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Tuesday
Wednesday

Counsel: Members of the Commission before the proceedings this morning I wish to refer to a matter which I consider as Counsel to this Commission, to be of some importance in the deliberations of the Commission. To be specific I refer to reports in the Press particularly the Daily Chronicle. I wish to make it clear that we welcome the press and we do not propose by any means to muzzle the press. But there appears a Head line in the Chronicle stating that Wismar District Commissioner tells the Wismar Inquiry Commission Security Forces did a good job. The Commissioner did make this statement - it may be in the actual words but words tantamount to this. But members of the Commission and my learned friends bear me out that that statement taken out of its context is misleading because you will recall vividly that the Commissioner before the date of the disturbances and during the day of the disturbances May 25th, 1964, told you in his own unequivocal terms that he was so afraid that he not only confined himself to his home and Compound far away north at Christainburg but he had actually arranged a craft to remove from the area if the violence in any way threatened him. In short of his own knowledge he knows nothing about any happenings on May 25th or the day preceding the 25th. His information was obtained by talking perhaps to different people, until Tuesday or Wednesday when he passed through the area. The point I am making, members of the Commission - I have no truck with the Press as regards these Head lines - but it must be stated in its proper context that the Commissioner was not there at all and obtained his information from people outside, days after the disturbances. I make this point members of the commission because this refers to one of our important terms of reference. This statement does not convey what transpired before you yesterday. I do not ask for the exclusion of the press. I do not say it is deliberate. As this matter is of considerable public importance I trust that the press will bear this in mind in all future references and publications about this Commission.

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Sheperd: Chairman I do not know whether I may be permitted to say something in connection with this rather odd submission made by Counsel who represent the Commission, let me borrow a paper, not having had my breakfast I was not very attentive to read the head lines. There was nothing in which within me as a lawyer that reacted through the headline in a sort of a way in which Counsel appears to have so reacted. Headlines are necessarily very short and are merely designed to give an impression, those who want to know the whole story read on and probably can supply another caption at the end. I thought that there was something military in Mr. Sugrim Singh's address, and he probably must have stated, and I am sure he will be the first to say that he does not wish to threaten the press. We are not to force an impression.

Chairman: Mr. Sheperd I do not to interrupt you, but I feel members of the Commission that Mr. Sugrim Singh has brought to our attention a headline in a certain newspaper to our notice.

Mr. Sheperd you are appearing for the Police and Volunteer Forces, under the circumstances without going into details in the whole preparation for the press to be here - and we will like to have them here - at the same time having regard to this very important and somewhat very difficult Commission which we are having, we would ask the press to be more careful in reporting, because the man in the street reading the head line would have the impression created by the headline in the newspaper referred to since it was in bold type. And since this statement regarding the Police and Volunteer Forces was attributed to a responsible officer as the Assistant District Commissioner it is doubtful whether reading the article would create any different impression. I do not want to enlarge very much on this point, but I feel members of the Commission ~~we~~ would find the task easier with a little co-operation from the press. From the beginning I stated we come here - although we heard and read of this before with unbiased minds and to give an impartial finding with regard to the terms of reference and we ask that members

Chairman cont'd: of the public as well as the press and witnesses should assist us in getting ^{to} the truth of this matter rather than to have big headlines in the papers which can be misleading. Again I ask that reporters exercise a little care in the reports they make. I wish also to point out that we have been entrusted with a duty and we intend to investigate those points which have been referred to us in our terms of reference.

Shepley Carter
Carter: I do not want to prolong this matter, but just to say ⁱⁿ ^{the} ^{Supreme Court} ^{that} ^{Mr. Singh} ^{is} ^{not} ^{going} ^{to} ^{associate} ^{himself} ^{with} ^{certain} ^{points} ^{made} ^{by} ^{the} ^{Commission} ^{and} ^{my} ^{learned} ^{friends} ^{who} ^{would} ^{bear} ^{me} ^{out} ^{that} ^{the} ^{Assistant} ^{District} ^{Commissioner} ^{said} ^{that} ^{he} ^{was} ^{at} ^{his} ^{compound} ^{and} ^{it} ^{is} ^{therefore} ^{impossible} ^{for} ^{him} ^{to} ^{express} ^{an} ^{opinion} ^{based} ^{on} ^{personal} ^{observation}. ^{That's} ^{all} ^{he} ^{was} ^{at} ^{his} ^{Compound} ^{on} ^{the} ^{day} ^{of} ^{the} ^{incidents} ^{and} ^{remained} ^{there} ^{and} ^{did} ^{not} ^{go} ^{out}.

Counsel: Members of the Commission I intended to convey and my learned friends ^{who} would bear me out that the Assistant District Commissioner, ^{said} that he was at his compound and it is therefore impossible for him to express an opinion based on personal observation. That's all - he was at his Compound on the day of the incidents and remained there and did not go out.

Shepley Carter
Carter: I still say I don't bear you out because it is the half truth. The Commissioner did say so, but he also said that he spoke to a number of people and that was the common opinion that the Police did a good job, and I have my note in which he said - "I felt that within the circumstances the police did a good job."

Counsel: I see. Now Mrs. Jagan when the adjournment was taken yesterday afternoon you said that around the 25th of May, this year you were Minister of Home Affairs and the maintenance of public safety and public order and the Police came under your portfolio. Is that so?

Mrs. Jagan: Yes.

Counsel: What about the Volunteer Force.

Mrs. Jagan: ^{The} ^{Government} ^{of} ^{British} ^{Guiana} ^{is} ^{not} ^{responsible} ^{for} ^{the} ^{Volunteer} ^{Force} ^{because} ^{it} ^{is} ^{under} ^{the} ^{control} ^{of} ^{the} ^{Government} ^{of} ^{British} ^{Guiana}. ^{di} ^{necker}.

Counsel: Can you tell this Commission if you are in a position to do so, whether the members of the Volunteer Force stationed at Wismar and Mackenzie came from other parts of British Guiana or were from the very area.

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Mrs. Jagan: To my knowledge they were from the area.

Counsel: Mrs. Jagan as Minister of Home Affairs at that time did you have any idea of the composition of the ~~personnel~~ personnel of the Police and Volunteer Forces at Wismar, in other words how many were East Indians and how many were Africans?

Mrs. Jagan: No I have no knowledge at all of the racial composition either of the Police or Volunteer Force.

Counsel: Do you share the view Mrs. Jagan that this tragedy at Wismar around the 25th of May was a racial attack by Africans ^{on} and the East Indian population there?

Mrs. Jagan: Well it was ~~a~~ ^{that} common knowledge in that almost all the persons attacked were East Indians.

Counsel: You would explain afterwards, in the main do you agree that the attack was a racial one?

Mrs. Jagan: Yes.

Counsel: Is it correct to say that you came to this conclusion, after receiving complaints from various persons who were actually in the area at the time?

Mrs. Jagan: Yes.

Counsel: Do you say this from your own knowledge, you never ~~went~~ ^{went} down there or were there on the 25th of May.

Mrs. Jagan: No I did not go there.

Counsel: Mrs. Jagan I understand you said yesterday that there was a system in operation ~~that~~ between your Ministry and the Police ~~there was a system in operation whereby your Ministry was kept~~ ^a apprised of outstanding happenings in this country involving security and public order, by means of letters or correspondence.

Mrs. Jagan: No, I did not say that in evidence, I said formerly ~~I had quite an amount of daily reports from the Commissioner of~~ ^{published} ~~police, but very often they related to events which were already~~ ^{news} ~~published~~ in the papers. I thought a more rapid system was necessary.

Counsel: You then instituted a system of getting in contact with ~~the~~ ^{the} Ministry by means of Telephone.

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Mrs. Jagan: Yes.

Counsel: Much obliged Mrs. Jagan. To put it clearly the onus was on the Commissioner of Police to keep you apprised ^{of} ~~an~~ these outstanding occurrences involving public safety and order by means of telephone.

Mrs. Jagan: Yes.

Counsel: Now let us move on to the Wismar tragedy. In keeping with this arrangement, did you receive any telephone message from the Commissioner of Police or on behalf of the Commissioner of Police prior to May 25th ^{about} ~~of~~ tension growing at Wismar.

Mrs. Jagan: No, apart from normal written records, I didn't get any telephone calls.

Sheperd: Did you receive information ^{not} from the Commissioner that racial tension was rising, I can't remember, you said that there ^{wasn't} ~~wasn't~~ any telephone calls. There are means ^{of} ~~of~~ other communications such as, minutes, files, letters etc.

Counsel: Members of the Commission I made my question clear, I am sorry my friend did not listen, if he ^{was} ~~was~~, he would have heard it clearly, I mentioned telephone because I made the foundation; ^{My} ~~my~~ question dealt with the period before the 25th of May, "did you ^{know} ~~receive~~ any telephone ^{call.} ~~conversation~~ from the Commissioner of Police or his representative of any tension growing at Wismar, and the ^{answer.} ~~answer~~ of the witness was no, but she got written reports of happenings ^{ings} ~~ings~~ of the week before.

Counsel: Now Mrs. Jagan you said earlier that these reports were ^{usually} ~~usually~~ late, can you recall when you received a written report from the Commissioner's ^{of Police} ~~Department~~ about tension growing at Wismar.

Mrs. Jagan: I am not aware of any specific written reports of these statements, the tension was rising but the written report would have ^{merely} ~~merely~~ been a record of events, for example:- So many houses burnt, ^{to} ~~to~~ many people injured.

Counsel: Oh, but with respect to any tension growing you had no ^{with} ~~with~~ written reports.

Mrs. Jagan: No.

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Counsel: You had no written report or did you have any telephone conversation from the police about tension growing at Wismar.

Mrs. Jagan: As I was saying none other than what ever had taken place.

Counsel: Now let us move on to the date of the tragedy, Monday 25th of May, did the Commissioner of Police - let us divide the day into 3 sections, let us say, morning, midday and afternoon, did the Commissioner of Police speak to you on the morning of 25th of May.

Mrs. Jagan: No.

Counsel: Mrs. Jagan did the Commissioner of Police speak to you on midday on Monday the 25th of May.

Mrs. Jagan: No.

Counsel: Did the Commissioner of Police in the afternoon speak to you of his own impression regarding the Wismar incident?

Mrs. Jagan: No.

Counsel: Now let us go back, did you speak to the Commissioner of Police on the morning, or midday of the 25th May.

Mrs. Jagan: No I didn't speak to him.

Counsel: Whom did you speak to?

Mrs. Jagan: I spoke to Mr. Puttock.

Counsel: What is his position there?

Mrs. Jagan: I believe he is the Assistant Commissioner.

Counsel: Could you help this Commission, tell us about what o'clock you spoke to Mr. Puttock?

Mrs. Jagan: Approximately 12.40

Counsel: Did you at the Ministry receive any information about the happenings at Wismar, before you spoke to Mr. Puttock?

Mrs. Jagan: Yes, I was in the Senate that day.

Counsel: You were in the Senate when you got the information? You were a member of the Senate at the time?

Mrs. Jagan: Yes.

Counsel: Could you give us some idea about what time on that day the 25th May, you received that information in the Senate?

Mrs. Jagan: It was around 10.00 a.m.

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Counsel: As a consequence of that information you spoke to Mr. Puttock, you tried to get the Commissioner and not getting him, you said you spoke to Mr. Puttock at 12.40. Could you recall what you told Mr. Puttock, - Now I want to make it clear Mrs. Jagan I want to ask you to avoid any conclusion ^{about} ~~at~~ Wismar. Just simply on what subject you spoke to Mr. Puttock ^{about?}

Witness: Well I may ⁹ say something, ^{to help you understand a little more} ~~little more understanding;~~ after I heard something of what took place at Wismar in the Senate as I said I received a message that things were looking bad at Wismar from one of the members who had come from Wismar on Sunday to attend ~~some~~ ^{the} meeting on Monday - I returned to the Ministry after the meeting and I attempted to get further information of what had taken place. I was unable at that time to receive any specific details that would assist me in evaluating the seriousness of the situation. On Monday however, I received a telephone call, an indirect call from someone who received a call from Wismar, and then I had information as a result of that call. This telephone call was the first communication I had that things were moving swiftly. From the minute I received that call I tried accordingly to get the Commissioner of Police at many places. I called to have the answer as regards conditions at Wismar. I tried to get in touch with various Government Departments, but no one was available and it was lunch hour. I gave a call to the Force Control and asked who was the Officer in charge there, but I was unable to get anyone and finally I was able to speak to Mr. Puttock who was present then.

Counsel: Did you tell Mr. Puttock that ^{you} had information that things were getting out of hand at Wismar?

Mrs. Jagan: Yes I told him that.

Counsel: He said anything in reply to you.

Mrs. Jagan: Yes he assured me that they ^{was} ~~were~~ sufficient force there to contain the situation, and he gave me a break down.

Counsel: Did Mr. Puttock tell you at that time whether the police had sent information that things were worse at Wismar when he spoke to you?

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Mrs. Jagan: He said that Mr. Isaacs had been sent out ^{at} approximately 12.00 noon to view the situation and report to the Commissioner, but he said nothing else to me on that subject.

Counsel: Did he say anything else of importance on the subject to you that you ^{can} recalled?

Mrs. Jagan: No, except the ^{usual} medical report.

Counsel: Now let us move forward, after this conversation which took place around 12.40 p.m. - later in the day did you have any other conversation with the police.

Mrs. Jagan: ~~Mrs. Jagan~~ I requested that an early meeting be arranged.

Counsel: You requested with whom. ^{a meeting.} Was this an emergency meeting?

~~Mrs. Jagan~~: With the Commissioner of Police?

Mrs. Jagan: I would have to check my records to be absolutely certain.

Counsel: Do you have your records here?

Mrs. Jagan: No I do not have it with me. I could not say ^{whether it was} ~~whom I~~ mentioned when I requested the meeting. ~~the regular meeting or whether it was~~ ^{whether I requested it}

Counsel: But in fact there was actually a meeting between yourself the Commissioner of Police, and what other officer.

Mrs. Jagan: Colonel King.

Counsel: About what O'clock.

Mrs. Jagan: About 2 p.m.

Counsel: About 2 p.m. that day. How did you arrange that meeting?

Now where did that meeting take place Mrs. Jagan:

Mrs. Jagan: In the Senate Ministry.

Counsel: Before we deal with the meeting, that meeting was at your request?

Mrs. Jagan: Yes. However, I wish to make this point which I am not certain, if I requested a meeting ^{or if it was a regular meeting.} I cannot recall.

Counsel: In other words in essence you are saying that it might have been a regular meeting of the Security Council or it may have been requested by you.

Mrs. Jagan: Yes.

Counsel: Now at this meeting did you refer to the Wismar occurrences or did you refer to the tension and happenings at Wismar.

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Mrs. Jagan: Yes, as ^{soon as} we arrived, we immediately discussed that .

Counsel: Wismar was the first subject, right?

Mrs. Jagan: I suggested that it was a very urgent matter and asked the Commissioner of Police if it was necessary ^{not} to send troops in the area.

Counsel: Yes, and what was the answer?

Mrs. Jagan: The Commissioner said at the time he had things in hand, and he didn't want to make any moves until Mr. Isaacs had reported his findings to him.

Counsel: Was there anything else discussed in relation to Wismar at that meeting between you and Colonel King ^{to the} Commissioner of Police.

Mrs. Jagan: Oh yes, a number of things in relation to Wismar.

Counsel: Can you tell us briefly?

Mrs. Jagan: Well as far as I remember, I expressed very fully my anxiety over the situation, and I ~~didn't~~ see why we should have to wait on Mr. Isaacs report, as I felt the ^{officer} in-charge of Wismar Police Station should have been able to advice on the situation. I was assured that the armed police on duty at Wismar and armed Volunteers which had embodied ^{on} ~~from~~ Sunday and Monday ^{was} ~~are~~ sufficient, I however, expressed my concern that the Volunteer Force Personnel taken from the area who were relatives, friends and ^{fellows} ^{of the people} workers could not be properly expected to take firm actions against such persons, I felt because of the close human relationship between the Volunteers and ^{members} of the Community it would prevent any firm action by the volunteers. I expressed my fears that the volunteers and the Police Forces could not cope with the situation and I strongly urged that British Troops be sent up immediately.

Counsel: Now did any thing else transpired in the conference in relation to Wismar Mrs. Jagan, as far as you can ~~remember~~

Mrs. Jagan: No.

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Counsel: Now after this meeting or conference—this was about 2.00 p.m. - later in the day did you have cause to speak to the Commissioner of Police?

Mrs. Jagan: I would like to say that as soon as our conference was ended I received an indirect phone call, from a woman who told me that some relative of hers had telephoned from Wismar saying that she must telephone me immediately that the situation at Wismar is absolutely desperate. I then telephoned the Commissioner of Police who had shortly returned to the office, and I told him as far as I was aware the situation was total^{ly} out of hand, and I beseeched him to send British Troops immediately to the area. He then replied to me that his information was the same as mine and that he was now making arrangements to despatch troops.

Counsel: Mrs. Jagan that was precisely what time?

Mrs. Jagan: Around 3 p.m.

Counsel: Are you aware that British Troops were flown to the area.

Mrs. Jagan: Yes.

Counsel: And do you know the strength of the troops.

Mrs. Jagan: I am not certain about that. But the troops didn't leave for some reasons or the other until four to four thirty for Wismar.

Counsel: Now after the despatch of the British Troops to the area did you have any conversation after that with the Commissioner of Police on the matter.

Mrs. Jagan: Yes

Counsel: When was that?

Mrs. Jagan: I wouldn't be able to say directly, but I had telephone conversation with Officer ⁱⁿ in charge at Wismar in connection with the despatch of the refugees and he asked me to do several tasks involving, sending the persons to Georgetown and make arrangements for their accommodation and all of that.

- Counsel. Do I understand you to feel Mrs. Jagan that the Officer in charge of Mackenzie Police Force in normal course should have communicated to Police Headquarters when the tension began to rise.
- Mrs. Jagan. Oh yes. I had thorough discussions, unsatisfactory discussions, with the Commissioner on that point. I pointed out to him that he should have known exactly from moment to moment what was happening from the view of Volunteers and Policemen who were on the spot.
- Counsel. Do you share the view Mrs. Jagan that if the security forces had complied with your request by sending British Troops when you made a complaint, do you share the view that the situation might have been contained?
- Mrs. Jagan. I would say by that time, the situation was completely out of hand.
- Counsel. My question Mrs. Jagan do you believe if British Troops with the security force were reinforced at Wismar when tension started it might have averted this tragedy.
- Mrs. Jagan. Yes
- Counsel. Do I understand you to say Mrs. Jagan that in not keeping you at the Ministry informed in accordance with the rules we have referred to before the Police and the Security Forces had not done what they should have done in keeping you informed.
- Mrs. Jagan. No, they did not keep me properly informed.
- Counsel. Mrs. Jagan might it have been that at the relevant time 25th of May and the day preceding, the Police were heavily occupied in other parts of the country. I am not aware of any outstanding happenings, but there were sporadic eruptions. Might it have been that the Police were occupied elsewhere, or the Commissioner was busy.
- Mrs. Jagan. No, I wouldn't say so, no matter what circumstances existed they should have arranged to contend with the situation.
- Counsel. Would you say that the Wismar and Mackenzie Police and the Volunteer Forces stationed at Wismar area were adequate in relation to the population of eighteen thousand there.
- Mrs. Jagan. No they were not.
- Counsel. Do you share the view Mrs. Jagan that ^{since} the area is within reasonable distance from the city of Georgetown and therefore within easy reach of Police reinforcements that tragedy should not have occurred.
- Mrs. Jagan. I believe that it could have been prevented by adequate control of the situation.
- Counsel. Now again I will ask you Mrs. Jagan you said this before but I wish to make my question very clear. Let us say if it was an estate on the East Coast with a population of eighteen thousand people and having two Police stations, within easier reach of Georgetown do you think that the situation would have been controlled.
- Mrs. Jagan. Yes
- Counsel. Without referring to specific occasions do I understand you Mrs. Jagan that the situation was not in the past firmly handled by the Police.

Mrs. Jagan . Yes, I expressed that in my resignation.

Counsel. Are you aware that members of the Police Force are trained and lectured to when they should use firearms.

Mrs. Jagan Yes

Counsel. And the elementary principals of how to handle a situation of impending riot.

Mrs. Jagan Yes. I assumed so

Counsel And it is within your experienced as Minister Of Home Affairs at the time that in certain situations in the country the police have actually fired shots in the air.

Mrs. Jagan. Yes you are speaking of the present *Situation*.

Counsel. In simple cases of looting there is a specific case in which the looter was actually shot at when disobeying the Police.

Mrs. Jagan Yes.

Counsel. What I am trying to get at Mrs. Jagan. I propose to ask the Commissioner of Police who I think is more familiar with the training in this respect, is your answer to a hypothetical question, if there is murder, looting, beating arson and raping in the presence of the Police and Volunteer force are they justified in shooting.

Mrs. Jagan. I should like to ask the *Mr* Chairman to explain something. When I said that the situation was not dealt with from the begining in the proper manner - I see the point you are directing. *I mean there was not sufficient firmness.*

Counsel. I agree, *that was what you meant.*

Mr. Shepherd. I don't agree

Counsel. Members of the Commission I appreciate my friends' intervention and actually I asked on occasions in the past, but there is no ham in the witness explaining an answer given before ^{at to} what she had in mind ~~actually~~ when she made that answer with respect to the occurrence at Wismer.

Mrs. Jagan When I was speaking in terms of Policemen not acting firmly you spoke in relation ~~to~~ fire arms.

Counsel: I see, you say there is a circular from the Commissioner of Police on this question setting out the orders and under what situation these constables and Policemen should use firearms ~~in the last resort.~~

Mrs. Jagan. I believe in 1963.

Counsel. Now Mrs. Jagan are you aware that around that time the 25th May the Police had in their possession tear gas or tear smoke as a device for quelling crowds and disturbances and that tear gas was used in various parts of the country when ever the occasion arose to quell disturbances, or quell riotious groups. In the first instance Mrs. Jagan do you know whether a y tear smoke was used by the Police stationed at Wismer or Christainburg on the crowds of people who went *about* ~~en~~ burning and looting.

Mrs. Jagan. I don't know anything about that.

Counsel. But is it within your information that Police at Wismar had their complement of tear gas in stock.

Mrs. Jagan. I wouldn't know

Counsel. Very well Mrs. Jagan, do you know Mrs. Jagan if the Police ~~at Wismar~~ or Volunteer Force ^{at Wismar} during those disturbances fired any shots in the air or towards anybody.

Mrs. Jagan. On this question I had ^{confidential} strict reports of eye witnesses and the Officer in Charge of the Volunteer Force. I don't know which is the truth.

Counsel. Did you get any information Mrs. Jagan from witnesses who were actually present, reliable witnesses of women being raped at the river side,

Mrs. Jagan. Well we were discussing this matter yesterday.

Counsel. You got that report.

Mrs. Jagan. Yes

Counsel. Now my question to you was did you get any information of women being raped by the riverside, and do I understand your answer to say that you got information from people who actually assisted and rescued these women.

Mrs. Jagan. I say that one eye witness who saw what took place on the opposite side of the river, as well as a witness who came to me, he was a man a non Indian and said to me that he had rescued one of the women and he hates to tell me, but he now regrets having done it, because since he attempted to rescue the woman he was chased out of Wismar. On this point it is an ordinary occurrence for people to lose their household possessions and in some cases their entire property for rescuing victims of the disturbances.

Counsel. Can I help you, is that the manager of the Singer Sewing Machine ~~Company~~.

Mrs. Jagan. No

Counsel. As a result of his intervention to rescue he suffered the same fate of having to leave the area.

Mrs. Jagan. It will not be fair to say anything which might seem as a means of identification through of course I could mention the name to the Commission.

Counsel. Were you informed that a member of the crew of the Sanguenay ship that stood along side the Wismar side actually had to fire a shot.

Mrs. Jagan. No I was told that a ^{man from} ~~member~~ of the Sanguenay ship. ^{had}

Counsel. Were you informed Mrs. Jagan that actually a man and his wife and his sister as a result of the violent attack had jumped into the river swimming towards the Mackenzie side and the man and his wife were rescued by a passing boat and the attackers swam out and pulled the sister and raped her on the beach.

Mrs. Jagan. No

Counsel. Are you aware Mrs. Jagan of a strike a temporary strike which followed at Mackenzie against one responsible official who referred to the attackers as hooligans.

Mrs. Jagan Yes, so I was told of this.

Counsel. Let us move on to another subject and be specific I am trying to get at the cause of the disturbances. Let us look at the cause under two heads the remote cause and the immediate cause. Do you share the view Mrs. Jagan that the happenings in other parts of the country from the beginning of the year resulting in killing both Indians and Africans did raise hatred to the highest peak around the time of the strike. Mrs. Jagan will you share the view that so deep was this race hatred and in such magnitude that Indians and Africans in large numbers moved out from certain areas with all their belongings and squatted in other areas where they felt they were safer.

Mrs. Jagan. We have seen this.

Counsel. Do you agree with me that from observing this phenomenon the principal of moving ^{was that} where they were more Africans and less Indians the Indians moved out, and where they were more Indians and less Africans the Africans moved out.

Mrs. Jagan. In the areas where it took place. *This was the pattern*

Counsel. And do you share the view that it was not as a result of panic but actually burning and beating of their respective groups in those areas caused them to remove.

Mrs. Jagan. From my own experience there were some areas where some people were hearing and not seeing. ^{The panic} just ~~from~~ what they heard and actually the ~~circumstances~~ ^{had taken} having taken place.

Counsel. You know of some cases where they removed because of panic.

Mrs. Jagan. Yes

Counsel. Now do you agree that the incident of Friday 22nd of May when two people were killed at Buxton Nr. & Mrs Sealey in any way directly or indirectly influenced the Wismar tragedy.

Mrs. Jagan. From the time I received that information it appears that those events had some bearing ~~on~~ ^{on} what took place at Wismar.

Counsel. Mrs. Jagan would you agree with me that by and large there is, put it in legal terms, there is a presumption which is rebuttable that almost all East Indians in this Country are members of the P.P.P. Perhaps I put it too high, let me make myself clear. Do you agree with ~~that~~ ^{that me} Indians generally ~~as~~ members of the P.P.P. with a few exceptions.

Mrs. Jagan. That is the ^{general} impression I have.

Counsel. In the same way Mrs. Jagan, do you agree with me that by large all Africans in this country with a few exceptions again are looked upon as members of the P.N.C.

Mrs. Jagan. That's an impression not a reality.

Counsel. In other words whatever the cause are the situation today is that there is sharp division on the basis of race among the two main political parties the P.P.P. and the P.N.C. Do you agree with that Mrs. Jagan.

Mrs. Jagan. That's the impression, everybody seems to have.

Counsel. Are you aware of any political party holding any meetings immediately preceding or on the day of this tragedy.

Mrs. Jagan I haven't had any reports of any meetings

Council. Are you aware Mrs. Jagan of any group or groups having gone to the area inciting any section of the population there to violence.

Mrs. Jagan I got this information.

Council. Again you got this information, you don't know it of your own knowledge.

Mrs. Jagan No

Council. Now can you tell us of the groups inciting,

Mrs. Jagan I am aware of the representative of that area going to the district, My information is that he spoke to two persons in groups

Step Chairman. It is very much in line with terms of reference to ascertain the causes of the disturbances. *Is it definitely evidence relevant*

Mrs. Jagan What I wish to say is that as Minister of Home Affairs I had three reports of movements of the same persons last year which led up to disturbances in the area.

Council. I am talking about the 25th May or a week or so before do you have any information that this representative did anything to create a situation.

Mrs. Jagan No, what I just said, was in relation to prior to this disturbance. *a time*

Council. I did ask you to refrain from previous happenings, let us confine ourselves to the present. You said you have information that immediately before the 25th of May that this representative did what.

Mrs. Jagan He talked to persons in groups in a manner which would cause hatred.

Council. Let us leave it there, now did you have any information Mrs. Jagan that an outside group or outsiders who don't belong to Mackenzie have gone up there and made their contribution in inciting the indigenous population there to violence.

Mrs. Jagan Yes I raised this matter of having notified that Banga-Mary had in fact gone and was found in the area, and had been arrested. *been*

Council. Now Mrs. Jagan do you agree with this statement in the press made by the Chairman of the Local Authority at Wus-Mar, published on the 29th May 1964, four days afterwards. This is what he says *the* Chairman meaning Mr. Festus Adams, the Chairman said that he had witnessed some of the incidents which occurred during the three days of trouble and had come to the conclusion that every thing was done by strangers. Quote in his own words, "I saw some of the fellows myself on Monday and I have never seen them before in my life". Do you agree with this statement from the Chairman.

Mrs. Jagan I *would not* be able to say on this point. *anything.*

Council. Let us move on to the immediate cause of the outbreak of violence, did you hear Mrs. Jagan that the rumour went around on the morning of the 25th that an Indian man *kicked an African boy.*

Mrs. Jagan No I did not hear about that.

Counsel. Were you told of any actual happenings in the ~~district~~ Wismar District at the relevant date the 25th May, or immediately preceding which touched off this outbreak. Have you heard of any immediate happening.

Mrs. Jagan No, I may say that my opinion finally was ^{that} I don't believe anything was said on that Monday, to touch off the disturbances.

Chairman. In view of the fact that opinions are not wanted I propose to stop the line of examination at this stage.

Counsel. I appreciate your intervention Sir, we have witnesses who would testify as to the causes and in view of that fact I propose to stop at this stage, and ask the Commissioners leave, to call Mrs. Jagan again

Mr. Shephers. Mrs. Jagan were you one time a student of economics, You however are ^{not} ~~setting out~~ ^{teaching} principles

Mrs. Jagan... I have never claimed to be an economist

Mr. Shepherd You however understand economics. In running your home and as a housewife you will have to know the elementary principles of economics. ~~Do you agree with me~~ - You can not ^{be} ~~be~~ ^{spend more} than you earn. Do you agree with me?

Mrs. Jagan Practically yes.

Shepherd. British Guiana has been for many years ^{been} a very poor country economically.

In spite of these efforts British Guiana have not been able to have a Police Force as large as or powerful it would have wished.

Mrs. Jagan

Mr. Shepherd.

Did you receive a minute on the 23rd. May Mrs. Jagan?

Mrs. Jagan Yes

Shepherd. These are instructions you see. I can't say what I really don't know.

Chairman Was it sent by hand or post.

Shepherd. You see a Minister Of Home Affairs has responsibility

Mrs. Jagan.

Mr. Shepherd Now Mrs. Jagan won't you agree that it was an extra ordinary shrows action on the 23rd, and 24th

Mrs. Jagan I had no powers to take actions of what I do not know. I know at 2 o'clock I asked that the British Troops be sent at Wismar.

Mrs. Jagan

Mr. Shepherd Was that two days later?

Mrs. Jagan If I may say, Yes. You must remember that the Commissioner of Police said that it was necessary at the time when I suggested at the beginning of the disturbances.

Mr. Shepherd. After the British Forces arrive at 6 P.M. that

violence started to subside as the British troops arrived.

Mrs. Jagan Can you give me any information on the Sun Chapman disaster

Counsel Members of the Commission according to my records Mrs. Jagan gave evidence before you, that she resigned on the 1st June. This occurred in the Sun Chapman incident took place on the 7th July, I would suggest that the opinion ventured on the Sun Chapman incident is a citizen and not as has been regarded as being made in the capacity Minister Of Home Affairs.

Mr. Shepherd. As citizen is taking orders you have the right to take orders. Would you tell us what you know of the disaster of the Sun Chapman.

Mrs. Jagan I know what was reported in the newspaper and that it was a terrible explosion resulting in the number of persons being destitute and shortly after there were instances which took place at Mackenzie and Wismar.

Mr. Shepherd What was the nationality of those who were principally damaged, and injured in the Sun Chapman incident. Now can you tell the Commissioners if you have the information of Forces of British subject. Can you give the information of the disaster of the Sun Chapman.

Counsel. Members of the Commission I will object to any such question, because an answer from the witness has been placed before this Commission by counsel of the Commission, the answer will be incriminating.

Mr. Shepherd. The answer will be incriminating may be. I don't see why my friend should worry about being incriminating.

Counsel. In a sense this matter is subjudice people lost their lives, and for the sake of argument if Mrs. Jagan say that John Jones blew it up she will be incriminating herself.

Shepherd. Now Mrs. Jagan this is a timely new matter, as Minister I better ask you as to the best of your information of the Police, were a large number of East Indians suffered by the Police.

Mrs. Jagan At the Police Compound.

Mr. Shepherd I think you will agree, don't you with the protection they gave was in every way adequate and sufficient in the circumstances to the large number of East Indians who were in the Compound.

Mrs. Jagan I am not sure, because they were removed shortly.

Mr. Shepherd And you will agree that the refugees went willingly to the Police Station Compound for protection.

Mrs. Jagan I won't be able to comment on this.

Mr. Shepherd. I do not hold any brief for any of the Political parties but I do hold brief for the Security Forces.

Counsel. Member of the Commission I don't wish to interrupt my friend I apologise, and I hope I don't disturb his train of mind in the proceedings but I wish to make it clear that after objection was taken to this resignation speech of Mrs. Jagan particularly the

who has referred to the behaviour of the attackers at Wisnar ~~had~~ ^{had} referred to the ^{as have you} attackers. or cannibals, one of the words I believe, which touched off ^{a temporary strike at} Derba immediately after the Wisnar disturbances.

WITNESS: I am not aware of that.

COUNSEL: Now, Mr Jagan, we will call you again at a later stage

CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen for the benefit of the press, we have agreed to exclude the evidence of the Sun Chapman disaster. ^{It also went full with on the} ^{of the} ^{Chairman}

COUNSEL: Commissioners I appreciate the reminder from the ^{Commissioners} ^{on this very} important point, and I shall refrain from now on to make any reference ^{to the} Chapman incidents.

MR CARTER: You can make ^{reference} ^{generally} ^{to that} ^{but} ^{not} ^{specifically}

COUNSEL: Much obliged.

COUNSEL: Your name is Bisson. ^{as follows} ^{E. D. Bisson} ^{being} ^{deputy} ^{Police} ^{Station}

WITNESS: Yes sir.

COUNSEL: You now live where?

WITNESS: Bush Lot West Coast Berbice.

COUNSEL: You have a wife and children?

WITNESS: A wife and six children.

COUNSEL: You used to live at Wisnar up to the 25th May this year

WITNESS: Yes sir.

COUNSEL: And you were employed as an operator at the Deneram ^{Bauxite} Company.

WITNESS: Yes sir.

COUNSEL: And along with that employment you had a general store ^{which} ^{was} ^{run} ^{by} ^{you} wife and two other employees.

WITNESS: Yes sir.

COUNSEL: And this general store was situated where?

WITNESS: Lot 18 Silvertown.

COUNSEL: That would be on the southern side of the market ~~and~~

WITNESS: Yes sir.

COUNSEL: Now these business premises of yours were housed in the ^{lower} ^{flat} a two flat concrete building.

WITNESS: Yes sir.

COUNSEL: And you and your wife and children resided in the ^{upper} ^{flat}

WITNESS: Yes sir.

COUNSEL: And this property was destroyed by fire?

WITNESS: Yes.

COUNSEL: Was it on the 25th of May?

WITNESS: Yes.

COUNSEL: Your property was destroyed by fire and you lost all your stock, furniture and everything.

WITNESS: Yes.

COUNSEL: And you were evacuated to Georgetown on the morning or midday of Tuesday the 26th of May.

WITNESS: Yes sir.

COUNSEL: What time?

WITNESS: On the first trip on the Barina was the Tuesday morning.

COUNSEL: There were two boats the Barina and the R.H.Carr later on. Briefly Mr Bisson what do you estimate the value of your loss, including the building and the stock?

WITNESS: Around forty thousand dollars.

COUNSEL: You have lived at Wisnar for how many years?

WITNESS: 17 years.

COUNSEL: And you have developed your fortune to that extent.

WITNESS: Yes sir.

COUNSEL: Now when you were evacuated did you get anything to bring away from Wisnar?

WITNESS: Nothing at all.

COUNSEL: Was your premises insured?

WITNESS: I had only four thousand dollars on premises and eight thousand dollars on stocks.

COUNSEL: Was that ordinary fire insurance or insurance for civil commotion or riot?

WITNESS: Ordinary fire insurance.

COUNSEL: Did you get any money from the insurance company?

WITNESS: No sir.

COUNSEL: On your insurance, is that because you are not insured for riot?

WITNESS: Yes sir.

COUNSEL: And you are now seeking shelter where?

WITNESS: In Bush Lot, West Coast Berbice.

COUNSEL: Doing what for a living?

WITNESS: I am not working with anybody I am just doing a little peddling.

COUNSEL: And I take Mr Bissoon that in connection with your business you have incurred a considerable amount of debt in Georgetown stores supplied with your goods.

WITNESS: Yes sir plenty.

COUNSEL: Roughly how much.

WITNESS: Around nine thousand dollars.

COUNSEL: Can you remember your creditors?

WITNESS: William Fogarty, A. Majeed and Sons, S.M. Singh and sons, Beepat, Jai-robin, and sons.

COUNSEL: Among these different suppliers of stocks, you have a total of around 9 thousand dollars, in debt, So Mr Bissoon, you are penny less with 9 thousand dollars owing. Right?

WITNESS: Yes.

COUNSEL: And the land of which these business premises were, have you any transport your legal title to the land.

WITNESS: No, Government leased land.

COUNSEL: For which you pay roughly

WITNESS: \$36, a year.

COUNSEL: Have you since gone back to Viscar?

WITNESS: Last month sir, I went back to court.

COUNSEL: How distressing it might have been with you, did you visit your premises that was destroyed?

WITNESS: Yes sir, I went there I asked the police to take me to see my place.

COUNSEL: Under police protection you went to see your place, and you saw your place.

WITNESS: Yes sir.

COUNSEL: What was its condition.

WITNESS: Everything burn flat, I saw everything burn, burn bed, sewing machine, everything, burn to the ground.

COUNSEL: Alright now, let us move down to the disturbances, now when first did it dawn you that something was coming up in the nature of violence.

WITNESS: Well when the shooting took place at Buxton.

COUNSEL: Was that on the Friday the 22nd May, when husband and wife, two people were shot?

COUNSEL: What happened at Wisnar at that time.

WITNESS: Well, there was a rumor going around that Indian shooting negroes and they going to ^{take} revenge there.

COUNSEL: That was the Friday.

WITNESS: Yes.

COUNSEL: Lets move on to the Saturday, as a matter of fact any acts of violence happened on the Friday that you know about.

WITNESS: Friday night a home in Silvertown was bombed.

COUNSEL: Yes, anything else.

WITNESS: Yes, On Friday night the house was bombed and people got injured.

COUNSEL: Now lets move on to Saturday. Can you remember anything that happened on Saturday?

WITNESS: On Saturday ^{wild} rumors were going around that bad things will happen.

COUNSEL: Was there any burning or beating on Saturday that you know of.

WITNESS: There was some burning up the hill tops, I saw the fires.

COUNSEL: Now let us come to Monday morning 25th What happened on the morning.

WITNESS: I woke up and opened my business and started to sell and we saw people running on the street.

COUNSEL: Now you are employed at Bauxite Company, but on that day the 25th May, were you on the day shift or the night shift.

WITNESS: I was on the 11^{pm} to 7^{am} shift.

COUNSEL: So you were home on the morning.

WITNESS: Yes.

COUNSEL: Now you opened your business up to what o'clock?

WITNESS: Around 8 a. m.

COUNSEL: And then around 8 a.m. what happened.

WITNESS: Negroes running and looting in the market and beating the Indians on the road.

COUNSEL: Neighbours ran into the store and told you to ^{close} shut up.

WITNESS: Yes.

COUNSEL: As a result of that information did you close your store?

WITNESS: Right away.

COUNSEL: And where did your wife and children go.

WITNESS: I sent them right away upstairs to go into the middle room in the upper flat.

COUNSEL: Well then after that what happened.

WITNESS: I was outside watching out to see what would take place.

COUNSEL: Did anything take place.

WITNESS: Yes sir, a large crowd coming from the market side coming my way to Silvertown, area.

COUNSEL: That is they were travelling from Silvercity market side to Silvertown.

WITNESS: Yes sir.

COUNSEL: Now can you come down there and look at this map and imagine as is you are facing Georgetown, Wisnar would be on that side, can you show on this map which is Silvertown? Silvertown is identified, Alright get back on the witness box. Sirs, I wish to tender this map as exhibit ^{Map attached, admitted} 'A' in the proceedings. When you saw this crowd coming towards your side, what happened next.

WITNESS: They come right in front of my place and shouted "Edward Bisson we come to take this place"

COUNSEL: Now this crowd Bisson, was approximately about how many persons.

WITNESS: About 80 persons.

COUNSEL: Not a hundred.

WITNESS: Could be, because they were plenty.

COUNSEL: Now when they said Edward Bisson we come to take your place, what happened next,

WITNESS: Well I got afraid, and I stood up to see what will take place. Then a man who was in front turned back and pointed right away into the business.

COUNSEL: Just a minute. Like a traffic inspector he turned and gave the signal that way, that's to your building right?

WITNESS: Yes sir.

COUNSEL: And in obedience to this improvised traffic inspector what happened?

WITNESS: They were armed with sticks, stones bottles, and wood.

COUNSEL: Yes and when this signal was given, what happened?

WITNESS: They started to pelt down the windows upstairs, with stones, bottles, and sticks.

COUNSEL: Were the windows destroyed.

WITNESS: Yes sir.

COUNSEL: Now just at this point while they were destroying your premises did you see anybody pass,

WITNESS : Yes people were passin-.

COUNSEL: Apart from people did you see any police pass?

WITNESS: No police at that time.

COUNSEL: Did the police come up later.

WITNESS: Yes sir.

COUNSEL: About how long after.

WITNESS: About 4 to 5 minutes after.

COUNSEL: While the crowd was there.

WITNESS: Yes the crowd was there.

COUNSEL: The ^{Crowd} ~~crowd~~ was still there pelting?

WITNESS: When the police came the crowd dispersed. They came with a jeep I saw a police ^{jeep taxi} ~~talking to~~ Mr Hobbs, the superintendent incharge, and Sergeant Chalmers, and two other policemen.

COUNSEL: ^{about} But how many in all.

WITNESS: About 6.

COUNSEL: Did the police come into your premises.

WITNESS: I saw the jeep coming and I ran downstairs to meet them. They said good morning Mr Bissoon, and I said good morning. I said look what happened to our home and they said let's go upstairs and see what happened and they went right away upstairs and saw the bottles and stones.

COUNSEL: Did you ask superintendent Hobbs anything.

WITNESS: He said he can't do it now, because his hands are tied ^{and} there is fires all around.

COUNSEL: Did he say anything else to you. Did he suggest to you, to remove to the police station.

WITNESS: No, not at that time.

COUNSEL: Did he later suggested to you to go there? Did you see any police ^{man} ~~man~~ for the balance of the day on the road.

WITNESS: Yes sir, one police man was left in front of my shop patrolling.

COUNSEL: Did the crowd return to your store while the policeman was there patrolling.

WITNESS: No sir.

COUNSEL: ~~No sir.~~

COUNSEL: Now while you were at your building did you see any fires around?

and

WITNESS: Yes sir, there were many fires all on the hills ~~all~~ in Silvertown.

COUNSEL: Now let us leave fires, did you see any beatings of Indians by Negroes.

WITNESS: Later on.

COUNSEL: When was that, what o'clock?

WITNESS: Around 12 to 1 or 2.

COUNSEL: Opposite your place.

WITNESS: Yes sir, while people were on their way getting away from their homes to go to the station, passing my shop, negroes beating the Indians.

COUNSEL: Apart from beating did you see anything else.

WITNESS: I saw they were taking away their jewels and money they had.

COUNSEL: This is of your own knowledge, not what you heard.

WITNESS: No, I am talking about what I saw.

COUNSEL: Did you see any raping.

WITNESS: No sir.

COUNSEL: Did you see anyone murdered.

WITNESS: No sir.

COUNSEL: Did you see anyone setting fire to anybody's house near to you.

WITNESS: Well, I ^{saw w.l.u.} see whilst hiding in my house, men went in to the hotel, which is at the back of me, and started to break up and then I saw fire, starting to blaze.

COUNSEL: That was whose hotel?

WITNESS: Mr Hankin Khan.

COUNSEL: You saw Hankin's hotel and ^{Sear's} Sear's shop at the back of you, go up into flames after these crowds entered in the premises.

WITNESS: Yes.

COUNSEL: Now after you saw ^{Sear's} Sear's house and Hankin's hotel burning did you leave your premises, rather at this point did you still have your wife and children in the upper flat.

WITNESS: No, I have three children, who are attending Mackenzie high school, I sent across a message and brought them across, and then I spoke to the police on the road keeping guard, I asked him what would be our position here today. He said he is advising me to take my wife and children across to Mackenzie.

COUNSEL: And you did so.

WITNESS: I did so because they would have come in for injuries.

COUNSEL: But you were left on the Wismar side?

WITNESS : Yes;

COUNSEL: Now let us move on after seeing Hakim's hotel on fire did you leave your premises and go anywhere.

WITNESS: Not yet.

COUNSEL: When did you leave it.

WITNESS In fact they come over from Hakim and started to break my back door.

COUNSEL : How many people were there.

WITNESS : Three persons were there who I know by names and faces.

COUNSEL : Can you name those persons.

WITNESS : First one was Clifford John, Leslie Cort, and Boogie ^{the} Collect of the Sun-Chapman Launch.

COUNSEL: Now what did these three ^{do} ~~did~~ to your back door.

WITNESS: They try to open the door, the door did not open and they took a rail and started to punch the concrete blocks and make a big hole and then went in the lower flat and opened the door. They then started to loot, a crowd of persons went in and started to loot.

COUNSEL: Did Boogie ^{the} and two other men assisted in the looting?

WITNESS: They are the first set that started to loot.

COUNSEL: After looting what did they do?

WITNESS: The police and the volunteers were standing in front of my house.

COUNSEL: The police and the volunteers ^{were} ~~was~~ standing in front of your building while people were looting at the back of your premises.

WITNESS: Yes sir.

COUNSEL: Did you speak to them.

WITNESS: No I was hiding, because the crowd was very big.

COUNSEL: Where were you hiding.

WITNESS: In ^{the} ~~the~~ Franker's house.

COUNSEL: While this looting was going on, the police on the road did you see the police go anywhere.

WITNESS: No sir, suddenly I saw two policemen running with a revolver, Police Detective Griffith, and Roberts, they fired some shots in the ^{air} ~~air~~, Detective Griffith said "Get out from here leave everything".

COUNSEL: Now, did the crowd remove?

WITNESS: Those who were looting at the back got away, but the crowd was still plenty in front of the building.

COUNSEL: Were they looting in front.

WITNESS: No they were watching on.

COUNSEL: Yes, what happened next.

WITNESS: And then I came out and met the police and they advised me to go to the station, because they cannot be in there all the time to watch me, and I asked them if they can't take me to the station; and I asked them for protection, they said that they can't protect me because they have to save lives.

COUNSEL: Now, at that time, did you see another policeman come up with a rifle and said anything.

WITNESS: Yes sir, the policeman said, they should have shot these people long ago.

COUNSEL: He was speaking to the two detectives, Griffith and Roberts who were there.

WITNESS: Yes sir.

MR. CARTER: Just a slight calrification. Do I undertand these people to be looting ^{the} or the Indians.

WITNESS: The people that were looting.

COUNSEL: Well after this fair policeman, who came in with the riffle and said this to the two detectives. Did the detectives say anything.

WITNESS: Nothing at all.

COUNSEL: Nothing at all?

WITNESS: The police took Mr Defranker and his wife and carried them to the ferry-boat, and they went across to the plant.

COUNSEL: Yes.

WITNESS: And myself, detective Roberts and detective Griffith stood up in my yard, and he said that I must go to the station, or go over to Mackenzie quickly.

COUNSEL: Did you go.

WITNESS: No, I said I would rather go to the station, I said I am not going alone, because I am afraid to walk on the road, because there were big crowds standing on the road.

COUNSEL: Then, did they escorted you?

WITNESS: Yes, and they left me at the station.

COUNSEL: Did anything happen at the station?

WITNESS : Yes sir, we were afraid to stand up there at the station.

COUNSEL: Why?

WITNESS: Because the crowd was so big at the station.

COUNSEL: Are you saying that the negroes surrounded the station.

WITNESS: They were moving and some were coming and some were going and some were passing at the back.

COUNSEL: About how many people.

WITNESS: Around 40 to 50.

COUNSEL: At what part of the station you were standing, at the top, bottom, or where.

WITNESS : At the bottom in the yard.

COUNSEL : When you arrived there, can you say how many East Indians were there?

WITNESS : About 400 East Indians.

COUNSEL: While you were at the station, 400 of you, did you know that an attempt was made even to bomb you all at the station or interfere with you all at the station?

WITNESS: I didn't see any person, but I heard look out, look out, and everybody bawled.

COUNSEL: Stop, there, first you heard a noise, look out, look out, while you were at the station and everybody bawled. Now is it true at that time when they said look out, look out, someone fired a shot.

WITNESS: Yes sir, an officer of the volunteer force who was working at the Singer Company.

COUNSEL: Where was he?

WITNESS: He was at the police compound the station was guarded right away round.

COUNSEL: How many shots he fired? one load. After this officer fired one load did you see in what direction he fired this load.

WITNESS: He fired the load towards the northern side of the ^{Police Station} ~~school station~~.

COUNSEL: Did you see persons or crowd in the northern side of the police station in the direction of the school?

WITNESS: Yes plenty people moving in that direction.

COUNSEL: Did you gather from the crowd ^{there} afterwards, that this shot ^{was} ~~is~~ fired either from the volunteers or the police or for that matter from any source, while you were standing there. Did you gather that an attempt was being made to throw a bomb at the station, while you all were there.

WITNESS: That is the same time they were trying to bomb us at the station.

COUNSEL: You know what happened to that volunteer? who fired that shot.

WITNESS: The volunteer has since left and is working in Georgetown.

COUNSEL: I am not talking about how Bissoon, I am talking about the very day as soon the shot was fired. Did the crowd do the volunteer anything.

WITNESS: I heard the crowd said that he ~~has~~ ^{would have to leave} left the district.

COUNSEL: Now, the chairman of your group, Mr Festus Adams, made a statement in the newspaper ^{where} four days later afterwards he said these burnings, beatings, and rape, have been caused by strangers, I have come to the conclusions that everything was done by strangers. ~~I~~ ^I saw some of the fellows myself on Monday and I have never seen them before in my life.

MR SHEPHERD: I suppose Mr Festus Adams would be called to say in his own words.

COUNSEL: Oh yes, Mr Festus Adams would be called, must be called. Do you agree with Mr Festus Adams's view?

WITNESS: No sir.

COUNSEL: Was it anything done by outsiders?

WITNESS: No sir, they had outsiders, but the majority was from Mackenzie.

COUNSEL: Now, did you observe as anything there while you were going to the station on the 25th some well known criminals in the crowd.

WITNESS: They had few of them I know.

COUNSEL: Were they taking part in the disturbances?

WITNESS: I know two of them who were stoning down my house ^{there}.

COUNSEL: Those two were.

WITNESS: I don't know their names, but I saw them at Wisnar.

COUNSEL: Now, tell me ~~did~~ ^{did} you try to seek shelter, at your neighbour's residence at any stage during the Monday 25th.

WITNESS: When my family left I was alone at home, and after the crowd came back I had to run to my neighbour the ^{De France} Defrankers!

COUNSEL: Were they Portuguese?

WITNESS: His wife is East Indian.

COUNSEL: They ^{The} didn't put you out.

WITNESS: No sir.

COUNSEL: Now, tell me Bissoon, while you were at your home, on the road or at the police station, did you see people with cans moving up and down Wisnar, cans that you are familiar ^{used} to see, gasoline or kerosene in ^{stoves}.

WITNESS: No sir.

COUNSEL: Now did you hear a rumor at Wisnar on the morning of the 25th? Monday. That an East Indian man a big man kicked an African boy.

WITNESS: I heard the story after I was in the boat, while I was coming to Georgetown, I heard the story occurred in a boat, because they were beating the man.

COUNSEL: Were there many people with injuries and actually bleeding at the Derba trade school.

WITNESS: No, the persons injured went to the hospital.

COUNSEL: Well you stayed at the Derba trade school for the night, until next morning. You left for Georgetown by the Barina.

WITNESS: Yes sir.

COUNSEL: And since then you only went back to the place a month ago.

WITNESS: Yes sir.

MR CARTER: Just one question, when you were at the trade school, did the company supply you with refreshments?

WITNESS: Yes sir.

MRS MOOTOO: So at that time when Mr Hakim's house was burning about 8 volunteers were there, did they try to save the building.

WITNESS: No.

PROF. DRAYTON: Just one thing Mr. Bissoon, your insurance on your property you said is insured for how much?

WITNESS: The building carried \$4,000, the stock carried \$8,000.

PROF. DRAYTON: Your estimated loss is \$40,000. Why you didn't ^{you} take out more insurance.

WITNESS: Sir, we didn't expect trouble to happen, we just ^{had} take that to stand by in case anything should happen to us, Because it is hard to keep up.

PROF. DRAYTON: Were you there in 1963?

WITNESS: Yes sir.

PROF. DRAYTON: ~~The~~ didn't trouble your business.

WITNESS: We had a slight trouble because did break some of my windows and the next morning they ^{said} said that they don't know how this happened, and promise that it wouldn't happen again.

MR MACDONALD: Now Mr Bissoon, you at one time said that they were looting at

your back door. Were you at your neighbours residence? And you could have seen the crowd looting at the back and the security forces in front, ^{Would} it have been possible for the men standing in front to see at the back?

WITNESS: No sir.

CHAIRMAN: Now, Mr Bissoon, did you do anything, there were policemen in front of your building.

WITNESS: No sir, the place was so hot that I couldn't come out. There were crowds all around.

CHAIRMAN: But at the time of looting, the policemen were ^{not} there.

WITNESS: Police ~~do~~ ^{were} not be there all the time, and if I had reported when the police had left, ~~they~~ ^{the} crowd would have attacked me.

COUNSEL: Prior to the 25th May do you know of a businessman whose premises had been looted, and he fired a shot injuring ³ the persons.

WITNESS: Yes sir, that is just near to me.

COUNSEL: What is ~~the~~ ^{his} name?

WITNESS: Mr Sewnarine.

COUNSEL: And the looting stopped, there were no deaths, but the looting stopped but there were injuries in the faces of the looters.

WITNESS: Face and back.

COUNSEL: Now Bissoon can you remember in relation to May 25th, the day when this happened how far back this shooting happened?

WITNESS: That is last year during the 80 days strike.

COUNSEL: Was Sewnarine burnt out this time?

WITNESS: He sold out because he cannot stay there.

COUNSEL: As a result of that shooting he had to sell out and vacate to Wisnar.

COUNSEL: At this stage members of the commission I wish to ask for an adjournment.

Adjourned

W. 18th