the proposed nominated Legislative Council immediately. That step might follow in say 2 or 3 months' time in the light of developments.

6. I propose to retain the present machinery designed for the ministerial system and I would hope, as soon as possible, to associate Unofficial members of the Executive Council with the administration of Departments. Interim Constitution should therefore provide for this contingency. In the meantime, arrangements would be made for the Chief Secretary

and other Unofficials to carry on the administration through the existing Ministerial Secretariats.

7. Your paragraph 8. You will agree that Commission of Enquiry should be appointed at the earliest possible date and I hope that it would be able to complete its task quickly. I agree that reference should be made to Commission in public statement referred to in paragraph 6 above.

Distribution: -

H.453

Secretary of State

P.S. to Minister of State

Sir T. Lloyd

P.S. to Parliamentary U/S.

Sir C. Jeffries

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Ministry of Defence - Chief of Staff Secretariat

Ministry of Defence - Lt. Gen. Sir N.C.D. Brownjohn, K.C.B., C.M.G., O.B.E., M.C.

Ministry of Defence - Private Secretary to the Minister of Defence

War Office - Gen. Sir H. Redman, K.B.E., C.B.

War Office - Major Barlow, M.O.3

Admiralty - Vice Chief of Naval Staff

Air Ministry - Vice Chief of Air Staff

27. TELEGRAM (No. 203) FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR OF BRITISH HONDURAS

(28 September 1953)

TOP SECRET

OUTWARD TEEGRAM

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

TO BRITISH HONDURAS (Sir P. H. Renison)

CYPHER (O.T.P.)

Sent 28th September, 1953 19.30 hrs.

IMMEDIATE
TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL
GUARD
No. 203

Recent developments and behaviours of Ministers in British Guiana have led to decision that constitution must be suspended and firm action taken to prevent disorder. More detailed explanation will be sent to you and West Indian Governors before the break is made which will not be for some days at any rate. In the meantime it is of course essential that complete secrecy be observed.

2. Governor, British Guiana estimates minimum force of 750 needed to preserve order when action is taken. Commander, Caribbean is to discuss problem with Commissioner of Police, British Guiana, in Trinidad shortly. It seems clear, however, that troops in addition to the companies of Royal Welch Fusiliers stationed in Jamaica will be needed. Governor, Jamaica has suggested that a Company of the Jamaica Battalion might be sent to British Honduras to relieve Company of Royal Welch Fusiliers there, but we have pointed out there is likely to be strong political objections to this in British Honduras. Grateful for your views.

3. Failing use of Jamaica troops, could you dispense with part or whole of company of Royal Welch Fusiliers for the time being?

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Mr. B.D. Edmonds
Mr. C.J.J.T. Barton
Sir K. Roberts-Wray
Mr. J.A. Peck
Mr. D.G. Gordon-Smith

28. TELEGRAM FROM GOVERNOR OF TRINIDAD TO WAR OFFICE TOP SECRET
28 September 1953

CIPHER TELEGRAM

The text of this message must be paraphrased if it is necessary to communicate it to persons outside British Government Service or to retransmit it in a cipher system other than O.T.P. This message will not be referred to in any Unclassified message. Note: The above notice will be reproduced on any copies made of this message.

EMERGENCY Recd. 28 Sept '53

From: -Port of Spain DTO. NIL

To: - War Office TOP SECRET

Info: - Admiralty (for transmission to C in C 73

AWI Station (7)

HQ Caribbean Area and Governor British Guiana (48) (by hand) of Commissioner of Police British Guiana)

Personal for DWO and information addresses.

1. After consultation Commissioner of Police British Guiana representing Governor Captain Her Majesty's Ship Burghead Bay following is appreciation of use of troops in British Guiana.

2. Uncertain loyalty police and volunteer force makes it imperative strong show of force when announcement by Governor made. If strong show of force made by troops probability is police and volunteers will remain loyal and carry out orders.

3. Consider filtering in troops before announcement by best available local air lift of 120 every (? 48) (? hours) might precipitate serious disorders before subsequent air lift arrives and force adequate. Therefore ill advised troops arrive big numbers in first flight.

4. Situation in British Guiana is deteriorating and each days (*sic*) delay will make task increasingly difficult.

5. Agreed that 1 RFW including company in British Honduras would be adequate supported by Her Majesty's ship Burghead Bay. This is minimum owing to size country and factors in para 2.

6. Recommend use cruiser to transport 1 RFW less 1 flight 120 direct Jamaica to British Guiana 1 flight 120 strong 90 in local aircraft by air. Cruiser Burghead Bay and flight to arrive simultaneously and Governors (*sic*) announcement made as soon as landing completed. Additional strength provided by presence of cruiser and belief that strong available landing party most desirable in the initial stages. Cruiser would not be required for more than a few days if situation reasonably restored.

Strongly recommend this course. Depending (? availability) cruiser D day could be within 10 days.

[Paragraph 7 missing]

29. TELEGRAM (No. 64) FROM GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

(28 September 1953)

TOP SECRET

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

CYPHER (O.T.P.)

D. 28th September, 1953

R. 28th ,, ,, 22.20 hrs.

PRIORITY

TOP SECRET

Personal No. 64

Your Top Secret telegram Personal No. 21.

Commission of Enquiry.

I suggest Sir Donald Jackson should be considered for appointment as member.

Distribution:

H.453

Secretary of State

P.S. to Minister of State

Sir T. Lloyd

P.S. to Parliamentary U/S

Sir C. Jeffries

Mr. K. H. Davies

Mr. P. R. Maynard

Mr. P. Rogers

Mr. N. L. Mayle

Mr. J. W. Vernon

Mr. C. Y. Carstairs

Mr. R. J. Vile

Mr. B. D. Edmonds

Mr. C. J. J. T. Barton

Sir K. Roberts-Wray

Mr. J. A. Peck

Mr. D. G. Gordon-Smith

Ministry of Defence - Chiefs of Staff Secretariat

- Lt. Gen. Sir N.C.D. Brownjohn, K.C.B., C.M.G., O.B.E., M.C.

- Private Secretary to Minister of Defence

War Office - Lt. Gen. Sir H. Redman, K.B.E., C.B.
- Major Barlow, M.O.3.

Admiralty - Vice Chief of Naval Staff

Air Ministry - Vice Chief of Air Staff
- Mr. S. Nicholls A.I.1.

30. COLONIAL OFFICE NOTE - FROM N.L. MAYLE TO J.W. VERNON

(29 September 1953)

Mr. Vernon

Major Barlow of the War Office rang up to enquire whether they could now give definite instructions for the withdrawal of the Company of the Royal Welch Fusiliers from British Honduras to enable it to be sent to British Guiana. I told him that we were consulting the Governor about this proposal and the suggestion that had been made by the Governor that a Company of the Jamaica Battalion might be sent to relieve the Company of the Royal Welch Fusiliers in British Honduras. I warned him that there may be some political difficulty about using Jamaican troops in British Honduras at the present time and told him that we would let him have a decision on the question of the withdrawal of the Welch Fusiliers from British Honduras as soon as we had the Governor's reply.

2. He is particularly anxious to have this decision as soon as possible and I said that we would telephone when we had the answer. As the telegram may come to you first would you please ring up Major Barlow or his Colonel who is on Extension 333 (I am sorry I have forgotten his name) if on the basis of the telegram we are able to agree to arrangements being made for the withdrawal of the Company forthwith.

(N.L. Mayle)

29th September, 1953

31. TELEGRAM (No. 66) FROM GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

(29 September 1953)

TOP SECRET

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

This document must be paraphrased if the communication of its contents to any person outside Government service is authorised.

AMENDED COPY (AMENDMENTS UNDERLINED)*

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir. A. Savage)

Cypher D. 29th September, 1953
 R. 30th ,, ,, 03.45 hrs.

EMERGENCY
TOP SECRET
PERSONAL No. 66

Addressed to S. of S. (please pass Admiralty for transmission to Commander in Chief, America and West Indies Station).

Repeated to General Jamaica, Governor Trinidad and Staff Officer Intelligence) Bermuda.

I have been advised to day that security situation in the police and volunteers has deteriorated much more than previously believed. It is possible that at least 50 per cent of both forces would refuse to accept full duty and such situation will worsen daily. In these circumstances I consider it imperative that the proposed operation should commence without delay and as soon as something of the order of 750 overseas men are available. It appears that this could be covered by a cruiser, 2 sloops and 450 troops available Jamaica. With reference to your top secret telegram No. 370, ferrying operations from cruiser would not prove unduly difficult and some local craft could assist.

2. In addition, it is considered that if large percentage of police and volunteers refuse duty, it will be necessary, if protection is to be given to the sugar estates, for a further 500 troops to be provided, This would presumably require air lift from the U.K.

3. A possibility that cannot be ruled out is that the P.P.P. leaders may be planning a coup to take over the Government. As Jagan is scheduled to leave here on 5th October for Belgium, and in view of his past practice of being absent at times of crisis it may be that they contemplate such action on or after 5th October.

4. I consider it essential, therefore, that our D day should be as early as possible next week, as soon as forces referred to in paragraph 1 can be assembled simultaneously in Georgetown: tide at Georgetown bar would appear to be favourable for early morning landing on or after 8th October. Second contingent by air lift could be held in readiness in the U.K. to fly if developments after the initial landing require it.

*[Editor's note: * In general text of telegram.]*

32. TELEGRAM (No. 67) FROM GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA TO COLONIAL SECRETARY
(29 September 1953)

TOP SECRET

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

This document must be paraphrased if the communication of its contents to any person outside Government Service is authorised.

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

CYHER D. 29th September, 1953
 R. 30th ,, ,, 02.15 hrs.

IMMEDIATE

TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL

Personal No. 67

Addressed to Governor of Trinidad.
Repeated to S. of S. and C.C. Troops Jamaica.

My immediately preceding telegram No. 189; Secretary of State Personal No. 66 repeated to you.

Would it be possible, if the situation developed unfavourably here, at this stage to make available 150 officers and men of the Trinidad Police to assist either before or during or after the arrival of overseas forces. Suggest at this stage only the Commissioner of Police should be informed.

Distribution:

H.453

Secretary of State

P.S. to Minister of State

Sir T. Lloyd

P.S. to Parliamentary U/S

Sir C. Jeffries

Sir H. Poynton

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Ministry of Defence - Chiefs of Staff Secretariat

,, ,, ,, - Lt. Gn. Sir N.C.D. Brownjohn, K.C.B., C.M.G., O.B.E., M.C.

,, ,, ,, - Private Secretary to Minister of Defence

War Office - Lt. Gen. Sir H. Redman, K.B.E., O.B.
,, ,, - Major Barlow M.O.3

Admiralty - Vice Chief of Naval Staff

Air Ministry - Vice Chief of Air Staff

 [Top Of page](#)

OCTOBER 1953

33. FROM CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE TO N.L. MAYLE, UNDER-SECRETARY, COLONIAL OFFICE

(1 October 1953)

TOP SECRET

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE,
STOREY'S GATE
S.W.1.

1st October, 1953.

Dear Mayle,

At their meeting on 30th September 1953, at which you were present, the Chiefs of Staff considered the question of despatching troops to British Guiana. I attach a copy of the relevant minute* your information.

2. You will note that the Chiefs of Staff invited the Colonial Office: -

(i) to inform the Governor of British Guiana that the reinforcements requested could arrive at Georgetown on 9th October, weather permitting - but not before.

(ii) to impress upon the Governor of British Guiana the difficulties inherent in providing further reinforcements from the United Kingdom and that he should not therefore ask for such reinforcements unless they were absolutely essential.

(iii) take note of the administrative requirements for the Royal Welch Fusiliers in British Guiana, and that similar requirements would be needed for any subsequent reinforcements.

(iv) to make the necessary arrangements for the withdrawal of the company of Royal Welch Fusiliers, less one platoon, from British Honduras.

I presume you will arrange for necessary action to be taken accordingly.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed)
Secretary
Chiefs of Staff Committee

[To:] N.L. Mayle, Esq., Colonial Office

* COS(53) 110th Mtg. Minute 3.

34. NOTE BY THE WAR OFFICE ON PLAN FOR TROOP MOVEMENT INTO BRITISH GUIANA

(1 October 1953)

TOP SECRET

CO 1031-1166

COPIES OF THIS DOCUMENT MUST NOT BE MADE WITHOUT THE AUTHORITY OF THE SECRETARY, CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

C.O.S (53) 488

1st OCTOBER, 1953

CHIEF OF STAFF COMMITTEE

REINFORCEMENT OF BRITISH GUIANA

Note by the War Office

Aim

1. The aim of this paper is to prepare a Plan for the move of the 1st Battalion Royal Welch Fusiliers from JAMAICA to BRITISH GUIANA for duties in aid of the Civil Power.

Situation in BRITISH GUIANA

2. Background to Unrest. A strike of sugar plantation workers has been in progress since 2nd September. The strike was fomented by members of the communist dominated government, many of whom are trade union leaders. Efforts to reach agreement between workers and employers have failed and a general strike has been called. Because of the irresponsible attitude of members of the government, it is understood that the Secretary of State for the Colonies has decided that he may shortly have to suspend the present constitution and considers that this action will lead to an outbreak of violence.

3. Present Situation. The Commander Caribbean Area, in conference with the Chief of Police BRITISH GUIANA and the captain of Her Majesty's Frigate BURGHEAD BAY, has appreciated that a force of one Infantry Battalion (i.e. 1st Battalion Royal Welch Fusiliers) will be required to maintain order, and to ensure the loyalty of the local police and volunteers. Plans are now in hand to replace the one company of the Royal Welch Fusiliers in BRITISH

GUIANA with troops of the JAMAICA Battalion so that the whole of this battalion can be moved to BRITISH GUIANA. Plans for the move of a battalion from the UNITED KINGDOM to BRITISH GUIANA have been considered in detail should this necessity arise.

Means of Movement

4. Royal Navy. The following ships can be made available.

(a) H.M. Cruiser SUPERB now on passage to BERMUDA due there 2nd October, 1953.

(b) H.M. Frigate BURGHEAD BAY now at TRINIDAD. .

(c) H.M. Frigate BIGBURY BAY now on passage to JAMAICA, due 3rd October, 1953.

5. Aircraft. Local charter aircraft sufficient to carry 120 troops in one lift are available in the Caribbean Area.

Planning Factors

6. Preliminary Moves. We have assumed that the company of 1st Battalion Royal Welch Fusiliers at present in BRITISH HONDURAS will have returned to join the remainder of the battalion in JAMAICA by the time this Plan is put into operation.

7. Force to be moved

(a) Men - 720 (elements of the support company will remain as Rear Party.

(b) Stores and Equipment - 20 tons (this is an approximate estimate only. Weapons of the Support Company will not accompany the Battalion).

(c) Vehicles - NIL

8. Harbour and Tide limitations for H.M. Ships

The Harbour at GEORGETOWN, BRITISH GUIANA, can only accept ships to the draft of a frigate and these can enter and leave the Harbour only at two hours before and after high water. The Cruiser can only approach to within 15 miles off shore. Both Frigates can berth alongside at the same time.

9. Tides and Pilotage

(a) Tides

There are two tides every 24 hours in GEORGETOWN Harbour. On 1st/2nd October High Tides are 12.40 GMT and 0001 GMT and thereafter approximately 45 minutes later each day.

(b) Pilotage

A pilot is normally required to bring ships into this Harbour. If one is not available the necessary navigation will be carried out by the ships concerned.

10. Carrying Capacity

(a) <u>Shipping</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Stores</u>
(i) <u>Cruiser</u>	600	200 tons (DW)
(ii) <u>Frigate (each)</u>		
<u>Long Voyage</u>	150)	14 tons
<u>Short Voyage</u>	360-400)	

(b) Aircraft. The capacity and type of aircraft is not known but we have been informed by Commander Caribbean Area+ that the total lift available is for 120 men.

11. Timings. The following timings have been calculated: -

(a) The battalion less one company is at 48 hours notice to move.

(b) (i) H.M. SUPERB will be 2½ days passage from JAMAICA from 2nd October.

(ii) H.M. BURGHEAD BAY is 2½ days passage from JAMAICA at present.

(iii) H.M. BIGBURY is due to arrive JAMAICA on 3rd October.

(c) Time to embark battalion and stores - ½ day.

(d) Passage from JAMAICA to rendezvous 15 miles offshore from GEORGETOWN.

(i) Cruiser at 20 knots - 2 days 12 hours.

(ii) Frigates (each) at 16 knots - 3 days 10 hours.

(e) Time to transfer troops at rendezvous from Cruiser to Frigates in fine weather - 1 hour.

Note: If weather is bad transfer of troops from Cruiser to Frigates might take up to 12 hours and it is more than probable that it would be necessary to wait for good weather conditions.

(f) Time of passage of the Frigates from rendezvous to GEORGETOWN and disembarkation - 3 hours.

(g) Time of air passage JAMAICA-GEORGETOWN (Atkinson Field) via CURACAO and PORT OF SPAIN - 16 hours.

Note: The airfield is 20 miles from GEORGETOWN.

12. Administration

(a) Rations. The following rations are available to be taken by the battalion: -

(i) 3 days fresh for period of sea journey.

(ii) 7 days tinned plus 6 days compo rations for consumption on arrival in BRITISH GUIANA.

(b) Vehicles and Petrol. None can be moved with the battalion therefore sufficient vehicles and stocks of petrol will have to be requisitioned on arrival.

(c) Accommodation and Accommodation stores. Will have to be provided by the local authorities.

(d) Ammunition. There are ample stocks in JAMAICA which can accompany the battalion.

(e) Ordnance and General Stores. Sufficient can be taken for the immediate use of the battalion.

Essential Requirement of the Plan

13. It is imperative that the complete force arrives simultaneously with the Governor's announcement suspending the Constitution. To this end and if both air and sea transport are used, very precise arrangements will have to be made to ensure that both parties arrive together. It is clear from planning factors at paragraph 11(e) and (g) above that to achieve this might be complicated and uncertain. Therefore, as the complete battalion can be moved in H.M. Ships it would be better to move them by this means and thus ensure that adequate forces are available when they are required.

The Plan on a D Day Basis

14. The Plan. The complete battalion less Rear Party should be moved to BRITISH GUIANA by H.M. Ships which should be loaded as follows: -

	Men Stores
H.M.S. SUPERB	520 NIL
H.M.S. BURGHEAD BAY	100 10 tons
H.M.S. BIGBURY BAY	100 10 tons

The ships should then sail either in convoy steaming at 10 knots or the Cruiser and Frigates sailing independently to meet at the rendezvous 15 miles off GEORGETOWN. At the rendezvous the men on H.M.S. SUPERB should be transferred to the Frigates who then steam into GEORGETOWN Harbour and disembark the battalion. The battalion should take on board sixteen days rations and Ordnance stores, to prepare for their initial operation in BRITISH GUIANA.

15. Definition of D Day. D Day is the day on which the battalion is ordered to prepare to move to BRITISH GUIANA and H.M. Ships SUPERB, BURGHEAD BAY and BIGBURY BAY ordered to report to JAMAICA.

16. Assuming D Day to be not before 2nd October, the following timings will apply:-

D Day - orders issued see paragraph 15 above.

D + 3 - H.M. Ships at JAMAICA, bn* and stores embarked.

D + 6 - H.M. Ships arrive at rendezvous off GEORGETOWN, transfer of troops from Cruiser to Frigates takes place. Dependant (sic) on suitable tide, Frigates disembark battalion at GEORGETOWN.

Recommendations

17. We recommend that if the Chiefs of Staff approve the Plan set out in this Note they should: -

(a) Forward it to Cabinet for endorsement.

(b) Invite the Colonial Office: -

(i) To inform the Governor BRITISH HONDURAS that the company of the Royal Welch Fusiliers will be removed.

(ii) To take note of the administrative requirements of the battalion mentioned at paragraph 12(b) and (c) above.

(c) Invite the Admiralty to take note of H.M. Ships which will be required for this operation.

(d) Invite the War Office to prepare a plan for the maintenance of the force in BRITISH GUIANA with particular reference to the immediate positioning of further components in the CARIBBEAN Area.

+ *Commander Caribbean Area Signal dated 28th September, 1953. -*

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE, S.W.1
1st OCTOBER, 1953

*[Editor's note: * battalion]*

35. COLONIAL OFFICE NOTE ON FORCES AVAILABLE

(No date on document, but most likely issued in early October 1953)

BRITISH GUIANA

NOTE ON FORCES AVAILABLE IN THE EMERGENCY

In the territory

The Police Force (African with mostly white officers) 1054
Special Police Reserve 181

Rural Constables 708
Volunteer Force (African with white officers) 441
Volunteer Force Reserve 208

These forces are only considered to be 50% reliable at the present time.

From the outside

Arrangements are being made to move the Battalion of Royal Welch Fusiliers, at present stationed in Jamaica, with the exception of small detachments to be kept in Jamaica and British Honduras, by cruiser to British Guiana.

Landed strength in British Guiana 550-600

Governor, British Guiana has asked Governor, whether he could lend him 150 officers and men, if required.

Governor has estimated that if police and volunteers refuse duty a further 500 troops will be required from the United Kingdom.

**36. ADDITIONAL AUTHORITY GRANTED TO THE GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA
BY THE QUEEN**

(4 October 1953)

BRITISH GUIANA

ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS passed under the Royal Sign Manual and Signet to the Governor and Commander in Chief of the Colony of British Guiana.

Dated 4th October, 1953.

ELIZABETH R.

ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS to Our Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over Our Colony of British Guiana or other Officer for the time being Administering the Government of Our said Colony.

Whereas by certain Instructions under the Royal Sign Manual and Signet, to the Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over Our Colony of British Guiana bearing date the first day of April, 1953 (hereinafter called "the existing Instructions"), provision is made amongst other things for matters relating to the Executive Council of the Colony;

And Whereas We are minded to amend the existing instructions in the following manner:

Now, therefore, We do hereby direct and enjoin and declare Our will and pleasure as follows: -

1. These instructions shall have effect from the day appointed by the Governor for the coming into operation of the British Guiana (Constitution) (Amendment) Order in Council, 1953.

2. Clause 4 of the existing instructions shall be revoked, without prejudice to anything lawfully done thereunder, and the following clauses shall be submitted therefore: -

4. (1) Nothing in this clause shall be construed as applying to any power conferred upon the Governor by paragraph (1) of clause 4 of these Instructions.

(2) In the exercise of his powers and the performance of his duties the Governor shall consult with the Executive Council, except -

(i) in the exercise of any power conferred upon the Governor in respect of which it is provided by law, either expressly or by implication, that he shall not be obliged to consult with the Executive Council in the exercise thereof;

(ii) in cases: -

(a) which are of such nature that, in his judgment, Our service would sustain material prejudice by consulting the Executive Council thereon; or

- (b) in which the matters to be decided are, in his judgment. Too important to require their advice; or
- (c) in which the matters to be decided are, in his judgment, too urgent to admit of their advice being given by the time within which it may be necessary for him to act:

Provided that in such a case, the Governor shall as soon as practicable communicate to the Executive Council the measures which he shall have adopted, with the reasons therefor.

4A. The Governor shall alone be entitled to submit questions to the Executive Council but if the Governor shall decline to submit any question to the Executive Council when requested in writing by any Member so to do, it shall be competent to such Member to require that there be recorded upon the Minutes his written application together with the answer returned by the Governor thereto.

4B. (1) The Governor may act in opposition to the advice given to him by the Members of the Executive Council, if he shall in any case deem it right to do so; but in any such case he shall report the matter to Us through a Secretary of State, at the first convenient opportunity, with the reasons for his action.

(2) Whenever the Governor shall so act against the advice of the Executive Council, it shall be competent to any Member to require: -

- (a) that there be recorded upon the Minutes any advice or opinion he may give upon the question with the reasons therefore; and
- (b) that his advice or opinion, as recorded, upon such question be transmitted to a Secretary of State.

4C.(1) The Executive Council shall not be summoned except by the authority of the Governor.

(2) No business except that of adjournment shall be transacted if objection is taken by any Member present that there are less than four Members present besides the Governor or Member presiding.

Given at Our court at St. James's this fourth day of October, 1953, in the second year of Our Reign.

37. TEXT OF PLANNED RADIO BROADCAST TO BE MADE BY GOVERNOR SAVAGE TO ANNOUNCE SUSPENSION OF THE CONSTITUTION - PREPARED BY COLONIAL OFFICE AND SENT BY THE COLONIAL SECRETARY

(4 October 1953)

TOP SECRET

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

TO BRITISH GUIANA (Sir. A. Savage)

Cypher (O.T.P.) WIS 1044/4/01
Sent 4th October, 1953. 03.00 hrs.

IMMEDIATE
TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL
Personal No. 47

My immediately preceding telegram.

Following is text of proposed broadcast:-

1. I have a very important announcement to make today which concerns everyone in this colony. I hope you will all listen to what I have to say most carefully and will then go quietly about your work and business.
2. I arrived in British Guiana in April this year. In that month a new constitution was introduced which gave British Guiana a great opportunity by this big advance along the road to responsible self-government within the British Commonwealth.
3. The main features of that new constitution were universal adult suffrage, an increased proportion of elected members in the legislature and elected Ministers responsible individually for departments. Certain reserve powers were vested in me as Governor in the interests of public faith, public order and good government.
4. Shortly after my arrival the first general election for the House of Assembly was held and, as you all know the People's Progressive Party gained 51% (just over half) of the total votes and 18 out of the 24 seats. With this majority the Party secured the election of members of the Party to all six Ministerial posts filled from the House of Assembly.
5. Her Majesty's Government and I were well aware that some of these Ministers had extreme left wing sympathies. We know that two of them had paid visits to communist countries in Europe. Nevertheless I have done everything I could to meet their wishes and, to induce them by tact, patience and tolerance to carry out their responsibilities as Ministers. The assistance and advice of the whole public service was at their disposal and, as you know, I have made no use as yet of my reserve powers to prevent them acting as they wished.
6. I have now to tell you that these Ministers have failed utterly to live up to their responsibilities and, regardless of your welfare, have devoted all their energies to perverting the Constitution for their own extremist ends. There has been no single action of any Minister in the past six months which [*one and a half lines illegible*]* at the election seem to me admirable and if implemented would have improved the life of all, but when I compare the state of the territory today with what it was when I arrived I find the most alarming deterioration in its economic life and a spreading of social unrest which is endangering public order. The Ministers have failed in their duty to you.
7. But this is not all. The leaders of the P.P.P. have openly strengthened their links with communist countries and have boasted of their preference for the Russian way of life. There have been visits by P.P.P. officials in recent months to communist conferences in Copenhagen, Roumania and Vienna. Three members the Party recently left for Vienna to take part in communist trade union discussions there. The Colony is being flooded with

communist propaganda. The very organization of the P.P.P. itself is being modelled on communist lines with calls for recruitment, indoctrination, political agitation and the maintenance of rigorous discipline. A communist political Youth Organization, the Pioneer Youth League, has been started. Deliberate attempts have been made to undermine the position and influence of the established Youth movements e.g. the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides. A British Guiana branch of the communist-inspired Peace Guard has been formed.

8. Some of the Ministers have taken the lead in these subversive activities. All the Ministers have deliberately used their position in the Government to further the communist cause. They have withdrawn the ban on the entry of West Indian communists, with the object, I am satisfied, of making British Guiana a centre of communist conspiracy in South America. They have demanded the right to make all appointments to boards and committees so that they can, for example, pack the Rice Marketing Board and local authorities. They have proposed the repeal of the Essential Services Ordinance which would enable the life of the country to be paralysed by wild cat strikes which could deprive you of water supplies, electricity, transport, and drainage and endanger food supplies and public health. The Minister of Education has boasted of his intention to alter the education system, even to the re-writing of text books, in ways which can only be intended to subvert and poison the of the young. Ministers have persistently sought to subject the Public Service to their political control. They have attacked the Public Service Commission which was set up to ensure freedom of the public service from political interference and pressure and they have announced their intention to abolish it.

9. Let me say that local patriotism or local nationalism is no crime - far from it. But the nationalism of Ministers has gone far beyond legitimate bounds in fomenting racial hatred. Taking all the actions of Ministers together and considering them in the light of the communist jargon used and the known communist connections of some of the leaders, I am convinced, and have to state categorically, that the Party is not a true nationalist one, but that the Ministers and the Party are completely in the hands of an extremist clique with totalitarianism aims planned from outside and are taking measures which are being carried out by the classical communist technique. Since Ministers have collectively presented a united front in all their actions I am forced to treat them all as equally responsible in these matters.

10. I come now to recent events. The sugar strike was deliberately engineered by certain of the Ministers to secure the dominance of a particular union in the industry for their political purposes. Furthermore they sought to spread the stoppage to other industries, including essential services, thus endangering the whole life of the community which it was their duty as Ministers to preserve. Foiled in their efforts to gain their ends by the strike they are now attempting to achieve it by a proposed Labour Relations Ordinance, which would introduce measures quite contrary to British practice. They are seeking in fact to turn the workers of British Guiana and their Unions into the political tool of an extremist clique. Finally one of the Ministers, Mr. Sidney King, led a rabble against the police in an attempt to charge the Legislative Chamber and force the measure by unconstitutional means.

11. The effect of all this is already serious. Moderate opinion in the territory is alarmed at the turn events have taken, as was marked by the recent resolution passed by the State Council. The business community has completely lost confidence as was shown by the serious falling off in imports and the reduction in building in recent months. There be no doubt that in the present circumstances no business will undertake further capital development in the territory nor is there any hope of bringing in the technical assistance

from abroad that is so badly needed for our economic development. This could only lead, and lead soon, to mass unemployment.

12. These events have finally decided the Secretary of State and myself that the Ministers have no intention of making the constitution work, that on the contrary their sole object is to seize control of the whole life of the territory and to run it on totalitarian lines. They have clearly shown that they are prepared to use violence and to plunge the state into economic and social chaos to achieve their ends. Their next attempt to demonstrate their power may be even more dangerous to the territory than the sugar strike.

13. In the interests of the people of British Guiana this must stop. I have, therefore, decided with the approval of the Secretary of State to take away Ministers' portfolios and to take over full control of the Government by the use of my reserve powers. I have also decided that in order to preserve public order and the safety of lives and property I must, much as I regret having to take this course, declare a state of emergency. The police reserve and the volunteer force have been called out. A large force of troops has been landed from the cruiser H.M.S. Superb which is lying outside Georgetown Harbour at this moment. These forces are already widely distributed throughout the territory. They have full authority to take action to deal with any threat to law and order. Everything has been done to secure the safety of all law-abiding citizens.

14. Steps are also being taken to suspend the Constitution and to provide an interim Government with which Guianese will be fully associated. This should be able to begin work within a short time. In the meanwhile Government will be carried out by myself and my official advisers.

15. A Commission of Enquiry will be set up in due course by the Secretary of State to enquire into the events in British Guiana which have led to this breakdown in the Constitution and to make recommendations for a revised Constitution.

16. The damage which this communist plot has done to the economic and social life of the community must be repaired as quickly as possible. I shall take vigorous steps forthwith to restore the economic position of the country, to ensure the rapid development of its resources and to accelerate the improvement in housing and other social services. We shall urgently examine the report of the International Bank Mission and I hope to introduce many of its proposals shortly. Active programmes of land settlement or rehousing will be pursued.

17. But these measures cannot succeed without the support and help of all decent citizens in British Guiana. Let us all now join to work together that our country may outgrow these past unhappy months and go forward to a brighter future. GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.

Distribution: -
Secretary of State
P.S. to Minister of State
Sir T. Lloyd
P.S. to Parl. U/Secretary
Sir C. Jeffries
Sir H. Poynton
Mr K.H. Davies
Mr. P.R. Maynard
Mr. P. Rogers
Mr. N.L. Mayle

Mr. J.W. Vernon
Mr. G.Y. Carstairs
Mr. R.J. Vile
Mr. B.D. Edmonds
Mr. G.J.J.T. Barton
Sir K. Roberts-Wray
Mr. J.A. Peck
Mr. D.G. Gordon-Smith

/Ministry of Defence

*[Editor's note: * Missing words accuse the Ministers of not implementing the plans set out in the Party's manifesto.]*

38. THE BRITISH GUIANA (EMERGENCY) ORDER IN COUNCIL, 1953

(4 October 1953)

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

1953 No. 1479

BRITISH GUIANA

The British Guiana (Emergency) Order in Council, 1953

Made 4th October, 1953

Coming into Operation On a day to be appointed by the Governor under section 1(2)

At the Court at Balmoral, the 4th day of October, 1953

Present,

The Queen's Most Excellent Majesty in Council

Her Majesty, by virtue and in exercise of the power reserved to Her, in pursuance of the British Guiana Act, 1928(a), by section 94 of the British Guiana (Constitution) Order in Council, 1953(b), and of all other powers enabling Her in that behalf, is pleased, by and with the advice of Her Privy Council, to order, and it is hereby ordered, as follows: -

Citation and commencement*

1. (1) This Order may be cited as the British Guiana (Emergency) Order in Council, 1953.

(2) This order shall come into operation on such a day as the Governor may, by writing under his hand, appoint.

Interpretation

2. In this Order, unless the context otherwise requires

"the Colony" means the Colony of British Guiana;

"the Defence Regulations" means the Defence Regulations, 1939, made by the Governor on the third day of September, 1939, under the Emergency Powers (Colonial Defence) Order in Council, 1939(d), and, except as otherwise expressly provided in this Order, does not include any variation of those Regulations;

"the Governor" means the Officer for the time being administering the Government of the Colony.

Provisions in the Schedules to have the force of law

3. (1) The provisions contained in the Defence Regulation specified in the first column of Part I of the First Schedule to this Order shall, as from the date on which those provisions are brought into operation under this Order, have the force of law as if they were set out in this Order with the modifications specified in the second column of the said Part and in Part II of the said Schedule and in subsection (3) of this section.

(2) The provisions contained in the Second Schedule to this Order shall, as from the date on which they are so brought into operation, have the force of law.

(3) The provisions specified in the First Schedule to this Order and the provisions contained in the Second Schedule to this Order shall be construed as if they formed one instrument, and accordingly, for references to the Defence Regulations, or to any of them, in the first mentioned provisions there shall be substituted references to the Order or to sections of this Order, as the case may require.

Bringing into operation of provisions of the Schedules

4. (1) The Governor may, by order, from time to time bring into operation all or any of the provisions specified in the First Schedule or contained in the Second Schedule to this Order.

(2) The Governor may at any time, by order, suspend the operation of all or any of the provisions brought into operation under subsection (1) of this section.

Publication of instrument setting out provisions of the Schedules

5. (1) At any time after the commencement of this Order the Governor may cause to be prepared and published in the Colony an instrument to be intitled "The Emergency Order" containing -

(a) the provisions specified in the first column of Part I of the First Schedule to this Order set out in full with the modifications and additions required by this Order, and in particular by -

(i) the second column of Part I of the said First Schedule;

(ii) Part II of the said First Schedule; and

(iii) subsection (3) of section 3 of this Order.

(b) the provisions contained in the Second Schedule to this Order; and the Governor may direct that, in such instrument, the said provisions shall be numbered in such manner, and such other formal amendments consequent upon the preparation of such instrument shall be made, as the Governor may think fit.

(2) Any instrument prepared as aforesaid and certified by the Governor shall be accepted in courts of law and may be referred to for all purposes connected with the provisions referred to in subsection (1) of this section; and any instrument purporting to be an instrument so prepared and certified shall be presumed so to be unless the contrary is proved.

Exercise of Governor's powers

6. In the exercise of any powers conferred on the Governor by or under this Order, the Governor shall not be obliged to consult with the Executive Council of the Colony.

W.G. Agnew

THE FIRST SCHEDULE PART I

Column 1	Column 2
Provisions of the Defence Regulations	Modifications
Regulation 2	In Paragraph (1) the definitions of "enemy alien", "the war", and "war offence" shall be omitted; in the definition of "Dominion ship or aircraft" the words "other than Newfoundland" shall be omitted; and, in the definition of "officer of police", for the words "superintendent of police" there shall be substituted the word "Sub-inspector".
Regulation 2. contd.	Paragraph (5) shall be omitted, and the following new paragraph shall be substituted therefore - "(5) Any reference in these regulations to "disturbers of the peace" shall be construed as a reference to any persons who - (a) by the use of arms, explosives or other violent means act in a manner prejudicial to public safety and order, or (b) incite to violence or counsel disobedience to law or resistance to lawful authority.
Regulation 3	
Regulation 4 as amended by the Defence Regulations (Supplies and Services) (Continuance) Order, 1946	After the word "police" there shall be added the words "and, for the purpose of such regulations as the Governor may by order specify, such members of Her Majesty's forces as the Governor may by order declare".
Regulations 6, 10, 11	After the word "safety" in each Regulation, there shall be inserted a comma followed by the word "order".
Regulation 17	
Regulation 18	After the word "safety" in subparagraph (c) and (e) of paragraph (1) and in paragraph (2) there shall be inserted the words "of order".

Regulation 20	After the word "among" in subparagraph (a) of paragraph (1) there shall be inserted the words "or seduce from their duty".
Regulations 21 and 22	
Regulation 23	After the word "constable" in paragraph (3) there shall be inserted the words "or any member of Her Majesty's forces".
Regulation 25	The words "then, without prejudice to the law relating to treason" and the words "and shall, on conviction on indictment, be liable to penal servitude for life" shall be omitted.
Regulations 28 and 30	
Regulation 31	The words "being either an enemy when a person" in paragraph (1) shall be omitted.
Regulations 32 and 33	
Regulation 34	After the word "defence" there shall be inserted the words "of public safety or order".
Regulations 41, 42 and 43	
Regulation 44 as amended by the Defence (Amendment No. 2) Regulations, 1941	
Regulations 45 to 51 inclusive	
Regulation 54	
Regulations 56, 57 and 58	
Regulation 59 as amended by the Defence Regulations, 1940	
Regulations 60 to 65 inclusive	
Regulations 67 and 68	
Regulation 69	For the word "three" in paragraph (1) there shall be substituted the word "six", and for the word "two" in paragraph (2) there shall be substituted the word "five".
Regulations 70 to 78 inclusive	

PART II

General Modifications

1. For any references in the provisions specified in the first column of Part I of the Schedule to "a war offence" there shall be substituted a reference to "an offence against these regulations".

2. For any references in the said provisions to "the enemy" there shall be substituted a reference to "disturbers of the peace".

3. Any reference in the said provisions to "the efficient prosecution of the war" or "the prosecution of the war" shall be replaced by a reference to "public safety and order", or, in so far as such provision already contains such last mentioned reference, omitted.

THE SECOND SCHEDULE

Arms, ammunition and explosives

1. (1) The Governor, may, by order in any area specified by such order, regulate or prohibit, either absolutely or subject to such exceptions as he may prescribe, the buying, selling or otherwise dealing* in any arms, parts of arms, ammunition or explosive substance, and may direct that all persons or any person or class of persons having in their or his possession any arms, part of arms, ammunition or explosive substances shall keep the same in any secure place directed by the Commissioner of Police, and if any person contravenes such an order or directive, he shall be guilty of an offence against this Order.

(2) The Governor may by order in any area specified in the order regulate or prohibit, either absolutely or subject to such exceptions as he may prescribe, the carrying or use of arms, parts of arms, ammunition or explosive substances, and if any person contravenes any such order he shall be guilty of an offence against this Order.

(3) Any person who, in any area specified in an order made under subsection (2) of this section, consorts with or is found in the company of another person who is carrying any arms, parts of arms, ammunition, or explosive substance, in circumstances which raise a presumption that he intends to or is about to act with or has recently acted with such other person in a manner prejudicial to the public safety or the preservation of the peace, shall be guilty of an offence against this Order.

(4) Any persons who attends or takes part in any meeting or procession and who has in his possession any arms, ammunition, explosive substance or stick or any stone or any other dangerous missile, shall be guilty of an offence against this Order.

(5) In this section, the expression "arms" includes (in addition to fire-arms) swords, spears, cutlasses, machettes, axes, hatchets, knives and other dangerous weapons.

Powers of search

2. (1) Any police officer of or above the rank of Sub-Inspector or any commissioned officer of Her Majesty's forces may without warrant and with or without assistance, and with the use of force if necessary -

(a) enter and search any premises, or

(b) stop and search any vessel, vehicle or individual, whether in a public place or not, if he suspects that any evidence of the commission of an offence against this Order is likely to be found on such premises, vessel, vehicle or individual, and may seize any evidence so found.

(2) Whenever under this section a woman is searched, the search shall be made by another woman.

Injury to property

3. (1) Any person who injures, or does any act calculated to injure or to prevent the proper use or working of any public building, railway, canal, bridge, road, vehicle, telegraph or telephone line, cable or plant, mine, shop, school, dwelling, house, ****[line]**, factory, waterworks, gasworks, electricity generating station, or any works or plant used or adopted for use for the production, supply, storage or transport of food, fuel, munitions, water, light, heat or power shall be guilty of an offence against this Order.

(2) Any person who approaches, or who is in the neighbourhood or, or who enters any such place as aforesaid, with intent to do injury thereto or to do any other act specified in subsection (1) of this section shall be guilty of an offence against this Order.

Employment of voluntary labour

4. (1) The Governor, or any person authorized by the Governor in that behalf, may employ and pay volunteers or voluntary labour of any description for any purpose which, in the opinion of the Governor, is necessary or expedient in order to maintain supplies and services essential to the life of the community or to secure the public safety or maintain public order.

(2) The remuneration of volunteers or voluntary labour employed under this section shall be paid out of the public funds of the Colony and shall be such as may be directed by the Governor or anyone authorized by the Governor in that behalf.

(3) Where volunteers or voluntary labour, employed under the provisions of subsection (1) of this section, have performed any work which would, but for the circumstances which necessitated the employment of such volunteers or volunteer labour, have been performed by labour paid by, or on behalf of, any public or private undertaking or other employer of labour, the costs and expenses incurred by Government in or about the provision and remuneration of such volunteers or voluntary labour or such proportion of those costs and expenses as may be declared by the Governor or by any person authorized by him in that behalf to be recoverable, shall be recoverable from such undertaking or employer and shall be a debt due to Government by such undertaking or employer and may be sued for by the Attorney General or any person authorized by the Governor in that behalf.

(4) There may be paid out of the public funds of the Colony such compensation to any person employed under subsection (1) of this section or to the personal representatives or dependants of any such person such compensation for injury or death resulting from such employment as may be decided by the Governor or any person or authority appointed by him in that behalf.

Direction of labour

5. (1) Where in the opinion of the Governor it is necessary or expedient in order to maintain supplies and services essential for the life of the community or to secure the public safety or maintain public order, the Governor or any person authorized by the Governor in that behalf may

(a) by order, direct any person or class of persons specified or described by name, office or employment or otherwise who is or are employed whether at the capacity of principal manger, agent, servant or otherwise, at or about an undertaking connected with such supplies and services to remain in and continue such employment at his or their usual or ordinary remuneration until released by the Governor or anyone so authorized as aforesaid.

(b) by order, direct any person thereafter called the person directed to undertake and perform, for such remuneration and under the direction of such person or authority as may be specified, such work or duties in or about an undertaking connected with such supplies and services and at such place, as may be specified.

(2) Any inability of a person directed, by reason of any requirement of an order made under paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of the section, to perform any contract or service shall not afford to any other party to the contract grounds for terminating or repudiating the same, but such other party may deduct from the salary or wages due under the contract of service to a person directed, a fair proportion of such salary or wages having regard to the period or periods during which the person directed is unable to perform such contract by reason of the requirements of such order as aforesaid.

(3) The Governor, or any person authorized by him in that behalf, may pay out of the public funds of the Colony to a person directed in addition to any remuneration due to him by virtue of an order made under paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of this section, an expenses reasonably incurred by him in complying with the terms of the order; and the provisions of subsection (3) of the preceding section shall apply for the purposes of the recovery by the Government of such remuneration and expenses in like manner as such provisions apply for the purposes of the recovery of the costs and expenses referred to in these provisions.

(4) Any person who, without lawful excuse, fails or neglect to comply with any such order or directive, or prevents or obstructs or interferes with any other person in the performance of any such order or direction shall be guilty of an offence against this section.

Provided that nothing in this section shall make it an offence for any for any person or persons to take part in a strike in any service not being an essential service within the meaning of the Trade Disputes Essential Services Ordinance, 1942, of the Colony.

(5) Any person who terminates or repudiates any such contract or service as aforesaid for any reason attributable to, or of the requirements of, an order made under paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of this section, shall be guilty of an offence against this Order.

Billeting

6. (1) Any person authorized by the Governor for the purpose may cause to be served upon the occupier of any premises a written notice (hereinafter referred to as "a billeting notice"), requiring the occupier of those premises to furnish therein, until further notice, according as that notice may direct, accommodation by way of lodging or food or both, and either with or without attendance, according as the notice may direct, for such number of persons as may be so specified.

(2) Every billeting notice must, in order to be of any effect for the purpose of this section, define by reference to the particular service or services in which they are engaged the persons for whom accommodation is required by the notice.

Power to proscribe organizations

7. (1) The Governor may by order declare to be unlawful any society or organization which in the opinion of the Governor is prejudicial to public safety and order.

(2) Any person who so long as any order under subsection (1) of this section is in force in relation to any society or organization, manages or works for such society or organization or in any other way assists such society or organization to continue to exist or takes part in any activities thereof, shall be guilty of an offence against this Order.

(3) Any person who shall, without lawful authority or excuse, have in his possession any badge, ticket, document or any other thing whatsoever, which purports to have been, or which appears to have been, issued by any society or organization declared to be unlawful under the provisions of subsection (1) of this section, whether before or after such declaration, or which purports to be, or which appears to be, or which appears to be intended as, evidence of membership of, or any authority from, or any association with, any such society or organization shall be guilty of an offence against this Order.

(4) It shall be lawful for any police officer to seize anything whatsoever which may appear to belong to, or to be connected with, or to be intended to be used for the purpose of, any society or organization declared to be unlawful as aforesaid; and it shall be lawful for a magistrate, upon such notice (if any) as he shall think fit, to order any such thing to be forfeited. Anything so forfeited shall be disposed of in such manner as the Commissioner of Police may direct.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This Note is not part of the Order, but is intended to indicate its general purport.)

This Order in Council gives the force of law, as from the date on which they are brought into operation by the Governor, to the provisions specified in the first column of Part I of the First Schedule (subject to certain modifications made by the Order) and to the provisions set out in the Second Schedule to the Order.

These provisions give certain powers connected with the defence of the Colony, the securing of public safety and order, and the maintenance of supplies and services essential to the life of the Community, and create certain offences for acts prejudicial to these matters. -

[Editor's Note: * The paragraph titles are printed in the margins of the original text.]

39. TELEGRAM (No. 64) FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA

(6 October 1953)

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

TO BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Cypher (O.T.P)

Sent 6th October, 1953. 23.15 hrs.

IMMEDIATE

TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL

PERSONAL No. 64

Grateful if you would let me have a situation report each day until further notice.

2. As you will appreciate action which is to be taken will provoke questions when Parliament reassembles on 20th October. This applies in particular to placing of persons under restraint and I should be grateful if you would let me have before 20th October in a convenient form the evidence in support of each case.

/Distribution:-

40. TELEGRAM (No. 71) FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA

(7 October 1953)

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

TO BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Cypher (O.T.P)

Sent 7th October, 1953. 18.45 hrs.

EMERGENCY

TOP SECRET

PERSONAL No. 71

Your telegram Personal No. 85.

I recognise that you may wish to alter timing of arrests e.g. to take place after arrival of troops instead of before. But I still consider it essential that leading figures in Party should be detained as soon as troops are deployed. Only thus can there be any hope of preventing the stirring up of disorder or organisation of incendiaryism as reported in your earlier telegram. We must try and anticipate disorder where possible and not wait for them to organise it as a justification for arrest. Please act accordingly.

Please telegraph how any change of timing will affect my announcement, revised text of which will be telegraphed later.

Distribution:
Secretary of State
Sir T. Lloyd
Mr. Rogers
P.S. to S. of S. (for No. 10)

41. TELEGRAM (No. 85) FROM GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA TO COLONIAL SECRETARY
(7 October 1953)

INWARD TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Cypher D. 7th October, 1953.
(O.T.P.) R. 7th ,, ,, 16.20 hrs.

IMMEDIATE
TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL
Personal No. 85

In view of the announcement of troop movements I consider that it is doubtful whether it would be politic to arrest Ministers and others on D-Day as previously proposed, particularly if no further disorder takes place in the meantime. Such action, in cold blood as it were, might turn section of public opinion against us. Decision on the question will therefore have to await developments and no (repeat no) mention of arrests should be included in statement until further advice from me. Searches will, in any case, be carried out, but in view of the absence of the element of surprise it is not expected that they will yield much of any value.

Jagan has requested meeting of the Executive Council for this morning at 9.15 a.m. local time and I will telegraph further (? "*after*" *omitted*) the meeting.

Distribution:
H.453
Secretary of State
Sir T. Lloyd
Mr. Rogers
P.S. to S. of S. (for No. 10)

42. TELEGRAM (No. 90) FROM GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

(7 October 1953)

INWARD TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Cypher D. 7th October, 1953.
(O.T.P.) R. 8th ,, ,, 04.35 hrs.

IMMEDIATE

TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL

Personal No. 90

Your top secret and personal telegram (*No. omitted*) paragraph 2.

I have since informed you in my top secret and personal telegram No. 85 that it was unlikely that any action would be taken to place persons named under restraint at the outset. I have now further considered the matter in consultation with the Security Liaison Officer and Members of the Executive Council other than Party Ministers and I am convinced that such action should not be taken unless developments in the situation demand it. Required information will, however, be sent to you as requested if any arrests are subsequently made.

2. Passage in paragraph 1 of H.M.G.'s proposed statement relating to placing of leaders under restraint should therefore be deleted.

3. The above was drafted before the receipt of your top secret and personal telegram No. 71. I have again considered the matter most carefully, but whilst I appreciate the risk of leaders stirring up disorder etc. I still feel very strongly that it would be a grave mistake to anticipate action on their part with consequent loss of goodwill and support of large section of the community. Withdrawal of portfolios might well foment overt action by leaders and provide immediate justification for detention. For those reasons I feel bound to adhere to previous views would urge that the decision be left to me.

4. Present intention is that announcement will be made here at 7.30 local time on 9th October.

/Distribution

43. TELEGRAM (No. 91) FROM GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

(8 October 1953)

INWARD TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Cypher D. 8th October, 1953.
(O.T.P.) R. 8th ,, ,, 20.05 hrs.

IMMEDIATE
TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL
PERSONAL No. 91

My Top Secret and Personal telegram No. 90.

I have again discussed this question with Security authorities and my Advisers and with Commander Caribbean and we are all of unanimous opinion that action to restrain leaders should not (repeat not) be taken at the outset. If, however, there is any subsequent action on their part to provoke or organize disorder, those concerned would be arrested immediately.

2. I shall assume that reference to arrests in H.M.G.'s statement should be omitted.

/Distribution:

44. STATEMENT BY HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT READ BY JOHN GUTCH, THE CHIEF SECRETARY OF BRITISH GUIANA, AND BROADCAST ON RADIO DEMERARA ON 9 OCTOBER 1953
(9 October 1953)

Her Majesty's Government have decided that the Constitution of British Guiana must be suspended to prevent communist subversion of the Government and a dangerous crisis both in public order and in economic affairs. The necessary Order in Council will shortly be laid before Parliament and an independent Commission of Inquiry appointed to report on what has happened and to recommend a revised Constitution. The faction in power have shown by their acts and their speeches that they are prepared to go to any lengths including violence to turn British Guiana into a communist state. The Governor has therefore been given emergency powers and has removed the portfolios of the Party Ministers. Armed forces have been landed to support the police and to prevent any public disorder which might be fomented by communists. These measures are being announced to the people of British Guiana in a broadcast by the Governor.

2. Her Majesty's Government are quite satisfied that the elected Ministers and their Party were completely under the control of a communist clique. There is no doubt whatever that Dr. Jagan, Mrs. Jagan, Rory Westmaas and Sydney King, to name ring-leaders, are closely associated with international communist organisations such as the World Federation of Trade Unions, the World Federation of Democratic Youth, the World Peace Council and the

Women's International Democratic Federation. It is well known that these organisations are used for indoctrinating supporters in all parts of the world and as a cloak for concerting communist plans. From actions and public statements of these extremists it is clear that their objective was to turn British Guiana into a state subordinate to Moscow and a dangerous platform for extending communist influence in the Western Hemisphere.

3. Ministers have used their official positions in trade unions to provoke and encourage a stoppage of work in the sugar industry for political purposes without regard to the real interests of the workers. They deliberately spread the stoppage of work to other industries including services essential to the life of the community which it was their duty as Ministers to protect. They then attempted to gain their political ends in trade unions by legislation and to set aside the rules of the House to get this passed at once. They incited large and unruly crowds to attend meetings of the House of Assembly seeking to intimidate opposition members with threats and abuse.

4. They have conducted an assiduous campaign to undermine the loyalty and discipline of the Police Force and have proposed to establish what they term People's Police.

5. They have persistently intruded into the sphere of the Public Service in an attempt to subject it to their political control: as part of this campaign they have attacked the Public Service Commission set up to ensure the freedom of the Public Service from political interference and pressure and have announced their intention to abolish it.

6. Ministers have promoted the formation of a communist political youth organisation, the Pioneer Youth League, and have sought to undermine the position and influence of established youth movements, such as the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides. The Minister of Education has announced his intention to remove the Churches from their present participation in the educational system of the country and to revise the curricula and text books of the schools with the evident objectives of indoctrinating the children of the country with their political views.

7. Ministers have sponsored a British Guiana branch of the communist inspired Peace Committee. Both personally and through their agents they have engaged in disseminating communist subversive propaganda and initiated and directed subversive activities. They have set up a committee which supports communist terrorists in Malaya and deliberately foments racial hatred.

8. In these and other directions the Ministers have deliberately used their powers not to further the interests of the whole community but to pervert the constitution and secure totalitarian control over all aspects of the social, cultural and economic life of British Guiana. Among other things they are seeking to turn the workers of British Guiana and their unions into political tools of the extremists.

9. These events have already done serious harm. Moderate opinion in the territory is alarmed at the turn events have taken, as was marked by a recent Resolution passed by the State Council. There can be no doubt that in present circumstances no business will undertake further capital development in the territory, nor is there any hope of bringing in technical assistance from abroad that is so badly needed for economic development. This could only lead and lead soon to mass unemployment.

10. It has become clear to Her Majesty's Government that the Ministers have no intention of making the constitution work, that on the contrary their sole object is to seize control of the

whole territory and to run it on totalitarian lines. They have clearly shown they are prepared to use violence and to plunge the State into economic and social chaos to achieve their ends. Their next attempt to demonstrate their power might have been disastrous to the territory.

11. These are the reasons why steps were taken to vest in the Governor full control of the Government of the Colony and the necessary emergency powers to ensure law and order. As soon as the necessary legal steps can be taken the present constitution will be suspended and an interim Government set up with which Guianese will be fully associated.

12. The Commission of Inquiry will be set up in due course by the Secretary of State to enquire into events in British Guiana which have led to this check in the political advance of the Colony and to make recommendations for a revised constitution.

13. The damage which this communist plot has done to the economic and social life of the community must be repaired as quickly as possible. The Governor will take vigorous steps forthwith to restore the economic position of the country to ensure rapid development of its resources and to accelerate the improvement of housing and other social services.

14. The Governor is announcing that he will hasten to carry out the recommendations of the International Bank Report which has been available in the territory for some time and which is to be published shortly. The Bank's recommendations to set up a British Guiana Credit Corporation which will provide credits for agriculture, industry, forestry, fisheries and rural and urban housing will be carried out as soon as possible. In this and other ways it is hoped that the social and economic progress of the territory will be resumed.

15. This action in British Guiana is not because of any change of the policy of Her Majesty's Government of encouraging political advance which was reaffirmed by the Secretary of State when he took Office: the action has been taken to meet the danger which hangs over the Colony and is designed solely to protect the life and liberty of British Guiana.

[Source: National Archives of Guyana]

45. BROADCAST BY SIR ALFRED SAVAGE, GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA ON RADIO DEMERARA, 9 OCTOBER 1953 (9 October 1953)

The official statement which has just been read to you will be published in the Gazette and Press but I am arranging for it to be distributed today with this speech to as many parts of the Colony as possible. Recent events may have come as a surprise and perhaps a relief to many of you. But it was inevitable, as I shall explain, and now each one of you has a duty to your country to perform at this time with loyalty and forbearance.

2. My first duty is to maintain law and order and I call upon the Police and the Volunteer Force to carry out faithfully the tasks assigned to them. I know that attempts have been made in recent months to undermine your loyalty to the Crown and by intimidation and other methods to seduce you from the high traditions of the Forces to which you belong. I know the strain which this has put upon you but I rely on each one of you to do your duty without fear or favour and to obey your superior officers implicitly as you have done at all

times in the past and in particular during the recent strike in the sugar industry. At this moment the Navy and Army are here in sufficient force to cope with any emergency that may arise and the forces are widely distributed throughout the country. They will be used to support you if their assistance is needed to protect life and property. In order to preserve public order I may have, much as I regret it, to use certain emergency powers. It is the duty of every person to assist the forces of law and order and to maintain the peace. As a precautionary measure, meetings have been banned and checks on road traffic have been instituted but I hope in general there will be as little interruption as possible in the normal life of the country. The inter-colonial cricket match with Trinidad will begin this morning and will continue, provided the crowds disperse quickly to their homes after the match.

3. Most of you listening can answer the question "Why has this been necessary?" It is because over recent months there has been a planned and continuous programme of strengthening links with communist countries with a view to making British Guiana a servile state where people are compelled, under intimidation, to give up those freedoms which we all cherish. You must have seen the reports of visits of an increasing number of people to iron curtain countries. What good were they bringing or sending back to British Guiana? Pamphlets and propaganda to teach us the Russian way of life. I do not believe the large majority of you want it.

4. Let me take you back to the 14th April when my wife and I arrived in this country and we pledged ourselves to your service. Since then we have endeavoured to meet as many of you as possible - at public meetings of welcome, in your homes and in your places of work - to learn at first hand of your problems and to see whether our experience elsewhere could be of assistance to you. Almost my first words on arrival were to speak of industrial relations - to plead for a better understanding between labour and capital, for without it there could be no substantial development. I pressed for conditions to be established which would encourage the investment of capital for development, to provide more employment and therefore improved standards of living. But what has happened? Confidence has been recklessly thrown away. I entered on my task here with sincerity and enthusiasm. I believed and still believe that much can be done in the next few years to encourage the economic development of the country so that as many of you as possible who are unemployed or under-employed could be given work and so improve your standards of living. I and my officials have done our utmost to make this constitution work. I have done everything I could to meet the wishes of the Ministers elected by the House of Assembly and to induce them by goodwill, by tact, by patience and by tolerance to carry out their responsibilities. The experience and advice of the whole public service was at their disposal and as you know I made no use of my reserved powers to prevent them acting as they wished. I have pressed on them at every opportunity, collectively and individually, ways and means of making progress in the economic field but with few exceptions most of their time has been spent in building up a political dictatorship, even stating that they are prepared to use violence to obtain their ends.

Individual Ministers have told me privately that they disagreed with some of the actions of their colleagues but as collectively they have presented a united front in all their actions I am forced to treat them all for the present as equally responsible and I have withdrawn all their portfolios today and they will cease to be in charge of the departments and subjects which I assigned to them in May.

5. So much could have been done but so little was attempted in the social and economic field. We have had probably more visits of industrialists in the last six months than in many years before. There appeared to me a growing opportunity for development of this great

country but the words and actions of the Ministers and of certain of their supporters have created doubts as to their real intentions and the outside world has lost confidence and the good name of British Guiana has become suspect.

And it is not only outside of this country that confidence has been lost. Many of the small depositors in our own Post Office Savings Bank have had their fears. Since 19th August over \$2,500,000 has been withdrawn in excess of deposits, mainly by the people with small savings. If the people of this country have no faith in their own Government, how can we expect people overseas to risk their money here? And so as a first step towards restoring confidence I ask those of you who have withdrawn your savings to put them back in the Bank. I give you my word that nothing will be done to prejudice the security of your savings.

6. Next I want to speak individually to the sugar workers. During the recent strike it was impossible constitutionally for me to speak to you. You know how I was attacked for not answering the call for my intervention and it was suggested that I took no interest in the workers. That was untrue. Ten days after the strike began some Ministers suggested that I should intervene and I agreed to do so provided that both parties would accept my decision. Dr. Lachhmansingh refused my offer. The sugar strike was deliberately engineered by certain of the Ministers and others to secure domination of the industry for political and not trade union purposes. What good reason was there to cause all of you and your families to suffer as you have done?

Do you remember my visits to the estates some weeks ago when my wife and I met many of you and I undertook to do all I could to help, particularly on the question of housing and land which so many of you pressed on me? Shortly after my return to Georgetown I had informal meetings with representatives of certain companies and put some suggestions to them. Had it not been for the recent strike I believe arrangements would have been made by now to provide more money for loans for more houses. Many of you spoke to me about more land being made available in sugar areas and the development of peasant farming. Again I discussed these matters with certain companies and I found them sympathetic. If it had not been for the strike I know some progress would have been made in this respect. However, I shall now resume the discussions on these matters and trust that in the near future I shall be able to make an announcement on this question. But I do urge on you the necessity for you to continue your work and to ensure that this crop is reaped with no further delay. If you fail in this, it can only mean further suffering to you and your families

7. To the trade unionists of this country I would say, you have a great responsibility and opportunity to restore confidence in this country. In the months that lie ahead your words and actions will be closely watched overseas. On you will depend to a large extent whether the industrialists who are interested in the development of the resources of this country will feel that if they come here they will be given a fair deal by you as well as by the Government. I watched with anxiety your reactions to the political pressure for a sympathy strike and I was glad to see that with certain exceptions you resisted the demand in spite of political intimidation.

8. And now a few words to the Civil Service. You, too, have I known been subjected to severe strain and anxiety during the past months and I am very conscious of the loyalty and patience with which the majority of you have resisted political pressures and have remained true to the high traditions of the Service. I am confident I can rely on your continued loyalty in the tasks of reconstruction which lie ahead.

9. And to every man and woman in this Colony let me say that this constitutional set-back which British Guiana has suffered and the precautions which it has been necessary to take to ensure law and order need not and should not be allowed to dislocate our normal life. I call upon you all to assist me by remaining calm and carrying out your normal duties. I have the right to demand your co-operation. If you give it freely, the sooner will it be possible to turn our energies to the constructive tasks of development and social improvement which have lain neglected during the last five months and to move forward once more along the path of progress.

10. For a short time the Government will be carried on under the present constitution as modified by amending Instruments which have been made and it is intended as soon as circumstances permit, to provide for the appointment of an Interim Government with which Guianese will be fully associated. As you have heard a Commission of Inquiry will be set up to make recommendations regarding the new constitution. Meantime, provided that normal work and business continues I intend to introduce as soon as possible the economic measures which could and should have been carried out by the late Government and to accelerate the implementation of the International Bank Report. I shall set up as soon as possible a British Guiana Credit Corporation and a provisional Economic Council with a Development Committee in each County of this country. I do not promise you the moon but I will see that the different economic proposals which you pressed on me during my tours of the country will now be sympathetically examined and as far as is practicable will be implemented.

11. Finally, I realise that I have a very heavy task in front of me and with the deepest sincerity and goodwill I appeal to everyone of you whatever your politics, race or religion, to give me your full trust, your support and your prayers. With them I am certain it will be possible to recover the confidence of the people both here and overseas so that the last unhappy months may be forgotten and we shall all go forward with a happier and more prosperous British Guiana.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.

[Source: Cheddi Jagan Research Centre, Guyana]

46. TELEGRAM (No. 100) FROM SIR ALFRED SAVAGE, GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA, TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY

(10 October 1953)

TOP SECRET

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES.

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

CYPHER (O.T.P.)

D. 10th October, 1953. 18.50 hrs.

R. 11th ,, ,, 00.30 hrs.

PRIORITY
TOP SECRET
PERSONAL No. 100

Situation Report.

Situation is still quiet on the surface but it is reported that the P.P.P. inner circle composed of Burn (*group omitted ? Burnham*), Dr. and Mrs. Jagan, Westmaas, Carter and King have been meeting continuously. We hope to obtain information as to their intention shortly. There is still a strong possibility that they are contemplating inspiring acts of disorder, particularly incendiarism, and it is believed there are elements which would obey such orders. The position is being closely watched.

Jannaraine Singh saw me today and took the line that he, Burnham and Chase had been planning to overthrow the extremists but that we had forestalled them. He again stressed his innocence and stated his service were at my (*group omitted ? disposal*).

/Distribution

47. TELEGRAM (No. 103) FROM SIR ALFRED SAVAGE, GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA, TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
(11 October 1953)

SECRET

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA. (Sir A. Savage)

Cypher (O.T.P.)

D. 11th October, 1953. 16.10 hrs.

R. 11th ,, ,, 23.15 hrs.

PRIORITY
SECRET
PERSONAL No.103

My telegram Personal No.100.

Situation Report.

P.P.P. have issued leaflet calling for stoppage of work, campaign of non-cooperation and boycott of United Kingdom goods. Text follows by separate telegram. Action has been taken to atop further printing of the leaflet. Leaders are also visiting estates preparing the workers for strike action. There have been no incidents. It is hoped shortly to carry out simultaneous

searches for documentary material at a number of places on the strength of information received.

Distribution: -

H.453

Secretary of State

P.S. to Minister of State

Sir T. Lloyd

P.S. to Parl. U/Secretary

Sir C. Jeffries

Sir H. Poynton

Mr. K. H. Davies

Mr. P. R. Maynard

Mr. P. Rogers

Mr. N. L. Mayle

Mr. J. W. Vernon

Mr. C. Y. Carstairs

Mr. R. J. Vile

Mr. B. D. Edmonds

Mr. C. J. J. T. Barton

Sir K. Roberts-Wray

Mr. J. A. Peck

Mr. D. G. Gordon-Smith

Mr. J. N. A. Armitage-Smith

Mr. W. I. J. Wallace

Ministry of Defence -

Chiefs of Staff Secretariat

- Lt. Gen. Sir N. C. D. Brownjohn, K.C.B., C.M.G., O.B.E., M.C. -

Private Secretary to Minister of Defence

War Office -

Lt. Gen. Sir H. Redman, K.B.E., C.B. -

Major Barlow, M.O.3.

Admiralty - First Sea Lord

Air Ministry -

Vice Chief of Air Staff -

Mr. S. Nicholls A.I.1.

48. TELEGRAM (No. 104) FROM SIR ALFRED SAVAGE, GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA, TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY

(11 October 1953)

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

En Clair D. 11th October, 1953. 15.55 hrs.
R. 11th ,, ,, 23.15 hrs.

PERSONAL No. 104

My telegram Personal No.103.

Following is text of P.P.P. Leaflet.

Begins.

P.P.P. Call to Action.

Our country has been invaded by foreign troops. Our just democratic rights have been taken away from us. In this grave hour we call all Guianese to action. In their military might our enemies now feel superior and strong. We must in every possible way express our strong opposition to what is being done in our beloved country. To this end we must in every possible way carry out a policy of non-cooperation with the present regime. The People's Progressive Party, the only party fighting for the establishment of a truly democratic state in British Guiana and for the improvement of the social and economic conditions of the working people now therefore calls upon the people of Guiana to

- (1) Stop work. Lay down tools in a Colony-wide general strike.
- (2) Embark upon campaign of non-cooperation and non-fraternisation.
- (3) Boycott all goods and supplies coming from the United Kingdom.

You voted in the People's Progressive Party in free and democratic elections.

Your right to vote has now been challenged and forcibly withdrawn.

In an unprecedented act, the British Government has done what has never before been done in any part of the world. In an organised and disciplined manner, without violence or terrorism, stand firm. Non violence, non cooperation.
Ends.

/Distribution: -

49. TELEGRAM (No. 113) FROM GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA TO COLONIAL SECRETARY
(13 October 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Code D. 13th October, 1953.
R. 13th ,, ,, 19.40 hrs.

IMMEDIATE
PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL
Personal No. 113

Your telegram Personal No. 100.

Burnham is booked to leave for England by Pan American Airways 15th October and Jagan has an open booking for B.O.A.C. for earliest opportunity this week. I think it is very unlikely that they would defer their departure in order to see the Minister of State since main objective in visiting London is to enlist support for their cause before Parliament reassembles.

2. I have therefore conveyed your message to them with omission of final sentence since I did not think that, at this stage, you would wish definitely to preclude yourself from seeing them, unless they had first seen the Minister of State. I regret time did not permit of prior consultation with you on this point.

3. I should mention that opposition group are also contemplating sending delegation to the United Kingdom: this will probably consist, of Luckhoo, Fernandes, Kendall and Dare, President of Georgetown Chamber of Commerce, and would I think prove most useful in countering tendentious propaganda by the others.

Distribution: -
H.453
Secretary of State
P.S. to Minister of State
Sir T. Lloyd
P.S. to Parl. U/Secretary
Sir C. Jeffries
Sir H. Poynton
Mr. K. H. Davies
Mr. P. R. Maynard
Mr. P. Rogers
Mr. N. L. Mayle
Mr. J. W. Vernon
Mr. C. Y. Carstairs
Mr. R. J. Vile
Mr. B. D. Edmonds
Mr. C. J. J. T. Barton
Mr. J. N. A. Armitage-Smith
Mr/ W. I. J. Wallace
Mr. D. G. Gordon-Smith

50. TELEGRAM (No. 114) FROM GOVERNOR SAVAGE TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
(13 October 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Code D. 13th October, 1953. 17.05 hrs.

R. 13th ,, ,, 22.30 hrs.

IMMEDIATE

CONFIDENTIAL

PERSONAL No. 114

My telegram Personal No.103.

Situation on Sugar Estates has deteriorated.

Dr. and Mrs. Jagan, Sydney King and Lachhman Singh have been touring estates encouraging workers to strike. Port Mourant is entirely closed down and at a number of other estates the turn out had been very poor and grinding at factories is only intermittent. No serious incidents.

2. Searches were carried out this morning and have yielded some useful material which is now being examined and evidence of destruction of other documents.

3. Situation in Georgetown is quiet and there is no indication at present of likelihood of strike spreading to other industries and services.

/Distribution

51. TELEGRAM (No. 113) FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA

(14 October 1953)

SECRET

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
TO BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Cypher (O.T.P.)

Sent 14th October, 1953. 20.30 hrs.

PRIORITY

SECRET AND PERSONAL

PERSONAL No. 113

Your telegram Personal No. 113, paragraph 3.

Glad to learn that representatives of opposition are proposing to visit United Kingdom. I hope every facility can be given in British Guiana for this to be done.

Distribution:

H.453

Secretary of State

P.S. to Minister of State

Sir T. Lloyd

P.S. to Parl. U/Secretary

Sir C. Jeffries

Sir H. Poynton

Mr. K. H. Davies

Mr. P. R. Maynard

Mr. P. Rogers

Mr. N. L. Mayle

Mr. J. W. Vernon

Mr. C. Y. Carstairs

Mr. R. J. Vile

Mr. B. D. Edmonds

Mr. C. J. J. T. Barton

Mr. D. G. Gordon-Smith

Mr. J. N. A. Armitage-Smith

Mr/ W. I. J. Wallace

52. TELEGRAM (No. 116) FROM GOVERNOR SAVAGE TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
(14 October 1953)

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Code D. 14th October, 1953. 17.00 hrs.

R. 14th ,, ,, 23.00 hrs.

IMMEDIATE

CONFIDENTIAL

PERSONAL No. 116

My telegram Personal No.114.

Situation in the sugar industry remains much the same. Blairmont is only estate working normally, all other factories are only grinding intermittently. There was one case of incendiarism last night involving the destruction of 40 acres of cane at plantation Uitvlugt and one or two isolated cases of intimidation have been reported. Police guard on various factories have been strengthened and on one estate a guard was provided to protect cane cutters who wished to work. Otherwise no incidents.

General public reaction to searches carried out by the police yesterday is that the action was justified though unduly delayed. P.P.P. leaders concerned tend to be hostile but there were no incidents. Jagan issued a statement which was published today taking the line that democracy was on trial. Reference was made in it to the searches and the Governor was referred to as a virtual dictator.

There is as yet no evidence that the general strike call will have any success.

/Distribution: -

53. TEXT OF LETTER FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO MARQUESS OF SALISBURY
(15 October 1953)

15th October, 1953.

I am thinking about appointments to the Commission of Enquiry for British Guiana. My present view is that it would probably be best to have a peer as Chairman - someone if possible not particularly associated with party politics or in the day to day fight - with two other members, one of whom would probably be from the Trades Union Council. I should be most grateful if you could let me know the names of any peers whom you think would be really suitable as Chairman.

(Sgd.) Oliver Lyttelton

[To:] The Right Honourable The Marquess of Salisbury, K.C.*

*[Editor's Note: * The Marquess of Salisbury (Robert Gascoyne-Cecil) was President of the Privy Council.]*

54. TELEGRAM (No. 124) FROM GOVERNOR SAVAGE TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
(15 October 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Code

D. 15th October, 1953

R. 16th ,, ,, 05.00 hrs.

IMMEDIATE

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

No. 124

My Personal Telegram No. 116

Situation in Sugar Industry much the same but it is reported that tension has eased slightly, although workers are still unsettled.

All is quiet in Georgetown at present, but there are indications that extremists may still be contemplating creating disorder particularly incendiarism.

I propose broadcasting tomorrow on these points viz:- appeal to the sugar workers, to the trade unions who so far have not responded to calls for a general strike, and to the Savings Bank Depositors who are being influenced by a story started by P.P.P. that their deposits will be used to pay for the troops.

I will send you text as soon as possible.

Distribution:-

H.453

Secretary of State

P.S. to Minister of State

Sir T. Lloyd

P.S. to Parl. U/Secretary

Sir C. Jeffries

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Mr. B. D. Edmonds

Mr. C. J. J. T. Barton

Mr. D. G. Gordon-Smith

Mr. J. N. A. Armitage-Smith

Mr. W. I. J. Wallace

/Ministry of Defence

55. TELEGRAM (No. 186) FROM GOVERNOR SAVAGE TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
(15 October 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Code D. 30th October, 1953
R. 31st ,, ,, 06.30 hrs.

PRIORITY
PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL
Personal No. 186

Chief Justice, whom I have appointed Chairman of committee to hear objections by members of the P.P.P. who have been detained, seeks confirmation of his belief that it was not the practice to permit either the press or the general public to be present at the hearing of objections by persons detained under U.K. Wartime Regulation 18(b) or to disclose the contents of security files or the names of informers.

2. Summary at paragraph 4 of secret circular telegram No. 116 of 11th July, 1942 appears to support his impression generally, but I should be grateful for information in regard to present practice followed in these matters in Malaya and Kenya. Grateful for early reply by telegram.

Distribution:
H. 631
Secretary of State
P.S. to Minister of State
Sir T. Lloyd
P.S. to Parliamentary U/S
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Mr. K. H. Davies
Mr. P. R. Maynard
Mr. P. Rogers
Mr. N. L. Mayle
Mr. J. W. Vernon
Mr. C. Y. Carstairs
Mr. R. J. Vile
Mr. B. D. Edmonds
Mr. C. J. J. T. Barton
Mr. J.A. Peck
Mr. D. G. Gordon-Smith
Mr. J. N. A. Armitage-Smith
Mr. W. I. J. Wallace
Mr. S.H. Evans

Commonwealth Relations Office - Mr. R.C. Ormerod

56. TELEGRAM (No. 124) FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA

(16 October 1953)

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

TO BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Cypher (O.T.P)

Sent 16th October, 1953. 21.30 hrs.

PRIORITY

TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL

PERSONAL No. 124

I am somewhat concerned that newspaper reports here are giving the impression that the extremists of the P.P.P. have a free hand to encourage strikes and to create a situation which might endanger public order. I am sure that this is a misleading impression and I leave it to you to judge what measures ought to be taken to check new attempts by party leaders to stir up trouble. If they are in fact appealing to the discontented by means and in a way calculated to provoke incidents you have my support for any action you decide to take to place greater restraint upon them.

2. Please let me have your reading of the situation in the light of the above.

Distribution: -

H.453

Secretary of State

P.S. to Minister of State

Sir T. Lloyd

P.S. to Parliamentary U/S

Sir C. Jeffries

Sir H. Poynton

Mr. K. H. Davies

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Mr. R. J. Vile

Mr. B. D. Edmonds

Mr. C. J. J. T. Barton

Mr. D. G. Gordon-Smith

Mr. J. N. A. Armitage-Smith

Mr. W. I. J. Wallace

57. SECOND BROADCAST BY SIR ALFRED SAVAGE, GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA, ON RADIO DEMERARA, FRIDAY 16 OCTOBER 1953
(16 October 1953)

People of British Guiana - When I spoke to you a week ago I sought the support of all sections of the community and I addressed a special word to all those who are engaged in industry and particularly to the sugar workers. I am very grateful for the positive response

made and for the many indications of goodwill which have been conveyed to me and to my advisers.

Since I spoke to you, there has been further evidence of political endeavour to create economic chaos in this country. Certain political leaders have issued a pamphlet and also by verbal instructions have called upon all workers to take part in a general strike in order to disrupt the economy of British Guiana.

Such a step would of course, have crippled the livelihood of tens of thousands of families but I am very glad to say that the attempt to create chaos and distress which would have been felt mainly by the women and children, has not succeeded because of the good sense of the mass of the workers.

There has been no general strike in British Guiana. I am aware however that the councils of certain trade unions are still considering the matter but I would press on them and their members that such action could only do harm to themselves, to their families and to their country.

I depend on you to demonstrate clearly to the world and in particular to the industrialists who could be of the greatest assistance to this country, that you will not allow your trade unions to be dictated to or fooled by any political party. You must be free to take your own decisions in your own interests - both now and in the future.

I understand that there is some confusion among the sugar workers. Here again, an attempt is being made to create chaos by repeating false rumours. I believe that with certain exceptions the sugar estates and factories are now working, although not all to full capacity. I am informed also that many of the workers on strike are very anxious to return to work.

May I repeat there is no general strike in this country, there is no trade dispute and I urge every one of you to get back to work and be assured that if there is any threat of intimidation of you or of your families, prompt action will be taken by the police.

As I promised you last week, I have recommenced discussions with the Sugar Producers' Association regarding more loans for houses and a scheme for peasant sugar farming but you must play your part by resuming full operations and so reap the crop without further delay. As soon as the sugar estates are back to full normal working my wife and I intend to pay visits to the estates and so extend the personal contacts we made some weeks ago.

At the moment a deliberate lie is being circulated by word of mouth throughout the country that the deposits in the Savings Bank will be used to pay the troops which are here.

This communist technique of undermining confidence has been used elsewhere. The facts are that the British Government and not this Government are responsible for the pay and for the food of the troops and that in any case the Savings Bank deposits are a sacred trust and cannot - and I repeat cannot - be spent by this Government or any other Government. The money in the Savings Bank is as safe there as if it was deposited in the Bank of England. The large majority of you have realised this but there may be further attempts to induce you to withdraw your money and therefore I ask you not to believe the lie which is being repeated.

This matter is of great importance for if you allow yourselves to be misled and do not show your confidence in your own Bank, it may prejudice the loans we have to raise here and overseas for the development of the country.

This last week has been full of rumours, many of which are being manufactured in order to confuse you. The truth is that here in Georgetown and elsewhere business is going on as usual and general confidence in the future of British Guiana is being re-established both here and overseas. Owing to the large arrears of work which were found in the Ministries, we have a substantial leeway to make up but the work is being tackled as quickly as possible and I ask you to have patience over the delays which have occurred.

Some people have been reported as saying that they are willing to fight and die for their political aims. May I say that what we want in British Guiana are leaders willing to live and to work hard for the economic development of this country and the betterment of its people. Political Development without economic development has little or no practical value. Our first objective has been and must be to raise the standard of living of the people.

And so again I do urge on you as absolutely essential a constructive policy of economic development, a policy of full production and of improved industrial relations. I and my advisers have started work on planning the various development committees of which I spoke a week ago but we must have the full co-operation of capital and labour if we are to succeed in developing the resources of this country.

It is my intention that on all these committees there will be representatives of Government, of employers and of the workers and with the fullest co-operation which I seek and goodwill on all sides. I am certain we shall be able to attract to this country the capital on which we must depend for future development.

That is all I have to say this morning but I propose to speak to you from time to time as may be necessary.

[Source: Cheddi Jagan Research Centre, Guyana]

58. INTERNAL COLONIAL OFFICE NOTE TO SIR. T. LLOYD FROM P. ROGERS
(16 October 1953)

Sir T. Lloyd

Today's article in The Times reinforces doubts I have been feeling over the past two or three days about the way the Governor is allowing the situation to develop in British Guiana. I cannot, for example understand why it was only two days after his broadcast that a search was carried out of P.P.P. headquarters. It is clear that many dangerous documents were burnt in that period. Nor does it seem to me, as far as one can judge from here, reasonable in present circumstances to allow P. P. P. supporters free scope e.g. to enter sugar estates and encourage strikes. Once we have entered into open conflict with the P.P.P. and taken the first and decisive step, it seems to me that the right course is to go hard at it and try to smash the Party completely. At present the Governor merely seems to me to be presenting them with an admirable rallying cry and giving them too much scope to proclaim it.

In many ways it would be convenient to wait and discuss this with Mr. Gutch on Sunday, but I would prefer not to do this. There have been several indications that Sir A. Savage has not consulted his senior officers, including Mr. Gutch himself, as freely as he might have done in recent months and it might be particularly unfortunate if a telegram hinting at sterner measures were to issue soon after Mr. Gutch's arrival.

I submit a draft for conson.(sic) accordingly.

P. Rogers
16.10.53

59. TELEGRAM (No. 132) FROM GOVERNOR SAVAGE TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
(16 October 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Code D. 16th October, 1953. 19.00 hrs.
R. 17th ,, ,, 01.30 hrs.

IMMEDIATE
CONFIDENTIAL
PERSONAL No. 132.

My telegram Personal No. 124

Situation in the sugar industry has deteriorated slightly today, as both plantations Port Mouranne (sic) and Albion are at a standstill, and no cane cutters reported for work at plantation Lusignan. All other factories are working intermittently except Blairmont which in normal.

Situation in Georgetown remains quiet but precautions have been taken to safeguard the dock area.

Ashton Chase and Sidney King today applied for air passages to London via Trinidad. It is expected that Trinidad will refuse entry, but confirmation of this has not yet been received.

I broadcasted today at 11.30 and a copy of my speech has been transmitted at press rates.

Distribution:
H.453
Secretary of State
P.S. to Minister of State
Sir T. Lloyd
P.S. to Parliamentary U/S
Sir C. Jeffries

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Mr. R. J. Vile
Mr. B. D. Edmonds
Mr. C. J. J. T. Barton
Mr. D. G. Gordon-Smith
Mr. J. N. A. Armitage-Smith
Mr. W. I. J. Wallace

**60. LETTER FROM THE PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION SOCIETY TO THE
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES**

(17 October 1953)

COPY

THE PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION SOCIETY
86 ECCLESTON SQUARE, LONDON, S.W.1.

Rt. Hon. Oliver Lyttelton, M.P., 17th October, 1953
Colonial Office,
Great Smith Street, S.W.1.

Dear Sir,

BRITISH GUIANA.

1. Amongst the various factors which may be held to have given rise to the necessity for the present suspension of the Constitution in British Guiana, attention has been drawn to the People's Progressive Party having secured 18 out of the 24 seats at the elections in April last, although it had a margin of only 2,600 votes in a total poll of 147,600. (P.P.P., 75,100; Others, 72,500.)

2. There has been a tendency therefore to take for granted that the P.P.P.'s large representation arose from the votes of the Opposition being spread over a number of groups and P.P.P. securing several seats on minority votes. From such details of the votes as I have so far found available, covering 23 of the 24 constituencies, however, only 7 seats in all were won on minority votes - 2 by the Opposition and 5 by P.P.P. The P.P.P. therefore secured a clear majority of 13 in the Legislature by clear majorities in 13 constituencies, and only 5 of its total of 18 members on minority votes.

3. If, however, representation had been in relation to the total votes, P.P.P. would have had 13 seats and been faced with an Opposition of 11. Had the new Legislature commenced its career with the Government and Opposition so closely representative of public opinion, as revealed by the votes cast, there can be little, if any, doubt but that Dr. Jagan and his ministerial colleagues would have adopted a much more responsible course than in fact they

did, and further time and opportunity thus secured for the Constitution to have been tested by experience as to its suitability for peaceful, orderly development along lines acceptable to all concerned.

4. As a Commission is to be appointed to consider and report as to what changes, if any, may be desirable to facilitate a resumption of constitutional, self-government, I would ask that the Commission's terms of reference may cover an examination of methods of election and their suitability to conditions in British Guiana.

5. In the course of the past thirty or forty years, in circumstances not altogether dissimilar, and notwithstanding difficulties arising from a great measure of illiteracy, the single transferable system of proportional representation has been introduced, with beneficial and lasting results. That is a matter upon which I shall hope to have the opportunity of submitting representations to the Commission when it is appointed.

Yours faithfully,

John Fitzgerald

Director and Secretary

61. LETTER FROM THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
(17 October 1953)

Privy Council Office
Whitehall, S.W.1.

17th October, 1953

My dear Oliver,

Thank you so much for your letter about a possible Chairman in the House of Lords for the Commission of Enquiry for British Guiana. I have been thinking over this to see whether there are any names which would be suitable. I don't know if you have considered the possibility of a Law Lord for this purpose. It seems to me that unless there is some objection which has eluded me this might provide the solution to your problem.

I am rather afraid that if we go outside the legal profession it may be rather difficult to find a peer of adequate status who has not Party affiliations. If he happened to be a Conservative - and I imagine in the House of Lords this would be probable - he would either be open to a suggestion of political bias or would, in order to give evidence of his absolute impartiality, lean over to far in the other direction. In any case it might be difficult for such a man to be entirely unbiased. And no doubt the same could be true on the Labour side of the House. On the other hand, there are men of the highest ability among the Law Lords, men such as Oaksey or Cus Asquith who would not be open to the same criticism. If my suggestion seems attractive to you I will send you a list of suitable Law Lords after consultation with the Lord Chancellor.

I mentioned my suggestion to Harry Crookshan and Patrick Hepburn at Cabinet this morning to sound them out as the possible reaction of the House of Commons to an appointment of this kind, and they seemed rather attracted by it.

Yours ever

(Signed) Bobbety

62. TELEGRAM (No. 136) FROM GOVERNOR FO BRITISH GUIANA TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

(17 October 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Code D. 17th October, 1953

R. 17th , , , 17.50 hrs.

PRIORITY

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

PERSONAL No. 136

Your personal telegram No. 126

Jagan and Burnham

Visit by opposition representatives has been postponed pending final decision regarding persons named. Opposition will not send representatives if persons named cannot travel.

63. TELEGRAM (No. 138) FROM GOVERNOR SAVAGE TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY

(17 October 1953)

TOP SECRET

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

CYPHER (O.T.P.)

D. 17th October, 1953

R. 17th , , , 23.50 hrs.

PRIORITY
TOP SECRET
Personal No. 138

Your telegram No. 124.

Since the printing of leaflets has been banned there has not been any overt action by the extremists. They are being carefully watched and the question of restraint of movement is examined daily. In fact, necessary Order has been prepared for some days, but for the present it is considered that such step unnecessary. Report just received from the S.P.A. is that the situation on sugar estates slightly improved today.

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H.453
Secretary of State
P.S. to Minister of State
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Mr. P. Rogers
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Mr. W. I. J. Wallace
Mr. D. G. Gordon-Smith

64. TELEGRAM (No. 149) FROM GOVERNOR SAVAGE TO SECRETARY OF STATE
(19 October 1953)

SECRET

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Cypher (O.T.P.)
D. 19th October, 1953.
R. 20th ,, ,, 01.00 hrs.

IMMEDIATE
SECRET

No. 149

My telegram Personal No.138

Situation in sugar industry has deteriorated slightly. Port Mourant and Albion are not working, and although all the other estates are grinding intermittently, at least four of them are seriously affected by poor turn out of field workers.

It is reported that P.P.P. leaders including King, Lachhmansingh and Jainarine Singh visited estates during the weekend, encouraging workers to remain firm during absence of Jagan and Burnham and to show special solidarity by ceasing to work during the visit of the Minister of State. Efforts were concentrated on the plantation of Blairmont, which has previously been unaffected, with the result that few field workers turned out today and railway line on the estate was damaged. Police are trying to obtain sufficient evidence to prosecute two Members of the House of Assembly who visited the estate and I am considering urgently question of issuing emergency order restraining the ringleaders. Sugar producers will also probably issue comprehensive notices.

Reports from reliable agents indicate that Chase, Jainarine and Georgetown supporters are anxious for Burnham to break away from Jagan and extremists and form his own party. Burnham insists, however, that he must maintain outward united front with Jagan until he returns from London. He anticipates that Jagan will make compromising contacts with communists in the United Kingdom and this will enable the party (*corrupt group**) to be called on after they return here and give justification for expulsion of Jagan and other extremists.

Distribution:-

H.631

Secretary of State

P.S. to Minister of State

Sir T. Lloyd

P.S. to Parl. U/Secretary

Sir C. Jeffries

Sir H. Poynton

Mr. K. H. Davies

Mr. P. R. Maynard

Mr. P. Rogers

Mr. N. L. Mayle

Mr. J. W. Vernon

Mr. C. Y. Carstairs

Mr. R. J. Vile

Mr. B. D. Edmonds

Mr. C. J. J. T. Barton

Mr. D. G. Gordon-Smith

Mr. J. N. A. Armitage-Smith

Mr. W. I. J. Wallace

*[Editor's note: * This refers to a few words which were not transmitted properly in the telegram and were therefore illegible.]*

65. TELEGRAM (No. 102) FROM GOVERNOR OF THE GOLD COAST TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

(20 October 1953)

SECRET

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM GOLD COAST (Sir O. Arden-Clarke)

Cypher (O.T.P.)

D. 20th October, 1953

R. 20th ,, ,, 13.35 hrs.

IMMEDIATE

SECRET AND PERSONAL

PERSONAL No. 102

For Lloyd from Arden-Clarke.

Prime Minister has just received cable from Wedgewood Benn, M.P., asking if he would be prepared to nominate a suitable African from the Gold Coast* for a Commission to go to British Guiana. Prime Minister is replying in affirmative if he is asked to do so by the British Government. Wedgwood Benn has sent similar question to Nehru, as he proposes to suggest in Thursday's debate that Commission to British Guiana would be strengthened by the inclusion of an Indian and a Gold Coast African. If asked by the British Government, Nkrumah would propose to recommend Justice Korsah.

*[Editor's Note: * Later known as Ghana]*

66. TELEGRAM TO COLONIAL SECRETARY FROM KEN HILL, MEMBER FO THE HOSUE OF REPRESENTATIVES, JAMAICA

(20 October 1953)

POST OFFICE

CABLE & WIRELESS

RECEIVED PARTICULARS OCT 20

KINGSTON JA

Secretary of State for Colonies House of Commons London

To ally fears and facilitate progress strongly suggest leaders of parliamentary majorities in British Caribbean be represented on proposed Commission of Enquiry for British Guiana.

KEN HILL MHR JAMAICA

67. TELEGRAM (No. 155) FROM GOVERNOR SAVAGE TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
(20 October 1953)

TOP SECRET

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

CYPHER (O.T.P.)

D. 20th October, 1953

R. 20th ,, ,, 21.05 hrs.

EMERGENCY

TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL

Personal No. 155

Further to my Top Secret and Personal telegram No. 138, it is now clear that P.P.P. extremists are determined to continue to encourage sugar workers to strike and to encourage intimidation. As this may lead to public disorders, I have decided that extremist leaders, including Janet Jagan and King, be detained under Emergency Order as we have not yet got sufficient evidence to prefer charges under ordinary law. I hope this action will deter ordinary rank and file in the party.

Subject to your views and to any change of political situation, noticeably circumstances referred to in my immediately following telegram, I propose to make arrests tomorrow, Wednesday night, and to detain persons concerned under guard at Atkinson Field.

Grateful to know by 10.00 local time 21st October whether such action would embarrass you.

Distribution:-

H.453

Secretary of State

P.S. to Minister of State

Sir T. Lloyd

P.S. to Parliamentary U/S

Sir C. Jeffries

Sir H. Poynton

Mr. K. H. Davies

Mr. P. R. Maynard

Mr. P. Rogers

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Mr. J. W. Vernon

Mr. C. Y. Carstairs

Mr. R. J. Vile

Mr. B. D. Edmonds

Mr. C. J. J. T. Barton

Mr. D. G. Gordon-Smith
Mr. J. N. A. Armitage-Smith
Mr. W. I. J. Wallace

68. TELEGRAM (No. 156) FROM GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

(20 October 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA Sir A. Savage)

Code. D. 20th October, 1953.
R. 21st ,, ,, 05.00 hrs.

IMMEDIATE
PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL
PERSONAL No.156

My immediately preceding telegram No. 155.

Situation in sugar industry slightly improved except that all work has ceased on plantation Blairmont and turn-out of cane cutters on two sectional estates has deteriorated.

2. Reference to paragraph 3 of my telegram Personal No. 138, police report this morning (as) follows: -

"Tussle inside the party dealt with in my situation report of yesterday's date has intensified. A letter was finally delivered to Mrs. Jagan last night telling her that if she did not reply today (20th October) to demand for a special congress, a public statement would be given to the press denouncing the Communist element in P.P.P. The leader of this movement from the Burnham section of the party is one Bobb, a schoolteacher, and he is strongly supported by Ashton Chase, Clinton Wong and Jainaraine Singh. His movement represents the strong African element of P.P.P. in Georgetown which is aiming at pushing Burnham into leadership and expelling Janet Jagan, Sidney King, Martin Carter and Rory Westmaas from the party executive. This is to be prime object of the special congress.

The feeling amongst these people is that Dr. Jagan would be manageable without the three above named executives, but that if he refuses to co-operate another must be found to take his place. Mr. R. B. Gajraj has been approached in this connection. Mrs. Jagan intends to delay the matter by sending a reply to Bobb demanding details and reasons for the congress. She and Sidney King are strongly opposed to party leaders seeking interview with the Minister of State but is determined that both Sidney King and herself should present party's case if Bobb, Ashton Chase and the other Burnham men persist in doing so. She is therefore anxious to avoid a party congress until after the Minister of State's departure. If a congress is forced on her, Sidney King has arranged for a (*omission*) of Buxton P.P.P. "tongues" to crowd out the meeting."

3. Later today police report received as follows:

"Mrs. Jagan's reaction to the demand for special congress, as set out in my situation report this morning, has been to call the executive meeting and representative of Bobb's movement to iron the matter out. The meeting was held this morning and Mrs. Jagan put Bobb's demand to them. After some wrangling and skilful manoeuvring by Mrs. Jagan, compromise reached whereby it was that the congress should be held after Minister of State's departure but before arrival of Commission of Inquiry. In return, Mrs. Jagan agreed to avoid an interview with the Minister of State for herself and that Ashton, Chase and Jainaraine Singh should be recognised as presenting the party's views to that Minister. However, she succeeded in getting agreement to Sidney King interviewing Minister on grounds that allegation had been made that he had fomented present unrest on the sugar estates and should be given an opportunity to defend himself. It has also been agreed that Mohammed Khan, Adjodha Singh and Balli Lachhmansingh should take the responsibility for strike agitation in order to absolve Jagan and Burnham from any connection with the present unrest. However, Adjodha Singh and Balli Lachhmansingh are very hesitant to take this step, while Mohammed Khan is agreeable."

4. As it now seems likely that Mrs. Jagan will be able to avoid open clash in the party for some time, and meanwhile will continue to organise agitation on sugar estates, I propose, subject to your views, to proceed with action outlined in my telegram under reference.

Distribution:

H.631

Secretary of State

P.S. to Minister of State

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P.S. to Parl. U/Secretary

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Mr. W. I. J. Wallace

Mr. D. G. Gordon-Smith

69. BRITISH GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER ON THE SUSPENSION OF THE CONSTITUTION OF BRITISH GUIANA

(20 October 1953)

BRITISH GUIANA SUSPENSION OF CONSTITUTION

I. INTRODUCTION:

1. The new Constitution introduced in British Guiana last April was based on a Report (Col No. 280) of an independent commission (Sir John Waddington, Chairman; Professor V. T. Harlow and Dr. Rita Hinden, Members). It conferred upon the people for the first time universal adult suffrage and provided for a bicameral legislature with a Lower Chamber (House of Assembly) consisting of 27 members, of whom 24 were elected, and an Upper Chamber (The State Council), consisting of 9 members appointed by the Governor (two on the recommendation of the Ministers in the Lower Chamber). The Constitution provided for the appointment of six elected members of the House of Assembly as Ministers with departmental responsibility and gave them a majority of two in the Executive Council, the principal instrument of policy. The Governor was obliged (save in exceptional cases) to consult and take the advice of this Council.

2. In the General Election at the end of April for the House of Assembly under the new Constitution, the **Peoples' Progressive Party (PPP) gained 51 per cent of the votes and 18 out of 24 seats. With this majority, it secured the election of members of the Party to the six ministerial posts filled from the House of Assembly. These Ministers were Dr. C. B. Jagan (Minister for Agriculture), Mr. L. F. S. Burnham (Minister for Education), Mr. A. Chase (Minister for Labour), Mr. S. King (Minister for Works), Dr. J. P. Lachhmansingh (Minister for Health), Mr. J.N. Singh (Minister for Local Government). Dr. Jagan was elected Leader of the House of Assembly and Mrs. Jagan, Deputy Speaker. Two further members of the PPP, Mr. Fingal and Mr. Robertson, were appointed to the State Council on the recommendation of the six Ministers.

3. The Peoples' Progressive Party therefore held six out of the ten places in the Executive Council. It also had a working majority in the House of Assembly but not in the State Council. It would also have had a majority if the Governor had decided to call a Joint Session of the two Houses for any purpose.

II. ACTIVITIES OF MINISTERS

4. The conduct of Ministers showed no concern for the true welfare of the colony and threatened its progress as an orderly state. It had seriously endangered the economic life of the country and had set it on the road to collapse. Examples of this conduct are: -

(i) Fomenting of strikes for political ends (paragraphs 15-18);

(ii) Attempting to oust established trade unions by legislative action (paragraph 19);

(iii) Removal of the ban on the entry of West Indian Communists (paragraph 8);

(iv) Introduction of a bill to repeal the Undesirable Publications Ordinance and the flooding of the territory with Communist Literature (paragraph 9);

(v) Misuse of rights of appointment to boards and committees (paragraph 13);

(vi) Spreading of racial hatred (paragraph 14);

(vii) Plan to secularize church schools and to rewrite textbooks to give them a political bias (paragraph 36);

(viii) Neglect of their administrative duties (paragraphs 22-23);

(ix) Undermining of the loyalty of the Police (paragraphs 9-11);

(x) Attempts to gain control of the public service (paragraph 12):

(xi) Threats of violence (paragraphs 28-33);

5. Each one of these acts judged separately was serious enough and the cumulative effect was disastrous: viewed in the light of the Communist connexions of Ministers their aim was unmistakable.

6. In the succeeding paragraphs the events of the period May-September 1953 are described roughly in chronological order.

The Loyal Address and withdrawal of bans on entry of Communists and Communist Literature:

7. At the first business session of the new House of Assembly held on 17th June the Party refused to move a Loyal Address to the Queen in response to Her Majesty's gracious message at the introduction of the new Constitution (though a Loyal Address was passed unanimously when moved by the Leader of the Opposition).

8. At the same time, and contrary to the general policy of other West Indian Governments, the PPP Ministers insisted on the removal of the ban on the entry of certain well-known West Indian Communists into British Guiana. They introduced a Bill to repeal the Undesirable Publications Ordinance, thus removing the power of the Governor-in-Council to exclude subversive literature. Communist literature brought in by Dr. Jagan in 1951 was seized by customs officials. The proposed Bill sought to invalidate this seizure and was thus attempting to make these officials liable to legal proceedings for their official action. It has not yet passed into law, but meanwhile communist literature has been pouring into the Country.

Undermining of the Loyalty of the Police.

9. Ministers intended to organize a "People's Police". On 3rd May, Dr. Jagan said: "Comrades; in the past when we asked for bread we were given bullets and those who fired at workers were honoured by the masters; but when the PPP gets into power the same bullets which were fired on those poor people will be fired on our oppressors. We shall organize a police force. It will be known as the People's Police".

10. Ministers in their speeches made clear their dissatisfaction that the existing Police Force was not under the control of the PPP. They encouraged dissatisfied policemen to make their complaints to Party leaders and used the dissidents to spread discontent and disaffection.

11. The Minister for Labour tried to interfere with the control of the Police by the Chief Secretary. He informed the Chief Secretary that he proposed to issue a statement for the guidance of the Police and required the Chief Secretary to draw their attention to it. The following are extracts from the proposed statement:

"It is nauseating to find that as soon as there is a Labour dispute or stoppage of work - no matter how trivial or large - the police intervene. . . . Any repetition of the past attitude and conduct by the Police will meet with stern action on the part of the elected Ministers."

In fact, the Police had not interfered in labour' disputes. They only became involved in the exercise of their duty to maintain law and order. The Chief Secretary managed to prevail on the Minister to defer publication until the question had been further discussed; but on 23rd September the Minister asked that the Governor should be informed that he proposed to issue the substance of the statement after resumption of work in the sugar industry.

Attempts to gain control of the public service:

12. It is fundamental, as it is in this country, and it is written into all Colonial Constitutions that the Public Services should be free from all political influences. Accordingly, under the Constitution, responsibility for the Public Service is reserved to the Governor who is advised on these matters by an independent Public Service Commission. Ministers, however, clearly showed that they resented this. For example, in a speech on 26th July. Dr. Jagan said: "They have appointed a Civil Service Commission because they do not want us to have anything to do with the appointment of Civil Servants. We would like to have power to appoint our own people who would be able to do our work." Ministers made clear their intention to abolish the Public Service Commission and to refuse to vote provision for it. They encouraged dissatisfied members of the Service to come direct to them for redress. They also encouraged junior officers to act as informers on departmental activities, and have sought their views regarding the efficiency and conduct of their senior officers. The Minister of Works instructed the Director of Public Works that committees of workers should be set up in connexion with works projects. The functions of these committees were not to be confined to service conditions, but were to advise on the execution of the projects.

Control over Boards and Committees

13. Ministers' appointments to statutory boards and committees showed their determination to put these committees under Party control without regard for members' suitability and experience. They appointed four PPP supporters, three of whom were primary school teachers, to the Education Committee, while the representatives previously on the Committee of the denominational governing bodies which control 260 out of 277 primary schools in British Guiana were excluded. They also proposed to fill five out of seven seats on the Transport Advisory Council by PPP supporters. Two of these were junior members of the Transport and Harbours Department itself, and one was a tailor who earns his living by selling PPP literature. Ministers pressed the Governor to transfer to them his powers to appoint members of other more important executive boards and committees so as to give them control over the Local Government Board and such organizations as the Rice Marketing Board. Ministers ordered the manager of the Rice Marketing Board to disobey the instructions of the legally appointed Board using the threat that they (the Ministers) would shortly be appointing a new board.

Racial Hatred

14. The Ministers for Education and for Labour started an "African and Colonial Affairs Committee" which declared support for the Man Mau in Kenya and the Communists terrorists in Malaya and specialized in vicious anti-British anti-white propaganda.

Labour Unrest

15. For many years a trade union called the Man Power Citizens Association (MPCA) has represented the main body of sugar workers. It has negotiated a number of agreements with the Sugar Producers Association (SPA) improving wages and setting up joint

negotiating machinery. In 1945, Dr. Jagan, who had been treasurer of this union, having failed to gain control of it, broke away, and later, under his influence, a rival union, the Guiana Industrial Workers Union (GIWU) was formed. With Dr. J. P. Lachhmansingh (later Minister for Health) as President, this union set out to break the MPCA and the negotiating machinery between the MPCA and the SPA. After the Enmore riots on 16th June, 1948, in which a number of people were killed, a Commission of Inquiry into the sugar industry reported (Colonial No. 249) that the claim of the GIWU for recognition was premature and unwarranted and that the claims and complaints of the workers were amply represented by the already recognized unions.

16. The GIWU, however, sought to call general strikes in the sugar industry in the autumns of 1951 and 1952 to obtain recognition, but failed to secure any general support for its calls though strikes did occur on individual estates. In the official report of the Registrar of Trade Unions in British Guiana, the number of members of the GIWU on the 31st December, 1952, was given as 817, compared with 7,272 members of the MPCA, of whom at least half were sugar workers.

17. When the PPP came into power, it espoused the cause of the GIWU, of which Dr. Lachhmansingh remained President although Minister for Health. Labour relations in the sugar industry have steadily deteriorated owing to direct interference by Ministers in minor matters which would previously have been settled through the existing joint consultative machinery. During this year there were 64 minor stoppages from May to September compared with three up to May. In August the Minister for Labour approached the SPA and pressed for the recognition of the GIWU. The Association sent a conciliatory reply, offering joint recognition with the MPCA. A meeting of the Union was held on the 30th August to consider this offer.

The Minister for Health as President and the Minister for Works (who held no official position in the Union) attended. The latter dominated the proceedings and insisted on the meeting calling a general strike in the sugar industry. The meeting agreed, without considering the SPA's reply to their demand for recognition; and Mr. King, Dr. Lachhmansingh, Mrs. Jagan (that is, two Ministers and the Deputy Speaker) and other members of the Party toured the estates urging the workers to strike.

18. The resulting strike eventually paralysed the whole industry. Some days after it had started, the union represented that its object was to secure an improvement in wages and working conditions although no previous approach had been made on the matter to the employers. Attempts were made to organize a general strike in sympathy in other industries and essential services. Some members of the Sawmill Workers Union (President, Dr. Jagan) and the British Guiana Labour Union (President, the Minister for Education) responded. The President of the Transport Workers Union, who was opposed to joining the strike, eventually agreed under pressure and intimidation to a four-hour sympathy stoppage of work by his union. Even this was only partially successful and there was little response from other unions. The Minister for Health then ordered the sugar workers to return to work.

Labour Legislation

19. Strikes having failed, the Minister for Health announced that the GIWU demand for recognition would be pursued by legislative action. A draft Labour Relations Ordinance was thereupon published requiring employers to recognise for purposes of negotiation any union which obtained the support of 52 percent of the workers in an industry by ballot. Such legislation is contrary to policy and practice in British industry because it imposes an

element of compulsion in a field where the principle of mutual consent which is inherent in collective bargaining can alone yield satisfactory results. It is claimed to be based on a United States law, but in fact reflects only one feature of the general code of industrial law in the United States, which imposes restrictions and obligations not only upon employers but also upon trade unions. At the same time, the Minister for Labour moved to repeal the Trade Disputes (Essential Services) Ordinance, 1942. The object of this Ordinance is to prevent sudden stoppages in services where there is likely to be an immediate and serious effect on the life and health of the community. Without such protection, the country could be deprived of water supplies, electricity, transport and drainage, and food supplies and public health endangered.

20. On 24th September, the day the strike ended, the House of Assembly met. Before the session began, large crowds had been instigated by the PPP and GIWU Leaders to assemble in the vicinity of the Legislative Chamber. While the Police were attempting to control them, the Minister for Works exhorted them to rush the building. It was soon packed with an unruly crowd, and it was some time before sufficient order could be restored for the session to begin. The Minister for Labour then moved the suspension of standing orders so that the Labour Relations Bill could be taken without due notice through all its stages that day. The Speaker refused this request on the grounds that such action infringed the rights of the minority in the House, that he could not permit a measure of such importance to the life of the community to be taken without notice. The Ministers present, and other members of the PPP, then rose and left the Chamber. Pandemonium broke out amongst the large crowd in the Chamber, which invaded the floor of the House, and order could not be restored for some time. The Leader of the Opposition had to be given police protection on leaving the building. The Party at first threatened to boycott the House until the Speaker reversed his ruling and, at a public meeting, the Speaker was accused by the Ministers of partiality. Eventually, however, the Bill was debated for several days and passed. These incidents added to the already serious tension in Georgetown which was not relaxed until the arrival of the troops.

21. The alarm generated amongst moderate opinion by these developments was reflected in a Resolution recorded on the 21st September by the State Council expressing its grave anxiety at the sugar strike and regretting that "certain Ministers of the Crown in the colony had been actively engaged in various parts of the country in promoting and sustaining this strike." The Resolution continued: "Such action by the Ministers of the Crown is a grave danger to the Constitution, a direct threat to the peace and security of the citizens of the colony, and the negation of good and responsible democratic government"; and it asked the Secretary of State "after due enquiry, to take such action as he may deem fit to ensure confidence in the Government and the proper and efficient working of the Constitution."

Ministerial Negligence

22. When the Ministers were dismissed, large arrears of work were found in most of their offices. In the case of the Minister for Works, who was responsible for drainage and irrigation, important issues had been left undealt with for several months. The consequence of this neglect, and the Minister's actions, are given in paragraphs 24-27.

23. Ministers came into power at an important stage in the development of the country. Prospects were bright. An estimated total of £10,000,000 overseas capital had been invested in the colony over the preceding five years. Plans to bring larger areas of land into production on the coast and to provide for the ever-growing population had been drawn up involving large schemes for the drainage of land. Arrangements had been made to find the

substantial sum of money required to meet the cost partly from the colony's allocation of £3,500,000 from United Kingdom funds for development. There were favourable markets for the two main agricultural products, namely sugar and rice, the former provided by the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement, 1951. The report of the International Bank Mission which visited British Guiana early this year was available in mid-July. This report provided an excellent blue-print for the future development of the colony. Ministers made no attempt to take advantage of all these opportunities, despite the efforts of the Governor who, as stated in his broadcast, pressed upon them on many occasions ways and means of making progress in the economic field.

III. THE ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES

Not only did Ministers neglect all these opportunities of pushing ahead with the development of the resources of the territory, and thereby improving the standard of life of the inhabitants but by their activities, they undermined the confidence of the whole business community. Although the International Bank Mission concluded during its visits that the major part of the large sums required for development during the next five years could be raised locally, the Governor was recently advised that any attempt to raise a local loan would be unsuccessful. A survey by the Chamber of Commerce of principal business firms shows that turnover in wholesale and retail trades decreased by 9½ per cent compared with the corresponding period in 1952. There is ample evidence that until private firms have more confidence in the future of the Colony they will make no further capital investments there. For example, (a) Kennametals International S.A. (Inc.) abandoned an Exclusive Permission to explore for columbite-tantalite on 30th June; (b) The New York-Alaska Gold Dredging Company abandoned an Exclusive Permission on 3rd September; (c) The Gulf Oil Corporation withdrew their application for an oil exploration licence on 27th August; (d) Panhandle Oil Canada Limited has abandoned further exploration pending the clarification of the political situation; (e) A building project by Ellis Associated Companies involving capital investment of \$300,000 was abandoned, as financial hackers refused to continue negotiations with the then government.

25. Unemployment increased sharply in the building trade because of a general reluctance to start new construction work. Local timber mills report decreases varying from 12 per cent to 40 per cent in the demand for lumber for the domestic building trade.

26. At the end of 1952, Savings Bank deposits totalled approximately \$16,000,000. The level of deposits fluctuated during the first weeks of the new government, but a serious run started in August as is shown in the following table:

Period	Deposits	Withdrawals	Net Withdrawals
August 19-31	\$281,264	\$ 604,605	\$ 323,341
September 1-15	369,029	1,371,485	1,002,456
September 16-30	338,694	712,619	373,925
Total	\$988,987	\$2,688,709	\$1,699,722

B.W.I. Dollar = 4/2

After the arrival of the troops, the rate of withdrawal significantly decreased.

27. The numerous strikes and stoppages in the sugar industry which had taken place during the past four months owing to direct interference in labour relations on sugar estates by Ministers resulted in substantial losses in production of sugar and in wages earned by sugar workers.

IV. THE DANGER OF VIOLENCE:

28. The leaders of the PPP had for some time made clear their preparedness to use force to gain their ends. For example: (i) On 10th March this year Dr. Jagan said: "In Kenya the Africans are not only killing white men who took away their land but are killing their own people who turn stooges and that should be done to stooges (here) who are fighting the cause of the Government and not the people". (ii) The Minister for Education said in the House of Assembly on 11th September: "The possibility of our present Constitution being taken from us will be met by as much force as is necessary". He also said at a public meeting on 24th September: "They say they are going to take away the Constitution from us, but I would like them to know that, when they attempt that, Her Gracious Majesty will not only hear of the explosion of the atomic bomb in the hinterlands of Australia but she will hear of it in the mudland of British Guiana for we intend to fight to the end. I would like not to disclose our plans for the intended action which we will take but will keep it a secret until it becomes necessary to put it into operation".

29. Ministers' actions showed that their speeches were not mere rhetoric. One example of this was when the Minister for Works encouraged a mob to rush the Legislature (see paragraph 20). The attempts to subvert the Police Force and to set up "People's Police" can have had no other object (see paragraphs 9 and 10).

30. It was established from reliable sources that at meetings attended by Dr. Jagan, the Minister for Education, the Minister for Works and Mrs. Jagan, a plan was made to set fire to business property and residences of prominent Europeans and Government Officials. It was to be put into force if the Governor refused to declare a joint session to consider the Labour Relations Bill or if action was taken to arrest any of the Ministers for sedition, or if the Constitution was revoked. This information was supported by reports of unusual sales of petrol to individuals without cars who carried it away in cans or bottles.

31. The PPP has a well-developed cell system which enables contacts to be made and instructions issued and there is reported to be a hard core of some 400-500 party members, concentrated mainly in Georgetown, who are ready to do violence at the bidding of the leaders, particularly Mr. King.

32. From 1st September to 9th October, 660 applications for cover against riot and civil commotion to a value of \$11,355,000 were received by three of the insurance companies operating in the colony from persons who have not previously sought such cover.

33. On 15th October, the Governor reported that "There can be no doubt that the arrival of troops forestalled any plans for violent demonstrations with which any moves to take action against Ministers and the Party, even the withdrawal of portfolios from one in more of the Ministers, would otherwise have been greeted".

V. PEOPLES' PROGRESSIVE PARTY LEADERS AND COMMUNISM:

Ties with International Communists Organizations:

34. Leaders of the Party have been closely associated with international Communist organizations for many years. Mrs. Jagan was a member of the Young Communist League in the United States before 1943, and Mr. R. Westmaas frequently attended Communist meetings in Great Britain before returning to British Guiana in November, 1952. At least ten members of the Party have made trips behind the "Iron Curtain" during the past two years, and these trips have increased in frequency since the Party came into power. Such Party members who visited the United Kingdom had frequent contacts with Communists here. Details of contacts between PPP leaders and international Communist Front organizations are given in Appendix A. It will be seen that these have mainly been with the "World Federation of Trade Unions", an organization under Communist control which has latterly devoted much attention to the incitement of strikes and agitation in western democratic countries and their colonies. At its General Council meeting in November, 1951, Dr. Jagan himself sought the formation of a Colonial Bureau of the WFTU. PPP leaders have made it clear that they were prepared to follow the lead of the WFTU and to further the aims of international Communism in British Guiana.

Party Organization

35. The PPP evolved from a political discussion group organized by Dr. and Mrs. Jagan. Although the Party had a following amongst labour leaders, it was firmly controlled from the outset by Mrs. Jagan as Secretary and Dr. Jagan as President. They used the Party to disseminate Communist literature and to spread pro-Communist propaganda in its journal Thunder. As already described, the Jagans and their associates set out to capture the existing trade union movement, or, where they failed, as with the sugar union, to set up rival unions in order to provide the labour wing to their political party. Mrs. Jagan, shortly after her election as Deputy Speaker of the House of Assembly, attended the Third World Congress of the Communist-dominated Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF), and, on her return, she circulated a directive to Party members calling for the organization of small cells for recruitment and indoctrination and the selling of the Party's paper and Communist literature.

Communist Propaganda

36. In official broadcasts, Ministers gave evidence of their attachment to Communist ideas. Dr. Jagan announced he believed that Socialism, having replaced Capitalism, would "itself evolve into the higher Communist stage of society". In an official broadcast, the Minister for Education said his intention was to remove churches from their present participation in the educational system of the country and to revise the curriculum and textbooks of schools "to give them the true Guianese Socialist and realistic outlook".

37. The Party, and in particular Mr. R. Westmaas, one of its Vice Presidents, have promoted the formation of a Communist political youth organization, the Pioneer Youth League affiliated to the Communist-controlled World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY) and World Peace Council (WPC). All Ministers have been present at one time or another at League meetings where propaganda of the WFDY and WPC was distributed. On 16th August, 1953, a Youth Congress to which overseas delegates were invited by the Minister for Works was held to coincide with the Communist World Youth Festival at Bucharest.

38. The Party sought to undermine the position and influence of the established youth movements such as the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, which are grouped in the colony under a Youth Council. This Council refused to accept the membership of the League on the ground that it was a political organization. The Minister for Local Government and Social

Welfare proposed to the Governor that the Minister for Works should be made Chairman of the Council.

39. In May, Mrs. Jagan set up a Women's Progressive Organization which has applied for affiliation to the Communist-controlled WIDF. A British Guiana Peace Committee, in which the Minister for Works, Mrs. Jagan and Mr. R. Westmaas have been active, has been spreading this type of Communist "peace" propaganda for some time and has taken its lead from the Communist-run World Peace Council. Mr. Westmaas is responsible for running a bookshop which is the main centre for the dissemination of Communist propaganda.

40. In sum, Dr. and Mrs. Jagan, Mr. S. King and Mr. R. Westmaas especially have been in frequent contact with communists and Communist Front organizations abroad. They have shown by their speeches and writings that they are zealots in the cause of Communism and have demonstrated by their actions that their objective is to impose a totalitarian control on the PPP, the trade unions, the Police Force, the youth organizations, and the State itself. All the Ministers have supported the extremists, have shown that they were prepared to be guided by them, and cannot therefore evade responsibility for what has occurred.

41. The Soviet Communist Leaders issue periodical directives in the Cominform journal concerning the National Liberation Movement in colonial and dependent countries. Communists are charged with the duty of securing control of these movements in order to establish satellite "Peoples Democracies". The technique by which Communist parties have seized power in other parts of the world is significantly standardized. In those countries a highly disciplined Party machine used propaganda, indoctrination of the young, infiltration of the Police and the public services, penetration of all forms of social organization, fomenting of class hatred and the creation of economic chaos by strikes to achieve its ends. Step by step this is the pattern followed by the PPP in British Guiana.

VI. ACTION BY HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

42. It became clear by the end of September that British Guiana was facing a rapid deterioration in the efficiency of its administration, in its economy, and in its security. This deterioration threatened not only public order but the very livelihood of the people. The Governor's reserved powers were certainly never intended to deal with a situation of this kind, so that effective action could not be taken within the terms of the Constitution to remedy matters. After consultation with the Governor, Her Majesty's Government were driven reluctantly to the conclusion that the only course was to take steps to suspend the Constitution. To have waited until further deterioration in the situation had brought loss of life would have been a betrayal of Her Majesty's Government's responsibilities.

43. Her Majesty's Government realized the gravity of this step. Some Ministers had threatened violence, and tension was great. They and other extremists might have used this occasion for stirring up disorder. Her Majesty's Government accordingly decided to transfer to British Guiana the troops which were stationed in Jamaica and British Honduras to support the security forces and to ensure the maintenance of order. In the event, the action taken by Her Majesty's Government was greeted with widespread relief in the colony and there were no incidents beyond the General Strike which the PPP Ministers are attempting to organize. In the West Indies, the unofficial members of several Executive Councils and Committees have supported Her Majesty's Government's action. Strong criticisms of the PPP by leaders of the two principal political parties in Jamaica have been published in the press.

44. Pending the making of the Order in Council to suspend the Constitution, PPP Ministers were deprived of responsibility for departments, and steps were taken to amend the Constitution so that the Governor, in exercising his powers under the Constitution, was no longer obliged to act on the advice of Executive Council. This was the effect of the British Guiana (Constitution) (Amendment) Order in Council, 1953, made on 4th October, 1953, and of the additional Instructions amending the Royal Instructions to the Governor of 1st April, 1953, signed by the Queen on the same day. The Governor was also given emergency powers at the same time under the British Guiana (Emergency Order in Council, 1953. The texts of Her Majesty's Government's announcement and the Governor's broadcast of 9th October are given in Appendices B and C. As stated in the announcement, a Commission will be sent out to British Guiana to enquire into the events which have led to this check in the political advance of the colony and to make recommendations for a revised Constitution,

APPENDIX A

CONTACTS BETWEEN PPP LEADERS AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST FRONT ORGANIZATIONS, 1950-1953

In November 1950, Keith Carter from British Guiana was present at the Second World Peace Congress held in Warsaw under the auspices of the Communist World Peace Council. In February, 1951, Thunder, the organ of the Peoples' Progressive Party, included an article entitled "Long Live Peace" which followed the lead of the Communist-controlled Warsaw Peace Congress in November, 1950, in calling for the abolition of atomic, bacteriological and other methods of mass destruction.

Towards the end of 1951, a British Guiana Peace Committee was set up and was dominated by PPP supporters. In the summer of 1951, Dr. Jagan, the leader of the Peoples' Progressive Party, visited Europe primarily to attend the Third "World Festival of Youth and Students for Peace" which was held in Berlin in August, 1951. It was also attended by 13 other British Guianese residents at that time in the United Kingdom, including Mr. R. Westmaas who, on his return to British Guiana, became a prominent member of the PPP. On 20th August, Prague Radio in its English transmission broadcast a recorded speech made by Dr. Jagan in which he denounced British Imperialism for allegedly exploiting the manpower and plundering the resources of British Guiana.

In November 1951, Dr. Jagan attended the General Council Meeting of the Communist-controlled World Federation of Trade Unions (1) (WFTU) in the Soviet sector of Berlin as an observer. During the course of his speech there, he made a suggestion that to assist trade unions in colonial territories, the WFTU should set up a Colonial Department. This suggestion was reiterated by a Trinidad observer present, and later a recommendation incorporating this proposal was approved by the General Council Meeting. A further recommendation approved was to the effect that the WFTU should send delegates to colonial territories in order to strengthen its links with these territories.

Meanwhile, in Vienna, the staff of the WFTU Secretariat had been augmented by the arrival there from the USA of Mr. Ferdinand C. Smith. A Jamaican by birth, Mr. Smith had lived in the USA for over 30 years and was well known there for his Communist activities amongst maritime workers. He left the USA in anticipation of the execution of a deportation order in force against him. He became an Assistant Secretary in the WFTU Secretariat in charge of American, Canadian and Caribbean affairs, and later was nominated as Head of the WFTU Colonial Department. In the spring of 1952, presumably in fulfilment of the WFTU General Council's recommendations referred to earlier, Mr. Smith, in company with Mr. W. Strachan,

a Jamaican Communist resident in London, travelled to the West Indies. They visited Jamaica and Trinidad, but were refused permission to visit British Guiana. This decision was later the subject of a bitter attack by Dr. Jagan in the Legislative Assembly. Both Mr. Smith, and Mr. Strachan returned to Europe in June, 1952, but a month later Mr. Smith sailed from the United Kingdom for Jamaica where he remained until March of this year. In March, he led delegates from the Caribbean at an International Conference on Social Security held in Vienna under the WFTU auspices. He travelled to Jamaica once more in April to continue his activities there on behalf of the WFTU.

After his debut at the Berlin Council, Dr. Jagan and his more extreme colleagues in the PPP began to take a prominent part in WFTU activity. The WFTU Bulletin of January 16-31, 1952, contained a long article by him on the trade union "struggles" in British Guiana, in which he attacked the "sham Constitution" given to the colony and demanded "real independence". The WFTU Bulletin of March. 1-15, 1953, contained an article in extreme terms by Mrs. Jagan on "Civil Liberties in British Guiana".

In the late summer of 1952, the Pioneer Youth League of British Guiana came into being as the Youth Movement of the PPP. It was accepted as an affiliate of the Communist-controlled World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY) (2) at a Council meeting held in Prague in February, 1953, and attended by Mr. S. King, Assistant Secretary of the PPP and lately Minister of Communications.

In October, 1952, Dr. Jagan was present at a meeting in Barbados called by Mr. Richard Hart, Secretary of the Caribbean Labour Congress and attended by other Communist sympathisers from Trinidad, St. Vincent and Barbados itself. Mr. F. C. Smith intended to be present at this meeting also, at which it is believed that plans to further WFTU influence in the Caribbean area were discussed, but in the event he was not allowed to enter Barbados.

In December, 1952, Mr. S. King, Assistant Secretary of the PPP, travelled to Vienna to attend the so-called Congress of Peoples for Peace held under the auspices of the World Peace Council. He was elected to the Presidium. Later, Mr. King visited Budapest where he is reported to have made a statement alleging that 90 per cent of the youth of British Guiana were unemployed and that the school children were half-starved. He also went to Prague where he attended WFDY Council meeting mentioned above. On his return on 5th March, 1953, he brought back with him a large suit case full of Communist propaganda pamphlets and correspondence with Communists contacts in Eastern Europe and England.

In May, 1953, a body known as the Women's Progressive Organization was formed at a meeting held in Georgetown by Mrs. Jagan, and a decision taken to apply for affiliation to the Communist-controlled Women's International Democratic Federation (3) (Headquarters: Soviet Sector of Berlin).

Immediately afterwards, Mrs. Jagan left for Copenhagen to attend the Third World Congress of Women organized by the WIDF. Mrs. Jagan was elected to the Congress Presidium. In a speech she said: "We need guidance and help. We in the Colonial World are tied economically and politically like the slaves of old. Our People turn their eyes to the great Socialist countries which have been moving forward with great rapidity and success. Help us to win freedom for all the oppressed colonial peoples of the world". Mrs. Jagan visited Roumania after the Congress in June, 1953.

Mr. R. Westmaas, Vice-President of the PPP, attended a session of the World Peace Council in Budapest, during the course of which Dr. Jagan and Mr. E. Huntley (a PPP member) were

elected members of the W.P.C. Mr. Westmaas stayed in Europe to attend the Third World Youth Congress and the Fourth World Youth Festival both events being held in Bucharest in late July and early August under the auspices of the World Federation of Democratic Youth. Mr. Westmaas was joined by two delegates from British Guiana selected by the Pioneer Youth League, Mr. Martin Carter (an Assistant Secretary of the PPP), and Mr. *Ramkarran (a PPP member).

Three members of the PPP, Mr. Jackson (President of the Federation of Unions of Government Employees), Mr. Blackman (Secretary of the Sawmill Workers' Union), and Mr. Ramkarran (a member of the House of Assembly) were at the Third Congress of the W.F.T.U. which opened on 10th October, 1953. In Vienna, the Secretary General, M. Saillant, said in his opening speech that the main task of the WFTU was to develop the workers' struggle "as much against colonial exploitation as for the strengthening of the social laws won in the course of previous struggles. That is why we need to stimulate, develop and guide everywhere the combative spirit". Mr. Ramkarran said at the Congress: "In this (sugar) strike movement, the organizations affiliated with the so-called International Confederation of Free Trade Unions stabbed the workers in the back", (presumably because they refused to take part in a political general strike). Mr. Blackman spoke of British Guiana being hidden behind "the blood-bespattered curtain of British terrorism" and said: "We will fight with as much determination even against odds as the Malayan patriots and the people of Kenya. We who have lived in slavery look with pride and admiration at the achievements of the Soviet Union. The successes of People's China and the People's Democracies in such a short space of time steel us to go forward with greater courage". He appealed to the WFTU for help. Mr. Jackson was elected to the Presidium. Observers from Jamaica, St Vincent and Trinidad attended this function, together with Mr. F. C. Smith.

Papers seized in recent police raids on party premises show that the PPP leaders were in constant communication with WFTU and other international Communist bodies in Europe, as well as individual Communists in the United Kingdom. The following are examples:

1. Letter from Jean Lafitte of the WPC enclosing photographic documents and captions concerning bacteriological warfare in Korea and China.
2. Letter from the Committee for Friendship and Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, Sofia, Bulgaria, dated 4th June, 1953, sending material and photographs on the life of Dimitrov.
3. Two letters dated 17th April and 25th August, 1953, from the WFTU Publications Limited to Mr. Huntley (a member of PPP) acknowledging notes on sugar workers and newspapers reproductions.
4. Declaration from the World Peace Council in Budapest, June, 1953, attended by Mr. Westmaas.
5. Letter to Mr. Huntley's wife forwarding proceedings of Third World Congress of Women in Copenhagen, June, 1953.
6. Letter to the Pioneer Youth League from Jacques Denis, General Secretary, WFDY, Bucharest, acknowledging receipt of names of four delegates and two observers elected to attend the World Youth Congress.

There is abundant information available to indicate quite clearly that, since initial contacts were made in 1950-51, there has been a steady strengthening of the ties between the PPP under the leadership of Dr. and Mrs. Jagan, Mr. Westmaas and Mr. King and the foremost international Communist Front organizations. There is little doubt that the attendance by PPP leaders at international meetings organized by these movements has given considerable impetus to the activities of the PPP and the Trade Union and Youth organizations under its control. The increased attention paid by the WFTU to colonial affairs in recent years suggested by Dr. Jagan himself indicates the clear intention of Soviet Communism to spread disaffection throughout the colonial empire by exploiting labour troubles and in other ways, while the presence of Mr. F. Smith in the West Indies shows that that part of the world and British Guiana in particular has been singled out for a concentrated attack.

NOTE (1). At the time of its Berlin Council meeting, the WFTU had been for nearly three years under Communist control. Its primary task as defined at its Milan Congress in 1949 by the Soviet trade union leader, V. V. Kuznetsov, was to "expose the warmongers and their agents in the labour movement", a task which "in the colonial and dependent countries", was to be "combined with the call for a struggle for national liberation and independence". Kuznetsov insisted that the WFTU should work to "secure the affiliation of new members, especially trade union centres in colonial and dependent countries", and that its executive bodies should "establish close contact with the trade unions of those countries". The promise of systematic help for trade unions in the colonial and dependent countries was repeated at the meeting of the WFTU Executive Committee in Budapest in May, 1950, which also instructed the WFTU Secretariat to extend the distribution of WFTU material to Asia, Africa and Latin America, and to assist trade unions of those countries in starting and developing a trade union press.

NOTE (2). The WFDY is a Communist-controlled organization which has close links with the WFTU. It has always shown a close interest in colonial problems. Thus, its Executive Council reported at its Second Congress in Budapest in September, 1949: "The Imperialists preparations for war have been stepped up. Everything is being put into motion in order to drown in blood the irresistible movement of the colonial peoples for national liberations."

NOTE (3). The Communist-controlled Women's International Democratic Federation has also shown a close interest in colonial problems. In accordance with the accepted Communist line a resolution passed at its Asian Conference at Peking in 1949 declared: "The WIDF leads women of all the Imperialist countries in their struggle against their Governments for the immediate termination of the colonial wars and armed intervention in Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaya, Burma, and the southern part of Korea."

* The name should be Ramsarran

[Editor's Note: The White Paper also has Appendices B and C which consist of the texts of the British Government's statement and the Governor's broadcast of 9th October, 1953.

*** Throughout this text, the White paper refers to the **People's** Progressive Party as **Peoples'** Progressive Party.]*

[Source: Cheddi Jagan Research Centre, Guyana]

70. TELEGRAM (No. 140) FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR SAVAGE
(21 October 1953)

TOP SECRET

INWARD TELEGRAM

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

TO BRITISH GUIANA (Sir. A. Savage)

Cypher (O.T.P.)

Sent 21st October, 1953. 12.45 hrs.

EMERGENCY

TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL

Personal No. 140

Your telegrams Nos. 155 and 156

Your decision whenever you put it into effect would of course have my full support. But I would like you to consider (and I hope consult with Minister of State about) alternative of restricting movements of persons in question to some limited area unless and until they take overt action clearly justifying their arrest to prevent bloodshed.

2. Detention on the eve of the debate on the White Paper might swing some speakers from a neutral or even mildly favourable line to one of criticism unless Parliament were given convincing reasons why action not found necessary over last twelve days had to be taken immediately before Parliament was to discuss conduct of party leaders. Neither your telegram nor most recent press reports received here disclose any deterioration in security or other grounds likely to satisfy Parliament.

3. Other considerations are that:-

(a) restriction would be less likely to set back hitherto relatively favourable reception of our action in the West Indies and other Colonial territories; and

(b) if moderate element within P.P.P. has any prospect of ousting extremists from leadership it is preferable that they should be given the opportunity of achieving this rather than taking over in the absence of the extremists.

4. If you still feel that arrests or, as I should prefer, restrictions are essential, I hope that you will be able to defer action by just over twenty four hours so that I may tell Parliament of your decision in my speech on White Paper. I should want then to give Parliament all available evidence that detention or restriction was necessary to prevent critical deterioration in public order. Please let me have any such material by emergency telegram.

/Distribution:-

71. TELEGRAM (No. 160) FROM GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA TO SECRETARY OF STATE

(22 October, 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Code D. 22nd October, 1953.

R. 22nd ,, ,, 06.00 hrs.

EMERGENCY

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

PERSONAL No. 160

Your telegram Personal No. 143

I have no objection if you say that the Attorney General is at present considering possibility of preferring charges against those concerned in plan for incendiarism.

2. For your information great difficulty is being experienced in obtaining sufficient evidence to prefer charges as agents are unwilling, through fear of intimidation, to make written statements or to give evidence in court and we are unwilling to disclose source of information for security reasons. Also information regarding abnormal sale of petrol was given too late to enable police to take action to discover where petrol was being taken.

/Distribution:-

72. TELEGRAM (No. 164) FROM GOVERNOR SAVAGE TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY

(23 October 1953)

TOP SECRET

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

CYPHER (O.T.P.)

D. 23rd October, 1953

R. 23rd ,, ,, 19.00 hrs.

EMERGENCY

TOP SECRET

PERSONAL No. 164

Your telegram No. 140.

As you are aware the arrival of the overseas forces in the Colony caused an immediate and marked improvement in the general situation here. However after the first shock had passed, extremist elements started to regain confidence and I am informed that they are now taking steps to form an active resistance organisation to undermine public order and to obstruct any efforts the interim Government may make to restore normal conditions and economic stability in the Colony.

2. This organisation, which at present is in skeleton form, is engaged in forming groups throughout the Colony who are prepared to carry out party orders irrespective of the consequences to themselves, There is no evidence to show that such groups are in possession of firearms or explosives or are trained in their use. It is more likely that they will be used to propagate a policy of non-co-operation and to undermine public order by encouraging the workers to strike on sugar estates from time to time and generally to spread hatred of the British Government and to distort the motives behind the suspension of the constitution. The long-term object is to maintain the power of the P.P.P. and its contact with the masses, many of whom must of course resent the action taken.

3. Thus although the situation in the sugar industry has shown some improvement recently, and in fact the industry may well return to normal in the near future except for two estates, I am convinced that the general situation is deteriorating and will continue to do so unless positive action is taken to stop it.

4. Since the 9th October extremists have generally been careful to avoid committing any overt act and the only evidence we have of such act is against Mrs. Jagan, Sydney King, Balli Lachhmansingh and Ajodha Singh. Even then I am advised that the evidence which is at our disposal for prosecution, and which is summarised in my immediately following telegram, does not indicate that the persons against whom charges might be made constitute in themselves a danger to the public safety, and I am further advised that such evidence does not by itself appear to justify the making of a detention order.

5. Nevertheless I am convinced that it is essential for action to be taken now to arrest the deterioration in the present situation. In this connection I have carefully reconsidered the question of restraining the ring leaders in the light of the observations made in your telegram under reference, but while I appreciate your arguments I regret I am unable to agree to this course of action as I am advised that such restraint is unlikely to break the contact between the leaders and their followers effectively and in addition may provoke disturbances in areas where leaders concerned have wide popular support.

6. Only alternative as I see it is to detain persons named in paragraph 4, together with approximately eight others, at Atkinson Field under military guard in the hope that complete removal of the leaders will paralyse the organisation and enable us to counter with propaganda and possibly to obtain further evidence to charge any of these persons in a court, but I am advised that in view of the records and behaviour and actions of the persons in the past and of the deterioration in the situation, their detention would be justified under Section 13(l)(c) of Emergency Order to **prevent** them from acting in any manner prejudicial to public safety, order or defence.

7. Neither I nor my advisers are of the opinion that it is any good depending on a split in the party to solve the problem, even partly.

8. As stated in my telegram No. 162 I do not however propose to take action indicated above until the Minister has consulted with you.

Distribution:-

H.453

Secretary of State

P.S. to Minister of State

Sir T. Lloyd

P.S. to Parliamentary U/S

Sir C. Jeffries

Sir H. Poynton

Mr. K. H. Davies

Mr. P. R. Maynard

Mr. P. Rogers

Mr. N. L. Mayle

Mr. J. W. Vernon

Mr. C. Y. Carstairs

Mr. R. J. Vile

Mr. B. D. Edmonds

Mr. C. J. J. T. Barton

Mr. D. G. Gordon-Smith

Mr. J. N. A. Armitage-Smith

Mr. W. I. J. Wallace

Mr. S.H. Evans

Commonwealth Relations Office - Mr. R.C. Ormerod

Air Ministry - Mr. S. Nicholls (A.I. 1)

73. TELEGRAM (No. 165) FROM GOVERNOR SAVAGE TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
(23 October 1953)

TOP SECRET

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

CYPHER (O.T.P.)

D. 23rd October, 1953

R. 23rd ,, ,, 19.10 hrs.

EMERGENCY

TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL

Personal No. 165

My immediately preceding telegram No. 164.

Statements have been obtained disclosing contravention of directions given by the Governor under Emergency Order prohibiting the holding of meetings without permission by Janet Jagan, Sidney King, Balli Lachmansingh and Adjodha Singh.

2. The evidence against Janet Jagan is to the effect that on Saturday 10th October 1953 at Grove and at Diamond, East Bank Demerara on three separate occasions she addressed a crowd of persons mostly sugar workers, urging their support for the P.P.P. and requesting them to go on strike as from Monday 12th October, 1953.

3. The evidence against Sydney King is to the effect that on Sunday 11th October, 1953 he stopped his car in which there were two other men at Plaisance, East Coast Demerara, and later that day at Ogle, East Coast Demerara, at both of which places a small crowd collected and he was seen to distribute hand bills purporting to be issued by P.P.P. calling for a general strike in the Colony, urging boycott of goods from the United Kingdom and referring to the troops sent to the Colony as "enemy troops" and as "foreign troops".

4. On 17th October, 1953 Sydney King was also seen at Enmore, East Coast Demerara, collecting money in a tin from persons in a crowd of 50 to 60 persons.

5. The evidence against Balli Lachmansingh and Adjodha Singh is to the effect that they were jointly engaged on Monday 19th October 1953 at Rossignol, West Coast Berbice, in addressing a crowd of about 300 persons, mostly sugar workers at plantation Blairmont, urging them to go on strike. Until then the workers at plantation Blairmont had not come out on strike, but after Balli Lachmansingh and Adjodha Singh had addressed the crowd, some of the workers went on strike.

6. While statements referred to above disclose prima facie cases against persons named therein, yet in view of the fact that there exists a real fear of victimisation of prosecuting witnesses, it appears to be quite pointless to institute proceedings in a court of law.
/Distribution:

74. TELEGRAM (No. 166) FROM GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA TO SECRETARY OF STATE

(23 October 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Code D. 23rd October, 1953

R. 24th ,, ,, 00.30 hrs.

IMMEDIATE
CONFIDENTIAL
PERSONAL No. 166

Addressed to S. of S.
Repeated to Comptroller, Development and Welfare Organisation, West Indies No. 64

Your Personal telegram No. 145.

I have had under reconsideration future policy as regards our intelligence and propaganda services in the light of present and potential future intentions of the extremists to the development of a resistance movement here. Our police intelligence service needs strengthening and reorganisation, while our bureau of public information has lost the confidence of the Press and public. There is no real contact between management and employees on the sugar estates, whilst commerce and industry generally have made little progress in public relations or in the use of propaganda.

2. I consider that we require a top flight intelligence and propaganda service in an independent supervisory and coordination organisation being fed by and assisting similar services in the above fields. I realise the difficulty in obtaining a suitable director with experience of both intelligence work and propaganda, but I do not feel that Young would be suitable, except perhaps for a reorganised Bureau of Information.

3. I have discussed with the Minister of State who will elaborate the needs of the situation on his return to London.

Distribution:

H.631

Secretary of State

P.S. to Minister of State

Sir T. Lloyd

P.S. to Parliamentary U/S

Sir C. Jeffries

Sir H. Poynton

Mr. K. H. Davies

Mr. P. R. Maynard

Mr. P. Rogers

Mr. N. L. Mayle

Mr. J. W. Vernon

Mr. C. Y. Carstairs

Mr. R. J. Vile

Mr. B. D. Edmonds

Mr. C. J. J. T. Barton

Mr. D. G. Gordon-Smith

Mr. J. N. A. Armitage-Smith

Mr/ W. I. J. Wallace

Commonwealth Relations Office - Mr. R.C. Ormerod.

Air Ministry - Mr. S. Nicholls (A.I.1.)

75. TELEGRAM (No. 171) FROM GOVERNOR SAVAGE TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
(25 October 1953)

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

En Clair D. 25th October, 1953

R. 25th ,, ,, 19.45 hrs.

IMMEDIATE

PERSONAL No.171

At 15.30 hours local time 24th October following persons were reported to be holding an illegal meeting near plantation Blairmont and were detained for questioning by local police:-

Sydney King, Martin Carter, Rory Westmaas, Balli Lachhmansingh and Sookdeo Kawall.

2. At 20.00 hours local time same day following persons were reported to be holding illegal meeting on Plantation Blairmont and were also detained for questioning by local police:-
Adjodha Singh and Kutain.

3. Police have obtained statements which are being considered by Attorney-General. Police consider that there is good evidence that illegal meetings were being held.

4. All persona named are at present in custody.

5. There has not yet been any reaction to detention of persona named and local police did not require to call in military assistance. I shall report further tomorrow.

6. A police sergeant was driven off Plantation Albion whilst trying to make an arrest on 24th October. Assistance of military patrol which was in area was requested and police subsequently made the arrest with military support. This was a purely criminal matter and had no connection with events described above.

Distribution:-

H.631

Secretary of State

P.S. to Minister of State

Sir T. Lloyd

P.S. to Parliamentary U/S

Sir C. Jeffries

Sir H. Poynton

Mr. K. H. Davies

Mr. P. R. Maynard

Mr. P. Rogers

Mr. N. L. Mayle

Mr. J. W. Vernon

Mr. C. Y. Carstairs

Mr. R. J. Vile
Mr. B. D. Edmonds
Mr. C. J. J. T. Barton
Mr. D. G. Gordon-Smith
Mr. J. N. A. Armitage-Smith
Mr. W. I. J. Wallace
Mr. S.H. Evans

Commonwealth Relations Office - Mr. R.C. Ormerod
Air Ministry - Mr. S. Nicholls (A.I. 1)

**76. NOTE FROM N.L. MAYLE TO P. ROGERS ON MEETING BETWEEN
REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COLONIAL OFFICE AND THE BRITISH GUIANA
OPPOSITION**

(26 October 1953)

Mr. Rogers

I attach a brief Note on the meeting which Lord Munster had with the British Guiana "Opposition" on Saturday morning*.

2. This delegation is very anxious to see the Secretary of State, and I strongly recommend that they should be given an interview.

(N.L. Mayle)
26th October, 1953

*[Editor's Note: * 24 October 1953]*

CO 1031-1183

Lord Munster saw the members of the British Guiana "Opposition" this morning. Mr. Rogers and I were present. The "Opposition" consisted of Mr. Fernandes, Mr. Luckhoo, Mr. Dare, Mr. Kendall and Mr. Carter. Mr. Kendall is a member of the House of Assembly, and Mr. Luckhoo, a lawyer, is a member of the State Council. Mr. Fernandes and Mr. Dare are prominent local business men.

All of the members spoke to the aims and activities of the P.P.P. and the way in which the P.P. P. Ministers had used their position in the Government to strengthen the influence of the Party throughout the country and to overthrow democratic Government. They outlined the attempts to get control of labour, the Rice Marketing Board, Local Government, and the successful efforts made to subvert the youth through youth organisations on communist pattern.

They gave details of particular incidents underlining the seriousness of the situation. Mr. Fernandes said that he was stoned at a meeting, while the police looked on. Threats had been made against all of them in the name of supporters of the P.P.P., and Mr. Kendall had felt it necessary to get authority to carry a revolver because of the threats made against him personally. They intimidated the workers, telling them that they must join the

"Government" trade unions, that is to say the pirate trade unions under the control of Ministers which had not succeeded in getting support from the workers in various industries before the Government came into power. Both Mr. Fernandes and Mr. Luckhoo stressed that the present situation had arisen because the communist P.P.P. had been allowed to establish itself and flourish in the Colony over a period of years and they both urged that it was necessary to take some action against the Party. Mr. Luckhoo suggested that it might be necessary to stop communists from voting in elections.

In connection with the economic effects of the regime, reference was made to the reduction in imports by 10 percent, the reduction in the turnover of trade in Georgetown by 10 percent, the cost of the sugar strike, the application for \$12m. riot insurance received by only four companies and the discouragement of outside capital. In this connection Mr. Luckhoo mentioned the case of the Kraft Cheese Company who were proposing to set up a centre in British Guiana for manufacturing their product, which would include keeping their own dairy farm. They had asked for some assurances about remitting profits and so forth, and Mr. Luckhoo, who had been acting for them, had tried in vain to get a reply from Dr. Jagan. The Company had now given up the idea of coming to British Guiana and were making enquiries elsewhere.

Mr. Luckhoo incidentally gave some useful figures of the wages increases which the M.P.C.A. had obtained for the Sugar Industry. Last year they totalled \$3m. and this year \$1m. The M.P.C.A. he said had also got material benefits for the other industries which it represented. An important point came up in connection with the proposed legislation for the compulsory recognition of trade unions. Mr. Luckhoo, in referring to the proposed labour legislation, made the point that for recognition under that legislation the union would require 52 percent only of the votes cast on the particular issue of representation and not 52 percent of the votes of all the workers in the unions and that by their usual method of intimidation, the Ministers have been able to see to it that their union received the necessary percentage of the votes.

Mr. Carter devoted himself to the future. He said, and it was generally agreed by the members of the delegation, that something must be done about the P.P.P. supporters in the Police and Civil Service. Mr. Kendall made the point that it was no longer safe to promote policemen from the ranks. Mr. Luckhoo had previously complained about the support which the government public relations department gave to Dr. Jagan, and referred to them as having given them a "Hitler" build-up. Mr. Carter thought that it would be essential to make changes in the posts of the Head of the Department and possibly another senior post. Mr. Carter stressed the need for some spectacular action during the Interim Government, especially as regards housing, and also the importance of strengthening the Secret Security Department of the Police. He took the opportunity however to pay tribute to Colonel Ward, the Police Commissioner.

Another point which was made by Mr. Carter and generally agreed by the others was that Mr. Burnham is now challenging Dr. Jagan as the Head of the Party; that he was more extreme and dangerous than Dr. Jagan; and that he was the man who would have to be carefully watched in the future.

**77. LETTER FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY,
PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE**
(26 October 1953)

26th October, 1953

Thank you for your letter of the 13th October about the possible Chairman for the Commission of Enquiry for British Guiana.

I think your suggestion about a Law Lord is excellent. I should be most grateful if you would send me a list of suitable Law Lords; and if, when you consult the Lord Chancellor, you can persuade him to give us a fair wind when it comes to letting a Law Lord go, that too will be a very great help.

(SGD) O. LYTTTELTON

[Handwritten] P.S. The man above all others that we should like wd be Norman Birkett. Could you possibly extract him from Gavin.

[To:] The Right Honourable
The Marquess of Salisbury, K.C.

78. TELEGRAM (No. 157) FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA

(26 October 1953)

SECRET

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

TO BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Cypher (O.T.P.)

Sent 26th October, 1953. 20.45 hrs.

EMERGENCY
SECRET AND PERSONAL
PERSONAL No. 157

Your telegram secret and Personal No. 173.

I agree that in circumstances described you are fully justified issuing Detention Orders against persons named in your telegram and I fully support your action.

2. I suggest you should issue announcement giving such reasons for your action as you deem expedient immediately on arrests being made, repeating to me forthwith at press rates.

3. I should be grateful for your advice on what reply should be given to any questions in House of Commons about the arrests and the Detention Orders.

Distribution:

H.631

Secretary of State

P.S. to Minister of State

Sir T. Lloyd

P.S. to Parliamentary U/S

Sir C. Jeffries

Sir H. Poynton

Mr. K. H. Davies

Mr. P. R. Maynard

Mr. P. Rogers

Mr. N. L. Mayle

Mr. J. W. Vernon

Mr. C. Y. Carstairs

Mr. R. J. Vile

Mr. B. D. Edmonds

Mr. C. J. J. T. Barton

Mr. D. G. Gordon-Smith

Mr. J. N. A. Armitage-Smith

Mr. W. I. J. Wallace

Mr. S.H. Evans

Commonwealth Relations Office - Mr. R.C. Ormerod

79. LETTER TO PHILIP ROGERS OF THE COLONIAL OFFICE FROM GOVERNOR OF BARBADOS

(26 October 1953)

GOVERNMENT HOUSE
BARBADOS.

26th October, 1953.

Dear Philip,

I expect you will be considering the appointment of one or more West Indians to the Commission on British Guiana's constitution.

It occurs to me that a most suitable person would be Sir Clement Malone, late Chief Justice of the Windward Islands, who now resides in Grenada.

He is a very wise old man who is known and respected throughout this region. He is still very alert mentally (he is acting on the West Indian Court of Appeal now sitting in Barbados) and I do not know of a better man for the job, white or coloured.

Yours ever

(Signed) Bill

[To:] P. ROGERS, ESQUIRE, C.M.G.

80. NOTE AND MEMORANDUM FROM LIONEL LUCKHOO TO SECRETARY OF STATE

(26 October 1953)

1. HANDWRITTEN NOTE

St. James Court
Buckingham Gate
S.W.1

26th October, 1953

Dear Sir,

Will you permit me to send you a copy of a draft memorandum which I commenced to prepare in British Guiana. It is not complete, but nevertheless feeling that it may be of some interest to you, I enclose a copy herewith.

We are hoping - (the small group from BG) - that it may be possible to meet you before we leave England.

Respectfully,

(Signed) Lionel Luckhoo

[To:] Hon. Oliver Lyttelton

2. MEMORANDUM

Draft/

MEMORANDUM by Lionel Luckhoo

INTRODUCTION

1. To appreciate the position in British Guiana, it is necessary to understand the peoples of the Colony and to study their background. They cannot be judged by the standards of England, for they have not passed through the varying stages of political development.

The Indians and Africans (major race groups) are simple folk, unaware of political guile and cunning, whose loyalty to the Throne springs readily and genuinely as was evidenced in the Colony during the recent Coronation celebrations. The people are not Communists, and until recent years very few ever heard of the word "communism".

Ignorance plus poor living conditions provided the ideal setting for Communist agents such as the Jagans, Burnham, King, etc. to sow their seeds. Their planned attack made through the People's Progressive Party proceeded in this manner:

(a) Sympathy for the workers: sowing seeds of discontent; exaggerating their grievances, and making the most extravagant promises if the workers would only support them.

(b) Belittling any attempts made by employers to improve conditions and wages by ridiculing their efforts, twisting the facts, and advising strikes and unrest.

(c) Their next step was to make the workers feel that they were virtually slaves and that workers in countries like Russia enjoyed untold benefits. They then flooded the country with books, literature etc. all freely distributed, which extolled the might of the USSR and proclaimed revolution as the solution to all troubles. Groups were formed in each district and those with little education were courted and injected with the ideas that they should become crusaders. To the average worker in British Guiana, the written word possesses (*sic*) some peculiar sanctity - "It is written in the books, so it must be true." They read, they heard, they believed.

(d) With the strong hard core of Communists, the P.P.P. worked on the basis of cells and groups were commenced (*sic*) in homes, streets, districts, villages, and in towns. They worked intensively and organised effectively. They preached their crusade of lies and impossible promises. They made the workers feel that they were unchained slaves and that they, as liberators would free them. Their theme cry was "We shall soon have the masses (*sic*) riding the classes." To the "have-nots" they promised that they would share the possessions of the capitalists. Then came the general elections and, attracted to this new teaching, the P.P.P. was swept into power.

What has happened since then shows clearly that this party dominated by Communists, has one aim only and that is the overthrow of the State, the severance of all connections with the British, and the establishment of links with Moscow. Their plan can be clearly determined by a consideration of the below.

DISLOYALTY

As British subjects, we enjoy the protection of the British Government and, in return, we give allegiance to the Throne. Allegiance and protection are reciprocal. The Ministers of the P.P.P. and their adherents have sought every opportunity to belittle the Sovereign and to ridicule established customs.

In reply to Her Majesty's message of good wishes, it was pointed out to the Ministers that it was proper to record a vote of affirmation of loyalty to the Throne. I am told personally by Her Majesty's Attorney General and the Speaker of the House that they prepared such a motion and endeavoured to induce the Ministers to have them table this motion. They refused. It was left to the Leader of the Minority Group to put forward such a motion, on which motion none of the P.P.P. members spoke. This might be regarded as a negative act showing their approach in such matters. As to their positive acts, there is abundant proof that at street meetings, the Ministers have declared that the Oath of Allegiance, which they took, was one of compulsion by law but not one which had any moral significance. Further that their lips uttered the spoken words, but that their hearts were not in consonance with the expression. Dr. Jagan, in his first broadcast as Leader of the House, said: I owe allegiance only to British Guiana and to my party." This declaration has often been repeated

by the P.P.P. members in the legislature, namely that allegiance was owed to no one other than to their party and to the Colony. [Three words illegible] the members of the P.P.P. made a public issue the invitation from Jamaica to send delegates to welcome Her Majesty the Queen when she visits that island in November. They refused to name any delegates or to vote any money to send such representatives. The puerile excuse that there was no money caused a loud cry of protest which came from all sections of the community.

The Leader of the Minority Group moved yet another motion asking for the House to reaffirm its loyalty and to send two delegates to Jamaica. This motion was defeated by the P.P.P.'s opposition. Yet again, Burnham, in the City Council, voted against the motion of loyalty to the Throne, which was moved on the 19th October, 1953.

At public meetings, the P.P.P. have openly urged the overthrow of the present State and capitalists and included in such sentiments criticism of the spending of money for "entertaining royalty". There was one particular incident on the West Coast of Demerara when it is alleged that a Union Jack and Coronation Flag of Her Majesty the Queen were pulled down and banners and placards and photographs of Stalin were prominently displayed.

When the Princess Royal visited British Guiana, the P.P.P. members displayed placards bearing the inscription: "Limey go Home". This insulting expression was commended in public by the Ministers. Mr. Khan, an active member of the P.P.P. and an elected member of the House of Assembly, on Wednesday, the 17th of June, 1953, spoke as follows:

"Sir, in her message to the Members of this Legislature and to the people of the Colony of British Guiana, which was read by His Excellency the Governor at the State opening of the Legislature, and which was read by Your Honour today, the Queen has said that she will watch the progress of British Guiana with deep and sustained interest. I do sincerely hope that the Queen will not watch us with the same interest as her ancestors, including her late father, watched the progress of the peoples of the Colonies in the past. I also do hope that the Queen will watch our affairs as well as those of the people of Malaya, Kenya, the Sudan and other colonial territories, in a different way from the way she has been watching them since the death of her father."

(Copies of the *Hansard* report and various newspaper cuttings support the statements above made.)

It cannot be denied that by action and by word and what they did and by what they did not do that the Jagans, Burnham, King, etc. were not bearing allegiance to the Throne and were indoctrinating the workers with such views as to turn them from their true allegiance to the Throne. Their subsequent publication of verse: "Keep the Red Flag Flying" and pamphlets terming Her Majesty's troops as "foreign troops" and "enemies of the people British Guiana" could only have one aim and that the severance all ties and connections with the British Commonwealth of Nations. This is but one facet - the most important one - in self-evident pattern which aims at Communist domination of British Guiana - the creatin (*sic*) of unrest and chaos which would give the leaders of the P.P.P. absolute power and control.

To turn to the other facets, these may be summarized as follows:

1. Building up of a strong body of public opinion in their favour and favouring revolutionary ideas by sowing seeds of hate and injecting into the masses opposition and evil ideas

relating to the European section of the community. They laughed and expressed approval by silence when Priests were assaulted by inflamed mobs.

2. They sought to clothe themselves with absolute power, as evidenced by the only legislation which they endeavoured to pass during their five months in office. (Security of tenure ordinance which was an effort to dispossess landlords of their lands and the revocation of *[illegible word]* execution, a relic of the Roman-Dutch system which provided a summary form of seizure and sale). Again, their labour bills seeking to effect compulsory recognition of trade unions could have only one purpose: the controlling of the working class movement completely dominating it to serve their own ends.

They followed the Lenin formula which says "We must be able to resort to all sorts of stratagems, manoeuvres, illegal methods, evasions and subterfuges only so as to get into the trade unions, to remain in them, and to carry on communist work within them at all costs".

Just as how the communist aim is the penetration of trade unions which should be followed by the unity of all workers in a single communist-controlled organisation, similarly the P.P.P. set about destroying free trade unions and setting up a few communist-controlled organisations.

In true communist style, the role of the trade unions is no longer to protect their membership but to carry into effect the decisions of the ruling party - the P.P.P.

Further, in repealing the essential services ordinance, they were seeking to have the whip-hand which would give them the right to call out essential workers from their work, without notice, and thereby create further disorder and confusion.

3. The Ministers of the Government were the ones who succeeded in calling a Government strike which paralyzed the sugar industry and they did this by asking the workers to support the Government by going on strike. Workers such as the rice workers at Mahaicony and Abary were forced to join the B.G. Labor (*sic*) Union, although they were members of the M.P.C.A. because Burnham, a Minister, told them the B.G. Labor (*sic*) Union was a Government Union.

4. Their planning was not short-termed. They intended to convert the Colony into a Red State and youth organizations and peace movements were started with Stalin and Malenkov as heroes and their banners and buttons proudly displayed. Classes were set up in which the youth of the country received night lessons from the Ministers and others, all organized by the brain behind this Red movement, Janet Jagan. Dialectical Materialism and an Introductory Course for Students of Marxism was the most important course on the study agenda. Burnham, as Minister of Education, proclaimed that he would divorce the control of religious bodies from the schools and that all schools, private and public, would be subject to a socialist course of education. He was endeavouring (*sic*) also to institute radio broadcasts to all schools, in which the theme would be civics and party politics.

THE RESULT

This web which the P.P.P. was spinning was aimed at destroying allegiance, breeding hate, clothing themselves with power, dominating the labour movement, indoctrinating the youth of the country and, lastly, to win the support of the Police Force which was the sole

instrument between themselves and absolute dictatorship of the country. It was in this setting, with the Police falling prey to their persuasion, with mob intimidation running rife, with insecurity and threats in the offing that the peoples (*sic*) of the country, who feared for its future, welcomed the coming of Her Majesty's forces and the proposed suspension of the Constitution. It was not the many dominating the few but the few intimidating the many to the point where one feared to express a contrary view to any dictum from the P.P.P. It might be useful to consider whether this was the growth of new ideas in a country so far removed from Moscow, that is, whether it was Socialism or Communism of a local type, or whether it was part of a much wider plan dictated from Moscow and on an international basis. To do so, it would be necessary to consider the lives and actions of the chief adherents and the rulers of the P.P.P.

Janet Jagan.

The P.P.P. was formed by Janet Jagan who at all stages has been the inspiration and the leader of the crusade towards Communist ends.

In the Legislative Council as reported in the *Hansard*, her husband, Cheddi Jagan, was called upon to deny that the Secretary (Janet Jagan) was trained in America as a Communist Agent and that she was a member of the Young Communist League, the same organization to which the notorious Dr. Fuchs belonged. To this statement Cheddi Jagan refused to reply although his attention was again subsequently drawn to it. It has been ascertained that Janet Jagan is a Polish-Jewess whose family name is Rosenberg.

She married Cheddi Jagan in America, then a dental student, and commenced her activities in British Guiana by undertaking social work, especially among the Indians on the Estates. She came into prominence when it was observed that whenever a strike broke out, she was always on the scene and without ever attempting to provide a solution, would take measures to perpetuate the strike by means of setting up soup kitchens, building up the resistance morale of the strikers and generally encouraging them to stay out.

Her speeches are to a pattern, infused with hate against the British and Capitalists and she sowed seeds of bitterness and hostility to the British Sovereignty and to persons of European descent.

Her husband, Cheddi Jagan, was a very ready subject for indoctrination and in America, from reports obtained from his student contemporaries, including Dr. Lee, dental surgeon, he was always in ample funds which it is suggested came from his political group associates who were members of the Communist Party.

As a Member of the Legislative Council, his daily contributions to the debate were always destructive and were bitterly critical and hostile to what he termed "British Imperialism".

Year after year in the Legislative Council, Jagan has attacked the maintenance of a Volunteer Force in this colony. He has attacked an increase in the Police Force as well.

On January 11, 1952, (*Hansard* report) he said, speaking of the Volunteer Force: "I opposed the establishment of this Force because I did not see the necessity of it in this country. . . . we are wasting our money on a Volunteer Force."

He was always opposed in the Legislative Council to Capital and to large industries, such as sugar and bauxite.

On April 13, 1951 (*Hansard*) when the whole colony was disturbed by persistent rumours of a contemplated Cuba-United Kingdom trade pact which would have affected the preference obtained on sugar, the LegCo considered a motion to protest against conclusion of the pact without prior consultation and agreement with the British Guiana Government.

All members of the LegCo spoke in favor (*sic*) and agreed, because without a market for our sugar, thousands of our workers would be out of work or have to accept a cut in wages.

This is what he said: "It is true we are speaking of the sugar workers, and when we think of the sugar workers, we are ways thinking that the more money they get, the better it is for their welfare; but at the same time, we have to keep in mind that this country is being run not only for the sugar workers." He went on to say: "Sugar is the greatest weakness in the economy of the West Indies and British Guiana, and the sooner we stop concentrating so much on sugar . . . the better."

He repeatedly criticized the British Rule and on January 5, 1951, when His Excellency the Governor was booed during the budget debate, this is what Jagan said (*Hansard*) : "Sir, I notice that certain Honourable Members deplored the fact that last evening you were booed on your way from this Council. As a representative of His Majesty's Government in this colony and the symbol of the British Rule here, a rule which has been responsible for a great deal of misery in this Colony, no doubt you will realize that what occurred last evening is merely a symptom of what is public opinion today."

He has several times admitted to U.S. newspapermen that he is a communist, but he prefers to shelter under the term "Socialist". On many occasions in the Legislative Council he has made his position clear.

On January 9, 1952, during the Estimates meeting, Jagan was attacked about his Communist ideology, Jagan replied (*Hansard*): The Honourable Member (Daniel Debedin) is always referring to my ideology. . . . the Honourable Member is trying to criticize our ideology but **we** are sustained in our views."

On January 11, 1952, after John Carter had referred to Police methods behind the Iron Curtain, Jagan was stung to the quick. He said he took exception to the Honourable Member's "slandering of the Soviet Union - the Peoples' Democracy".

And again, in February, 1953, in a verbal exchange with Lionel Luckhoo in the Legislative Council, he screamed that the coming elections would decide if the people were for or against Communism. That would be the test.

At public meetings his words on approach are very often revolutionary. He was invited as an honored (*sic*) guest behind the Iron Curtain in 1952 visiting East Berlin to attend an International Youth Conference held under Communist auspices, and attended the World Federation of Trade Union Council in Berlin, as a delegate. As leader of the P.P.P., he commenced a colony-wide campaign with thousands of Communist papers and books, most of which were printed behind the Iron Curtain. These books extolled the might and glory and many were openly seditious. Arising out of this and because I saw only too clearly, as President of the Man-Power Citizens' Association the havoc that was being created in

twisting the minds of the semi-illiterate in the Sugar Estates, I moved the motion for the banning of Subversive Literature.

I quoted in the Legislative Council from some forty different books which had been distributed freely in most cases and at a nominal charge in other cases. The Communist literature filled with hate and propaganda was flooding the country. Publications such as the West Indian Newsletter, a Communist publication, were dumped by the thousands in the Estates and were aimed at stirring the people to revolution.

Jagan endeavored (sic) to get other well known Communist agents as Billy Strachen (*sic*) and Ferdinand Smith to come and help in the crusade. They were banned by the Governor-in-Council and. Jagan moved a motion in the Legislative Council condemning this ban. His motion failed.

The Jagans gathered to their bosom other well-known and self-confessed Communists such as Rory Westmaas, Rudy Luck and Sydney King and Burnham. Rudy Luck and Westmaas were notorious for their Communist activities in London where in private and in public they sought every opportunity to decry the British and to preach the doctrines of Marx and Lenin.

Westmaas has recently returned from the Iron Curtain where, accompanied by another Communist, Ramcharran, they attended the Communist-organized International Youth Congress in Bucharest. They are being further trained in "peace" activities, and it is publicized that other youths in the colony will be afforded the opportunity of visits behind the Iron Curtain in the near future.

Burnham

While studying in England, Burnham was courted by the Communists there and invited to visit Czechoslovakia and Roumania, which countries he visited at their expense. He was President of the West Indian Students' Union, Vice-President of the London branch of the Communist Caribbean Labour Congress, a delegate on two occasions to the International Union of Students Council in Prague and Paris, and at the World Youth Festival in Czechoslovakia in 1947, he was the leader of the five West Indian delegates.

Burnham is an atheist and refused to permit his only child to be baptized.

King

Sydney King was another honoured guest behind the Iron Curtain. He attended the World Federation of Trade Unions in Vienna and Hungary in February, 1953, and when he returned in April, 1953, he gave expression to a highly seditious speech which was reported in the *Daily Argosy* (cutting attached*). His speeches abroad were printed in the journal issued by the Caribbean Labour Congress and his opposition to British and Bookers are quoted therein.

At the victory parade after the P.P.P. had succeeded, Russian banners and portraits were prominent. They carried portraits of Stalin, Mao Tse Tung and Melenkov.

Now the youths are being indoctrinated. Throughout the colony the Pioneer Youth Movement after the pattern of Red youth movements, is being spread and the chief organizer is Janet Jagan who, together with the Ministers, visits these groups and gives

them lessons and lectures on dialectical materialism. Instead of five or six Jagans or Burnhams, they are sowing the seeds for five or six thousand Burnhams and Jagans.

*[Editor's Note: * The newspaper clipping is not attached in this edition.]*

81. RULES MADE BY THE GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA FOR THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON DETAINED PERSONS

(26 October 1953)

No. 2 of 1953

BRITISH GUIANA

RULES MADE UNDER THE EMERGENCY ORDER

UNDER SECTION 13(4) OF THE EMERGENCY ORDER I HEREBY MAKE THE FOLLOWING RULES: -

1. These Rules may be cited as the Emergency (Advisory Committee) Rules, 1953.

2. In these Rules -

"the committee" means an advisory committee appointed by the Governor under Section 13(2) of the Emergency Order; "order" means an Order made by the Governor under section 13(1) of the Emergency Order.

3. Any person with respect to whom an order has been made may, within seven days from the date on which the order is served upon him, submit in writing his objections against the order to the Chairman of the Committee.

4. (1) An objector shall be entitled to be heard in support of his objections in person or by counsel, solicitor or agent.

(2) The Committee, as soon as practicable after any objections have been referred to them, appoint a time and place for considering the objections, and shall give notice thereof to the objector, and also, if any objector is detained, to the person in whose custody the objector is, and such person shall cause the objector to be brought before the Committee at the time and place so appointed.

5. (1) The Chairman shall convene the Committee as soon as practicable after any objections have been referred to them.

(2) The Committee shall regulate their own procedure, and after consideration of the objections shall make a written report to the Governor of their recommendations with respect to the objections.

Made this 26th day of October, 1953.

ALFRED SAVAGE
Governor

82. TELEGRAM (No. 173) FROM GOVERNOR SAVAGE TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
(26 October 1953)

TOP SECRET

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Cypher (O.T.P.)
D. 26th October, 1953
R. 26th ,, ,, 18.00 hrs.

EMERGENCY
SECRET AND PERSONAL
PERSONAL No.173

My telegram Personal No.171.

Statements obtained from eye witnesses reveal case against persons arrested for holding meeting in contravention of Emergency Orders. However, police advise that most widespread fear of victimisation exists and in consequence some statements only obtained on the understanding that witnesses not required to give evidence in court, and other persons likely to depart from statements for the same reasons if called as witnesses. I am therefore advised that if cases are brought, court acquittal appears inevitable.

It is, however, becoming increasingly clear that extremist leaders are determined to undermine public order and police have statements to show there have been fresh acts of intimidation. In addition attempt was made to derail main line train in vicinity of Blairmont last night and it is reported that plan of incendiarism is likely to be carried out on Plantation Skeldon.

In these circumstances, unless I hear from you to the contrary by 20.00 hours G.M.T. I propose to issue Detention Orders against the following active leaders:

King, Carter, Westmaas, Balli Lachhmansingh, Adjodha Singh.

I do not consider other persons named in my telegram under reference sufficiently important to detain, nor do I consider it expedient to detain Janet Jagan and other leaders at the present.

I also propose to set up immediately Advisory Committee of three under chairmanship of the Chief Justice.

/Distribution

83. TELEGRAM (No. 175) FROM GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

(26 October 1953)

INWARD TELEGRAM
TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

SECOND AMENDMENT - SEE LAST PARAGRAPH - AMENDMENT UNDERLINED*

Amended copy. Amendment x and underlined
FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

En Clair D. 26th October, 1953
R. 27th ,, ,, 06.45 hrs.

PERSONAL No. 175

Your telegram Personal No.157.

Following is text of announcement issued to press here at 23.15 hours local time.

It is announced that Detention Orders have this day been made by His Excellency the Governor under the Emergency Order in respect of the following persons: -
Sydney Evanson King,
Richard Owen Rory Westmaas,
Martin Wylde Carter,
Samuel Mahaballi Lachhmansingh and
Adjodha Singh.

His Excellency is satisfied that the past conduct and the recent activities of these persons constitute a threat to public safety and order (?and omitted) with a view to preventing them from acting in a manner prejudicial to public safety and order, he has decided that it is necessary to make orders directing that they be apprehended and detained in safe custody at such a place in the Colony as he may from time to time direct and until such time as he may by further order direct.

The Governor has also today appointed an Advisory Committee under the Emergency Order consisting of the Chief Justice as Chairman, Mr. Carlos Gomes and Mr. H.A.M. Beckles. It will be the duty of the committee to hear objections made to it by persons against whom Detention Orders have been made and to make recommendations to the Governor in respect of such objections.

Sookdi Al Kawall and Cootain, who were arrested at Plantation Blairmont on Saturday 24th October in connection with alleged breaches of directions given under the Emergency Order, have been released by the police.

It is regretted that, owing to widespread intimidation and the fear of victimisation, grave difficulty has been experienced in obtaining the evidence of eye witnesses of offences

which have been committed. Some eye witnesses have given statements on the distinct understanding that they would not be required as witnesses in court. In these

circumstances the institution of criminal proceedings in such cases is considered to be impracticable.

[Editor's Note: The amendments (underlined) are contained only in the text of the telegram.]

84. COLONIAL OFFICE MEMORANDUM - P. ROGERS TO SIR T. LLOYD

(27 October 1953)

Sir P. Lloyd

You and the Secretary of State were consulted about (18), which cut across the line agreed with the Secretary of State earlier in the day and embodied in the draft telegram behind (18). As a result, the Governor's action was approved in (20) and we have material in (21) for a statement in the House. (22) was sent off on your instructions asking for information on one further point.

There remains to my mind one issue of importance, namely the Governor's reason for not arresting Mrs. Jagan. He says in (18) that he does not consider it expedient to detain her at present. The issue is one which we must leave to his judgment, but I confess that I am a little surprised, since there can be no doubt that she is the real brains behind the organisation. I think it would be interesting to know the Governor's reason and I suggest an enquiry as in draft.

P. Rogers

27.10.53

Sir T. Lloyd

You spoke to me about this last night and I submit an alternative draft on your directions.

P. Rogers

29.10.53

85. COLONIAL OFFICE MINUTE

(27 October 1953)

Sir T. Lloyd

You and the Secretary of State were consulted about (18)*, which cut across the line agreed with the Secretary of State earlier in the day and embodied in the draft telegram behind (18). As a result, the Governor's action was approved in (20) and we have material in (21) for a statement in the House. (22) was sent off on your instructions asking for information on one further point.

There remains to my mind one issue of importance, namely the Governor's reason for not arresting Mrs. Jagan. He says in (18) that he does not consider it expedient to detain her at present. The issue is one which we must leave to his judgement, but I confess I am a little

surprised, since there can be no doubt that she is the real brains behind the organisation. I think it would be interesting to know the Governor's reason and I suggest an enquiry as in draft.**

(Signed) P. Rogers
27.10.53

Sir T. Lloyd

You spoke to me about this last night and I submit an alternative draft* on your directions.

(Signed) P. Rogers
29.10.53

[Editor's Notes:

* *The numbers in brackets in the text refer to file numbers given to particular Colonial Office documents circulated to officials.*

** *The drafts are not included here.]*

86. TELEGRAM FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA
(27 October 1953)

TELEGRAM

TO GOVERNOR, BRITISH GUIANA

[From] Mr. Rogers* 27/10.53

Cypher

Secret and Personal

Your telegram No. 173 Personal and subsequent telegrams. It is for you alone to decide the local expediency of detaining Janet Jagan, or leaving her at liberty to make trouble, but I would like you to know that there is no reason at this end why you should not detain her whenever you are satisfied there is good cause for it. In that event I should of course wish to have full information on what can be said publicly about that cause.

Since I may be asked why when others have been detained the person who is regarded as the brains of the party is left free, I should be interested to know later the reasons which make it inexpedient in your view to detain her at present.

[Editor's note: *Philip Rogers sent this telegram on behalf of Oliver Lyttelton, Secretary of State for the Colonies.]*

87. TELEGRAM (No. 180) FROM GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA TO COLONIAL SECRETARY
(27 October 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir. A. Savage)

Code

D. 27th October, 1953.

R. 28th ,, ,, 3.15 hrs.

IMMEDIATE

PERSONAL No. 180

Your telegram No. 157, paragraph 3.

It is difficult to advise on replies without knowing what specific questions will be asked. However, my personal telegrams Nos. 164, 165, 171, 173, 175 and 181 should provide material for replies to most questions. In addition I suggest you stress the point that minimum use of Emergency Powers has been made since troops landed and that Detention Orders were only made when it became clear that persons concerned were determined to continue to undermine public order. It might be as well also to indicate that if other persons act in a similar manner, further Detention Orders will have to be made.

2. Further statements were also obtained from other workers on Plantations Port Mourant and Albion stating that, although many workers in this area resented action taken by the Government, there are still a considerable number who are willing to resume work but are afraid that their families or their crops would be damaged if they did so.

3. Police only obtained statements with great difficulty and on the understanding that persons making them would not be called as witnesses. No names given in telegram should therefore be published.

4. In addition, Deputy Commissioner of Labour visited Plantations Port Mourant and Albion week ending 25th October. Following is an extract from this report:-

"For some long time I could not believe a few persons could create such intimidation as to make a much larger number of people act contrary to their views. I have, however, changed that view and can say for certain that, at the moment, a very large number of workers would return to work but for fear of harm being done, either to their persons or to their property. I have heard of flower gardens, provision farms and rice

fields of loyal workers being destroyed. Boycott of shopkeepers has been threatened. All these things create fear in the minds of decent people."

Distribution:

H.631

Secretary of State

P.S. to Minister of State

Sir T. Lloyd
P.S. to Parliamentary U/S
Sir C. Jeffries
Sir H. Poynton
Mr. K. H. Davies
Mr. P. R. Maynard
Mr. P. Rogers
Mr. N. L. Mayle
Mr. J. W. Vernon
Mr. C. Y. Carstairs
Mr. R. J. Vile
Mr. B. D. Edmonds
Mr. C. J. J. T. Barton
Mr. D. G. Gordon-Smith
Mr. J. N. A. Armitage-Smith
Mr. W. I. J. Wallace
Mr. S.H. Evans

Commonwealth Relations Office - Mr. R.C.Ormerod

88. TELEGRAM (No. 181) FROM GOVERNOR FO BRITISH GUIANA TO SECRETARY OF STATE

(27 October 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Code D. 27th October, 1953.
R. 28th ,, ,, 02.15 hrs.

EMERGENCY
PERSONAL No. 181

Your personal telegram No. 159.

Detention Orders.

Following is summary of some statements taken by the police between 23rd October and 25th October which indicate the existence of intimidation:

(a) Ramnauth, a field worker and member of M.P.C.A. on Plantation Albion, continued to work after majority of workers went on strike. As a result one Basdeo, a P.P.P. supporter, threatened to shoot him. He reported this to the Police and next day half an acre of his rice farm was destroyed, estimated loss \$48. On 17th October his house was stoned by several known P.P.P. supporters.

(b) Monbodh, labourer on Plantation Albion, member of estate joint committee, stated that on 14th September Adjodha Singh held a meeting on the estate and encouraged people to use violence against members of the M.P.C.A. and those who were working while others were on strike. Next day he was assaulted by known P.P.P. supporters. He reported the incidents to the police but on 19th September and 21st September his house was atoned. On 23rd October he was warned that if he made further representations to M.P.C.A. on behalf of the workers something serious would happen to him.

(c). Rattan Singh, foreman in factory on Plantation Albion, continued to work after strike was called. As a result, on 13th October, he was assaulted by a lone P.P.P. agitator. He reported to the police, who have charged person concerned. On 22nd October, however, his farm was damaged with resultant estimated loss of \$250.

(d) Drepaul, boiler worker on P1antation Albion continues to work as (*corrupt grp.*)* for watchman after strike started. During September his house was stoned on several nights and on 15th October his house was broken into and property to value of \$17 was stolen.

(e) Gafoor, headman on Plantation Port Mourant, continued to work after strike started. On 17th October a section of his rice farm was destroyed and he ceased working to avoid further damage to his farm.

(f) Driver Chief Headman on Plantation Port Mourant stated rice farm of nine willing workers was damaged by P.P.P. supporters.

[Editor's note: A few words are missing here in the received telegram.]

89. THE BRITISH GUIANA CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ORDER IN COUNCIL, 1953

(28 October 1953)

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

1953 No. 1564

BRITISH GUIANA

The British Guiana (Constitution) (Amendment) (No. 2) Order in Council, 1953

Made - 28th October, 1953

At the Court at Buckingham Palace, the 28th day of October, 1953

Present,

The Queen's Most Excellent Majesty in Council

Her Majesty, in exercise of the powers reserved, by virtue of the British Guiana Act, 1928(a), in the British Guiana (Constitution) Order in Council, 1953(b) (thereinafter called

"the Principal Order"), and of all other powers enabling Her in that behalf, is pleased, by and with the advice of Her Privy Council, to order, and it is hereby ordered, as follows: -

1. (1) This Order may be cited as the British Guiana (Constitution) (Amendment) (No. 2) Order in Council, 1953, and shall be construed as one with the Principal Order.

(2) The Principal Order, the British Guiana (Constitution) (Amendment) Order in Council, 1953(c), hereinafter called "the Amending Order", and this Order may be cited together as the British Guiana (Constitution) Orders in Council, 1953, and, accordingly, subsection (2) of section 1 of the Amending Order is hereby revoked.

(3) This Order shall come into operation forthwith.

2. From the commencement of this Order, the Principal Order shall have effect as if subsection (2), except paragraph (h) thereof, and subsection (3) of section 7 of the Principal Order had not been revoked, and section 3 of the Amending Order shall be construed accordingly.

3. Her Majesty reserves to Herself, Her Heirs and Successors power, with the advice of Her to Her Privy Council to amend or revoke this Order as to Her and Them shall seem fit.

W.G. Agnew

EXPLANATORY NOTE(*This Note is not part of the Order, but is intended to indicate its general purport.*) This Order in Council revives subsection (2), except paragraph (b) thereof, and subsection (3) of section 7 of the British Guiana (Constitution) Order in Council, 1953.

90. TEXT OF ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL ORDERS OF THE BRITISH GUIANA ORDER IN COUNCIL, 1953

(28 October 1953)

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

1953 No.

BRITISH GUIANA

The British Guiana (Constitution) (Amendment) Order in Council, 1953

*Made, 1953**

Coming into Operation On a day to be appointed by the Governor under section 1 (3)

At the Court attheday of, 1953*

Present,

The Queen's Most Excellent Majesty in Council

Whereas Part II of the British Guiana (Constitution) Order in Council, 1953(a) (hereinafter called "the Principal Order"), provision is made for the constitution and functions of an Executive Council for British Guiana:

And Whereas it is expedient to amend the Principal Order as is hereinafter provided:

Now, therefore, Her Majesty, in exercise of the powers reserved by virtue of the British Guiana Act, 1928(b), in the Principal Order and of all other powers enabling Her in that behalf, is pleased by and with the advice of Her Privy Council, to order, and it is hereby ordered as follows:

1. (1) This Order may be cited as the British Guiana (Constitution) (Amendment) Order in Council, 1953, and shall be construed as one with the Principal Order.

(2) The Principal Order and this Order may be cited together as the British Guiana (Constitution) Orders in Council, 1953.

(3) This Order shall come into operation on such day as the Governor shall by writing under his hand appoint.

2. Sections 6, 18 and 19 of the Principal Order are hereby revoked, without prejudice to anything lawfully done thereunder.

3. Section 7 of the Principal Order which provides, among other things, that the Governor shall consult with the Executive Council in the exercise of all powers conferred upon him by the Principal Order, other than powers which he is by that Order directed or empowered to exercise in his discretion shall be revoked; and, accordingly, where any provision of the Order which confers any power upon the Governor contains a direction or authority to the Governor to exercise that power in his discretion, such discretion or authority shall cease to have effect, and subject to the provisions of any instructions under the Royal Sign Manual and Signet, the Governor shall have full discretion in the exercise of all powers conferred upon him by the Principal Order.

4. Section 23 of the Principal Order is hereby revoked, without prejudice to anything lawfully done thereunder, and the following section is substituted therefore: -

"Salaries of Ministers

23. (1) Ministers shall receive such salaries (if any) as the Governor may by writing under his hand appoint.

(2) Any such salary shall be in lieu of any salary to which a Minister would, but for this subsection, be entitled by virtue of being a Member of either Chamber.

(3) All such salaries (if any) shall be charged upon the revenues of the Colony and shall be paid by the Treasurer upon warrant directed to him under the hand of the Governor."

4. Her Majesty hereby reserves to Herself, her Heirs and Successors power, with the advice of Her or Their Privy Council, to amend or revoke this Order as to Her or Them shall seem fit.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This Note is not part of the Order, but is intended to indicate its general purport.)

This Order in Council revokes certain provisions of the British Guiana (Constitution) Order in Council, 1953, relating to the functions and proceedings of the Executive Council established by that Order.

*[Editor's Note: * No date is shown on this copy. This Order was made on 28 October 1953.]*

91. TEXT OF LETTER FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO LIONEL LUCKHOO

(29 October 1953)

29th October, 1953.

Thank you for your letter of the 26th October, and for the interesting memorandum which you sent me with it.

I am sorry it has not been possible to meet you this week, especially since I am now told that you will already have left to return to British Guiana when I meet your colleagues on Monday next. As I shall not be able to meet you personally, your memorandum is all the more valuable.

(Sgd.) Oliver Lyttelton

[To:] Lionel Luckhoo, Esq.

92. TELEGRAM (No. 169) FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA

(29 October 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

TO BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

En Clair

Sent 29th October, 1953 14.45 hrs.

PERSONAL No. 169

Detention of P.P.P. Leaders

Following is text of statement in the House of Commons yesterday:-

The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Oliver Lyttelton):

When the Governor announced the decision to suspend the Constitution, the People's Progressive Party called for a general strike. The leaders of the P.P.P. followed up the call by touring the sugar estates and trying to get more of the workers to strike. Intimidation and threats have been used by the party against workers unwilling to strike. There are specific cases of workers having their rice farms destroyed, their houses stoned by known P.P.P. supporters, of their being assaulted, and their lives being threatened by P.P.P. members.

The Deputy Commissioner of Labour in a recent report said: -

"For some long time I could not believe a few persons could create such intimidation as to make a much larger number of people not act contrary to their views. I have, however, changed that view and can say for certain that, at the moment, a very large number of workers would return to work but for fear of harm being done, either to their persons or to their property."

On 24th October, seven members of the party, including one ex-Minister, Mr. King, were detained for questioning by the local police on reports that they had held illegal meetings on or near a sugar estate. Two members were later released.

The Governor has announced that owing to widespread intimidation and fear of victimisation, grave difficulty has been experienced in obtaining the evidence of eye witnesses of the illegal meetings which the members are alleged to have conducted. Some eye witnesses have given statements on the understanding that they would not be required as witnesses in court.

The Governor decided that five of them, including the ex-Minister should be detained under the Emergency Order on the ground that their activities constituted a threat to public safety and order and that their detention was necessary to prevent them acting in a manner prejudicial to public safety and order. The Governor at the same time appointed an Advisory Committee under the Emergency Order, with the Chief Justice as chairman, to hear objections by persons against whom detention orders had been made and to make recommendations to the Governor in respect to such objections. The detention of these persons under the Emergency Order in no way precludes proceedings against them for offences that can be tried in the ordinary courts.

It is a matter of great regret to Her Majesty's Government, and to myself, that this action had to be taken, but in the circumstances there was no alternative.

93. TEXT OF LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES, OLIVER LYTTELTON, TO SIR VINCENT TEWSON, GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE BRITISH TUC
(29 October 1953)

PERSONAL AND
CONFIDENTIAL

29th October, 1953

You very kindly sent me a message last week to say that you hoped to be able to make George Woodcock available for the Commission of Enquiry in British Guiana and provided he could be back by the New Year in order to meet his commitments with the Royal Commission on Taxation.

I do not know Woodcock personally, but my people speak of him so highly that I am sure he would be the best person for this job.

Since you and I discussed this matter we have gone into the mechanics of assembling the Commission and working out how long it will need in the territory. We have had Gutch, the Colonial Secretary, over here for a week and have been able to go into all this with him. It now seems pretty clear that the Commission will need as much as two months in the territory and my people, who are old hands at setting up Commissions, feel there is little possibility of getting the members of the British Guiana selected and available to go in the next month or six weeks. So often the people who have the most to give on a Commission like this are the ones who have the greatest difficulty in detaching themselves from their commitments here.

This is disappointing to us because it seems clear that we could not meet your present requirements about George Woodcock. I am particularly sorry that he has this commitment in England in the New Year because I had been hoping to suggest to you that it would be a great help to us and I think to the cause of Trade Unionism generally if he could have spared some time after the end of the work in British Guiana to have visited some of the West Indian Islands. I believe my people have discussed with you during the course of the year how the whole of the Trade Union movement in the Caribbean might benefit by some wise guidance from here at the present stage; and in particular there is a tricky situation in Trinidad on which we would very much like the T.U.C.'s help and advice.

This is to some extent a separate question and it is certainly one I did not mention when we spoke. I hope however you will agree we could perhaps look at these two questions together. I recognise that we may seem to accept a very slow pace in getting the Commission together, but it is bitter experience which prompts this caution. I do however regard both the British Guiana Commission and the other more general task in the trade union field which I have mentioned as assignments of absolutely first importance; and the two together, I feel sure, call for every effort on our part to secure that the right man is freed to do the job. Perhaps we could discuss this further?

(Sgd) Oliver Lyttelton

[To:] Sir Vincent Tewson. Kt., CBE, MC.

94. LETTER FROM MARQUESS OF SALISBURY TO COLONIAL SECRETARY
(29 October 1953)

Privy Council Office
Whitehall, S.W.1

29th October, 1953

My dear Oliver,

Thank you for your letter of 26th October, 1953 about a possible Chairman for the Commission of Enquiry for British Guiana. If Sir Norman Birkett is the man you would like above all, I will of course do what I can with the Lord Chancellor to secure his release for this purpose: and I will take the matter up with him as soon as possible.

If Birkett is not available, I should think that the best plan would be for the Lord Chancellor to be asked for his views as to any alternative. Would you like me to do this or would you prefer to talk to him yourself.

Yours ever,

(Signed) Bobbety

[To:] The Rt. Hon. Oliver Lyttelton, D.S.O., M.C., M.P.

95. TELEGRAM (No. 184) FROM GOVERNOR SAVAGE TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
(29 October 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES.

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Code D. 29th October, 1953.

R. 30th ,, ,, 06.30 hrs.

IMMEDIATE PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL
PERSONAL No. 184

Addressed to S. of S,
Repeated to O.C. Troops Jamaica

Only positive reaction to detention of Sydney King and others here comes from Plantation Enmore and Sectional* (*sic*) Estate. Most workers on these estates, which are nearest to King's home, have gone to strike and, in addition, a number of leaflets stating "release Sydney King now" and showing a photograph of him have been widely distributed. Police have taken action to stop further printing of leaflets.

2. Position on other estates in sugar industry is as follows:-

Plantations Albion and Port Mourant are closed.

Plantation Skeldon 60% turn out (many workers are harvesting rice in this area).

Plantation Blairmont 70% turn out. All other estates turn out varying between 80 and 95%.

3. 25 specific cases of intimidation have now been reported to the Police at Plantation Albion, but of these only two can be proceeded with in Court owing to difficulty in obtaining sufficient evidence.

Distribution:

H.631

Secretary of State

P.S. to Minister of State

Sir T. Lloyd

P.S. to Parliamentary U/S

Sir C. Jeffries

Sir H. Poynton

Mr. K. H. Davies

Mr. P. R. Maynard

Mr. P. Rogers

Mr. N. L. Mayle

Mr. J. W. Vernon

Mr. C. Y. Carstairs

Mr. R. J. Vile

Mr. B. D. Edmonds

Mr. C. J. J. T. Barton

Mr. D. G. Gordon-Smith

Mr. J. N. A. Armitage-Smith

Mr. W. I. J. Wallace

Mr. S.H. Evans

Commonwealth Relations Office - Mr. R.C.Ormerod

** This is a transcription error on the receipt of the telegram. The estate referred to is most likely Lusignan Estate.*

96. TEXT OF LETTER TO THE PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION SOCIETY FROM J. VERNON OF THE COLONIAL OFFICE

(29 October 1953)

29th October, 1953

I am directed by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th October, 1953, concerning the electoral system in British Guiana, and to inform you that your suggestion will be borne in mind when the terms of reference for the Commission of Enquiry are drawn up.

I am to note your intention to submit at a later date material to the Commission on the question of proportional representation.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

(Sgd.) J.W. Vernon

[To:] THE DIRECTOR
THE PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION SOCIETY,
LONDON, S.W.1.

**97. COLONIAL OFFICE NOTE ON THE C.P.A. MEETING ON BRITISH GUIANA
ADDRESSED BY JOHN CARTER**
(30 October 1953)

Mr. J.B. Johnston

C.P.A. Meeting - British Guiana

On Wednesday night (28th) the well-attended Meeting of Members of both Houses in the C.P.A. Room heard an Address by Mr. John Carter, Leader of the United Democratic Party, who was accompanied by his colleagues (Meesrs. Kendall, Fernandes, Luckhoo and Dare). During questions, in which all the visiting party intervened, the following points of special interest emerged in reply to the question: -

1. Literature - They said that they lacked the material (literature and films) to combat the Communists, who had ample supplies.
2. Trade Unions - They had been unable to organize trade unions properly; the T.U.C. had been able to give them a limited assistance.
3. Political Party organisation - They had been handicapped by lack of knowledge of how a political party should be organised.

G.H. McLean
30th October, 1953

Copies to: -
Mr. Hopkinson
Lord Munster
Mr. Carstairs
Mr. Evans

[Editor's Note: C.P.A. - Commonwealth Parliamentary Association]

**98. TELEGRAM (No. 578) FROM SIR HUGH FOOT, GOVERNOR OF JAMAICA, TO THE
COLONIAL SECRETARY**
(30 October 1953)

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM JAMAICA (Sir H. Foot)

Code D. 30th October, 1953
R. 31st ,, ,, 06.30 hours

No. 578

Addressed to S. of S.

Repeated to West Indian Governors

(Governor Barbados please pass copy to Comptroller, Development and Welfare Organisation, West Indies, No. 127).

Following resolution moved by Opposition was passed unanimously in the House of Representatives yesterday:

"Whereas constitutional development of the people of British West Indies is a matter of supreme importance to elected Houses of all territories.

And whereas the British Government has found it advisable to suspend the constitution of British Guiana.

Be it resolved this Honourable House requests West Indies Branch of Commonwealth Parliamentary Association to consider advisability of sending a Parliamentary Delegation comprising representatives of all willing Legislatures to British Guiana to study and observe what action may be taken in aid of the people of British Guiana and earliest possible restoration of their constitutional rights.

And be it further resolved that each territory bear expense of its delegates.

And further that British Colonial Office be requested to consider advisability of having proposed Commission of Enquiry representation of West Indian thought and opinion by inclusion of representatives chosen by elected Parliamentary majority of British West Indies in consultation with one another".

2. I am sending by savingram a copy of a newspaper report of debate on this resolution from which you will see that some doubts were expressed in the House about the wisdom of sending a West Indian Parliamentary delegation to British Guiana. It is presumably for West Indian Branch of Commonwealth Parliamentary Association to put forward definite proposals.

3. As regards suggestion that Commission of Enquiry should include West Indian representatives, I certainly do not think it would be practicable to leave nomination of representatives to "elected Parliamentary majority of British West Indies in consultation with one another", but I think there might be something to be said for considering appointment of a West Indian to the Commission if a West Indian of sufficient standing could be found.

4. I realise that reaction to resolution in British Guiana may be that West Indian territories should mind their own business. Moreover, resolution was hurriedly prepared and inadequately considered and debated. I nevertheless think that there is merit in interest displayed here in British Guiana situation, and since both our political parties have taken a helpful and reasonable line regarding H.M.G.'s action in British Guiana it would from our point of view be a pity if move made were very ill received.

Distribution: -

H. 641

Secretary of State

P.S. to Minister of State
Sir T. Lloyd
P.S. to Parliamentary U/S
Sir C. Jeffries
Sir H. Poynton
Mr. K.H. Davies
Mr. P.R. Maynard
Mr. P. Rogers
Mr. N.L. Mayle
Mr. J.W. Vernon
Mr. C.Y. Carstairs
Mr. R.J. Vile
Mr. B.D. Edmonds
Mr. C.J.J.T. Barton
Mr. J.A. Peck
Mr. D.G. Gordon-Smith
Mr. J.N.A. Armitage-Smith
Mr. W.I.J. Wallace
Mr. S. H. Evans

Commonwealth Relations Office- Mr. R.C. Ormerod

 [Top Of page](#)

NOVEMBER 1953

99. COLONIAL OFFICE MEMORANDUM - NOTES ON MEETING BETWEEN THE COLONIAL SECRETARY AND MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH GUIANA "OPPOSITION" (2 November 1953)

The Secretary of State saw members of the British Guiana "Opposition" this morning. They consisted of Mr. Carter, Mr. Luckhoo, Mr. Kendall, Mr. Fernandes and Mr. Dare. The Minister of State, Mr Fraser and Mr. Mayle were also present.

2. Mr. Carter raised the question of the future and emphasised the importance of taking some impressive action on the economic side in the immediate future. He enquired the Secretary of State's views regarding the action to be taken now.

3. The Secretary of State referred to the Interim Constitution and the enquiry which is to be made, and said that during the Interim Constitution everything possible would be done on the economic side. This was the British Guiana Government's responsibility. But on the other side, the political one, it would be up to the "Opposition" to unite and organise themselves so as to avoid a repetition of April 1953. In particular it was probably within their compass to remedy the anomalous situation under which the P.P.P. with only 51 per cent of the total votes cast gained eighteen out of the twenty-four seats.

4. The delegation recognised this and expressed their intention to do all they could on the political side. The Minister of State in this connection impressed upon them that it would be necessary for their prospective members of the permanent Legislature to go round their constituencies and do some really hard work over a long period in personal canvassing.

5. Mr. Kendall said that they were at a disadvantage as compared with the P.P.P. as they had no funds. The P.P.P. were obviously getting financial assistance from some source, presumably from abroad. Mr. Fernandes went on to point out that 90 percent of the British Guiana students who came to the United Kingdom went back "red" due partly to inadequate allowances from the British Guiana Government, and to petty annoyance while they were in this country, which were naturally seized upon and magnified by the communist party. The allowances given to students were scarcely sufficient to enable them to live properly and the administration in the past had shown itself to be unsympathetic to appeals for higher allowances. There were also examples of personal injustice among the coloured ranks in the police and Civil Service generally, which were allowed to persist, he thought, because there was no-one in the administration to consider these cases from the political aspect. However, these hard cases gave the P.P.P. valuable material for their campaign to infiltrate the Civil Service.

6. Mr. Luckhoo referred to the need for an anti-communist campaign to strike at the root of the movement, and to present to the people at large the advantages of the democratic way of life. He thought that the Colonial Office might be able to help with suitable literature to counter-balance the mass of communist literature which was flooding the country. He was informed at this point that Mr. Carter had discussed this problem with Mr. Carstairs this morning. Mr. Carter said that the Bureau of Public Information had had some literature, but that as the Head of the Bureau and at least one other official were members of the P.P.P., no use had been made of it. The Minister mentioned that a similar problem arose in Northern Italy just after the war and this was tackled successfully through British Information Services. Mr. Fernandes thought that the aim of the literature should be to combat disloyalty and Mr. Luckhoo stressed the need for assistance for the Security Department and asked that the question of outlawing communism might be considered.

7. Mr. Kendall reverted to the part played by the British Guiana students who were sent to this country for further education, in furthering the communist cause on their return. They undoubtedly became indoctrinated with communist ideology while they were here and were a powerful influence in spreading communism on their return to British Guiana, where, if they were unable to find other employment, they would be found jobs within the organisation of the P.P.P. He maintained that the West Indian Students Union was "left" and hostile to the British Commonwealth.

8. Mr. Luckhoo urged the removal of the P.P.P. teachers who were teaching schoolchildren along communist lines and breaking their faith in religion to the distress of their parents.

9. In reply to an enquiry by the Minister of State Mr. Luckhoo explained the recent decision of the local T.U.C. to disband itself. The M.P.C.A. broke away from the T.U.C. in June 1952 when it became apparent that the T.U.C. was coming under the influence of the P.P.P. Mr. Burnham was advocating that there should only be three unions, one for agriculture, one for labour generally one for the mining industry. All these unions would of course be those at present under P.P.P. control. When the P.P.P. came into power the smaller unions had no alternative but to line up behind the P.P.P. unions, but with the decision to suspend the Constitution, the smaller unions have taken heart, and it was the smaller unions which formed the majority which decided to break up the T.U.C.

10. Mr. Dare, the President of the Chamber of Commerce, made the point that a lot of people did not vote at the last election through intimidation and undue influence, and that it would be necessary to ensure more privacy at the next election. He thought also that known communists should be prevented from voting. On the economic side he agreed that

progress must be made by the interim administration and suggested that the most suitable spheres would be houses, roads, water supply and minor industries.

11. Mr. Fernandes suggested that something could be done to bring some riverain areas under agricultural production in addition to the areas that would be coming into production as the result of the large drainage and irrigation schemes.

12. All members of the delegation expressed their thanks to the Secretary of State for the action which had been taken, and assured him that it had been absolutely necessary to save the Colony and the people. They also expressed their thanks to the Secretary of State for having received them and listened to their views. The Secretary of State, for his part, said that he was very glad to have had this opportunity of hearing their views and repeated the assurances which had been given publicly that there was no intention on the part of Her Majesty's Government of going back on the policy of progressive constitutional advance. He thought himself that both adult suffrage and the ministerial system should be included in whatever constitution was recommended for British Guiana to follow the Interim Constitution, but his of course as a matter for the Committee of Enquiry which is to be sent out. It would be for the gentlemen who had come to see him this morning to give that Committee all possible help when they conducted their enquiry in British Guiana, so as to ensure that they arrived at the right solution.

100. TELEGRAM (No. 174) FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA

(2 November 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

FROM SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

TO BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Code

Sent 2nd November, 1953. 20.00 hrs.

PRIORITY

CONFIDENTIAL AND PERSONAL

PERSONAL No. 174

Your telegram Personal No. 186.

Paragraph 1 confirmed.

2. Procedure in Malaya is that every person when first detained is told of his right to lodge an objection. If he does so he is given a document stating the reasons for his detention with sufficient particulars for him to present his case. He may be represented by Counsel, or by

an agent of his own choice, or by himself. At the hearing (at which the Security Officer responsible for the objector's arrest is present) the objector makes his statement and can then be questioned by the Committee on it. Then the objector withdraws, the Committee asks the Security Officer for more information, which is usually highly confidential and cannot be disclosed to the objector.

3. In Kenya detainee is allowed to consult advocates in preparing case for Advisory Committee on Detainees. Advocates however, are not allowed to appear lest sources of secret information be compromised by same advocate hearing questions prompted by Special Branch information put to different detainees.

Distribution:

H.631

Secretary of State

P.S. to Minister of State

Sir T. Lloyd

P.S. to Parliamentary U/S

Sir C. Jeffries

Sir H. Poynton

Mr. K. H. Davies

Mr. P. R. Maynard

Mr. P. Rogers

Mr. N. L. Mayle

Mr. J. W. Vernon

Mr. C. Y. Carstairs

Mr. B. D. Edmonds

Mr. C. J. J. T. Barton

Mr. D. G. Gordon-Smith

Mr. W. I. J. Wallace

Mr. S.H. Evans

Commonwealth Relations Office - Mr. R.C. Ormerod

101. TELEGRAM (No. 396) GOVERNORS OF WINDWARD AND LEEWARD ISLANDS
(2 November 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

OUTWARD TELIEGRAM

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

TO (1) WINDWARD ISLANDS

(2) LEEWARD ISLANDS

Cypher (O.T.P.) 38529 C.R.

Sent 2nd November, 1953. 14.45 hrs.

PRIORITY
REPLY URGENTLY REQUIRED
CONFIDENTIAL AND PERSONAL
(1) No. 396
(2) No. 258

Following from Lloyd.

Begins.

It has been suggested that your Chief Justice would be a suitable member of the Commission of Enquiry for British Guiana, to which S. of S. may wish to appoint someone of local descent. Should be grateful for early reply

(a) giving your views on a Jackson's suitability for appointment to such a difficult Commission and

(b) saying whether if necessary you would feel able to agree to his release for that purpose, by say, the end of the year for a period of possibly four months.

2. I am telegraphing similarly to (To 1) the Governor, Leeward Islands (To 2) the Governor, Windward Islands.

3. This possibility should not (repeat not) or course he mentioned to Jackson.

Ends.

102. LETTER FROM SIR STEPHEN T. LUKE, GOVERNOR OF BARBADOS, TO PHILIP ROGERS OF THE COLONIAL OFFICE

(2 November 1953)

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Hastings House
Barbados, B.W.I.

2nd November, 1953

My dear Philip,

There are two aspects of the British Guiana crisis that seem to me to be particularly interesting in a wider context:-

(a) the genuine concern manifested throughout the British West Indies at recent developments in that Colony;

(b) the helpful and responsible attitude adopted by the principal political leaders and parties.

I have, I must confess, been surprised at the depth of emotion aroused by British Guiana's disaster. Apart from the known extremists and a few radical intellectuals like Elsa Gouveia, there has, as far as I am aware, been no disposition to embarrass H.M.G. On the contrary, the feeling has rather been that British Guiana's failure has in some degree been a West Indian failure; that democratic progress in the region has received a set-back from which all must suffer; and that the problem of putting British Guiana back on its political feet is a responsibility which all West Indians must share.

It is, I think, significant that what might be called the "federal sentiment" should be so strongly manifested under the compulsion of these distressing events, and in respect of a Colony which has hitherto stood aloof from the movement towards political integration. There is concern at British Guiana's violent departure from the main stream of West Indian political development; and there is recognition that liberal democracy is threatened, in less or greater degree, everywhere. "And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee".

Given both this close West Indian interest in the British Guiana situation and the responsible attitude adopted by West Indian leaders to H.M.G.'s drastic intervention, I venture to suggest that the Colonial Office should give very careful thought to the widespread demand that one or more leading West Indians should be associated with the forthcoming Commission of Enquiry. I am well aware that there are powerful objections to this proposal. It involves, for instance, a departure from the well-accepted principle that constitutional reform is a matter for negotiation and settlement between H.M.G., and the people of the territory concerned. It might prove an embarrassing precedent in the future in the case of other territories. Moreover, the selection of suitable and representative West Indians to serve on the Commission would present great difficulties. Nor have I any idea whether a Commission constituted in this way would be acceptable in British Guiana. I can only make the point that, in considering this matter, you should not lightly dismiss the genuine West Indian impulse to have a share in ascertaining the lessons from events in British Guiana and in helping to create conditions for its future democratic development on sound lines. It we believe, as we do, that federation is the means by which the West Indies may best attain political stability and an independent status within the Commonwealth, then I think that we ought to be encouraged by the regional reaction to events in British Guiana, and consider very seriously whether it would not be right to associate British West Indians with us in devising ways and means of recovery from what, after all, in an unparalleled (*sic*) disaster in the recent history of political development in this part of the world. I believe that, by enlisting the help of West Indian leaders in this way, H.M.G. would give great impetus to the growth of that "federal sentiment" which, after all, is the essential prerequisite and foundation for political integration in the region.

While, as I said above, I recognise that the objections to this proposal are powerful and may be decisive, I venture to put these considerations to you because I am increasingly convinced that we must lose no opportunity to further the establishment of a British Caribbean federation. As Lord Simon said in his recent Romanes lecture: "No one can doubt that . . . these islands may hope to accomplish in partnership what they have never accomplished in isolation". From H.M.G.'s point of view there are, I believe, great dangers involved in the indefinite continuance of the existing system under which power has largely been transferred to West Indian hands while the ultimate responsibility still rests with the U.K. Government, and I can see no satisfactory way out of this dilemma except through federation.

I assume, of course, that you would not in any event decide to appoint West Indians to the Commission without prior consultation with WICIR Governors.

Yours . . .

Timmy Luke

[Handwritten note by Luke]:

Since I dictated the above I have seen Foot's telegram 578 which is relevant to the matter discussed in this letter.

103. TELEGRAM (No. 380) FROM GOVERNOR OF WINDWARD ISLANDS TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

(3 November 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

WINDWARD ISLANDS (Mr. E.B. Beetham)

Cypher O.T.P. D. 3rd November, 1953.

R. 3rd ,, ,, 19.30 hrs.

PRIORITY

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

No. 380

Addressed to S. of S.

Repeated to Governor Leeward Islands No. 265.

Following for Lloyd.

Your telegram No. 396.

British Guiana Commission of Enquiry.

I think that Jackson would be admirable choice. He is quick and clear thinker. He understands well the difficulties mentioned by the Secretary of State in the House regarding speedy political advance and has no (repeat no) illusions about the limitations of West Indians generally.

He would furthermore be able to give other members much useful and authentic information from his own personal knowledge and as a generally respected Guianese he should be able to obtain much additional information of value to the Committee denied to other members,

He will remain calm and unruffled no matter what attitude and (*corrupt gp ?*)* his fellow countrymen adopt towards the Commission. His integrity is beyond question.

I regret that I am unable to reply definitely on (b) without consulting the Chief Justice, but we might be able to manage if other West Indian Colonies can lend us a Judge from time to time to take the criminal sessions and act on the outstanding civil cases reaching formidable proportions.

*[Editor's note: * Words missing in the received text of telegram].*

104. TELEGRAM (No. 141) FROM GOVERNOR, LEEWARD ISLANDS, TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

(3 November 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM LEEWARD ISLANDS (Sir K. Blackburne)

Cypher (O.T.P.)

D. 3rd November, 1953.

R. 3rd ,, ,, 19.10 hrs.

PRIORITY

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

No, 141

Repeated to Governor of the Windward Islands by mail.

Your telegram No. 258.

Following for Lloyd.

Begins.

Jackson is a stern disciplinarian of the old school and would be admirable member of the Commission because of known integrity and as native of British Guiana. But I doubt whether West Indian political opinion would regard the appointment as meeting their view that a West Indian should be associated with this particular Commission. West Indian politicians would probably prefer someone like Professor Lewis who is the known champion of West Indian advance.

He can (? be) spared though additional Puisne Judge probably needed during absence.

Ends.

105. COLONIAL OFFICE NOTE - FROM N.L. MAYLE TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

(3 November 1953)

Mr. Johnston.

I attach a copy of a Note I made on the Secretary of State's meeting with the British Guiana "Opposition" yesterday morning.

2. If the Secretary of State has no objection, I should like to send a copy of this Note out to the Governor for his personal information.

3. I am having a further copy of the Note registered and will take up with other departments points arising out of the interview, for example, the treatment of British Guiana students in this country.

(Signed)
N.L. Mayle

3rd November, 1953

106. NOTE FROM N.L. MAYLE OF THE COLONIAL OFFICE

(5 November 1953)

Mr. Barton
Mr. Watt

Please see paragraph 10 of the attached note of an interview given by the Secretary of State to the members of the British Guiana "Opposition".

2. I should be grateful for your views on the suggestion that known communists should be prevented from voting.

(N. L. Mayle)

5th November, 1953

107. TELEGRAM (No. 185) FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA

(5 November 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

TO BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Cypher (O.T.P.) WIS 1044/02

Sent 5th November, 1953 21.45 hrs.

PRIORITY
REPLY URGENTLY REQUIRED
CONFIDENTIAL AND PERSONAL
PERSONAL No. 185

Following from Rogers.

Begins.

Detention of political leaders.

Following Parliamentary Question is down for oral reply 11th November: - "To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies who were the persons on whose statements, given under promise not to be called as witnesses in proceedings against the Guianese ex-Ministers, those ex-Ministers were detained without a charge; whether the statements were in writing; and how long he proposes to continue the suspension of habeas corpus in British Guiana."

2. We propose to recommend to Secretary of State that reply to first part of the Question should be that witnesses against the ex-Minister and the other persons detained gave their evidence on understanding that their identity would not be revealed and that Secretary of State is not therefore at liberty to say who they are; and that reply to third part should be that Governor will detain persons under Emergency Regulations for as long as it is necessary to do so in the interests of public order in British Guiana but that the Attorney General will not on that account refrain from initiating action in the Courts where the witnesses are willing to testify.

3. Grateful for any comments you may have and also for answer to second part of Question.

Ends.

108. TEXT OF LETTER FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO LORD SIMONDS, THE LORD CHANCELLOR

(6 November 1953)

6th November, 1953

I have been discussing with Salisbury the question of a Chairman for the Commission of Enquiry which is to go to British Guiana. It is not an easy one. We must clearly have someone who does not figure in the day to day political scene and yet we must have someone reasonably well known and of unquestioned personal authority.

My feeling at present time is that a Law Lord would almost exactly meet these requirements and I think the man above all others that we should like would be Norman Birkett.

I am writing to ask if you could spare him for this task. I scarcely need to rehearse to you the importance of the Commission or of our getting the right people on it. I think it would mean an absence of up to two months in British Guiana. I know I am asking a lot but I think the issues at stake are of such moment that I am justified in putting the request to you. Will you please consider it and let me know whether you can spare Birkett?

(Sgd) Oliver Lyttelton

[To:]
The Lord Chancellor

House of Lords

109. TELEGRAM (No. 186) FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR SAVAGE
(6 November 1953)

SECRET

INWARD TELEGRAM

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

TO BRITISH GUIANA (Sir. A. Savage)

Cypher (O.T.P.) WIS 1044/747/01

Sent 6th November, 1953. 12.15 hrs.

IMMEDIATE
REPLY URGENTLY REQUIRED
SECRET AND PERSONAL
PERSONAL No. 186

Your telegram No.149 and previous Situation Reports.

I am most grateful for the situation reports which you have been sending me. Please continue to send me reports at such intervals as appear to you appropriate but not less than twice a week.

2. You are no doubt aware that Question Time in the House of Commons for Colonial Affairs is Wednesday. While the House is sitting, and its interest in British Guiana continues, it is important that I should have an up-to-date statement of the position in the territory by 10.00 hours G.M.T. on each Wednesday.

3. An example of the need for such a statement is a Question down for next Wednesday asking how many people are detained under the Emergency Regulations in British Guiana. I am aware that 5 Detention Orders have so far been issued, but I understand that other persons have been arrested for offences under the Emergency Regulations. Grateful for further information on this point by return and for a last minute report on detentions to be included in your situation report for each Wednesday.

110. NOTES FROM BARTON AND WATT TO A REQUEST FROM MAYLE

(6 November 1953)

[Handwritten notes]

Mr. Watt, Mr. Mayle

Ref. att'd. My views on the idea of "known Communists" in Br. Guiana being excluded from the voters list is that it would be wrong, even if the Communists in the UK were not a tolerated political party. It takes me back to the days when Papists & Jews were disfranchised; &, today, would lead to another form of totalitarianism in politics. (Though I hope that someday we will break away from a system under which the suffrages of two Fat Heads are twice as valuable as that of one Long Hand!)

Axin Barton
6-11-53

I agree with X; and the suggestion also appears at variance with the Secretary of State's views about maintaining adult suffrage.

To try to legislate known communists out of voting, so long as the C.P. remains otherwise tolerated, would, I am sure, be difficult, if not impracticable.

If I may say so, the Minister of State's advice, in para. 4, seems to be the right way to prevent the votes of known, or potential, communists from winning.

I don't know of any precedents in British territories for the suggestion.

(Signed) L. Watt
6/11

111. TELEGRAM (No. 48) FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR OF JAMAICA

(7 December 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

TO JAMAICA (Sir H. Foot)

Sent 7th November, 1953. 20.00 hrs.

CONFIDENTIAL AND PERSONAL

WICIR No. 48

Addressed to Governor, Jamaica.
Repeated to all West Indian Governors.
(Gov. Barbados please pass copy to Comptroller).

Your telegram No. 578.

Resolution moved by the Opposition on British Guiana.

I agree that there is merit in the interest displayed in British Guiana situation and while some points are not acceptable, the line taken by both political parties is indeed helpful and reasonable, and much to their credit. There is no reason from H.M.G.'s point of view why the move should be ill received and, for the personal information of Governors, the appointment of a West Indian to the Commission is already being considered. It would not of course be possible to leave selection to elected members of West Indian Legislatures.

112. TELEGRAM (No. 193) FROM GOVERNOR SAVAGE TO COLONIAL SECRETARY
(7 November 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir. A. Savage)

Code D. 7th November, 1953.
R. 7th ,, ,, 21.25 hrs.

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL
NO. 193

Your confidential telegram No. 186.

I was proposing to continue sending situation reports by telegram at regular intervals.

2. Position on sugar estates has remained more or less unchanged during this (*omission*) Port Mourant and Albion are still closed. Action was taken by the Sugar Producers Association on 2nd November to issue trespass notices against six men at Albion

known to be trouble makers, and. eviction notices against two others. Commissioner of Labour, who visited the area and addressed workers at both Port Mourant and Albion, reports that in his opinion this action has had a good effect. Jagan's influence is particularly strong in this area but there may be a move to return to work towards the end of the month when rice harvesting is finished. At Enmore position has improved slightly but grinding has only been intermittent. Other estates are all practically back to normal.

3. On the night of 3rd November police dispersed meeting of about 600 persons at Buxton and 18 arrested persons were released after questioning, and question of prosecution is under consideration.

4. Announcement of terms of Draft Order in Council providing for Interim Government which I made in a broadcast on 5th November (my telegram Personal No. 192) has been well received by the press and, so far as one can judge, by responsible sections of the community.

5. Reference paragraph 3 of your telegram under reference, only five persons are still detained under Emergency Regulations.

113. COLONIAL OFFICE MINUTE FROM G.L. STEPHENSON TO P. ROGERS

(7 November 1953)

Mr. Rogers,

You asked me to marshal any information I could lay my hands on in connection with Sir Colin Campbell, suggested as worth considering for membership of the Royal Commission shortly to go out to British Guiana.

Who's Who (1952)

CAMPBELL, SIR COLIN, Kt. 1952, OBE, 1941. Town Clerk, Plymouth since 1935; b.1891; m.1923, Matilda Hopwood; 2 d. Clerk, Burnley, 1923/35. ARP Controller, Plymouth, 1939-1945. Rec. Golf. Address: Hill House, Crown Hill, Plymouth.

Mr. H. Symon (Under Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Local Government, (also member of the S. of S's Advisory Panel on Local Government) has a very high opinion of Sir Cohn Campbell's administration ability and shrewdness.

Mr. Banwell (Secretary of the Association of Municipal Corporations, also a member of our Panel) is much impressed with Sir Colin's work, particularly after the war when, as Town Clerk, Plymouth, he was responsible for the rebuilding of the town and its services making Plymouth the first class town from the local government angle that it is now. Sir Cohn has a name for high administrative ability and is well spoken of by the R.N. with whom he co-operated well.

Some three years ago he visited Persia on behalf of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (formerly Anglo-Persian Oil) to make an enquiry for the Company, and since then has served as Assistant Commissioner on the Boundary (Local Government) Commission, and in 1951 on the Central Housing Commission. His services are retained at Plymouth as Clerk of The Peace.

Mr. Banwell declares that Sir Cohn being energetic, versatile, a sound administrator with broad experience might be a useful member of the proposed Commission.

Sir Colin Campbell's telephone number is Plymouth 72115.

(Signed)
(G. L. Stephenson)
7th November, 1953

114. TELEGRAM (No. 194) FROM THE GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

(8 November 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Code D. 8th November, 1953

R. 9th ,, ,, 02.00 hrs.

IMMEDIATE

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

No. 194

Your personal and confidential telegram No. 185.

Parliamentary Question.

Following for Rogers.

Begins.

Primary reason for detention of five persons in question was not statements of witnesses, but fact that their general activities constituted a threat to public safety and order. See paragraph 3 of S. of S. statement contained in his telegram, your Personal telegram No. 169.

I suggest, therefore, that reply to first and second part of question might be as follows.

Begins: -

that some witnesses gave evidence in writing of illegal meetings held by one ex Minister and four other persons detained, on the understanding that their identity would not be (group omitted) and that S. of S. is therefore not at liberty to say who they are; that holding of

these meetings was, however, not sole or primary ground for detention of these five persons but, as stated by S. of S. in the House of Commons on 28th October, they were detained because the Governor was satisfied that their activities constituted a threat to public safety and order, and that their detention was necessary to prevent their acting in a manner prejudicial to public safety and order.

Ends.

I agree to proposed reply to third part of question.

Persons detained have all submitted objections for the consideration by Advisory Committee set up under the Chairmanship of the Chief Justice, and hearing of these is expected to begin next week. This could be mentioned, if desired.

Ends.

115. MEMORANUM BY COLONIAL OFFICE ON DRAFT REPLY TO QUESTION TO BE ASKED OF THE COLONIAL SECRETARY IN BRITISH PARLIAMENT

(9 November 1953)

File No. WIS/044/02/P.Q.3

Mr. Vernon. 9/11
Mr. Rogers. 9/11
Permt. U.S. of S. 10/11
Parly. U.S. of S. 10/11
Minister of State 10/11
Secretary of State 10/11

DRAFT

REPLY

Five persons are at present held on Detention Orders issued under the Emergency Regulations.

Notes for Supplementaries

1. The five persons concerned are:
S.E. KING (late Minister of Communications)
R.E.WESTMAAS (Vice President of Peoples Progressive Party)
M.W. CARTER (Assistant Secretary of Peoples Progressive Party)
S.M. LACHMANSINGH (P.P.P. Member of House of Assembly)
ADJODA SINGH (P.P.P. Member of House of Assembly)

The Detention Orders were issued under Regulation 16(1) (c) of the British Guiana Defence Regulations, 1939, as re-enacted by the British Guiana (Emergency) Order in Council, 1953.

2. The detainees are held at Atkinson Field and are allowed to see their own lawyer.
3. The persons detained have all submitted objections for the consideration of the Advisory Committee set up under the Emergency Regulations, with the Chief Justice as Chairman, and the hearing of these is expected to begin next week.
4. See also Notes for Supplementaries for Question asked by Mr. Turner-Samuels.

116. EXTRACT FROM COLONIAL OFFICE MEMORANDUM ON QUESTION TO BE ASKED IN THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT

(9 November 1953)

REPLY

FOR WEDNESDAY, 11th NOVEMBER, 1953

93. MR. GRIMOND: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies how many people are at present detained under Emergency Regulations in British Guiana.

ANSWER

MR. LYTELTON: Five persons are at present held on Detention Orders issued under the Emergency Regulations.

117. COLONIAL OFFICE MINUTE ON DRAFT OF REPLY TO PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

(9 November 1953)

I have amended the draft after discussion with Mr. Rogers. Although agreed by the Governor, I felt very doubtful about the end of the draft reply (regarding prosecutions) particularly because: -

- (a) I do not think it would be right to say what the Attorney-General will or will not do.
- (b) Prosecutions can only be launched if criminal offences have been committed and it by no means follows that a person detained under an emergency enactment has committed any offence. Indeed, wherever there is sufficient & available evidence of crime, my own view is that prosecution and not administrative detention is the correct remedy.
- (c) Strictly, there is no question of a witness being "willing to testify", since he can be forced to come to Court and reply to questions, though, of course, from an unwilling witness you may not get the answers for which you hope.

I have therefore deleted this passage and inserted a note for supplementaries on this matter. I have also added one about "suspension of habeas corpus".

(Illegible signature)

118. NOTE BY JAMES VERNON OF THE COLONIAL OFFICE ON PROPOSED REPLY TO QUESTION ASKED IN PARLIAMENT

(9 November 1953)

Mr. Turner Samuels M.P. - 5/11

(oral reply for 11 Nov:)

See minute on main file.

J.W.V.

5/11

The Governor in his telegram Personal and Confidential No. 194 of 8th November has recommended the following reply: -

"That some witnesses gave evidence in writing of illegal meetings held by one ex Minister and four other persons detained, on the understanding that their identity would not be revealed and that S. of S. is therefore not at liberty to say who they are: that holding of these meetings was however not sole or primary ground for detention of these five persons but, as stated by S. of S. in the House of Commons on 28th October, they were detained because Governor was satisfied their activities constituted a threat to public safety and order and. that their detention was necessary to prevent their acting in a manner prejudicial to public safety and order."

He agreed to the latter part of the reply being as proposed in Mr. Rogers' telegram.

The Secretary of State in his announcement on the 28th October linked the difficulty of getting witnesses to make statements in the Courts with the five Detention Orders made. The Secretary of State might now be accused of trying to wriggle out of a difficult situation if he now argues, as proposed by the Governor, that the main reason for the Detention Orders was not the difficulty of getting witnesses to make public statements, but the fact that the general activities of the persons concerned constituted a threat to public safety and order. The Secretary of State made it clear in his original Statement that it was their past activities which was one of the reasons for the Detention Orders. I suggest therefore that the answer to the Question must accept that one of the reasons for issuing the Detention Orders was the difficulty of obtaining statements from witnesses.

I submit draft accordingly.

(Signed) James W. Vernon

9th November, 1953

119. COLONIAL OFFICE NOTE FROM P. ROGERS TO J.VERNON

(9 November 1953)

Mr. Vernon

Mr. Banwell of the Local Government Advisory Panel had suggested via Mr. Stephenson that Sir Colin Campbell would be a useful member of the British Guiana Commission. I asked for more particulars about him which Mr. Stephenson has now kindly provided.

Sir Colin's experience is rather outside the range for which we are looking and I do not think he comes on to our first short list. If however we run into difficulties, as we yet may, he is well worth bearing in mind, in view of his obvious ability.

When you have seen, this should be registered on the file about the Commission. I think it would also be useful if we started consideration about payment and other details. I had a word with Mr. Mayle about this and presumably British Guiana will pay.

(Signed) P. Rogers
9.11.53.

120. MEMORANDUM ISSUED BY THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR UNDER THE EMERGENCY ORDER, 1953
(10 November 1953)

PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED
BY THE
"ADVISORY COMMITTEE
APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR
UNDER SECTION 13(2)
OF THE EMERGENCY ORDER 1953

In exercise of the power to regulate our own procedure vested in us by Rule 5(2) of the Emergency (Advisory Committee) Rules 1953 we the above-mentioned Advisory Committee intend to adopt the following procedure in considering objections made by persons detained under Section 13 of the Emergency Order 1953.

This procedure is based substantially on that followed in the United Kingdom and the Colonies in operating Advisory Committees similar to the British Guiana Advisory Committee.

1. The Committee which is merely an Advisory Committee and is in no sense a Court of Law, will not be bound by the rules of practice, procedure or evidence which are morally applied in Courts of Law.
2. The proceedings of the Committee will
 - (a) not be open to the Press or the public;
 - (b) be conducted as administrative rather than judicial enquiries;
 - (c) be quite informal in character
3. As the Committee will have perused all relevant documents before the hearing, the case against the detainee is not presented on behalf of the Government.

4. No formal charge will be preferred against the detainees but with due regard to the interests of security, the Committee will give each detainee a document informing the detainee of the grounds on which the order has been made against him and containing such particulars to enable him to present his case, as are, in the Chairman's opinion sufficient.

5. No witnesses will be called on behalf of the Government though the Committee is free to consult with the Defence Security Officer, who will be in attendance.

6. The names of informants will not be disclosed nor any information by which they might be identified.

7. Documents furnished for the Committee's use will not be made available to a detainee or his Counsel or Solicitor or agent, but in the course of the hearing, extracts from documents may be read out by the Committee at its absolute discretion.

8. A detained person may give oral evidence if he so desires and may call witnesses to give oral evidence. No oath or affirmation will be administered to any detainee or witness.

9. A detained person may, instead of giving oral evidence or in addition thereto or in addition to the evidence of any witness he may call, hand to the Committee a written statement of his case or part of his case.

10. The case of each detainee will be heard separately and in the absence of all other detainees.

11. The Committee may question

(a) any detainee who gives evidence or in respect of whom a written statement is handed in;

(b) any witness called on behalf of a detainee.

12. Points of procedure not covered by this memorandum will be provided for by future Memoranda or decided by the Committee as and when they arise and the Committee is, of course, free at all times to depart from or vary the procedure set out in this Memorandum.

13. From time to time the Chairman will give the Press such information with regard to the work of the Committee as in his opinion can be given without infringing the spirit of the Committee's procedure and in particular no disclosure will be made of

(a) any evidence given;

(b) the names of any persons who give evidence;

(c) any recommendation made by the Committee to the Governor.

14. The public will not be informed of the Committee's recommendation to the Governor nor will it be communicated to the detainee.

PETER BELL
Chairman

H.A. BECKLES
Member

CARLOS GOMES
Member

10th November, 1953

121. TELEGRAM (No. 196) FROM GOVERNOR SAVAGE TO COLONIAL SECRETARY
(10 November 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir. A. Savage)

Code D. 10th November, 1953.

R. 10th ,, ,, 23.00 hrs.

PRIORITY
PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL
PERSONAL No. 196

My personal and confidential telegram No.193.

Situation Report.

Position on sugar estates still more or less unchanged, though there has been some improvement at Enmore. Trespass notices have been issued by management against six men at Port Mourant. Fifteen acres of cane were destroyed on night of 9th November at an estate on East Coast Demerara.

2. I held an Executive Council meeting on 6th November to dispose of essential business. Chase, Jainaraine Singh and Lachhmansingh attended. Chase adopted a sulky attitude but they were not obstructive. Singh was ingratiating.

3. One of the detainees, Balli Latchmansingh, was permitted to attend funeral of his infant daughter on 7th November under escort.

4. P.P.P. is continuing its attempt to organise a resistance campaign and a number of anti-British and anti-Government leaflets have been printed and distributed. Every effort in being made to combat this.

5. An interesting document apparently written by Sydney King as a part of communist manifesto for British Guiana soon after he became a Minister, has been seized by police from a printer and is now being examined. King had ordered 2,000 copies, but the printer states that he had not executed the order as he considered the draft "too hot".

Copies sent to: -
Commonwealth Relations Office - Mr. R.C. Omerod

122. LETTER FROM LORD CHANCELLOR SIMONDS TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
(10 November 1953)

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

LORD CHANCELLOR
HOUSE OF LORDS
S.W.1.

10th November, 1953

Dear Oliver,

This is to confirm the conversation we had before Cabinet this morning about a Chairman for your British Guiana Commission. I am not willing even to ask Lord Justice Birkett whether he would be willing to go to British Guiana. He is not, I believe, physically fit to take the job, but he might feel it his duty to accept if the request was made to him. I won't run the risk.

On the other hand, I am willing that you should ask Lord Justice Morris or Lord Justice Hodson. Either of them would do the job admirably. I cannot, of course, guarantee that they would accept. In writing to them you will no doubt say that you will make this proposal to them with my approval.

I do hope that the job will not take very long, for I can ill spare a Lord Justice in these days when there are serious arrears of work facing the judges.

Yours,

(Signed) Simonds

[To:] The Right Honourable Oliver Lyttelton, D.S.O., M.C., M.P.

123. QUESTION AND ANSWER IN BRITISH PARLIAMENT
(11 November 1953)

EXTRACT FROM OFFICIAL REPORT OF 11 NOV 1953

Detained Persons
(Identity of Witnesses)

103. **Mr. Turner-Samuels** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies who were the persons on whose statements given under promise not to be called as witnesses in proceedings against the Guianese ex-Ministers, those ex-Ministers were detained without a charge; whether the statements were in writing; and how long he proposes to continue the suspension of *habeas corpus* in British Guiana.

Mr. Lyttelton: Witnesses against the one ex-Minister and the other persons detained made their statements on the understanding that their identity would not be revealed and I am not, therefore, at liberty to say who they were. Some of the statements were in writing. The Governor will detain persons under the emergency Orders for as long as it is necessary to do so in the interests of public order in British Guiana but *habeas corpus* has not been suspended.

124. TEXT OF LETTER FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO LORD JUSTICE MORRIS
(12 November 1953)

12th November, 1953

You will have seen in all the recent furore about British Guiana, references to the decision of Her Majesty's Government to appoint a Commission of Enquiry to enquire into the events leading to the suspension of the Constitution and to make recommendation for a revised constitution.

It is clearly of great importance that the Commission should be of the highest standing and skill, and I am sure that we could not do better than appoint to the Chairmanship a leading member of the Judiciary. I am therefore writing to ask whether you would be prepared to undertake this task and I do so with the approval of the Lord Chancellor. I cannot pretend that it would be a light task. The Commission would have to spend some two months in British Guiana and if time for preparation, travelling and writing the report is included, the whole period involved might be more than three months. We hope the Commission could leave for British Guiana some time early in January.

If as I hope, however you will feel able to undertake this important and delicate task, it would be of great assistance and comfort to us. In that event, I should like to consult you about the precise terms of reference and the remaining membership of the Commission and also about the financial arrangements.

I enclose a copy of the White Paper.

(Sgd.) O. Lyttelton

[To:]
The Rt. Hon. Lord Justice Morris

**125. TELEGRAM (No. 193 & 334) FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR OF
BRITISH GUIANA AND COMPTROLLER, DEVELOPMENT AND WELFARE
ORGANIZATION, WEST INDIES**

(12 November 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

FROM SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

TO: (1) BRITISH GUIANA
(2) COMPTROLLER, DEVELOPMENT AND WELFARE ORGANIZATION, WEST INDIES.

Cypher (O.T.P.) WIS 1044/41/04
Sent 12th November, 1953. 23.00 hrs.

IMMEDIATE

CONFIDENTIAL AND PERSONAL

(1) PERSONAL No. 193

(2) No. 334

You will have seen telegram No. 578 from Governor, Jamaica, containing text of Resolution moved by Opposition Party and approved unanimously by House of Representatives, which included inter alia proposal that representative of West Indian thought end opinion be included in Commission of Enquiry for British Guiana.

To Comptroller only

2. We were already considering this suggestion when Rogers received your letter of 2nd November. Governor of British Guiana had previously suggested Jackson, Chief Justice of the Windwards and Leewards.

To Governor, British Guiana only

2. Rogers has also received letter from Comptroller, saying that he has been impressed by the genuine concern manifested throughout the British West Indies at recent developments in British Guiana and the helpful and responsible attitude adopted by principal political leaders and parties. He suggests that I should give careful thought to the widespread demand that one or more leading West Indians should be associated with the forthcoming Commission of Enquiry. Amongst his arguments in favour of this suggestion is that it would give a great impetus to the growth of federal sentiment. You yourself suggested appointment of Jackson in your telegram Personal No. 61.

To Both

Governors of Windwards and Leeward Islands have been consulted about his suitability. Governor, Leeward Islands agrees he would be an admirable member of the Commission but doubts whether West Indian political opinion would regard the appointment as meeting their view. Governor, Windward Islands considers Jackson admirable choice who would well understand difficulties regarding speedy political advance and is a generally respected

Guianese who should be able to give much additional information of value to the Commission denied to other members.

3. Governor, Barbados, has independently suggested Sir Clement Malone, late Chief Justice of the Windward Islands, as being "a very wise old man who is known and respected throughout the West Indies".

4. It is likely that the Commission will be a small one, probably 4 or possibly 3 persons. I should certainly welcome the appointment of a suitable person from the West Indies or British Guiana both for its own sake and because of the federal sentiment. I can well understand that in many ways a political figure might have the greatest appeal in the area and I am in no way opposed to such an appointment per se. For one reason, or another, however, there seems to be no one who quite fits the bill. Manley and Adams suggest themselves as individually the most suitable in this field, but it would hardly be possible to choose the former without serious offence to Bustamante, while the latter ought not to be taken away from Barbados for a further lengthy period at present juncture. No-one else occurs to me as being suitable from the political field, though I should welcome any suggestions. I have considered the University field, but I think that it would be most undesirable at this juncture in the history of the University College to ask any member of its staff to serve on a highly political Commission of this kind. From the legal field Malone and Jackson seem the most suitable. Malone might have the greater appeal in the West Indies, while Jackson would presumably be more acceptable in British Guiana. On balance I am inclined to favour the latter.

5. Grateful for your views as soon as possible.

126. TEXT OF LETTER FROM THE COLONIAL SECRETARY TO LORD SIMONDS
(12 November 1953)

12th November, 1953

Many thanks for your letter of 10th November about a Chairman for the British Guiana Commission of Enquiry. I quite understand about Lord Justice Birkett.

I am most grateful for your help and your suggestion, and I have written to Lord Justice Morris asking him if he will undertake the task. If he accepts we will do all we can to see that you are deprived of his services for the shortest possible time.

(Sgd) Oliver Lyttelton

[To:] The Right Honourable Lord Simonds

127. ARTICLE IN DAILY WORKER, NEWSPAPER OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN
(12 November 1953)

GUIANA HEARING TO BE IN SECRET
"Evidence" hushed up

Daily Worker Reporter

The arrested leaders of the British Guiana People's Progressive Party are not to be allowed to see documents containing alleged evidence against them.

Nor will their defence counsel be allowed to see them. Not a word that they or their counsel speak in defence before a Government committee of three is allowed to be known either in Guiana or outside.

These points are contained in the regulations on the work of the committee of three which has been appointed in Guiana by the Governor, Sir Alfred Savage, to hear requests from persons detained without trial by his order.

A cable from Georgetown reported yesterday that the People's Progressive Party has issued a statement demanding that sessions of the Government committee of three shall be held in public.

The statement added: "This method of trial of detainees reminds us of the Inquisition. . . . it seems the case against the five cannot stand up to public scrutiny.

Emergency orders override elementary rules of justice."

Jagan's call

At present five men arrested a fortnight ago are detained without trial. They are Mr. Sydney King, Minister of Communications, Mr. Rory Westmaas, Mr. Martin Carter, Mr. B. Lachmansingh and Mr. Adjodha Singh, members of the House of Assembly.

Even the recommendations of the committee to the Governor on their cases are to be kept secret.

All that they and their counsel are allowed to do is to submit statements in writing and to give evidence and call witnesses if required.

At a press conference in Glasgow yesterday, Dr. Jagan, elected Premier of British Guiana, said that if public opinion in Britain was sufficiently aroused over the events in British Guiana, it could mean the fall of the Tory Government. With him was Mr. L.F.S. Burnham who was his Minister of Education.

Referring to his tour of the country, Dr. Jagan said: "People seem to be supporting us enthusiastically in spite of the attitude of the Labour leaders."

Mr. Burnham told pressmen: "In the name of democracy they have destroyed democracy in British Guiana."

Both leaders said they expected to be arrested when they returned to their own country.

Mr. Oliver Lyttelton, the Colonial Secretary, refused in the Commons last night to appoint a commission to visit British Guiana and report on social and economic conditions there.

128. LETTER FROM SIR JAMES ROBERTSON TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY

(12 November 1953)

The Old Bakehouse
Cholsey
Berks.
12. XI . 53

Dear Secretary of State,

I have considered the proposal which you made to me on Tuesday, that I should be a member of the Commission which is to go to British Guiana in January.

I feel very honoured to be considered for this appointment and shall be very pleased to go.

I presume that the terms of serving in this Commission will be communicated to me later, and that I should not be out of pocket on it.

With many thanks for inviting me to go on this Commission. I am

Yours sincerely

James W. Robertson

[Editor's note: This letter was handwritten.]

129. TELEGRAM (No. 350) FROM COMPTROLLER, D.W.O. WEST INDIES, TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

(13 November 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM COMPTROLLER, DEVELOPMENT AND WELFARE ORGANISATION, WEST INDIES

Cypher (O.T.P.)

D. 13th November, 1953

R. 13th ,, ,, 22.55 hrs.

IMMEDIATE
PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL
No. 350

Addressed to S. of S. and to Governor, British Guiana No. 41.

Your telegram No. 344 to me and Personal No. 193 to Governor of British Guiana.

I can think of no leading political figure who could spare the time to participate in the enquiry and who would also command general approbation. In the circumstance I think Jackson would be a very suitable choice.

130. TELEGRAM (No. 198) FROM GOVERNOR SAVAGE TO COLONIAL SECRETARY
(13 November 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir. A. Savage)

Code D. 13th November, 1953.
R. 13th ,, ,, 22.00 hrs.

PRIORITY
PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Personal No. 198

My personal and confidential telegram No. 196.

Situation Report.

Position on the sugar estates remains much the same. It is hoped that there may be resumption of work at Port Mourant and Albion after the week-end. There were stoppages at Skeldon and Blairmont on the 11th November owing to dissatisfaction with the accuracy of the cane weighing scale. Blairmont resumed yesterday but the stoppage at Skeldon continued in spite of official check on the scale. Recheck is being carried out today.

2. Unsuccessful attempt was made to set fire to the manager's house at Albion last night during his absence.

3. Statement intended for the press was issued by the P.P.P on 11th November condemning the procedure laid down by the Advisory Committee for hearing objections by detainees. Daily newspapers declined to publish it. Hearings by the committee will now begin on the 23rd November.

Copies sent to:-
Commonwealth Relations Office - Mr. R.C. Ormerod

131. TEXT OF LETTER FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO SIR JAMES ROBERTSON
(16 November 1953)

16 November, 1953

I was more than delighted to get your letter of 12th November. It is good news that you are prepared to serve on the British Guiana Commission of Enquiry.

I shall not be able to let you have the exact terms of reference of the Commission until I have had an opportunity to discuss them with the Chairman, as soon as we have one.

The usual financial arrangement for Commissions of this sort is to pay an honorarium and to meet living expenses while in the colony by a subsistence allowance. I think, therefore, you can rest assured that you will not be out of pocket over the Mission.

I hope to get the Commission off to the Colony in January.

(SGD.) O. LYTTLETON

[To:] Sir James W. Robertson, K.B.E.

132. LETTER FROM JOHN MORRIS TO OLIVER LYTTLETON
(16 November 1953)

THE ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE,
STRAND, LONDON, W,C.2
16th November, 1953

Confidential

Dear Mr Lyttleton,

I thank you very much for your letter in regard to the proposed Commission of Enquiry and for sending me a copy of the White Paper on British Guyana. I am giving the matter most careful consideration and I will write again shortly.

Yours sincerely,

John W. Morris

[To:] The Right Hon. Oliver Lyttleton D.S.O M.C. M.P.
Colonial Office

133. LETTER FROM JUSTICE JOHN MORRIS TO OLIVER LYTTLETON

(17 November 1953)

THE ROYAL COURTS
OF JUSTICE,
STRAND,
LONDON, W.C.2
17th November 1953

Private and Confidential

Dear Mr Lyttleton

I have given my careful consideration to your invitation to me to be Chairman of the proposed Commission of Enquiry relating to British Guyana and I regret to say that for various personal reasons I do not feel able to undertake this task. I need hardly say that I am very sorry not to be able to help in the way desired.

I took the opportunity of reading the White Paper and of perusing the report of the debate in the House of Commons. Had I felt able to accept - I think that I would have been perplexed in regard to certain matters: it may possibly be of slight help if I mention one or two aspects that occurred to me coming fresh with the matter. As a private citizen I felt that on the information reaching the Government as set out in the White Paper the Government had to act resolutely and promptly. But an enquiry "into the events leading to the suspension of the Constitution" must first and foremost be an enquiry into the allegations against the Ministers. If they have committed offences then it will be said that they should be persecuted. Some I gather have been detained but not arrested. If it is difficult to collect evidence then the position before the Commission may be either that the Ministers will ignore it or that they will claim searching public investigation - in which case the Commission might be put into the difficult position of in effect trying the Minister in regard to matters some of which might if evidence were available be the subject of charges. It seems to me that it might be embarrassing for a Judge from England to be put in effect in the position of trying the Ministers! Someone would have to present the case on the individual cases against the Ministers and the Ministers would be entitled to be heard. If they were - then would they be cross-examined and if so by whom [and] no estimate as to the time involved in all this part of the enquires could be made in advance.

On the various other matters set out in the White Paper again as a private citizen it seems to me that on reasonable belief in regard to the matters a Government had to take action. But it might be somewhat embarrassing for a Judge thereafter to have to say whether matters set out in the White Paper can or cannot be substantiated.

As to "making recommendations for a revised Constitution" this might be difficult for anyone not possessing a background of knowledge as to the country while any plan evolved will inevitably be tested by the scrutiny of those with diverging political outlooks. It may be that these are not realms in which a Judge figures very well.

I have mentioned these merely as lines of thought - or impression - in case this might be of any assistance.

May I be allowed to say that I appreciate how anxious and worrying must be the problems you have to tackle and my I repeat how sorry I am that I find myself unable to accept your invitation.

Yours sincerely

John W. Morris

[To:] The Right Hon. Oliver Lyttleton D.S.O. MC. M.P.
Colonial Office

134. TELEGRAM (No. 200) FROM GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

(17 November 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Code D. 17th November, 1953.

R. 18th ,, ,, 01.40 hrs.

IMMEDIATE

CONFIDENTIAL

PERSONAL No. 200

Addressed to S. of S.

Repeated to Comptroller, Development and Welfare Organisation, West Indies

No.77.

Your personal and confidential telegram No.193.

Commission of Enquiry.

I agree that there is no leading political figure who could suitably be chosen and I doubt very much whether a politician would be acceptable here. Of Malone and Jackson I adhere to my original recommendation in favour of the latter, and I can think of no better choice. Sherlock's name had occurred to me, and his inclusion would, I think, have been favourably accepted in British Guiana, but I note that you have considered and ruled out the University field.

2. For Chairmanship I should like to suggest Sir William Gormann, High Court Judge, if there is any possibility of securing his services. As you know he has had a number of assignments in West Africa and to my knowledge commanded universal confidence and respect.

3. I understand from Gutch that someone from the T.U.C. and possibly an ex-administrator might be chosen to complete the team. I fully endorse the inclusion of the former. As regards the latter I would have suggested Milverton, but I assume the fact that he has already expressed definite views in the House of Lords would rule him out. I might mention that local opinion here has canvassed prospect of Waddington and Lethem. I imagine that the inclusion of Waddington could not be considered, having regard to his Chairmanship of Commission responsible for the suspended Constitution. (**Corrupt group**)** appears to command much respect among the general public here, particularly the East Indian community, but I gather that industrial interest might regard him with some suspicion. I would raise no objection to his appointment.

* Telegraph Branch note: Correction being obtained.

*[Editor's note: **The name of the individual was not received in the telegraphic transmission. The name has not appeared in copies of other telegrams made available to the editor.]*

135. TELEGRAM (No. 205) FROM GOVERNOR SAVAGE TO COLONIAL SECRETARY
(17 November 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir. A. Savage)

Code D. 17th November, 1953.

R. 17th ,, ,, 01.40 hrs.

IMMEDIATE

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

PERSONAL No. 205

My personal and confidential telegram No.198.

Situation Report.

Position on sugar estates has improved considerably. At Skeldon there was a return to work on 16th November and today attendance there is normal. At Port Mourant and Albion there has been a gradual resumption of work since 16th November and turn out today is 60 percent of normal. All factories throughout the Colony are now grinding.

2. There were reports of possible unrest on Corentyne at the end of last week and police reinforcements were sent to the area, but nothing transpired.

3. Executive Council meeting was held this morning at which it was decided to reimpose the ban on entry of six West Indian communists who were previously banned from British Guiana, namely: - Ferdinand Smith, William Strachan and Richard Hart of Jamaica and John Rejas, John la Rose and Quentin O'Connor of Trinidad. I propose to consider banning other communists later on.

Copy sent to:-
Commonwealth Relations Office - Mr. R. Ormerod

136. TELEGRAM (No. 819) FROM GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

(17 November 1953)

B.G.C 262/0/5

SAVING

From the Governor of British Guiana

To the Secretary of State for the Colonies

Date 17th November, 1953

No. 819 SAVING

PERSONAL PRIORITY

RESTRICTED

Your restricted personal priority telegram No. 194 of 13th November. Detentions.

As requested, I forward herewith a copy of the Rules made under section 13(4) of the Emergency Order, 1953. Copies of the "Procedure to be followed by the Advisory Committee appointed under section 13(2) of the Emergency Order" and a related semi-official letter, addressed to the Attorney General by the Chairman of the Committee, are also forwarded for your information.

137. TEXT OF LETTER FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO LORD JUSTICE MORRIS

(18 November 1953)

Private and Confidential

18th November, 1953

Thank you for your letter of the 17th November about the proposed Commission of Enquiry in British Guiana.

I am naturally disappointed that you do not feel able to accept the Chairmanship but quite understand. Thank you for giving it such serious consideration and for sending me your very helpful comments on some of the difficulties which are bound to face the Commission.

(Sgd) Oliver Lyttelton.

[To:]
Lord Justice Morris

138. TEXT OF LETTER FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO LORD SIMONDS

(18 November 1953)

18 November, 1953

Lord Justice Morris after asking for a few days for consideration has now told me that he does not feel able to take art the Chairmanship of the Commission of Enquiry to British Guiana.

I enclose a copy of his letter to me and should be grateful if you would read it. I rather think that the difficulties he sees in the Chairmanship being undertaken by a Judge are likely to be seen by any other of the Law Lords we might approach. I consequently think we ought perhaps to look elsewhere, but before we do I should be grateful to know whether you reach the same conclusion after reading Morris's letter.

(Sgd) Oliver Lyttelton.

[To:] The Right Honourable Lord Simonds

139. LETTER FROM LIONEL LUCKHOO TO N. MAYLE, UNDER-SECRETARY IN THE COLONIAL OFFICE

(18 November 1953)

Georgetown,
British Guiana
18th November, 1953

Dear Mr. Mayle,

Here I am back again in British Guiana and since arrived have been busily engaged in planning for our future work in the interest of the colony. As I know you will be interested in a report I endeavour to give below a fair narration of the situation.

1. In British Guiana everything seems normal and settled. This is due to the form steps taken and the prohibition of public meetings which, if permitted, could whip up the emotions of the people. One is conscious of a smouldering which will need time and active work to extinguish. Perhaps an example would better explain what I mean.

Plantations Port Mourant and Albion were the only two estates on strike when I returned. These estates are in Berbice and are in the district where Jagan was born and where his influence is strongest. Meetings are off so I called some of the principal ring-leaders and spoke to them asking why they continued to strike, etc. The answer was that the P.P.P, had promised to take away the Crown lands leased to the Sugar Estates for cane cultivation and give it to the workers for rice. They feel that the suspension of the constitution is a deliberate step to foil them from getting these lands.

It is incredible that people could believe and accept such impossible statements but there you are! After a long talk they appeared to see some reason but a realistic approach compels me to admit that time and work on these individuals and their kind are necessary if there is to be a change of heart. Yesterday both estates resumed work.

2. Most people are anxiously awaiting the charges to be instituted against the leaders. I do hope that something is done, for if nothing is done, the public will regard all the action and facts of the White Paper as being suspect and without foundation. This would be tragic.

Janet Jagan is like a bee flitting from place to place. By means of her personal contacts she endeavours to keep the spirit of the party alive.

3. I am hoping that our Commissioner of Police will be given every opportunity to expand the security department and to improve Police conditions generally. You will remember that this is a point I stressed before Lord Munster and again before Mr. Lyttelton.

As a lawyer I come into very close contact with the Police and I know the feeling of dissatisfaction among the ordinary policeman as the conditions under which he has to live.

I lay emphasis on this because in the absence of the Military the Police is our first line. We must on them and their loyalty must always be 100%.

Since my return I have been devoting the greater portion of my time to:

- (a) organising study groups,
- (b) setting up a lending library,
- (c) preparing propaganda, booklets and leaflets for distribution,
- (d) making preliminary plans for a newspaper.

Re: (a)

For obvious reasons we must have helpers to go not only in towns but in the country districts and educate and inform the workers. To do so they must have the necessary information and factual details to pass on; for the negative approach of why communism is bad is insufficient, [and] the positive way of showing how democracy is superior must be urged, and workers encouraged to follow a school which would bring for them greater benefits.

The first study group of 15 meets next week when we shall devote our time to the study of the central problem of the economy of British Guiana. Workers have been so long deluded into accepting catch words and phrases portraying Guiana as the El Dorado and the magnificent province that they feel this is a fabulously wealthy country which brings millions to the Capitalists and poverty to the workers.

Members of the study group who are to go out and teach and inform the workers must be briefed on the problems of the economy of British Guiana, a country in which 9/10ths of the population live on the low lying alluvial coastal belt 6 feet below sea level, and where 80% of the economic activity takes place. This inhabited and productive area being an artificial man made environment, the battle against water, where sea water must be kept out and fresh water conserved makes the economics and physical problems of production quite unique. The study group will also tackle the basic principles of trade unionism.

The members of the study group will be under an obligation wherever they go to choose potential leaders and to brief them to carry on the work of informing and educating the worker. This is to be carried on the basis of the cell system in which workers' groups will be formed.

Re: (b)

I am now begging, borrowing and buying books for a lending library. I have a small nucleus collection with copies of all the "background books", - books by Shoed - Communism and Man, Force Labour in Soviet Russia, It Happens in Russia, Stalin Slave Camps, I believe, etc., etc. and these will be regarded as reference books to be utilised by the members of the study groups and leaders of the various workers' groups.

Re: (c)

Writing the propaganda leaflets and booklets will take some time, but is very necessary because the material should have a local flavour and be written in the language which workers in Guiana will understand. I have enlisted the assistance of Percy Armstrong, the Editor of the *Guiana Times* - a periodical which should be familiar to you. If it is not, then I shall be happy to send you copies. He writes in an attractive Time-like style which puts over a point to good effect. For the present, through an organisation, I am getting some excellent 10 or 12 page pocket size booklets which will be distributed freely, examples are: "Communism brings slavery" by William Chamberlain, "The Communists conspiracy against the Negroes" by George Schuyler, "The red drive in the colonies", "The Red terror and Religion", "How Communism demoralises Youth", etc., etc..

Re: (d)

General plans for a newspaper next year are in a fluid state as money must be found to carry the loss which is inevitable. I have at the back of my mind that the paper must win popular appeal by a sympathetic approach to the problems of the workers and must not act as a carriage to foist the personality of an individual on the public but must of course be a solid weapon in the fight against Communism.

In carrying out the above programme, members of the U.D.P. and recognised trade unions will be used but at the beginning the Party idea will be soft-pedalled. I feel the principle of building up goodwill and taking the workers' minds out of the Soviet gutter should be our

first duty. It will commence on a very moderate scale, each study group member meeting small groups of 10 or 12 in private houses in town and country and they in turn or some of them carrying on in their particular districts and submitting weekly reports to the Central body.

Time is needed but with enthusiasm and a desire to serve our country this little movement can prove of some usefulness when the time arrives for the U.D.P. to face the crucial test of another general election.

Yesterday afternoon I had the pleasure of meeting your Mr. Young and I showed him my plans which I am happy to say met with his approval. He offered to assist me with material, etc. and I hope to see much of him when our study group gets cracking from next week.

I am afraid this has been a very lengthy letter but knowing your evident concern and genuine interest in our colony I make no apology.

It means exhaustive efforts on our part and in the not distant future when I hope I shall have won my spurs in my profession I hope to devote my time wholly in making my small and humble contribution to the land of my birth.

Kindest regards to yourself and Mr. Rogers.

Yours very truly,

(Signed) Lionel Luckhoo

140. EDITORIAL PUBLISHED IN LONDON *TIMES*

(19 November 1953)

DANGEROUS DELAY

(*Times*, 19 November 1953)

It is now over a month since the announcement was made by the Colonial Office that a commission would be appointed to inquire into recent events in British Guiana and to make recommendations for a revised constitution. Yet the names of such a commission have not been announced, and the disturbing fact is that, judged on the previous history of the Royal Commission on East Africa, there is a danger that they will not be, perhaps until after some unforeseen event occurs which makes the situation in British Guiana even more difficult to resolve than it now is. This is what happened in Kenya. The difficulties of assembling a commission are well known; but it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that these commissions on colonial affairs are not given the priority by Government that they urgently require.

The commission will have before it a task of great complexity. The devising of a practical constitution for British Guiana is under no conditions likely to be easy. It was recognition of this fact by the Government which so long retarded the granting of political advance in step with neighbouring territories. When a constitutional committee eventually arrived it did not really set itself to resolving the difficulties. It merely recommended that a course which the Administration had long hesitated to pursue should be adopted - namely, the sweeping

aside of nearly all constitutional checks. The peculiar factor in the situation is that British Guiana is a multi-racial society in which one race, the Indian, is in process of ceasing to be a powerful minority and within the next ten years will become a majority. Any constitution which ignores the insecurity created by that factor is likely to fail.

So far as social and economic matters are concerned, there will not be any need for the commission to take first-hand evidence. A number of recent reports exist such as the Venn report on the sugar industry and the Evans report on settlement in the interior - which contain most of the relevant facts. There is also the report of the mission from the International Bank which visited the country this year and contains an impartial assessment of the position. There will also be in the country the two-man mission of Mr. F.A. Brown, until recently manager of the Sudan Gezira Board, and Mr. G. Lacby, Colonial Office adviser on irrigation, who may be able to make valuable proposals on land settlement. The commission will certainly have to take cognizance of such reports, and should be equipped with a secretariat adequate to collate them. Subjects such as land settlement are inseparable from the political issue.

The most urgent need is to get the commission going. However well chosen its membership, and its terms of reference, these will be of no avail if opportunity is let slip. It is also vital that as little time as possible should be lost in bringing to trial those members of the P.P.P. who were recently detained on charges of fomenting disorder. Normal conditions must be restored in both the judicial and the constitutional spheres in British Guiana as soon as possible.

141. NOTE FROM PRIVATE SECRETARY OF COLONIAL SECRETARY TO N.L. MAYLE
(20 November 1953)

Mr. Mayle

Please see the Lord Chancellor's letter attached.

The Secretary of State has now directed -

(i) that Sir James Robertson be invited to become Chairman of the Commission of Enquiry to British Guiana. He has authorised me to write to Sir James tomorrow (Saturday) morning to avoid delay and I attach a draft. Sir T. Lloyd thought this draft should mention what honorarium etc. was given to Sir John Waddington as Chairman of the Constitutional Commission as a guide to Sir James Robertson. Perhaps you would also check that I have described Mr. Justice Jackson correctly. The papers are I think in the Department at present.

(ii) that Mr. Jackson should be invited immediately by telegram to become a member of the Commission. Perhaps this could be put in hand.

(iii) that we should clinch Mr. George Woodcock. Sir Vincent Tewson promised the Secretary of State that he could have Mr. Woodcock and I think we must now send a letter to Mr. Woodcock which, if we can get it off tomorrow morning, would have to be for my (or Sir T. Lloyd's?) signature. Sir T. Lloyd would be grateful if you could check whether there are any precedents as regards remuneration etc. paid to T.U.C. members of commissions, if there have been any in recent times. The letter (and the telegram to Mr. Jackson) would clearly

have to indicate terms. If the letter to Mr. Woodcock has to wait until Monday it should I think be for the Secretary of State's signature.

You will also doubtless wish to let Sir A. Savage know what is now proposed.

(Signed) J.B. Johnston

20th November, 1953

142. LETTER FROM THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
(20 November 1953)

LORD CHANCELLOR
HOUSE OF LORDS
S.W.1
20th November 1953.

Dear Oliver,

Thank you for your letter of the 19th November regarding the Chairmanship of the Commission of Enquiry to British Guiana.

I am very sorry that Lord Justice Morris was unable to accept your invitation. I have considered his letter and some further observations he made to me personally, and am bound to say that, though his reasons against an English Judge taking the Chairmanship do not seem to me conclusive, there is no doubt they might make a strong appeal to any other Judge to whom you gave a similar invitation. I think, therefore, that the safer course in order to avoid further delay would be for you to look elsewhere for a Chairman.

I am sorry for this and wish that I had been able to help you more.

Yours ever,

(Signed) Salisbury

[To:] The Right Honourable Oliver Lyttelton, D.S.O., M.C., M.P.

143. TELEGRAM (No. 210) FROM GOVERNOR SAVAGE TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
(20 November 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Code

D. 20th November, 1953
R. 21st ,, ,, 07.00 hrs.

PRIORITY
PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL
Personal No. 210

My personal and confidential telegram No.207.

Situation Report.

Position on sugar estates is now normal: completion of rice harvest -in no doubt mainly responsible for this improvement and further change in situation seems unlikely until return of Jagan and Burnham.

2. Conviction has been secured for intimidation at Rose-Hall, accused being fined \$100.

3. Re-imposition of ban on West Indian communists has received favourable press comment, but there has been no noticeable public reaction.

4. The five detainees handed the guard commander on 19th November a written statement to the effect that they were going on hunger strike from 11.15 a.m. "in protest against continuation of martial law in Guiana, the suppression of genuine democratic trade union activity and barbarous use of heavy tanks against the black people of Kenya, and also against certain aspects of the food arrangements here at Atkinson Field." They have in fact refused food since midday on 19th November. No serious complaint in regard to the food arrangements had in fact been made by them, but they have now been told to put any complaints in writing so that it may receive attention.

5. In a letter recently intercepted from Mrs. Jagan to P.P.P. country groups, she complains of difficulty in maintaining contact and distributing reading material owing to the operation of Emergency Order and exhorts them to "keep heart".

Copy sent to:
Commonwealth Relations Office - Mr. R. Ormerod

144. DETENTION ORDER AGAINST SYDNEY KING (21 November 1953)

COPY

THE EMERGENCY ORDER, 1953

GROUND OF DETENTION

1. Activities prejudicial to public safety, order or defence committed since the suspension of the Constitution on the 8th October, 1953:

(a) On the 17th October, 1953, at Enmore Estate you were present and took part in the holding of an illegal meeting of more than five persons, contrary to the Governor's Directions of the 9th October, 1953, made under the Emergency Order 1953, prohibiting meetings of more than five persons in a public place.

(b) On the 24th October, 1953, at Plantation Blairmont, County of Berbice, you were present and took part in the holding of an illegal meeting of more than five persons, contrary to the Governor's Directions of the 9th October, 1953, made under the Emergency Order 1953, prohibiting meetings of more than five persons in a public place.

(q) On Sunday the 11th October, 1953, in Plaisance Village you distributed pamphlets entitled "P.P.P. Call to Action" which, after making the untrue and provocative statement that British Guiana had been "invaded by foreign troops" went on to call for an illegal general strike and other conduct, namely non-cooperation and non-fraternisation and boycotting of all goods and supplies coming from the United Kingdom, of a kind which, in the then existing state of the Colony might have been prejudicial to public safety, order and defence.

(d) In October 1953, you assisted Mrs. Janet Jagan, (Secretary of the People's Progressive Party) and Martin Carter and Rory Westmaas (Members of the Party) in the organising of selected members of the Party into a Resistance Movement aimed at

(a) inciting dissatisfaction against the lawfully constituted authorities in the Colony;

(b) the commission of arson on sugar estates in the Colony.

(e) In the month of October 1953, you arranged with members of the People's Progressive Party to make bombs for use against opponents of that Party.

2. Background and past conduct

In addition to the activities set forth under paragraph 1 above, your background and past conduct, as set hereunder, were taken into account incoming (*sic*) to the decision to detain you under the powers conferred on the Governor by Section 13 of the Emergency Order 1953:

(a) You have identified yourself with extremist politics in the Colony and have been, since the inception of the People's Progressive Party in 1949, a close associate of Dr. Cheddie Jagan and Mrs. Jagan, who are leading members of that Party. That Party has been active in the dissemination of orthodox Communist propaganda materials obtained from Eastern European and British Communist Party sources, and, as was said in the statement by Her Majesty's Government read over Radio Demerara on the 9th October, 1953, by the Honourable John Gutch, Chief Secretary, was a Party "completely under the control of a communist clique".

(b) You have shown yourself to be a strong admirer of the Soviet Union and by your actions and words have raised a strong suspicion that you are a convinced Communist. This view is borne out inter alia by the Manifesto handed in by you to the National Printery, Georgetown, in May, 1953, with a view to its publication, and by the fact that you had in your possession at your home at Buxton, on Tuesday, 13th October, 1953, a quantity of Communist propaganda material.

(c) You have maintained contacts with world Communist organisations such as the World Federation of Trade Unions and the World Federation of Democratic Youth.

(d) You have, since 1949, distributed Communist propaganda material in the Colony.

(e) You have been an active member of the British Guiana Peace Committee from its inception in late 1951. That Peace Committee, which is known to be affiliated to the Communist controlled Peace Movement, was started in British Guiana by Dr. Cheddie Jagan when he returned to the Colony from Eastern Europe in September 1951.

(f) You have been an active member of the Pioneer Youth League and the Demerara Youth Rally, which are youth sections of the People's Progressive and which are affiliated to the World Federation of Democratic Youth which is a Communist controlled body.

(g) Between December 1952 and March 1953, you visited Communist dominated countries in Eastern Europe and attended the Peace Conference in Vienna representing the British Guiana peace Committee.

(h) In March 1953, on your return from Vienna, there were seized from you a number of photographs of negroes being lynched and maltreated in the United States of America. The fact that these photographs were found parcelled with Communist propaganda documents and that they were brought to the Colony just before the General Elections, raises, in the light of the rest of your past conduct, the presumption that your purpose in bringing the photographs into the Colony was to foster racial hatred in the Colony.

(i) On the 7th March, 1953, at Buxton, shortly after your return from Vienna, you made a provocative public speech alleging inter alia that British troops were "murdering the people of Kenya" in order to steal their land and that American troops in Korea were resorting to germ warfare and "fighting the women and children" there.

(j) In September 1953, you arranged for a man to commit arson on Skeldon Estate.

(k) During the recent general strike in September 1953, and at a time when you were a Minister of the Crown, you visited sugar estates and incited labourers to prevent other labourers from working.

(l) Early in October 1953, you were party to a plan to commit arson in Georgetown.

(m) While the police were attempting to control the crowd outside the House of Assembly on the 24th September, 1953, you exhorted the crowd to rush the building. In the result, the building was soon packed with an unruly crowd.

(Sgd.) PETER BELL

Chairman of the Advisory Committee

Date: 21st November, 1953

To:
SYDNEY EVANSON KING, Esq.,
Detention Camp,

Atkinson Field,
BRITISH GUIANA.

**145. TEXT OF LETTER FROM PRIVATE SECRETARY OF COLONIAL SECRETARY TO
SIR JAMES ROBERTSON**

(21 November 1953)

21st November, 1953.

Mr. Lyttelton is not in the Office today but has asked me to write to you on his behalf in order to avoid delay, to ask whether you would consider accepting the Chairmanship of the Commission of Enquiry which is to go to British Guiana.

I understand from the Secretary of State that when you discussed with him your possible membership of the Commission he told you that he was then thinking in terms of a Law Lord as Chairman. Since then he has come to the conclusion, after discussion with the Lord Chancellor, that to have a Judge as Chairman as well as having a Colonial judge as a member of the Commission might give the Commission too great an appearance of being a judicial enquiry. There are in addition a number of difficulties which would arise for the Chairman if he happened to be also a Judge or Justice of Appeal in the United Kingdom.

The Secretary of State has therefore decided that he will not pursue the idea of having a Judge as Chairman and has asked me to say that he would be delighted if you would accept the Chairmanship yourself. Subject to any views you may have yourself if you accept, he feels that it should be sufficient to have a Commission of three. As I believe he mentioned to you, he hopes the other two members would be Sir Donald Jackson, Chief Justice of the Windward and Leeward Islands, who is a Guianese, and Mr. George Woodcock the Assistant General Secretary of the Trades Union Congress. We understand Mr. Woodcock is willing to serve and can be made available by the T.U.C. and we are just sending an invitation to Sir Edward Jackson (sic).

Sir John Waddington, the Chairman the recent British Guiana Constitution Commission, received an honorarium at the rate of £225 per month for the period he was engaged on the enquiry, a subsistence allowance at the rate of £2 a night whilst he was in the Colony and at the rate of 13/4d. a night whilst travelling to and from the Colony. We are proposing to the Governor of British Guiana that those should be the terms for the Chairman of the present Commission.

Mr. Lyttelton does not wish you to feel that you need decide in a hurry whether you will accept Chairmanship but he would be very grateful if you could let him know your decision as soon as may be conveniently possible.

(J.B. JOHNSTON)

Private Secretary

[To:] Sir James Robertson, K.B.E.

**146. TELEGRAM (No. 207) FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR OF
BRITISH GUIANA**

(22 November 1953)

SECRET

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

TO BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Cypher (O.T.P.)

Sent 22nd November, 1953. 17.15 hrs.

IMMEDIATE

REPLY URGENTLY REQUIRED

SECRET AND PERSONAL

PERSONAL No. 207.

Your telegram Personal 210.

Detainees.

Decision by detainees to go on hunger strike on 19th November is probably connected with departure of Jagan on that day for India, where hunger strikes may be expected to elicit sympathy. If this is so it would indicate close planning of actions between detainees and Jagan and their method of communication for this purpose may repay investigation.

2. News of hunger strike does not appear to have reached outside world yet. I hope it can be prevented from doing so as long as reasonably possible.

3. When the news does break it is clearly desirable for a full refutation of the reasons given for the hunger strike as quickly as possible to be issued in British Guiana and London. Grateful if you would let me have your views on what should be said.

4. I am not clear whether "suppression of genuine democratic trade union activity" in detainees' statement is meant to apply to British Guiana or to Kenya.

Copy sent to:

Commonwealth Relations Office - Mr. R.C. Ormerod.

**147. NOTES PREPARED BY COLONIAL OFFICE FOR REPLY TO QUESTION ASKED IN
PARLIAMENT**

(20 November 1953)

1. EXTRACT FROM OFFICIAL REPORT OF 23 NOV 1953

BRITISH GUIANA

Emergency Regulations

(Appeal Tribunal)

63. Mr. Brockway asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will place in the Library a copy of the rules of procedure of the tribunal which has been set up in British Guiana to consider appeals by persons detained under the Emergency Regulations.

Mr. Hopkinson: My right hon. Friend has asked the Governor for a copy of the rules of procedure for this purpose.

2. [NOTES PREPARED FOR REPLY]
(Oral reply for 23. 11. 53)

Regulation 13 of the Emergency Order in Council which was signed on the 4th October at Balmora¹ provided that an Advisory Committee should be set up by the Governor "to consider any recommendations to the Governor with respect to any objections against a detention order under the regulation which are duly made to the Committee by the person to whom the Order relates".

The regulation also provides that the Governor may make rules as to the manner in which objections against such an Order may be made to the Advisory Committee. "Such rules shall contain provisions for enabling any person in respect of whom an Order is made . . . to make objections against the Order either in person or by Counsel, or solicitor or duly authorised agent". It is these rules for which Mr. Fenner Brockway is now asking.

A telegram was sent to the Governor (Personal No. 194) on the 13th November asking for details of the rules, but no reply has yet been received.

I have sent a further telegram to the Governor today, advising him of this Parliamentary Question and asking when a reply to the previous telegram will be received.

I submit a draft reply. I understand from Mr. Osborne that it is most unlikely that this Question will be reached for oral reply and I have therefore restricted the notes for supplementaries.

See also letter to Mr. Fenner Brockway which should reach private office today.

(Signed) James Vernon
(J. W. Vernon).
20th November, 1953

**148. LETTER FROM SIR JAMES ROBERTSON TO MR. JOHNSTON, PRIVATE
SECRETARY TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES**
(23 November 1953)

The Old Bakehouse
Cholsey
Berkshire
23. XI . 53

Dear Mr. Johnson,

I am writing to thank you for your letter of 21st November. If the Secretary of State wishes me to be Chairman of this Commission going to British Guiana, and thinks that I am up to it, I shall certainly do my best to make a success of it, and feel very honoured to be asked to go as Chairman,

I (*illegible word*) that three is probably a large enough body and the membership you mention is wide enough to be representative of a number of types of experience.

I have no comments to make on the terms of the proposed for honorarium, etc., which seem to me to be very reasonable.

Would you be good enough to ask someone in the office to send me some of the material on B.G. which can be sent by post, e.g.:

- (1) the report of the Waddington Commission
- (2) a copy of the constitution now in abeyance
- (3) the recent white papers which may seem relevant.

I shall be in Paris from November 30th until December 6th at a conference about the impact of western civilisation on the Islamic countries, but will be available (*illegible word*) before or after that if the Secretary of State should wish to see me again.

It doesn't appear in Who's Who, as I was awarded it in the Coronation Honours, but I am also K.C.M.G. as well as K.B.E.

Yours sincerely

James Robertson

(Editor's Note: The original letter is hand-written).

149. TELEGRAM (NO. 215) FROM GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

(23 November 1953)

SECRET

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Cypher (O.T.P.)

D. 23rd November, 1953.

R. 23rd ,, ,, 23.15 hrs.

PRIORITY

SECRET AND PERSONAL

PERSONAL No. 215

Your secret and personal telegram No. 201.

I have received enquiry from the Commander Caribbean Area as to my reactions should he wish to withdraw one company of Argylls if the internal security situation deteriorates in Grenada. I have agreed to this step as a temporary measure if it proves necessary, but I have pointed out that the situation here may deteriorate on the return of Jagan and Burnham.

**150. COLONIAL OFFICE NOTES ON POSSIBLE ANSWER TO QUESTION ASKED OF
THE SECRETARY OF STATE IN BRITISH PARLIAMENT**

(24th November 1953)

REPLY

FOR THURSDAY, 26TH NOVEMBER, 1953

115. MR. LESLIE HALE: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies, on what date he first received a recommendation from the Governor of British Guiana that the Constitution of British Guiana should be suspended.

ANSWER

MR. LYTTLETON: The decision to suspend the Constitution was taken on a series of reports by the Governor over a period which indicated quite clearly that the situation was progressively and rapidly deteriorating.

[ACCOMPANYING NOTES]

This question of Mr. Hale's is extremely difficult to answer without landing the Secretary of State in a political storm.

2. In a number of communications received from the Governor in August and September he was clearly beginning to lose hope that he could make the Constitution work e.g.: -

(i) his political report for July ("it would clearly be politic to avoid a crisis as long as possible"),

(ii) a letter dated 27th August to Sir. T. Lloyd ("P.P.P. members of Government are using their position to undermine the Government"),

(iii) his political report for August ("extremist views prevail . . . probably a deliberate intention to wreck the Constitution . . . Mrs. Jagan has issued a circular directive"),

(iv) a letter dated 13th September to Sir. T. Lloyd ("I am rapidly coming to the conclusion that unless the opposition elements rouse themselves quickly . . . we shall have to go back on the new Constitution which would mean use of force"),

(v) telegram personal No. 37 of 17th September ("I consider a breakdown in the Constitution is probable in any case within a few weeks. . . it would almost certainly be accompanied by disorder. . . Forces might be required.")

3. The Governor, however, never actually recommended the suspension of the Constitution.

4. It was on the basis of the documents listed above, plus a letter from Sir Stephen Luke, plus the various reports received on the developing sugar strike (and in particular the attempt to start a general sympathy strike on 21st September) which led the Secretary of State to decide on 23rd September that the Constitution should be suspended. The decision was sent to the Governor on 24th September.

5. The Governor never replied to this telegram as such, but he clearly accepted the decision and acted promptly on it.

6. There are various ways in which this question could be answered: -

(i) the Secretary of State could take refuge in the fact that some communications between Governor and himself are secret and cannot be revealed in the public interest - see 1st alternative draft,

(ii) He could say a flat no - see 2nd alternative,

(iii) He could refer to the various communications received from the Governor - see 3rd alternative,

(iv) He could point out that the decision was Her Majesty's Government's, see 4th alternative, and

(v) The fullest reply would be a combination of (iii) and (iv).

Since it is unlikely that this question will be taken orally the Secretary of State would get away with any of these replies, but the impact of the reply on the forthcoming prayer must be reckoned with. If Labour members become aware that the Governor did not recommend suspension, they will use that as an argument in the debate to show that suspension was unnecessary ("Even the Governor was against it" would be a typical distortion). For that reason I favour the lat* (*sic*) alternative draft, which though they may smell a rat they will not be able to get around.

(Signed) James Vernon
24/11

Mr. Sorensen asked on the 21st October at what date the Governor conveyed to the Secretary of State the gravity of the circumstances which he considered warranted the

dismissal of the Ministers and the landing of troops. The answer given to this which formed only part of the Question was that the series of actions of Ministers which led to the decision to send troops and suspend the Constitution were reported as they occurred over a period. There was nothing in the Supplementaries bearing on this particular part of the Question (WIS 1044/58/01/PQ.8).

2. I suggest that the present Question might be dealt with similarly and I submit an alternative draft reply.

(Signed) N.L. Mayle
(N.L. MAYLE)
24th November, 1953

(Handwritten appended note)

S. of S.

While I agree with him on reply for the answer (as his 2nd is most likely to be used) I am sure that in next Monday's debate Minister must be prepared for pressure for a more precise answer. And this can, I think, make use of 2(iv) and (v) overleaf** and then say quite plainly that this decision to suspend was H.M.G.'s.

T. Lloyd
25.11.53

[Editor's Notes:

**last*

*** In Vernon's notes above]*

151. DRAFT OF COLONIAL SECRETARY'S REPLY TO QUESTION ASKED IN BRITISH PARLIAMENT - DRAFT PREPARED BY N.L. MAYLE
(24 November 1953)

File No. WIS 1044/01/PQ1

Mr. Mayle 24/11

Permt. U.S. of S. 25/11
Parly. U.S. of S.
Minister of State
Secretary of State 25/11

DRAFT REPLY

The decision to suspend the Constitution was taken on a series of reports by the Governor over a period which indicated quite clearly that the situation was progressively and rapidly deteriorating.

Notes on Supplementaries

The decision to suspend the Constitution was taken quite properly by Her Majesty's Government.

2. The Governor would naturally be very reluctant to make a specific recommendation for the suspension of the Constitution, and would not do so except in the very last resort.

There is no doubt whatever that the Governor was in full agreement with the decision to suspend the Constitution.

**152. TEXT OF LETTER FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO SIR VINCENT TEWSON,
GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE BRITISH TUC**
(24 November 1953)

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

24th November, 1953.

I think that I should now send a letter to George Woodcock asking him if he would be prepared to serve on the British Guiana Commission of Enquiry. I enclose the letter which I have written for that purpose and if you see no objection I should be grateful if you would pass it on to him.

You will see that we are proposing that he should be paid an honorarium in addition to his travelling expenses and a subsistence allowance. I hope that there will be no objection to this so far as you are concerned.

(Sgd.) O. Lyttelton

[To:] Sir Vincent Tewson, C.B.E., M.C.

**153. TEXT OF LETTER FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO GEORGE WOODCOCK OF
THE BRITISH TRADE UNION CONGRESS**
(24 November 1953)

24th November, 1953

I believe that you know about the proposal that someone from the Trades Union Congress should serve as a member of the Commission of Enquiry which is being set up in connection with the suspension of the Constitution in British Guiana. I am writing with Sir Vincent Tewson's agreement to ask whether you would serve on this Commission. I very much hope that you will find it possible to accept.

The Chairman of the Commission will be Sir James Robertson, who has recently retired from the post of Civil Secretary of the Sudan and we are hoping that Sir Donald Jackson, the Chief Justice of the Windward and Leeward Islands, will also agree to serve making a

Commission of three. Sir Donald Jackson incidentally is a West Indian and a native of British Guiana.

I am hoping that the Commission will go out to British Guiana at the end of the year or early in January. It is difficult to say how long this enquiry will take and the best estimate that I can give is that it may be as much as three months of which six weeks, or a little longer, will probably have to be spent in the Colony.

The terms will of course cover the cost of your travelling and a subsistence allowance whilst in the Colony and whilst travelling to and from the Colony. It is also proposed that you should receive an honorarium. These matters are under discussion with the Governor and we will let you have further details very shortly.

Would you let me know as soon as possible whether you will serve as a member of this Commission. I would very much like to be able to make an announcement within the next few days.

(Sgd) Oliver Lyttelton

154. TELEGRAM (No. 219) FROM GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

(24 November 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Code

D. 24th November, 1953.

R. 25th ,, ,, 01.45 hrs.

IMMEDIATE

CONFIDENTIAL AND PERSONAL

No. 219

My immediately following telegram contains text of letter issued to newspaper editors by the Chief Justice following visit of Advisory Committee to Atkinson Field yesterday to begin the hearing of objections lodged by detainees.

Following passage occurs in signed statement by Sydney King presented to the Committee:

-

(a) "I have been distributing communist propaganda material since 1948 and not since 1949".

(b) "I should like to confirm my close association with Dr. and Mrs. Jagan. I am an admirer of the Soviet Union. I am, in fact, an admirer of all peace loving peoples and of the finest in culture of any people. But in the Soviet Union I see the first country to break the imperialist chain, a staunch defender of peace and inspiration of all oppressed humanity.

It is charged also that I am a convinced communist. V.I. Lenin says that a communist must have a fair mastery of all human knowledge, of sciences, arts, philosophy, of history, of economics, anthropology, etc. I cannot pretend to have reached this eminence. It is, however, with this reservation, I am a convinced Communist".

3. Chief Justice, who has been consulted, does not see any reason why passage in statement need be regarded as in any way privileged, but suggest that you may wish to seek confirmation of his views from your advisers if you contemplate making public use of this material, e.g. in forthcoming debate.

155. TELEGRAM (No. 220) FROM GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

(24 November 1953)

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

En Clair D. 24th November, 1953

R. 25th ,, ,, 01.45 hrs.

IMMEDIATE

PERSONAL No. 220

My immediately preceding telegram.

Following is text of Chief Justice's letter.

Begins.

The following information may be of interest to you:

The Advisory Committee, accompanied by Mr. Hope, Superintendent of Police, and Police Security Officer visited Atkinson Field this morning to begin hearing of the objections which have been lodged with them by the five persons now detained at Atkinson Field under Section 13 of the Emergency Order 1953.

The Committee had intended to begin the hearing of the objections made by the detained person Mr. Sydney Evanson King but on arrival at Atkinson Field the Committee found awaiting them written notification from Mr. King that he did not intend to attend today's meeting of the Committee. They also found awaiting them a document signed by Mr. King

containing his observations on the grounds of detention which had previously been served on Mr. King. In reply to an oral enquiry made of Mr. King shortly after the Committee reached Atkinson Field by Mr. David Rose at the request of the Committee, Mr. King repeated that he did not intend to appear before the Committee at today's meeting. The Committee has been left with the impression, from what Mr. King said to Mr. Rose and from statements in Mr. King's memorandum above referred to, that he does not propose to attend before the Committee at any time.

In the result, Mr. King at no time appeared before the Committee at today's meeting. The Committee remain prepared to hear Mr. King and/or any witnesses he may wish to call on his behalf if he changes his mind before the Committee finally conclude their sittings at Atkinson Field.

The Committee had hoped to see today the detained persons Mr. Richard Own Westmaas, Mr. Martin Carter, Mr. Adjodha Singh (though not intending to hear their objections today) to clear up doubts as to whether they intended to pursue the objections to detention which they had lodged with the Committee. Each of these three detained persons declined to attend before the Committee today, stating that they would decide on their future course of action when they had been served with the grounds of detention contemplated by paragraph 4 of the Committee's procedure. It is intended to serve these grounds of detention in the next day or two.

The Committee will be at Atkinson Field on Monday next the 30th November, 1953, at 9.30 a.m. to hear the objections lodged by Mr. Samuel Mahabali Lachhmansingh and the objections lodged by Messrs. Westmaas, Martin Carter and Adjodha Singh.

I would point out that attendance before the Committee is quite optional.

Ends.

156. TELEGRAM (No. 221) FROM GOVERNOR SAVAGE TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY

(24 November 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Code D. 24th November, 1953.

R. 25th ,, ,, 07.15 hrs.

PRIORITY

CONFIDENTIAL

PERSONAL No. 221

Your telegram Personal No. 207.

Detainees.

As you will have seen from my telegram No. 218, hunger strike is now over.

2. Reference your paragraph 1, date of Jagan's departure was of course announced in the daily newspapers here, which are available to detainees, but possibility of some clandestine method of communication will be investigated. In fact news of hunger strike appeared in newspapers here daily since 19th November following announcement made by Mrs. Jagan as Secretary of the P.P.P., and intermediary in this instance is suspected to have been legal representative of one of the detainees. Failure of local editors to communicate news to outside world can only be attributed to failure to appreciate its news value.

3. As regards reason given for hunger strike, I think suppression of genuine democratic trade union activities was probably meant to refer to British Guiana. Reference is obscure but possibly they had in mind prevention of passage of Labour Relations Bill.

4. It is clear from Mrs. Jagan's announcement that words "tanks" in detainees' statement was a mistake for "bombs". It was recently reported in press here that heavy bombs had been used against Mau Mau.

5. As regards food arrangements, there is little to add to paragraph 4 of my telegram No. 201. There was some temporary difficulty in providing King with pea-nuts which he regards as essential to his diet (he is a vegetarian) (?but) these are now being provided. No complaint in writing has been submitted by detainees. Gist of this has already appeared in the press here.

6. I find it difficult to suggest what might be said in full refutation of grounds given for hunger strike, if necessity should arise. It could be pointed out that martial law does not exist here and that detention of individuals concerned was due to their activities which constituted a threat to public safety and order; and that so far from genuine democratic trade union activities having been suppressed, action taken by H.M. Government has ensured that unions should not be brought under political control of the P.P.P. Point about use of heavy bombs I must leave to you. Material about food arrangements given above.

7. Hunger strike caused practically no public reaction here even in centres of P.P.P. influence such as Port Mourant and Buxton.

8. I was about to ask for any guidance which you might be able to give me on question of procedure to be followed, e.g., forceable (*sic*) feeding if detainees should pursue hunger strike to point of seriously endangering their health. It would be helpful if this could be sent by airmail for future reference in case of need.

Copies sent to:- Commonwealth Relations Office - Mr. R.C. Ormerod

**157. LETTER TO SIR JAMES ROBERTSON FROM PRIVATE SECRETARY OF THE
COLONIAL SECRETARY**
(25 November 1953)

25th November, 1953.

Mr. Lyttelton has asked me to say how delighted he is at the good news in your letter of the 23rd November that you are willing to undertake the Chairmanship of the Commission of Enquiry to British Guiana.

It may be useful if I mention that West Indian affairs are dealt with in the Office by two departments - West Indian department "A" and West Indian department "B". P. Rogers is the Under-Secretary in charge of these two departments and M.L. Mayle is the head of West Indian department "B" which deals with British Guiana. Rogers is away from the Office at the moment. I have asked Mayle to send you the documents you asked for in your letter.

Please accept my apologies for our omission of your K.C.M.G. when we last wrote to you and my thanks for drawing our attention to the omission.

(J.B. JOHNSTON)

Private Secretary

[To:] Sir James Robertson, K.C.M.G., K.B.E.

**158. TELEGRAM (No. 277) FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR OF
LEEWARD ISLANDS**
(25 November 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

TO LEEWARD ISLANDS (Sir. K. Blackburne)

Cypher (O.T.P.)

Sent 25th November, 1953 02.45 hrs.

GUARD

CONFIDENTIAL AND PERSONAL

No. 277

Telegram to Governor Windwards, No. 425.

British Guiana Commission of Enquiry.

Following from Wallace.

Begins.

Point made in your telegram No. 141 was carefully considered before Jackson was selected. It was felt that risk of adverse effect on West Indian political opinion was more than effect by advantage of having British Guianese on Commission.

Ends.

159. TELEGRAM (No. 425) FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR OF WINDWARD ISLANDS
(25 November 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

TO WINDWARD ISLANDS (Mr. E. B. Beetham) Cypher (O.T P.)

Sent 25th November, 1953. 02.00 hrs.

IMMEDIATE
CONFIDENTIAL AND PERSONAL
No. 425

Addressed to Governor Windward Islands
Repeated to Governor Leeward Islands No, 276
Repeated to Governor British Guiana Personal No.209
Repeated to Comptroller, Development and Welfare Organisation, West Indies,
No. 339

Your telegram No. 380.

British Guiana Commission of Enquiry.

Following personal from Secretary of State.

Please ask Jackson on my behalf whether he would be prepared to serve as a member of this Commission. I should be grateful if you would tell him that I attach the greatest importance to having a responsible West Indian, if possible a British Guianese on the Commission; that I feel by experience and background he is eminently suited to the task and that I very much hope that he will assent. He would, of course, get traveling expenses and a suitable subsistence allowance.

2. The functions of the Commission are given in paragraph 44 of the White Paper, Cmd.8980.

3. As regards last paragraph of your telegram under reference I should be grateful if you would let me know what assistance you will need to replace Jackson. He may be absent from your territories for as long as four months from the beginning of next year.

4. Grateful for very early reply.

**160. TELEGRAM (No. 150) FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR OF
BRITISH GUIANA**

(25 November 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

TO BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Code

Sent 25th November, 1953. 01.30 hrs.

IMMEDIATE

CONFIDENTIAL

No. 150

My telegram No.210.

Commission of Enquiry.

Propose that terms for Chairman and Secretary should be same as those adopted for Waddington Commission and that, as in that case, cost should be met by British Guiana.

This would mean subsistence allowance for all members including Secretary of £2 per night in British Guiana and 13/4d. per night on journeys by sea or aircraft outside Colony with an honorarium of £225 per month for the Chairman and £175 per month for each of the members. If, however, Sir Donald Jackson accepts, honorarium would not be payable in his case as a serving judge, in accordance with practice which has been adopted in the past.

**161. TELEGRAM (No. 210) FROM GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA TO COLONIAL
SECRETARY**

(25 November 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

TO BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Cypher (O.T.P.) WIS 1044/41/04

Sent 25th November, 1953. 01.00 hrs.

PRIORITY
GUARD
CONFIDENTIAL AND PERSONAL
PERSONAL No. 210

Your telegram Personal No. 200

Commission of Enquiry.

I am most grateful for your comments. As you will see from my telegram to Governor, Windward Islands, No. 425, repeated to you as No. 209, I am asking Jackson to serve on Commission.

2. Sir James Robertson, late Civil Secretary, Sudan, has agreed to serve as Chairman and for third member of the Commission I have approached Mr. George Woodcock of the T.U.C.

3. I am telegraphing separately regarding terms for chairman and member of the Commission.

**162. COLONIAL OFFICE MINUTES ON VIEWS OF USING SYDNEY KING'S
STATEMENT IN ANSWERING PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION**
(26 November 1953)

Mr. Mayle

I feel sure it will be agreed that full use should be made of Mr. King's admission of his Communist faith given in document (43) at some time or other. It is the first out-right avowal we have had by a leading member of the P.P.P. that he is a Communist. Mr. King's reference to his close association with Dr. and Mrs. Jagan implicates them in this admission also.

The material might be used with great effect in the debate on the opposition's prayer against the Order-in-Council, if a suitable opportunity to use it is given by the opposition. I understand, however, that it is possible that this debate may now be put off for as much as a fortnight, in which case it will seem strange not to have published this information earlier.

It is possible that an opportunity will arise to use this information in reply to a P.Q. for next week (though I hope we shall, not have another fifty-two put down). To be on the safe side, however, it might be best to arrange for a suitable Question for answer on Wednesday next week and I submit a suitable draft.

The Governor of British Guiana should be informed that we are proposing to use Mr. King's statement and it might be as well to get from the Governor details of the grounds for detention given to Mr King and the other detainees and the full text of Mr. King's reply. I submit a draft on this point also.

(Signed) James Vernon
26th November, 1953

[Editor's Note: The comment by Mayle below Vernon's minute is almost illegible; however, he indicated that in his opinion it was undesirable to use extracts of Sydney King's statement in the answer to a Parliamentary question.]

Sir T. Lloyd

It is suggested that in view of the postponement of the debate on British Guiana we should make use of the admissions by Mr. King recorded in (43) (*three illegible words*).

On balance I doubt if this would be worth while because on looking at the answer it seems to me that it falls rather flat after all that has been said about the P.P.P. There is, after all, no doubt in any reasonable quarter in this country of their Communist associations and the statement does not add anything of sufficient importance in my view to justify making use of it on its own. It might on the other hand be quite useful in the course of debate and I agree that we should telegraph in the terms of the draft telegram,* as revised.

(Signed) P. Rogers
26.11.53

*[Editor's Note: * The draft telegram is not included here.]*

**163. TELEGRAM (No. 421) FROM GOVERNOR OF WINDWARD ISLANDS TO
COLONIAL SECRETARY**
(26 November 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM WINDWARD ISLANDS (Governor's Deputy)

Cypher (O.T.P.)
D. 26th November, 1953.
R. 26th ,, ,, 15.45 hrs.

IMMEDIATE
PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL
No. 421

Addressed to S. of S.	
Repeated to Governor	Leeward Islands No. 276.
„ „ „	British Guiana No. 277.
„ „ „	Barbados for Comptroller,
	Development and Welfare
	Organisation, West Indies No. 132.

From the Governor Windward Islands.

Your telegram No. 425.

British Guiana Commission.

Jackson willing to serve.

2. I have consulted him regarding replacement and it is considered that a judge from outside will be needed during his absence.

164. DRAFT OF LETTER PREPARED BY JAMES VERNON OF THE COLNIAL OFFICE TO SIR JAMES ROBERTSON

(26 November 1953)

Mr. Vernon 26/11

Mr. Mayle 27/11

Date November 1953.

DRAFT* S/o letter to

Sir James Robertson, K.C.M.G, K.B.E
The Old Bakehouse
Cholsey,
Berks.

I should like to consult you about the terms of the Commission of Enquiry to British Guiana of which you recently accepted the chairmanship. The objects of the Commission have already been indicated in general terms. They were originally set out in the announcement which Her Majesty's Government made on the 9th October, which read as follows: -

. . . . "an independent Commission of Enquiry will be appointed to report on what had happened and to recommend a revised constitution"; and also: -

"The Commission of Enquiry will be set up in due course by the Secretary of State to enquire into the events in British Guiana which have led to this check in the political advance of the Colony and to make recommendations for a revised Constitution".

The Governor also said in his broadcast made on the same day:

"As you have heard, a Commission of Enquiry will be set up to make recommendation regarding the new Constitution".

In the White Paper (Cmd.8980) of which a copy has been sent you, the same point was referred to in paragraph 44: -

"As stated in the announcement a Commission will be sent out to British Guiana to enquire into the events which led to this check in the political advance of the Colony and to make recommendations for a revised Constitution."

(H.M.G's announcement and the Governor's broadcast are contained as Appendices B. and C. in this White Paper.)

We clearly therefore cannot depart very far from the terms of these various statements. On the other hand if we state quite specifically that one of the functions of the Commission of Enquiry is to enquire into recent events in the territory, the Commission will be expected to enquire into the various charges against Ministers and other leaders of the P.P.P. in the White Paper, and state whether or not the various accusations made by H.M.G. were warranted. As you probably are aware this point has already been raised vigorously by the Opposition in the House of Commons demanding that the leaders of the P.P.P. should be tried in the Courts for their activities as described in the White Paper. The Commission of Enquiry will then almost inevitably find itself turned into an unofficial "Court". The Ministers would expect to be allowed to lead evidence in their defence. There would be nobody present to cross examine them or to lead evidence to support the Government's accusations, and the Commission would find itself placed in a very invidious position. The presence of the Chief Justice of the Leeward and Windward Islands on the Commission would not help in the circumstances. The Secretary of State therefore wishes to propose terms of reference which would avoid this semi-judicial enquiry, while at the same time not departing too far from what has already been said in public, and at the same time giving the Commission the right to consider in general terms how the events of the past few months have shown up the inadequacies of the 1953 Constitution.

The Secretary of State proposes terms of reference on the following lines: -

To enquire into the reasons which led to the suspension of the constitution and to make recommendations for any necessary changes therein.**

We would also propose that the Commission should be described as a Constitution Commission, rather than a Commission of Enquiry.

I should be grateful for your comments on this matter. We shall of course have to clear the terms of reference with the Governor of British Guiana before they are finally settled and published.

As I understand you are going away on 30th November, I am sending this letter over to you in the hope that you will be able to let us have a reply before you go.

Yours sincerely,

[Editor's Notes:

* The final version of this letter is not included here.

** Handwritten notes, made by an unidentified official on the draft, amended these terms to read:

"To enquire into the reasons which made it necessary to suspend the constitution and to recommend what changes are required in it."]

165. LETTER FROM SIR GEORGE WOODCOCK TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY

(26 November 1953)

TRADES UNION CONGRESS
TRANSPORT HOUSE
SMITH SQUARE
LONDON, S.W.1.
26th November, 1953

The Rt. Hon. Oliver Lyttelton, D.S.O., M.C., M.P.,
Secretary of State for the Colonies,
Colonial Office,
The Church House,
Great Smith Street, S.W.1.

Dear Mr. Lyttelton,

Thank you for your letter of 24th November and I am very glad indeed to accept the invitation to serve as a member of the Commission of Enquiry which is being set up in connection with the suspension of the Constitution in British Guiana.

Sir Vincent Tewson* has already discussed with our General Council the possibility that someone from the T.U.C. might be invited to serve on the Commission and arrangements have been made to enable me to give to the work of the Commission as much time as may be necessary.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) George Woodcock

Assistant General-Secretary

*[Editor's Note: *General Secretary of the T.U.C.]*

166. COLONIAL OFFICE NOTES ON PROPOSED BRITISH GUIANA COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY

(27 November 1953)

Mr. Vernon

British Guiana Constitution Commission

I have discussed the terms of reference with Mr. Rogers, in the light of the point made by Lord Justice Morris about the risk of the Commission becoming involved in a judicial enquiry into the conduct of Ministers.

2. Mr. Rogers and I felt that the terms of reference might be worded somewhat on the following lines bearing in mind what has already been said about an enquiry, and the

desirability that the Commission should, if possible, express some views on the conduct of the Ministers, *and at the same time avoiding so far as possible** the risk referred to by Lord Justice Morris. The terms of reference would be to enquire into the reasons which led to the suspension of the Constitution and to make recommendations for changes in the Constitution.

3. Subject to any views you may have on the terms of reference, would you please prepare a draft letter to Sir James Robertson setting out what has already been said publicly in Parliament** and elsewhere about the purpose of the Constitution, and going on to mention the point made by Lord Justice Morris and giving our suggested terms of reference. The letter should then go on to ask Sir James whether he has any comments on the suggested terms of reference, which we shall of course have to clear with the Governor before they are finally settled.

4. We ought to get the letter to Sir James Robertson as soon as possible so that we can get his reply before he goes away on the 30th November.

(Signed)
(N.L. Mayle)

26th November, 1953.

[Notes by Vernon written on margin of this note:

** Vernon drew a line through the words shown in italics [Editor's italics] and substituted "and also".*

*** Referring to this, he wrote: "**No mention of functions of Commission was made in Parliament**".]*

Mr. Mayle

I attach herewith draft letter to Sir James Roberson on the lines you propose above. I have also drafted* two possible alternative terms of reference which I suggest get further away from a wording which would convert the Commission into an unofficial "Court". I also suggest that we should drop the title "Commission of Enquiry" and describe the Commission as a Constitutional Commission. This would follow the lines of the Waddington Commission, as also would the second of the two alternative terms of reference I have proposed.

I should however also like to point out that none of the proposed terms of reference would give the Commission the right to enquire into economic and social matters. It has been assumed in a number of comments on the Commission, in particular a recent leader in *The Times*, that the Commission would cover economic and social conditions in the territory in order to shed light on the reasons for the recent crisis. I feel sure that terms of reference on the proposed lines will receive adverse comments from *The Times* and possibly other sources.

(Signed) James Vernon

(J.W. Vernon)
26th November, 1953

[Editor's note: The drafts are not included here.]

Sir T. Lloyd

Mr. Mayle and I have discussed the terms of reference for the British Guiana Commission, in the light of comments made by Lord Justice Morris. Mr. Vernon's draft is the result. In his minute of 26.11.53. Mr. Vernon also rightly draws attention to the possibility of including economic and social matters in the Commission's terms of reference. I agree that their exclusion will cause criticism, but I really cannot see that a further enquiry into such matters, except in so far as they are strictly related to the Constitution, is required. As has already been said in replies to Questions in the House we have had enough of such enquiries already. In so far as such issues are strictly related to the Constitution, then the terms of reference proposed must bring them within the Commission's scope.

On a further point I agree with Mr. Vernon that we should describe the Commission as a "Constitutional Commission" and have added to the draft accordingly.

I don't know whether you would wish to sign the letter to Sir James Robertson, but if not I would suggest that I could sign it.

(Signed) P. Rogers
27.11.53

Secretary of State.

Since we had told Sir James Robertson (No.21 on WIS 1044/41/04) that the terms of reference of the Commission would be discussed with the Chairman I have, in order to save time, spoken to him by telephone. He is principally concerned (as we are to concentrate the work of the Commission on the future and to avoid so far as may be possible, investigations into the past which as Lord Morris pointed out (No.31 on WIS.1044/41/04), might develop into quasi-judicial investigations of the conduct of dismissed Ministers.

With this purpose in view I suggest that the terms of reference might be: -

"In the light of the circumstance which made it necessary to suspend the Constitution of British Guiana to consider and to recommend what changes are required in it."

This may be criticised in Parliament as a departure from the underlined words in the following extract from the White Paper: -

"As stated in the announcement a Commission will be sent out to British Guiana to enquire into the events which led to this check in the political advance of the Colony and to make recommendations for a revised Constitution."

Nevertheless, it would be wise to adopt the formula I have suggested or something very near it in order to guard as far as possible against the dangers which Lord 'Morris saw.

[Five words illegible] consult the Governor over the terms of reference, but should of course let him know what has been decided well in advance of the announcement in Parliament of the * possible terms of reference of the Commission. That announcement should, I suggest, be made on Wednesday, the 2nd of December.

(Signed) T. Lloyd
27.11.53

[Secretary of State's handwritten notes on margin:

** "**composition and**" to be inserted here.*

Secretary of State's handwritten comment at the bottom of this note:

"I think the wording is v. adroit."]

167. TEXT OF LETTER FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO SIR JAMES ROBERTSON

(27 November 1953)

27th November, 1953

I am most grateful for your prompt response to the invitation to serve as chairman of the Commission of Enquiry to British Guiana. I asked my Private Secretary to let you know how delighted I was but I now have the opportunity of saying so myself, since I am writing to let you know that both Woodcock and Jackson have accepted the invitation to serve as members of the Commission.

I hope to announce this in the House next week. Perhaps you would keep the matter confidential until after I have informed the House. I am very happy about the composition of the Commission and hope you will agree that it is a well balanced team.

(Sgd) Oliver Lyttelton.

[To:]

Sir James Robertson, K.B.E.

168. TEXT OF LETTER FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO GEORGE WOODCOCK

(27 November 1953)

27th November, 1953

Thank you very much for your letter of the 26th November. I am delighted that you are able to accept the invitation to serve as a member of the Commission of Enquiry for British Guiana.

I have heard this morning that Sir Donald Jackson, Chief Justice of the Windward and Leeward Islands has agreed to serve. This makes the Commission complete. I hope to announce the composition and terms of reference of the Commission in the House next week. Perhaps you will be good enough to keep the confidential until I have informed the House.

If there are any documents or information that you would like straight away perhaps you would get in touch with N.L. Mayle in this office, who is head of the West Indian Department dealing with British Guiana. His telephone number is Abbey 1266, extension 247.

(Sgd) Oliver Lyttelton

[To:]
George Woodcock, Esq.

**169. ADJODHA SINGH - GROUNDS OF DETENTION SET OUT AGAINST HIM BY THE
ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR DETAINED PERSONS**
(28 November 1953)

THE EMERGENCY ORDER, 1953

GROUNDS OF DETENTION

1. Activities prejudicial to public safety, order or defence committed since the suspension of
the constitution on the 8th October, 1953.

On the 19th October, 1953, and 24th October, 1953, and between those dates on Blairmont and Bath Estates in the County of Berbice, you were present at, and took part in the holding of, illegal meetings of more than five persons, contrary to the Governor's Directions of the 8th October, 1953, prohibiting meetings of more than five persons in a public place.

2. Background and past Conduct.

In addition to the activities set forth under paragraph 1 above, your background and past conduct, as set out hereunder, were taken into account in coming to the decision to detain you under the powers conferred on the Governor by Section 15 of the Emergency Order 1953:

(a) You have identified yourself with extremist politics in the Colony and have been, since at least two years ago, a close associate of Dr. Cheddie Jagan and Mrs. Janet Jagan, who are leading members of the People's Progressive Party. By the time of the General Elections in this Colony in April, 1953, you had become a leading member of the People's Progressive Party in the Canje district, County of Berbice. That Party has been active in the dissemination in the Colony of orthodox Communist propaganda materials obtained from Eastern Europe and British Communist Party sources and, (as was said in the Statement of Her Majesty's Government read over Radio Demerara on the 9th October, 1953, by the Honourable Mr. John Gutch, C.M.G., O.B.E., Chief Secretary) was a party "completely under the control of a Communist clique".

(b) You have, during the past two years distributed Communist propaganda materials in the Colony.

(c) You are believed from your past activities and statements, and your close association with three leading members of the People's Progressive Party, namely, Dr. Cheddie Jagan, Mrs. Janet Jagan and Mr. Sydney King, to be a strong admirer of the Soviet Union and to hold Communist views.

(d) On the 14th September, 1953, on Plantation Albion, Corentyne, County of Berbice, at a meeting which you held on that Estate, you exhorted persons present at that meeting to

resort to violence again persons who refused, contrary to the advice of the People's Progressive Party to strike work on that Estate.

(Sgd.) PETER BELL

Chairman of the Advisory Committee

To:
ADJODHA SINGH ESQUIRE,
Detention Camp,
Atkinson Field, British Guiana.

Dated 28 November, 1953

171. COLONIAL OFFICE MINUTE

(28 November 1953)

Sir Thomas Lloyd

At your request I spoke to Sir Leslie Brass on the telephone yesterday about the practice in this country during the war with regard to proceedings under Defence Regulations 18B. He had no personal recollection on the subject (he was Assistant Legal Adviser until Sir Oscar Dowson retired in 1946), but subsequently he spoke to Sir Frank Newsam. Sir L. Brass telephoned to me to say that Sir Frank remembered quite clearly that all the proceedings were treated as confidential and that the Home Office refused to disclose any of the evidence given. That given by the person against whom proceedings were taken was usually *viva voce**.

2. The grounds upon which the Home Office adopted this attitude were that: -

(1) If there was disclosure of part of the evidence, they could not refuse to disclose the whole.

(2) They would not be likely to get full information unless the informants were aware that what they said would be treated as secret.

(3) Full disclosure would compromise their sources of information.

Sir Leslie Brass added that he understands that the Home Office were actually asked questions which they refused to answer. They would not say it any given case whether the Home Secretary accepted the view of the Committee. The most they ever did was to give numbers of the cases in which recommendations had been accepted and those in which they had been refused.

[Illegible signature]

28.11.53

*[Editor's Note: * orally]*

**172. MARTIN CARTER - GROUNDS OF DETENTION SET OUT AGAINST HIM BY THE
ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR DETAINED PERSONS**

(28 November 1953)

THE EMERGENCY ORDER, 1953

GROUNDS OF DETENTION

1. Activities prejudicial to public safety, order or defence committed since the suspension of the constitution on the 8th October, 1953.

On the 24th October, 1953, at Blairmont Estate, County of Berbice, you were present at, and took part in the holding of an illegal meeting of more than five persons contrary to the Governor's Directions of the 8th October, 1953, prohibiting meetings of more than five persons in a public place.

2. Background and past conduct.

In addition to the activities set forth under paragraph 1 above, your background and past conduct, as set out hereunder were taken into account in coming to the decision to detain you under the powers conferred on the Governor by section 13 of the Emergency Order, 1953:

(a) You have identified yourself with the extremist section of the People's Progressive Party in British Guiana since that Party's inception in 1949 and have always been a close associate of three of the leading members of that Party, namely, Dr. Cheddie Jagan, Mrs. Jagan and Mr. Sydney King. You have taken an active part in the work of that Party.

That Party has been active in the dissemination of orthodox Communist propaganda material obtained from Eastern European and British Communist Party sources and it was that Party which was described in the statement by Her Majesty's Government read over Radio Demerara on the 9th October, 1953, by the Honourable Mr. John Gutch, Chief Secretary, as a Party "completely under the control of a Communist clique".

(b) You became an Assistant Secretary of the People's Progressive Party in 1953 and have assisted at the Party's Headquarters at 106 Regent Street, Georgetown, in the distribution and sale of Communist Propaganda material.

(c) In 1951 you became Chairman of the Peace Committee, British Guiana. This Committee is known to be affiliated to the Communist-controlled Peace Movement.

(d) In July 1953, you went to Bucharest to attend there the Fourth World Festival of Youth which was sponsored by the Communist-controlled World Federation of Democratic Youth.

(e) On the 28th April, 1953, at New Amsterdam you took part together with other members of the People's Progressive Party in an illegal procession for which you were convicted by the Magistrate and fined.

(Sgd.) PETER BELL

Chairman of the Advisory Committee

To:
MARTIN CARTER ESQUIRE
Detention Camp,
Atkinson Field, British Guiana.

Dated 28th November, 1953.

**173. STATEMENT BY MARTIN CARTER TO THE GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE
FOR DETAINED PERSONS**

(28 November 1953)

DETENTION CAMP,
Atkinson Field,
28.11.53.

The Chairman of the Advisory Committee,
Advisory Committee for Detained Persons,
Atkinson Field.

Sir,

I have to acknowledge receipt of your letter and the statement of the Grounds of Detention on which my detention was ordered. I have appended comments on the grounds -

COCERNING GROUNDS OF DETENTION

In order to introduce my attitude not only to the fact of my detention but also to the grounds thereof and the setting up of a Commission of Enquiry to deliberate as to whether my activities are prejudicial to public safety I submit the following in relation to the various statements as shown below:-

In the first place the charge that I was present at and took part in the holding of an illegal meeting of more than five persons on the 24th of October, 1953, at Blairmont estate is a common or garden falsehood. I neither took part in the holding of, nor was present at any meeting on October 24th at Blairmont Estate. The fact that this untruth is the charge first mentioned in the grounds of detention more or less indicate (sic) the tone and character of the charges that follow.

With reference to 2(a) I am proud to agree that I identified myself with the People's Progressive Party since its inception. This Party has been, from its inception the target of a barrage of lies, slanders, libels and misrepresentations. On the one hand it strove to march in the vanguard of a people, a colonial people fighting against the inherited ossified cruelties of colonialism and imperialist repression. Drawing strength from the descendants of black slaves and indentured "coolies" this Party raised a banner of hope over the dreary mudflats of Guiana. Against it however were ranged all the institutions of British Imperialism - press, pulpit and radio, each of which outdid itself in the vicious campaign of vilification that attended all the moves and efforts of the militant Party of the people.

I note in addition that it is stated that I have always been a close associate of Dr. C. Jagan, Mr. (*sic*) J. Jagan and Mr. Sydney King. To a point of correction I am not merely an associate of these five patriots - these people are my comrades.

It is with some surprise that I observe in charge (e) page (2) that a previous conviction has been entered among the grounds of detention. Perhaps this is included to "prove" that I am a "criminal" with a record.

In paragraphs (c) and (d) page (2) it is stated that in 1951 I became "Chairman of the Peace Committee. This Committee is known to be affiliated to the Communist controlled Peace Movement" and that in July 1953 I went to Bucharest to attend there the Fourth World Festival of Youth which was sponsored by the Communist controlled World Federation of Democratic Youth.

As there are so many misconceptions in these two little paragraphs it is necessary to explain to some degree the nature of the Peace Movement. To obtain a clear view of the events that made the emergence of a World Peace Movement a burning necessity it is necessary to begin from the epoch of the Renaissance. The Renaissance was the epoch in which the bourgeoisie (the capitalist class) was established in power. Passing from commercial capitalism the capitalist class entered industrial capitalism seeking in various areas of the earth's surface good markets for the sale of their commodities. As technology developed, however and the productive power of machinery increased the capitalist class found itself in different countries faced with the glaring contradictions. On one side there developed the fight between various capitalist powers for colonies in which to dump their commodities (This ended up the first time in the first World War of 1914-1918). But even before the war there was also occurring in highly developed countries (like America for instance) a peculiar phenomenon called over-production. Over production only means of course that the people who work for wages and produce goods and commodities etc. are so terribly robbed and exploited of their labour power by the owners of the means of production (the capitalist class) that they - the workers that is - are unable to purchase the goods they themselves produce after a while consequent upon this peculiar situation a thing called crisis occurs. Here factories close down, men are thrown out of employment and misery creeps over the land like a bloated toad. This situation moves like a nightmare in the subconscious mind of every capitalist driving him to various wild schemes of self- preservation and other things which I shall speak of as I go on.

In 1917 during the first Great War a wonderful event occurred. The glorious Soviet Union, the first Socialist State in human history was born. The first cry to issue from the heart of this young state was the cry of Peace and Security among the People. This was so because the people of the Soviet Union realised that only Peace could help them to live better, that Peace was a condition essential for the development of human culture. In reply Great Britain, U.S.A., Holland and other capitalist countries organised an expeditionary force and sent it through the backdoor of Russia to strangle the life out of this young peace loving state. This vile attempt failed ignominiously.(*sic*)

Ever since then however the capitalist states have seeking to let loose the dogs of War at the gateways of the Socialist stronghold. America by then had become pealed into the forefront of industrial capitalism. In 1929 the phenomenon called overproduction burst like an abscess spilling pus over the streets of New York, proving the instability and insecurity of the capitalist system. In 1939 the fiend Hitler broke loose and soon the whole of Europe was groaning beneath the heel of the Nazi jackboot. Were it not for the moral strength of this peace loving Soviet Union the Nazi plague might well have overtaken the entire world like

some poisonous fungus. It is to be borne in mind that huge capitalist concerns in England and America and France actively supported the Hitler gang of cut-throats. It is reported that a portrait of Henry Ford hung in Hitler's private study. It is known that Ford helped to finance the Nazi Party. After the cessation of hostilities in 1945 and 1946 the whole world weary of the terror and horror of war yearned for a lasting peace. In 1946 men of good will who desired lasting peace met in Europe and founded the World Peace Movement. From the outset the ideologies of capitalism launched an attack on this movement for peace and friendship. From the capitalist class of America (the same class to which Ford, who supported Nazism belonged) came the loudest and most vicious attacks. On the other from the Soviet Union came warm and generous support.

Why did America and English ruling circles attack the Peace Movement? Clearly because they did want the peace of the world secured. In America particularly the nightmare of overproduction had been sated by the gluttonous jaws of war. During war time overproduction looks more or less like a fable to be told to very young children. But after the end of war when production turns once again to the creation of civilised commodities the tendency towards crisis looms large again. Clearly then war means peace in the minds of the capitalists since it saves them from the nightmare of crisis. "Let there be war and no crisis" jubilantly cries the capitalists jumping up and down in a war dance. "Down with the Peace Movement" they shout in chorus. As Lenin the architect of Soviet Union once said "The capitalists like war not because it is terrible, but because it is terribly profitable."

Stretching long tentacles over the world American imperialism today threatens the world with the threat of war. War to the rulers of America is the only solution to the contradictions inherent in the system they foster. And as American imperialist (*sic*) has taken the whole of the capitalist world as its private domain it is to be expected that wherever American imperialism is the word "Peace" becomes subversive and forbidden. Even now Korea bleeds from the wounds inflicted on her. Who else is to bleed in the wake of the American mastodon? But as the departed leader of the Soviet Union Joseph Stalin had said "Peace will be preserved and strengthened if the people of the World take into their own hands the cause of the Preservation of Peace and uphold it to the end. On the other hand war will become inevitable if the war mongers succeed in enmeshing the popular masses in a web of lies and deceiving them and inveigling them into another bloody world war. Hence a broad campaign for the preservation of peace as a means of exposing the criminal designs of the warmongers is now of paramount importance.

The world peace movement therefore is an organisation fighting for the preservation of peace. Professor Frederic Joliot Curie the world famous physicist is President and many persons like Paul Robeson, Professor J.D. Bernal renowned in different fields of human effort unite to weld it into a powerful force for maintaining World Peace.

So long as the profit crazy war mongers of the capitalist countries continue to threaten the cradles of innocent children with war and suffering pain and death the World Peace Movement will continue to be necessary. And today when research into nuclear physics has put unbelievable supplies of energy into the hands of men it is absolutely important that really responsible and culture loving people be on guard to protect the earth from the wanton use of this power by madmen.

With regard to my visit to Bucharest I wish to state that the World Federation of Democratic Youth is a world wide organisation with a membership of over 80,000 (*sic*) persons in 90 countries. This organisation fights for the rights of youths and fosters Peace and Friendship. In British Guiana youths do not have the right to employment to education to develop fully.

It was therefore a great privilege to attend the festival in Bucharest and to show solidarity with an organisation that fights to lift from the sump of degradation the youth not only of Guiana but also of all the countries where youth pines away under miserable conditions of life.

In (b) of page (2) I note that I became an Assistant Secretary of the People's Progressive Party and assisted in the sale and distribution of Communist propaganda material. I became an Assistant Secretary of the People's Progressive Party in 1953 but I have been selling and distributing Communist propaganda before 1953, and I shall continue to do so as long as I possibly can. I feel convinced that it is only by the adoption of the principles laid down by Marx and Engels furthered and developed by Lenin and Stalin that a people colonial or otherwise as the case may be can learn how to free itself from the tight bonds of imperialism and capitalist serfdom and go forward to the creation of a form of a society in which the free development of all will be assured.

In the light of all this I am compelled to challenge the authority that keeps me detained in a hut with a garden of rusting barbed wire. The rules and regulations of the Committee to which this is now submitted leave no room for doubt as to the purpose and intention. I feel that the appointment of the Advisory Committee by the Governor is nothing more than a sop to Cerberus. It strikes me as an attempt to create the illusion that justice is being done, while in fact there was always the intention within this context of suppressing that freedom of movement association and belief which is the inalienable birthright of every human being.

(Sgd.) Martin Carter.
28.11.53.

174. RORY WESTMAAS - GROUNDS OF DETENTION SET OUT AGAINST HIM BY THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR DETAINED PERSONS

(28 November 1953)

THE EMERGENCY ORDER, 1953

GROUNDS OF DETENTION

1. Activities prejudicial to public safety, order or defence committed since the suspension of the constitution on the 8th October, 1953.

On the 24th September, 1953, on Blairmont Estate you were present at and took part in the holding of an illegal meeting of more than five persons, contrary to the Governor's Direction of the 8th October, 1953, prohibiting meetings of more than five persons in a public place.

2. Background and Past Conduct.

In addition to the activities set forth under paragraph 1 above your background and past conduct as set out hereunder were taken into account in coming to the decision to detain you under the powers conferred on the Governor by Section 15 of the Emergency Order 1953:-

(a) You are known to have been in London in 1952 a member of the West Indian section of the of the British Communist Party;

(b) In 1951 you visited Eastern Europe to attend the Communist controlled Third World Youth Festival held in Berlin;

(c) In June 1952 you returned to British Guiana and within a year of your return you became Vice-Chairman of the People's Progressive Party, an Executive of the Peace Committee British Guiana which is known to be affiliated to the Communist controlled movement, and an active member of the pioneer Youth League. This latter body is affiliated to the World Federation of Democratic Youth which is a Communist controlled body.

(d) On the 7th June, 1953, you left British Guiana for Vienna where you attended the World Peace Council which is a Communist-controlled body and you remained in contact with Communist circles in Eastern Europe until September 1953 when you returned to British Guiana.

(e) On the May Day Parade, 1953, in Georgetown, British Guiana, you lead (*sic*) the Peace Committee Section of the Procession which displayed Communist Slogans and pictures of Stalin and Lenin;

(f) On the 25th April, 1953, you took part, together with other members of the People's Progressive Party, in an illegal procession in New Amsterdam, County of Berbice, for which you were convicted by the Magistrate and fined;

(g) You have identified yourself with extremist politics in the Colony since your return to the Colony in 1952 and have since then been close associate of Dr. Cheddie Jagan, and Mrs. Janet Jagan, who are leading members of that Party;

That Party has been active in the dissemination of orthodox Communist propaganda material obtained from Eastern Europe and British Communist Party sources and as was said in the statement read over Radio Demerara on the 9th October, 1953, by the Honourable Mr. John Gutch, Chief Secretary, was a Party "completely, under the control of a Communist clique".

(Sgd.) PETER BELL

Chairman of the Advisory Committee.

To:
RICHARD OWEN WESTMAAS ESQUIRE,
commonly known as RORY WESTMAAS,
Detention Camp, Atkinson Field.

Dated 28th November, 1953.

175. TELEGRAM (No. 230) FROM GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

(28 November 1953)

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

En Clair D. 28th November, 1953.
R. 28th ,, ,, 19.55 hrs.

IMMEDIATE
PERSONAL No.230

My telegram Personal No.227.

Summonses were served on Balli Lachhmansingh and Adjodha Singh on the afternoon of 28th November at their place of detention at Atkinson Field, charging them jointly for holding an illegal meeting on the 19th October at Blairmont contrary to the emergency Order. They will appear at the Magistrate's court at Blairmont on the 4th December.

2. Adjodha Singh is also charged with having incited persons to commit assault at Blairmont on the 14th September and with having held a meeting there on the 24th October. He will appear on these charges at the Magistrate's court at Albion on the 7th December.

176. STATEMENT BY SYDNEY KING TO THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR DETAINED PERSONS

(No date on document - but believed to be 28 November 1953)

OBSERVATIONS ON "GROUNDS OF DETENTION"

It appears from a perusal of the document presented to me on Saturday evening 21st November 1953 that there are two main grounds on which I have been apprehended and detained: -

(a) A recitation of offences alleged to have been committed by me since October 8th.

(b) A brief review of my activities previous to the suspension of the constitution and an estimation of my political views.

I want to make it quite clear at the outset that I ask no mercy for beliefs which I hold nor for activities actually undertaken by me. At the same time I must express my indignation at the allegations that I am an organiser of arson thugs and incendiaries.

I should like with your indulgence to deal first with the section headed "Background and past conduct".

This document contains a number of truths, one slander, two lies and a number of half-truths and inaccuracies.

The slander lies in paragraph (h), namely, that the photographs of negroes being lynched and maltreated in the United States were to be used to "foster racial hatred in the Colony". Out of this slander arises a contradiction, which will immediately appear. I am accused of being a "convinced communist" and, together with this, of planning to "foster racial hatred".

But all the world knows that the philosophy of Communism is hostile to all forms of racism and race hatred.

The two lies are contained in paragraphs (j) and (l). I cannot while there is breath in me permit myself to be accused of organising such obviously foolish forms of struggle. These two lies again give rise to a further contradiction. All the world knows that the communist views of proletarian revolution reject out of hand such forms of "struggle" as arson, incendiarism and the killing of individual leaders.

Now for the half-truths and inaccuracies: -

(d) I have been distributing communist propaganda material since 1948 and not since 1949.

(e) The Guiana Peace Committee is not affiliated to the World Peace Council - to which I believe the (*illegible word*) to refer - for the reason that the World Peace Council does not accept affiliates.

(f) I am not a member of the Pioneer Youth League. The Demerara Youth Rally is not a youth section of the People's Progressive Party.

(m) This is a serious distortion. I walked past a policeman at the main entrance of the public buildings with a view to discussing the accommodation situation with the Police and Chamber authorities, since I had received complaints of discrimination. I actually did so. It appears that the crowd, inspired by my success in passing the entry proceeded up the stairs and occupied the balcony of the Public Buildings, the public gallery being already filled.

Turning now to the other paragraphs in "Background and past conduct". I should like to confirm my close association with Dr. and Mrs. Jagan. I am an admirer of the Soviet Union. I am in fact an admirer of all peace-loving peoples and of the finest in the cultures of all peoples. But in the Soviet Union I see the first country to break the imperialist chain, a staunch defender of peace and the liberation of all oppressed humanity.

It is charged also that I am a convinced Communist. Now "conviction" alone is not enough to make one a communist. V.I. Lenin says that a communist must have a fair mastery of all human knowledge, of the sciences, art, philosophy, of history, or economics, anthropology, etc. I cannot pretend to have reached this eminence. However, with this reservation, I am a convinced communist.

I am also an ardent partisan of peace, a pursuit in which I will not be daunted by the present inquisition. As for my having visited countries in Eastern Europe (and also Western Europe), this is a historic fact. I do not deny historic facts. My only regret is that those who will read this document may not have enjoyed that privilege.

I now turn with your permission to the grounds of Detention - Part the first, which purports to deal with my activities subsequent to October 8, 1953. Permit me to state that paragraphs (a) (b) (d) and (e) are foul (*illegible word*) lies, pointing to intentions on the part of the ruling classes which have been without equal since the days of John Smith - a shameless frame-up against the defenders of peace and genuine working class militants, supported by witnesses who cannot be presented, by police agents whose consciences, by their very nature, can be purchased for dollars.

I have refrained from attending a sitting of the committee and from calling witnesses. How can a person call witnesses to prove that he did not, on dates unstated and at places unmentioned, conspire to commit given offences?

So far as the committee itself is concerned it is more in the nature of a Star Chamber. It has been set up, moreover, with the aim of deceiving the people, leaving them to suppose that some sort of justice is being done.

The rules and terms of reference of the Committee are scandalous and indicate a hidden dictatorship lurking somewhere in the background.

I challenge the authorities concerned to bring these hearings into the open.

I declare that the task of proving criminal charges against me rests upon the accusers and not myself.

I reaffirm my undying loyalty and patriotism to my country, to the cause of peace, proletarian internationalism, equality for all nations great and small, the right of these nations to self-determination, and to the cause of friendship among all peoples of the world.

(Sgd.) Sydney King

The Chairman
Advisory Committee for Detained Persons,
Atkinson Field,
c/o Major Anderson.

177. COLONIAL OFFICE MINUTES FROM P. ROGERS

(29 November 1953 & 30 November 1953)

[1] Sir T. Lloyd

Mr. Carstairs and I have had some discussion about the effect the meetings which Dr. Jagan and Mr. Burnham are holding in various parts of the country, including for example a visit to Cambridge in the near future. They will undoubtedly do harm and we both feel that there would be great advantage if the Opposition party could as far as possible follow in their traces. The effect of such later meetings could I believe not fail to be most useful, since the general reaction could I think fairly be expected to be similar to that of the Manchester *Guardian* reporter who was clearly most impressed by the answers made by the Opposition to all that the P.P.P. members had said.

I suggest that it would be best if such follow-up visits could be arranged by the Headquarters of the Conservative and Labour Parties in conjunction, since we want to avoid making this a party issue, as far as possible. I suggest that Mr. Fraser might be asked to raise the matter in the first instance with the Conservative Party Headquarters and see if they would attempt to deal with it as a bi-partisan issue.

(Signed) P. Rogers
29.10.53

[2] Mr. Watson

Sir T. Lloyd mentioned this to the Secretary of State who agrees with the proposal. He would be glad if Mr. Fraser would make enquiry of the Conservative Party Headquarters accordingly. I am sending a copy of this minute and of the minute above to Mr. Fraser separately.

The Secretary of State considered, however, that it would be best for us, rather than for the Conservative Party Headquarters, to raise the matter with Transport House. I imagine this could best be done on your side and subject to any comments you may have I should be grateful if you would raise the matter with them accordingly. If you see difficulty about this I should be most grateful for your suggestions as to how we might best pursue the matter with Transport House.

I am sending a copy of this minute to Mr. Carstairs and Mr. Mayle for information.

(Signed) P. Rogers
30.10.53

178. COLONIAL OFFICE NOTES - CONSIDERATION OF ADVISABILITY OF QUOTING SYDNEY KING'S STATEMENT TO THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE IN ANSWER TO PARILAMENTARY QUESTION

(30 November 1953)

Minister of State.

Secretary of State

I have had a word about this with Sir Frank Newsam. He agrees that we are in no way bound by home practice during the war but would expect that, if Mr. King's statement in No. 43 was disclosed to Parliament (whether by way of answer to a Parliamentary question or in the course of the expected debate) the Opposition would quickly make the following points:

-

(a) why has the Secretary of State chosen to make this disclosure seeing that was a definite practice in this country to treat as confidential anything said to advisory committees as well as the decision of those bodies; and

(b) since there has been this departure, was the Secretary of State prepared to publish not merely what suited him but the whole proceedings of advisory committees.

Sir Frank Newsam's advice was that if we very much wanted to make use of Mr. King's statement we should do so without saying that it was made to an advisory committee. I personally doubt, however, whether that would serve any good purpose. Almost certainly there would be strong pressure on the Secretary of State to disclose the circumstances in which Mr. King had made the statement and even if, as Sir Frank Newsam suggested, the Secretary of State declined to yield to that pressure, there would still be the risk that Mr. King or his friends might find ways of making it known that the statement had been extracted from a document which he presented to the advisory committee.

The difficulties which may follow from disclosure of Mr. King's statement seem to me to outweigh the advantages (considerable though those are) of making use of that statement either in reply to a Parliamentary Question or in the course of the debate. I should tell the Governor, in reply to paragraph 3 of No.43, that while there was no question of privilege there are these difficulties, and ask whether he can say what the prospects are that Mr King, who sounds from No. 43 to be very proud of his attachment to Communism, would agree, if approached, to publication of these two passages.

(Signed) T. Lloyd
30.11.53

[Handwritten Comment below note:]

But surely this whole position is altered by the fact that Mr. King's statement was not made before the committee. It was part of written memorandum sent in by Mr. King explaining why he refused to attend this Committee, a refusal which he subsequently repeated.

My view is that we could use the extract usefully in the debate and that the only outcome would be a demand for the publication of the whole memorandum in regard to which we ought perhaps to consult the Governor. I see no point in putting this material into a reply.

[To:] Sir T. Lloyd
Secretary of State

[Illegible Initials]
Dec 1

Secretary of State.

This has come to me as Sir T. Lloyd is away. I would like to make just two further comments before a final decision is taken.

The first is that I wonder whether we can really sustain the distinction between a statement made before the Committee by Mr. King and a written statement put in to the Committee to explain his absence. I do not see how one can deny that it was a statement made to the Committee.

Secondly, if we make use of this material for the advantage of immediate publicity, is there not a risk that other detainees (and British Guiana is not the only place where this system is in operation at the present time) may feel that their hearings are prejudiced if there is a risk that anything they say before the Advisory Committee may be cabled home and used out of its context for publicity purposes by the Colonial Office? The system may then break down altogether.

[Initialed by Johnston]

1.12.53

**179. STATEMENT BY RORY WESTMAAS TO THE GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY
COMMITTEE FOR DETAINED PERSONS**

(30 November 1953)

30th November, 1953.

The Chairman,
Advisory Committee for Detained Persons,
Atkinson Field.

Sir,

I have read your letter of the 28th November, 1953 together with a statement of the grounds on which my detention was ordered by the Governor.

I have read the grounds of the detention and feel obliged to make the following remarks concerning the allegations and statements contained in that document which purports to provide sufficient and justifiable reasons for keeping me detained but which are in reality nothing less than lies and half-truths and attempts at witch-baiting. They obviously have their roots in the vain attempts of two decadent imperialist hierarchies to help in the securing of the maximum capitalist profit through the exploitation, ruin and impoverishment of the majority of the population of the given country through the enslavement and systematic robbery of the people of other countries, especially backward countries, and last through wars and militarisation of the national economy, which are utilised for the obtaining of maximum profits. (Stalin - Economic Problems of Socialism in the U.S.S.R.) Moreover, from these falsehoods and puerile methods of attempting to create anti-Communist hysteria it would appear that a "foreign ideology" - the fascist sponsored McCarthyism is being imported into the country under open licence symbolising yet another victory for aggressive American imperialism in a British-governed territory.

I will deal with the paragraphs and subsections in the order set out in the Grounds of Detention.

Para. 1. This allegation is false. Neither I nor any of my comrades held or took part in the holding of an illegal meeting at Blairmont Estate on that day. But the mere fact that a false allegation is all that can be levelled against me, under 1 indicates the tone and relative truthfulness of the document and the justification or lack of it for my arrest and continued detention.

Para. 2. Some of my past activities have been set out at times accurately while at times either by design or because of an inefficient spy system inaccurate statements have been made. I shall indicate corrections now because truth is on my side and because sooner or later but inevitably, the working class and Peoples will raise high a glorious wall of truth and will expunge in a mighty wave of anger and cleansing fire the centuries of lies and slanders written and spoken against them on the white brittle sands.

(a) It is true that I have been in London in 1952 a member of the Communist Party of Great Britain but to be a member of that Party which is a mass organisation does not necessarily mean being a Communist. From the information in this subsection it is clear that a spy or spies had been sent into the otherwise unsullied ranks of that organised vanguard of the British working class which is fighting for peace and socialism in Britain and which will lead

the British People through freedom from American domination, the destruction of the imperialist and capitalist system in Britain to Socialism and Communism.

It is well known that the Communist Party of Great Britain enjoys legality but its existence legal or illegal gives it no power or control over the political life of the People of any other territory. While a member of that organisation I strove to learn and apply the method and philosophy of dialectical and historical materialism the guide to action which is the tool with which the world can and will be interpreted and changed into the best possible place for human beings. I shall continue in my determination to wage a ceaseless war against the exploitation of man by man, against the enslavement and systematic robbery of peoples, against philistinism, against the debaucheries of human culture, against those who would turn science into a mockery, while on the other hand, to wage a ceaseless struggle for an end to class society, for the freedom of peoples and the release of the pent up springs of human will endeavour and joy and for the development and enrichment of the people's culture and for the use of science as a weapon in the hands of man permitting his ever-increasing control over the forces of nature for the creation of a society of truly human beings in a world at peace.

Para. 2. It would be more truthful to state that I attempted to go to the Third World Festival of Youth and Students for Peace and Friendship which was held in Berlin, German Democratic Republic in August 1951. The word "attempted" is used advisedly - at Saalfelden near Innsbruck in Austria while en route for Berlin the party of young English workers and students with which I was travelling was brutally beaten up by armed thugs in the uniform of the United States of America. These hoodlums were attempting to prevent us from knowing the truth about a people whose country was freed from the cankerous stench of Fascism and the wonderful experience of being among tens of thousands of young people from all countries of the world united in the demand for Peace, Friendship and their future happiness.

(c) Please note that I was in Britain in June 1952 and could not therefore be in British Guiana at that time.

I am honoured and proud to have been elected a Vice-Chairman of the People's Progressive Party and the world knows that, the people of Guiana returned 18 out of 21 candidates put forward for the 24 seats in the elections held in April 1953 and that this demonstrated the people's hatred for Imperialism and the love and respect which they gave to the only organisation fighting for a betterment of their conditions, for increased wages, for Peace and National Independence. To serve as an ordinary member and an officer of that Party is a great honour.

Concerning the World Federation of Democratic Youth it is widely known that this organisation is broad and democratic embracing in affiliations a total of 80 million young people in 90 countries of the world, control of this organisation, its aims, objects, its policy is decided by the 80 million young men and women scattered over the earth's surface, each demanding Peace and Friendship. 80 million pairs of hands demanding books, work and a secure and happy future. In these circumstances it is only natural that quite a few of those 80 million should reside in Guiana.

(d) (c) of paragraph 2 states that I am an executive of the Peace Committee "which is known to be affiliated to the Communist controlled movement". It is necessary to point out that I am the Secretary of the Peace Committee which because of its nature can have no Executive Committee. The Peace Committee is a voluntary association of citizens whose sole

concern is that the people of our territory should become acquainted with and voice their opinions on the vital issue of Peace and War. Today, it is precisely this simple idea - Peace or War which is engaging the minds and efforts of the greatest living scientists and artists as well as the overwhelming majority of the peoples of the world. It is in the heroic peaceful labour of the hundreds of millions of Soviet and Chinese workers and peasants and of the workers and peasants of the People's Democracies of Eastern Europe that World Peace will be strengthened. It is in the everyday strivings of the Peoples of Western Europe and Britain for freedom from the stifling grip of the American atom-maniacs in the honest labour of countless million of black people in Africa and India and in the sweat of the black and white workers of Latin and North America itself that the hope of mankind will be realised and the Peace of the world maintained.

The filthy plans of the armaments crooks and germ war experts of the United States of America to start another world war are doomed to failure. The dove of Peace will yet rise triumphant spreading its wings over the peoples of all countries will inevitably fulfil their world historic task of liberating themselves in honour and in earnest of World Peace.

I did not know that the Guiana Peace Committee is affiliated to the World Council of Peace and I am certain that the World Council is also unaware of it but I do know and over 600 million people who signed the Appeal for the signing of a Five-power Peace Pact also know that the World movement for Peace is dominated by the inflexible determination of the Peoples to safeguard Peace in the interests of all humanity.

The World Peace Council meeting which I attended in June this year was held in Budapest, the beautiful capital of the People's Democracy of Hungary and not in Vienna as stated in the "Grounds". I remained in Hungary for some time but I cannot remember whether the time was passed in contact with Communist circles, oblongs or squares. It passed pleasantly enough in the company of several friends of Peace. After an extremely enjoyable stay in Hungary I went on to Bucharest, capital of the People's Democracy of Rumania and there I attended the Third World Congress of Youth and I remained in this capital of peace until the end of the Fourth World Festival of Youth and Students for Peace and Friendship held there in August.

Paragraph 2(e). The names and faces of such great leaders of the working class and oppressed peoples as Comrade Lenin and Stalin will always live on in the minds of men and their writings will constantly be a call to action for the toiling masses, urging ever new tasks of skill and audacity in the struggle for complete human liberation. On May Day 1953, in Georgetown, I led the Peace Committee in the demonstration carrying portraits not only of Lenin and Stalin but also of Karl Marx, the founder of scientific Socialism, Comrade Mao Tse Tung, leader of the, People's Republic of New China and Comrade Sydney King, Assistant Secretary of the P.P.P. and subsequently a People's Minister in the House of Assembly.

The slogans carried by supporters and members of the Peace Committee were "For Peace and Higher Wages" "Ban Illiteracy not Books" and "Limey Go Home". The bomb has not yet been invented which will apply the McCarthy loyalty oath to persons before deciding whether he explode (*sic*) or not. Regarding illiteracy lying Imperialist propaganda would have us believe that Communists succeed best among illiterates who cannot therefore be able to read about the spectre of Communism which is haunting the world. With regards to "Limey Go Home" it is perhaps ironic that the very people who first called the Imperialist troops of England Limeys should be now crawling all over England (As well as the British Dutch Belgian and French empires).

(f) This clause is included with no other purpose than to imply criminality in my past conduct.

(g) The honourable word "comrade" and not "associate" would convey more accurately the idea of the relationship which exists between individuals working together for the emancipation of the working class and People.

Extremist views are held only by Fascists and war-mongers. I consider an insult the allegation that I have identified myself with extremist politics samples of which can be heard almost daily from the mouths of monopolists racists neo-Malthusians and other ultra-reactionary circles of the Western Powers in particular the U.S.A.

My views are Communist views and because I believe them to be right I will continue to propagate them for as long as it is possible to do so.

In conclusion I must state that the views previously expressed by my Party that the Advisory Committee has been set up as a smoke screen to deceive and to buffer public indignation at the detention of my comrades and myself and that the Rules of the Committee are a clear exposure of the farce and masquerade that the whole thing is.

Further, I see in the arrest and detention of the Chairman of the Peace Committee, Mr. Martin Carter, a member of the Secretariat of the Peace Committee, Mr. Sydney King and myself a vicious attack on the Peace movement in this territory designed to permit the easier spread of war-propaganda, the greater more rapid exploitation of the people and ultimately the militarisation of the people in order to use them as cannon fodder in a new world war now being hatched up in the Wall Street cesspits.

(Sgd.) B. Westmaas

(Richard Owen Westmaas)

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December 1953

180. COLONIAL OFFICE MINUTE ON SYDNEY KING'S STATEMENT TO ADVISORY COMMITTEE

(1 December 1953)

Sir R. Roberts-Wray

Sir T. Lloyd

Sir H. Poynton spoke to me about this after the matter had been mentioned by the Secretary of State. In understand that the Secretary of State wishes to quote the letter of Mr. King's (sic) in the course of Monday's debate, provided we can clear the point referred to in the draft telegram [*illegible word*]. If it can be cleared, the Secretary of State could take the line that this is not a matter of divulging any of the proceedings of the Advisory Committee which should as an issue of principle be kept secret. It was on the contrary a

matter of quoting a letter from Mr. King which he had written spontaneously on refusing to make any use of the Committee.

Telegram as in draft attached.

(Signed) P. Rogers
1.12.53

181. TEXT OF LETTER TO GEORGE WOODCOCK FROM PRIVATE SECRETARY OF THE COLONIAL SECRETARY

(1 December 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

WIS 1044/41/04

1st December, 1953

The Secretary of State has asked me to let you know that an announcement of the appointment of the British Guiana Commission will be made in the House tomorrow afternoon in reply to a question.

Besides yourself there are as you know, on the Commission Sir James Robertson, K.C.M.G., K.B.E., late Civil Secretary of the Sudan, who will be Chairman and Sir Donald Jackson, Chief Justice of the Windward and Leeward Islands. The terms of reference of the Commission will be:-

"in the light of the circumstances which made it necessary to suspend the Constitution of British Guiana to consider and to recommend what changes are required in it."

The Commission will be known as a Constitutional Commission. Would you please treat this information as confidential until the announcement has been made.

(Sgd.) J.B. JOHNSTON
Private Secretary

[To:] George Woodcock, Esq.

182. TELEGRAM (No. 215) FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA

(1 December 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

TO BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Cypher (O.T.P.)

Sent 1st December, 1953 21.30 hrs.

PRIORITY
GUARD
CONFIDENTIAL AND PERSONAL
PERSONAL No. 215

My telegram No. 210

Commission of Enquiry

Persons named in my telegram have now accepted. Hence Commission will be: - Sir James Robertson, K.C.M.G., K.B.E. (Chairman)
Sir Donald Jackson, and
Mr. George Woodcock.

2. I have decided that the terms of reference of the Commission should be: - "In the light of the circumstances which made it necessary to suspend the Constitution of British Guiana to consider and recommend what changes are required in it."

I am hopeful that this wording will concentrate the work of the Commission on the future and will avoid, so far as may be possible, investigations into the past which might develop into quasi-judicial investigations of the conduct of dismissed Ministers.

3. The Commission will be known as a Constitutional Commission.

4. I shall announce the composition and terms of reference of the Commission in reply to a question in the House of Commons on Wednesday.

183. TELEGRAM (No. 231) FROM GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

(1 December 1953)

SECRET

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES.

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

En clair D. 1st December, 1953.

R 2nd ,, ,, 05.00 hrs.

IMMEDIATE
PERSONAL No. 231

Situation report.

Reference my telegram Personal No. 217, paragraph 4, details of hearing on 30th November as follows: -

(i) Complaint of intimidation against Baboolall and Alfred Sarjoo. Baboolall convicted and fined \$75.00 and costs, Sarjoo discharged due to insufficient evidence.

(ii) Complaint of intimidation against Baboolall and Norman. Alleged victim called as prosecution witness denied acts of intimidation by accused. This was contrary to statement given earlier to police. Complaint withdrawn.

(iii) Cases of intimidation and of assault against Mansingh postponed for 3rd December due to non appearance of alleged victim who is prosecution witness.

Paragraph 7(a).

Preliminary investigations into charges of sedition against Bowman commenced today. Hearing adjourned until Monday 7th; expected preliminary investigation into charges of sedition against Nazrudeen will commence Monday 14th.

2. Advisory Committee visited Atkinson Field again on 30th November to hear objections lodged by Balli Lachhmansingh, who was legally represented. None of the other four detainees presented themselves before the committee, but Martin Carter and Adjodha Singh sent the Committee written statements; neither was very significant, the former being composed of the usual communist jargon. Westmaas sent message to say he was preparing a statement which would be ready for submission that afternoon, but it has not yet been received. In response to message from Committee enquiring whether it was their intention to appear before the committee at any time, each of the four replied in the negative.

184. EXTRACT FROM FIFTY-THIRD POLITICAL REPORT ON BRITISH GUIANA
(No date on this document, but most likely it was 2 December 1953)

SECRET

Extract from Fifty-third political Report on British Guiana

10. Sydney King and the four other detainees handed the Guard Commander a written statement on the 19th November to the effect that they were going on hunger strike and refused food from midday on that day until the evening of the 23rd November. The grounds given for the strike were "their indefinite detention, the continuation of martial law in Guiana, the suppression of genuinely democratic Trade Unions activity, the barbarous use of heavy bombs against the black people of Kenya, and also certain aspects of the food arrangements at Atkinson Field". The only complaint received about their food had been from Sydney King over some difficulty in keeping him adequately supplied with peanuts (he is a vegetarian) and on breaking his fast he immediately demanded five pounds of this favourite item of his diet. The hunger strike created remarkably little reaction locally and

curiously enough does not seem to have attracted much attention in the outside world either.

11. The Advisory Committee appointed to hear objections by the detainees against their detention went up to Atkinson Field on the 23rd November to hear the objection which had been lodged on behalf of Sydney King by the legal representative of the detainees. In the meantime, however, the detainees, with the exception of Bali Latchmansingh who had engaged another lawyer of his own, had discarded legal representation in protest at the rules of procedure adopted by the Committee. King declined to appear before the Committee and presented a signed statement commenting on the Grounds of Detention which had previously been served on him. In the course of this statement he boasted of his communist convictions in the following passage:

"I should like to confirm my close association with Dr. and Mrs. Jagan. I am an admirer of the Soviet Union. I am, in fact, an admirer of all peace loving peoples and of the finest in culture of any people. But in the Soviet Union I see the first country to break the imperialist chain, a staunch defender of peace and inspiration of all oppressed humanity.

It is charged also that I am a convinced communist. V.I. Lenin says that a communist must have a fair mastery of all human knowledge, of sciences, arts, philosophy, of history, of economics, anthropology, etc. I cannot pretend to have reached this eminence. It is, however, with this reservation, I am a convinced Communist".

The Committee visited Atkinson Field again on the 30th November to hear the objection to his detention lodged by Balli Latchmansingh. He was represented by Mr. Ramprashad, a barrister, instructed by Mr. Poonai, Solicitor, who was also present. None of the other four detainees presented himself before the Committee, but Martin Carter and Ajodha Singh sent the Committee written statements: neither was very significant, the former consisting of the usual Communist jargon. Rory Westmaas sent a message to say he was preparing a statement for submission, but that it would not be ready until that afternoon. In response to a message from the Committee inquiring whether it was their intention to appear before the Committee at any time, each of the four replied in the negative.

185. NOTE FROM J.B. JOHNSTON, PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY - REFERRING TO SYDNEY KING'S STATEMENT TO THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR DETAINED PERSONS

(3 December, 1953)

Minister of State
Secretary of State

We discussed this at the Ministerial Meeting this morning and I was asked to obtain further advice from Sir K. Roberts-Wray. I showed him the file and asked him to read the last three minutes, which he did. He then told me that he agreed with my minute of the 1st December, and that he personally advised against making use of this material. His view was that since this document was "presented to the Committee" (see 43) it should be treated as part of the Committee's proceedings and that the distinction between a statement made before the Committee was too thin to be safe. If however you still wish to make use of the material he would advise that we should first find out from the Governor whether the statement was made in reply to some letter from the Committee, e.g. a letter inviting him

to attend before the Committee, and show reason why he should not be detained. If it was made in reply to such an invitation, that would clinch the matter, in Sir K. Roberts-Wray view, against making public use of the material. But if the statement was a spontaneous effusion sent to the Committee, we might perhaps just get by.

[Initialled] J.B.J.

3rd December, 1953

[Handwritten comment below note:]

I think it is worth consulting the Governor again - see in this connection the Chief Justice's views in the telegram at /43. Do so urgently.

(Initialled by H. Poynton)

[Handwritten comment below Poynton's comment:]

Sir H. Poynton

The S. of S. is anxious to make use of the statement & agrees that we should consult the Gov. urgently as proposed.

(Signed) J.B. Johnston

3/12

186. TELEGRAM (No. 526) FROM GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

En Clair D. 5th December, 1953
R. 5th ,, ,, 19.30 hrs.

IMMEDIATE
No. 526

My telegram No. 231.

Situation Report.

Trade Union Council has been reformed under amended rules excluding from membership any trade union affiliated directly or indirectly to Caribbean Labour Congress, W.F.T.U., or to any other organisation which the Council shall deem to be an undemocratic or subversive

nature. President of the new Council remains Gibson of Amalgamated Building Workers Union and Glen of Guianese Workers Federation and Tello of M.P.C.A. are Vice-Presidents. Secretary is Shakoor of M.P.C.A. Although this move is well intentioned, it may cause some difficulty to employers who are in relations with unions excluded from the new T.U.C., such as B.G. Labour Union and Sawmill Workers Union, since if they continue to recognise them, they might be represented as condoning communist connection.

Press reaction to composition of Constitutional Commission has been generally favourable, inclusion of Jackman being particularly welcomed. Public reaction also seems favourable; there has been no comment as from P.P.P. leaders.

Position in regard to current legal proceedings has been telegraphed separately.

187. TELEGRAM (No. 236) FROM GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

(6 December 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Code D. 6th December, 1953
R. 7th ,, ,, 04.00 hrs.

IMMEDIATE
PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL
PERSONAL No 236

Your telegram Personal No. 219.

King's Memorandum.

Sequence of events is as follows: -

After their arrest and detention, detainees notified the Chairman of the Advisory Committee through Counsel retained by them of their desire to make representation against the orders for detention. Committee fixed date for hearing at the Detention Centre. Counsel then notified the Chairman that he was no longer briefed to represent the detainees before the Committee. Security Police then served statement of the grounds of detention on King personally and the Committee travelled to the Detention Centre as arranged, with the intention of hearing King's objection first. On arrival, the chairman received letter from King stating that he had no intention of appearing before the Committee, but attached memorandum entitled "Observations on 'Grounds of Detention' ". This is the letter referred to in your telegram under reference. Contents of memorandum and the general tenure are repudiation of certain of the allegations of the "Grounds of Detention", justification of others, and general criticism of the function and procedure of the Committee.

2. Attention is invited to Clause 9 of the Committee's Rules of Procedure enclosed with my personal savingram No. 819, which permits detained person, instead of giving oral evidence, to "hand to the Committee a written statement of his case or part of his case". Attention is also invited to Clause 13, which contains assurance that no disclosure will be made to the press of any evidence given.

3. It would appear therefore that the memorandum (was) addressed to the Chairman and essentially in connection with the proceedings of the Committee. I am accordingly now advised that it would not appear proper for its contents to be quoted in the debate on Monday.

4. In the circumstances the text is not being telegraphed in response to your telegram Personal No. 220, but will be sent by airmail for information.

**188. ORAL REPLY TO QUESTION TO BE ASKED IN BRITISH PARLIAMENT ON THE
BRITISH GUIANA DETAINEES - PREPARED FOR THE COLONIAL SECRETARY BY
JAMES VERNON OF THE COLONIAL OFFICE**

(7 December 1953)

On 28th October the Secretary of State announced in the House of Commons the issue of detention orders for five people including one Minister - Mr. Sydney King. He said "the Governor decided that five of the seven including the ex-minister should be detained under the Emergency Order on the grounds that their activities constituted a threat to public safety and order and that their detention was necessary to prevent them acting in a manner prejudicial to public safety and order. The Governor at the same time appointed an Advisory Committee under the Emergency Order with the Chief Justice as Chairman to hear objections by persons against whom detention orders had been made and to make recommendations to the Government in respect of such objections." This announcement therefore gave the terms of reference of the Advisory Committee. It is not a "Tribunal" in the usual sense of the word. Its recommendations to the Governor will not necessarily be published.

The latest information is in Telegram Personal No. 231 reporting the visit of the Advisory Committee to Atkinson Field where the detainees are held, to hear objections lodged by Balli Lachmarsingh. I have used the contents of this telegram in the draft reply. It is clear from this telegram that only Balli Lachmarsingh has formally objected to his detention to the Committee. The other four detainees have refused to submit their cases formally to the Committee and three of them merely submitted statements to it.

We may know before Wednesday whether Mr. Westmaas has already submitted a statement to the Committee.

This may be mentioned in the debate today on British Guiana and what is said then may affect the terms of the reply.

It is also possible that further information will have been received from the Governor before Wednesday and I shall be grateful if Mr. Osborne would check with me at the last possible moment to see whether anything further has come in.

(Signed) James Vernon
J.W. VERNON
7th December, 1953

189. EXTRACT FROM OFFICIAL REPORT OF 9 DECEMBER 1953 OF THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT

(9 December 1953)

Emergency Regulations (Detentions)

71. **Mr. Grimond** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies how many people are now detained under the emergency regulations in British Guiana; how many have brought their cases before the tribunal; and with what result.

72. **Mr. Lyttelton**: Five persons are held under detention orders. One has brought his case before the Advisory Committee appointed to hear objections against detention orders. The other four have refused to appear before the Committee, but three of them have submitted statements to it. Two of these persons are being prosecuted for holding illegal meetings. The Governor has not yet received the recommendations of the Committee.

190. TEXT OF LETTER FROM PHILIP ROGERS OF THE COLONIAL OFFICE TO GOVERNOR OF BARBADOS

(9 December 1953)

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Colonial Office
The Church House
Great Smith Street
S.W.1.
9th December, 1953

Although I haven't sent you an earlier written acknowledgement of your most helpful letter of the 2nd November about the reactions to the British Guiana crisis in the West Indies you will have seen from subsequent telegrams that much attention was paid to it here and that it arrived most opportunely. Those telegrams have disposed of the immediate question of action about appointments to the Commission, but I did want, even if very belatedly (for which delay I apologise), to let you have my thanks for writing as you did. If I may say so your letter was most timely and, apart from helping us in the immediate consideration of the problem of appointments, did throw a new light on West Indian reactions to British Guiana. I confess that I for one was surprised and also very much pleased at those reactions.

Yours ever,

(Signed)

P. Rogers

[To:] SIR STEPHEN LUKE, K.C.M.G.

191. TEXT OF LETTER FROM N.L. MAYLE OF THE COLONIAL OFFICE TO GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA

(11 December 1953)

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

COLONIAL OFFICE,
The Church House,
Great Smith Street,
S.W.1
11th December, 1953.

I am sending you this private and personal note about the Information Services in continuation of my letter of the 10th December, to enquire about the present position of Harewood. You will recall that in the note which I made on a meeting which the Secretary of State had with the British Guiana "Opposition" on the 2nd November, of which I sent you a copy with my letter of the 4th November, there was a reference, in paragraph 6, to the Head of the Bureau and at least one other official being members of the P.P.P.

2. Although they did not, I think actually say so, the delegation were clearly of the opinion that Harewood and the other official in question should be removed from the B.B.I. We should be grateful for your comments on this, and to know whether, in view of the alleged sympathies of Harewood and the other official with the P.P.P. you propose that they should be excluded from the new organisation.

N.L. Mayle

[To:]
Sir Alfred
Savage, K.C.M.G.,
Government House,
Georgetown,
British Guiana.

192. NOTE FROM N.L. MAYLE TO T. ROGERS REFERRING TO LETTER FROM LIONEL LUCKHOO

(12 December 1953)

Mr. Rogers

You will be interested to see the attached letter from Mr. Luckhoo, in which he describes the situation in British Guiana, as he found it on his return there and his various activities.

2. For obvious reasons I must avoid becoming involved in an exchange of correspondence with Mr. Luckhoo on letters like this, but I think I must send him a friendly acknowledgement of his letter and I propose to write in the terms of the attached draft.

3. I am very anxious to do nothing to discourage Mr. Luckhoo from pursuing his useful activities, as I think he might well become the spearhead of a united opposition party to the P.P.P.

(Signed)

(N.L. Mayle)

12th December, 1953

[Handwritten comment]

Seen with interest. Thank you. I quite agree.

(Signed) T. Rogers
12/12

193. LETTER FROM CHIEF SECRETARY JOHN GUTCH OF BRITISH GUIANA TO JAMES VERNON OF THE COLONIAL OFFICE
(14 December 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

C. 262/10/5

CHIEF SECRETARY'S OFFICE
BRITISH GUIANA

14th December 1953.

Dear James,

In continuation of my confidential letter of the 7th December (C. 262/10/5) I enclose herewith copies of Grounds of Detention served on R. Westmaas, Martin Carter, and Adjodha Singh and the signed statements presented by them in reply.

Yours ever

(Signed) John Gutch

[To:] J. W. Vernon, Esquire,
Colonial Office.

194. LETTER FROM N.L MAYLE OF THE COLONIAL OFFICE TO LIONEL LUCKHOO
(14 December 1953)

COLONIAL OFFICE
The Church House,
Great Smith Stret, S.W.1.

14th December, 1953

Dear Mr. Luckhoo,

This is a note, rather belated I fear, to thank you for your letter of the 18th November and your very interesting account of the situation.

As you know, we are anxious to see the party system developed on democratic lines in British Guiana against the time when the new Constitution will be introduced and I was very glad to hear about your own efforts in that direction, and that you had been in touch with Mr. Young.

You will no doubt have heard of the result or the further debate on British Guiana; when the Prayer to annul the Draft Order in Council suspending the Constitution was rejected.

With best wishes from Mr. Rogers and myself.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed)
(N.L. Mayle)

[To:] Lionel Luckhoo, Esq.

195. LETTER FROM JAMES VERNON OF THE COLONIAL OFFICE TO R.D. FAIRN OF THE BRITISH PRISON COMMISSION

(18 December 1953)

The Church House
Great Smith Street
London S.W.1

18 December 1953

Dear Fairn,

I have been given your name as the expert on Prison regulations in this country.

You may have noticed from the Press that the five members of the People's Progressive Party who are held under Detention Orders issued under the Emergency Regulations in British Guiana recently undertook a hunger strike.

Fortunately the strike lasted for a few days only but we anticipate further demonstrations of this sort before the troubles are over and the Governor has asked for our advice on forcible feeding. I understand that there are regulations regarding forcible feeding for the Prison

authorities in this country. I should be grateful for information on these regulations and for any other information both as to the occasions when forcible feeding is held to be justifiable and procedure followed.

Can you also say whether it was necessary to resort to forcible feeding of anyone detained under Regulation 18B during the war and, if so the circumstances of the case, or did this not come your way?

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) James Vernon

[To:] R.D. Fairn,
Prison Commission

196. LETTER FROM N.L. MAYLE, UNDER SECRETARY OF THE COLONIAL OFFICE, TO GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA

(21 December 1953)

(WIS 1044/366/02)

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

COLONIAL OFFICE
The Church House,
Great Smith Street,
S.W.1.
21st December, 1953.

I sent you on the 4th November a copy of a Note which I made of the meeting which the Secretary of State had with the British Guiana Opposition on the 2nd November. The Opposition raised a number of useful points and one of them, the problem of Mr. Harewood and his Assistant in the Bureau of Public Information, formed the subject of letter to you of the 11th December. There are certain other matters arising out of the interview on which we should like your comments generally.

2. One of the most important is the treatment of British Guiana students in this country and the danger of turning them all into communists, but no doubt you will wish to discuss this problem with Keith during his forthcoming visit.

3. Kendall raised the question (paragraph 5 of the Note) of the source of the funds of the People's Progressive Party. We would be interested to learn whether there is any evidence of the P.P.P. receiving assistance from abroad. In the same paragraph he also raised the question of personal injustices amongst coloured ranks in the police and the Civil Service. We realise that the P.P.P. had successfully penetrated the police and the Civil Service, but it seems difficult to accept Kendall's argument that this was mainly due to a sense of personal injustice amongst the persons concerned. There will nevertheless always be a number of persons whose estimates of their ability is higher than that of their superior officers, and who will allow their feeling of injustice at this fact make them a prey for bodies like the P.P.P. and who then act as foci to infect others. The problem is probably best dealt with by efforts to improve the general morale of the Civil Service and the police and by the

maintenance of good pay and conditions for them. Good housing and the conditions for the police are of particular importance and we should be glad to hear details of your plans in this respect. We should also like your views of making an example of any members of the Services who can be proved to have allowed political affiliations to interfere with their work, or have otherwise infringed the Code about the political activities of Civil Servants which was issued in British Guiana at about the time of the introduction of the new Constitution.

4. Luckhoo suggested (paragraph 6) that communism should be outlawed and Dare suggested (paragraph 10) that known communists should be prevented from voting at the next election. The Communist Party is a tolerated political party in this country and the only Colonial territory in which it has been banned is Malaya where it is in armed insurrection against the state. To deny the vote to known communists would be to use totalitarian methods to combat totalitarianism and would, therefore, be very difficult to justify. It would also have very little effect in itself on the electoral results since known communists are few. There is also the difficulty of defining, in legal terms, what a communist is, not to mention that of proof.

5. Luckhoo proposed (paragraph 8) the removal of P.P.P. teachers who were teaching children on communist lines. In this country certain Education Committees have refused to promote known communists to be head teachers. You will no doubt wish to discover to what extent Luckhoo's fears are justified, and to take any steps necessary to remedy the situation.

6. An important point seems to have been made by Dare (paragraph 10) for the need to ensure more privacy at the next election, though arrangements for this lie some way ahead. The arrangements made last time will, in any case, have to be reviewed in view of the legal decision which declared two of the elections null and void because of irregularities in the election procedure. Our first reaction is that the whole idea of separate ballot boxes for each candidate is dangerous and ought to be avoided if possible, although I appreciate that special facilities must be provided for the 20% of illiterates amongst the electorate.

7. We should be most grateful for your views on the above points.

(N.L. Mayle)

[To:] Sir Alfred Savage, K.C.M.G.,
Governor,
British Guiana.

197. TELEGRAM (No. 252) FROM GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

(22 December 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Code D. 22nd December, 1953
R. 23rd ,, ,, 01.35 hrs.

PRIORITY
PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL
PERSONAL No. 252

In a letter addressed to Officer Commanding Troops and dated 19th December, the five detained persons at Atkinson Field declared their intention of going on a hunger strike from 6 p.m. on 21st December to 6 a.m. on 27th December in protest against their detention, and it has now (been) confirmed that King, Carter and Westmaas have refused food since 6 p.m. on 21st December. The remaining two detainees are at present in Berbice facing trial (my telegram No. 573 refers).

198. TELEGRAM FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY TO ACTING GOVERNOR OF BARBADOS

(24 December 1953)

Saving

From the Secretary of State for the Colonies
To the Officer Adminstrating the Government of BARBADOS
Date 24th December, 1953
No. 500 Saving

Repeated, Development and Welfare Organisation in the West Indies No. 655

C.A.C. British Guiana No. 945

British Guiana Constitutional Commission

The above-named commission, whose members are Sir James Robertson, K.C.M.G, K.B.E., (Chairman), Sir Donald Jackson, Mr. George Woodcock, C.B.E., and Mr. R.E. Radford (Secretary), will assemble in British Guiana on January 6th. They expect to be there for about two months, and, as in the case of the Waddington Commission, would then like to spend about a fortnight in Barbados working upon their report before returning to this country by sea at the end of March. (Passages have been arranged provisionally on the s.s. "Colombia" sailing from Barbados 28th March.

2. Grateful to learn (a) whether Governor of Barbados agrees that the Commission may come to Barbados as proposed, and (b) whether the Comptroller could place office accommodation at their disposal.

3. Please repeat replies to Governor of British Guiana.

199. TELEGRAM (No. 230) FROM THE COLONIAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA

(24 December 1953)

SECRET

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

TO BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Cypher (O.T.P.) WIS 1044/02\

Sent 24th December, 1953. 16.15 hrs.

IMMEDIATE

SECRET

PERSONAL No.230

Your telegram Personal No.252.

Hunger Strike.

You may like to have following information on procedure relating to forcible feeding in the United Kingdom. When a prisoner goes on hunger strike, Prison Commissioners require report by Prison Medical Officer within 48 hours stating weight before strike and whether he is fit to be artificially fed. It is within the discretion of the Prison Medical Officer to decide when the forcible feeding shall be started but the usual wait varies between two to seven days after commencement of strike.

2. Basis of food is warm milk with glucose or sugar added if this is considered desirable. Medical Officer can no doubt advise on this point and whether a sedative (*sic*) should be included.

3. Usual method is by stomach pump through the mouth and three or four prison officers usually attend to assist.

200. TELEGRAM (No. 260) FROM GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

(31 December 1953)

CONFIDENTIAL

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM BRITISH GUIANA (Sir A. Savage)

Code D. 31st December, 1953.

R. 31st " " 17.30 hrs.

CONFIDENTIAL
PERSONAL No.260

My telegram Personal No.252.

Hunger Strike

Hunger strike was officially concluded on 27th December. Detainees were examined by a doctor on 26th December and all were found to be in good health. There was evidence to indicate that they had consumed fruit throughout the period of the strike.

201. COLONIAL OFFICE NOTE FOR INTERNAL CIRCULATION

(1 January 1954)

Mr. Mayle thought it advisable to give the Governor some guidance on forcible feeding in view of (49A)*.

The telegrams (50)* [*three illegible words* ? is hands on] information given me over the telephone on 24th December by Director of Medical Services on the staff of the Prison Commissioners. I was unable to contact Mr. Fairn to whom we had written on the same subject at (48).*

In addition to the information given in the telegram, the Director of Medical Services also said that feeding was sometimes done through the nose but this was a matter on which the Medical Officer would be able to advise. I explained that the detainees were taking water and he said that if he were in charge, he would substitute the jar of water for one of milk, but that if the prisoner did not drink some of the milk within 24 hours he would replace it with the water again. He had no objection to this suggestion being passed on to the Colony semi-officially. I attach a draft.**

I also asked the Director if he knew of any cases of detainees held under Regulation 18(b) during the war being forcibly fed but he said that he had not heard of this happening although he himself had had a lot to do with detainees at Liverpool during the war.

(Signed) K.J. Windsor
1.1.54

[Editor's Note:

**The number refers to a reference number placed on single or groups of Colonial Office telegrams or letters circulated internally.*

*** See "Windsor to Gutch", 4 January 1954]*

202. LETTER TO JOHN GUTCH, CHIEF SECRETARY OF BRITISH GUIANA GOVERNMENT, FROM K.J. WINDSOR OF THE COLONIAL OFFICE

4 January 1954

Colonial Office,
The Church House,

Great Smith Street, Westminster,
S.W.1

4th January 1954

CONFIDENTIAL & PERSONAL

Dear Gutch,

With reference to our telegram Personal No. 230 you may like to know that when we spoke to the Director of Medical Services in the Prison Commissioner's department to obtain the information given in that telegram, he suggested that if the detainees were taking water whilst on hunger strike, it might be a good idea to substitute milk and see whether this liquid was consumed. If the milk was not touched within 24 hours, he said it should be replaced by water again.

This might be a useful idea if the detainees go on hunger strike again, though I gather there is evidence that they went further and consumed fruit, which hardly makes it a hunger strike at all.

We are examining the legal position regarding forcible feeding and will be writing again about it.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) K. J. Windsor

[To:]
J. Gutch, Esq., C.M.G., O.B.E.
Chief Secretary's Office,
British Guiana