

ADVANCE COPY

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AND TO ROUTINE ANGUILLA, BELMOPAN, GRAND CAYMAN, KINGSTON  
AND TO ROUTINE NASSAU, HAMILTON, BRIDGETOWN, PORT OF SPAIN  
AND TO ROUTINE BDDC BRIDGETOWN, ECGD

HM THE QUEEN'S VISIT TO GUYANA

SUMMARY

1. AN OUTSTANDINGLY SUCCESSFUL AND ENJOYABLE VISIT. OBJECTIVES OF ENCOURAGING DEMOCRACY AND SENSIBLE ECONOMIC POLICIES ACHIEVED. VISIT ALSO DEMONSTRATED GUYANA'S RETURN TO INTERNATIONAL RESPECTABILITY AND CONTINUING CLOSE LINKS WITH THE UNITED KINGDOM.
2. GENUINE POPULAR ENTHUSIASM AND AFFECTION FOR HER MAJESTY FROM VAST CROWDS. BLANKET AND FAVOURABLE PRESS COVERAGE. GUYANA HAS BEEN GIVEN A LIFT AND BRITAIN'S PROFILE A TREMENDOUS BOOST.

DETAIL

3. HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN AND HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH VISITED GUYANA FROM 19 TO 22 FEBRUARY, THEIR FIRST VISIT HERE TOGETHER FOR 28 YEARS. THEIR PROGRAMME COMPRISED A MIX OF FORMAL AND INFORMAL ENGAGEMENTS INCLUDING A TRIP BY BOAT INTO THE INTERIOR WITH A CALL AT AN AMERINDIAN VILLAGE, AND A FULL DAY IN GEORGETOWN INCLUDING AN ADDRESS TO PARLIAMENT AND A VISIT TO A SUGAR ESTATE MANAGED FOR THE GOVERNMENT BY BOOKER TATE LTD. HER MAJESTY VISITED THE ANGLICAN CATHEDRAL AND THE NATIONAL ART COLLECTION WHILE THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH CALLED AT THE BIODIVERSITY CENTRE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GUYANA AND AT THE GUYEXPO '94 TRADE FAIR. A WREATH WAS LAID AT THE NEWLY-RELOCATED COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVE. THIS PROGRAMME PROVIDED OPPORTUNITIES TO MEET A WIDE CROSS-SECTION OF THE GUYANESE PEOPLE, TO SAMPLE THEIR CULTURE AND TO SEE SOMETHING OF ONE OF THE MAINSTAYS OF GUYANA'S ECONOMY IN WHICH A BRITISH COMPANY IS CLOSELY INVOLVED.
4. HER MAJESTY'S ADDRESS TO PARLIAMENT, THE CEREMONIAL HIGH POINT OF THE VISIT, ENCAPSULATED THE TWO PRINCIPAL MESSAGES WHICH THE VISIT WAS DESIGNED TO CONVEY: A BLESSING AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL FOR THE RETURN TO FULLY REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT AND THE NEED TO CONTINUE THE REHABILITATION OF GUYANA THROUGH SOUND ECONOMIC

POLICIES. THE QUEEN PLEDGED THE FULLEST SUPPORT FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM FOR THE CONSOLIDATION AND DEEPENING OF THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS, AND EMPHASISED THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD GOVERNMENT TO UNDERPIN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT. SHE STRESSED HER GOVERNMENT'S LEADING ROLE IN THE INTERNATIONAL EFFORT TO ASSIST GUYANA WITH GRANTS, FINANCING FACILITIES AND DEBT RELIEF, AND EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH THE GUYANESE GOVERNMENT'S DETERMINATION TO ATTRACT INWARD CAPITAL INVESTMENT AND TO USE THE PRIVATE SECTOR AS THE ENGINE OF GROWTH. HER SPEECH WAS WARMLY RECEIVED BY THE GOVERNMENT AND BOTH THE PRESIDENT AND MRS JAGAN HAVE TOLD ME HOW DELIGHTED THEY WERE WITH IT. THE OPPOSITION'S REACTION WAS MORE MUTED: THEY ARE NEVER HAPPY WITH THE NOTION THAT DEMOCRACY NEEDED TO BE RESTORED IN GUYANA, SELF-EVIDENT THOUGH THIS MAY BE.

5. FOR HIS PART, PRESIDENT JAGAN TOLD THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY THAT THE VISIT COINCIDED WITH A NEW BEGINNING AND A RENEWED SENSE OF NATIONAL DETERMINATION TO ANCHOR GUYANA FIRMLY ON THE DEMOCRATIC PATH. HE SAID "I WISH TO RECORD TODAY THE APPRECIATION OF THE PEOPLE OF GUYANA FOR THE GREAT CONTRIBUTION MADE BY YOUR MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT TO THE RESTORATION OF DEMOCRACY IN GUYANA". HE ASSURED THE QUEEN THAT, IN ITS QUEST FOR A STABLE AND JUST SOCIETY, GUYANA WAS SEEKING A COMBINATION OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL AID, CREATING A FAVOURABLE INVESTMENT CLIMATE AND PROVIDING INCENTIVES FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO PLAY A LEADING ROLE IN THE ECONOMY.

6. BARONESS CHALKER ACCOMPANIED THE QUEEN AS MINISTER IN ATTENDANCE AND USED THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLORE IN SEPARATE MEETINGS WITH PRESIDENT JAGAN AND THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (BEING REPORTED SEPARATELY IN DETAIL) THEIR THINKING ON ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ISSUES. SHE WAS ABLE TO PUT ACROSS A NUMBER OF OUR CONCERNS INCLUDING THE NEED TO MAKE GUYANESE INDUSTRY MORE EFFICIENT THROUGH PRIVATISATION, TO STRENGTHEN THE COUNTRY'S CAPACITY TO ABSORB AID, AND TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WITH DUE REGARD FOR THE CONSERVATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT. BARONESS CHALKER ALSO TOOK THE OCCASION TO SIGN WITH THE FINANCE MINISTER THE BILATERAL FOLLOW-UP AGREEMENT TO LAST MAY'S PARIS CLUB AGREEMENT UNDER WHICH THE UNITED KINGDOM WILL RESCHEDULE 29 MILLION OF COMMERCIAL DEBT. COMING ON THE SAME MORNING AS HER MAJESTY'S ADDRESS TO PARLIAMENT, THIS AGREEMENT PROVIDED IMMEDIATE AND TANGIBLE EVIDENCE OF BRITAIN'S LEADING ROLE IN PROMOTING DEBT RELIEF AND SUPPORTING GUYANA'S ECONOMIC RECOVERY PROGRAMME.

7. MORE GENERALLY, THE QUEEN'S VISIT SERVED TWO OTHER PURPOSES. IT HAS DEMONSTRATED THAT, AFTER YEARS OF ISOLATION AND DECLINE

CAUSED BY THE IDIOSYNCRATIC AND DISASTROUS POLICIES OF THE LATE FORBES BURNHAM, GUYANA HAS REGAINED INTERNATIONAL RESPECTABILITY AND MERITS POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SUPPORT. IT HAS ALSO HIGHLIGHTED THE LINKS OF TRADE, TRADITION AND FAMILY AND LANGUAGE BETWEEN GUYANA AND THE UNITED KINGDOM. FOR THE PAST YEAR BRITAIN HAS ENJOYED A FAVOURABLE IMAGE IN GUYANA THROUGH A NEW AID PACKAGE, DEBT FORGIVENESS, INCREASING TRADE AND A STRONG FLOW OF VISITORS IN THE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, DEVELOPMENTAL, MILITARY AND SOCIAL FIELDS. HER MAJESTY'S VISIT HAS CROWNED THIS PERIOD OF ENHANCED CONTACTS AND WILL ENSURE THAT THE LINKS ARE FURTHER PROMOTED IN THE MONTHS TO COME. BRITISH EXPORTERS WOULD DO WELL TO SEEK TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE HEIGHTENED PROFILE WHICH WE NOW ENJOY AS A RESULT OF THE QUEEN'S VISIT.

8. THE TOUR RECEIVED BLANKET COVERAGE IN THE LOCAL MEDIA. WE HAD BEEN ABLE TO PLACE MUCH TRAILER MATERIAL WITH RADIO, TELEVISION AND THE WRITTEN PRESS, AND DURING THE VISIT ITSELF CONSTANT COVERAGE OF THE QUEEN'S AND DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S ACTIVITIES WAS PROVIDED BY LOCAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL JOURNALISTS. APART FROM SOME PETTY GRIPES ABOUT THE LACK OF OPPORTUNITY FOR EVERYONE TO SEE OR TALK TO THE QUEEN, THE PRESS REACTION WAS UNIFORMLY POSITIVE. THIS MIRRORED THE POPULAR RESPONSE, THE MAGNITUDE, EXCITEMENT AND ENTHUSIASM OF WHICH SURPASSED EVERYONE'S EXPECTATIONS, INCLUDING THOSE OF THE SECURITY AUTHORITIES. EVERYWHERE CROWDS OF WELL-WISHERS AND SPECTATORS WERE DENSE, THEIR WELCOME SPONTANEOUS AND VOCAL, WITH A TYPICALLY GUYANESE WARMTH AND GAIETY. DURING THE PACKED THREE DAYS THE ENTIRE POPULATION OF GEORGETOWN, SOME 180,000 PEOPLE, MUST HAVE SEEN THE QUEEN, MANY OF THEM ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS. THEIR AFFECTION AND RESPECT FOR HER MAJESTY WERE EVIDENT, BOTH FROM THOSE OLD ENOUGH TO REMEMBER HER LAST VISIT WITH NOSTALGIA AND THOSE YOUNGER ONES CAPTIVATED BY THE MYSTIQUE OF ROYALTY. I AM ASSURED THAT IT HAS BEEN MANY YEARS - 28 IN FACT - SINCE CROWDS ON THE SAME SCALE HAVE BEEN SEEN IN GEORGETOWN. IT HAS ALSO BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE THE CITY HAS BEEN AS CLEAN AND FRESHLY-PAINTED AND THE ROADS REPAIRED. THE FRANTIC LAST-MINUTE WORK BY GOVERNMENT, PRIVATE ENTERPRISE AND VOLUNTEERS, ALL DESPERATE TO RESTORE SOME PRIDE IN THE CITY AND TO ENSURE THAT IT WAS FIT FOR A QUEEN, WILL PROVIDE A LASTING BENEFIT FROM HER MAJESTY'S VISIT AND DEMONSTRATE WHAT CAN BE DONE WITH A LITTLE EFFORT.

9. I AM MOST GRATEFUL TO HER MAJESTY AND HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS FOR INCLUDING GUYANA IN THEIR CARIBBEAN TOUR, AND FOR AGREEING TO SPEND A SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT OF TIME HERE. I HOPE AND BELIEVE THAT THEY

FOUND IT AN ENJOYABLE AND INTERESTING EXPERIENCE. THE GUYANESE PEOPLE CERTAINLY DID. IT HAS GIVEN GUYANA A LIFT, MUCH NEEDED ENCOURAGEMENT TO CONTINUE ON THE PRESENT REALISTIC AND SENSIBLE PATH, AND A TREMENDOUS BOOST FOR BRITAIN'S PROFILE. IN SUM, AN OUTSTANDING SUCCESS.

JOHNSON

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