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From 1888 to 1891

**862. SEÑOR DIEGO URBANEJA, VENEZUELAN MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
TO VISCOUNT GORMANSTON, GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA
[28 January 1888]**

(Translation – Original: Spanish)

Caracas, January 28, 1888

Sir,

In the *Argosy* and in the *Demerara Daily Chronicle*, periodicals of your Colony, of the 7th and 6th of this month respectively, the Government of the United States of Venezuela has seen a Notice published, invested with the official seal, by which your Excellency, in your character of Lieutenant-Governor, proclaims that –

“Whereas it has come to the knowledge of the Government that the President and Government of Venezuela have conceded privileges to construct a railway to Guacipati, in and over territories belonging to British Guiana, intimation is given that such privileges will not protect persons who may be found trafficking on lands belonging to the Colony from judicial proceedings.”

As the undersigned Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic doubts the authenticity of such a document, which cannot be based on any reasonable precedent, since it refers to territory never disputed nor contested, inasmuch as we have constituted authorities with legal jurisdiction in the whole of the Yuruari Territory, he desires to see the Notice referred to, which is an attempt on the most legitimate interests of this nation, confirmed or disavowed.

Such is the object of this note; and at the same time, in view of the aggressive conduct of Great Britain, to inform you that we cannot allow now, as in 1858 we declared to the British representative in Caracas that we could not allow, this country to be entered otherwise than by the established posts, and that it did not at all suit us to open the line of our frontier with British Guiana, so as not to give a chance for unwarrantable and arbitrary violations of our rights.

We now solemnly confirm this prohibition, assisted by the justice of our cause, and by our duty to protect ourselves against the insult offered to our sovereignty by the mission of Special Agents of your Colony, without our permission or authorization, to carry on explorations in territory which was never before disputed us by any one, nor even by the tenacious and aggressive Power which seeks to invade us, careless as to its methods and scorning the rules upon which civilized nations base their proceedings and dealings with others.

In consequence of this declaration, we shall instruct our Consul in your city not to issue passports to British functionaries or subjects to enter our territory by the Essequibo frontier, or by places or ports not open to foreign commerce. . .

863. BRITISH COLONIAL OFFICE TO BRITISH FOREIGN OFFICE
[9 February 1888]

Downing Street, February 9, 1888.

Sir,

I am directed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to transmit to you, for the information of the Marquess of Salisbury, a Proclamation as to the right of the Government of British Guiana to territory comprised in a concession made by President of Venezuela. . . .

(Signed) ROBERT G. W. HERBERT

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Inclosure: Extract from the Official Gazette of British Guiana, 31 December 1887
 [Document No. 861 in Year 1887].

864. VISCOUNT GORMANSTON, GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA, TO SIR H. HOLLAND, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
[14 February 1888]

Government House, Georgetown, Demerara, February 14, 1888.

Sir,

Adverting to Mr. Bruce's despatch of the 31st December last, forwarding a copy of his Proclamation relative to the grant of a Concession for a railway to Guacipati made by the President of Venezuela, I have the honour to transmit to you a copy of a note addressed to me by the Venezuelan Minister of Foreign Affairs, with a translation of my reply. . . .

(Signed) GORMANSTON

865. VISCOUNT GORMANSTON, GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA, TO SEÑOR DIEGO URBANEJA, VENEZULAN MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
[14 February 1888]

Government House, Georgetown, Demerara, February 14, 1888.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's note of the 28th January last relative to the Territory of the Yuruari, and to inform you that I shall avail myself of the earliest opportunity to transmit a copy thereof to Her Britannic Majesty's Government. . . .

(Signed) GORMANSTON

866. AMERICAN SECRETARY OF STATE THOMAS BAYARD TO EDWARD J. PHELPS, AMERICAN MINISTER TO GREAT BRITAIN**[17 February 1888]**

*Department of State,
Washington, Feb. 17, 1888.*

I transmit herewith translation of a note received by me on the 15th inst., wherein the Venezuelan Minister sets forth the information lately supplied to him to the effect that the Legislature of Demerara has recently asserted a claim of British jurisdiction over the gold-mining districts of Caratal, on the headwaters of the Yuruari River, and that, by a decree of the Government of British Guiana, dated Dec. 31, 1887, formal denial is made of the validity of a grant by the Venezuelan Government for the construction of a railway from Ciudad Bolivar to Guacipati, a city in the Caratal district, on the ground that it passes in and over certain territories and lands within and forming part of the Colony of British Guiana. . .

The Government of the United States has hitherto taken an earnest and friendly interest in the question of boundaries so long in dispute between Great Britain and Venezuela, and so far as its disinterested counsels were admissible, has advocated an amicable, final and honorable settlement of the dispute. We have followed this course on the assumption that the issue was one of historical fact, eminently adaptable for admitting arbitration and that the territorial claims of each party had a fixed limit, the right of which would without difficulty be determined according to the evidence.

The claim now stated to have been put forth by the authority of British Guiana necessarily gives rise to grave disquietude, and creates an apprehension that the territorial claim does not follow historical traditions or evidence, but is apparently indefinite. At no time hitherto does it appear that the district of which Guacipati is the centre has been claimed as British territory or that such jurisdiction has ever been asserted over its inhabitants, and if the reported decree of the Government of British Guiana be indeed genuine it is not apparent how any line of railway from Ciudad Bolivar to Guacipati could enter or traverse territory within the control of Great Britain.

If, indeed, it should appear that there is no fixed limit to the British boundary claim, our good disposition to aid in a settlement might not only be defeated, but be obliged to give place to a feeling of grave concern. . .

867. BRITISH COLONIAL OFFICE TO BRITISH FOREIGN OFFICE**[8 March 1888]**

(Extract)

Downing Street, March 8, 1888.

With reference to the letter from this Department of the 9th ultimo, forwarding a copy of a Proclamation issued by the Government of British Guiana respecting the Concession granted by

the President of Venezuela for a railway over certain territory to Guacipati, I am directed by Lord Knutsford to transmit to you, to be laid before the Marquess of Salisbury, a copy of a despatch from the Governor of British Guiana, inclosing a note addressed to him on the subject of that Proclamation by the Venezuelan Minister for Foreign Affairs.

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Inclosure 1: Viscount Gormanston, Governor of British Guiana, to Sir H. Holland, Secretary of State for the Colonies, 14 February 1888 [Document No. 864 above]

Inclosure 2: Señor Diego Urbaneja, Venezuelan Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Viscount Gormanston, Governor of British Guiana, 28 January 1888 [Document No. 862 above]

Inclosure 3: Viscount Gormanston, Governor of British Guiana, to Señor Diego Urbaneja, Venezuelan Minister of Foreign Affairs, 14 February 1888 [Document No. 865 above]

868. CIRCULAR ISSUED BY THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT TO THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS IN CARACAS
[15 June 1888]

(Translation – Original: Spanish)

Since the solemn protest of the 20th February of last year, issued by this Department, against the proceedings of Great Britain relative to the Guiana boundaries, its violation of our territory, and the decision in her favour of a question to which she is a party by declaring herself co-proprietor of the Orinoco, founding settlements, and subjecting to conditions the erection of a lighthouse at Barima, her incursions from the Essequibo to the Pomaroon, the Moroco, Guaima, Barima, and Amacura, and finally refusing to accept arbitration to decide the controversy relative to limits, the Governor of Demerara proceeds anew with amazing insistence to decree the creation of a new Colonial district under the name of "North-east district," within the boundaries of which he comprises the Venezuelan Territory of Barima and appoints B. A. Day as Commissary, while the Legislative Assembly of the Colony assigns him 10,000 dollars to defray the expenses of a permanent occupation of that zone and therein collect contributions and hold it as under British jurisdiction. This happened on the 2nd of the present month, in derision of right and morality, for your Excellency must be reminded that at the time this takes place in Demerara our Representative seeks, by preliminary and confidential steps in Europe, to re-establish the matter on a diplomatic footing, and by taking into consideration the reciprocal rights of both nations, arrive at a friendly settlement and secure international harmony on a basis of equity and justice. But until this result is attained, the peremptory duty of my Government is to protect and defend its rights by protesting, as it in due form solemnly protests, in the same form and with the same force and reasoning that your Excellency has seen in the former protest of the 20th February, 1887, against this fresh usurpation on the part of the Government of Demerara.

Therefore, the Government of Venezuela renews on this occasion said protest in all its parts, and declares the Colonial Act of the 2nd of the present month a violation of its sovereignty and

territory, and an encroachment upon its rights as an independent nation, on its district of Barima, rights that have never before been disputed, and also protests against any other action or act which tends to interrupt the exercise of its jurisdiction on national territory.

Hoping that your Excellency will take note of the facts that give rise to this protest, so as to inform your Government thereof, it is pleasurable to me to renew to your Excellency the testimony of my most distinguished consideration.

(Signed) A. YSTURIZ

869. MR. WILLIAM ANDRAL OF THE BRITISH LEGATION IN CARACAS TO THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY, BRITISH SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

[5 July 1888]

Caracas, July 5, 1888

My Lord,

I have the honour to inclose to your Lordship translation of a Circular addressed to the Diplomatic Body in this city by the Venezuelan Minister for Foreign Affairs, under date of the 15th June, but which now appears in the *Opinion Nacional* of the 3rd instant, having reference to a Proclamation of the Governor of British Guiana, published in the official Gazette of that Colony on the 2nd June last, relative to the organization of a new district, to be called the "North-east district" [*sic*] which comprises, as stated in the Circular, the Venezuelan territory of Barima, against which usurpation solemn protest is recorded. . . .

(Signed) WM. A. ANDRAL

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Inclosure: Circular Issued by the Venezuelan Government to the Diplomatic Corps in Caracas, 15 June 1888 [Document No. 868 above].

870. VENEZUELAN CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, FR. ANTONIO SILVA, TO COL. GEORGE GIBBONS, DIPLOMATIC AGENT OF VENEZUELA IN NEW YORK

[18 September 1888]

*Legation de Venezuela en Washington:
Sept. 18, 1888.*

Col. George W. Gibbons [Diplomatic agent of the Republic of Venezuela]

My Dear Sir:

In reply to your inquiry of this date permit me to say that as the representative of the Government of Venezuela in the United States, I thank you for your manly and patriotic efforts in behalf of my country. To the President of the United States, Grover Cleveland, my country is largely indebted for his sympathy and the notion taken by him toward the Government of Great Britain, in showing that Government that the United States of America was not indifferent to the unwarranted acts of encroachment by Great Britain on the territory of the Republic of Venezuela.

This timely interference on the part of President Cleveland has for the present stopped the English Government in her attempted acts of spoilation, encroachment, and appropriation to herself of very nearly one-third of our whole republic, and besides taking possession of the Orinoco River, which connects with the River Amazon and the Plate, the possession of which would have given to Great Britain the absolute control of the trade of the whole of South America. My Government and people feel that in President Cleveland they have a friend and protector, and that the power of Great Britain over this trade is at an end, and that closer commercial and friendly relations between the United States and my country are firmly established in the wishes of my countrymen and will be carried out by my Government.

President Cleveland's bold and manly course on the South American question will, no doubt, give your country the control of the trade of that portion of the continent, amounting to about \$900,000,000 a year, a result which, I trust, will come to pass. It is my opinion that the safety of republican institutions in South America depends largely on the establishment of closer commercial relations, on a basis that will prove very advantageous to the United States, and of such a character that it will be impossible for Europe to compete or interfere. The natural position of both sections of this continent makes it imperative that such should be the case, and I am satisfied that such will be the result of the deliberations of the representatives of all the South American countries at the proposed conference to be held in Washington in January 1889, and which was approved by President Cleveland on the 24th day of May, 1888.

With the assurance of my high consideration, I remain,

Yours truly,

FR. ANTONIO SILVA
Chargé d'Affaires

**871. CIRCULAR ISSUED BY THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT TO THE
DIPLOMATIC CORPS IN CARACAS**

[29 October 1888]

(Translation – Original: Spanish)

Caracas, October 29, 1888.

Sir,

In June last the Government of the United States of Venezuela was compelled to protest against a measure of the Governor of Demerara, whereby he decreed the appointment of a Commissary for the district of Barima, the Legislative Body of the Colony voting a credit to meet the

expense of a permanent station in that locality to collect contributions, and hold it as under British jurisdiction.

Now it learns that the English have constituted Barima a Fiscal Inspector's station, named an Inspector, with a body of police, erected barracks for the same, and with a custom-house cutter. They do not permit our pilots to cut wood nor to anchor the pontoon, except at half a mile from the coast. They also occupy Amacura.

The time has therefore arrived to renew the protests made, by the Government of the Republic on the 20th February, 1887, and the 11th June of this year, which, in its name, I now renew, protesting anew formally and solemnly before the Governments of all civilized Powers and the world against the acts of spoliation that, in detriment of the rights of Venezuela, have been, and are being, consummated by that of Great Britain, and that at no time, and under no circumstance, will the Government of Venezuela recognize those acts as being capable of weakening, impairing, or lessening in the least degree the lawful rights of this nation to the territory unlawfully encroached upon by the authorities and colonists of Demerara, with or without the consent of the British Cabinet.

Requesting your Excellency to take note of this protest, and to make it known to the Government of _____.

(Signed) N. BORGES

[This was transmitted to the Diplomatic Body accredited to this Republic, and to their Excellencies the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the American Republics in friendly relations with Venezuela.]

872. H. L. BOULTON OF THE BRITISH LEGATION IN CARACAS TO THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY, BRITISH SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

[6 November 1888]

Caracas, November 6, 1888.

My Lord,

In Mr. Andral's despatch of the 5th July he transmitted translation of a Circular addressed to the Diplomatic Body in this city by the Venezuelan Minister for Foreign Affairs, protesting against the usurpation of Venezuelan territory in Guayana, and I have now the honour of inclosing translation of a further protest addressed to that body on the same subject. . . .

(Signed) H. L. BOULTON

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Inclosure: Circular issued by the Venezuelan Government to the Diplomatic Corps in Caracas, 29 October 1888, [Document No. 871 above].

**873. DOCUMENT OF FULL POWER, ISSUED BY DR. J. L. ROJAS PAUL,
PRESIDENT OF VENEZUELA
[21 November 1889]**

(Translation – Original: French)

Full Power

Dr. J. L. Rojas Paul, Constitutional President of the United States of Venezuela.

To all who may see these presents, greeting:

Whereas it is desirable that diplomatic relations, now suspended, should be renewed between Venezuela and Her Britannic Majesty,

Accordingly I, with the consent of the Federal Council, grant full power to Dr. Modesto Urbaneja, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the French Republic, to negotiate and sign, with any person or persons duly authorized by Her Majesty's Government, a Treaty for the renewal of relations with Venezuela, in accordance with the instructions sent to that Minister, and on the understanding that his engagements shall have no validity until they have been approved by the Republic as laid down by the Constitution.

Given, signed by my hand, sealed with the Great Seal of the Republic, and countersigned by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, at Caracas, on the 12th November, 1889.

(Signed) S. P. ROJAS PAUL

(Countersigned) P. CASANOVA
*Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Treaty Department,
Caracas, November 21, 1889.*

A true copy:

The Superintendent,

(Signed) R. V. SEIJAS

**874. STATEMENT BY PASCUAL CASANOVA, VENEZUELAN MINISTER OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS
[16 December 1889]**

(Translation from Spanish)

*MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Caracas, December 16, 1889.*

In the periodical called the *Daily Chronicle*, of Demerara, British Guiana, is a decree by the colonial governor, Sir Charles Bruce, dated the 4th December, 1889, in which Barima, or the

great mouth of the Orinoco River, is declared to be an English colonial port, and the line known as “the Shomburgk survey” is assumed to be the boundary between British and Venezuelan Guiana.

Now, according to the declaration of Lord Aberdeen, made to Señor Fortique, Venezuelan minister in London, Shomburgk was never authorized to occupy any portion of our territory – not even that inhabited by tribes of wild Indians; that the stakes and signals set up by him were intended merely to indicate a line which should be the object of future discussion and negotiation between the two nations; and that it was not known that any stations or military posts had been established or that the British flag had been raised over the disputed territory. This was in 1841, and the Venezuelan Government soon procured the removal of the marks and posts indicated.

Now, however, following up its system of former usurpations, the Government of Demerara does not hesitate to declare Barima a colonial port, to create a police station there, and to take possession of the neighbouring country; all without leave or license and in open contempt of all those principles of justice which govern the international relations of civilized nations.

Therefore, the Government of the United States of Venezuela is under the necessity of protesting, and it does hereby formally and solemnly protest, against the acts of the government of Demerara in declaring Barima a colonial port; and it does this in the same manner and form expressed in its protest of February 27, 1887, and of the 15th June and 20th October, 1888, against former usurpations of Venezuelan territory.

It protests, moreover, against the act of jurisdiction which the same colonial government has recently pretended to exercise over the territory of Venezuela by authorizing the construction of a road which shall put Demerara in communication with the federal territory of Yuruary. That territory belongs exclusively to the Republic and is under its sole and exclusive jurisdiction, it having never been considered disputed territory between Venezuela and Great Britain. Moreover, the last-named power is prohibited from claiming or occupying it by the very terms of the agreement which it itself proposed and entered into with Venezuela in 1850 through Mr. Bedford Hinton Wilson, then *chargé d'affaires* of Great Britain in this capital.

(Signed) P. CASANOVA

**875. PASCUAL CASANOVA, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF VENEZUELA,
TO WILLIAM L. SCRUGGS, AMERICAN MINISTER IN VENEZUELA.**

[20 December 1889]

*MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Caracas, December 20, 1889.*

Mr. Minister: A new act of usurpation of Venezuelan territory consummated by the governor of Demerara has obliged the Government of the United States of Venezuela to make the accompanying protest, which I have the honour to transmit for Your Excellency's information and that of the Government you so worthily represent in this capital.

I improve, etc.,
P. CASANOVA

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Inclosure – Statement by Pascual Casanova, Venezuelan Minister of Foreign Affairs, 16 December 1889 [Document No. 874 above].

876. WILLIAM L. SCRUGGS, AMERICAN MINISTER IN VENEZUELA, TO JAMES G. BLAINE, AMERICAN SECRETARY OF STATE
[21 December 1889]

[No. 63]

*LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
 Caracas, December 21, 1889. (Received December 30)*

Sir: I have just received from the Venezuelan minister for foreign affairs the note and copy of protest which I inclose, from which you will see that the British colonial government of Demerara has taken formal possession of the principal mouth of the Orinoco River and declared the town of Barima a British colonial port.

I have, etc.,
 WILLIAM L. SCRUGGS.

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Inclosure: Pascual Casanova, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Venezuela, to William L. Scruggs, American Minister in Venezuela, 20 December 1889 [Document No. 875 above].

877. SEÑOR MODESTO URBANEJA, VENEZUELAN PLENIPOTENTIARY, TO THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY, BRITISH SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
[10 January 1890]

(Translation – Original: French)

Venezuelan Legation, Paris, January 10, 1890.

My Lord,

I have the honour to address your Lordship, with profound respect, in order to inform you that the Government of Venezuela, being desirous of renewing diplomatic relations, unfortunately interrupted, with Her Britannic Majesty, have empowered me to negotiate and sign, with any person or persons duly authorized by Her Majesty, a Treaty for the renewal of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

I inclose a certified copy of the document conferring the necessary power on me.

Being eager, on my part, to execute this important commission, I came to London at Christ-

mas in order to furnish proof of the anxiety of the Venezuelan Government for the renewal of diplomatic relations with Her Majesty's Government; I found it impossible, however, during Christmas time, to address your Lordship, as I was compelled to return to Paris, where I hold the post of Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of Venezuela in France. I shall have to remain here for six or seven days longer, and shall then be able to come to London, where I can stay as long as may be necessary for the attainment of a successful result of the important mission intrusted to me by the Venezuelan Government. I venture to place confidence in the noble feelings of justice which animate the powerful Government of Great Britain.

Being desirous that your Lordship may be informed of the mission which has been intrusted to me, I have the honour to address this note to you, and to request you to take into consideration the power conferred on me, and to grant me an interview, at which I may be allowed to give expression at greater length to the anxiety of Venezuela to renew diplomatic relations with Her Majesty's Government, an anxiety which I trust is apparent from the terms of the present note. . .

(Signed) MODESTO URBANEJA

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Inclosure: Document of Full Power, issued by Dr. J. L. Rojas Paul, President of Venezuela, 21 November 1889 [Document No. 873 above].

**878. BRITISH FOREIGN OFFICE TO SEÑOR MODESTO URBANEJA,
VENEZUELAN PLENIPOTENTIARY
[16 January 1890]**

(Translation – Original: French)

Foreign Office, London, January 16, 1890.

M. le Ministre,

I am directed by the Marquess of Salisbury to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th instant, informing him of the wish of the Venezuelan Government for the renewal of diplomatic relations with Her Britannic Majesty, and inclosing a copy of the full power granted to you by the President of Venezuela empowering you to negotiate for that purpose with Her Majesty's Government.

Lord Salisbury desires me to say that as soon as his health is sufficiently re-established, he will be happy to take an early opportunity of arranging a time when he can have the honour of receiving you. . .

(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON

**879. BRITISH FOREIGN OFFICE TO SEÑOR MODESTO URBANEJA,
VENEZUELAN PLENIPOTENTIARY**

[10 February 1890]

(Translation – Original: French)

Foreign Office, London, February 10, 1890.

M. le Ministre,

In compliance with your request I have the honour, by Lord Salisbury's direction, to transmit to you herewith a statement of the conditions which Her Majesty's Government consider necessary for a satisfactory settlement of the questions pending between Venezuela and Great Britain...

(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON

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Inclosure: PRO-MEMORIÁ

(Translation – Original: French)

Pro-memoriá

Her Majesty's Government have received with satisfaction the communication from Señor Urbaneja, that he has been empowered by the President of Venezuela to negotiate for a renewal of diplomatic relations between the two countries, which were interrupted in 1887 by the Venezuelan Government then in office. Her Majesty's Government have on their side always had every desire to cultivate friendly relations with the Republic of Venezuela.

In accordance with Señor Urbaneja's request, the following statement has been prepared of the conditions which Her Majesty's Government consider necessary for a satisfactory settlement of the questions pending between the two countries: –

1. As regards the frontier between Venezuela and the Colony of British Guiana, Her Majesty's Government could not accept as satisfactory any arrangement which did not admit the British title to the territory comprised within the line laid down by Sir R. Schomburgk in 1841. They would be ready to refer to arbitration the claim of Great Britain to certain territories to the west of that line.

2. Her Majesty's Government consider that they are entitled to expect that the differential duties now levied on imports from British Colonies in violation of Article IV of the Commercial Treaty of 1825 shall be repealed.

3. They would propose that all outstanding claims on the part of subjects of either country against the Government of the other should be referred to a Mixed Commission.

S.

880. SEÑOR MODESTO URBANEJA, VENEZUELAN PLENIPOTENTIARY, TO BRITISH FOREIGN OFFICE

[13 February 1890]

(Translation – Original: French)

Venezuelan Legation, Paris, February 13, 1890.

Sir,

I have had the honour to receive your note of the 10th, inclosing the *pro-memoriá* which you transmitted to me by direction of Lord Salisbury respecting the conditions which are held by Her Britannic Majesty's Government to be necessary in view of a solution of the questions pending between Great Britain and Venezuela.

Being desirous that those questions should be settled in a peaceful a friendly manner, which is the wish of the Venezuelan Government, I inclose a paper containing observations on the above-mentioned *pro-memoriá*, which may bring those questions to a friendly termination if taken into consideration by Her Majesty's Government with their noble appreciation of justice.

I offer you my particular thanks for your kind attention, and I beg you to use your influence in favour of the just observations which I thought I ought to make with regard to the *pro-memoriá*. . .

(Signed) MODESTO URBANEJA

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Inclosure:

Observations on the Pro-Memoriá addressed to me by Sir T. H. Sanderson, under directions from Lord Salisbury, respecting the conditions which are held by Her Majesty's Government to be necessary in view of satisfactory settlement of the questions pending between Venezuela and Great Britain.

(Translation – Original: French)

Venezuela possesses documents, historical data, Spanish and English maps, and information of all kinds relating to the past, showing that Venezuelan

Guiana extends to the Essequibo, the natural frontier on the side of British Guiana, and in regard to Punta Barima, Her Britannic Majesty's Government has recognized that that point and the island belonging to it are part of the Venezuelan territory and possessions. The Venezuelan Government cannot, therefore, accept any single point on the arbitrary end capricious line laid down by Sir R. Schomburgk in 1841, which has been declared to be null and void even by the Government of Her Majesty. Neither is it possible for Venezuela to accept arbitration in respect to territory to the west of that line.

Notwithstanding her unquestionable rights Venezuela has proposed, and now proposes, an arbitration, which shall include all the territory from the Essequibo, and the evacuation of the invaded territory from the Pomaroon onward in the direction of the Orinoco.

With regard to this matter, the papers in the case show that the British Government has itself proposed, through the Right Honourable Lieutenant- General Sir Andrew Clarke and the Right

Honourable Captain Lowther "to evacuate the invaded territory, and to submit the case to the arbitration of a friendly Power, provided Venezuela would declare diplomatic relations to be re-established between the two countries."

In this view, the Government of Venezuela has thought fit to appoint a Confidential Agent to conclude a Preliminary Agreement for the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with the Government of Her Britannic Majesty. In these circumstances, it was observed with regret that the conditions required by Lord Salisbury in the above-mentioned *pro-memoriá* are more unfavourable to Venezuela whose President, Dr. Rojas Paul, desires peace, and seeks to establish relations with Great Britain, than the proposals made to the former Confidential Agent, who when President of Venezuela, broke off diplomatic relations with Great Britain, which country may well have reason to complain of the conduct of the Magistrate so acting.

The present Government of Venezuela, a Constitutional, prudent, and pacific Government, which has given Great Britain no reason to complain, but which is, on the contrary, anxious to renew diplomatic relations with Her Britannic Majesty's Government with that object would have been less onerous for Venezuela than those formerly offered to the Representative of the Government which broke off relations with the Government of Her Britannic Majesty, and against which the Queen's Government might well have some reason to complain.

It is therefore necessary to repeat, and the present *pro-memoriá* from Lord Salisbury is much more unfavourable to Venezuela than the proposals made to my predecessor by Sir Andrew Clarke and Captain Lowther.

2. With reference to the differential duty levied on imports from the English Colonies and also from Colonies belonging to other countries, it should be remembered that the complaints made by Venezuela against the protection given by the authorities of Demerara to the clandestine introduction of merchandise into Venezuela are of long standing, and have been constant. But in no case can that differential duty be considered as a violation of Article IV of the Commercial Treaty of 1825.

This difficulty can be completely removed in the new Commercial Treaty which is to be concluded between Great Britain and Venezuela; for if the progress of civilization and commerce throughout the world, and the increased transactions of all kinds between the two countries of Great Britain and Venezuela be considered, the Treaty of 1825 must be held to have become obsolete.

3. Neither does any difficulty present itself with regard to the settlement of the respective claims of the two nations of Great Britain and Venezuela against each other, for in this matter Great Britain, which may be considered as one of the nations which have founded the universal principles of modern international law, will have no difficulty in applying those principles to Venezuela in order to come to an understanding, as other powerful nations have already done, that the claims in question shall be made in accordance with the principles of international law, now well known in the civilized world.

It is with the greatest respect, and while repeating an expression of the wish that diplomatic relations may be renewed between Venezuela and Great Britain, that these observations are submitted on the *pro-memoriá*, which Sir T. H. Sanderson, by direction of Lord Salisbury, transmitted to me, in view of the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between the countries in question.

It may be hoped that the Government of Her Britannic Majesty, guided by their own sentiments of justice, will modify the conditions laid down in their *pro-memoriá* in order that they

may become compatible with the sovereignty and the rights of Venezuela, with the respect owed to public opinion, which is well informed in the matter, and with the duties imposed by the desire to preserve the internal peace of the Republic, and its friendly diplomatic relations with the Government of Her Britannic Majesty.

(Signed) MODESTO URBANEJA

Paris, February 13, 1890

**881. N. BOLET PERAZA, VENEZUELAN MINISTER IN THE UNITED STATES, TO
JAMES G. BLAINE, AMERICAN SECRETARY OF STATE
[17 February 1890]**

(Translation from Spanish)

*LEGATION OF VENEZUELA
Washington, February 17, 1890.*

Sir: The undersigned has the honor to present his most respectful compliments to the Hon. James G. Blaine, and to remark that he deeply regrets the painful causes that occasioned the postponement of the interview which was to be granted to him on the 12th of December last, in which the undersigned hoped to receive some assurance with regard to the generous steps of the United States Government designed to put a stop to the conflict in which the territorial rights of Venezuela are involved by reason of the possession which has been forcibly taken of a part of Venezuelan Guiana by the Government of Great Britain.

Since that time matters have been daily becoming more serious, and have now reached an extremely critical and alarming stage, and, although the undersigned still proposes to solicit, at a future day, an interview on this subject, he nevertheless deems it necessary for him, in view of the gravity of the circumstances, to give a statement of the existing state of things in the present note, and once more to request the United States Government to use its good offices (which will be strengthened by its powerful influence) in order to bring about a settlement of the dispute between Venezuela and Great Britain by the means which international law and the spirit of modern civilization have provided for such cases.

The Honorable Mr. Blaine is already aware that agents of the Government of Great Britain have taken possession unduly and forcibly of the port of Barima, at the mouth of the Orinoco, which up to that time had been possessed by Venezuela, whose title to it was indisputable. It is only necessary to cast a glance at the map of South America in order to see the vast importance of this aggressive step of Great Britain. When a European maritime power has once obtained a foothold at Barima, it absolutely controls the Orinoco River and its numerous affluents. Through that artery it may penetrate as far as the Rio de la Plata. Venezuela is therefore not the only American republic that is at the mercy of the naval power that gets control of the Orinoco River. Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, Brazil, the Argentine Republic, and Uruguay are likewise at its mercy. This is not a danger that threatens Venezuela alone; it threatens all America, and is, perhaps, more serious than the possession of the Panama Canal by a European power, since it would ren-

der nugatory the efforts which, through the initiative of the United States Government, are now being made by the nations of America to draw closer their family bonds, to unify their interests, and to have one and the same destiny in future. All these aspirations, which are based upon the continental idea which is now engaging the attention of the International American Conference, might be rendered fruitless by the presence and control in the Orinoco of so formidable a naval power as is Great Britain. Her vessels would enter the mouth of that river and would carry to the great centers of population her productions, her ideas, and her exclusive interests.

This, in the opinion of the undersigned, explains the haste with which Great Britain has acted in taking possession of the territory of Venezuela lying on the Orinoco. Great Britain wishes to be able to control that immense fluvial artery when the project of the unification of America is accomplished; this was understood by the Government of Venezuela when it appealed to that of the United States, asking that its influence might be exerted, not only in behalf of the rights of Venezuela, but also in behalf of American rights and interests, which were jeopardized by the British invasion on the Orinoco.

The undersigned has recently received advices from his Government, informing him that a British squadron has already arrived at Barbados, and that three steamers belonging to that squadron, viz., the *Emerald*, the *Bellerophon*, and the *Partridge*, have been ordered to Demerara; it was also positively asserted in Venezuela that there were British forces already at Barima; all of which shows that this act of invasion is not to be attributed to the colony, but that it is a measure adopted by the Government of the mother country.

These events, as Your Excellency will readily understand, have excited the people of Venezuela still more than they were already excited, especially in the towns situated near the scene of the conflict, and it is impossible to foresee the consequences to which they may give rise.

The Government of Venezuela is unwilling to abandon the hope which it bases upon the sincere friendship of that of the United States, that the latter will request Great Britain to consent to submit its dispute with Venezuela to arbitration, and it has consequently instructed me, with a view to bringing about this result, to beg Your Excellency with redoubled earnestness to lend the good offices of the United States Government, which is now more than ever the only source from which Venezuela can hope for assistance, since the nations of Europe, feeling irritated at the attitude which has been taken by the republics of South and Central America with the design of drawing closer their commercial relations with the United States, will not be willing to give any support to Venezuela, not even the moral support of their sympathy, inasmuch as a European power is concerned in the dispute, which shares with them the apprehensions that are felt by them all in consequence of the commercial and fraternal union with this Republic which is now being established through the American International Conference.

The undersigned therefore feels confident that when Your Excellency shall have taken into consideration the critical state of this question, the imminence of a conflict, and the reasons which the undersigned has had the honor to set forth in the present note, you will deign to act in compliance with this request, and that you will inform the Cabinet of St. James that the Washington Cabinet sincerely desires that the present controversy between Great Britain and Venezuela may be settled by the means that are now recognized and made use of by civilized nations for the decision of questions of this kind in accordance with reason and justice.

The same sentiments and desires were expressed by the President of the United States in his message of December 3, 1889, and the undersigned believes that if the idea which they involve were directly manifested by Your Excellency to the Government of Great Britain, it would be

sufficient to induce that nation to assent to a peaceful settlement whereby all just rights would be guaranteed; for the voice of the United States has always been listened to with deference by the European powers, especially when this nation has spoken in behalf of the legitimate interests of America, which it has defined in a doctrine that now forms part of its common law.

With sentiments, etc.,

N. BOLET PERAZA

**882. BRITISH FOREIGN OFFICE TO SEÑOR MODESTO URBANEJA,
VENEZUELAN PLENIPOTENTIARY**
[19 February 1890]

(Translation: Original: French)

Foreign Office, London, February 19, 1890.

M. le Ministre,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th instant, and its inclosure, containing your observations on the Memorandum, forwarded with my letter of the 10th, respecting the questions at issue between Her Majesty's Government and that of Venezuela.

I have lost no time in laying your communication before the Marquess of Salisbury. . . .

(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON

**883. WILLIAM L. SCRUGGS, AMERICAN MINISTER IN VENEZUELA, TO JAMES
G. BLAINE, AMERICAN SECRETARY OF STATE**
[6 March 1890]

[No. 82]

*LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
Caracas, March 6, 1890. (Received March 21)*

Sir: By constitutional provision, the national legislature of Venezuela is composed of two houses, one of senators and one of representatives. The senators are elected for the term of 4 years by the legislatures of the several States, each State being entitled to 3 senators and to an equal number of *suplentes*, or alternates. The alternates have no functions except in the case of death, inability, or absence of their principals. Only native-born citizens 30 years of age or upwards are eligible to either position. There are nine constituent States of the federal union, and consequently 27 senators and as many alternates.

The representatives are elected for 4 years by popular vote, and for this purpose there is no restriction of the suffrage, no qualifications other than age and sex. It is only necessary that the

voter be a male citizen 18 years of age, and all persons born or naturalized in the country are citizens; so, too, are all residents who were born abroad of Venezuelan parents, and likewise all resident natives of other Spanish American countries who "manifest a desire to become citizens." There is one representative and one alternate for every 35,000 inhabitants, and an additional member is allowed for every fraction of 35,000 over 15,000.

The meeting of the two houses takes place annually on the 20th of February, "or" to adopt the language of the constitution, "as soon thereafter as possible." The presence of two-thirds of each house is necessary to a quorum; but less than a quorum may organize as a "preparatory commission" and formulate measures for approval by a quorum of either house after organization. The organization is effected by the election of a presiding officer and subordinate officers, the appointment of standing committees, etc. The presiding officers of the senate and house are styled, respectively, "the president" and "vice president of Congress." The sessions are open and public, but may be made secret by a majority vote in each house. All voting, whether in open or in secret session, is secret and by ballot. The constitutional limit of the session is 60 days, but may be extended to 90 by a majority vote in both houses.

The new Congress met in Caracas on the 20th ultimo. There being less than a quorum present, those who answered to their names organized themselves into a preparatory commission and proceeded to formulate business for the session. On the 25th, there being a quorum present, both houses were organized and the session formally declared open. On the 3d instant the President read his annual message (dated the 1st) to the houses in joint session.

The message (two copies of which I transmit under separate cover) is of great length and treats mainly of local and domestic matters.

The President congratulates the country upon the fact that during the past year there has been a settled peace. There has been a grand "political transformation," but without war or bloodshed, "without even riot or disorder of any kind." He urgently recommends, however, that greater attention be paid to the coast defenses and to "the strengthening and improving of the military and naval forces;" says the financial condition of the country is satisfactory; that the interest on the public debt has been punctually paid and the debt itself materially reduced; and that, with the exception of the old difficulty with Great Britain, the relations of the Venezuelan Government with foreign powers are amicable and satisfactory. He expresses regret, however, that, in spite of the constant efforts made in London and in Washington looking to some just and satisfactory solution of the British Guiana controversy, nothing has been accomplished, and that the colonial authorities of Demerara are constantly encroaching upon Venezuelan territory.

Of the International Conference of American States now in session in Washington he says, "all the free states of both the Americas responded to the call of the great Republic, and it is hoped that a Congress, such as the world has never before seen, may be productive of beneficial results to all the countries represented;" and that "it is a consoling thought to see friendly arbitration gaining in favor as a means of settling international disputes."

The reading of the message occupied nearly 3 hours, and was listened to with profound attention, with frequent applause from the galleries and from the benches of the members.

I have, etc.,

WILLIAM L. SCRUGGS

**884. BRITISH FOREIGN OFFICE TO SEÑOR MODESTO URBANEJA,
VENEZUELAN PLENIPOTENTIARY**

[19 March 1890]

(Translation: Original: French)

Foreign Office, London, March 19, 1890.

M. le Ministre,

With reference to my note of the 19th ultimo, I have now the honour to transmit to you, by Direction of the Marquess of Salisbury, the accompanying Memorandum containing the views of Her Majesty's Government on the paper inclosed in your note of the 13th ultimo relative to the conditions which are held by them to be necessary for a solution of the questions pending between Great Britain and Venezuela, and for the renewal of diplomatic relations between the two countries. . . .

(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON

Inclosure:

Memorandum in reply to Señor Urbaneja's *Pro-Memoria* of February 13, 1890

Her Majesty's Government have given their careful attention to Señor Urbaneja's Memorandum of the 13th February. The following observations are forwarded in reply: –

1. As regards the boundary of British Guiana, Her Majesty's Government have carefully studied all the documents, historical data, maps and other information which have been communicated or referred to by the Venezuelan Government in the course of the discussions.

They have also recently made further investigations, which have resulted in the acquisition of much information of which they believe that the Venezuelan Government is not aware:

After examination of all this evidence, they can say without hesitation that the claim of the Venezuelan Government to the Essequibo is one which Spain never asserted, and which Her Majesty's Government must regard as absolutely untenable; the claim of Great Britain, on the other hand, to the whole basin of the Cuyuni and Yuruari is shown to be solidly founded, and the greater part of the district has been for three centuries under continuous settlement by the Dutch and by the British as their successors.

In these circumstances, Her Majesty's Government must decline, as they have repeatedly declined before, to entertain any proposal for bringing into arbitration claims on the part of Venezuela which in their full extent involve the title of the larger half of the British Colony.

They cannot admit that there is any foundation for the assertion that any Government of Her Majesty ever recognised Point Barima as Venezuelan territory. Her Majesty's Government have constantly maintained that of strict right they are entitled to the whole country within the line described in Lord Salisbury's note to Señor Rojas of the 10th January, 1880, that is, as far as the high lands of Upata, if not up to the Orinoco itself, and that all settlements by Venezuela the east of that line are in the nature of encroachments on the rights of Great Britain, whose desire has been throughout to pursue a conciliatory course, and to effect a solution by means of friendly

compromise and concession.

Her Majesty's Government must repeat that they cannot admit any question as to their title to territory within the line surveyed by Sir R. Schomburgk in 1841, and laid down on Herbert's Map, inclosed herewith. On the other hand, Her Majesty's Government do not wish to insist on the extreme limit of their claim, as stated in the note to Señor Rojas referred to above. For the purpose of facilitating a settlement, and as an indicator of good-will towards Venezuela, they would be ready to abandon a portion of that claim; and as regards that part of the territory between the Schomburgk line and their extreme claim, which is indicated by a green line on the map marked (A) and attached hereto, they are prepared to submit their claims to the arbitration of a third party.

Her Majesty's Government have never in any way authorized either Sir Andrew Clarke or Captain Lowther to present any proposals to the Government of Venezuela, and they must now, while regretting that Señor Urbaneja should have been misled, state their entire inability to adopt such proposals as he mentions.

2. As regards the question of the differential duties, Her Majesty's Government have the highest legal opinion in support of their view, that these duties are an infraction of the Treaty of 1825. They consider themselves, therefore, justified in claiming the repeal of the duties, quite apart from the question of a fresh Commercial Treaty.

Her Majesty's Government have, on their part, always endeavoured, to the best of their ability, to prevent all illicit traffic between Her Majesty's Colonies and Venezuela, but it would not be reasonable to hold Great Britain or her Colonies responsible for the conduct of Venezuelan officials, or for the administration of law outside Her Majesty's colonial waters.

Her Majesty's Government do not doubt that if the other questions at issue between the two Governments were satisfactorily adjusted, means could be found for arranging on an equitable basis the claims of the two nations against each other on behalf of their respective subjects.

Her Majesty's Government cannot conclude this expression of their views without calling Señor Urbaneja's attention to the annexed notice, which appeared in the *Opinion Nacional* of Caracas of the 24th January last. A large part of the districts therein granted by Contract to M. Le Mye is within the Schomburgk line above alluded to, and, therefore, within British territory. The Contract cannot be recognized by Her Majesty's Government, and any attempt to put the Concession in force within that line would entail the risk of a collision with the British authorities.

Foreign Office, March 19, 1890

**885. SEÑOR MODESTO URBANEJA, VENEZUELAN PLENIPOTENTIARY, TO
BRITISH FOREIGN OFFICE**

[28 March 1890]

(Translation – Original: French)

Legation of Venezuela, Paris, March 28, 1890.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th instant, in which, by

direction of Lord Salisbury, you inclosed a Memorandum containing the views of Her Majesty's Government in reply to my note of the 13th February last, with regard to the preliminary bases which should be fixed on the boundary question in order to facilitate the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of Venezuela.

At the same time I venture to request you to be good enough to furnish me with a copy of the "Sketch Map of the Territory in dispute between Venezuela and British Guiana by C. Alexander Harris, of the Colonial Office, April 1888," and a copy of the "Map of British Guiana constructed from the Survey and Routes of Captain Schomburgk, and other documents in the possession of the Colonial Department, by L. J. Herbert, of the Quartermaster-General's Office, Horse Guards, April 1842. . ."

(Signed) MODESTO URBANEJA

**886. N. BOLET PERAZA, VENEZUELAN MINISTER IN THE UNITED STATES, TO
JAMES G. BLAINE, AMERICAN SECRETARY OF STATE
[24 April 1890]**

(Translation from Spanish)

*LEGATION OF VENEZUELA
Washington, April 24, 1890.*

Sir: The undersigned has the honor to present his respects to the Hon. James G. Blaine, and regrets to inform him that he has this day received advices from his Government apprising him that Dr. Modesto Urbaneja, minister of the Republic in France, who visited London for the purpose of endeavoring to secure the restoration of diplomatic relations between Venezuela and Great Britain, relying to this end upon the mediation of Mr. Lincoln, the United States minister, was unable to accomplish his purpose, for the reason that His Excellency Mr. Lincoln has not received the instructions which the Honorable Mr. Blaine promised to send him for that purpose during the interview in which the undersigned had the honor to speak to His Excellency on this and other subjects on the 20th of February last.

The undersigned, having again received urgent instructions from his Government to remind the Honorable Mr. Blaine of the instructions so generously promised by him, hereby does so, with the remark that the circumstances are extremely critical for Venezuela, which sees on the one hand the British forces persistently invading her territory, and on the other does not see any effective demonstration on the part of the United States Government in the way of mediation, which has been so earnestly solicited from it, and which it has so unequivocally promised.

The undersigned has informed his Government of the repeated promises made to him by the Honorable Mr. Blaine that, when once the plan of arbitration should have been adopted by the conference, the friendly steps of the United States Government near that of Great Britain would be begun, with the view of inducing the latter to consent to a peaceful settlement of the boundary question between it and Venezuela, and the undersigned consequently entertains the hope that when the Honorable Mr. Blaine shall communicate to the Cabinet of St. James the wish expressed by the International American Conference that disputes between the American republics

and the nations of Europe may be settled by arbitration, that favorable opportunity may be taken by the United States Government to use its good offices to the end that the controversy may be brought to a speedy and reasonable termination by that means.

The undersigned will consider himself highly honored if the Honorable Mr. Blaine will favor him with a satisfactory reply to this note, which result is awaited by his Government with impatience and anxiety, owing to the gravity of the circumstances.

The undersigned, etc.,

N. BOLET PERAZA

887. WILLIAM L. SCRUGGS, AMERICAN MINISTER IN VENEZUELA, TO JAMES G. BLAINE, AMERICAN SECRETARY OF STATE
[25 April 1890]

(Extract)

[No. 98]

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
Caracas, April 25, 1890. (Received May 1)

Sir: The recent occupation by a British police force of a large area of territory south and west of the limits hitherto claimed by England as the boundary of her Guianian possessions is creating grave apprehensions in Government circles here.

It will be remembered that Venezuela has steadily maintained, since 1836, that the Essequibo River is the limit of British possessions. It will be remembered also that in the earlier stages of this controversy England claimed only to the Pumarón. Subsequently she extended her claim westward to the Gulf of Morajua and southward to the river Guaima. Later on, taking advantage of the unsettled political condition of the country, she further extended her claim, first to the River Barima, then to Braza Barima (including the fertile island of that name), and finally southward up the main channel of the Orinoco delta, as far as the Amacura, the starting point from westward of what is known as the "Schomburgk line."

This line extends in general direction southeastward to the Otomonga, near its junction with the Cuyuni, between the sixtieth and sixty-first meridians; thence southward in general direction to the head waters of the Uriman, or Little Coroni (one of the navigable affluents of the Orinoco), between the sixty-first and sixty-second meridians; thence northward to the junction of the Maju and Tacutu Rivers, tributaries of the Branco; and thence eastward along the margin of the Tacutu and beyond its source to the head waters of the Essequibo.

Never, I believe, until quite recently has England claimed this line as the southern boundary of her colonial possessions. On the contrary, she has more than once explicitly disclaimed any such pretension. Yet she now not only occupies the entire territory north of this line, but has taken possession of large districts south of it. More than this, she now lays claim to almost the entire territory north of the Caroni and east of the Orinoco below the mouth of the Caroni. This

includes, of course, the vast territory of Yuruary, wherein are situated the rich and productive gold mines of Caratal and Colloa.

Of course, the Venezuelan Government is not prepared to resist these bold encroachments; otherwise they would hardly be attempted. The Government here has been endeavoring for more than 6 months past to reestablish diplomatic relations, restore the *status quo* of 1886, and have the question of boundary referred to arbitration, but without the slightest prospect of success. The British Government makes it a condition that Venezuela relinquish her claim to all territory north of the Schomburgk line, and that arbitration be limited to disputed territory south of that line.

Hence the difficulty in the way of reestablishing diplomatic relations, of restoring the *status quo*, and thus bringing about a permanent adjustment by means of friendly arbitration. It can now be done, I apprehend, only by the friendly intervention of some neutral power which England respects.

I have, etc.,

WILLIAM L. SCRUGGS.

888. GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA, VISCOUNT GORMANSTON, TO LORD KNUTSFORD, BRITISH SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

[25 April 1890]

Government House, Georgetown, Demerara, April 25, 1890.

My Lord,

I have to report that yesterday, at the request of M. Krogh, who has come here as Venezuelan Consul, but whose exequatur not having been received I have declined to recognize officially; I granted him a personal interview to introduce to me a M. B. F. Seijas, who informed me that he had come with a Commission from the President of the Republic of Venezuela to inspect the frontiers between this Colony and that State in some of the disputed districts, especially the Barima district and Amacura River, as well as part of the Cuyuni. I at once informed this gentleman that I had no power to receive any Commissioner from the Republic of Venezuela; that if the Government of that State wishes to enter into any arrangements with a view to settling the question of the territory in dispute, they should address themselves to Her Majesty's Government in London, and that all I could do was to forward any application he might make to your Lordship for your instructions, and, at the same time, I begged him to write to me officially, stating exactly his position and his requests.

I have received no communication from this gentleman, and cannot, therefore, state the precise nature of his demands. Should he renew his verbal application to visit the districts of the Colony mentioned to you, I shall refuse to grant it him pending instructions from your Lordship, which I may be obliged to ask for by telegraph. . . .

(Signed) GORMANSTON

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Inclosure: Governor of British Guiana, Viscount Gormanston, to Lord Knutsford, Brit-

ish Secretary of State for the Colonies, 25 April 1890 [Document No. 890 below]

889. DR. R. F. SEIJAS, VENEZUELAN MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TO SEÑOR G. A. KROGH, VENEZUELAN CONSUL IN GEORGETOWN
[25 April 1890]

(Translation: Original – Spanish)

Georgetown, Demerara, April 25, 1890

Sir,

Having been sent by the Government of Venezuela to fulfil certain functions in the disputed territory of Guiana, I have come here to learn the real process of the invasion, as this Colony is the point whence expeditions, both public and private, start to establish themselves in districts of Venezuelan Guiana, and even in places never before claimed by Her Majesty's Government, on the strength of public Acts and of Concessions of lands and mines. As it appeared to me logical and reasonable that his Excellency the Governor, being so well acquainted with the wishes of the Imperial Government, must have authority to treat about the delimitation or to propose a *modus vivendi* until both nations arrive at a final settlement of the dispute, I spoke to him in this sense during the private visit which I had the honour of paying him yesterday.

His Excellency answered that he had no instructions to that effect, and at the same time expressed a wish to be informed by letter of the purpose and object of my mission. I hasten to satisfy him with that frankness, loyalty, and good faith with which the present Government of Venezuela, treat all their business, by stating that my object is to see, to examine, and investigate, on the ground itself, the real state of the question, to sift the exactness of the plans and maps drawn up, and the points where the English have fixed posts, so that my Government may be informed of all these details, and may be able to guide their conduct with safety.

I venture to hope that you will be so good as to send a copy of this communication to his Excellency the Governor of Demerara . . .

890. SEÑOR G. A. KROGH, VENEZUELAN CONSUL IN GEORGETOWN, TO GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA, VISCOUNT GORMANSTON
[25 April 1890]

(Translation – Original: Spanish)

Georgetown, Demerara, April 25, 1890

My Lord,

I have the honour to inclose herewith copy of an official note I have received from Dr. R. F. Seijas, in his character of Special Envoy of Venezuela to the disputed territory in Guiana.

In fulfilling this duty, I beg you to inform his Excellency the Governor of the contents of this communication. . .

(Signed) G. A. KROGH

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Inclosure: Dr. R. F. Seijas, Venezuelan Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Señor G. A. Krogh, Venezuelan Consul in Georgetown, 25 April 1890 [Document No. 889 above]

891. GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA, VISCOUNT GORMANSTON, TO LORD KNUTSFORD, BRITISH SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
[25 April 1890]

British Guiana, April 25, 1890.

My Lord,

Since writing my former despatch of this day's date, I received the inclosed two letters from M. Krogh, acting here unofficially as Venezuelan Consul.

I had to request M. Krogh to furnish me with a translation of M. Seijas' letter, which he has done.

I purpose tomorrow to inform M. Seijas that I have no power to accede to his request without the special sanction of your Lordship, and that have written to your Lordship, inclosing his application to me, and asking, as I do now, for instructions how to act in this matter. . . .

(Signed) GORMANSTON

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Inclosure: Dr. R. F. Seijas to Señor G. A. Krogh, Venezuelan Consul in Georgetown, 25 April 1890 [Document No. 889 above].

892. DR. R. F. SEIJAS TO SEÑOR G. A. KROGH, VENEZUELAN CONSUL IN GEORGETOWN
[30 April 1890]

(Translation – Original: Spanish)

Georgetown, Demerara, April 30, 1890.

Sir,

Amongst the instructions which I have received from the Government of Venezuela, as shown to you on the day of my arrival in this Colony, there is one impressing upon me the duty of protesting against the British usurpation of our territory, should the facts frequently reported to the Government of Venezuela be true. And as the said facts are so well known here as to be beyond doubt, I think it now time to carry out my instructions; therefore, in the name of the Republic, I hereby solemnly and publicly protest:

1. Against, all official acts authorized by the Government of Demerara, with or without the sanction of Her Majesty's Government, in any way seeming to encroach on the territory of Venezuela.

2. Against intrusion of authorities or other persons who (with the tolerance, permission, or order of the said authorities) enter the Venezuelan territory by the Essequibo River or by any other river within the territorial limits of the Republic, by which there is no authorization or permission to enter, nor is any exterior commerce of any kind whatever authorized or permitted.

3. Against all acts of the Government of Demerara intending to enlarge the limits of the Colony encroaching on the lands of Venezuela, which lands begin on the north of the mouth of the west and south of the River Essequibo.

4. Against all Concessions of lands, forest, mines, etc., which have been granted by the Government of Demerara north of the Essequibo River, which is the limit of the Colony, as only the Government of Venezuela has power to grant such Concessions.

5. Against the establishment of English settlements in the Cuyuni, Pomeroon, Barima, Amacura, or any other river, or part of the Venezuelan territory.

6. Against the British jurisdiction established, and of the civil authorities, be it police or any other, in territory of Republic.

7. Against the exploitation of the natural productions of the Venezuelan territory, and their exportation by ways unauthorized for foreign commerce; and without the previous permission and authorization of the Venezuelan Government.

8. Against the frequent intrusions on the territory of the Republic, no matter for what object.

9. Against all or any other establishment within the jurisdiction of the Government of Venezuela; also against any line or lines of steamers or sailing-vessels to ply on the sea-coast and rivers of the territory of the said Republic.

10. Against all or any British expeditions, official or private, either composed of British subjects or subjects and citizens of any other nation, who, leaving Demerara, enter the territory of Venezuela; or who, coming from abroad, land in the said territory with the tacit or expressed consent of the Government of the Colony.

11. Against the establishment of stations, either police, military, naval, or any other; buoys, light-ships, lighthouses, and the opening of roads of any kind in Venezuelan soil.

12. Against the destruction of any rapids which may obstruct the navigation of any river within the territory of Venezuela; against the catechizing of any aboriginal Indian or Indians within the jurisdiction of the Republic, and also against the establishment of Missions or any religious Order of any kind.

I further declare that the Government of the United States of Venezuela have already protested, and by these presents do protest against all and every act or acts which are known to the Government of the Republic, and named in the foregoing twelve Articles; that the said Government of Venezuela disowns the legality which may be imputed to such acts, which are, and will always be, null, void, and of no value whatever; and finally, reserving all rights, the Venezuelan Government will make them valid in due time and place. Now, I hereby ratify and confirm this the said protest of the Republic of Venezuela.

Please transmit this protest and declaration to his Excellency the Governor of Demerara (British Guiana), and kindly oblige me with an acknowledgment of its receipt. . . .

(Signed) R. F. SEIJAS

893. JAMES G. BLAINE, AMERICAN SECRETARY OF STATE, TO WILLIAM L. SCRUGGS, AMERICAN MINISTER IN VENEZUELA

[2 May 1890]

[No. 81]

*DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, May 2, 1890.*

Sir: Referring to your No. 53 of November 16 last and your No. 63 of the 21st of the succeeding month, both relating to the question of the disputed boundary between Venezuela and British Guiana, I have to inclose copy of my telegram, dated yesterday, instructing Mr. Lincoln* to use his good offices to bring about the resumption of diplomatic relations between Great Britain and Venezuela, with a view to the arbitration of the boundary question.

I have informed the Venezuelan minister at this capital of the contents of this telegram. Copies of your Nos. 53 and 63 have been sent to Mr. Lincoln.

I am, etc.,

JAMES G. BLAINE

[*Editor's note: * American Minister in London*]

894. JAMES G. BLAINE, AMERICAN SECRETARY OF STATE, TO N. BOLET PERAZA, VENEZUELAN ENVOY IN THE UNITED STATES

[2 May 1890]

*DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, May 2, 1890.*

Sir: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your note of the 24th ultimo, relative to the question of the disputed boundary between Venezuela and British Guiana.

I yesterday instructed our minister at London by telegraph to use his earnest good offices with Her Majesty's Government to bring about a resumption of diplomatic relations between Venezuela and Great Britain, as a preliminary step toward negotiation for arbitration of the dispute.

I directed Mr. Lincoln to suggest to Lord Salisbury that an informal conference of representatives of Venezuela, Great Britain, and the United States be held here or in London, with a view to reaching an understanding on which diplomatic relations may be resumed. I further stated that our attitude in such a joint conference would be solely one of impartial friendship towards both Governments.

Accept, etc.,

JAMES G. BLAINE

895. WILLIAM L. SCRUGGS, AMERICAN ENVOY IN VENEZUELA, TO JAMES G. BLAINE, AMERICAN SECRETARY OF STATE

[3 May 1890]

[*No. 100*]

*LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
Caracas, May 3, 1890. (Received May 15)*

Sir: Since the date of my No. 98 of the 25th of April last I have procured a "sketch map" of the disputed Guianian territory as prepared by authority of the British Government.

This map shows the extreme claim by the British Government, as set forth January 10, 1880; the provisional line within which it refused to admit any question of title October 21, 1886, and also the boundary respecting which it intimated a willingness to submit to arbitration April, 1888.

It will be observed, however, that the claim thus officially announced does not differ materially from that indicated in my former dispatch, and that the vital point in dispute, namely, the command of the great mouth of the Orinoco, is precisely the one which Great Britain now refuses to submit to friendly arbitration.

I have, etc.,

WILLIAM L. SCRUGGS

896. N. BOLET PERAZA, VENEZUELAN MINISTER IN THE UNITED STATES, TO JAMES G. BLAINE, AMERICAN SECRETARY OF STATE

[5 May 1890]

[*Translation from Spanish*]

*LEGATION OF VENEZUELA,
Washington, May 5, 1890.*

Sir: The undersigned has the honor to acknowledge with the greatest satisfaction the receipt of Your Excellency's note of the 2d instant, whereby you were pleased to inform him that you had sent instructions by telegraph to the United States minister at London to use his good offices with the Government of Her Britannic Majesty, with a view to securing the restoration of diplomatic relations between Venezuela and Great Britain, as a preliminary step towards the negotiation of an arbitration convention for the settlement of the dispute. Your Excellency added that you had authorized Mr. Lincoln to suggest to Lord Salisbury that an informal conference of the representatives of Venezuela, Great Britain, and the United States be hold, either at Washington or at London, for the purpose of reaching an agreement with regard to the restoration of diplo-

matic relations, the attitude of the United States to be, in said conference, one of impartial friendship.

The undersigned expects the most satisfactory results from the step which Your Excellency has just taken in this important matter, for one of the circumstances that increased the difficulties of Venezuela in the conflict in which she is now engaged with Great Britain, and that which gave most encouragement to Her Majesty's Government in its invasions of Venezuelan territory, was the belief entertained by the British Government that the United States would abandon Venezuela and would never use their fraternal mediation in her behalf.

That mediation having now been initiated by the decisive instructions sent by Your Excellency to the United States minister at London, and Great Britain being now aware that the United States are speaking not only for themselves in this matter, but that they are also voicing the fraternal desire of all the nations of the American continent, solemnly and explicitly expressed at the International American Conference, it is to be hoped that the British Government will modify its attitude and will be inclined to accept the amicable and peaceful means that are offered to it in the name of the high principles of humanity and justice for the settlement of its controversy with Venezuela.

The undersigned, being convinced of the signification and high importance of the noble step taken by Your Excellency, informed his Government thereof by telegraph without delay, and he has this moment received the reply of the President of Venezuela, which was sent by telegraph, and which is as follows:

“Congratulations. Good for Venezuela. Thanks to Mr. Blaine.
ANDUZA PALACIOS.”

The undersigned has the honor to communicate this to the Honorable Mr. Blaine, for the satisfaction of the United States. While Venezuela was already bound to this country by the ties of traditional friendship, she is so now by those of deep gratitude.

With sentiments, etc.,

N. BOLET PERAZA

**897. MR. FRANCIS VILLIERS, ACTING GOVERNMENT SECRETARY OF BRITISH GUIANA, TO SEÑOR G. A. KROGH, VENEZUELAN CONSUL IN GEORGETOWN
[9 May 1890]**

Government Secretary's Office, Georgetown, Demerara, May 9, 1890.

Sir,

I have the honour, by direction of the Governor, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 1st instant, inclosing translation of a letter addressed to you by Dr. Seijas, which you forwarded to his Excellency at Dr. Seijas' request. . . .

(Signed) FRANCIS VILLIERS
Acting Government Secretary

898. GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA, VISCOUNT GORMANSTON, TO LORD KNUTSFORD, BRITISH SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

[9 May 1890]

Government House, Georgetown, Demerara, May 9, 1890.

My Lord,

I have the honour to transmit, for your Lordship's information, translation of a further letter which I have received from M. Seijas, through M. Krogh, protesting, on behalf of the Venezuelan Republic, against the British usurpation of Venezuelan territory, together with a copy of the reply to M. Krogh acknowledging the receipt.

2. I may state that M. Seijas left for Trinidad on the 5th instant. . . .

(Signed) GORMANSTON

*

Inclosure 1: Dr. R. F. Seijas to Señor G. A. Krogh, Venezuelan Consul in Georgetown, 30 April 1890 [Document No. 892 above].

Inclosure 2: Mr. Francis Villiers, Acting Government Secretary of British Guiana, to Señor G. A. Krogh, Venezuelan Consul in Georgetown, 9 May 1890 [Document No. 897 above].

899. JAMES G. BLAINE, AMERICAN SECRETARY OF STATE, TO N. BOLET PERAZA, VENEZUELAN ENVOY IN THE UNITED STATES

[19 May 1890]

*DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, May 19, 1890.*

Sir: I have the honor to inform you that I have received a dispatch from our minister at London, reporting that, in compliance with my instructions, of the transmission of which I advised you on the 2d instant, he had an interview with Lord Salisbury in regard to the renewal of diplomatic relations between Venezuela and Great Britain and the settlement of the boundary dispute by arbitration.

After listening to the views of this Government, His Lordship informed Mr. Lincoln that he desired to consult with the colonial office before replying to his suggestions.

Accept, etc.,

JAMES G. BLAINE

900. JAMES G. BLAINE, AMERICAN SECRETARY OF STATE, TO WILLIAM L. SCRUGGS, AMERICAN ENVOY IN VENEZUELA

[19 May 1890]

[No. 85]

*DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, May 19, 1890.*

Sir: I inclose for your information and the files of your legation, copy of Mr. Lincoln's No. 229* of the 5th instant, reporting his conversation with Lord Salisbury in regard to the renewal of diplomatic relations between Great Britain and Venezuela and the settlement of the boundary dispute by arbitration.

I am, etc.,

JAMES G. BLAINE.

(Not included here)

901. N. BOLET PERAZA, VENEZUELAN ENVOY IN THE UNITED STATES, TO JAMES G. BLAINE, AMERICAN SECRETARY OF STATE

[20 May 1890]

[*Translation*]

*LEGATION OF VENEZUELA,
Washington, May 20, 1890.*

Sir: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Your Excellency's note of yesterday, whereby you were pleased to inform me that you had received a dispatch from the United States minister at London, in which he stated that, in pursuance of the instructions which Your Excellency had sent him, he had an interview with Lord Salisbury in regard to the restoration of diplomatic relations between Venezuela and Great Britain and the settlement of the boundary question by arbitration, and that Lord Salisbury, when apprised of the views of the United States Government, had informed Mr. Lincoln that he wished to consult the colonial office before replying to his suggestions.

I have already transmitted this news to my Government by cable. Although it does not contain a final decision, I do not doubt that it will be very pleasing to my Government, because it informs it of what it so eagerly desired, viz., that the United States Government has begun to lend its paternal good offices in this question with a decision that can not fail to be crowned with success. It will be a glorious thing for the United States Government to restore to this whole continent the tranquillity which it does not now enjoy, on seeing the sovereignty of a sister republic menaced by a European power. Such a result, added to those which have just been accomplished

by the International American Conference, will immortalize the present administration, which will forever be blessed by the nations of South America.

The pretensions of the Government of Great Britain have now reached an extreme which can not be properly described in the courteous language of diplomacy. Your Excellency will judge of their enormity by merely running your eye over the two maps which I have the honor to transmit to you. One of these is a photographed copy of a map published by British engineers in 1817, the original of which is in the library of the New York Historical Society, and the other is the map presented by Lord Salisbury to Dr. Modesto Urbaneja, our minister, on the 10th of February last, with the three demarcations of boundaries which Lord Salisbury says constitute the conditions necessary to the settlement of the question.

These three demarcations are the fanciful line drawn by Schomburgk, in red ink, which takes possession of one of the mouths of the Orinoco, and concerning which Lord Salisbury says that there can be no discussion with regard to titles; the second, in green ink, extending still further into Venezuelan Guiana, concerning which Lord Salisbury says that arbitration may be accepted; and the third line, in violet-colored ink, which extends as far as the extreme interior course of the Caroni, not far from the capital of our Guiana, and which constitutes the extreme claim of the British Government.

In 1817, 3 years after the conclusion of Great Britain's treaty with Holland, whereby she first entered into possession of Dutch Guiana, the boundary between which and Venezuelan Guiana is the Essequibo river, the English laid claim to but a comparatively small territory in our Guiana in order to establish themselves at Cape Nassau, on the Atlantic coast, the possession of which territory was always disputed by Venezuela. The map to which I refer, which was published in Edinburgh in 1817, gives that demarcation.

I now beg Your Excellency to compare that claim with the three claims of Lord Salisbury's map, and you will be convinced that they are wholly without foundation, for a line which advances into neighboring territory as years roll by may be anything but the result of rights or titles.

So unpleasant was the impression which these inconsistent claims on the part of Her Britannic Majesty's Government made upon the United States Government in 1888 that, although they were not then so great as they now are, they induced Mr. Bayard to write to Mr. Phelps as follows:

In the course of your conversation you may refer to the publication in the *London Financier* of January 24 (a copy of which you can procure and exhibit to Lord Salisbury) and express apprehension lest the widening pretensions of British Guiana to possess territory over which Venezuelan jurisdiction has never heretofore been disputed may not diminish the chances for a practical settlement.

If, indeed, it should appear that there is no fixed limit to the British boundary claim, our good disposition to aid in a settlement might not only be defeated, but be obliged to give place to a feeling of grave concern.

Venezuela hopes that, as the case is now still more aggravated, and as the influence of the United States has been strengthened by the bonds which it has just established with its sister nations of America and by the earnestness with which these nations have manifested their desire that the question between Venezuela and Great Britain may be decided by arbitration, the steps taken by the Honorable Mr. Blaine will be more successful than those of his predecessor.

With sentiments, etc.,

N. BOLET PERAZA

902. JAMES G. BLAINE, AMERICAN SECRETARY OF STATE, TO WILLIAM L. SCRUGGS, AMERICAN MINISTER IN VENEZUELA
[21 May 1890]

[No. 88]

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, May 21, 1890.

Sir: I have received your No. 100 of the 3d instant, inclosing a map showing the British claims to the territory in dispute between the Governments of Great Britain and Venezuela. Copies of your dispatch and of its inclosure have been transmitted to our minister at London.

I am, etc.,

JAMES G. BLAINE

903. GENERAL DANIEL BRICEÑO, VENEZUELAN LAND COMMISSAR, TO SEÑOR G. A. KROGH, VENEZUELAN CONSUL IN GEORGETOWN
[30 May 1890]

(Translation – Original: Spanish)

United States of Venezuela, Bartica Grove, May 30, 1890.

Sir,

Among the instructions which I have received from the Governor of the territory of Yuruari, as shown to you on the day of my arrival in the Colony, there is one impressing upon me the duty of protesting against the British usurpation of our territory, should the facts frequently reported to the Government of Venezuela be true. And as the said facts are so well known here, that I myself have seen them and touched them, I think it is now time to carry out my instructions; therefore, in the name of the Republic, I hereby solemnly and publicly protest –

1. Against, all official acts authorized by the Government of Demerara, with or without the sanction of Her Majesty's Government, in any seeming to encroach on the territory of Venezuela.

2. Against intrusion of authorities or other persons who with the tolerance, permission, or order of the said authorities, have entered the Venezuelan territory by the Essequibo River or by any other river within the territorial limits of the Republic, which limits begin on the north of the mouth on the west and the south of the River Essequibo.

3. Against all Concessions of lands, forest, mines, etc., which have been granted by the Government, and which I have found to be north of the Essequibo River, as only the Government of Venezuela has power to grant such concessions. Against the establishment of British settlements

in the Cuyuni, Essequibo (north), Mazaruni and its confluences, which I have visited myself, and against the exploitation of the natural productions of the Venezuelan territory, and their exportation by ways unauthorized for foreign commerce; and without the previous permission and authorization of the Venezuelan Government.

4. Against the British jurisdiction established, and of the civil authorities, be it police or any other, in territory of Republic.

5. Against the frequent intrusions on the territory of the Republic, no matter for what object; against any line or lines of steamers or sailing-vessels to ply on the rivers of the territory of the said Republic. Also against the establishment of stations, either police, military, naval, lightships, buoys, posts, lighthouses, telegraphs, etc., and against all or any British expeditions, official or private, who enter the territory of the Republic.

6. Against the destruction of any rapids which may obstruct the navigation of any river within the territory of Venezuela. Against the opening of roads of any kind, and also against the catechizing of any aboriginal Indians within the jurisdiction of the Republic, and also the establishment of Missions or any religious Order of any kind.

I further declare that the Government of Venezuela have already protested, and by these presents do protest, against all and every act or acts which are known to the Government of the Republic, named in the foregoing six Articles; that the said Government of Venezuela disowns the legality which may be imputed to such acts, which are and always will be, null, void, and of no value whatever; and finally, reserving all rights, the Venezuelan Government will make them valid in due time and place. Now, I hereby ratify and confirm this the said Protest of the Republic of Venezuela.

Please transmit this Protest and Declaration to his Excellency the Governor of the Colony of Demerara, notifying the Government of the Republic, and kindly oblige me with an acknowledgment of its receipt. . .

(Signed) D. BRICEÑO

904. WILLIAM L. SCRUGGS, AMERICAN ENVOY IN VENEZUELA, TO JAMES G. BLAINE, US SECRETARY OF STATE

[7 June 1890]

[No. 106]

*LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
Caracas, June 7, 1890. (Received June 20)*

Sir: A special commissioner of the Venezuelan Government to that of British Guiana has just returned hither after an extensive tour of observation through the territory recently occupied by the British colonial authorities of Demerara. He reports the occupation as "a fact, formally and fully accomplished." The governor of Demerara told him plainly that, "although Venezuela claimed this territory, it would never be given back." The position and extent of this territory is fully shown in my Nos. 98 and 100 of April 25 and May 3 last.

According to the commissioner, the transformation in Barima is complete. In 1883 “there was not a sign of human habitation” between the Rivers Barima and Amacura. “Now there are upwards of fifty English settlements, all in a most flourishing condition.” The soil is of inexhaustible fertility, admirably adapted to sugar and cotton culture, and the forests abound with richest and rarest cabinet and dye woods. The British have established a port of entry and a number of large warehouses at Barima Point, “thus affording increased facilities for smuggling European goods into the Venezuelan coast and river ports.”

In other portions of the disputed territory rich gold mines have been recently discovered and opened. These are worked at comparatively small expense and “yield enormous profits.” Hence, owing to the excitement thus caused and the extraordinary inducements held out to immigrants, the country is being rapidly settled up.

The Indians of the far interior receive special attention from the Demerara government. They are encouraged to visit and trade with the new settlements. They are not required to pay taxes or port dues of any kind, and when they visit the settlements they are protected from “sharpers” by a special police force, whose business it is to “see that they are not cheated.” They seem greatly pleased with these attentions, and already a profitable trade has sprung up between them and the new settlements. They are acquiring the English language and seem contented and happy in their new relations.

The trade between the new settlements and Demerara has already become quite extensive and is daily increasing. It is carried on by means of small coasting and river steamers, operating under subsidies from the British and colonial governments, and, to adopt the language of the commissioner, the rich valleys of the Pumaron, Guaima, Barima, and Amacura “have become the granaries of British Guiana.”

Acting under instructions from his Government, the commissioner made formal written protest against all these encroachments, and against the exercise of any and all British authority in the territory named; but little or no attention was paid to it.

In this connection I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your instruction No. 85, dated the 19th May, inclosing copy of Mr. Lincoln’s No. 229 of the 5th, in which he reports his conversation with Lord Salisbury in regard to the renewal of diplomatic relations between Great Britain and Venezuela and the settlement of the boundary dispute by arbitration. I have taken the liberty to communicate, informally, the substance of Mr. Lincoln’s dispatch to the Venezuelan minister for foreign affairs.

I have, etc.,

WILLIAM L. SCRUGGS

905. SEÑOR G. A. KROGH, VENEZUELAN CONSUL IN GEORGETOWN, TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY OF BRITISH GUIANA
[17 June 1890]

(Translation – Original: French)

*Consulate of the United States of Venezuela in Demerara,
Georgetown, June 17, 1890.*

Sir,

According to the instructions received from my Government, I have the honour to inclose herein a translation of a Protest and Declaration made by M. Daniel Briceño, and dated at Bartica Grove on the 30th of last month, which was not sent to you before, as I had to refer to Venezuela.

Please inform his Excellency the Governor of its contents, and kindly oblige me with an acknowledgment of its receipt. . .

(Signed) G. A. KROGH

*

Inclosure: General Daniel Briceño, Venezuelan Land Commissar, to Señor G. A. Krogh, Venezuelan Consul in Georgetown, 30 May 1890 [Document No. 903 above].

906. GOVERNOR OF BRITISH GUIANA, VISCOUNT GORMANSTON, TO LORD KNUTSFORD, BRITISH SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
[20 June 1890]

Government House, Georgetown, Demerara, June 20, 1890.

My Lord,

With reference to my despatch of the 6th instant, I have now the honour to transmit to your Lordship, for the information of Her Majesty's Government, a copy of a letter from M. Krogh, transmitting what he describes as a translation of Protest and Declaration addressed to him by M. D. Briceño. . .

(Signed) GORMANSTON

*

Inclosure 1: Señor G. A. Krogh, Venezuelan Consul in Georgetown, to the Colonial Secretary of British Guiana, 17 June 1890 [Document No. 905 above].

Inclosure 2: General Daniel Briceño, Venezuelan Land Commissar, to Señor G. A. Krogh, Venezuelan Consul in Georgetown, 30 May 1890 [Document No. 903 above].

907. SEÑOR LUCIO PULIDO, VENEZUELAN PLENIPOTENTIARY, TO THE BRITISH FOREIGN OFFICE
[20 June 1890]

Hotel Victoria, Northumberland Avenue, London, June 20, 1890.

Sir,

I have come to London with the character of Plenipotentiary *ad hoc* of the Republic of the United States of Venezuela to succeed M. Urbaneja, who remains as Minister Plenipotentiary of Venezuela in the French Republic.

I am duly authorized by my Government to give, on their behalf, to Her Britannic Majesty's Government the answer to the Memorandum addressed by you on the 19th March last to M. Urbaneja, and to continue, should it be so convenient, the negotiations already initiated.

I pray you in consequence kindly to appoint me a day and hour to have the honour to deliver personally to you, after previous verification of my official character, the answer of my Government to the said Memorandum. . .

(Signed) LUCIO PULIDO

908. BRITISH FOREIGN OFFICE TO SEÑOR LUCIO PULIDO, VENEZUELAN PLENIPOTENTIARY

[21 June 1890]

Foreign Office, London, June 21, 1890.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 20th instant, which I have submitted to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

It will give me much pleasure to receive you at the Foreign Office on Tuesday next, the 24th instant, at 3 o'clock . . .

(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON

909. JAMES G. BLAINE, AMERICAN SECRETARY OF STATE, TO WILLIAM L. SCRUGGS, AMERICAN MINISTER IN VENEZUELA

[21 June 1890]

[No. 97]

*DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, June 21, 1890.*

Sir: I have to acknowledge the receipt of your No. 106 of the 7th instant, in relation to the Guiana boundary dispute, and to state that a copy of your dispatch has been forwarded to your colleague at London, for his information.

I am, etc.,

JAMES G. BLAINE

**910. MEMORANDUM COMMUNICATED TO THE BRITISH FOREIGN OFFICE BY
SEÑOR LUCIO PULIDO, VENEZUELAN PLENIPOTENTIARY**

[24 June 1890]

The Government of the United States of Venezuela are very desirous to renew diplomatic relations with Her Britannic Majesty's Government, and wish to see the said relations re-established under cordial and durable basis. My Government has honoured me with full instructions to this effect, and, animated by the most conciliatory feelings, I shall be most happy if I arrive at a final arrangement with Her Majesty's Government.

My Government have seen with great regret the communications exchanged in the months of February and March last between M. Urbaneja, my predecessor, and yourself, as Under-Secretary at Her Majesty's Foreign Office. And with particular regret have my Government received your last communication, dated the 19th March ultimo, addressed to M. Urbaneja, as in the said communication the conditions under which Her Majesty's Government would consent to a settlement of the questions pending with the United States of Venezuela are peremptorily defined. The emphatic statements therein contained in reference to the boundary question between Her Majesty's Colony of British Guiana and the United States of Venezuela, which is, in fact, the only serious difference existing between both Governments, create now for my Government difficulties not formerly contemplated, which render impossible a just and honourable settlement. I am instructed by my Government to formally decline the consideration of said proposals.

I am, however, quite ready and most disposed to take part in an informal Conference, as suggested by the Honourable Mr. Blaine, Secretary of State of the United States of America, composed of the United States' Minister, a Representative of Great Britain, and myself, as Representative of the United States of Venezuela, to endeavour to reach, by cordially discussing the pending difficulties, a final settlement, which would permit the Governments of Venezuela and Great Britain to renew their friendly relations.

The pending difficulties referring to the additional duties imposed in Venezuela upon colonial imports, to the modification of the existing Treaty of Commerce, and to certain British claims of other natures against my Government, will be arranged as soon as the diplomatic relations between both Governments are re-established, and I do not hesitate to state that the instructions of my Government on these matters are of the most cordial and satisfactory character.

The only pending difficulty between the two Governments over which public opinion in Venezuela is exceedingly excited, and with regard to which my Government must act with the greatest prudence, is the one relating to the boundary between Her Majesty's Colony of British Guiana and the United States of Venezuela. It is materially impossible to settle this question within a short time, but preliminary steps can at once be taken as basis for final settlement, which steps I have the honour to submit to the consideration of Her Majesty's Government in the present Memorandum.

I would suggest, for the renewal of diplomatic relations between the Government of the United States of Venezuela and Her Majesty's Government, that a preliminary Agreement be made between both Governments for the purpose of arriving at the final settlement of the boundary question under the following basis: –

1. The Government of the United States of Venezuela should formally declare that the River

Essequibo, its banks, and the lands covering it, belong exclusively to British Guiana, and Her Majesty's Government should formally declare that the Orinoco River, its banks, and the lands covering belong exclusively to the United States of Venezuela.

2. Considering that the region to the west and north-west of the Essequibo River towards the Orinoco River is not officially well known, and considering that the surveys made by the explorer, Mr. Schomburgk, cannot be invoked as a title of property against the United States of Venezuela in the same manner in which the surveys made by several Venezuelan explorers cannot be invoked as a title of property against Her Majesty's Colony of British Guiana, both Governments should at once agree to appoint a Mixed Commission, composed of two Chief Engineers and their respective staffs, to proceed to make without any delay, and in the course of one year, the chorographical, geographical, and hydrographical Maps and Charters of the said region, in order to officially determine the exact course of the rivers and streams, the precise position and situation of the mountains and hills, and all other valuable details which would permit both Governments to have a reliable official knowledge of the territory which is actually in dispute.

3. The official Maps and Charters of the region would permit both Governments to determine with a mutual feeling of friendship and goodwill a boundary with perfect knowledge of the case, and a natural boundary between British Guiana and the United States of Venezuela should in all cases be preferred and determined.

4. But if, in view of such official Maps and Charters, both Governments do not agree upon a friendly boundary, it should from the present moment be agreed that in such an event the final decision and settlement of the boundary question should be submitted to two Arbitrators, appointed one by each Government, and a third one elected by the two Arbiters for cases of discord, to decide the question, and in view of the original titles and documents which both Governments would then submit to justify their claims to the lands or territories in dispute, the said Arbitrators should be authorized to fix a boundary-line which, being in accordance with the respective rights and titles, should have the advantage of constituting as far as possible a natural boundary.

5. In order to arrive at this desirable result, and to prevent any chance of international susceptibilities, both Governments should agree to withdraw or remove all posts and any other indications or signs of presumptive possession and dominion on the said region until the final boundary has been fixed in the manner aforesaid, and therefore neither Government shall exercise any jurisdiction upon the disputed region pending the final arrangement.

(Signed) LUCIO PULIDO

London, June 24, 1890

911. MR. ALVEY ADEE, ACTING US SECRETARY OF STATE, TO N. BOLET PERAZA, VENEZUELAN ENVOY IN THE UNITED STATES
[9 July 1890]

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, July 9, 1890.

My dear Sir: It gives me pleasure to inform you that the Department is in receipt of a dispatch from our minister at London, dated the 25th ultimo, in which he states that, in compliance with the Department's telegraphic instructions, he requested Señor Pulido, the special envoy from Venezuela to Great Britain, to meet him with a view to arranging the former's presentation to Lord Salisbury. Señor Pulido called on Mr. Lincoln on the 21st ultimo and informed him that he had, on the previous day, formally notified Sir Thomas Sanderson, assistant undersecretary of state for foreign affairs (by whom the recent note to Señor Urbaneja was signed), of his mission, and had requested an appointment to present his credentials and the response of the Venezuelan Government. As he was still desirous of being presented to Lord Salisbury, Mr. Lincoln had an interview with His Lordship, who stated that, while Señor Pulido was in negotiation with Sir Thomas Sanderson, it would, nevertheless, be quite agreeable to him to receive him. Mr. Lincoln accordingly made the presentation on the 25th ultimo. The conversation was brief and referred only in general terms to the pending controversy, the hope being expressed by both Lord Salisbury and Señor Pulido, in the most courteous manner, that some satisfactory arrangement would soon be reached. It was understood that Señor Pulido was to continue his negotiations with Sir Thomas Sanderson. Señor Pulido expressed his gratification to Mr. Lincoln at the latter's action in the matter.

I am, etc.,

ALVEY ADEE,
Acting Secretary

**912. BRITISH FOREIGN OFFICE TO SEÑOR LUCIO PULIDO, VENEZUELAN
PLENIPOTENTIARY**
[24 July 1890]

Foreign Office, London, July 24, 1890.

Sir,

I duly submitted to Lord Salisbury the Memorandum which you were good enough to leave with me on the 24th ultimo, containing proposals for the resumption of diplomatic relations between Great Britain and Venezuela, and for the settlement of the frontier between the Republic and the Colony of British Guiana.

I have now the honour, by direction of Lord Salisbury, to transmit to you a Memorandum containing the reply of Her Majesty's Government to those proposals.

The reply would not, as you will perceive, exclude further discussion on the special points connected with the frontier which you mentioned at our interview.

But Lord Salisbury has received with great surprise, during the last few days, the intelligence of the issue by the Government of Venezuela of two Decrees, of which copies are inclosed herewith, purporting to establish Venezuelan Administrations in the district between Point Barima and the River Pomaroon, and in the neighbourhood of the point where the Cuyuni debouches into the Essequibo. Such Notices can have no practical effect, and any attempt to put them into execution could only be regarded as an invasion of the Colony and dealt with accordingly.

But Lord Salisbury desires me to state that he cannot but regard the publication of the De-

crees at the present moment as entirely inconsistent with the professed desire of the Venezuelan Government to come to a settlement of pending differences by means of friendly discussion.

Unless the Decrees are withdrawn, with satisfactory explanations, it appears to him that it will be useless to continue the present negotiations, and that, although he will regret their suspension, it will be necessary to defer them until the Venezuelan Government are prepared to treat the question in a more conciliatory spirit. . . .

(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON

*

Inclosure:

Memorandum, 24 July 1890

Señor Pulido's Memorandum of the 24th ultimo has received the careful consideration of Her Majesty's Government, who have been desirous of examining in the most friendly and impartial spirit, any proposals which the Venezuelan Government may wish to offer for the resumption of diplomatic relations and the settlement of pending differences.

In Señor Pulido's opinion, the only matter which presents real difficulties is the question of the frontier between Venezuela and British Guiana, upon which he states that public opinion in Venezuela is greatly excited. He thinks that it is materially impossible to settle this question in a short time, but as a step towards its final solution he proposes a preliminary Agreement to the following effect: –

Venezuela to recognize the title of British Guiana to the exclusive possession of the River Essequibo, with its banks and the lands covering it, while, Her Majesty's Government would similarly recognize the title of Venezuela, to the exclusive possession of the River Orinoco, its banks and the lands covering it. A Mixed Commission of Engineers, appointed by the two Governments, to survey in the course of a year the country to the west and north-west of the Essequibo River, and the two Governments then to proceed, with the information thus obtained, to lay down a frontier between their respective territories, giving the preference to a natural boundary. In case of their being unable to agree on a line, the decision of the boundary to be referred to two Arbitrators, to be appointed one by each Government, and, if they should disagree, to a third Arbitrator to be chosen by the other two. Pending these discussions, both Governments to withdraw all posts and signs of presumptive possession and dominion from the territory in dispute.

Her Majesty's Government regret that this proposal is not such as they would feel justified in accepting.

The proposed Declaration, if it be correctly understood, would recognize the right of Great Britain to the main stream only of the Essequibo and the land upon its banks, without including its tributaries, in exchange for a similar recognition of the right of Venezuela to the main stream of the Orinoco, and the land upon its banks and in the neighbourhood of its mouth, including Point Barima and the adjacent district, while the whole intervening country would remain subject to discussion, and, in last resort, to arbitration. Such a transaction is clearly inadmissible. For in this manner Venezuela would maintain her full claim, surrendering nothing to which she can hope to show any legitimate title, while Great Britain would not only admit the discussion of claims upon the part of Venezuela for which she has constantly maintained that there is no seri-

ous foundation, but would at once and unconditionally abandon a considerable portion of territory of which she is in actual occupation.

That territory, and by far the greater portion of the large tract of country which the Venezuelan Government seeks to put in question, accrued to the Netherlands under the Treaty of Munster of 1648 by right of previous occupation. It was constantly held and claimed by the States-General in succeeding years. It was publicly and effectively occupied by Great Britain during the wars at the close of the last century, and the formal transfer of the country so occupied was effected by the Treaty of Peace with the Netherlands of the 13th August, 1814, and was in no way questioned by Spain on the conclusion of peace with her in the same year.

Her Majesty's Government would have no object in joining in such a survey as is proposed by Señor Pulido, of country which is already sufficiently well known to them, and which has been scientifically surveyed by British engineers. For many years past British administration has been familiar with the greater part of the districts watered by the Cuyuni and Massaruni Rivers. There is, therefore, already at the disposal of the two Governments ample information for the purpose of settling a general line of frontier, although the decision of any minor points of detail might be properly left to the Commission of Delimitation.

Her Majesty's Government have indicated in previous statements the extent of the full territorial claim which they believe themselves entitled to make. They have also defined the line within which they consider the British title to be unquestionable. In offering that certain portions of their claim beyond that line should be submitted to arbitration, they expressed their willingness to exclude from the proposed reference those valuable districts in the neighbourhood of Guacipati which, although falling within their claim, have for some time been in Venezuelan occupation, and in regard to which an arbitral decision adverse to Venezuela might have caused her considerable embarrassment and would have involved heavy pecuniary claims on the part of Great Britain on account of revenue received in past years.

They regret to see that this offer on their part does not appear to have been appreciated, or to have met with any response on the part of Venezuela. Her Majesty's Government would not object to receive for examination and possible discussion any suggestion for modification of their proposals in points where the Government of Venezuela consider that the interests of the Republic are seriously involved, but they are unable to depart from the general principle on which those proposals are based, or to accept an eventual reference to arbitration of a character so extensive as the method of procedure suggested by Señor Pulido would not improbably involve.

Her Majesty's Government have more than once explained that they cannot consent to submit to arbitration what they regard as their indisputable title to districts in the possession of the British Colony.

Every fresh investigation tends only to enforce and enlarge that title, and to make it more incumbent on them to maintain it as an act of justice to the rights and interests of the Colony.

**913. SEÑOR LUCIO PULIDO, VENEZUELAN PLENIPOTENTIARY, TO THE
BRITISH FOREIGN OFFICE**

[4 August 1890]

(Translation – Original: French)

London, August 4, 1890.

Sir,

I have received your note of the 24th ultimo, in which you are good enough to transmit, in the form of a Memorandum, the answer of Her Britannic Majesty's Government to what I had the honour of communicating to you on the 24th June, namely, the counter-proposals and answer of the Venezuelan Government to the proposals which you made to M. Urbaneja, my predecessor, in the communication of the 19th March, for the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between the Governments and the settlement of the questions pending.

In this note, you are good enough to state: "That Lord Salisbury has received with great surprise during the last few days the intelligence of the issue by the Government of Venezuela of two Decrees, of which copies are inclosed herewith, purporting to establish Venezuelan Administrations in the district between Point Barima and the River Pomaroon, and in the neighbourhood of the point where the Cuyuni debouches on to the Essequibo." And a little further on: "That unless the Decrees are withdrawn with satisfactory explanations, it appears to him that it will be useless to continue the present negotiations, and that although he will regret their suspension, it will be necessary to defer them until the Venezuelan Government are prepared to treat the question in a more conciliatory spirit."

I have no information from my Government about this fresh incident. But I think it proper to suggest that it proves the necessity of settling, in the manner customary among civilized nations, the frontiers between Venezuela and the British Colony of Guiana, as well as how much it is to be regretted at the same time that Her Britannic Majesty's Government persist, in their refusal to submit the question to the examination and decision of an Arbiter, as Venezuela has been proposing for ten years, and as the other nations who hold possessions in this same country (Guiana) are actually doing at present.

In fact, these frontiers, being more or less uncertain and undefined, from the point of view of the Government of Her Britannic Majesty, seeing that they have been constantly extending them on their own authority for the last fifty years, cannot but give rise to conflicts of dominion and territory. If the British Government occupied those territories in 1884, though they were declared disputable and neutral in 1850 by both Governments, and took measures to make a permanent establishment there, they cannot be astonished that the Venezuelan Government do not abandon their rights and their jurisdiction over them while the question is not settled in the usual manner, and when the districts are seized by force. This duty is imposed upon them, unfortunately, by an inexorable necessity.

I will communicate your note and Memorandum to my Government, and will answer it more fully as soon as I have received the necessary explanations and instructions. . .

(Signed) LUCIO PALIDO

**914. SEÑOR LUCIO PULIDO, VENEZUELAN PLENIPOTENTIARY, TO THE
BRITISH FOREIGN OFFICE**

[30 September 1890]

(Translation – Original: French)

19, Rue Daru, Paris, September 30, 1890.

Sir,

As I had the honour to inform you at our last interview, I shall, with the permission of my Government, leave for Venezuela on the 8th *proximo*, with the intention of passing the winter at Caracas.

Señor Z. Pimentel, my Secretary, will, by order of the Venezuelan Government remain charged provisionally with the Special Mission to the Government of Her Britannic Majesty with which I was honoured, and I trust that you will be so good as to show to Señor Pimentel the same kind attention and confidence which you have shown to me.

I must take this opportunity to state that my Government has informed me in recent communications that they are considering your note of the 24th July, and the Memorandum inclosed therein, and that they will in due time make their decision known to you. The Government of Venezuela is anxious to discover an acceptable basis for the settlement of the question of the British Guiana frontier, and is inspired with the spirit of conciliation which is indispensable in any negotiation. Should Her Britannic Majesty's Government respond to these wishes and sentiments and do to Venezuela the share of justice to which she is entitled, I have no doubt that an agreement will be arrived at. But in the contrary case, I am instructed to state that Venezuela will not at any time recognize either the occupation of those parts of Guiana which were declared in 1850 to be in dispute and to be neutral, or the measure's taken for their permanent occupation by the Colonial authorities or by Her Britannic Majesty's Government, as Venezuela reserves to herself for all time the right to recover the territories in question. . . .

(Signed) LUCIO PULIDO

**915. BRITISH FOREIGN OFFICE TO SEÑOR LUCIO PULIDO, VENEZUELAN
PLENIPOTENTIARY
[7 October 1890]**

Foreign Office, London, October 7, 1890

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your note of the 30th ultimo, informing me that you are about to leave for Caracas, and that, during your absence, your Secretary, Señor Pimentel, will remain provisionally charged with the Special Mission to the Government of Her Britannic Majesty with which you have been intrusted.

You also state that your Government is considering the note which, by direction of the Marquess of Salisbury, I had the honour of addressing you on the 24th July last in regard to the boundaries between Venezuela and British Guiana.

I have already had the honour of receiving Señor Pimentel, and Lord Salisbury desires me to assure you that any communication which he may make by Order of his Government will receive immediate attention. . . .

(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON

**916. EXTRACT FROM THE STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS TO CONGRESS BY
PRESIDENT BENJAMIN HARRISON OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
[9 December 1891]**

I should have been glad to announce some favorable disposition of the boundary dispute between Great Britain and Venezuela touching the western frontier of British Guiana, but the friendly efforts of the United States in that direction have thus far been unavailing. This Government will continue to express its concern at any appearance of foreign encroachment on territories long under the administrative control of American States. The determination of a disputed boundary is easily attainable by amicable arbitration where the rights of the respective parties rest, as here, on historic facts readily ascertainable. . .

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