

Friday 27.11.64.

Colonel De Freitas being sworn states as follows:-

MR. RAMSAROOP: I am appearing ^{associated with} ~~for~~ Mr. Sugrim Singh, as counsel to the Commission.

CHAIRMAN: Call Colonel King.

MR. SHEPHERD: Mr. King is supposed to be here at 9, and if it pleases the Commission, Colonel De. Freitas is here.

MR. RAMSAROOP: I have no objections to Colonel De. Freitas.

CHAIRMAN: What is your first name?

WITNESS: ~~Celso De. Freitas.~~ ^{Lima} Celso Lima De Freitas ^{duly sworn etc}

MR. RAMSAROOP: Your full name is Celso Lima De. Freitas, and you are the commanding officer of the British-Guiana Volunteer Force?

WITNESS: Yes.

MR. RAMSAROOP: What is the authorized strength of the force?

WITNESS: The authorized strength is 600.

MR. RAMSAROOP: What is the composition of your battalion?

WITNESS: The battalion is made up of a headquarter company, and four rifle companies of which one is stationed at Mackenzie, and another at New Amsterdam.

MR. RAMSAROOP: What are the duties of your forces?

WITNESS: TO assist the police whenever called upon to do so, to provide armed escorts and patrols, to assist in the restoration of law and order.

MR. RAMSAROOP: Colonel, I will read ^{remind of some disturbance that began as witness} to you the following, of some disturbances that began at Lagnara. Did His Excellency advise you to embody some of your forces?

WITNESS: Yes, he did on the 24th May, to embody a small number of men, 22 in number.

MR. RAMSAROOP: Is this a ^{copy} story of the letter from His Excellency the Governor?

WITNESS: I have one here I think it is in my file.

MR. SHEPHERD: No objections.

WITNESS: I will read the copy.

CHAIRMAN: The letter will be Exhibit "N".

MR. RAMSAROOP: At the time of the embodiment, What was the strength of the Company?

/ WITNESS:

27.11.64.

WITNESS: Ninety-five officers and men. There was one Major, and three were Subalterns ninety one other ranks.

MR. RAMSAROOP: Was that from the Ministry of Home Affairs?

WITNESS: Commissioner of Police.

MR. RAMSAROOP: On the 25th May you were requested by the Commissioner of Police to order the embodiment of the entire Volunteer Force. ^{D Coy}

WITNESS: Yes sir.

MR. SHEPHERD: ^{Counsel} What time was that?

WITNESS: In the morning?

MR. RAMSAROOP: ^{Counsel} And was Major Lamglam in charge then?

WITNESS: He was in charge of the embodiment? ^{But they came under Counsel the operational command of the Sup of Police.}

MR. RAMSAROOP: Can you say that on the 24th this year the platoon of the Br. ^{Army.} arrived at Wismar and was in force?

WITNESS: On the 25th.

CHAIRMAN: ^{Counsel} What time was that.

WITNESS: It was 4 to 5 in the evening.

MR. RAMSAROOP: ^{Counsel} Did you Colonel receive report subsequently from Mr. Langham.

WITNESS: Yes I did. ^{received} Report is submitted as exhibit 'D'

MR. RAMSAROOP: On Thursday 28th May did you visit Mackenzie?

WITNESS: I did.

MR. RAMSAROOP: Thank you. On Thursday 28th you paid a visit to

Mackenzie, you went because of a series of complaints against the

Volunteer Force. What were these complaints?

WITNESS: There were allegations that were made during the disturbances, that the police and Volunteers were there and they did not stop the confusion in the area. Do you mind if I call the names of four of the persons from my file. There was Rahaman, but I do not think I can remember the names of the others.

CHAIRMAN: Yes. one Mr. Rahaman.

WITNESS: Mr. Rahaman met Captain Stevens who was appointed at Mckenzie. Mr. Rahaman alleged that members of the Volunteer Force had stood idly by while people were being raped and beaten. Mr. Rahaman said that

^{was} he accompanied.

27.11.64.

had requested Vol Force to accompany him
 Capt Stevens to Wismar to rescue these people. Captain Stevens had asked Mr. Grundy and Mr. Slater *we had also been asked to* to accompany him across the river to rescue two girls who had been beaten and raped. When I arrived at Mc Kenzie I got in touch with Major Goodbody who was in charge of the British troops there. I also asked Captain Stevens if Mr. Rahaman *in his who the* was in company *personally* requested the Volunteer Force. I also saw *the* Mr Grundy and *the* Mr Slater. I made an investigation there, and I have their statements. My *report* evidence was *submitted* to His Excellency The Governor.

CHAIRMAN: From whom were the other allegations.

WITNESS: There was a Seegobin and a Mr. Low their allegations were *of a* different nature.

MR. SHEPHERD: What were *was* your evidence in respect to these complaints?

WITNESS: I found that it was false Rahaman was not in company with Captain Stevens. *He* may have been in the same crowd with Captain Stevens. He told us it was not true, because Slater and Grundy were not there at all. *The* Their allegations were that Captain Stevens had asked a *member* of Volunteers to accompany him to the other bank to rescue the girls who were being raped, *that wasn't so.* There were *two* Volunteer force in the vicinity at that time, trying to hold back the unruly crowd while they made for the boat. The other was occupied in keeping back the crowd from getting to the Esso Installations there.

MR. SHEPHERD: What is this Volunteer's name?

WITNESS: I haven't got his name.

MR. SHEPHERD: Was *he* this volunteer who *was* praised *by* *Captain Stevens*?

WITNESS: Yes.. They were trying to get into the Esso Bulk Instllation for what reason I don't know.

MR. SHEPHERD: What might have been the reason?

WITNESS: We were put there to see that no one interferred with the Bulk Station.

CHAIRMAN: What were the other Complaints?

WITNESS: Mr. *Low* Langham complained that Sergeant Roberts and other member of the Volunteer Force had stood by while fire was being set to a building.

MR. SHEPHERD: What were your findings there?

WITNESS: *That* The house was being set a fire and no one did any-thing at all was a false statement. At no time during the disturbances did any rank of the force see fire being set. The burning of the houses were well organized. There were *95 houses on fire on the night in* two buildings blazing furiously by the time *the* the volunteers *arrived on the scene. Numerous houses which have been* arrived at the scene.

27.11.64.

set afire were extinguished shortly after they appeared. Hakim's hotel was extinguished three times in the presence of Major Langham. The Volunteers could not open some of the houses to put out fires. The most they could do was to break into the house at an early stage of the fire. They did this in a number of cases. On seeing a fire in that area the party rushed to the spot but on arrival found the building blazing and beyond salvage.

MR. SHEPHERD: Was there a fourth complaint from an anonymous person.

WITNESS: Yes there was. It was a complaint that members of the Volunteer Force stood idly and watched a man being beaten until both his legs were broken while his wife was beaten and raped. There appears to be no record of such an incident but there was a man named Prashad who was beaten he was also injured superficially. He was given first aid treatment and sent away. He did not have either of his legs broken. I found no evidence that any member of the Volunteer force stood by.

MR. SHEPHERD: So you investigated the complaint and found no cause for disciplinary action against your Officers.

WITNESS: No.

MR. SHEPHERD: Is your Force normally used as a Military Force?

WITNESS: Yes.

MR. SHEPHERD: Was there a request by the Police for assistance.

WITNESS: A request was made on the 24th.

MR. SHEPHERD:
CHAIRMAN: What time?

WITNESS: About 9.00^{a.m.}, it might have been later.

CHAIRMAN: And the request was for 24 volunteers to be placed under the control of the Police?

WITNESS: Yes.

MR. SHEPHERD: Volunteers like soldiers carry arms. Their first duty is of course to protect their arms. They are responsible for their arms and cannot lay them down to care for fire fighting.

WITNESS: Not unless they leave a man or guard over the arms.

MR. SHEPHERD: What are their fire orders? What are their orders on taking life? in other words are Volunteers expected to shoot at sight any suspicious person?

WITNESS: Certainly not.

MR. SHEPHERD: Are they expected to prevent serious crimes.

7 WITNESS. . .

27.11.64.

WITNESS: Yes, if they see them occurring.

MR. SHEPHERD: Are they permitted to open fire on crowds because they look suspicious?

WITNESS: ~~no~~

MR. SHEPHERD: Subject to your direction (Chairman) I think I should like to see this file. I have ~~no~~ ^{no account of the admission expended.} ~~dates.~~

WITNESS: I beg your pardon I have the ~~dates~~ ^{records.}

MR. SHEPHERD: I am sorry I think I should give it to your Counsel.
 (Record submitted marked Exhibit 1.)

MR. SHEPHERD: Would it be correct to say that in the circumstances the duties of your Volunteers was to rescue life.

WITNESS: It was so.

MR. SHEPHERD: Is it true that your Volunteers were operating with the Police or were they operating alone.

WITNESS: Yes they were operating with the police.

MR. SHEPHERD: Did they save many lives?

WITNESS: They literally saved hundreds of lives. From the records I have ~~77~~ ⁷⁷ families were rescued. I have ~~478~~ ⁴⁷⁸ names of ^{identifiable} persons rescued.

MR. SHEPHERD: Have you a record of persons rescued?

WITNESS: Yes I have

MR. SHEPHERD: I think it is proper and fitting for the commissioners to see. I will hand your file to your learned Counsel.

MR. SHEPHERD: Reviewing the situation as Officer commanding the Volunteer Force, are you satisfied with the work of your Company during the disturbances?

WITNESS: I ~~was~~ am.

MR. SHEPHERD: Do you command the Volunteers from your headquarters in Georgetown.

WITNESS: I do.

MR. SHEPHERD: When there is a meeting of the Security Council do you normally attend?

WITNESS: No.

MR. SHEPHERD: DID you attend a meeting on the 23rd?

WITNESS: No, I attended a meeting on the 28th after I returned.

CHAIRMAN: It is a pity that this evidence was not available before so that the people's names mentioned here could have been called to give evidence to the Commissioners.

27.11.64.

MR. SHEPHERD: It is merely a record. That is why I put it forward so tentatively.

MR. SHEPHERD: I may say so the Major Langham⁺ certain volunteers will be here.

CHAIRMAN: They will be here.

MR. SHEPHERD: They will come to give evidence.

MR. RAMSAROOP: They will probably give the evidence.

MR. CARTER: I just want to ask one question so I can follow the evidence. You said there were seventy seven families identified. By that you mean there were more persons who were unidentified ^{persons} rescued by the Volunteers. I understand that there were other rescue operations in which the persons rescued were not identified by the volunteers.

WITNESS: That is correct these are only the identified ones.

MR. CARTER: So that it will be more than seventy seven families ? rescued? Almost double that figure?

WITNESS: I couldn't say.

MR. CARTER: Thank you.

MR. SINGH: Yes, the people who made these reports concerning the volunteers forces, did you actually see them?

WITNESS: No. That record was given to me by Major Langham who was in charge and he got this from the records in the Company's diary as well as from the police station.

MR. SINGH: DID you make any request before that they should be brought to you personally?

WITNESS: From the people? No. No one ever approached me with any complaints.

MR. SINGH: You said that you hadn't that complaint made personally by the three men. Did you request that they brought before you?

WITNESS: The men, they were not in the area, at that time they had already left.

MR. SINGH: Now when you investigated these complaints was Major Goodbody there?

WITNESS: Major Goodbody was there. I spoke to him about it.

MR. SINGH: Had he knowledge of these complaints?

WITNESS: Yes.

MR. SINGH: Lieutenant Thomas was he present?

WITNESS: Well I don't know Lieutenant Thomas is. Those for the commanding unit were present.

/MR. SINGH.....

27.11.64.

MR. SINGH: ^{Thank} Thank you very much.

DR. DRAYTON: Is it usual for you when your men fire a round of ammunition to make a report immediately of this particular incident and why it was fired.

WITNESS: The moment they arrived back to headquarters they must be accounted for and the statement is placed in the diary and recorded.

DR. DRAYTON: Who records ^{it} ~~at these stations?~~

WITNESS: There ^{is} ~~was~~ always an orderly present in ~~the orderly room~~ and the moment the troop return if there are any incidents they must be recorded.

DR. DRAYTON: What is the total number of volunteers in this company?

WITNESS: Ninety five including officers.

DR. DRAYTON: It looks as though only nine volunteers used any rounds of ammunition?

WITNESS: That is possible so.

DR. DRAYTON: And only on five occasions in Wismar from this report?

WITNESS: Yes I gather that most of the rescuing of families who were being beaten or molested and also putting out fire was done by Volunteers.

DR. DRAYTON: Thank you.

REV. MCDONALD: Did you say that the B.G.V.F. has ^{4 or 5} companies.

WITNESS: Five companies. Headquarters Company and four rifle companies?

REV. MC DONALD: There was one at McKenzie and one at New Amsterdam. Could you tell me where the other two were?

WITNESS: In Georgetown. If you would like the details I could give you them.

REV. MC DONALD: I would be very glad.

WITNESS: They were ^{on duty} ~~scheduled~~ from Skelton to McKenzie. On that ^{day} ~~day~~ Sunday 24th and Monday ^{the Barbic Coy was stretched from Skelton to} ~~was from Skelton~~ and also ^{to} ~~ding~~ New-Amsterdam. ^{gund the} The Canje bridge and all the essential places, ^{The Georgetown Corp were posted} ~~and that was embodied~~ along the Corentyne and the Canje. ⁱⁿ from Vergenoegen right down to Versailles ^{and} the West Coast, ^{there} the smaller police stations ^{going} ~~up~~ I also had a platoon at Mahaica and one at Mahaicony, ^{and} ~~but on that~~ day because it was a little late these were part of their duties to ^{and} ~~relieve~~ the police. I had very few scattered guards at ^{with} ~~the police station~~ patrolling the army.

REV. MC.DONALD: Could you tell me colonel the two companies from Georgetown and the Head quarters were they entirely committed along the East Coast and West Coast?

/ WITNESS.

27.11.64.

78

WITNESS: Yes, in Georgetown we have a number of scattered guards, the first one at Government house, the law Courts, the fire Brigade station and the defense of the area. In fact we had them posted in the whole area. to help the police in Georgetown. *The companies were entirely committed*
The company, except for a small reserve.

REV. MAC DONALD: Were any of your men sent from Georgetown to Wismar?

WITNESS: No.

MAC. DONALD: Would it be *correct* then that on Sunday 24th of May, except for 'D' Company, the other four companies were embodied and entirely committed?

WITNESS: Except for a small reserve in Georgetown.

CHAIRMAN: Except for D. Company the other 4 companies were embodied and entirely committed or was there some that could possibly be reinforced.

WITNESS: Yes,

REV. MCDONALD: One final question. From the headquarters Company and the 2 Georgetown Companies, were any of your men sent to the Wismar/MacKenzie area, before or after the 25th?

WITNESS: No, none.

MRS. MOOTOO: Where were your men *from + these from D Coy.*

WITNESS: The majority were *from* the Mackenzie/Christianburg area.

MRS. MOOTOO: What is the ethnic composition of your men?

WITNESS: Predominantly they were Africans, only one or two *were* Indians.

MRS. MOOTOO: You said that the setting ^{of} fire to houses was so well planned, that the volunteers didn't actually see fire being set. If these men were residents of the area, don't you think that they would have known of these plans?

WITNESS: I am not in a position to give an opinion like that, *All* I know is that every volunteer that is embodied comes under the strictest discipline, and he is to carry out his duties, but I cannot really say if they knew of it before.

MRS. MOOTOO: But you said it was planned.

WITNESS: I cannot give an opinion of that. When I mentioned well

27.11.64.

planned, it seems to me that ~~if~~ the burnings of the buildings may have been organized in certain areas, but I don't think that the volunteers had any knowledge of these plans.

MRS. MOOTOO: When these people accused the volunteers of standing by idling, there might have been a possibility that some of them stood by, because only a few did shoot people who were looting, and setting fires.

WITNESS: They were out on patrols.

MRS. MOOTOO: Did you find out if any stood by idling?

WITNESS: No, there were only 2 volunteers at the time, one was keeping back a mob, and the other was protecting a building.

MRS. MOOTOO: But if they were patrolling they may have been others in the area.

WITNESS: They don't patrol on the Mackenzie side, they go ^{west} across to the troubled areas.

MRS. MOOTOO: Is this on the Mackenzie side?

WITNESS: Yes.

MRS. MOOTOO: Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN: Colonel you say that at 9 a.m. on the 24th, the commissioner of police requested the embodiment of 24 number ^{of the 24th} which could have been embodied?

WITNESS: On the 24th, I received a telephone call from Mr. Puttock informing me that the volunteer force must be alerted as there was a possibility of violence ^{at Mackenzie} on the 24th.

CHAIRMAN: ~~This is on the 24th.~~

WITNESS: ~~Yes, but only at Mackenzie.~~

CHAIRMAN: Now, the information communicated to you was that the situation at Mackenzie was getting tense, and that there had been a report of burning houses.

WITNESS: Yes. *I had no details about fires it was simply in regard to rising tension.*

CHAIRMAN: And it was not until the 25th that the major part of the violence erupted. Would you say the Monday?

WITNESS: Full embodiment took place on the 25th.

/Chairman;

CHAIRMAN: I am speaking of the violence at Wismar.

WITNESS: On the 25th.

CHAIRMAN: There was a period between the 23rd, 24th, and the 25th would you still say therefore that there may have been a spontaneous out burnt or there was a gradual build up feeling? Which caused violence on the 25th?

WITNESS: I think that it began to snow ball and began on the 24th, and things seemed to have got out of control.

CHAIRMAN: You mean violence?

WITNESS: Yes. There was tenseness on the 23rd, and violence began on the 24th, it snow balled and became really bad in the 25th.

CHAIRMAN: SO, really from the 23rd to 25th there was time enough to have the volunteer force at Mackenzie alerted?

WITNESS: The volunteer force could have been alerted in time, whether it was on the 20th or 24th.

CHAIRMAN: Another point, when ~~is~~ the volunteer force ~~was~~ embodied was that around 3 p.m. /

WITNESS: The final man came in later but a large number had already reported ~~by~~ midday.

CHAIRMAN: Your instructions to your men, that they should only fire when persons are actually seen committing some criminal offence.

According to exhibit P. 1 seen here that shots were fired at rioters escaping from custody at First Alley Wismar and to disperse crowds attaching Bissons shop. We have had evidence that the volunteers are very efficient and comparable with boys of the British army with whom they had the opportunity to work along side. There have been quite a number of shots fired, and only two persons were injured. Can you say if they were firing shots in the air or the looters were being fired at.

WITNESS: I think Major Langham would be in a better position to give evidence, I have not got these reports.

CHAIRMAN: You don't know if they were in the air.

WITNESS: I hardly think they would have fired in the air.

CHAIRMAN: And you say that instructions ^{to} of the Volunteer Force ^{were} was

/ that they....

27.11.64.

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 that they are not fire on anybody acting suspiciously.

WITNESS: No they should be warned and challenged.

DR. DRAYTON: Just one more question. What was the extent of Military Training of the Volunteers in D Company.

WITNESS: I think some had several year of militay training and few of them had one year.

DR. DRAYTON: Who was responsible for their traning?

MR. SHEPHERD: Please Dr. Drayton I don't think you should ask a history of the training of these Volunteers.

DR. DRAYTON: I am not asking the history? I am only interested in the D. Company. During the time they were embodied at Wismar were any shot guns lost?

WITNESS: No, the Volunteers have never lost any ^{rifle} shot guns before.

Several weeks after the disturbances they ^{lost} a sten gun.

DR. DRAYTON: ^{They.} Never reported any lost? [?]

WITNESS: None at all.

DR. DRAYTON: ^{was there} But during the disturbances did you find any ammunition?

WITNESS: No I am not aware.

DR. DRAYTON: What about the 25th May, 1964.

WITNESS: On the 25th May they were very busy and they had no time to search for any ammunition.

DR. DRAYTON: Would you fire at an unruly crowd?

WITNESS: No, only in the air to desperse the crowd.

DR. DRAYTON: Now this incident at Karakara, ^{where one of your men fired at an unruly crowd} would you say this was contrary to discipline?

WITNESS: Yes. ^{I feel this was what happened}

DR. DRAYTON: Thank you?

MR. SHEPHERD: Can I ask you three other questions concerning the questions that were put forward to you by counsel. Was there anyone present with you during the investigations of the complaints.

WITNESS: Yes; ^{Mr. J. Goodbody was present.}

MR. SHEPHERD: You know the complaints, that were mentioned in the papers?

/ WITNESS:

was yes I found no proof of the
27.11.64.

WITNESS: For ~~the 26th and 27th~~ May, 1964.

MR. SHEPHERD: With reference to the preconceived plan to burn houses
Would you say that you have no knowledge of ^{any such} ~~this preconceived~~ plan
of burning and looting at Wismar. ?

WITNESS: I had none?

MR. SHEPHERD: You were asked about the training of the Volunteers?

COUNSEL: What is your name?

WITNESS: John Langham. *only 8.11.64 & 12*

COUNSEL: Are you the Commanding officer of the D Company stationed
at Mc Kenzie?

WITNESS: Yes Sir.

COUNSEL: On Monday 24th May around 10 a.m. were there disturbances
at Wismar?

WITNESS: Yes Sir.

COUNSEL: Could you say the nature of these disturbances?

WITNESS: There were fires and people being assaulted.

COUNSEL: On Monday 25th did you receive any instructions to embody
your ranks?

WITNESS: On the 24th. *in Struck to embody 25 men.*

COUNSEL: From where did your authority come?

WITNESS: I received a telephone call from Supt. Puttock.

COUNSEL: Major this was about 3.p.m. on Sunday 24th May.

WITNESS: That is correct.

CHAIRMAN: By that time was it difficult to get in touch with the
Volunteer force?

WITNESS: Yes.

COUNSEL: Why did you say it was difficulty?

WITNESS: The first thing we had to do was to get what men you could
find, and get them to bring in others. Some of them were ~~been~~ em-
ployed by the Bauxite Company and some at other firms.

COUNSEL: You however were able to get around 60?

WITNESS: By 3 o'clock these 60 men were actually committed and the
rest were still coming in.

/COUNSEL

27.11.64.

COUNSEL: Major the situation in that area was somewhat difficult to control that day.

WITNESS: I would say so.

COUNSEL: And were your service directed to the rescuing of these Indians.

WITNESS: Undoubtedly.

COUNSEL: Major why was this so?

WITNESS: There were two things we could do, rescuing persons or save their properties.

CHAIRMAN: What was your choice?

WITNESS: As far as I am concerned, there is no choice.

CHAIRMAN: Major, were many persons arrested? / *when* I know of one person who was actually shot in the hip, and other persons were shot at.

CHAIRMAN: Major, were your patrols able to find those people who set fire to the buildings?

WITNESS: No.

MR. RAMSAROOP: Major Langham is it true that your Company had rescued no less than 77 identified families?

WITNESS: My record shows that over 77 families were rescued comprising well over 400 persons.

MR. RAMSAROOP: Thank you.

MR. SHEPHERD: Normally Major, the Force you command are employed as Military Force. Normally they are soldiers.

WITNESS: They are trained as soldiers.

MR. SHEPHERD: In matters like this they are embodied to set in support of the Civil powers?

WITNESS: ~~Correct~~. *Correct*

MR. SHEPHERD: And when they set in support of the Civil Powers they have the duties and powers of the policemen.

WITNESS: Yes they do.

MR. SHEPHERD: During the state of Emergency were your troops fully armed?

WITNESS: Yes.

MR. SHEPHERD: Were they instructed on the proper use of these arms?

WITNESS: Yes.

/mr. shepherd;

27.11.64.

MR. SHEPHERD: Are they expected to account for ammunition expended?

WITNESS: Yes and they are checked when they come in from patrolling and all ammunition is handed back.

MR. SHEPHERD: With respect to the proper use of arms in the face of danger, can you explain to the Commission what instructions were issued to your men on the use of arms.

WITNESS: In normal circumstances this is a matter of Fire Discipline. A man does not fire a weapon unless he receives a fire order, but this was not normal circumstance at all and I gave a blanket fire instruction.

MR. SHEPHERD: What is a blanket instruction, explain what type of instruction you gave your men.

WITNESS: I told the troops to charge their magazines; put one round of ammunition in the breech and apply the safety catch.

MR. SHEPHERD: Would it have been the proper use of ammunition to open fire on a crowd that has assembled and were doing nothing?

WITNESS: No.

MR. SHEPHERD: Would it have been the proper use of ammunition to have opened fire on a person who looked suspicious?

WITNESS: Certainly not.

MR. SHEPHERD: If however people showed signs of trouble would it have been proper to open fire.

WITNESS: Yes.

MR. SHEPHERD: By the time your troops were ^{committed} ~~committed~~ Major was it to rescue both property and persons in the situation.

WITNESS: It was possible but highly improbable.

MR. SHEPHERD: Would it have been possible to rescue more than 400 persons in the area, if primary attention was paid to the saving of property that is houses etc.

WITNESS: Absolutely not.

MR. SHEPHERD: So you had a choice between saving houses and shops from destruction and saving lives and your orders were to save lives?

WITNESS: Yes.

/ MR. SHEPHERD: ...

27.11.64.

MR. SHEPHERD: After the operations were finished, were you satisfied with the discipline of your Force?

WITNESS: Absolutely.

MR. SHEPHERD: Did you however receive complaints from members of the public.

WITNESS: Yes.

MR. SHEPHERD: Did you investigate them:

WITNESS: Yes.

MR. SHEPHERD: In the light of your investigations are you still satisfied?

WITNESS: Yes.

MR. SHEPHERD: Now Major, this may be personal. A great deal of ~~the~~ property was destroyed by fire. Have you any knowledge of pre-conveived plans to set fire to houses?

WITNESS: No.

MR. SHEPHERD: Thank you.

MR. P.N.SINGH: Did you at any time come to the conclusion that it was planned?

WITNESS: I don't think it was possible to have come to such a conclusion.

MR.P.N. SINGH: Was Major Goodbody at any time on Patrol duty in Wismar?

WITNESS: I believe he may have been over there on 26th or 27th.

MR. P.N. SINGH: Not before?

WITNESS: I don't know.

MR. P.N. SINGH: Was he at any time in McKenzie?

WITNESS: I cannot answer that question.

MR.P.N. SINGH: When did you first realise the gravity of the situation at Wismar?

WITNESS: From the 24th May.

MR. P.N. SINGH: When did you receive instructions to have your men embodied.

WITNESS: At 10, ^{a.m.} on the 24th.

MR. P.N. SINGH: When did you receive instructions for the full embodiment.

/ WITNESS

27.11.64.

WITNESS: That was on the 25th around 10.00 A.M.

MR. P.N. SINGH: How many men were embodied on the 24th.

WITNESS: Twenty four men and one sergeant.

MR. P.N. SINGH: Did you think at that time that all the men should have been embodied?

WITNESS: I believed so.

MR. P.N. SINGH: When you received instructions to partially embody your men, did you advise that all of them be embodied on the 24th?

WITNESS: Yes I did.

MR. P.N. SINGH: What reply did you receive?

WITNESS: I was given instructions to embody 24 men and one sergeant.

MR. P.N. SINGH: Was any reason given?

WITNESS: I have no authority to ask for reasons.

MR. P.N. SINGH: Who instructed you to embody 24 men.

WITNESS: Instructions came from Superintendent Puttock.

MR. P.N. SINGH: So you were instructed to embody 24 men only although you had advised otherwise?

WITNESS: Yes sir.

MR. P.N. SINGH: Was Mr. Puttock ever at McKenzie or Wismar during this period?

WITNESS: No sir.

MR. P.N. SINGH: Did you ever speak to Mr. Neil Isaacs while you were up there.

WITNESS: Yes sir.

MR. P.N. SINGH: When did he arrive?

WITNESS: I think it was about midday or shortly after midday on the 25th. I would like to state the situation on the 25th was such I have not kept a count of time.

MR. P.N. SINGH: Well let me get this? Was he in the area on the 24th?

WITNESS: No sir.

MR. P.N. SINGH: Now was anybody in the area, any military personnel or police personnel above your rank?

WITNESS: I can't answer that question. I was the most senior person there so far as the volunteer force is concerned.

27.11.64.

MR. SINGH: Could you let us take for example, suppose there was a sudden flare up at McKenzie ~~Could~~ you embody your men without receiving orders from the authority.

WITNESS: No.

MR. SINGH: You can't why?

WITNESS: Because that is the way we operate to embody or disembody.

MR. SINGH: Si if there was a sudden falre up and thousands of lives were involved you would have to wait on authority to embody?

WITNESS: Yes, sir.

MR. SINGH: Now these 24 men that were embodied on the 24th of May, where were they stationed at the time of committment.

WITNESS: These 24 men were, I might say they were handed over the division ^{command} of the police force.

MR. SINGH: And where were they stationed?

WITNESS: I think that evidence ^{will have to come} comes from the ofricer in charge of the division.

MR. SINGH: You don't know where these men were.

WITNESS: They were committed in Wismar.

MR. SINGH: Having been committed did you have any more control over them on the 24th, 25th and 27th?

WITNESS: Yes I had. We came together as a company that is commencing on the midday of the 25th.

MR. SINGH: Were any of your men at any time posted to Wismar for example, places like Silver City and Valley of Tears.

WITNESS: We weren't posted anywhere. We cannot post people anywhere. We patrolled the entire area from one end to another.

MR. SINGH: Were any of your men equipped with walky talky?

WITNESS: None of them were equiped with walky talky.

MR. SINGH: Did you see any of the force equiped with them?

WITNESS: At a later stage the U.K. Troops they were equipped with them/

MR. SINGH: When did the ^{Bike.} troop arrive.

WITNESS: May I refer to my records. Seventeen thirty-half past five on the 25th.

/ MR. SINGH:

27.11.64.

MR. SINGH: Now to your knowledge before the arrival of the U.K. forces were any helicopters in operation.

WITNESS: Not to my knowledge.

MR. SINGH: Was any reports made to you that your men were standing around doing nothing while people were being attacked, and houses were being burnt?

WITNESS: No sir.

MR. SINGH: I should have asked Colonel De. Freitas this question but it slipped me, you may be able to assist me. Did you sit at this enquiry? Was that the first time that you heard these complaints?

WITNESS: Yes it was. Before I say yes I would like to know what complaints you are referring to.

MR. SINGH: While their houses were being lit afire and women were being beaten the volunteers stood idly around?

WITNESS: These I have heard.

MR. SINGH: Do you know from what source these complaints came to the attention to Colonel De. Freitas?

WITNESS: I understand that a number of individuals submitted the complaints to some official source. They were then passed to Colonel De Freitas.

MR. SINGH: Now were any fire arms lost by your men during the disturbances or subsequent during the 24th or 25th?

WITNESS: No sir. A stem gun was lost some time later.

MR. SINGH: When.

WITNESS: I shall have to refer to my records. Yes.

MR. P.N. SINGH: ~~June the 29th?~~

WITNESS: On June 29th.

MR. P. N. SINGH: The gun was lost.

WITNESS: I don't know what you mean by lost, but usually we say lost or stolen.

MR. P.N. SINGH: I should like to know from where was that gun lost or stolen?

WITNESS: It was stolen or lost from the company headquarters building of D. Company of the volunteer force.

27.11.64.

MR. P.N. SINGH: And there are guards?

WITNESS: Yes, a guard.

MR. P.N. SINGH: I suppose they work on shift system?

WITNESS: That's right.

MR. P.N. SINGH: And jet this gun was stolen or lost.

WITNESS: Yes.

MR.P.N. SINGH: Any ammunition lost?

WITNESS: No sir.

MR. P.N. SINGH: any ammunition or firearms found?

WITNESS: Not by ~~accident~~. *my Coy.*

MR. P.N. SINGH: Were any searches made where these buildings that were burnt?

WITNESS: Yes.

MR. P.N. SINGH: By whom?

WITNESS: By the police and by ourselves assisting the police.

MR. P.N. SINGH: And none of your men reported that they found any ammo.

WITNESS: A quantity of ammo., was found in a burnt out building I can't recollect who found it.

MR. P.N. SINGH: But, was it found by one of your men?

WITNESS: To the best of my recollection, I think not. I think it was found by the police, but I may be wrong.

DR. DRAYTON: Major Langham, prior to the 24th May, were you aware of rising tension in the area?

WITNESS: Yes sir.

PROF.DRAYTON: What evidence was there *of* rising tension?

WITNESS: Well, several days before 25th, there were incidents of attempted arson.

PROF. DRAYTON: Since you became aware of this around the 21st May did you have any conversation with the commanding officer of the volunteer force, telling him about the rising tension, and perhaps advising him that the members of the volunteers should be embodied?

WITNESS: The people in authority in that area are the police, if the police feel that the situation is out of control and they require

/some....

27.11.64

some additional members, they would communicate with the volunteer force headquarters, and some ~~state authority~~ ^{additional authority} would be given to mobilize the situation.

PROF. DRAYTON: That may be the procedure but you as a human-being living in that area, for how long?

WITNESS: For 6 or 7 years.

PROF. DRAYTON: You must have felt concern about this tension. And you must have had informal conversation with Colonel Celso De. Freitas about the possibility of trouble in that area.

WITNESS: It is a difficult question to answer, we were having incidents which were reported, but it was not for me to foresee that there was going to be a sudden eruption.

PROF. DRAYTON: But in the course of those conversations you must have mentioned that there was rising tension?

WITNESS: Yes.

PROF. DRAYTON: Why did you think it necessary to advise Mr. Puttock that the whole of the D. Company should be embodied?

WITNESS: It was my personal opinion at that stage, that the troubles had changed. This thing had suddenly developed into a large scale affair.

DR. DRAYTON: Even on the 24th?

WITNESS: Yes.

PROF. DRAYTON: There was a distinct difference between the 23rd, and the 24th. Now, when you spoke to him on the 24th and advised the total embodiment of the D. Company, what did he say to you?

WITNESS: I do not recollect his words.

PROF. DRAYTON: What did he say to this. Did he say I do not think the whole of the D. Company should be embodied.

WITNESS: Words to that effect.

PROF. DRAYTON: Now, Major Langham in your opinion if the whole of the D. Company had been embodied at the time that you had suggested do you think that the calamity on the 25th might have been averted?

WITNESS: I cannot say that it could have been averted, but it may have been substantially reduced.

2021
27.11.64

PROF. DRAYTON: Had Mr. Puttock visited this area at anytime prior to the 24th.

WITNESS: Yes Mr. Puttock had been out there from time to time. I cannot remember the dates.

PROF. DRAYTON: But he was not there on the 23rd, the 24th, 25th or 26th?

WITNESS: I cannot remember.

PROF. DRAYTON: Where were you on the day in question?

WITNESS: AT Wismar/Christianburg.

PROF. DRAYTON: You were there from what time to what time?

WITNESS: I gave my instructions as far as I can recall, at about 11 o'clock on midday.

PROF. DRAYTON: When were those records prepared. This record that Colonel De.Freitas tendered?

WITNESS: These records came from a number of source. We keep notes in books.

PROF. DRAYTON: Was there a single book at the station, where these things recorded at the company headquarters they recorded on the day in question?

WITNESS: No. ^{h. De Freitas} This is what Colonel De.Freitas told us, the record was reconstructed long after the 25th.

MR. SHEPHERD: I must object, ^{Col De Freitas} that I think that Major Langham did not say so. I don't remember him referring to that, but he did say ~~so~~ ^{that} But reports had to be made.

PROF. DRAYTON: There is no such book Major Langham?

WITNESS: On the 24th we had a partial embodiment. A group of men, who left and reported to the B.G. police, were committed to the Wismar/Christianburg area. What ever they did or found out was reported to the police station at Wismar, further the company headquarters as such at the centre was about the last thing that I was going to consider at a time like this. On the 25th when we got ^{orders} our embodiment ~~orders~~ for a total embodiment.

WITNESS: On the 25th May we were informed by several people that the

/Volunteers were

27.11.64.

Volunteers were not co-operative, and I have in my diary a few statements some which is in the Police Station at Wismar.'

DR. DRAYTON: Was it not contrary to fire in an unruly crowd?

WITNESS: Yes they had to receive orders from the Superior officers to fire at the unruly crowd.

DR. DRAYTON: Could you not fire at such a crowd?

WITNESS: No sir.

DR. DRAYTON: You see Major Langham the unruly crowd was burning and looting the houses.

WITNESS: You could not shoot in the crowd, or at the individual person or there might have been several injured in the crowd.

DR. DRAYTON: How serious was the situation?

WITNESS: The crowd was walking.

DR. DRAYTON: I am suggesting to you that you could have fired at the unruly crowd and several houses could have been saved from burning.

WITNESS: We could not fire except orders were given to us.

DR. DRAYTON: But if you had fired in the air the crowd would have dispersed?

WITNESS: I think so, but orders were not given to shoot.

DR. DRAYTON: Did you Major Langham prepared a long statement.

WITNESS: Yes sir.

DR. DRAYTON: Major Langham at 8 o'clock on the 25th from your records on your initiative, you called in your unembodied officers in N.C.O. and told them to make ^{preparah} ~~reports~~ pending receipt of authority from Headquarters, for free embodiment so your judgement of the previous day had been confirmed by 8 o'clock on the 25th for quick embodiment. Did you try to get in touch with Colonel De. Freitas?

WITNESS: Yes I tried to get in touch with Colonel De. Freitas.

DR. DRAYTON: Immediately after your meeting?

WITNESS: Yes, I tried to get a call to Georgetown but I didn't get through.

DR. DRAYTON: How many times did you attempt to this.

WITNESS: I don't recall.

/Dr. DRAYTON ...

27.11.64.

DR. DRAYTON: More than once.

WITNESS: I beleived ^{twice}.

DR. DRAYTON: When you ^{gave instructions} ~~enrolled~~ here for quick embodiment what peroid of time ^{require} ~~did~~ you called.

WITNESS: You must be ready for quick embodiment.

DR. DRAYTON: How long does this thing takes.

WITNESS: It takes about 2 to 3 hours.

DR. DRAYTON: But yet from your own records it ~~wasn't~~ until 7 o'clock that night that total embodiment in your company was ready.

WITNESS: That was quite right 7 o'clock. The last came in that time just for the last couple hours from 5,6, 7 o'clock three men were still out standing.

DR. DRAYTON: Just one ot er thing Major Langham where did this meeting take place? with Neil Isaac. ?

WITNESS: At the police station.

DR. D.LAYTON: You were across at Wismar at 11 o'clock.

WITNESS: Yes.

DR. DRAYTON: So you received a telephone call from Colonel De.Freitas at Wismar?

WITNESS: No, at McKenzie. I received the phone call before I went to Wismar.

DR. DRAYTON: You went across there you came over at what time?

WITNESS: I Can't say what time I came across.

DR. DRAYTON: But at 3 o'clock you were at the McKenize side because you were present at the conference and you remained on the MacKenzie side and you were there all night.

DR. DRAYTON: Thank you.

MR. SHEPHERD: Now I want to clear a few points too. Would you look at exhibit O. Was this your records ^{fl} a rescue operation that you submitted to your commanding officer. So you have a copy of it ^{with you} ~~down~~?

WITNESS: Yes sir.

MR. SHEPHERD: I noted that in two cases attempts were made to put out fires and your volunteers were seen breaking down doors or breaking windows of premises. Would that be a conclusion to put

27.11.64.

to ^{cut} put out fires or save lives?

we heard

WITNESS: It would be both. On many occasions screams and we smashed our way into the houses and that was the first attempt to try to put it out and we extinguish a few that way.

DR. DRAYTON: Did you at anytime prepare a lengthy statement.

WITNESS: Yes.

DR. DRAYTON: Where is the lengthy statement.

WITNESS: This is the major part, I have taken out of it appendices which were the information from the chief medical officer of the Demerara Bauxite Company and also information received from the police station.

WITNESS: In other words my initial report was comprehensive and which were supplied by other persons.

DR. DRAYTON: Did your lengthy report contain statements of opinion.

WITNESS: I have written to the commanding officer on this comprehensive statement.

DR. DRAYTON: I am just asking for the benefit of the Commission... if you could let us have a copy of the comprehensive statement that you tendered to the B.G.P.F.

WITNESS: I haven't got it. It is with the commanding officer.

DR. DRAYTON: Could you make that statement available.

MR. SHEPHERD: I don't quite understand what the statement is for.

What is the purpose of this question. Do you want all the records?

It is quite impossible to get to the file cabinet and work upwards ^{you} have a ^{perfect} personal right to get to the truth ^{but it is} not examining all the records.

~~The sort of thing you name and his security.~~

DR. DRAYTON: Major Langham prepared a very lengthy statement.

We would like to see it.

Mr. Shepherd: For what?

Dr. Drayton: I am not here to be cross examined.

Mr. Shepherd: I am here to understand what is going on.

Dr. Drayton: I am speaking clear English. You have prepared a very lengthy statement of the events?

Witness: Yes.

Dr. Drayton: And this statement you have tendered to the commissioners

24 25
27.11.64

is called from the lengthy statement? Did you admit this just now?

Witness: Yes, but I don't remember saying this.

Dr. Drayton: How many pages were there?

Witness: Seventy-six sir.

Dr Drayton: Do you care to tender it to the Commissioners.

Witness: I do have ^{not} them. It is not in my possession.

Dr; Drayton: What happened to them?

Witness: Colonel De Freitas has ^{it} them.

Dr. Drayton: Oh, Colonel De Freitas has ^{it} them. Major Langham what is the extent of your Military Training. How many years?

Witness: Eighteen years.

Dr. Drayton: What is the extent of the training of your men who were under your command?

Witness: Varying from three years to one year.

Dr. Drayton: Well, by that ^{Do} you mean that the men had one year to three years?

Witness: Some have one year and others three years.

Dr. Drayton: Thank you very much. Now with respect to the British Guiana Volunteer Force how many days training they had?

Witness: Two afternoons per week.

Dr. Drayton: For how long?

Witness: Two hours every afternoon.

Dr. Drayton: Was this training enough for the disturbances at Wismar?

Witness: They had no training for such things ^{as} like riots.

WITNESS: I am saying that you have got the statement in front of you and summary of operations.

PROF. DRAYTON. We have got the bulk but I personally as a member of this commission would like to have the complete statement that you tendered to Colonel De.Fretias in the disturbances.

MR. SHEPHERD: I shall like to know why? why do you want everything?

PROF. DRAYTON: Because as a member of this commission, I feel this ^{is} relevant.

MR. SHEPHERD: The witness is here, he can give you everything.

DR. DRAYTON: Mr. Chairman I can't understand this hesitancy to produce this report, I am quite anxious to get the truth, therefore, I must press that the entire statement be tendered

25 26

27.11.64.

admission

CHAIRMAN: At this stage the court should have a resuscitation for lunch.

REV. MC DONALD: Was this the actual order you gave your men, not to save any properties, but to save lives?

WITNESS: Yes sir, I told them not to bother to save properties but to save people's lives.

MC DONALD: How long did this rescuing operation go on for?

WITNESS: All day and all night.

MRS. MOOTOO: I understand that a member of the Volunteer Force, Lieutenant Wishart shot a man who was looting, do you know if this man was killed?

WITNESS: He was wounded.

MRS. MOOTOO: Could you tell us a little more about this incident?

WITNESS: They were some people who were looting, they were told to stop. They didn't stop, and the three persons opened fire. Of those three, somebody shot him and the bullet went through his middle and came out the other side. I didn't see who shot him, all I know is that he was shot. After-wards the father of the boy went to Mrs. Wishart and threatened her life.

MRS. MOOTOO: She was threatened only by the Boy's father?

WITNESS: Yes, that is all I understand.

MRS. MOOTOO: This man, was he actually looting?

WITNESS: Some people were looting and he broke away.

MRS. MOOTOO: Did you know where he was looting?

WITNESS: I don't know.

DR. DRAYTON: What time did Assistant Commissioner Isaacs arrived in the area?

WITNESS: ^{to} The best of my recollection around 3 o'clock, on the 25th.

CHAIRMAN: Major Langham what training did the members of the Volunteer force received in dealing with riotous crowds?

WITNESS: No training at all.

CHAIRMAN: The atmosphere on the 23rd, was it different to the one on the 24th?

WITNESS: Yes.

25 27

27.11.64.

CHAIRMAN: Did you have any talk with Mr. Hobbs? Had you at any time told him of the necessity to embody the entire Volunteer force? *

WITNESS: I may have had.

CHAIRMAN: If the police are doubtful of the situation at Wismar, they would contact their headquarters, and if they couldn't help they would contact your headquarters.

WITNESS: Yes sir.

CHAIRMAN: Did you ask Mr. Hobbs if he could contact his headquarters so that you could get the necessary powers to embody the whole of your Volunteer force?

WITNESS: It is difficulty to answer that question?

CHAIRMAN: Did you ask him.

WITNESS: I am pretty sure I suggested that my men should be used.

CHAIRMAN: Did you suggest that to Mr. Hobbs?

WITNESS: I believe I did.

CHAIRMAN: Never-the-less, you were given permission on Monday 24th. *Sunday*
to embody on 24

WITNESS: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: About what time would you say you had another 25th?

WITNESS: We got another 25 to 30 about three quarters of an hour after the first batch. The last *five* ~~fifty~~ came in about 5.00 o'clock.

CHAIRMAN: When did you go across to Wismar?

WITNESS: Shortly after 3.00 o'clock.

CHAIRMAN: You worked in conjunction with the Police but you were in full control of your force?

WITNESS: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: Did you have any discussions with the Senior Police?

WITNESS: There was no time to discuss the situation.

CHAIRMAN: Did you plan any course of action between the police and yourselves?

WITNESS: I naturally did not think that there was any point in planning a course of action. It was clear and obvious what was to be done. It was a rescue operation and while rescuing was being carried out any individual seen setting fire to houses would have been shot.

/ CHAIRMAN: ...

27.11.64.

CHAIRMAN: At 10.00 when you went over was violence at its height or was it still building?

WITNESS: It was high enough.

CHAIRMAN: The only form of operation that was possibly ^{was} to bring in the injured people?

WITNESS: That was primarily what we did.

CHAIRMAN: What preventative measures were taken by your force in conjunction with the Police.

WITNESS: Where ever we found a crowd we dispersed them.

CHAIRMAN: How?

WITNESS: By addressing them.

CHAIRMAN: Did it become apparent that the arsonists could not be caught?

WITNESS: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: Did you take any measures?

WITNESS: The only method was to try to disperse the crowd.

CHAIRMAN: Your soldiers had rifles?

WITNESS: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: What were your means of communication?

WITNESS: By mouth.

CHAIRMAN: Do you know of any company in the Volunteer Force, equipped with Wireless sets?

WITNESS: I do not know. We have not got any.

CHAIRMAN: Do you think it is necessary to the efficiency of the Force?

WITNESS: Very desirable.

CHAIRMAN: At 11.00 you felt that the Force was inadequate to deal with the situation. What did you do?

WITNESS: I spoke to my Senior and in answer he told me that they were authorised to embody 24 men.

CHAIRMAN: Did you try to get in contact with him again?

WITNESS: It was impossible. The telephone lines were engaged.

CHAIRMAN: Is there no other means of communication with your Force?

WITNESS: No Sir.

CHAIRMAN: Now in dealing with the unruly crowd I heard that
/Lieutenant

27.11.64.

court. Is he giving evidence? I do not think that Mr. Hobbs who will be giving evidence should be in the court, as all the other witnesses are out of Court:

MR. SHEPHERD: I would like someone to guide me, as I need a Solicitor. Mr. Hobbs is my Solicitor and I think that he would be in Court beside me to instruct me and act as my Solicitor.

CHAIRMAN: I think that this question has already been raised and no one mentioned anything or raised any objection. The Commissioner gave Mr. Hobbs permission to sit in the building.

MR. P.N. SINGH: Well then in the circumstances I think that no evidence should be allowed to be taken from Mr. Hobbs.

~~Court adjourned for a few minutes in order that Counsel and Commissioner commissioners could have the evidence of Dr. Fries.~~

DR. WINFRED FRIES (Witness Sworn)

MR. RAMSAROOP: Dr. are you registered ^{as} Med. Practitioner?

WITNESS: No I am doing my internship.

MR. RAMSAROOP: On the 26 of May were you ^{an} Intern at the Georgetown hospital?

WITNESS: Yes.

MR. RAMSAROOP: Dr. on the 26th May of this year did you examine one Ivy Ramnarase.

WITNESS: I can't remember.

CHAIRMAN: Have you no notes to check.

WITNESS: I was only notified yesterday that I had to appear in Court today, so I had no time to look up my notes or records.

MR. RAMSAROOP: Mr. Chairman I am wondering if this Witness would be available for Court on Monday. I can appreciate the difficulty she is having in not being notified.

CHAIRMAN: My instructions were that they should be instructed to give evidence. I remember distinctly preparing lists of evidence. The doctors should have been there yesterday. Why were they only notified yesterday?

CHAIRMAN: Dr. Fries I am afraid you will be of no use to the Commission without your notes. You will be served with a summons to give

27.11.64.

evidence on Monday at 8.30.

CHAIRMAN: Colonel King should be giving evidence at 12.30.

MR. SHEPHERD: Colonel King was called to a Conference. Possible he has been detained but as soon as he arrives I will inform the commission.

Court again adjourned for a few minutes until the arrival of Colonel King.

WITNESS: Colonel King

CHAIRMAN: Your first name?

WITNESS: Robert.

CHAIRMAN: You are the commanding officer the British Garrison.

WITNESS: I am the commander of the British Garrison, the same thing.

MR. RAMSAROOP: Colonel during the night of the 25th May this year were you told of anything in relationship to there being incidents?

CHAIRMAN: That should be the 24th?

WITNESS: On the night of the 24th I had information that some troubles had started in the Wismar/Christianburg area.

MR. RAMSAROOP: Yes, what was the source of your information?

WITNESS: It was from the police.

MR. RAMSAROOP: Would it be from the Commissioner of Police?

WITNESS: No it was from the force control.

MR. RAMSAROOP: Following that information did you on the 25th of this year put one to two of your companies at one hour's notice to move to MacKenzie?

WITNESS: I did.

CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. RAMSAROOP: The necessary orders were given by whom?

WITNESS: They were given by me.

MR. RAMSAROOP: They were given by you? at that time Colonel did you expect troops from England that had not arrived yet?

WITNESS: Some troops had arrive and some were arriving that day.

MR. RAMSAROOP: Commander at around 2 p.m. on the 24th May this year did you attempt a security counsel meeting?

WITNESS: Not on the 24th on the 25th.

27.11.64.

MR. RAMSAROOP: On the 25th May commander you attended a meeting or the security counsel at the Ministry of Home Affairs.

WITNESS: That is so.

MR. RAMSAROOP: Commander was the Wisamr situation discussed at that meeting?

WITNESS: It was.

MR. RAMSAROOP: Was there any request by anyone present at that meeting?

WITNESS: There was a suggestion.

MR. RAMSAROOP: By whom.

WITNESS: By the minister.

CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. RAMSAROOP: Without a formally signed request is the military power to go into action?

CHAIRMAN: I don't want to interrupt but may we have this suggestion. What was that suggestion?

WITNESS: The suggestion was that the British Troops should come to assistance of the police and other security forces in Wismar.

MR. RAMSAROOP: Is it necessary for their to be a formally signed request before the military is put into action?

WITNESS: Yes.

MR. RAMSAROOP: Did you returned to headquarters around 3 p.m.?

WITNESS: Yes, I did.

MR. RAMSAROOP: And on your return did anyone ring you in connection with the Wismar disturbances.

WITNESS: Yes.

MR. RAMSAROOP: Who is that person?

WITNESS: The commissioner of Police.

MR. RAMSAROOP: Can you say that exactly he told you?

WITNESS: He told me he had further news of the disturbances at Wismar, and he requested that British Troops be dispatched there. He said he would send you a formal signed request for British Troops to come to the assistance of the Police.

MR. RAMSAROOP: Did he also tell you that a Dakota was a requisitioned

27.11.64.

required for a troop lift?

WITNESS: Hetold me that he had arranged for that,

MR. RAMSAROOOP: Were the arrangements confirmed?

WITNESS: It was. I was told it would be standing by. From 16 hours from 4 p.m.

MR. RAMSAROOOP: Is it true that Demba have offered their air craft to take troops from Ogle?

WITNESS: They did.

MR. RAMSAROOOP: Did you give orders to the Commanding Officer of the Queen's Own Buffs? for a paltoon of Company 'C', Devon and Dorsers, to be alerted?

WITNESS: I did.

MR. RAMSAROOOP: A Platoon of 'C' Company of the Devon and Dorsets move to MacKenzie and zround 5 p.m. of that date, the airpraft was loaded with your company and put off from Atkinson for MacKenzie, arriving there at 5.30 p.m.

WITNESS: Correct, about that time.

MR. RAMSAROOOP: You mentioned that after a briefing bu the police Lieutenant Thomas, after a police briefing, he sent 3 patrols across the river to Wismar where they began operation at approximately 6.15 p.m.

WITNESS: TAHT IS so.

MR. RAMSAROOOP: About 8 p.m. on the 25th May did you give orders to s O.C.C. company, 1 D and D what would that be?

WITNESS: Officer commanding 'C' Company first Devon and Dorset Regiment.

MR. RAMSAROOOP: You give orders around 8 p.m. to move to MacKenzie with the tactical haadquarters?

WITNESS: Yes, that is a small headquarter.

MR. RAMSAROOOP: And anot er platoon to MacKenzie?

WITNESS: Yes.

MR. RAMSAROOOP: And for this purpose the Demba launch Pobris was being sent to MacKenzie and t. at Launch was shoduled to be at Atkinson stelling about 8. p.m.

/WITNESS:

WITNESS: No, about 12 mid-night.

MR. RAMSAROOP: These troops left at 30 hours. What would be that be?

WITNESS: That is 30 minutes after midnight, on the 26th of May.

MR. RAMSAROOP: And they arrived at MacKenzie at 4 hours.

WITNESS: That is 4 in the morning of the 26th May.

MR. RAMSAROOP: And patrols from these reinforcements were operating by 0530 hours?

WITNESS: That is 5.30 a.m. on the morning of the 26th.

MR. RAMSAROOP: At the time of the Sun Chapman incident following the disturbances at Wismar/Christianburg MacKenzie. Can you recall what was the strength of your troops at MacKenzie.

WITNESS: There was a company of about 90 British troops.

MR SHEPHERD: Is it a fact that troops were flown out from the U.K. on 24th and were in action at Wismar on the 25th.

WITNESS: No sir not quite, troops were flown on the 23rd and they arrived on the 24th.

MR. SHEPHERD: The 24th was a Saturday.

WITNESS: Yes sir.

MR. SHEPHERD: It is true that there were other British troops in the action on other parts of B.G.

WITNESS: That is true.

MR. SHEPHERD: These troops the 'C' Company of the first battalion of the Devon and Dorset regiment were most conveniently dispersed for you in the Wismar area.

WITNESS: That is right, because the remainder of the British troops were sent flying across with the exception of some British troops in Georgetown there were no other. And the first battalion of the Devon Dorset regiment has just come in from England,

MR. SHEPHERD: And they were already at Atkinson field, and it was on the 25th that the commissioner of the Police told you that there was transport to take them and the transport was in fact the Dakota.

WITNESS: Yes. that is correct.

MR SHEPHERD: It is correct that the British troops are trained primarily

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as soldiers not as policemen?

WITNESS: That is so.

MR. SHEPHERD: But if it is practised to give aid to the civil power to quell disturbances?

WITNESS: That is so.

MR. SHEPHERD: In this case following the meeting of the security council on the 25th, you had a request from the commissioner of police to give aid to the civil power. Have you request in writing?

WITNESS: I have a photostatic copy of that request.

MR. SHEPHERD: I suggest that the record be submitted to serve as exhibit. When only one platoon had been sent ahead under the several command of the terms apparently they were in disposed. Senior police officers, is that so.

WITNESS: Not necessarily the case everytime.

MR. SHEPHERD: When the officer commanding the 'C' company arrived personally at Wismar he took them to operations.

WITNESS: Yes he did.

MR. SHEPHERD: Thank you, no further questions

MR. P.N. SINGH: No questions.

DR. DRAYTON: Colonel King, you say that on the night of the 24th you receive a message from the police force control.

WITNESS: No sir, we always get in touch with the police force control. Colonel King was sworn in and states as follows:-

WITNESS: We always keep in touch by means of Force Control at the Police station, in case any report should come in about the trouble area, we could be able to send the troops right away.

DR. DRAYTON: What time was it?

WITNESS: I think it was about 10 o'clock to 11. p.m. I was told before of that.

DR. DRAYTON: How long before?

WITNESS: About an hour.

DR. DRAYTON: About 9. p.m. somebody told me that they were disturbing at Wismar, and that the situation was tensed, but you heard from the police force control and about 10. p.m. on the 24th the situation

was grave, so you immediately dispatched
and Dorset Regiment. Do you always do that?

WITNESS: That's the normal thing we always do.

DR. DRAYTON: After you received the report, you thought there might
be trouble and you automatically shotem the notice. You foresaw
trouble?

WITNESS: I think it might be trouble.

DR. DRAYTON: Did you have any discussion with the Commissioner of
Police between 10 p.m. on the Sunday and the security counsel meeting
on the 25th?

WITNESS: I believe I did. The commissioner told me that he had sent
one of his policemen to Wismar you see what the situation was at the
time. During the night of the 24th he didn't have the report from
Mr. Isaacs at the time.

DR. DRAYTON: What time was this?

WITNESS: About 9 o'clock in the morning.

DR. DRAYTON: But the reports have come in about the disaster the
previous night. Was the commissioner aware of this?

WITNESS: I assume he was aware.

DR. DRAYTON: Who was present at the meeting on the 25th May.

WITNESS: The Minister, Commissioner of Police, myself and the permanent
secretary of Home Affairs.

DR. DRAYTON: When the Minister made the request that the British Army
should come to the assistance of the Police and Volunteer forces at
Wismar. Did you remember what the situation had been?

Witness: Because I thought the situation was not fully known.

Dr. Drayton: How long did the Security Council meeting last?

Witness: I think about 45 mins.

Dr. Drayton: About 3 p.m. you arrived at the Head Quarters, and within
minutes of your return, the information suddenly became available about
the extreme gravity. You had the report from Wismar and it was necessary
to ask for the assistance of the British Forces. Did you happen to
know the time the Commissioner Isaacs arrived at Mackenzie?

Witness: No.

Dr Drayton: At the Security Council

made a suggestion, why wasn't it taken

Witness: I made no comment on the matter.

Mrs. Motoo: You said that your troops did not leave at 3.45 from Atkinson Field?

Witness: Because there was no air-craft available until four.

Mrs. Motoo: You said the Commissioner of Police rang you up, and said that your craft would be ready at 4 o'clock, and that it was standing by. Why didn't you take off at that time?

Witness: We had to load food, ammunition and radio sets, all this takes time, and the troop was told to stand by because they were given one hour's notice.

Mrs. Motoo: Do you always wait this long?

Witness: It depends sometimes soldiers are kept longer than necessary when they are not fully equipped.

Mrs. Motoo: Why did you not put them on 30 mins alerted?

Witness: The air-craft was not ready, and they would not have been able to leave in 30 mins.

Chairman: A formal request for Civil power had to be from the Commissioner of police?

Witness: The Minister informed the Governor that if the troops were required to give assistance to the Civil powers she appointed the Commissioner of Police the Minister could have directed you?

Witness: Yes Sir, In this circumstance she had appointed the Commissioner of Police as her representative.

Chairman: Only in these circumstances?

Witness: It was on the 22nd May that the Minister advised the Governor that she wished the Commissioner of Police initiate the intervention of troops under my command if it became necessary.

CHAIRMAN: Could you say if she had completely delegated the powers to the Commissioner of Police?

WITNESS: No sir she could have delegated the powers herself.

CHAIRMAN: I have my notes and I will read them for you. Wismar was first discussed. I asked if it was necessary now to send the troops to the area. Commissioner of Police felt that things were /in hand

in hand and that he did not want to do... trouble had been reported. I expressed fully my interest in the... situation and I expressed fully that the Officer in Charge should report.

CHAIRMAN: You were also informed that the Volunteer Force had been embodied and had been working in conjunction with the police?

WITNESS: I believe so.

CHAIRMAN: Around about 11 minutes to eleven o'clock you received a telephone call or a wireless message?

WITNESS: It was a telephone call.

CHAIRMAN: Now the 'C' Company was at Atkinson Field having arrived about 24 hours before that is Sunday. They were posted for duty at Diamond Estates on the East Bank?

WITNESS: I don't think so.

CHAIRMAN: The evidence of the lieutenant is that he left Diamond after your information at ten minutes to eleven on the night of the 24th, was there a change in the stand-by order.

WITNESS: I did not do it at that time because there were occasions of beatings. In actual fact I told them that they would leave at 1 hour's notice from 5.00 o'clock that morning.

CHAIRMAN: What was for MacKenzie?

WITNESS: This was not known to them but I had Mc Kenzie in mind.

CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

DR. DRAYTON: Would you say that the Minister of Home Affairs had power to sign a request suggesting this and that you would have been obliged to act on it?

WITNESS: Yes Sir. I would have had to inform the Governor of course. In fact if I had not a letter from the Governor previously on 22nd May and had received a directive from the Minister of Home Affairs I would have had to refer the matter to the Governor's Office.

DR. DRAYTON: When the Commissioner of Police issued a directive, were you obliged to obey it? Yes or no.

MR. SHEPHERD: Colonel King is a Commanding Officer and cannot give

a direct answer.

WITNESS: No Government can order me. They can only request my assistance.

DR. DRAYTON: So in fact neither the Minister of Home Affairs nor the Governor could have insisted on your making troops available to the areas?

WITNESS: Only the Governor.

DR. DRAYTON: So in fact you would say that if the Minister of Home Affairs at the Security Council Meeting made her suggestion and this suggestion was turned down by the Commissioner of Police you could have refused to go on duty.

Mr. SINGH: So in fact did you say if the Minister of Home Affairs at the Security Council meeting on the 24th and 25th. Was it suggested. The suggestion was turned down by the commissioner of police.

WITNESS: If she had then been present upon the people.

WITNESS: I could have.

MR. SINGH: With information at your disposal would you have refused? to accept it?

WITNESS: at that time I don't know. I must take advice from the police in fact from the people.

MR. SINGH: And not act on the Minister of Home Affairs.

WITNESS: Yes. It had been made not at that time. Yes Mrs. Jagan had been to the people had come to the conclusion and had signed the Minister of Home Affairs.

MR. SINGH: You could have tendered it and not to accept Mrs. Jagan request.

WITNESS: I would tell you exactly what I would have done. I would have got aeroplane and flown to Mc. Kenzie and then had a look at the position for myself.

MR. SINGH: But you could not have dispatched British troops on information of the minister at that time.

WITNESS: No because the information was not there.

MR. SINGH: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN: You said you received a letter from the Governor on

Cont'd

39-40

the 22nd of May which more or less request from the Home Affairs or the police and you act on the advice on either of them.

CHAIRMAN: Could we have a copy of that?

WITNESS: Yes you may indeed?

MR. SINGH: A photostatic copy.

MR. SINGH: At this stage you may have kept an army which will not be cleared up.

WITNESS: Yes I may do so.

CHAIRMAN: Yes proceed Mr. Shepherd.

MR. SHEPHERD: On the 22nd May the day of the conference meeting was it staged.

WITNESS: Of course it was staged sir.

MR. SHEPHERD: For the evidence or not.

WITNESS: I do not request anything sir. I don't know the nature of the evidence.

CHAIRMAN: Yes you requested.

MR. SHEPHERD: No I do not because if I do had evidence it will begin to fall into place and I stated we say that the emergency was declared by the Governor acting on the advise of the Premier or acting on the advice of the council of ministers.

WITNESS: Council of ministers.

MR. SHEPHERD: You say that the Governor sent you the minutes asking to post three of your troops made of the civil power.

WITNESS: The governor of course is commander in chief.

MR. SHEPHERD: You replied as Garrison commander in British Guiana.

WITNESS: This is so.

MR. SHEPHERD: So you may move with orders not otherwise.

WITNESS: Yes.

MR. SHEPHERD: The Governor had of course authorised you to act on support of the civil power and you were in another situation.

WITNESS: Yes.

MR. SHEPHERD: and you will have to act on the discretion of people and you would not act especially in writing by a representative of

of the local government or the council of ministers. present the British Garrison on the council of ministers. So far as you are aware internal security is the responsibility of the council as ministers.

WITNESS: That is so.

MR. SHEPHERD: The defence of British Guiana upon the other hand of the imperial is represented by the governor.

WITNESS: Right sir.

MR. SHEPHERD: I am formally asking the commissioner to call the premeir so I can question him that the council of ministers question him where is there in immediate emergency in British Guiana and that would be the formal request. I imagine the commission can grant it because I want to hear it from the lips of the premier. The emergency then the Colonel King had of course just two days prior to the whole of the security council.

WITNESS: Yes.

MR. SHEPHERD: The troops were ready at your disposal were those who had just arrived the Devon and Dorset at Atkinson were sent.

WITNESS: They were the only troops there.

MR. SHEPHERD: Would it be right to say that the troops had been flown two days before action.

MR. SHEPHERD: There would have been enough troops from else-where and it would be ready for removal.

WITNESS: Definitely.

COLONEL King being sworn and states as follows:-

WITNESS: It would have meant moving the troops elsewhere.

MR. SHEPHERD: If the troops had not arrived would that have involved jeopardising the position.

WITNESS: Yes certainly.

MR. SHEPHERD: No further questions.

CHAIRMAN: Thank you Colonel King.

MR. SHEPHERD: If colonel King would now be releived we will be pleased because he has many things to do.

/CHAIRMAN:....

Con'd

CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen we are thinking that...
and we haven't anybody by the time, we will resume court tomorrow
at 9.30 and continue until 12.30, in order to get through with these
volunteers.

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