

**- 11 -****From 1755 to 1756****396. WEST INDIA COMPANY (ZEELAND CHAMBER) TO DIRECTOR-GENERAL, ESSEQUIBO****[6 January 1755]***(Extract)*

Having written thus far, we receive your letter of September 11 of last year, 1754, whereby among other things you confirm what you told us in your letter of the 2nd preceding, sent to us via Berbice, concerning the movements of the Spaniards in coming down the River Orinoco with a great number of men, with the intention (as you inform us, according to the report you have received) of making an invasion of the Colony of Essequibo.

However surprising this information (though in no way beyond probability, considering the various reports received by you) of any expedition and enterprise planned by the Spaniards may have seemed to us, and although we accordingly must hereby fully approve the arrangements determined upon by you, as also all further possible means employed by you and the Court to protect the Colony as much as possible against a sudden surprise and put it so far as necessary in a proper state of defence and resistance: still, for our own part, we cannot deny that we nevertheless think we have reasons to trust that the aforesaid Spaniards did not thereby intend a direct invasion or conquest of the Colony. For, as for us, we cannot conceive how such an enterprise and open act of hostility, not only contrary to the so explicit protestations and assurances which (as you informed us) were made to you even so recently by the Commander, that he would try to do everything in his power to maintain good friendship and neighbourly relations, of which also he gave actual proof in the case of the three runaway slaves from Essequibo, in fulfilment of an agreement which existed between you and his predecessor, but, moreover, at a time when the Republic is in full peace with the Crown of Spain, can take place without any previous announcement or declaration of war, especially when, as we trust, no immediate cause or reason has been given therefore. This is why, in the uncertainty as to what to think of this, and guided by what we could deduce from what you wrote us in your letter of the 2nd September last, we were not far from suspicion that the Spaniards, who for some time now have shown great attention to the matter of their trade, might not dislike to see it hampered, and therefore might try by all possible means to prevent the importation of merchandise from the Colony into their lands, which these last few years has been carried on not without success, as has also the reciprocal exchange of their wares and products to the Colonies of the State; and that, the better to make sure of their own trade, they might try their utmost to possess themselves of those regions which they without doubt will maintain to be situated within their territory, and among which might also possibly be included those mines of which you spoke in your last preceding letter.

We would we were able to give you an exact and precise definition of the real limits of the

river of Essequibo, such as you have several times asked of us; but we greatly doubt whether any precise and accurate definition can anywhere be found, save and except the general limits of the Company's territories stated in the preambles of the respective Charters granted to the West India Company at various times by the States-General, and except the description thereof which is found in the respective Memorials drawn up, printed, and published when the well-known differences arose concerning the exclusive navigation of the inhabitants of Zeeland to those parts, wherein it is defined as follows: "That region lying between those two well-known great rivers, namely, on the one side, that far-stretching and wide-spreading river, the Amazon, and on the other side, the great and mightily-flowing river, the Orinoco, occupying an intermediate space of ten degrees of north latitude from the Equator, together with the islands adjacent thereto." For neither in the Treaty of Munster, (concerning which you gave us your own opinions), nor in any other is there to our knowledge anything to be found about this; the only thing we have discovered up to this time by our search is a definite boundary-line made in the West Indies between New Netherland and New England in the year 1650, but nothing more or further.

For which aforesaid reasons it is therefore our opinion that one ought to proceed with all circumspection in defining the Company's territory, and in disputing about its jurisdiction, in case this may have led to the aforesaid preparations of the Spaniards, and that it would be best in all befitting and amicable ways to guard against all estrangements and hostile acts arising therefrom.

Still, without retracting aught from what we have urged with relation to the aforesaid enterprises of the Spaniards, we have nevertheless thought it our duty in the present case, and in our uncertainty whether it might not have some serious consequences for the Colony (which Heaven forbid), to make certain needed provisions so far as was in our power and as time allowed. We have consequently resolved to send by the ship "De Goude Spoor," now lying ready to sail, some men and a goodly quantity of gunpowder; likewise some additional victuals, such as thought might be most needed – a list of which is here inclosed; and we hope that all these things may prove to have been sent from a prudent and excessive caution rather than because of a well-founded fear of imminent or pressing disaster.

In this uncertainty we every day eagerly look forward to further advices; and furthermore we think we are right in trusting that these circumstances will afford no pretext, in case no mishaps or unexpected disasters shall have befallen the Colony, for placing any obstruction in the way of the arrangements and plans which have been projected and already announced by us for the correction of many abuses.

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**397. WEST INDIA COMPANY (ZEELAND CHAMBER) TO THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL AND COURT OF POLICY, ESSEQUIBO**

**[6 January 1755]**

*(Extract)*

And now, further, as regards the various outliers and outrunners employed in the service of the Company, concerning which we cannot well issue definite instructions, we have decided that it must be left to your discretion to so reduce and diminish their number as the interests and the service of the Company shall prove to permit.

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**398. DIRECTOR-GENERAL, ESSEQUIBO, TO WEST INDIA COMPANY**  
**[13 February 1755]**

*(Extract)*

The opportunity of a ship lying ready to sail from Berbice to Europe makes it my duty to acquaint Your Honours that the fear of some undertaking by the Spaniards against these Colonies is almost over. I have received last week a letter from one of the missionaries, who informed me that it had been the common talk of the whole coast that all the preparations were tending to make an attack on us; but that now he himself having read the Royal Orders, he could assure me that they extended only to the expedition to Rio Negro and the Amazons in order to regulate the delimitation. That, moreover, matters were in a sad state with the [party] sent out from Spain; the Royal Orders contained provision that the Provinces of Cumaná and Caracas must provide the necessary revenue for General Iturriaga. . .

This was confirmed by the unanimous information received from both Orinoco and Barbadoes, so that our vessels are again beginning to sail to Orinoco, one barque of I. Courthial's and a canoe with cattle having already returned thence. . .

Because differences existed concerning the lands between the two Crowns of Spain and Portugal, the Princes together are sending expressly to make a delimitation between the said lands, and the King commanded that Don Joseph Iturriaga, who was formerly factor for the Biscayan Company in La Guyra, should be the head, with three other gentlemen placed under him, taking their turn here in Guayana, whence they, with the necessary number of vessels and people, should ascend the Orinoco as far as the Rio Negro, and there should join some Ministers of the King of Portugal, and thence go up the Marañon or Amazon, and then take their way to Buenos Ayres, where they are to await a ship in order to return to Spain, in order to give to the King an account of their delimitations. Further, the King orders that in the whole circumference both of the lands of Spain and Portugal not one fortress or castle may be erected. This is the purport of the Royal Order which I have seen and read with my own eyes.

The aforesaid Principal Don Joseph Iturriaga has an order from the King that from the Royal Treasury so much money as he deems necessary must be supplied, but he has been answered in Caracas and Cumaná that there was no money in the Treasury, whereof he has sent a despatch to the Court and expects an answer what he must do, but without that can perform nothing.

In Cumaná, and the whole passage to here in Guayana, those gentlemen dispatched by Don Joseph de Iturriaga made delimitations and plans. One of them, Don Antonio de Iturriaga, with the title of Captain de Alba Bordo, died in Suaij last December; he had orders to reconnoitre all mouths and channels of Orinoco, and to sound them, but since he has died (on the 20th of this past month December) two engineers with one or two vessels have gone to reconnoitre and to do that which the deceased should have done. In this expedition about two months will be spent because they must go to the Island of Trinidad, and the food which they must have with them is also not abundant. After their return no further progress will be made until Don Joseph Iturriaga receives a reply from the Court that orders have been sent here for their maintenance, being 300

loads of cassava and 300 *fanegas* of rice, but according to the time that this is demanded the said expedition will not be undertaken the whole of this year. There are yet other orders, but of no importance, consequently they are passed over in silence.

### **399. MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS AT THE COURT OF JUSTICE AT ITS ORDINARY MEETING**

**[7-8 April 1755]**

*(Extract)*

*Fort Zeelandia, April 7-8, 1755*

His Excellency the Director-General having informed the meeting that complaints had been received from the Upper Essequibo about the treatment of Jan Pierre Maillard, through whose fault, or at least with whose permission, one or two Akawois were killed, and that his Excellency had caused the said Maillard to be here today, as also the negroes, Andries and Domingo, belonging to Maximilian and Dudonjon, in order to be interrogated on the matter.

The negro Andries, having been first called and asked about the case, declares that Jan Pierre Maillard, in the Upper Essequibo, having placed the pistol on the breast of an Indian called Awaeniroe, who was indebted to him, said, "You must and you can pay me; there are Akawois; kill them." That thereupon Maillard's people killed two Indians, an Akawois and an Arawak, one being in his boat and the other in the river.

The creole Domingo, having been called and examined, tells the same story as the negro Andries, with this difference, that it has been told to him by a Carib.

Jan Pierre Maillard, having been interrogated about this matter, acknowledged to having placed the pistol on Awaeniroe's breast; also that the Akawois had been killed in his presence, but that he took no part in it, either directly or indirectly.

All this having been considered, also that the Indians must frequently tell falsehoods for the whites who trade in the Upper Essequibo, and commit many extravagances, it has been unanimously resolved, in order to prevent all these disorders, which would be very prejudicial to the Colony, to discontinue this trade in the Upper Essequibo, and to send, by the next meeting, for the Indian Awaeniroe and the murderer Armanary, in order to examine the case as far as practicable, and then to make such arrangements and fix such orders as will be found necessary.

### **400. REPLIES GIVEN BY COLONEL DON EUGENIO ALVARADO TO THE INSTRUCTIONS\* AND ORDERS GIVEN BY REAR ADMIRAL DON JOSÉ DE ITURRIAGA, IN REGARD TO THE SECRET MISSION IN GUAYANA**

**[20 April 1755]**

*(Extracts)*

8. **Instruction** – *This place (i.e., the cattle farm of Divina Pastora) is the best for carrying out the investigations and commission with which you are charged.*

8. **Reply** – In this instruction your Excellency gives me the name of the cattle farm which you consider the best place for making the various investigations; but in view of the fact of its not being central in the Missions, nor of there being any one here able to afford me the confidential information required and vouch for the truth of the same, I was obliged to forego my convalescence after my severe illness and betake myself to other places, visiting all parts, and personally making the necessary investigations. . .

10. **Instruction** – *At distance of 3 leagues from the cattle farm (“hato”) is the village of Copapuy, where mines are said to abound, and the Father Missionary will be able to afford you information concerning them, as he has acquired considerable knowledge about them.*

10. **Reply** – The generic term your Excellency employs in this Article [of the instructions] in regard to the mines of Copapuy I presume refers to the two perfect metals, and not in a general sense, to mines of the eight minerals, namely, metals, semi-metals, residiums, metallines, salts, sulphurs, stones, waters, and earths, for the mere examination of these species would need the resources of alchemy and chemistry and would afford employment for many years.

Taking this for granted, I visited Copapuy, examined the two which they call gold mines, and had a conversation about them with Father San Augustin de Olot, President of that Mission, as your Excellency directs me, whom I found to be a man well advanced in cultured years, and who found a good lode, known to him and guarded for some years, and very desirous of having mining works in his district, but with as much knowledge of mines and their working as he does of the human heart.

His great work has been to proclaim the riches of the country, and then sacramentally keep- ing to himself the brilliant earth, after being washed, as if it were gold dust.

I acknowledge that the position of the places where the brilliant earth is collected on the sur- face is indicative that these may contain gold mines, for they show good signs of those things which alchemists earnestly long for, such as circumvallations of water, very hard rocks like quartz, marble, and little or no shale, etc., and, in my opinion, there is no other evidence. The samples I have of both one and the other are, in my poor opinion, nothing more than particles of saffron-coloured talc, mixed with sand and marl, which shine brightly in the sun and, even should they be gold, I should consider it very much mixed with copper on account of its colour. The particles are so volatile that when separated and pulverized for use in a pounce-box, they fly up in one’s face, precisely as white talc when powdered.

Padre Olot is under the belief that particles of one gold mine, which they call Camarasua are more solid than the others of that of Santa Maria; but, as I have looked at them without any bias, I distinguish no difference whatever.

We have, nevertheless, various passages in the history of America which describe the Prov- ince of Guayana as commonly called “a rich gold country,” and the origin of the modern fable of “El Dorado.”

And I do not doubt that it may possess many and very rich mines, for I know that our Court considered those in the immediate neighbourhood of the town of Guayana as good ones, and that in Caroni and other parts of this province the same micaceous sands are found as in Copapuy.

Although your Excellency only directs me in this Article to investigate what belongs to Co-

papuy, I offer no apology for informing your Excellency of other mines existing in the interior of the province, both because so far no account has been taken of them, as that you may, if you think fit, inform our Ministry about them.

In the destroyed Missions of Cunuri, Tupuquen, Curumo, and that of Miamo, which escaped the relentless fury of the Caribs, and which is at present in charge of Father Alexo de Villazan, Missionary Apostolic, of great energy, gold and silver ores are found at every step. But it must be well understood that I am only stating what they represent to me, for, as your Excellency is aware, nothing deceives one more than the metallic particles found in the earth.

The village of the Mission of Miamo is situated at directly 14 leagues from the cattle farm of Divina Pastora, and trends southwards. It would, indeed, be the best place possible to entertain or make a fool of a miner.

I surveyed this Mission with the greatest care, on account of being one of the principal avenues of the Colony of Essequibo, and in one of its valleys I noticed an indication similar to those most sought in Peru, so I ordered excavations to be made on the surface and then collected a quantity of the white earth the same as gypsum, with abundant particles and scales of silver, which resisted the pressure of the fingers. I gathered some lumps of that stuff to send your Excellency, and, truly, if experts consider it genuine silver ore, we can hope that it may be as abundant as the famous silver mine Salcedo, in Peru. This valley had no name in the country, and on that account I baptized it "Alvarado," my own family name, giving the same to the mine.

The lowlands, or, better said, the sand-banks formed by the River Miamo, from which the Mission takes its name, are as brilliant when pulverized as the particles of the gold mines of Capapui. This is also the case with the sands from the bed of the River Macaruma (which enters the Miamo and is different from the other called Curumo), which are of gold colour, like those of Miamo.

In this there are two quarries or mines of white marl, which takes the place of lime, and are; so white that they are not excelled by white lead. Both are mixed with metallic particles, and one of them to such a degree that it might be taken for a silver mine. It is cut up in pieces of any size required, and if bricks or tiles for buildings were made of it they would be very beautiful.

Hence, it is probable that the ancient inhabitants of the district of Miamo, Macarumu, and other rivers used this method of building, or at least made the walls of their houses of the said marl, and probably roofed them with the aforesaid slabs from the beds of both rivers; for all of them, as I have said, glitter in the sunshine.

I should have abundant grounds for a prolix dissertation, and be a real author therein, were I to show the origin of the fable of "El Dorado." This is not the place to pursue a matter of which the greatest use is limited to an exposure of error, but on a better occasion, if God spares my life, I will investigate this matter, and reconcile the histories of Herrera, Oviedo, and others with what Gumilla and La Condamine have written upon the subject.

So, returning to the chief subject of this article, I consider that in these Missions, which are more in the hands of the Dutch than in those of their proper owner, there exist the chief riches and the fame of the Province of Guayana which has flown throughout Europe.

For two reasons I have made no experiments to be able to satisfy your Excellency better on this head: first, because I have no mercury, antimony, salts, Aqua regia, or any instrument for this work with me; and, secondly, because of the experience I have had, it is my opinion that there is little gain to the public in gold and silver mines, and that the true treasure for the Sover-

eign consists in the active and passive commerce of his subjects, both at home and abroad. This opinion has more force in regard to the Province of Guayana, a province entirely unpeopled of our people, and consequently rendered impossible for commerce, and so exposed on every side to the designs of foreigners, to whom it would be a most desirable acquisition if they could get to exploit its mines, etc.

All sound policy dictates to us that the absolute necessity of our preserving the Indies must be referred to those parts where Spaniards are established at the present day. In the Kingdom of Peru, the continent, and Chile, and likewise in New Spain there is nothing but rich metals, in abundant mines, sufficient to maintain the present luxury and profusion of Europe, while the Spaniards, its masters, derive the minor advantage.

If the Province of Guayana abounds in mines, let its treasures, for my part, remain in the bowels of the earth; and would that the seven planets could restore to us so many millions of Spaniards who have perished in search of wealth, and I would forego their influence on the metals.

*11. Instruction – You will likewise ascertain the internal government, mode of life, and profits of the Mission and of its inhabitants, their progress in the reduction of the heathen, the number of villages actually maintained, their population, years of establishment, method of treating the Indians, and how they employ them.*

*11. Reply – I divide this Article into two Sections, so as to answer it better. The first will embrace the internal government, mode of life, profits of the Mission, and expenditure of its inhabitants, which your Excellency will see in Sheet No. 2. The second will refer to the progress in the reduction of heathen nations composing the villages which have been founded, and those which are maintained, with their population, as shown in Sheet No. 3 from which your Excellency will form a suitable opinion.*

*12. Instruction – At a day's journey off was founded the Mission of Cunuri, which was burned down by the Caribs a few years ago. It took its name from a river of that name which flows into the Essequibo, according to general opinion. You will ascertain what you can, both on this point, and also as to the distance to the said River Essequibo, and if at the present day a road, which many have traversed, and which passed at a short distance from Cunuri, is still open and practicable.*

*12. Reply – The village of Cunuri, which your Excellency mentions in this Article, was burned and destroyed by the Caribs in the year 1751, with various others, as shown in Sheet No. 3, and the river which passes close to it gave its name to the Mission. The common opinion that the River Cunuri flows into the Essequibo is not correct, but the mistake has some foundation, for its waters (as well as those of others) flow into the Yuruari, and this into the Cuyuni; and the whole form one river only, and, under the name of Cuyuni, flow into the Essequibo. From the waters of the Cunuri to where they enter the River Essequibo, through the rivers named, the distance is from twenty-five to thirty days of wearisome navigation, on account of the falls and rapids; and it is necessary that the boats be very small and of little draught, like canoes, made from the bark of a tree, as specially shown in Sheet No. 4. . .*

I presume that by the further charge your Excellency gives me in this Article, as to whether I know if the road by way of Cunuri, which has been traversed by many, be open and practicable,

your Excellency wished to indicate to me the corresponding route by land, and on this supposition, knowing the immense importance it is to His Majesty's service that I should fully inform myself of the pernicious avenues of the Province of Guayana to the Dutch Colony of Essequibo, I have surveyed for myself the banks of the Cunuri, Miamo, and the other rivers which flow into the Yuruari, and with pleasure would I have penetrated as far as the Cuyuni, if political reasons had not prevented me doing so, but seeing that I have thoroughly investigated it, and that the road, taken for granted in your Excellency's question, really exists and is practicable (according to the American fashion) you will see in the said Sheet No. 4 the various routes between the Province and Essequibo whether by land, by fresh water, or by salt water.

13. *Instruction* – You will also enquire about the road made by the Caribs from the Orinoco to certain islands of the River Caroni, distant from Capapui one day's journey westwards; and whether they use it frequently at the present day.

13. *Reply* – I likewise assume that in this Article you Excellency refers to the land journey made by the Caribs from the Orinoco to their refuge in the islands of the River Caroni which you mention and which lie to westward of the Mission of Capapui. And on this understanding, I have ascertained that they navigate the Orinoco up to the mouth of the Caroni, enter it and pass its fall by night, and continue their course up the stream until they reach the islands mentioned by your Excellency, where, if we may so express it, they make a station for ingress into the interior.

They make their entrances in two ways, one by leaping directly ashore in the great savannahs and woods which run from the bank of the Caroni up to the Mission of Capapui, and by which they also go to Cunuri, Tupuquen, and other villages which were destroyed in 1751, and even to Miamo, until they reach the woods of the southern slope which are inhabited by Caribs and other savage tribes, where they capture their *poitos* or slaves, whom they carry off to sell to the Dutch. By the other way, without disembarking, they follow the course of the Caroni and enter an arm of this river which runs to the south-east and ends near the Yuruario, which comes from the south, like the Caroni. They drag over their canoes and launch them in that river, and as the Yuruario receives various rivers, and among others the Miamo and Cunuri, they communicate throughout with ease, owing to their skill and practice in navigation, and when they think fit they enter through the said stream into the Cuyuni, and thus, if they choose, into the River Essequibo.

The first mode of ingress is not so general among them because they are usually traitors, and, although they come with the semblance of peace, they are afraid of the Missions, and dread being discovered, especially by the Pariagota tribe, their enemies. So they go more securely by the second, and it is more convenient for them, as they have less land to traverse either to reach the woods or to return to the stream they navigated and carry off their captives in safety.

This statement is general as regards the Caribs of the Orinoco, and in respect to the limits stated by your Excellency in this Article 13. But it has extensions which are necessary for the useful understanding of the avenues of the Province of Guayana, for these not only favour the ingress of Indians, but also that of foreigners.

Assuming then that the savage Carib tribe is spread along the tributaries of the Orinoco, equally towards the east and towards the west, and likewise in the woods of the southern slope which form the defence of Essequibo, it is evident that they will be continually going to and fro through all parts, attacking the other tribes who inhabit both banks of the Orinoco, and also in the interior, the Missions of the Capuchin Fathers and of the Observants, in order to capture their

*poitos* and destroy by fire and sword those who are already reduced. Hence it is evident that the two entrances mentioned are not only used by the Caribs of the western part of the islands of Caroni, but also by those from the east, with this difference, that those from the east come out of the Canons of Acquire, Amacura, Barima, and Garambo, navigate the Orinoco up stream and enter the Caroni, while those from the west do the same thing down stream, and afterwards both proceed alike as already said.

Those of the east have two shorter routes, apparently for incursions into the Missions, one by water and the other by land. The former is the one referred to in Sheet No. 4, and was made last year (1750) by the Dutchman Salomon Percico in order to return to Essequibo; for, as the River Imataca, which comes from the southern hills, falls into the Orinoco at 30 leagues from the Castle of Guayana, near the Creek of Aquire, and not far from those of Amacura, Barima, Garambo, etc., which are close to great Boca de Navios, and which are entirely peopled by Caribs, they come up against the stream of the Imataca, which offers a road for ingress into the Missions of Palmar, Miamo, and the rest, and if they proceed up to sources of the said river, they came to the southern hills, which are peopled by Caribs and other savages. This is the course of the road from Essequibo, made in 1742 by the French smuggler named Ignace, and by which in 1749 the Dutch fugitive Nicolas Colart made his escape. Both these circumstances are reported in the said Sheet No. 4.

The second is entirely by land, for since the sources of Aquire and the other canons already mentioned extend so far into the interior, they reach the plains of the Missions of Miamo, Tupuquen, Cunuri, etc., in which they used to trade, as they still do trade in others, with hatchets, cutlasses, guns (which they obtain from the Dutch), and hammocks, which they exchange for cassava.

14. **Instruction** – *You are to enter into parleys for pacification with a renowned Carib Chief living in these islands at the head of a considerable force, and to offer him good terms, and likewise with the head Chief of the sources of the Creek Aquire, where a large number of Caribs are living, and with other Chiefs of the same nation occupying the sources of the River Caroni. You are to listen to their proposals, and, even if you do not succeed in bringing them to reasonable terms, you are not to dismiss them without the hope of further parleys in the future.*

14. **Reply** – In order to reply better to this Article, it is necessary first of all to remove some unintentional misconceptions which your Excellency is under for want of accurate information. The first is, that there is not merely one celebrated Chief of the Islands of Caroni, but several; the second is, that those of the sources of the Creek Aquire are many, and of equal reputation and strength – their names are given at the end of Sheet No. 4; and the third is, that the sources of the River Caroni have not hitherto been ascertained.

With respect to the first, there came into my presence, and, through an interpreter, I spoke with, the Chief Patacon (who formerly lived in the Islands of Caroni, and is now settled with the greater part of his people in the Mission of Morucuri, founded by Father Joseph de Guardia, and I took care to treat him well so as to make more sure of him; and as he was already reduced to civilized life, it was not necessary to treat of pacification; but through him I offered good treatment to his cousin, the Chief Thumucu, and to the Chief Oraparene, who styles himself King of the Parava.

Here it is necessary to make a digression in order to avoid any mistake when speaking of the

sources of the River Caroni, according to the general opinion of the Caribs, and to throw some light on what is understood by Oraparene, and whence the title of "Chief" is derived.

Parava, in the Carib language, means sea, and the place of which Oraparene calls himself King is more to the west of the Islands of Caroni, on a great canon, which is higher up than the Island of Patacon, through which this river discharges itself, receiving various other tributaries, which come both from the south and from the west before it falls into the Orinoco; for this reason, at the concourse of so many streams, they give it the name of sea.

Oraparene is a man of advanced intelligence, and openly replied that he did not want to give up his Kingship and go into a state of misery in the Mission, where he could not have authority, "guarichas" (i.e., wives), freedom to capture "*poitos*," or to trade with his friends the Dutch, who provide him with cotton goods, axes, cutlasses, dye-woods, and whatever he requires. To these reasons he added many others in favour of uncivilized life, and so he remains obstinately attached to that sort of existence. With them, "Chiefs" are nothing more than a union of persons of both sexes, composed of sons, brothers, first cousins, and nephews, who form an association and occupy a certain district with their ranches, and he is considered the most powerful among them who can bring together the greatest number of people. They have no respect or subordination whatever to the Headman, and have no other laws than those of their own fancy. The Parives are more idle than the other Indians, and as they found their courage upon being continually in motion and attacking other tribes, they are very roving, and work their farms with the "*poitos*" they capture, from among whom they select the most robust men and the best-looking women, and sell the rest to the Dutch for implements for their farms and guns for their defences.

Returning to Patacon – who, like all of them is a, very great liar – when he saw the presents made to him and to all his followers, he offered to bring to me Thumucu and other Chiefs, and to gather a number of Indians forthwith for settlement in the Mission of Aguacagua. He fixed a month for this service, but he deceived me, for he did nothing, and under futile pretexts excused himself from fulfilling his undertaking. Thumucu, his cousin, who is just such another, has deceived Father Joseph de Guardia, a true labourer for the Lord on the eastern banks of the Caroni, with hopes of coming into the settlement, but has raised constant difficulties as to what he wants, and I have not even seen him, for up to this time when I am replying to your Excellency he has not appeared.

With respect to the second, it is morally impossible to enter into negotiations of peace with the innumerable Chiefs of the sources of Aquire, as you will see from the list of them in the said Sheet No. 4, seeing that these sources are in the woods of the southern slope that protect the Colony of Essequibo.

Nevertheless, I have take measures on behalf of the Mission of Miamo, and caused some Caribs from the settlements to mingle with them, in order to see if they can bring any of them to me, so that I may talk to them of pacification; and if I succeed I will not dismiss them without hopes of future parleys, as your Excellency directs.

With regard to the third and concluding section of this Article, it is the common opinion of the Western Caribs that the sources of the River Caroni are in the lake of the Parava, which they call the sea, and which they reckon to be more than 30 leagues in extent, and inhabited by countless savage tribes on the southern slope.

Others in the same direction place these sources nearer, but too far off to be ascertained.

Both origins are doubtful, but I consider the former to be the more, probable. But from either

one or the other it would be very difficult to bring the various Chiefs of that district to negotiations for peace, and still more to reach any of them, for an armed expedition could not be made for that purpose only, and therefore I have suspended the matter.

I have very recent information, well worth considering, upon this matter, assuring me that the Caroni is a small river, and that very near its sources a considerable one, called the Carap, falls into it; the latter rises in the woods of the southern slope, and this stream has made the Caroni famous for its current.

I have had corroboration of this account from various Indians who have recently come from the woods. The first was given to me by some Guaicas Barinagotos, through their missionary on the Yuruario, Father Thomas de San Pedro, and the second by some Caribs, through their missionary in Aguacagua, on the eastern banks of the Caroni, Father Narciso de Bisbal, both of them reliable persons according to report, but I must see what result I shall obtain from further investigations.

(Signed) DON EUGENIO DE ALVARADO

Province of Guayana  
Mission of the *Hato* [a cattle farm] of La Divina Pastora  
April 20, 1755

(*Archivo General de Simancas*)

[*Editor's note*: \* The instructions are shown in Document 387 in *From 1751 to 1754*]

**401. REPORT OF DON EUGENIO ALVARADO, SECOND IN COMMAND OF THE COMMISSION OF LIMITS, ON THE VARIOUS COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN THE PROVINCE OF GUIANA AND THE DUTCH COLONY OF ESSEQUIBO**

[20 April 1755]

*Communications by Sea alone.*

From the Province of Guiana to the Dutch Colony of Essequibo there are two ways of journeying by sea. In both the starting point is the Great Ships' Mouth of the River Orinoco. The first is accomplished by bearing to windward until the necessary point is reached for entering the mouth of the Essequibo, and the second by descending the coast.

The first is that commonly used by the *bilanders* and light craft entering the Orinoco for contraband trade, the length of the voyage depending on favourable or unfavourable winds.

The second is dangerous, not only on account of the violent swell of the tides, but also on account of the many sunken reefs and the numerous headlands, which have to be doubled by force of rowing. These difficulties are surmounted by profiting by the easy navigation afforded by the creeks of the Orinoco, which run inland. Down these the coasting-vessels run, as will be explained in the following chapter:

*By River, Creeks, and Seas*

The most convenient navigation is to descend the Orinoco to its Great Ships' Mouth, then avoiding the coast to enter the Creek of Barima, facing the Island of Cangrejos, cross the Creek of Garambo, ascend that of Baune [*sic*], and so on by others forming a species of zigzag until the Creek of Moruca is reached. Here the Dutch have a castle which they call the Post.

All these creeks communicate with the sea, in a space of 38 leagues of coast. The general opinion is that they are waters of the Orinoco, forced inland by the impetus of the tides.

The aforesaid Creek of Moruca is at a distance of 12 leagues from the mouth of the River Essequibo. From the great mouth of the Orinoco to that of the Essequibo 50 leagues of coast are counted. Thus, by the aforesaid creeks, are avoided (it is understood) the 38 leagues which are dangerous on account of the violent swell of the sea, which agitates the waters of the Orinoco, greatly disturbing the tides and their currents.

Eight months can be counted in favour of this navigation during the time when the Orinoco is at its full height or when it commences to rise or fall. The journey can then be accomplished, from Guiana to the Colony of Essequibo, in about eight or ten days. During the four remaining months of the year, which is the time of the height of the summer, the voyage takes from twelve to fifteen days, not on account of insufficiency of water for the boats, but on account of contrary winds.

*By Land and Rivers*

The journey to Essequibo can be made from any of the villages of the Missions which the Catalonian Capuchin Fathers hold in this province, whether north and south, or east and west, the difference in the length of the journey depending on the situation of the village started from.

From the Mission of the Hato de la Divina Pastora to the forests is two or three days' journey through savannahs; to pass through these forests in order to reach the banks of the River Cuyuni, is a matter of eight to ten days; in summer the aforesaid river can be crossed on foot, the water not reaching above the knee, or by jumping from stone to stone. In winter it is crossed in canoes made of the bark of trees, or in pirogues. Once on the further shore of the River Cuyuni the route is continued to a country house situated on a neck of land (as explained in the next chapter), whence it is easy to re-embark and continue the journey down the River Essequibo.

The aforesaid country house (which is on an estate) is situated on a point of land shaped like a serpent's tongue which is formed by the Rivers Cuyuni and Massaruny, running in parallel lines, which gradually contract, until both rivers lose themselves in the Essequibo. Both these rivers come from the south, as also the Essequibo, but the three take their rise at a great distance from one another.

The voyagers who have made the journey so far, for two days through the savannahs and eight days through the forest, have to pass to the opposite shore of the Cuyuni by means of canoes; then they are obliged to re-embark to reach a country house situated on the bank of the Essequibo itself at a distance of 8 leagues from the Fort of Zeelandia, on account of the forest on the northern bank being very rugged and dangerous from the numerous tribes of Indian savages to be met with there, and there being no means of getting provisions.

This route, which by land and water occupies a space of eleven days, is open to all the tribes

of wild Indians who inhabit the forests of the southern bank which serve as a defence to the Colony of Essequibo, especially to the Caribs, under whose protection the Dutch penetrate the forests constantly to trade for the slaves or *poitos*, fighting the other tribes of all the forest from east to west, for which reason the passes are not safe to all, but only to those who have a good understanding with the Dutch and the Caribs, as the following examples will show.

In the year 1742 this route was regularly opened by a Frenchman named Ignacio, a famous smuggler, in company with an apostate Augustinian monk; and along it they conveyed two hundred mules, which they brought from the Provinces of Barinas, Caracas, and Casanar. With these they passed the Orinoco by Angostura, and then through the Caroni, and having reached this part of the continent, they brought them to Essequibo, and shipped them to Barbadoes and Martinique.

In the year 1747 a Dutchman named Salomon Percico, trading in Orinoco, and pursued by a pirate, landed near the Castle of San Francisco of Guayana, and continued his journey through the Missions as though they were the States-General, and returned to his house in Essequibo by the same route which Ignacio had opened, saving the money which he had taken with him on disembarking.

The following year, 1749, a Dutchman, Nicholas Colart, came from Essequibo to Guayana flying from justice on account of a murder he had committed on his estates. He arrived in ten days at the ruined Mission of Cunuri, having come with some Indians with loads [*sic*].

In the year 1750 the aforementioned Dutchman, Salomon Percico, came the same route, though he did not return to his house overland, but embarked on the River Imataca, which flows into the sea 30 leagues below Guayana, as I have said in the answer to the 13th Article of the Instruction.

By the Imataca he entered the Orinoco and followed the creeks already mentioned, until he reached Essequibo, where he now lives, and is one of the persons of note in that Colony, in continual intercourse with the Commander and the Accountant of the town of Guayana, as also with the Fathers and other persons of note in the Province.

Although these examples suffice to show the practicability of the overland route which is open to Essequibo, yet, to show to what extent it has been practicable in these last years, I will add that in the years 1750 and 1753 a Zambo woman of masculine courage came by this route from Essequibo, and returned the same way; she came to the Islands of Caroni to trade with the Caribs, bringing stuffs and other goods, some carried by Indians, and others by beasts of burden, and returned to her house with the *poitos* or slaves which she had purchased from the Caribs. This trade is most useful in Essequibo, as the slaves cultivate the lands, and are therefore as valuable as negroes, at the same time costing infinitely less.

#### *By Rivers Only*

In the answer given to the 12th Article of the Instruction were described the different villages in the vicinity of the rivers which communicate, by means of the Yuruary, with the Essequibo, and in the answer to Article 13 it was said that the River Yuruary has many tributaries. Anybody wishing to go to Essequibo by rivers only could do so in two ways: one by embarking on the rivers of Miamo, Cunuri, and others which flow into the Yuruary, navigating the Caroni, until one enters the stream which it discharges, which ends near the Yuruary; only in this case it

is necessary to drag the canoes over the intervening isthmus.

Others accomplish the journey by navigating the Yuruary, by which they enter the Cuyuni, which empties itself into the Essequibo.

This journey is more lengthy for some than for others, because those who start from the Missions of Cunuri and Miamo, as also the new village of Yuruary, arrive at a point nearer to the river of the same name, and those who journey by the Caroni and its stream take longer, the way being less direct.

The first take twenty days and the second as much as thirty, for which reason the route is not used by our countrymen, excepting in extreme cases, but it is of great use to the Indian Caribs, Aruacas, and other savage tribes, able to live with little sustenance on the rivers and in the forests, to get *poitos*, or slaves, which they sell to the Dutch.

It is also dangerous on account of the rapids and falls with which the rivers abound, especially in summer, and can only be navigated by canoes holding from eight to ten men.

This letter shows the communications between Guayana and the Dutch Colony of Essequibo and as the navigable rivers and streams, used for contraband commerce, are most numerous, it would have been of great use to draw up a map of the country, that my answers to the Instructions might be the better understood, and that our Court might with greater facility get an idea of this portion of America, which is not shown in the maps which have been published up to the present.

I have made a rough sketch of the principal communications, drawn from what I have seen, and compared with what I have heard from the Indians who have gone to people this labyrinth of waters, and had I a cartographer in any company I should with his help have made a complete map, and thus I am disappointed in being unable to produce a work which would be original.

Names of several of the Chiefs who inhabit the sources of the stream of Aquire: Avaruary, Ararica, Arincare, Sayricary, Juppo, Aumavary, Oraenua, Maravare, Cayupane.

(Signed) DON EUGENIO DE ALVARADO

Province of Guayana  
Mission of Hato de la Divina Pastora,  
April 20, 1755.

#### 402. FURTHER REPORT BY DON EUGENIO ALVARADO ON THE COURSE OF THE RIVER ESSEQUIBO AND ITS TRIBUTARIES

[30 April 1755]

The River Essequibo comes from the south, and empties itself into the sea due north by three mouths, formed by several large islands which separate its waters. All three are navigable for vessels of 500 to 1,000 *arrobas*. Ships coming from Europe enter by the principal mouth, called the Great Mouth, without any difficulty. The other mouths would be equally navigable for larger ships if a pilot could be found familiar with their narrow channels.

The river is populated on either side to the distance of 30 leagues. It is very easy to sail up it, and it has been explored to within the neighbourhood of the great Lake Barima, a voyage occu-

pying forty-five days, but its source has not been discovered. Divers rivers flow into it, as also one branch of the Rio Negro, which forms the aforesaid lake, and communicates with the Amazon. At a distance of 8 leagues from the Fort of Zeelandia it is joined by the Rivers Cuyuni and Mazaruni, both coming, like the Essequibo, from the south, and is navigable for light craft for 50 leagues inland.

#### *Fortresses*

The Fort of Zeelandia is built to leeward on the last island formed by the Great Mouth of the River Essequibo. Its fortifications consist of a low rampart in the form of a hexagon, having a parapet of brickwork, the thickness of which is about  $1\frac{1}{4}$  yards. Its artillery delivers a horizontal fire, and consists of thirty-five cannon of the calibre of 4-pounders. The diameter of the fortress, taken from the parapet, is 40 Spanish yards. In the centre is raised a square of brickwork 12 yards in height and 24 yards in diameter.

This species of platform contains a two-storeyed dwelling, the walls of which are of the same thickness as the parapet; the terraces running round the circumference of the building are furnished with twenty swivel-guns. A level battery of twenty-four brass guns, the calibre of which ranges from 18 to 24, is raised at a, short distance from the fort, and is protected from the impetus of the river and tides by a strong palisade, needing continual repairs.

#### *Garrison*

The full garrison of this fortress is 100 well-trained soldiers, 60 of whom are paid by the States-General, and the other 40 by the mercantile community of the Colony.

A sergeant with a detachment of twenty men is provided by the garrison for the Demerara River, as also the overseers of the plantations of the Company which the States-General have in this Colony.

Allowing for the detachments supplied from the garrison, the want of the full complement, and the sick, of which there are always a certain number, only fifty men can be counted on.

The merchants and inhabitants of the aforesaid Colony volunteer their services in times of hostility or of insurrection among the negroes. For these emergencies the Company has 150 negroes maintained by the direction of the States-General, five men being told off to man each gun. During times of quiet these men are kept working continually in fatigue parties on the fortifications and their surroundings to repair the damages caused by the river and tides.

#### *The Colony and its Commerce.*

In the districts of this Colony there are no towns or villages. All the merchants and other inhabitants have houses on their estates in the country, which they call plantations, situated to about the distance of 30 leagues on both banks of the Essequibo.

In the neighbourhood of the island which holds the Fort of Zeelandia there are perhaps ten or twelve houses, including warehouses and inns. In these houses reside the officer of the Royal Exchequer, called the Secretary, the officers of the garrison, and the surgeon. The Governor lives in the fort.

The Dutch have no fixed number of ships for the commerce of this capital. They send ships according to the quantity of produce to be exported. Some years three ships are required, other years one will suffice.

As a rule, it is for account of the Company with consignments and remittances for private merchants, and if these merchants ship merchandise through their own agents they pay duty to the Company corresponding to the freights, unless, as sometimes happens, a wealthy inhabitant charters a ship and trades on his own account.

The Company has in this Colony three of the most fertile estates. From these they obtain large quantities of sugar and rum. The sugar is exported to Europe, the rum, of which large quantities are made, is reserved to supply the Spanish foreign contraband trade of the Islands of Barbados and San Eustacio, different towns on the coasts of the continent, the Windward Islands under the dominion of Spain, and the Province of Guayana.

These articles are the most important in the commerce of the Colony; for although it produces a certain quantity of coffee and cocoa, part is consumed by the inhabitants and part in retail trade.

The three estates are managed at the cost of the General Administration, and are kept up and worked by the Company for the States, to whom belong over 400 negroes employed on the lands.

These estates are under the superintendence of the officer of the Royal Exchequer, who, with the title of Secretary, is the second in command in the Colony.

The whole Colony is governed by the Governor and the Secretary; for although there are a certain number of counsellors, they are looked upon as deputies of commerce, and only meet to discuss matters of common interest.

#### *The River Themeraria or Demerara*

This river flows into the sea at a little more than 3 leagues to windward of the mouth of the Essequibo; it is of great depth, and so navigable [*sic*] that up to the present it has not been possible to discover its source. It is populated for more than 50 leagues on both banks, in the same manner as the Essequibo.

The population is English, under the dominion of the Dutch. The inhabitants being poor, and their estates small, commerce is inconsiderable.

#### *Fortress and Garrison*

The States-General have in the mouth of the river a small fort of six to eight cannon of the calibre of four; the garrison consists of a sergeant and a detachment of twenty men from Essequibo.

This fort, as also all the jurisdiction of Demerara, is in the hands of a Governor, whom the Prince of Orange has made subordinate to the Governor of Essequibo.

The Post is at present held by the son of M. Graveson, the Governor of Essequibo.

The regular settlement of Rio de Demerara began ten years ago, and although it was formerly inhabited by several English families, as these were fugitives from British possessions, the Dutch had no difficulty in subjecting them to their authority.

*Commerce of Demerara*

The principal produce of this Colony is sugar and rum. The sugar forms a third part of the cargo of the Company's ships bound to Europe, which start from the Essequibo with only two-thirds of their cargo, and stop here to take the rest on board.

The inhabitants of Demerara, as also those of the Colonies of Berbice, Surinam, and others trade with the dominions of the Catholic King by means of long boats and small schooners, laden with rum.

With these they enter the said dominions, and exchange their cargo for mules, cocoa, and silver, which they carry to their settlements, and then ship to Europe.

As a rule, the Dutch Colonies have a kind of alliance with the many savage tribes of Indians living in the forests, which run from north to south, and separate the Province of Guayana from the Dutch settlements. They hold with these Indians a commerce of barter and exchange, giving hatchets, knives, choppers, gaudy ornaments, and glass beads in exchange for the *poitos* or slaves, which these tribes of savages make between themselves.

This trade is of great utility to the Dutch, as the said slaves cultivate their lands, and fetch as high a price as negroes.

These particulars I have had verified by different eye-witnesses, and find them all agreed.

(Signed) EUGENIO DE ALVARADO  
Province of Guayana,  
Mission of Hato de la Divina Pastora,  
April 30, 1755.

**403. A SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT BY EUGENIO DE ALVARADO**

**[30 April 1755]**

*(Extracts)*

*La Divina Pastora, April 30, 1755.*

The Dutch have explored the River Essequibo in a distance of forty-five days' journey from its mouth, without discovering its sources, reaching as far as the immediate neighbourhood of the Great "Laguna" Parime, and surveying various rivers which flow into it, as also an affluent of the Rio Negro, which communicates with the Amazons, flowing g from the said "Laguna".

This information I have succeeded in verifying from the accounts of various persons who have visited these places, and I find they are correct.

**404. DIRECTOR-GENERAL, ESSEQUIBO, TO WEST INDIA COMPANY**

**[31 May 1755]**

*(Extract)*

As I now write this I have staying at my house the chiefs of the Panacay tribe up in the Cuyuni. I must absolutely keep them friendly, for many weighty reasons. . .

The fear of an invasion by the Spaniards is, as I have already had the honour to advise your Honours, mostly passed away, and there is now a peaceful lull on that account.

Reasons to the very slightest extent are not afforded to the Spaniards to enable them to show the least appearance of discontentment; of that I have always taken the most scrupulous care, and have done everything that was in my power to maintain good friendship and neighbourliness; but then, on the other hand, I have always been very attentive to permit no encroachment on your Honours' territory or jurisdiction, because in such cases, if the least forbearance be shown, it can sometimes result in very evil and irreparable consequences.

Honourable Sirs, it is only too true that the intention has existed of attacking and surprising us, and I have still a perfect belief therein; but the disgrace that has befallen the Spanish Minister, the Marquis de Ensenada, has entirely turned the tables here in America. Mr. Gidney Clarke has given me the first information thereof, advising me to do my best to make it public in Orinoco, following which wholesome advice I immediately sent a letter, per express, to the General commanding there, under pretence of imparting this important news as a friend and good neighbour; and I inclosed therewith, for his greater assurance, the English newspaper. I have obtained a most polite reply, with an expression of great thankfulness, and am informed for certain that a ship was immediately dispatched to Spain with the object of fetching further orders.

Since that time they have continued diligently to recruit, but everywhere experiencing want, the majority of their people have dispersed. The Commanding Officer and head engineer, who stood ready to set out so as to come here (under pretence of buying necessaries), are dead, and most of the rest are very ill.

All this notwithstanding, they will try to creep in softly, and, as far as possible, to approach and surround us; and it is certain, that they have now taken complete possession of the Creek Iruway, which flows into the Cuyuni, which indisputably is Your Honours' territory. The Post located by order of the Council above in Cuyuni is situated not more than ten or twelve hours from the Spanish dwellings.

The Chiefs of the Panacays (a mighty nation which has never before been here) have expressly come down to offer their help against the Spaniards if required, and they are going to settle down with their dwellings round the Post.

I am sure and certain that they have their eye upon some rich mines thereabouts, although this as yet is kept very secret. I am of opinion that it is my unavoidable duty, so long as Your Honours may be pleased to intrust this Colony to my care, to watch over and indefatigably look after the interests of the same, and that under the Lord's blessing I shall do, and in such a manner that I may be always prepared and ready to answer for my conduct before omniscient God and before man. Your Honours are far from the actual spot, impossible for Your Honours to be able to know as minutely as was necessary the ins and outs of things.

How I have exerted myself to perform every duty, and to be of assistance as far as possible to the colonists, is abundantly known to Your Honours; but the place swarms with enemies who try in all possible ways to disgust and make me downhearted; they even try to mislead Your Hon-

ours, and to give evil impressions with regard to myself. Of this I am only too well aware.

(Signed) L. STORM VAN 'S GRAVESANDE

P.S. – As this is being prepared I receive information that four ecclesiastics have departed to Spain simply in order to inform the King of the richness of the mines situated above between Cuyuni and Massaruni, where a great inland sea has been discovered.

**405. DIRECTOR-GENERAL, ESSEQUIBO, TO WEST INDIA COMPANY**  
**[27 August 1755]**

*(Extract)*

The nation of the Acuways, which is very strong in the interior, and some of whose villages both in Essequibo and in Massaruni and Demerary are situated next to our plantations, commenced by attacking the dwellings of some free creole belonging to the plantation Oosterbeek, and massacring those they found there. Thereupon they spread themselves and caused terror everywhere. Most of the planters living in Massaruni retired to an island with their slaves and their most valuable goods, and none of them dared to stay at night at the plantations. A few days after that the aforesaid Acuways attacked the plantation of a certain Pieter Marchal (who according to general report is the chief cause of this revolt) at half-past five in the morning, killing two of his people and wounding five, most of whom have since died. . .

Many of the colonists, and amongst them several Councillors, have requested me to send out an invitation to the Carib Indians to take the field against the Acuways, but as there are many difficulties connected with this, I have not yet decided to do so, and am of opinion that such measures should not be taken until absolutely necessary. Because, if the Caribs come (which they will certainly do at the first invitation), they will come several hundred strong and begin by asking for bread and other provisions, of which we have none. . .

We must also consider whether we can take the responsibility before Almighty God of causing so much bloodshed as would certainly be occasioned here, the more so since I presume and really believe that actual cause has been given to the Acuways, in which belief I am confirmed by the fact that up to the present no plantation has been attacked except those whose owners, according to common report, are accused of having grossly ill-treated that nation, and who were the cause of several Acuways being killed by the Caribs. . .

What gives me further cause for suspicion is the fact that although I have already sent several orders for some of the Aruwaks, neighbours of the Acuways, connected with the latter and well acquainted with all their affairs, to come to me in order that I may examine them and send them to the Chiefs of the Acuways to try and establish peace, these Indians have immediately vanished, and are nowhere to be found, but a few days before they had been seen in their houses and spoken to. At the bottom of this are no doubt the people who are afraid that those Indians will bring to light too many hidden acts of injustice, it having been foretold me that such would occur. I have sent orders to Demerary, to the Posts, and everywhere to bring me some Acuways here either by persuasive or forcible measures, and I have hopes that when I get some to speak to I shall

be able to make peace with them. But if I am unable to succeed in so doing, and if, as I hear, they assemble in larger numbers and persist in their hostilities I shall be compelled to choose the lesser of two evils and set the Carib nation at work, which I cordially hope will not be necessary, and which step I shall only take in the last extremity.

(Signed) L. STORM VAN 'S GRAVESANDE

P.S. – Your Lordships' canoe has just arrived from Orinoco with ten mules. The people on board report to me that the place swarms with soldiers and boats.

**406. DIRECTOR-GENERAL, ESSEQUIBO, TO WEST INDIA COMPANY**  
**[9 September 1755]**

*(Extract)*

After the despatch of my last, the Postholder of Maroco has come, and has brought me a letter from a missionary Father written to him from Orinoco, wherein he has requested him to deliver up and send to him some Indians of the Chiama nation, by us called Shiamacotte, and who have already (over ten years) been dwelling under the Post, adding that, in case of reluctance, he would come with sufficient force to fetch them, and take them away in chains. The letter has appeared to me a very surprising one. I have given the Postholder a written draft how the letter is to be answered, copy whereof herewith. I have already caused a quantity of powder to be sold, and shall continue, as far as possible, to follow Your Honours' commands therein; but, Honourable Sirs, I know not whether such action is very prudent in the present state of affairs, when the flames of war begin to approach us so closely.

\*

***Inclosure: Postholder in Wacquepo and Maroco to the Missionary Father in Orinoco.***  
**[Undated]**

Reverend Father,

Your letter of the 20th July has been handed to me by the Indians, and I learn from the same your request to have some Indian Chiamas living in these parts sent to you, to which I beg to reply –

That the aforesaid Indians have been living here already some years, and being free men I cannot compel them to depart from here, still less can I use any force with them, such being directly contrary to my instructions, in which I am expressly ordered to protect the free Indians as much as lies in my power, to be of service to them, and to ward off from them all violence and injustice.

Should they, however, be desirous of departing of their own free will, I should not keep them back, but let them go as freely as they came. Concerning what you write, that if they will not come of their own free will you would come and fetch them with violent measures, I do not think that you meant this seriously, but that you only said so to frighten the Indians.

Because I cannot believe that you would undertake to violate in such a manner the jurisdiction of their High Mightinesses, my Sovereigns, the allies of His Catholic Majesty, and take a step of such immense consequences.

My instructions are also to take great care that nothing whatever is done either by me or by the Indians living under me that would give the least cause of displeasure to our neighbours; but, on the contrary, to do everything that is possible to keep up friendly relations, which I am always ready to do. My instructions, however, further provide that in case of any violence I must return violence with violence.

Many of the Indians of the Arwai nation who have slaves for their wives on the plantations in Essequibo, and children by them, frequently desert them and run away to Orinoco. Such have never been claimed, and we are quite certain that such claim would be refused. How then can we be asked to give up free Indians, although this is a matter which does not concern me, and if anything relating to it be asked I must humbly refer to our Governor; I am only a servant, and can do nothing without his Excellency's orders.

I thank you very much for the bottle of balsam sent to me, and whenever I am in a position to do you a favour or service shall always prove myself ready to do so.

A proof of my respect for you is the return of the Indian who brings you this, because if I had done my duty exactly I should have taken him prisoner, since he is accused of being an accomplice in the murder of three Roman Catholic Christians that was committed up in Essequibo, but considering him as an envoy from you I have let him return. . .

#### **407. MINUTES OF THE COURT OF JUSTICE, ESSEQUIBO [6-7 October 1755]**

*(Extract)*

*Rio Essequibo, October 6-7, 1755.*

The respective burgher officers having by Petition, submitted a certain project, according to which they were of opinion that, by the removal elsewhere of the Company's trading-place in Moroco, the deserters from this Colony would be prevented from escaping so easily from this river to the Orinoco, the same was carefully examined; and seeing that the cost would have to be borne by the Colony, it was resolved to deliberate in the first place with the aforesaid burgher officers upon what footing they considered that the slaves required for that purpose could be furnished by the Colony, the expenses of the Postholders being in the meantime borne, and all matters for the dwellings contributed in the most reasonable and expedient manner, by the Company.

#### **408. DIRECTOR-GENERAL, ESSEQUIBO, TO WEST INDIA COMPANY [November 1755]**

Moreover, the Council has sent to Barima a certain Adriaen Chritiaansen to invite hither the

Chief of the Caribs who murdered the Acuways in Mazaruni, to be present at the Session for January next, that we may learn from the same who have been the causers and inciters thereof, so that I think this tumult will now be greatly allayed.

**409. EXAMINATION OF ARRAYTANA, CARIB CHIEF, BY ADRIAEN CHRISTIAENSE**

**[17 December 1755]**

Declaration of the Owl Araytana concerning the murder committed by him with regard to the Acuway nation, and also at whose incitement such was committed, as follows: –

**Question:** To the above-mentioned Owl in what manner he had performed the journey to Essequibo and what his intention was?

**Answer:** My journey was because I had been summoned by the orders of my ally, his Excellency, who told me on my coming to him that his Honour had understood that the Spaniards were persecuting us and also killing us; that that was the reason why he had summoned me, in order to tell me that I must hold my self in readiness to come and help him resist the Spaniards, and also that I must warn all the other Carib Owls to be in readiness with their subjects to come and help him.

**Question:** What did you do further?

**Answer:** I asked my ally, his Excellency, for permission to go to Upper Essequibo in order to make my bread in Masseroeny before my journey to Essequibo, whereupon my ally, his Excellency; asked me what I wanted to do in Upper Essequibo, whereupon I answered my ally, "Because my brother, Tarawera, has been killed by the nations, therefore I wish to take revenge." Whereupon my ally answered, "It is good. The nation who killed your friend lives in Coenawaroeka." Whereupon I replied, "It is good. I shall also take my revenge there." Whereupon my ally replied, "It is good. But kill no nations who are in alliance with us." Whereupon I replied, "No. I know that such may not be done." So I left my aforementioned ally and went to Masseroeny, as far as Tawaaykoere, near Cawaritana, where my bread was made. Then I came away from there – my boat by water, and I by land – as far as Marchal's, to get into my boat there and complete my aforesaid journey. I, my brother, and two women carne to Marchal, sat down, and were welcomed by him, whereupon he asked me, "Have you been at war?" I answered, "No; because this is the beginning of my journey to the place to which I intended to go." Whereupon Marchal answered me, "What are you looking for then? Because the Acuway nation is looking for you. They have asked me to kill you, because the nation have told me that you have killed their friends. They are therefore seeking to kill Arraytana, Awarawe, Karochpo, Aurachpo, and Oerakayare for revenge. They have had a large number of arrow-heads made to kill your people upon their departure, and then they intend taking flight to Camoeran, above Masseroeny; and would you not kill those who seek you?" I answered, "No; because your Lord, my ally, only recently forbade me most expressly to do no harm to the nation, who are his friends, or allies." Whereupon Marchal again answered, "No; go and kill them, because they are not his Excellency's allies; therefore go and kill them. I shall be answerable for this to his Excellency, and I will write his Honour a letter that I gave you orders to kill them. So on the second day I left

Marchal and went to Mr. Pypersberg to speak to him about it. (In coming to him I told him that Marchal had directed me to kill the Acuways, and that he had also informed me in what manner that nation intended to murder me, whereupon Mr. Pypersberg asked me, "Are you going to do it?" whereupon I answered him, "Yes; because Marchal has incited me against them." Thereupon Mr. Pypersberg answered, "It is good. When are you going?" I said, "To-morrow." Whereupon he said to me, "Go, then, and warn all the other Caribs of Masseroeny, especially Oeracajare; and when you have murdered the nation, let Oeracajare bring the women to me." Thereupon I departed from thence and came again to Marchal, who asked me what Mr. Pypersberg had said, and I told him all the aforesaid. Whereupon Marchal answered me with gladness, "Did I not say so? And yet you say that our masters will not allow you to kill the nation. Go, kill them, and come back within five days, and bring me the women." Therefore did I, together with the Masseroeny Caribs, kill the nation by Marchal's order, and brought the women down, three of the best of which I sold to Marchal, and also had to give him a boy into the bargain as a present for encouraging me to commit the murder, because he said, "Did I send you, or did his Excellency do so? Nay, indeed, I think that I gave you permission to kill the Acuways, wherefore the slaves belong to me by right." I answered him, "It is well." I departed thence to Mr. Pypersberg, to whom I also had to give two of the best slaves, because he said to me that he was as much a master as the other. I was therefore obliged to bring to my ally, his Excellency, one old slave. I related all that occurred to me, and the reasons why I killed the Acuways. Then I departed from my ally, his Excellency, and encountered Marchal at the corner of Varken Eyland, and I shouted out to Marchal. He answered, "I am now going to your ally." Whereupon I said to him, "It is well," and I thought Marchal would do according to his promise, and so I went home.

This declared the Owl Araytana before me.

(Signed) ADRIAEN CHRISTIAENSE

Aymara-Aykoeroe, December 17, 1755

#### **410. MINUTES OF THE COURT OF JUSTICE, RIO ESSEQUIBO [5 January 1756]**

*(Extract)*

After calling upon the name of the Lord: . . .

The Carib Owl (or Chief) Aritanna, brought hither in accordance with the Resolution passed at the last meeting [the 7th and 8th April, 1755], at the expense of the Colony, being called in, was circumstantially interrogated by the interpreters, Stephanus Gerardus van der Heyden and Bastiaan Christiaansen, perfectly acquainted with the language and invited for that purpose, how the matters in question with the Acuways had come to pass? Upon what grounds such had taken place? And who had incited him to such outrageous conduct? The more so that when he was on the point of departing up the river he had been so seriously enjoined and recommended by his Excellency, the Director-General, not to molest or harm in any manner any natives that were on terms of friendship with us, and only to have his bread prepared (which he at that time alleged to

be the reason of his going).

Answers, according to the interpretations, that it was true he had received that order from his Excellency, that it had also been his intention to strictly obey and follow out the same; but that had committed that murder solely upon the persuasion and advice of the person Pieter Marichal, the one living highest up the River Masseroeny, who had told him that if he did not murder the Acuways, the latter would murder him and his people in order to avenge their friends killed some time before, and when he, the summoned one, had thereupon replied that such had been strictly forbidden him by the Commander of this Colony, the aforesaid Marichal had encouraged him, and continued to say that he would be answerable for it by writing a letter to his Excellency (who, moreover, could not judge who were friends or enemies), that he, Marichal, had sent Caribs to his help, and for which he, the Owl, had, after the slaughter had been committed, presented Marichal with one of the captured slaves in recognition of that advice. Pieter Marichal, the really accused cause of this commotion, being called in, this testimony was placed before him and being heard in his defence concerning the whole account of the Owl, straightly refused to be heard solely upon the accusations of a single Carib, he appealing to Christian witnesses who had heard the contrary out of the mouth of the aforesaid Owl himself. All of which being ripely considered, and found to be without lawful and. valid proof, it was determined to let this matter remain in *statu quo*.

Whereas Jan la Riviere has sent in a Petition in which he complained that a certain piece of land situated in the River Bouweron has been taken from him in consequence of an action instituted against him by the late Erasmus Veldermans, praying that he may again be put in possession of this land:

The petitioner, since there are no immediate results connected with his case, is referred to the Court of Policy, this being the proper body to deal with such requests.

In satisfaction of the Resolution of this Court, dated the 7th October, 1755, concerning the proposals of the respective burgher officers with regard to the removal of the Company's trading-place from Moruka, whereby it was agreed to hear their opinions in what manner they think it would be most expedient to obtain slaves to perform this work of removal, it was this day proposed by them that this work could well be done by free and hired Indians. This being deliberated upon, it, was found good that this removal should be proceeded with without delay, and that Captain Stephanus Gerardus van der Heyden was to have the supervision; that after the Captain had given all the required information to his Excellency, the Director-General will order the Postholder to go and take charge of this Post.

#### **411. DIRECTOR-GENERAL, ESSEQUIBO, TO WEST INDIA COMPANY**

**[12 March 1756]**

*(Extract)*

I have the honour to inform your Lordships that the accusations made against Pieter Marschal concerning the war with the Acuways were brought up at the last meeting of the Court, when the Carib Chief, Aretanna, otherwise called Maraywakke, appeared in person, in consequence of my orders sent to him and was examined through the medium of the Burgher Captain, L. G. van der

Heyden, and Bastian Christiaanse, both perfectly acquainted with the Carib languages. The Chief repeated the charge he had already made to me against the said P. Marschal, and stood his ground without the slightest variation, his language to his accuser being very courageous.

I had previously charged Adriaen Christiaense, sent by the Court to summon the aforesaid Indian, to narrowly examine the man in Barima concerning these matters, and to write down his answers, in order to see whether this Indian would stand by his words and make no variations in his tale, but found that his words, both to me and to A. Christiaense agreed in every detail with what he said before the Court. I have the honour to send herewith a copy of the aforesaid interrogatories made by A. Christiaense and the answers of the Indian. P. Marchal, being heard in the presence of the Indian, persisted in his flat denials, whereupon the Indian told him that he was no honest man, that he retracted his spoken words from fear of punishment, and that he dared not stick to what he had said. "I," said he, "committed the deed by your advice, and killed the Acuways, from whom I brought you four slaves, and although I am an Indian, you do not hear me deny what I have done, as you do." With other hard expressions.

But since however, it is a prescribed custom here that no Indian's testimony can hold good against that of Christians (a custom that rests on good grounds, because most of them are not to be trusted, and many of them can be made to say whatever one wishes for drink, or other considerations), Marchal was declared innocent of the charges, although I, and many with me, think him really guilty.

He, consequently, returned to his plantation, but on his arrival there the Acuways (who had remained quiet, and done nothing for a very long time) appeared again in large numbers, and compelled him, if he wished to save his life, to take flight as speedily as possible, so that he was obliged to leave his place, and has, so I hear, entered the service of Mr. Secretary Spoor on his Honour's plantation. I should by no means advise him to think of returning to his place, because whether he be guilty or not guilty, the Acuways would certainly kill him.

It is my belief that this business will quiet down slowly, the Acuways up in Demerary being already perfectly satisfied, and coming here to trade with the Christians as before.

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***Inclosure: Examination of Arraytana, Carib Chief, by Adriaen Christiaense, 17 December 1755*** [Document No. 409 above].

**412. JACOB STEYNER, ASSISTANT AT THE POST ARINDA, TO THE COMMANDEUR, ESSEQUIBO**

**[28 May 1756]**

Your Excellency will remember the report concerning the three Christians who are up in the savannah; they have now made themselves masters of the whole savannah. Your Excellency, I know not what will come of this; they make themselves masters of all rivers. Your Excellency, I believe that they are Spanish people, and that they will make themselves masters of all places. They come by way of the Cuyuni. Your Excellency must know that they have three established places – one on the Wenamu, a branch of the Cuyuni: another above Masseroeny in Queribura; and a third above Syseroeny on Mawakken. These places are all terribly strong.

On the 3rd of May they reached the Caribs, and began to lay out plantations; on the 17th May they went to Demerara in ten corrials. When I asked them where they came from they told me that they had risen from the dead, and that as many more were coming. They are Caribs, Ackewys, Arrewacks, and Warrouws – all kind of nations, one pretending to be the grandfather, and another the father or brother of his friend. They say that they have all been dead some twenty wears and have come to life again. Whatever I say to them meets with no other reply. Your Excellency, on the 27th May I was told by an Ackewey of Demerara that the Ackeweys, who did so much mischief last year, are again getting themselves and their slaves ready to do war against the Christians. With regard to the Post all is still in peace, so long as God will. Your Excellency, I know not what it means that Mushack does not come to the Post. I am half afraid of this people; they pretend they are God's people; and I remain. . .

Your Excellency's Servant,

(Signed) JACOB STEYNER

Post Arinda, May 28, 1756

**413. LETTER OF PADRE BENITO DE LA GARRIGA TO DON JOSÉ ITURRIAGA**  
**[29 May 1756]**

*(Extract)*

*Caronie, May 29, 1756.*

Your Excellency having understood from a member of this community, in a conversation, of the great desire which he and others have of seeking the fugitive slaves from Surinam, who, according to some Indians, are living in the neighbourhood of the head-waters of that river, of the Dutch Colonies, and inviting them to come and live in this province; and having also heard, in the same conversation that this work in the service of God and His Majesty was not carried out, on account of the want of a guard to accompany the Fathers, and also because they had no faculty of granting them their liberty without which grace they certainly would not be tempted to come, your Excellency was pleased to declare that you would give the necessary guard, also would concede liberty in His Majesty's name to all the said revolted saves who would come and settle in this province.

The Fathers of these Missions, being assembled in a Chapter in the Mission of Suay, heard from me an account of the said conversation, and not only did they hear with much joy of this project, but all offered themselves, emulously, to carry out the design; and in consequence thereof I am ready to undertake the mission and start upon the journey from the 1st January, the proper season to perform it; and also to solicit the above-mentioned negroes to return with us...

*[The missionary then sets forth the great difficulties of the enterprise, on account of the Dutch, who, no doubt, would be quickly informed by their friends and allies, the Caribs, of this undertaking, and requests that he may be allowed complete liberty in every respect, both as to the way and the time and manner that he will carry out the mission. And he remarks that]* the

practice observed in this province with fugitive slaves from the Dutch Colonies, etc., in contradistinction: to what was formerly practised, is to arrest them, sell them, and advise their owners of the same that they may come and receive the value of them; and this they, the owners, do very willingly, arriving in a schooner, taking their money, for which they give a receipt, and then return to their abode. Neither more nor less is it intended to do with the revolted slaves of Surinam that may be brought to this province.

Our solicitude notwithstanding, let us offer the liberty granted by your Excellency in His Majesty's name, as it will be said the faculties conceded to you do not annul the formal "Cedulas" and done in this manner against the usual custom hitherto practised, and observed with the first who may come, their hopes would be destroyed, as I have remarked.

The Dutch and other foreigners do not treat us in this way; for if we ask for the Indians, His Majesty's subjects, which are taken from the Missions and the dominions of His Majesty, they reply with great frankness that they have spent money upon them, and that is all the satisfaction they give us for the good we do in giving them the value of their fugitive slaves. . .

[*Archivo de Simancas*]

**414. EXTRACT FROM DESPATCH OF DON JOSÉ ITURRIAGA TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE OF SPAIN**

[29 May 1756]

Your Excellency,

The inclosed copy of a letter from the Prefect of the Missions of Guayana will inform your Excellency of the state of the important Mission in regard to the revolted negroes of Surinam, and you will therefrom understand the truth of what is going on in respect of the fugitive negro slaves of Esquivo (Essequibo) and the other foreign colonies, and particularly of the slaves.

Before the Prefect wrote me this letter I had various conferences with him, for the purpose of removing the objections he mentions in his letter, and trying to make him undertake the journey this summer, but I did not succeed, nor shall I succeed without the "Cedula" which he demands.

On the other hand, I see well the importance of this secret, for if the Dutch of Essequibo get to know of the idea they will try, at any cost, to bring the revolted to return.

Those negroes would be most useful in Guayana and the lowlands of the district where they live well, but where the whites and Indians perish in great numbers.

Thus, in the Missions of the Capuchins, some Indians who had visited the said negroes say that they were inquiring for the Spaniards. They add that in their villages there are splendid plantations of yucca, maize, and some sugar-mills, and that all classes of workmen are to be found among them.

This news has stimulated the Catalonian priests to undertake the journey, etc., which, according to those Indians, is one of twenty days; but, in my opinion, I consider it one of a month and a half for the priests, with Indians and a guard of soldiers.

I have no doubt the Franciscans of Piritu will very gladly take part in this expedition, and it would be to their advantage to put a stop thereby to the raids of the Caribs, etc.

[*Archivo de Simancas*]

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***Inclosure: Extract from a letter of Padre Benito de la Garriga to Iturriaga, 29 May 1756***  
[Document No. 413 above].

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**415. WEST INDIA COMPANY (ZEELAND CHAMBER) TO DIRECTOR-GENERAL,  
ESSEQUIBO**  
[31 May 1756]

(*Extract*)

Your action with respect to the Acuways also has our approval, since we are fully convinced that nothing can contribute more to the safety of the colonies, than a kind, but at the same time circumspect, treatment of the neighbouring native tribes; for which reason we hereby urgently recommend that you do everything which can tend towards the furtherance of mutual peace and the growth of public confidence.

At this opportunity we reiterate the orders of this Assembly, already communicated to you by previous letters, regarding the sale of such necessaries as were sent you by us or purchased by you for the defence of the Colony of Essequibo against the dreaded invasion by the Spaniards (at least as far as they can be spared), and also those regarding the transmission to this body of a specified account together with the proceeds thereof. We trust that those orders have already been obeyed by you.

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**416, ISAAC KNOTT, COLONIST IN DEMERARA, TO THE COURT OF POLICY,  
ESSEQUIBO**  
[4 July 1756]

***APOSTIL***

To the Director General and the Court of Policy, in Session at Fort Zeelandia, the 4th July, 1756.

Inasmuch as this matter cannot be dealt with here, the petitioner is referred to the Directors. Done in Council, 4th July, 1756.

(Below there stood) In my presence. (And was signed) Adriaan Spoor, Councillor Secretary.

Mr. Isaac Knott, citizen and inhabitant of the River of Demerary, very respectfully makes known that he would be glad to have permission to make timber for a few consecutive years in the Rivers of Waini and Pomeroun; he therefore humbly requests you, the Director-General and Councillors, to be pleased to have the goodness to grant him, the petitioner aforesaid, permission

to make timber in the aforesaid rivers, for the time of six, eight, or more, consecutive years, as you may determine, on condition of paying once per year a recognition of 1,000 florins to the West India Company, and, moreover, all the tonnage dues of the incoming barques, according to the custom of these lands.

To which aforesaid he, the petitioner, requests a favourable Apostil. (Below there stood) Done, etc.

Your humble and devoted servant,  
(And was signed) Isaac Knott.

**417. MINUTES OF THE COURT OF POLICY, ESSEQUIBO**  
**[4 July 1756]**

*(Extract)*

Jacques Salignacq and Isaac Knott both having presented Petitions – that of the former containing a request for permission to plant and export *rokoe* or *oriane* dye, that of the latter for permission to cut timber in the Rivers of Pomeroon and Wayni, offering to pay the Company for a period of six, eight, or more years the sum of 1,000 guilders annually, in addition to the ordinary dues and taxes.

Both the aforesaid Petitions were, after deliberation, referred to their Honours the Directors...

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***Annex: Isaac Knott, colonist in Demerara, to the Court of Policy, Essequibo, 4 July 1756***  
[Document No. 416 above].

***Appended on the annex below Isaac Knot's signature:***

[Agrees word for word with its original at the Secretary's office.  
In witness whereof,

MICHAEL LOOFF, Assistant

Rio Essequibo, July 5, 1756.]

**418. DIRECTOR-GENERAL, ESSEQUIBO, TO WEST INDIA COMPANY**  
**[7 July 1756]**

*(Extract)*

A request from Isaac Knott and Co. to the Council aforesaid to cut timber in Pomaroon and

Weyne for the English, for which they have offered to pay annually to the Honourable Company 1,000 guilders over and above the tonnage duty of the barques which come to fetch away the timber, which request, I believe, will be profitable for the Honourable Company, and afford a small revenue from an article from which the Company derives not the very slightest profit, being of opinion that it is good to make money when one can, when no loss afterwards is involved.

As peace has not yet been made with the Acuways of Mazaruni and Essequibo, I am obliged to leave the garrison at the old fort, and cannot yet imagine how this matter will turn out. It is, however, of the utmost importance to this Colony. I send your Honours herewith a copy of the report of the Assistant of the Post Arinda up in Essequibo, who recently came down.

This report, if one can firmly rely on it, gives much reason for anxiety. Your Honours will please to remember that on the small map which I handed to his late serene Highness [the Stadtholder] and to you, there are marked two or three places where, according to the report of a Jesuit Father, the Spaniards were establishing themselves, wherewith this report very well agrees. If this be true, we should be shut in by them in the same manner as the English in North America by the French forts of the Ohio, which would be of the very worst consequences to this Colony, and must by all means be stopped, directly or indirectly.

The most unfortunate part of it is that we have such lack of capable men to whom one can intrust anything. The Postholder at Arinda, being about to marry a widow here, has asked for his discharge, which I have granted him, and have offered that place to one H. Steynfels, the same person who some years ago submitted to Your Honours a plan for making important discoveries in Cuyuni, at which time you were pleased to write me that I must try to keep that man until your further orders. I in no way doubt that, if this man accepts that post, he will fulfil his duty exactly, find out the real truth, and, possibly, by other discoveries bring greater profit to the Company than any Postholder has done heretofore. . .

The colonist, D. Couvreur, who has just now come from up in Mazaruni, where he lives, has given me information which confirms the report of the Assistant in Essequibo, saying that several Indians from above have retreated to his place; that between two and three days' journey above his plantation, which is equal to about twelve or, at most, fifteen hours of travel, there live some whites, who have there a great house and more than 200 Indians with them, whom they make believe a lot of things, and are able to keep under absolute command. He has proposed to me that in the month of August, when the water at the falls is somewhat lower, he shall go himself with some other colonists and creoles of the Company, and carry off those whites and bring them here. This was very acceptable to me, as I know him to be a man capable of a daring deed; wherefore I have accepted this, and will, at the next meeting of the Court, submit it for consideration.

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***Inclosure: Jacob Steyner, assistant at the Post Arinda, to the Commandeur, Essequibo, 28 May 1756*** [Document No. 412 above].

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**419. EXTRACTS FROM A PRÉCIS FOR THE SPANISH SECRETARY OF STATE OF DOCUMENTS RESPECTING THE BOUNDARY COMMISSION, DATED 1756**  
[1756]

The expedition before leaving Cadiz was not in harmony; and a difference arose between Iturriaga and Alvarado.

Immediately on their arrival at Cumaná, Iturriaga caused much dissension among his people, and separated himself from Alvarado, to whom he would make no communication.

Alvarado is too sharp and forcible, and finding himself alone and neglected, and to revenge himself, he entered into friendship with the Governor [of Cumaná], the result of which was that both censured the conduct of Iturriaga, as is seen from the notes sent now by him to Señor Arriaga.

Here follows an account of the proceedings of the Governor of Cumaná, who, notwithstanding that Iturriaga had a Royal Warrant to him, commanding him to supply the expedition with all it required, refused point blank to give him "a farthing", though he provided "boats, men, and munition, which he had at hand . . ."

In this manner a whole year was spent, and the supplies they took with them, both plentiful and good, and sufficient to carry them to the end of their journey, were consumed.

Finally, they took 80,000 pesos (about 16,000 guilders), which the Governor of Caracas gave them, and with this Iturriaga pursued his course to the Orinoco, where he spent another year, without any proof, on his part, that anything more was done than seeding officials, some here, and some there, to acquire information, more or less the same as that acquired by Alvarado, and sent her by him. . .

"It is quite true no letters have arrived from Iturriaga; and this is a matter of serious consideration. For the correspondence has to pass through the hands of the Governor to reach here; and it is very remarkable that those of Alvarado do arrive; and we see none from his superior, which doubtless we may attribute to the union of those two against him.

"Whatever the case might be, it is quite certain that between them they have eaten up what they took with them, and spent the 80,000 pesos from Caracas; and we are now come to that point where I fear they will not even start on the expedition this year.

"They have now exhausted the supply, and the second, on its arrival, they began consuming; and meanwhile nothing whatever is being carried out, but the whole baggage is rotting away."

It is believed that Iturriaga was altogether too slow; and this is confirmed by the fact that "it took him a whole year to get ready and start from Cadiz." But he is not considered by any means "so culpable as the Governor of Cumaná." And it proceeds: "Although there is no proof that Alvarado disobeyed Iturriaga, nevertheless, in the reports be made to him [of the secret mission], it is easy to recognize, from the bitter manner he replies to each point of the instructions, that a serious misunderstanding existed between them, and if it be as I believe, there is little doubt that the fault was, and still is, Iturriaga's.

"Nor can I do less than condemn as very suspicious the friendship of Alvarado with the Governor, being of such a close and intimate nature that it is quite clear they are both united against Iturriaga."

The President of the Council recommends that the Governor should be at once recalled,

“with the simple expression, drily and coldly written, that it is His Majesty’s Royal pleasure to deprive him of his command for good and just motives.”

The Governor is shown to be a man of no honour, and of very bad character, totally unfit for His Majesty’s service, against whom there have been numerous strong and well-founded complaints for the unjust manner in which he has managed the affairs of Cumaná. Grave charades of fraud, and intrigues with His Majesty’s enemies, the Dutch, are also mentioned.

Referring to the Reports sent in by Alvarado, it is said that “they chiefly relate to the natural history of Guayana, etc. They also treat of the eleven Missions of the Capuchin missionaries, etc. And a paper is inclosed of the instructions given him by Iturriaga, with replies to each, which treat of the natural history, geography, communication of the province with the Dutch of the coast, and other matters of a general nature. . . .”

[*Archivo de Simancas*]

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