

The Wismar Commission Report

Day 6 – Monday, 23 November 1964

CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, we are sorry for the delay owing to the fact that Mr. Sugrim Singh is still ill and is unable to come to work, but we will proceed as we did last Friday, and hope by tomorrow if Mr. Sugrim Singh is still ill, we will have a replacement.

PRATAP N. SINGH: I ask that I be granted leave to enter appearance at this late stage and that I would be watching the interest of the displaced persons.

[*Permission granted for Mr. Pratap N. Singh to appear on behalf of the displaced persons.*]

MR. RAMNARACE ETWARU is sworn in and he states as follows:

CHAIRMAN: Ramnarace Etwaru, where do you live?

ETWARU: I live at Cumberland, Canje.

CHAIRMAN: What is your occupation?

ETWARU: I am not working.

CHAIRMAN: Can you say on the 25th May where you were living?

ETWARU: Half Mile, Wismar.

CHAIRMAN: What work you did there?

ETWARU: Shop proprietor and farming.

CHAIRMAN: How long have you been at Wismar?

ETWARU: About two and a half years, sir.

CHAIRMAN: What was your relationship with the people at Wismar?

ETWARU: There were more Africans there than Indians. We lived on good terms.

CHAIRMAN: What happened on the 22nd, 23rd, 24th and 25th days of May?

ETWARU: On the 25th May, I saw some boys walking around my place and I saw Corporal King and I reported the matter to him.

CHAIRMAN: Yes?

ETWARU: He went to the boys and searched them but he did not find anything on them.

CHAIRMAN: Would you kindly speak up so that everybody can hear you? You said you reported the matter to Corporal King. What then?

ETWARU: I asked for protection and he said that everything would be alright.

CHAIRMAN: Yes? What happened? Can you say what he told you?

ETWARU: He told me that he would send four volunteers to give me a regular check up, but they never came.

CHAIRMAN: Yes. How far was Corporal King?

ETWARU: As I was speaking to me him there we heard an explosion about half a mile away.

CHAIRMAN: Yes?

ETWARU: Then he left me and went to the explosion.

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CRAIRMAN: Yes?

ETWARU: Then I continued to open my business at 7.00 a.m. as usual. About 8 o'clock one of my cousins came running.

CHAIRMAN: What's his name?

ETWARU: Ramsarran. And he told me they were beating Indians and burning places down by the market place. I then started to close my place, and by the time I was finished, I ran upstairs and saw a crowd of about a hundred. They came up to my place; some of them went to my neighbour James Barker and threw his house off the blocks. After they were finished they came to my place and they started to stone my windows and told me to come outside. I did not come outside. They broke the paling and came into the yard and broke open the shop door and started to loot the shop. Bertie Williams was the first person to bring out a carton of Carnation milk, and everybody started to fetch out. After a time the fellow named Tarzan Frank broke open my back door, and he came in the house. He took the axe and raised it into the air.

CHAIRMAN: How many people were in the house?

ETWARU: Six of us. My wife, adopted son, Sugrim, Persaud and Kundal. Kundal begged Tarzan not to chop us with the axe. He (Tarzan) took the axe and threw it outside. He went to my small bedroom took a blanket and hang it on the rafter. He then threw gasoline and lit it afire. While he was doing that another fellow was fetching out the clothes and searching for money. After the house started to burn they ran outside and all of us had to run into the yard. I had about two hundred dollars in my pocket. The people searched me and took away my money. They took my wife's ring from her finger.

SHEPHERD: You say "they"; I don't understand.

CHAIRMAN: Who were they?

ETWARU: Some were Africans.

CHAIRMAN: You don't know any of them?

ETWARU: Not by name. They started to follow. My wife ran into the latrine and the others ran into the fowl pen. As we were there they came with sticks and started to beat us.

CHAIRMAN: Who?

ETWARU: All of them, sir. The first to pelt a bottle was Daman. His father works at the boat landing and cooks for the prisoners. The others started to beat me. I got injuries on my head and the rest in my back. Sugrim also had his hand broken. Kundal had plenty cuts on his head. Whilst some were beating me the others were beating my wife. They tore off her clothes and searched her for money. After they did not get money they took a knife and cut off her hair.

CHAIRMAN: Yes?

ETWARU: After I got my hand broken I decided to run and catch the station. As I was going I met the animal protector, Roshanai.

CHAIRMAN: The R.S.P.C.A. official?

ETWARU: When he saw me coming he ran in the house and hid, so I decided to try to catch the station.

CHAIRMAN: Did Roshani run into his own house to hide?

ETWARU: He ran into his own house. While I was going to the station several Negroes met me and kicked and cuffed me. Well, I went to the hill foot and met Police Martins, and I asked him to take me to the station.

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CHAIRMAN: Do you know this policeman?

ETWARU: Yes sir, 6329. He told me that I have to wait, and that out Premier is the cause of this, and we have to get more. He then handed me over to a volunteer who took me to the station. Sergeant Chalmers was carrying me to the boat landing, and he asked me if I do not know who beat me, and I told him yes. As I reached the boat landing, I noticed Damon and Chalmers held him and took him to the station. I then went to the hospital but I never heard anything about the matter on to this day.

CHAIRMAN: You went across to Mackenzie?

ETWARU: Yes sir.

CHAIRMAN: What became of your wife?

ETWARU: Well, I left her and the volunteer went to her rescue. She was in hospital for five days.

CHAIRMAN: That would you estimate your loss to be?

ETWARU: \$8,175.

CHAIRMAN: Which includes your house?

ETWARU: I had two houses, sir, and everything in the house was destroyed.

CHAIRMAN: You estimate your loss to be \$8,175 which includes two houses on lease land, and your stock and household furniture. You also had a farm. What was the value of it?

ETWARU: Yes. At the time I valued it for about \$1,000.

CHAIRMAN: That includes plantains, eddoes, etc.

ETWARU: The plantains were actually ripe, but I could not go to reap them. I had a house insured for \$2,000.

CHAIRMAN: Did you get that insurance?

ETWARU: No sir.

CHAIRMAN: Were you insured for riots?

ETWARU: No. Fire insurance only.

CHAIRMAN: Your stock was not insured?

ETWARU: No sir, just one building.

CHAIRMAN: Now, was your wife hospitalised?

ETWARU: She just got treatment and she was sent to Georgetown.

CHAIRMAN: What is her name?

ETWARU: Ivy Etwaru. She also had treatment in New Amsterdam Hospital.

CHAIRMAN: Can you say what injuries you had. Where is your wife?

ETWARU: She is at Berbice.

CHAIRMAN: Is she coming to give evidence?

ETWARU: No sir. She is not coming.

CHAIRMAN: Where is she at the present?

ETWARU: She is at Main Street, Cumberland.

CHAIRMAN: That is all.

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SHEPHERD: Your real name is?

ETWARU: My name is Ramnaresh Etwaru.

SHEPHERD: You come forward to acknowledge the help you and your family received from the volunteers and the policemen. Did they carry you to the station?

ETWARU: Yes sir.

SHEPHERD: That is Saturday or Monday?

ETWARU: On Monday, sir.

CHAIRMAN: There were lots of trouble?

ETWARU: Yes sir.

SHEPHERD: What happened to you next?

ETWARU: He just carried me to the police station.

SHEPHERD: Your wife was carried across the river and was treated by the doctor at Mackenzie Hospital?

ETWARU: Yes sir.

SHEPHERD: And you pointed out that you saw a man by the name of Damon rushing to you?

ETWARU: Yes sir. He threw a bottle at me.

SHEPHERD: He was taken to the police station?

ETWARU: Yes.

CARTER: You were in your house with your relative or friend?

ETWARU: My uncle, sir.

CARTER: Was he taken to the police station also?

ETWARU: Yes, he was taken along with me and my wife by the volunteers and police to the police station. He was hospitalised five days at the Mackenzie Hospital.

CARTER: You lived well with the people?

ETWARU: Yes, because most of the people buy from my shop.

PRATAP N. SINGH: Did you notice any strangers in the crowd? Were they people who lived there? Were you attacked at Wismar before?

ETWARU: No sir.

DRAYTON: You said that your hand was broken. You're sure that it was broken?

ETWARU: Yes.

DRAYTON: Who told you that?

ETWARU: Dr. Roza or Dr. Klautky.

DRAYTON: Can you say which one?

ETWARU: I don't know because I was unconscious.

DRAYTON: You know the police, 6329? Do you know him quite well?

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ETWARU: Yes.

DRAYTON: What precisely did he say to you?

ETWARU: I told him that my head was bleeding and he said that you all Premier was the cause of that, and that you have to get some more licks.

DRAYTON: When he handed you to the volunteers what interval elapsed? He told you about your Premier, etc., etc., then handed you over to the volunteer?

ETWARU: Ten minutes.

DRAYTON: You did not see your wife? What is her name?

ETWARU: Ivy Etwaru.

PRATAP N. SINGH: Why did you ask for protection?

ETWARU: Because I saw the other place was on fire.

PRATAP N. SINGH: At the time you have already seen the place on fire?

ETWARU: Yes. That was the night of the 25th of May.

PRATAP N. SINGH: And the place was getting tense and the houses were already burnt?

ETWARU: Yes sir.

PRATAP N. SINGH: Now, did you give the names of Brindley William and Frank to the policemen?

ETWARU: Yes. I also told them that I know the person and not by name.

PRATAP N. SINGH: You also told them that you knew the persons but not by name? Did you know the person who broke your hand?

ETWARU: No sir.

PRATAP N. SINGH: Now, did you know any of the persons who robbed you?

ETWARU: No sir. I really can't tell you.

PRATAP N. SINGH: You said that you knew the people pretty well?

ETWARU: Yes.

MOOTOO: Mr. Etwaru, you said you went to the house of the R.S.P.C.A. man?

ETWARU: When he came towards me, he ran and hid in the house, so I did not go to meet him because I think he would not help me.

MOOTOO: When you were being beaten and looted did you see any policemen or volunteer?

ETWARU: No.

MOOTOO: When and after something happened to you, did you make any report to the police station?

ETWARU: I could not go to the police station.

MOOTOO: You did not have any other way to report to the station?

ETWARU: No, there was no other way.

MOOTOO: That is all.

CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Etwaru.

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MR. ALBERT JAIRAM is sworn in and he states as follows:

CHAIRMAN: You are a qualified government dispenser working for government?

JAIRAM: Yes sir.

CHAIRMAN: Where do you live?

JAIRAM: Well, I am presently residing at Wakenaam.

CHAIRMAN: On 25th May, 1964 you were at Wismar?

JAIRAM: No, in Georgetown. I travelled on the night of the 24th.

CHAIRMAN: You left Wismar on the night of the 24th. You are married and have a family.

JAIRAM: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: You left your family there and travelled. And where were you on the 25th? At Wismar?

JAIRAM: No. I returned on the Friday night.

CHAIRMAN: I haven't got a statement from you. I don't know what are your duties at Wismar. Have you a record of the number of people injured?

JAIRAM: No, I don't have because I didn't get back till the Thursday night. I left on the night of the 24th May and returned the following Thursday. I didn't treat anybody. I returned on the Friday night.

CHAIRMAN: You have a list of the number of deaths in the area?

JAIRAM: No.

CHAIRMAN: You are a government dispenser making records of the deaths of the place?

JAIRAM: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: You are supposed to be the registrar?

JAIRAM: Yes. I never returned to duty until the Friday. And on the following Monday I was advised by the Ministry of Health not to return back the following Friday.

CHAIRMAN: After you left on the 24th of May did you go back to Wismar?

JAIRAM: I went the Friday night. I reached there about 10.30. I went to the District Commissioner and telephoned to the police station because I heard they broke and entered my house. I asked the sergeant if I can go and he said no because the place is under curfew.

CHAIRMAN: Do you have any knowledge of the number of people who died on the 24th and 25th?

JAIRAM: No. I can tell you what I heard.

CHAIRMAN: Who acted for you?

JAIRAM: Mr. Alleyne.

CHAIRMAN: He is still there? You don't know whether he is still the dispenser there?

JAIRAM: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: Would he have any records of the number of deaths?

JAIRAM: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: Have you brought any statement or any record or official documents or so?

JAIRAM: No. Because I had not been the registrar then.

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CHAIRMAN: I don't know why you were summoned. Is there any evidence you can give to the Commissioners besides what you have already given?

JAIRAM: No. I saw three houses were on fire – two at Wismar and one at Christianburg.

CHAIRMAN: Was there great tension in this area?

JAIRAM: Yes, there was tension.

CHAIRMAN: What time you reached Georgetown?

JAIRAM: I would say about 12.30 a.m. on the 25th.

CHAIRMAN: Now, did you try to contact any responsible officer of the police to say what you saw of the houses and that there was tension in the area?

JAIRAM: Well, I went back on the Thursday.

CHAIRMAN: I am not talking about Thursday. During your stay in Georgetown for the rest of the night did you say anything about the houses you left on fire at Wismar? You said you saw three houses burning and there was tension in the area. Did you try to see any responsible officer?

JAIRAM: Honestly, I didn't tell anybody. I did not take it for anything.

CHAIRMAN: Now, you never said anything during the whole time? Now, you say you didn't take it for anything. Do you think that the houses were just being burnt because of personal spite or just a general feeling against Indians?

JAIRAM: I didn't have anything in view until when I received a message that there was tension in the area.

CHAIRMAN: What do you mean "tension in the area"?

JAIRAM: Well, there were bickerings and gossips that there would be a flare up here and there in the area.

CHAIRMAN: You came down to Georgetown. You are a senior government officer up there?

JAIRAM: Yes sir.

CHAIRMAN: You did nothing to communicate the fact to anybody?

JAIRAM: No sir.

CHAIRMAN: Nothing more.

—

PRATAP N. SINGH: I would like to ask you a question. You said you could feel the tension before you left. You had heard bickerings?

JAIRAM: Bickerings and so forth.

PRATAP N. SINGH: From whom did you hear these bickerings?

JAIRAM: I heard on Saturday about 1.30 p.m. Banga Mary discussing it.

PRATAP N. SINGH: With whom was he discussing it?

JAIRAM: With about four other men.

PRATAP N. SINGH: And where was it being discussed?

JAIRAM: The Alumina restaurant.

PRATAP N. SINGH: I see. Did you hear any bickerings that places were being set afire?

JAIRAM: No. I heard that trouble would start soon.

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PRATAP N. SINGH: Now, when you saw these fires didn't it come to your mind that trouble would start soon?

JAIRAM: Since during the strike there was always trouble.

PRATAP N. SINGH: Before this night were any places burnt?

JAIRAM: No sir.

PRATAP N. SINGH: Were any people beaten? You have heard conversation that trouble would flare up and having seen the fires of the three houses at one time. When did you hear about your house being burnt?

JAIRAM: A few days later.

PRATAP N. SINGH: How long was the house burnt before the news reached you?

JAIRAM: I was travelling in a steamer when I heard that my house was burnt.

PRATAP N. SINGH: Did you tell anybody about this burning?

JAIRAM: No. I did not take it seriously.

PRATAP N. SINGH: Where were you at that time.

JAIRAM: I was at the Base.

CHAIRMAN: Speak up.

PRATAP N. SINGH: Did you protect your house?

JAIRAM: No.

PRATAP N. SINGH: Did you inform the police that you were leaving your premises unprotected?

JAIRAM: Yes. I told Sergeant Chalmers.

PRATAP N. SINGH: Oh, you told Sergeant Chalmers!

JAIRAM: Yes sir. I told him.

PRATAP N. SINGH: You said that your house was stoned. Can you say how long that was?

JAIRAM: About three weeks ago.

PRATAP N. SINGH: How many times did this happen?

JAIRAM: Two times.

PRATAP N. SINGH: Did you report this? Was it reported on both occasions?

JAIRAM: Yes sir.

PRATAP N. SINGH: Did you receive any cooperation?

JAIRAM: No sir.

SHEPHERD: I wish to ask a few questions on this point. When you said you asked for protection?

JAIRAM: When my house was stoned.

SHEPHERD: You said that the police and volunteers were keeping duty at the District Commissioner's house.

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JAIRAM: Yes, they were.

SHEPHERD: You know that at Wismar there are about 20,000 souls living there?

JAIRAM: I beg your pardon.

SHEPHERD: Do you know that there are about 20,000 people living in the Wismar area?

JAIRAM: Yes sir.

SHEPHERD: And you know that there are many houses and shops and not any insignificant number of government buildings, but you did not ask for personal protection for your premises?

JAIRAM: Not during that crisis.

SHEPHERD: Did you agree that the volunteers and police patrol passed your house and government dispensary before the present crisis?

JAIRAM: They will have to pass there.

—
DRAYTON: Why did you leave Wismar?

JAIRAM: Because I received a telephone message that my daughter was ill in Georgetown.

DRAYTON: When you heard Banga Mary and four others discussing the possibility of the disturbances at Wismar, this was the Saturday? Did you mention it to anyone what you heard being discussed?

JAIRAM: Yes. I mentioned it to the village overseer.

DRAYTON: Did you mention it to any police official?

JAIRAM: No.

DRAYTON: You being dispenser and registrar of births and deaths in the district, and yet you say you didn't mention it to anyone? I am certain that you would like to help us as much as possible. When you promised last week to bring the records here today, were you not certain of obtaining them?

JAIRAM: Well, last week nobody was there. I said I was going to see about the records.

DRAYTON: You did make this promise?

JAIRAM: Yes.

DRAYTON: But you visited the area and didn't make any efforts to collect the records to help the Commission. Did you not promise Mr. Beekie last week?

JAIRAM: After thinking over the matter I didn't think it was wise.

DRAYTON: You mean, Mr. Jairam, that you had not gone over the matter seriously?

JAIRAM: I did not think it was necessary for me to collect it. It was not in my district.

CHAIRMAN: Did you promise Mr. Beekie that you will go to Mackenzie and get the records for today? But you didn't do that.

—
MACDONALD: As dispenser and registrar of births and deaths, and you didn't turn over the records to anyone?
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CHAIRMAN: You say that you were in charge of the records up to the 24th May. Did you know subsequently if any records were made?

JAIRAM: I can say frankly no.

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CHAIRMAN: Could you say frankly if you know about any deaths that occurred during the Wismar-Christianburg-Mackenzie disturbances?

JAIRAM: I should know; also the registrar there.

CHAIRMAN: Do you know the name of this man?

JAIRAM: Yes. P. I. Alleyne.

—

MOOTOO: Do you know the four others who were speaking to Banga Mary? Would you recognise them?

JAIRAM: I did see one of them.

MOOTOO: Do they belong to Wismar?

JAIRAM: I should say yes.

MOOTOO: You know their names?

JAIRAM: No.

MOOTOO: You know where they work?

JAIRAM: I just went in to the restaurant to purchase something. I don't know.

—

DRAYTON: Mr. Jairam, what time did you get to Georgetown on the Sunday night?

JAIRAM: About 12.20 a.m.

DRAYTON: Now, when you reached Georgetown did you inform anybody of what you had heard?

JAIRAM: No.

—

CHAIRMAN: You didn't tell anyone that you cannot produce these documents. Your conduct is not very impressive. You may step down.

—

MRS. MANGREE is sworn in and she states as follows:

CHAIRMAN: Where do you live?

MANGREE: I live at 120 Williamsburg, Corentyne.

CHAIRMAN: You used to live at Wismar?

MANGREE: Yes. First Alley hill top.

CHAIRMAN: What work you used to do?

MANGREE: I am a huckster.

CHAIRMAN: You had a stall at the Wismar market?

MANGREE: I had two stalls.

CHAIRMAN: Now, on Sunday the 24th May around 5 p.m., you were going to the stall near the police station. Did you hear anything?

MANGREE: Yes, sir. I heard one Brummel and Campbell were talking.

CHAIRMAN: Yes, what did they say?

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MANGREE: Campbell and Brummel used the word that no Indians cannot stay here tonight; they will run them rass. And Brummel used the word saying "You are talking about run them rass; you are going to see what we are going to do with them. We are going to kill them." I stood up against a cart waiting for my grandchild. Then Campbell used the word saying that "we are going to take Valley of Tears first." And then when he turned back, Brummel looked at me and laughed. He then walked away. I then left to go to the police station and I meet Mr. Battersfield who is the police. He asked me, "What did you come for, Mangree?" I said that I came to make a report that I was going to Georgetown, which I always do. He then asked me when I was coming back, and I say Monday as usual. He said "O.K.," and I then left to catch Sagar launch and I came to town.

CHAIRMAN: Did you tell anyone what you heard Campbell and Brnmml speaking?

MANGREE: Yes, I told the constable and he told me something else. He did not take any regards to what I said.

CHAIRMAN: He did not pay any regard to what you were saying?

MANGREE: No sir.

CHAIRMAN: Did you go back to Wismar?

MANGREE: Yes. I left Georgetown on Monday with the launch and reached Wismar at 7 p.m. One Barton and a volunteer boy came on the launch and told me not to go home, to go to the police station. I then went in the station yard, and there were many people in the yard. So many that you could not get any path to walk. They were mostly Indians. I then put the child to stand near the station steps, and one volunteer boy told me not to go up and I came down back. Two white men from Mackenzie told one of them to take the microphone and speak to the people, telling them not to go outside – to stay in the station yard; and the boy did that.

CHAIRMAN: Did you have your own house up there?

MANGREE: Yes, I lived there since 1941.

CHAIRMAN: You had your own house – one house?

MANGREE: Yes, one house. I am a taxpayer.

CHAIRMAN: You pay tax?

MANGREE: Yes sir.

CHAIRMAN: Transport land?

MANGREE: No sir. Lease land.

CHAIRMAN: What is the value of your stall, furniture, house, and so on?

MANGREE: Well, the stall and house I value at \$7,500.

CHAIRMAN: Did you go to see what happened to them?

MANGREE: Well, after a few weeks, I went to Mr. McGill Smith and asked him if I could go to see my place.

CHAIRMAN: Did you get to go back?

MANGREE: Yes sir. When I went, my house was burnt down. Nothing was left.

CHAIRMAN: What about your stall in the market?

MANGREE: Well, the stall was there.

CHAIRMAN: What about your stock?

MANGREE: They broke into the stall and took away some of the stock.

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SHEPHERD: These two volunteers helped you on Monday night?

MANGREE: Yes sir.

SHEPHERD: They told you to go to the police station and not home?

MANGREE: Yes sir.

SHEPHERD: These two volunteers probably saved your life.

MANGREE: One by the name of Barrington, sir. I do not know the name of the other.

SHEPHERD: These two volunteers probably saved your life.

MANGREE: Yes sir.

CARTER: No question.

CHAIRMAN: Thank you Mrs. Mangree. You can step down.

SHEPHERD: Before the resumption I should make an observation on the position of the inquiry so far. May I first make a comment concerning the Commission quarters. It is perhaps not necessary to point out that little has been done to provide the Commission with suitable premises and little effort has been made to assist you.

The building allotted for the use of the Commission is highly unsuitable. The accommodation is far from satisfactory and there are no private entrances for the Commission and barristers. You may be accosted on your way up by people who wish to give evidence before you. Barristers and witnesses may also be jostled by the public. I know how difficult is the task you have to discharge, and this was exemplified in the case of the last witness who failed to produce any official records. Regarding the manner in which statements are treated in the circumstances as they are, I appreciate the patience and care with which the Commission has taken so far to contact the persons concerned with the proceedings and by taking such statements.

I should, however, wish to draw your attention to a statement in the *Sunday Chronicle*. If it is true, the Premier, Dr. Cheddi Jagan, yesterday accused the Governor, Sir Richard Luyt, and the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Peter Owen, of using all their powers and resources to destroy the government while employing every subterfuge to help the opposition. This is outrageous. In a release from his office denouncing the decision of the Commissioner not to institute prosecution proceedings against persons alleged to belong to the so-called People's National Congress "terrorist organisation," the Premier declared, "I am not surprised at the decision. It follows the discriminatory pattern of police action which has accounted for so many breakdowns of law and order over the last three years and in which the events of Wismar are the most horrible, and the failure to assist the American newsman who went to the rescue of a defenceless girl last Sunday night is only the most recent."

Noting that in 1963 there had been evidence to support conspiracy charges against 25 persons, Dr. Jagan declared that the two-year long investigations had tended to "diminish rather than increase" the evidence and charged that had the Governor acting on the now banned terrorist report detained a large number of people at an early stage, "many lives" would have been saved.

I have to leave this statement with you for a decision on it and would like, Mr. Chairman, to hear from your own lips whether or not the statements attributed to the Premier are correct as reported. They are damaging and prejudicial to this inquiry. The statement about Wismar is prejudicial to the Commission's dignity and was calculated to detract from the important task of members. The statement is highly discriminatory and should never have been made while the Commission is sitting.

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CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr. Shepherd, the Commissioners are very grateful to you for bringing this article to our knowledge and I myself personally did not notice it. We intend to take appropriate action. However, I must point out now it is not unique for such things to happen. In the *Evening Post*, dated November 18th, 1964, the last paragraph reads as follows: "No one will try to deny that such assaults did in fact take place but to say that they were done with the connivance of the police and volunteers is a wicked lie."

SHEPHERD: I take it the paragraph of the *Earning Post* is from the editorial but the article I have first read was an official release alleged to be made by the Premier himself.

MR. KATIL RAHAMAN is sworn in and he states as follows:

CHAIRMAN: You live where?

RAHAMAN: I live at Plantation Industry now.

CHAIRMAN: You have a wife and three children?

RAHAMAN: Yes sir.

CHAIRMAN: Now, in May on Monday the 25th you worked where?

RAHAMAN: Well, I was working at Demba as chief steward at the Watooka Guest House, Demerara Bauxite Company.

CHAIRMAN: And where did you live?

RAHAMAN: At 372 Tacama Circle, Mackenzie.

CHAIRMAN: On the 25th May did you see anything there?

RAHAMAN: Well, on the 25th of May when the fire started I was working.

CHAIRMAN: When you saw the fire?

RAHAMAN: Well, you could see the fire in big flames in the afternoon.

CHAIRMAN: When was the first time you saw the fire?

RAHAMAN: The fire started on Friday, continued Saturday, Sunday and Monday was the big fire.

CHAIRMAN: When first you saw the big fire?

RAHAMAN: On Monday you can see the fire in the day and better in the night, around 5.00 to 5.30 in the afternoon.

CHAIRMAN: You saw the fire on Monday afternoon around 5.00 to 5.30?

RAHAMAN: Yes sir.

CHAIRMAN: What did you do?

RAHAMAN: Well, after the fire I finished work because people were saying you could not go home at all. Around 6.30, the manager of Demba took five of us at the trade school. When I went to the trade school I checked for my wife and children there. We stayed there the whole night and came on the second boat, the "R.H. Carr."

CHAIRMAN: Did you lose anything?

RAHAMAN: Well, I lost \$2,000 and my house was looted.

CHAIRMAN: Where was your wife at that time?

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RAHAMAN: My wife left the house and went away to the trade school. Then we were taken to Georgetown the Tuesday morning and about one o'clock to Plantation Industry. I stayed there until the last day of June. Then on Monday I went to the office. I saw Mr. and Mrs. Fraser. He said I could go back and work. I went back to start to work on that day.

CHAIRMAN: Yes?

RAHAMAN: Well, I worked Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.

CHAIRMAN: Where did you stay?

RAHAMAN: Well, I stayed at the guest house.

CHAIRMAN: Did you visit your home?

RAHAMAN: I went back to my home.

CHAIRMAN: What did you see?

RAHAMAN: Nothing in the house.

CHAIRMAN: What happened after?

RAHAMAN: Well, I started to work from Tuesday to Saturday.

CHAIRMAN: Yes? Go on.

RAHAMAN: On Sunday, I brought the Canadian Commissioner, Mr. Gregg, to Georgetown and I went back on Monday to work. I went home about 6.00 p.m. And about three quarters of an hour later there was a knock on the front door. I noticed when I went to the front window to look out I saw a crowd of Negro boys.

CHAIRMAN: Yes. Go on.

RAHAMAN: I went to the back door and there was another crowd. So I told my son, "What are we going to do now?" There was no escape at the front door neither at the back.

CHAIRMAN: What happened then?

RAHAMAN: The crowd broke down the front door and came in. The last I could have remembered that I was beaten, and I believe I was unconscious.

CHAIRMAN: You believe you were unconscious?

RAHAMAN: Yes sir. I was unconscious.

CHAIRMAN: What injuries did you suffer?

RAHAMAN: A cut on my face, a chop on my belly, and I became unconscious.

CHAIRMAN: What happened?

RAHAMAN: I think I spent 11 days at the Mackenzie hospital and then I was transferred to the Mercy Hospital.

CHAIRMAN: How long did you spend in hospital?

RAHAMAN: I think I spent three weeks at the Mercy Hospital and then I went home, and last week when I went back for a check up, I was told that I will have to undergo another operation.

CHAIRMAN: Did you go back to your employment?

RAHAMAN: I was afraid to go back.

CHAIRMAN: What was your loss?

RAHAMAN: I don't think I . . .

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CHAIRMAN: How much was your loss?

RAHAMAN: The house was not mine. It does not belong to me. But I lost about \$3,000 in furniture, wares, utensils, etc.

CHAIRMAN: You estimate your loss about \$3,000.

RAHAMAN: I have some papers here I think it would help.

CHAIRMAN: Okay! I have already taken your estimate. That's all.

SHEPHERD: Can you give me the name of any of the people that were beating you?

RAHAMAN: I can't remember who they were, but they were Africans. Young boys about 18 to 20 years of age.

SHEPHERD: Could you have seen a crowd when you were standing at your window?

RAHAMAN: Yes.

CARTER. You said that Fraser took yourself and other friends to the Mackenzie Hospital. Was he in charge there?

RAHAMAN: Yes.

CARTER: Did he make several trips in the night?

RAHAMAN: Yes.

CARTER: Did he do the same thing to the other employees?

RAHAMAN: Yes, but during the night.

PRATAP N. SINGH: What happened the night?

RAHAMAN: I spent the night in the Mackenzie hospital.

PRATAP N. SINGH: How long did you work there?

RAHAMAN: I worked there for 22 years.

PRATAP N. SINGH: On the 22nd, 23rd, 24th and 25th were you aware that there was a curfew on?

RAHAMAN: No.

PRATAP N. SINGH: Do you know what is the meaning of curfew?

RAHAMAN: Yes.

PRATAP N. SINGH: Where were the volunteers and patrols?

RAHAMAN: There were none at all. They were at Mackenzie. Sometimes I saw soldiers once or twice and sometimes none at all.

MOOTOO: You are sure that there were no volunteers or policemen?

RAHAMAN: Only soldiers.

MOOTOO: How did you happen to go back?

RAHAMAN: I got a letter from them.

MOOTOO: They wrote to you?

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RAHAMAN: Yes.

MOOTOO: Because they wrote to you, you thought it was safe to go back?

RAHAMAN: Yes, when I was finished working I want straight home.

MOOTOO: Did Demba assure you that it would be alright?

RAHAMAN: No one told me if it was safe or not.

MOOTOO: They sent you a letter. Have you a copy of the letter?

RAHAMAN: I got it by post. It was left at home.

MOOTOO: You came to Demba and ask for a job?

RAHAMAN: I asked for a job.

—
DRAYTON: How are you earning your living?

RAHAMAN: Social Assistance, sir.

DRAYTON: Which hospital were you taken to?

RAHAMAN: Mercy Hospital.

DRAYTON: Which doctor were you checked by?

RAHAMAN: Dr. Searwar.

—
CARTER: How long did you remain at the Mercy Hospital?

RAHAMAN: Nearly about three weeks.

CARTER: You didn't pay that bill?

RAHAMAN: Demerara Bauxite Company paid the bill.

CARTER: Do you know if the Demerara Bauxite Company paid hospital bills for everyone injured?

RAHAMAN: One Hassan was near me, but I don't know who paid his bill.

—
CHAIRMAN: That is all, Mr. Rahaman. You may step down.

—
HASSAN KHAN is called as a witness and he states as follows:

CHAIRMAN: How old are you?

HASSAN KHAN: Eight years old.

CHAIRMAN: Do you go to school?

HASSAN KHAN: Yes. Sans Souci Methodist School, Wakenaam.

CHAIRMAN: In May month you used to attend St. Aidan's Anglican School? What class were you in?

HASSAN KHAN: First standard.

CHAIRMAN: What are your parents' name?

HASSAN KHAN: Bibi Alima Khan and Inshan Khan.

CHAIRMAN: Where were you living at Wismar?

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HASSAN KHAN: Valley of Tears.

CHAIRMAN: You used to go to school, at which session? Morning or afternoon?

HASSAN KHAN: Afternoon.

CHAIRMAN: On Monday 25th May, 1964, yourself and who were at home?

HASSAN KHAN: My brother.

CHAIRMAN: How old was he?

HASSAN KHAN: Nineteen.

CHAIRMAN: What did you see happen at that time?

HASSAN KHAN: About 7 o'clock.

CHAIRMAN: You saw what?

HASSAN KHAN: People were rushing to our house.

CHAIRMAN: You knew any of them?

HASSAN KHAN: Yes. Five. Cassa, Cedric, Neville, Francis and Edward.

CHAIRMAN: What did they do?

HASSAN KHAN: They broke open the door and came inside the house.

CHAIRMAN: Only the two of you were home? Where was your mother?

HASSAN KHAN: My mother was in the shop, and my father was at work.

CHAIRMAN: What happened?

HASSAN KHAN: I hid under my father's bed.

CHAIRMAN: You saw what was happening?

HASSAN KHAN: People came in and threw gasoline in the hall.

CHAIRMAN: Black people?

HASSAN KHAN: Yes. My brother ran out and Cassa scratched the match and lighted the house afire.

CHAIRMAN: Then what happened.

HASSAN KHAN: My brother ran out. Cassa scratched a match and lit a fire.

CHAIRMAN: You saw your brother run out of the house?

HASSAN KHAN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: What happened to him?

HASSAN KHAN: The other rest of people surrounded the house and when he ran out they held him and beat him.

CHAIRMAN: What happened to you?

HASSAN KHAN: Nothing happened to me.

CHAIRMAN: You were still under the bed?

HASSAN KHAN: I ran out and I saw them hold him, and they beat Richard.

CHAIRMAN: What did, they beat him with?

HASSAN KHAN: A paling stave.

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CHAIRMAN: What did your brother do?

HASSAN KHAN: Cassa lashed him on his head.

CHAIRMAN: And what happened?

HASSAN KHAN: He fell down and they started to beat him.

CHAIRMAN: More than one of them?

HASSAN KHAN: Yes, more than one.

CHAIRMAN: And what did you do?

HASSAN KHAN: I hid under the bed when they started to beat him. The crowd left and went to one Paul's house.

CHAIRMAN: And then you ran out from your house and where did you go?

HASSAN KHAN: To Watooka.

CHAIRMAN: What happened to the house at this time?

HASSAN KHAN: The house was burning.

CHAIRMAN: Now you went to Watooka and you saw your father, and there you told him what happened? Did you see your mother?

HASSAN KHAN: Yes, I saw her the same day.

CHAIRMAN: What time?

HASSAN KHAN: About 7 o'clock the night.

CHAIRMAN: Where did you see her?

HASSAN KHAN: At the trade school over at Mackenzie.

CHAIRMAN: You stayed at Watooka and then you were taken to a white man's house?

HASSAN KHAN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: And there you stayed until the night, and then you went to the trade school?

HASSAN KHAN: Yes

—

SHEPHERD: When Richard was beaten and fell down, did you see a policeman come and take him away?

HASSAN KHAN: Yes.

—

CARTER: You say a policeman took Richard away. In what? A jeep?

HASSAN KHAN: No, I did not see that.

CARTER: Did you go to the policeman?

HASSAN KHAN: No.

CARTER: Where did you go?

HASSAN KHAN: I ran at the back of the house and ran up the hill, and went to my grandmother.

CARTER: What is her name?

HASSAN KHAN: I do not know.

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CARTER: Where did she live? Was she at home?

HASSAN KHAN: She lived in Little Alley. She was not at home.

CARTER: After that where did you go?

HASSAN KHAN: To Mackenzie by boat.

CARTER: Did you see any crowds on the road?

HASSAN KHAN: I saw a lady and she boxed me.

CARTER: Did anybody else do you anything?

HASSAN KHAN: No.

CARTER: Did you see any policeman or volunteer on the road? Did any of them talk to you?

HASSAN KHAN: No, they walked away from me.

CARTER: Did anybody help you from the time you left home?

HASSAN KHAN: No.

CARTER: Whose boat you crossed on?

HASSAN KHAN: Mac's boat.

CARTER: Mac took you over.

HASSAN KHAN: Yes.

CARTER: The other people on the boat were they Indians?

HASSAN KHAN: No. Negroes.

CARTER: Were you the only Indian on the boat?

HASSAN KHAN: Yes.

CARTER: Did they do you anything on the boat?

HASSAN KHAN: No.

CARTER: You got on the Mackenzie side and you went to look for your father. Where does he work?

HASSAN KHAN: He was coming home.

CARTER: Did you meet him on the road?

HASSAN KHAN: Yes.

CARTER: Where did you sleep that night?

HASSAN KHAN: At a white man's house.

CARTER: Do you know his name? Was he a Canadian?

HASSAN KHAN: Yes, he was a Canadian.

CHAIRMAN: He brought you down the next day to join the boat?

HASSAN KHAN: Yes.

PRATAP N. SINGH: Besides Cassa, you know the names of the other boys who beat your brother?

HASSAN KHAN: I only know five of them.

PRATAP N. SINGH: Did Cedric beat him too?

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HASSAN KHAN: Yes, all of them.

PRATAP N. SINGH: Who did you tell this to?

HASSAN KHAN: I told my mother.

PRATAP N. SINGH: Did you tell your father?

HASSAN KHAN: No.

PRATAP N. SINGH: Did anybody offer to take you to the police to tell them that these five boys helped to beat your brother?

HASSAN KHAN: No.

PRATAP N. SINGH: That is all.

—

DRAYTON: Was there any policemen when your brother Richard was beaten?

HASSAN KHAN: No. Later the policemen came from the police station.

DRAYTON: Where they came from?

HASSAN KHAN: They came from the police station.

DRAYTON: They were not present when he was beaten?

HASSAN KHAN: No.

—

MACDONALD: Where were you when the boys were beating your brother?

HASSAN KHAN: I was outside on the steps.

MACDONALD: Did you see everything that happened?

HASSAN KHAN: Yes

MACDONALD: Did the boys see you?

HASSAN KHAN: No, they didn't see me.

—

MOOTOO: What did the boys say to Richard?

HASSAN KHAN: They asked Richard if he knew them.

MOOTOO: What did Richard say?

HASSAN KHAN: Richard said "yes" and then Cassa lashed him.

MOOTOO: How many of them were there?

HASSAN KHAN: Plenty of them.

MOOTOO: Did your brother try to fight them?

HASSAN KHAN: No.

MOOTOO: Did they come looking specifically for Richard or just for anyone in the house?

HASSAN KHAN: Any one.

—

CHAIRMAN: Your brother Richard is dead.

HASSAN KHAN: Yes.

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CHAIRMAN: He used to go to school in Georgetown.

HASSAN KHAN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: Thank you. That is all.

INSHANALLY KHAN is sworn in, and he states as follows:

CHAIRMAN: Where are you living?

INSHANALLY KHAN: I am living at Black Bush Polder.

CHAIRMAN: What work you are doing there?

INSHANALLY KHAN: I am doing tailoring.

CHAIRMAN: On the 21st May you were living at Wismar?

INSHANALLY KHAN: Yes sir, at 125 Wismar Housing Scheme and I had a business at Lot 14 Silver Town.

CHAIRMAN: You run the business?

INSHANALLY KHAN: Yes sir.

CHAIRMAN: Are you married?

INSHANALLY KHAN: Yes sir. I have three children.

CHAIRMAN: On the 21st of May, 1964, did anything happen?

INSHANALLY KHAN: On Thursday the 21st May between 4 o'clock and 5 o'clock I saw Robert Jordan and some other men walking on the public road at Wismar with a newspaper in his hand. He was showing the people about the two families who died at Buxton, telling them that look the East Indians are killing up the Africans at Buxton.

CHAIRMAN: What did you say; it was on Thursday? Are you sure?

INSHANALLY KHAN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: Now anything happened on Thursday or the next day?

INSHANALLY KHAN: Well, he asked the Negro people what they are doing about this. A tall Negro fellow came into my shop about 6.30 in the evening and told me that he was very hungry, and if he can't get something to eat or he would kill up the coolie so-and-so, at Wismar. I then close my shop. I went to the police station and made a report to Constable Fraser. I then return to my store.

CHAIRMAN: What happened on Sunday?

INSHANALLY KHAN: On Sunday about 7 p.m. I was at home at 125 Wismar Housing Scheme. I saw five to six houses on fire at Wismar Hill. I then became frightened and I locked up my house and slept. On Monday, about 7.30 a.m., I left my home and went to the shop. When I went down there I saw the streets full with Negro men and I became frightened I didn't open my store the morning. About 9 o'clock the said morning I went to John Mohamed business place about 30 rods from my place and asked him to use his telephone which I did. I then rang S. M. H Bacchus to ask him to inform the Home Affairs Minister what was going on up there. I then told him about 9 to 10 houses were set on fire and one blasted the previous night which was Sunday night, and they were beating the Indian people while they were walking on the road.

SHEPHERD: I didn't hear that.

INSHANALLY KHAN: Beating Indian people while they were walking on the road. I then left John Mohamed premises and went back to my store and after there I went upstairs at D'Aguiar Bros. with the

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men and spend a good time there. During the time I spent there I saw one Mr. Subryan going across to Mackenzie on Dutchie's boat landing. Some men beat him and throw him in the river. About 2.30 I then decided to walk back of the school to catch the police station. When I went to the police station I went there and met Mr. Hobbs and told him that I got some important papers and other things at my shop if he can send a policeman with me to get them out. He told me that there was no time for that now; there is only time for saving lives. I then left and met Sergeant Archers, a volunteer sergeant, and told him also, and I met another volunteer soldier. Both of them told me the same thing that there is no time for that but it is only time for saving lives, and after that I left there and met Sergeant Chalmers and told him that my wife and three children are up at the housing scheme where I am living, and I would be grateful if he could take me there to rescue them. He then told me to hold on about ten or fifteen minutes when the police jeep comes. He took me up with the jeep, and he brought down my family to the station compound.

CHAIRMAN: From this house that you have up the hill, where you went?

INSHANALLY KHAN: From the station compound after we came down about 7.30 to 8.00 we went over to Mackenzie trade school.

CHAIRMAN: Now the house you had in the housing scheme, was that your own house?

INSHANALLY KHAN: I bought it on a hire purchase scheme from the government.

CHAIRMAN: And the store?

INSHANALLY KHAN: I rent that from T. Prashad.

CHAIRMAN: How much is your financial loss?

INSHANALLY KHAN: Between ten to eleven thousand dollars. I have one more thing to say. Before the disturbances I was coming down to Georgetown by the R.H. Carr about a month before. I saw Mr. Ross and a corporal of the Police Force and Harris from Wismar and some other fellows discussing in the R.H. Carr. I heard Mr. Ross say, "Don't beat and kill the Indians; just pull out their nails and take out their eyes."

CHAIRMAN: Who is Mr. Ross?

INSHANALLY KHAN: He is a steward on the R.H. Carr.

CHAIRMAN: Yes Mr. Shepherd?

SHEPHERD: No questions.

CARTER: No questions.

PRATAP N. SINGH: Just one question. When you made this report to P.C. Fraser what did you tell him, and what did he do?

INSHANALLY KHAN: He entered the report in the report book.

PRATAP N. SINGH: Nothing else?

INSHANALLY KHAN: He told me that he would keep a close watch on them.

CHAIRMAN: Was the policeman on the R.H. Carr – Corporal Joseph?

INSHANALLY KHAN: Yes.

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DRAYTON: Mr. Khan, you said that you saw Mr. Robert Jordan?

INSHANALLY KHAN: Yes.

DRAYTON: How many people were there?

INSHANALLY KHAN: About nine to ten people.

DRAYTON: About 4.30 to 5 o'clock? What was the total number?

INSHANALLY KHAN: Yes. That was all I saw.

DRAYTON: What was he doing?

INSHANALLY KHAN: He was riding.

DRAYTON: You said that you saw Mr. Jordan riding and at the same time reading a newspaper? How did he manage this?

INSHANALLY KHAN: Well, he rode a while and then he stopped and read something from the paper.

DRAYTON: Do you know what he was reading?

INSHANALLY KHAN: He was reading of what had happened at Buxton.

DRAYTON: How far away was he from you? Could you have seen him?

INSHANALLY KHAN: He was about 10 to 15 rods away. I saw him.

DRAYTON: Are you sure he was reading about the family at Buxton?

INSHANALLY KHAN: Yes sir.

DRAYTON: But the family at Buxton did not die until the Friday. Then how could he be reading of that family on Thursday.

INSHANALLY KHAN: I did not know, sir.

DRAYTON: You said that he was riding.

INSHANALLY KHAN: Yes, he was riding.

DRAYTON: Did you see him on Thursday.

INSHANALLY KHAN: Yes. I saw him on Thursday.

DRAYTON: Did you see Mr. Ross?

INSHANALLY KHAN: Yes, I saw Mr. Ross.

DRAYTON: What did he say?

INSHANALLY KHAN: He said that "you must not kill the Indians but dig out their eyes and pull out their nails."

DRAYTON: Did anything like this happen on the 25th May?

INSHANALLY KHAN: No sir.

DRAYTON: Thank you. That's all.

MACDONALD: You said that you complained to Mr. Hobbs and after receiving no satisfaction from him you went to Sergeant Archer, and than later to Mr. Wishart to ask help to get some papers and other things at your shop and they did nothing. This was during the confusion. You later asked Sergeant Chalmers to rescue your wife and children and he went right away?

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INSHANALLY KHAN: Yes, that was so.

CHAIRMAN: That is all Mr. Khan. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN: Call Mr. Bholai Singh.

BHOLAI SINGH is sworn in and states as follows:

CHAIRMAN: What is your name?

BHOLAI SINGH: My name is Bholai Singh.

CHAIRMAN: What is your occupation?

BHOLAI SINGH: I am a general merchant. A businessman.

CHAIRMAN: You live at Mon Repos, East Coast Demerara?

BHOLAI SINGH: Yes sir, I do.

CHAIRMAN: You used to live at Wismar before 25th May, 1964?

BHOLAI SINGH: Yes, I did.

CHAIRMAN: What work you used to do?

BHOLAI SINGH: I had an amalgamated business.

CHAIRMAN: You had your business at Wismar?

BHOLAI SINGH: Yes sir. I had a business at Wismar.

CHAIRMAN: What do you usually sell in your general store?

BHOLAI SINGH: Hardware and other items.

CHAIRMAN: On the 23rd May, 1964, when you were at Wismar, what day was it?

BHOLAI SINGH: It was a Thursday evening.

CHAIRMAN: What happened?

BHOLAI SINGH: About 4 p.m. I saw one Mr. Robert Jordan. I know him personally. He is the representative for the Demerara River. I asked him if I could speak to him.

CHAIRMAN: Yes.

BHOLAI SINGH: He said that he was very busy but he would speak to me for a few minutes. He told me that he wanted me to save some time to speak to the people on platform, telling them that they must take note on what Dr. Jagan is doing. He said that Dr. Jagan sent people to kill Mr. and Mrs. Sealey at Buxton.

CHAIRMAN: Yes.

BHOLAI SINGH: And that I must go now on the platform and tell the Indians about the situation of the country and what Dr. Jagan is doing. I said, "What is your authority to tell me such things?" I said, "If you can give me any authority, I would tell them, but without any authority I would not, and moreover you know many prominent Indians. Why don't you ask them who are living in Georgetown?" He said, "I had the privilege of hearing you at several meetings, and you are the person I have selected to go." He then said, "Alright, if you don't want to go, when the Negroes of this country start killing in this country then you would know." While he was speaking to me, I was in company with Harry Seegobin and Toor Singh. We were discussing about business, Mr. Jordan then went his way. Around 8 p.m. that very evening, I saw Mr. Jordan on the road again opposite my business place. At the same time I saw the police jeep driven by

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Police Constable London, with Sergeant Chalmers in it. The jeep stopped awhile and the driver asked Mr. Jordan if he would like to have a lift. He said “no,” as he had to go and give some orders to his boys on the other side. That is what transpired on that evening, while on the following morning he was in my vicinity.

CHAIRMAN: Which vicinity?

BHOLAI SINGH: Silver Town area. Mr. Jordan was still in the district.

CHAIRMAN: Did you watch the whole night?

BHOLAI SINGH: Yes, I was awoken by my family late the next morning.

CHAIRMAN: How large is your family?

BHOLAI SINGH: Four. My wife, daughter, mother-in-law and myself. They woke me up and told me they heard people crying outside the Wismar market. I went to the shop to close the windows which my wife had opened, then I rushed out on the road. I stood up watching the people.

CHAIRMAN: This was what time?

BHOLAI SINGH: About 8.30 to 9 o'clock. I saw hundreds of men on the street. They started to loot persons who were selling on the roadside. I got afraid and ran back. I saw an Amerindian man passing in the river. I hailed out to him. He was travelling in a canoe and he came back. I begged this man to take my wife and family to a place of safety.

CHAIRMAN: Did he do so?

BHOLAI SINGH: Yes. When I came back to my shop I heard someone shouting, “Mr. Singh, look they just kill your two children, and have them at the police station”. I didn't see them there, but when I came to the wharf I saw my sons washed in blood.

CHAIRMAN: How old are your two sons?

BHOLAI SINGH: One 34 and the other 40.

CHAIRMAN: Were your sons living with you?

BHOLAI SINGH: No, they are not living with me; they have their own business places.

CHAIRMAN: What happened then?

BHOLAI SINGH: By the aid of the police and Inspector Young they were sent to the hospital. Then returning from the boat-house I was going towards my business place where I was mobbed so I had to run to shelter in the police station where hundreds of other people were. That was around ten o'clock. I had no time to take any meals or gather anything. I was kept at the police station. At eleven o'clock, I spoke to Superintendent Hobbs asking him to give me an assistant to go and collect some of my belongings. Superintendent Hobbs told me that he could not manage now, but later he would try to send some with me. Again about two o'clock I made another request; the same thing was told to me. I was left sitting at the police Station until four o'clock. I spoke to Sergeant Chalmers. By this time the place was crowded with Indian people seeking shelter.

CHAIRMAN: You spoke to Sergeant Chalmers? What did you say?

BHOLAI SINGH: I said, “Look, two volunteers are bursting open my son's door.”

CHAIRMAN: What door?

BHOLAI SINGH: The door to his living quarters.

CHAIRMAN: What did Sergeant Chalmers say?

BHOLAI SINGH: Sergeant Chalmers said he is rather busy, and he cannot send anybody, but volunteers are outside. I know one of the volunteers who was breaking my son's window.

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CHAIRMAN: Do you know his name?

BHOLAI SINGH: His name is Bob Hope. I remained quiet for a little while because I got confused in seeing that I was living so near to the police station, and these incidents are taking place on us. Around eight o'clock I beseeched Sergeant Archer of the Volunteer Force to allow me to have someone to go and get some of my belongings. He bluntly refused. A few minutes after I spoke to another corporal. I said, "I am hungry and I have nothing to eat. Would you follow me to my business place." He said "Look I am taking this on my own risk as I know you, and I am going to follow you with another private". The two volunteers followed me to my business place. As soon as we reached my business place I saw my business place opened and a man by the name of Hackett was in my shop. One of the volunteers held Hackett while I had no chance to take up anything because they said we must hurry to the station. So I secured the doors and windows and went to the police station where a police constable by the name of Beharry took a statement from the volunteer and myself. When we saw Hackett on the premises he had a tin of gasoline in his hand. That was the end of the 25th. And I was the last person to be taken over with the volunteer to the industrial school at Demba where we were kept for the night. The next day was Tuesday. Around two o'clock we were asked to board the R.H. Carr.

CHAIRMAN: Now, before you left, did you see your building burning or was it still standing?

BHOLAI SINGH: That one is still standing, but my other buildings on the hill were burnt the next day.

CHAIRMAN: Was that your own building?

BHOLAI SINGH: All belong to me. I had three buildings in all.

CHAIRMAN: How much you valued your loss – stock and building that was burnt?

WITNESS: My building, when I was deciding to sell it, I refused \$8,000 because I value it at \$12,000, and my belongings about \$1,500, leaving out my stock and trade at the waterside.

CHAIRMAN: How much is that?

BHOLAI SINGH: Well my stock is valued about \$1,500.

CHAIRMAN: You had an insurance?

BHOLAI SINGH: No sir. When we boarded the R.H. Carr, I asked the captain to allow me to stop at the place to pick up my family and my request was granted. Where I had sent my family the previous day.

CHAIRMAN: Are your two sons still alive?

BHOLAI SINGH: They were hospitalised at Georgetown and Mackenzie hospital.

CHAIRMAN: How long did they spend at Mackenzie?

BHOLAI SINGH: One spent about two months and one spent about four weeks.

SHEPHERD: Your name is also Richard Low. How old are you?

BHOLAI SINGH: Yes, I am 69.

SHEPHERD: You are a fine chap for your age. How tall are you, about 6 feet?

BHOLAI SINGH: I don't know.

SHEPHERD: You have a family of four?

BHOLAI SINGH: Yes sir.

SHEPHERD: You were not injured?

BHOLAI SINGH: No.

SHEPHERD: You had an escort of volunteers to take you to your business?

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BHOLAI SINGH: Yes sir.

SHEPHERD: And you were taken by the police or by the volunteers across to Mackenzie and to the trade school?

BHOLAI SINGH: Yes sir.

SHEPHERD: You and your family arrived safely in Georgetown. You are a very grateful man.

BHOLAI SINGH: When you say grateful what do you mean, Mr. Shepherd?

SHEPHERD: Because you are 69 years old, six feet tall and you are quite upright and strong, and you did not suffer.

BHOLAI SINGH: I was grateful for that time only.

SHEPHERD: Now on Monday there was confusion in Wismar-Christianburg?

BHOLAI SINGH: Yes.

SHEPHERD: You made several appeals to the police for assistance to rescue your property?

BHOLAI SINGH: Yes.

—

CHAIRMAN: Were you surprised when the police arrived at your property?

BHOLAI SINGH: No.

—

SHEPHERD: Did the volunteers arrest Hackett when he was found in your shop?

BHOLAI SINGH: They took him to the station.

SHEPHERD: Hackett was arrested and taken to the police station?

BHOLAI SINGH: Yes.

SHEPHERD: Did the police take a statement from him?

BHOLAI SINGH: Yes. But they did not charge him and he was not punished. He was allowed to go free.

SHEPHERD: There were two volunteers in your son's house?

BHOLAI SINGH: Yes.

SHEPHERD: How many people were at your son's house breaking the windows?

BHOLAI SINGH: The volunteers were breaking the windows.

SHEPHERD: How many people were living in that house?

BHOLAI SINGH: My daughter-in-law, my son, and two children.

SHEPHERD: Do you know for what purpose they were breaking the house?

BHOLAI SINGH: No, I don't know for what purpose.

SHEPHERD: Did you know this man Bob Hope?

BHOLAI SINGH: Yes.

SHEPHERD: How long had you known him?

BHOLAI SINGH: About four years.

SHEPHERD: Was he living at Mackenzie?

BHOLAI SINGH: Yes.

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SHEPHERD: You saw the volunteers in khaki uniform?

BHOLAI SINGH: Yes.

SHEPHERD: Was there anybody standing about?

BHOLAI SINGH: Yes, few people were standing there.

SHEPHERD: At this point in examination I have no instructions from either the volunteers or the police and I cannot question the witness further. I should wish to do so at a later stage when I have the necessary information.

BHOLAI SINGH: Please sir, will you permit me to go on further?

CARTER: May I ask you just one question? You were complaining about being hungry. Did you get anything over at Mackenzie?

BHOLAI SINGH: I am grateful to the people of Mackenzie. I had plenty to eat.

DRAYTON: Mr. Singh, was it the Thursday or Saturday that you saw Robert Jordan.

BHOLAI SINGH: I saw Mr. Robert Jordan on Thursday the 21st.

DRAYTON: What do you mean when you asked Mr. Jordan “what authority he had”?

BHOLAI SINGH: This is what I meant. Someone could come and tell me anything and want me to go and do something they might like and Robert Jordan did this and wanted me to go and could not give me any reason.

DRAYTON: Did he tell you on the Thursday afternoon about the murder of Mr. and Mrs. Sealey?

BHOLAI SINGH: Thursday afternoon? I’ve forgotten the date. I make an apology for that sir.

DRAYTON: When the two volunteers took you to your business place did you recover your belongings?

BHOLAI SINGH: I had no time to recover my belongings. I just had time to go back and I picked up nothing at all.

DRAYTON: You had been asking for somebody to help you to go to with you to your place with you since 11 o’clock in the morning till 8 o’clock in the night? You had been asking for somebody to go with you to your business place to get your belongings and when you were taken to your place you returned without anything?

BHOLAI SINGH: No, I saw a man in the place.

DRAYTON: Was he looting?

BHOLAI SINGH: Yes sir.

DRAYTON: But did you collect your belongings that you wanted to collect?

BHOLAI SINGH: No.

DRAYTON: What did you want to collect?

BHOLAI SINGH: My clothing, my jewellery and money. However, sir, I had no chance to pick it up.

DRAYTON: Well I am just asking you because if you went why didn’t you pick up your belongings? Where did you keep your jewellery?

BHOLAI SINGH: Under a drawer at the counter.

DRAYTON: Couldn’t you have picked them up and put them in your pocket?

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BHOLAI SINGH: I couldn't spare any time; that was the position. If you were in my place you would have done the same.

DRAYTON: When did you go to Wismar?

BHOLAI SINGH: On the 17th October, 1957. I was employed at the security department for four and a half years at Demba.

DRAYTON: You had no business at that time?

BHOLAI SINGH: No sir.

DRAYTON: And your total loss you estimate at \$13,000?

BHOLAI SINGH: Around that sir.

MOOTOO: Mr. Singh did you hear about Mr. and Mrs. Sealey before Mr. Jordan mentioned it?

BHOLAI SINGH: No.

MOOTOO: Neither in the newspaper?

BHOLAI SINGH: I do not know, I cannot say, but that was the first time I heard it from Mr. Jordan.

MOOTOO: After that did you hear about what took place before or after the 24th?

BHOLAI SINGH: At the industrial site in Georgetown, someone mentioned about the Sealey's death on Thursday the 21st.

MOOTOO: Now about this son who was in hospital.

BHOLAI SINGH: Victor and Walter were hospitalised because they were beaten. Both of their hands and legs were broken. I went back a second time to Wismar.

MOOTOO: You didn't give that in your statement. What time was this?

BHOLAI SINGH: Around the second week in June. I went back there by police escort to my business premises. The business was there but all the goods were taken away. Nothing was left.

CHAIRMAN: So you returned?

BHOLAI SINGH: No, I spent four days in making inquiries to see if I could have got my belongings. With the corporal's help I found one of my refrigerators, and I am grateful to the police and that was the only belonging that I found.

CHAIRMAN: Did you bring it back with you?

BHOLAI SINGH: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: Any questions arising out of that?

SHEPHERD: No questions.

CHAIRMAN: That is all, Mr. Singh.

CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, the Commissioners would like you to know that the last date for submitting statements or memoranda would be up to Saturday 28th of this month. After that date we would not be able to accept statements or memoranda. We shall proceed with what we have. We now stand adjourned until tomorrow.