

**- 6 -****From 1670 to 1688****123. PROCEEDINGS OF THE WEST INDIA COMPANY (ZEELAND CHAMBER)****[June 1670]***June 2, 1670.*

There were certain public-spirited persons who offered their services in order, together with this Chamber, to erect a new Colony upon the whole Wild Coast.

*June 23, 1670.*

[The conditions agreed on for the above-mentioned Colony having, been reported, it was voted] to accept and approve the same, after certain slight corrections – especially on this condition that from the first Article shall be struck out "Pomeroon," since the disposal thereof does not belong to this Chamber, but to the Committee of Nova Zeelandia.

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**124. EXTRACT FROM THE REGISTER OF THE RESOLUTIONS OF THEIR HIGH MIGHTINESS THE STATES-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NETHERLANDS FOR THE YEAR 1670. VOL. II****[15 October 1670]***Wednesday, October 15, 1670.*

There was read to the Assembly the Petition from the Directors of the Chartered West India Company of this country, showing that the Chamber of Zeeland having some time ago commenced to form a Colony in the River Essequibo upon the Wild Coast of America, the same had fallen into the hands of the English during the English war, but that with the forces sent out by the Province of Zeeland, amongst others, to the coasts of America, the aforesaid Colony had again been got out of the hands of the English, and that subsequently the aforesaid province of Zeeland had allowed itself to be persuaded by the Company to again place the aforesaid Colony in the hands of the Company, and to give it up to the latter on the 11th April of this year, upon the conditions agreed to with the Chamber of Zeeland, and as exhibited together with the aforesaid Petition, and provided that the agreement made should, on being submitted to the Assembly of Nineteen by the Chamber of Zeeland, be found to be in conformity with the interests of the Company, wherefore the aforesaid Directors begged that their High Mightinesses might be pleased to approve of the said agreement, so that the Company might again come into possession of the aforesaid Colony. This being deliberated upon, it was approved and agreed to hereby consent to the aforesaid request, and the aforesaid agreement was consequently approved, which act of approval shall be made out in due form.

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**125. THE QUEEN REGENT, DOÑA MARIANA DE ASTURIAS, TO COUNT PEÑARANDA, PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE, 1671**

[1671 – exact date not shown]

*(Extract)*

We shall now treat of that most endangered; . . . and we will first begin with the Island of Trinidad, where the three ports considered and supposed to be the most important must be inspected. The said island is important, and may be fortified.

All necessary orders having been given for stores, powder, etc., and for the men who are to be engaged on the said island, it will be necessary to visit and inspect the whole of it.

Without loss of time they must proceed to the Orinoco, and at the narrowest part of the said river it is necessary to build a strong fort. The said fort must be constructed of four ramparts with moat and all the rest it may require, with eight pieces of artillery.

Some men may be left there from one of the ships.

And steps may be taken to form a good town, and a good bargain at the same time for Spain.

The Dutch are near the entrance of the said river.

*(British Museum, Department of MSS, Spanish MS)*

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**126. PROCEEDINGS OF THE WEST INDIA COMPANY (ZEELAND CHAMBER)**

[6 March 1671]

*March 6, 1671.*

Pieter Wollefrans appeared before the Chamber, and requested payment of a fourth part of the sum of 568f\*.: 19 : 6, being the balance of the account for the salary earned and deserved by Aert Adriaenssen Groenewegen as Commander in Essequibo from the 6th November, 1650, to the 19th August, 1664; date of his death, and therefore due to his heirs. . .

*[Editor's note: \* guilders]*

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**127. PROCEEDINGS OF THE WEST INDIA COMPANY (ZEELAND CHAMBER)**

[23 July 1671]

*July 23, 1671.*

That the Chamber has understood from Jacob Hars that on the aforesaid coast a good craft is very necessary, in order to be able to visit the nearest lying rivers there for the increase of the business in the annatto dye, and for other things.

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**128. PROCEEDINGS OF THE WEST INDIA COMPANY (ZEELAND CHAMBER)  
[20 July 1673]**

*July 20, 1673.*

There was read the private or secret letter from the Commander Hendrik Roll, from Rio Essequibo, under date of the 16th March, 1673, wherein the following points were noticed, which it was resolved to insert here: . . .

Peace had been made with the Caribs in Barima and the Arawaks, and they had intercourse with each other, and he was going to send a boat after carap-oil, intending in the meantime to make trial of the linseed oil.

He had sent some wares to Orinoco for the purpose of trade; by mistake these were carried to Trinidad, and, no opportunity being found to trade there, they had come back home. Since that time the people of Orinoco have requested that we should go there to trade, whereupon he has resolved to send thither Steven Tornaelje with an old negro who knows the language well.

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**129. PROCEEDINGS OF THE WEST INDIA COMPANY (ZEELAND CHAMBER)  
[11 June 1674]**

*June 11, 1674.*

A discussion was held as to the additional measures which might be necessary for maintaining and furthering the trade on Rio Essequibo; and the matter being put to the vote, it was resolved and agreed to send thither at the first opportunity a mason and a cooper, and two or three outliers, inasmuch as some have served out their time, and will undoubtedly seek to obtain their discharge from the Commander.

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**130. CHARTER OF THE NEW WEST INDIA COMPANY  
[20 September 1674]**

*(Extract)*

The States-General of the United Netherlands to all who shall see or hear these presents read, Greeting, make known:

That we, having found by experience that the welfare of these lands is notably furthered by navigation and the commerce of the good inhabitants, and that the said navigation and commerce can with difficulty be carried on, protected or maintained with countries and districts situated at some distance without the common help and especial assistance of several of the more important citizens, leagued together to that end; for which reason we had many years ago established a general West India Company among the aforesaid citizens by special Charter: But having observed that the affairs of that Company had, through many disasters, fallen into such a state that the shareholders in the same have suddenly become unwilling to continue the aforesaid Company; wherefore we, the last prolongation of the said Charter being about to expire on the 30th September, 1674, have determined to further continue the said Charter, but to dissolve and abol-

ish the said West India Company; desirous, nevertheless, that the aforesaid, our citizens, and especially the shareholders and depositors in the said Company, should not only preserve their interest in the aforesaid navigation, traffic, and trade, but also that their commerce and navigation and the export of manufactures from this country should increase, especially in conformity with the Treaties, alliances, and leagues formerly made with other Princes, Republics, and peoples concerning commerce and navigation, and which we intend shall be upheld and followed punctually in all parts:

We, therefore, having taken into due consideration that naught can be done, protected, and upheld in the districts hereafter mentioned without the usual aid, assistance, and resources of a General Company, on account of the great risks from sea-pirates, extortions, and other things which are met with in such long and distant voyages, have determined for the above and other further pregnant reasons and considerations and urgent causes, after mature deliberation in Council, that navigation, trade, and commerce in the districts of West India and Africa, and other places hereafter mentioned, shall henceforth be carried on only by the common and united strength of the former shareholders and depositors of the aforesaid Company who are willing and shall be encouraged to do so, and in the place of those who are unable or unwilling to subscribe, by other merchants and inhabitants of this country; and to this end a new general West India Company shall be established, which we, out of particular affection for the common weal, and in order to maintain the inhabitants of this country in prosperity, shall strengthen with our help, favour, and assistance as far as the present condition and circumstances of the country will in any way allow; and provide with a proper Charter, with the following privileges and exemptions:

I. To wit, that within the present century, and to the year 1700, inclusive, none of the natives or inhabitants of this or any other country shall be permitted, other than in the name of this United Company, to sail or trade upon the coasts and lands of Africa, reckoning from the Tropic of Cancer to the height of 80 south of the Equator, with all the islands in that district lying off the aforesaid coasts, and particularly the Islands of St. Thome, Annebon, Isle of Principe, and Fernando Polo, together with the places of Isekepe and Bauwmerona, situated on the continent of America, as well as the Islands of Curacao, Aruba, and Buonaire. . .

So that the further limits of the aforesaid Charter shall be open to all the inhabitants of this State without distinction, to be navigated and traded in by them at their pleasure, with this reservation and understanding that if the Chartered East India Company of this country should come to navigate and occupy before all others the islands lying between the coasts of Africa and America, beginning with Ascension southwards, or any of them, private Charter thereof shall be granted to the said East India Company to the exclusion of all others for as long a time as they shall continue the actual possession, so that the like shall also be granted to the said West India Company should the latter come to take and retain the first actual possession thereof, and that in case of the abstention of both, or their abandonment of possession, the said islands shall remain, or once more become places of the second class, which may be navigated by private individuals upon payment of dues; that it shall also be within our faculty and power to grant such licences as we shall deem advisable to other private subjects of this country who may desire to establish any Colonies in the aforesaid district of the present Charter, in those places where that Company neither has nor retains any real or actual possession.

II. That the aforesaid Company shall henceforth be permitted to make, in our name and by our authority, within the limits set down above, contracts, leagues, and alliances with the Princes

and natives of the countries lying within them; shall further build fortresses and strongholds there, and shall appoint Governors, warriors, and officers of justice, and keep up establishments of good order, police, and justice, for other necessary services, and for the maintenance of the places.

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**131. PROCEEDINGS OF THE WEST INDIA COMPANY (ZEELAND CHAMBER)  
[5 November 1674]**

*November 5, 1674.*

Jan Pieterse, of Flushing, has been engaged to serve as an outlier on Rio Essequibo at 10 florins wages per month, and likewise Abraham Boudart and Corn. Lantmeter.

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**132. WEST INDIA COMPANY (ZEELAND CHAMBER) TO HENDRIK ROL,  
COMMANDER, ESSEQUIBO  
[22 February 1675]**

In regard to the trade in Orinoco, for which your Honour is putting forth every endeavour, it would be good if we could get it, but with regard to the lure of the Spaniards, who invite you to bring there some material of war for the King, and under that pretext to get the trade, it must be considered whether this might not, perhaps, at some time be harmful to us, putting in their hands a knife to cut our own throats. Therefore we recommend you to give good heed thereto. . .

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**133. MANUEL DE BELMONTE TO THE COUNT DE MEDELLIN OF THE COUNCIL  
OF THE INDIES  
[17 February 1676]**

Excellency,

The States of the Province of Holland and West Friesland have resolved to establish a Colony on the coast of the mainland at Cape Orange, between Surinamte and the Rivers Amazon, where they possess the greater part of the coast from Trinidad to the River Amazon, for they already have settlements in Barbiche, Sequiebes, and Surinamte [Berbice, Essequibo and Surinam]; and in order that this one may be better cultivated and maintained than the other three, which are hardly kept up, the cities of Amsterdam, Leyden, Haarlem, and Rotterdam are taking charge of it, and have made a contract with 100 shareholders, who undertake to bring ten youths and two girls each, and in four years' time as many more, so that they will have about 2,600 persons, without counting those who may be born and those who may come from other parts; and for their encouragement many privileges of hereditary judicial offices are being granted to them, and also freedom from taxation for ten years, and other exemptions, and the Hollanders undertake to maintain them and to keep a sufficient garrison in two fortresses which are to be constructed at their cost with other conditions.

To commence this work, seven war frigates are lying ready in the port of Amsterdam, three of fifty-four guns, and the rest of thirty-six to forty, three tenders of twelve guns, and other vessels, which are to set sail in April of the present year, 1676, to convey the shareholders, their people, and 300 soldiers for the garrisons and the further necessaries for their establishment; and their object is to endeavour to take possession of the Island of Cayenne, off the coast of the mainland, which is held by the French, who took it from the Dutch in years gone by; and it is understood they will effect it with little resistance. The Commandant of this squadron is Jacob Binques, who is instructed, on arriving at the coast of the mainland, to remain with four frigates, while Pedro Constante, with three frigates and the tenders, will proceed to make an attack in the Windward Isles, which the French hold in America. And in one of the tenders the pirate Erasmus is going, who is well known through having, with one small frigate, plundered the Island of Granada, which belongs to the French. And Constante is the man best acquainted and most in touch with those places; he was formerly Governor of the Island of Tobago, and was in the Tortuga Islands, when their inhabitants revolted against their Governor, Augeron, because they did not want to allow him to trade.

I do not enlarge further on this matter, because Senor Don Manuel de Lira will have done so in the last post received in His Majesty's Cabinet; and your Excellency may regard it as certain that this is the best opportunity for driving out the buccaneers and French from the point to the north of the Island of Santo Domingo and Tortuga Island, and although they ask a large sum for doing it, they may come down to better terms, and it is a matter that should not be delayed, since, if peace is made, that thorn will remain, which, together with Jamaica, will be the ruin of everything.

*(Archivo General de Indias, Seville)*

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**134. EXTRACT FROM THE "CONSULTAS" OF THE COUNCIL OF WAR AND COUNCIL OF THE INDIES TO THE KING OF SPAIN, IN REFERENCE TO A NEW SETTLEMENT OF THE DUTCH ON THE COAST OF GUAYANA, BETWEEN THE RIVER AMAZONS AND SURINAM**

**[12 March 1676]**

Sire,

Manuel de Belmonte sent to me, the Count de Medellin, in a letter of the 17th February last (which I received by the last post from Flanders), the inclosed note, in which he relates that the States of the Provinces of Holland and West Friesland have resolved to establish a Colony on the coast of the mainland at Cape Orange, between Surinam and the River Amazon, where they hold the chief portion of the coast from Trinidad up to this river, with settlements in Barbiche, Sequiebes, and Surinamte [Berbice, Essequibo and Surinam]; and in order that this new Colony may be better cultivated than the preceding ones, it is under the care of the cities of Amsterdam, Leyden, Haarlem, and Rotterdam, which have contracted with 100 shareholders, who undertake to bring ten youths and two girls each, and in four years as many more, so that they would have about, 2,600 persons, excluding those who might be born there and who might come from other parts; and that for their encouragement many privileges of hereditary judicial offices are granted

to them, and the privilege of not paying duty for ten years, and other exemptions, and the Hollanders undertake to maintain them and to keep a sufficient garrison in two fortresses, which are to be constructed at their cost, with other conditions.

And he says that, in order to commence it, seven war frigates were lying ready in the port of Amsterdam, three of fifty-four guns, and the remainder of thirty-six to forty, three tenders of twelve guns each, and other vessels, and that they are to set sail in the month of April of this year, conveying the shareholders, their people, and 500 soldiers for the garrisons, and all else necessary for their establishment. And that their object is to try to take possession of the Island of Cayenne, which is close to the shore of the mainland, and which the French possess and captured from the Dutch, and it is believed they will effect it with little resistance. He also says that the Commandant of this squadron is Jacob Binqes; and he has heard that on reaching the coast of the mainland he will remain with four frigates, and that Pedro Constante will proceed with three frigates and the tenders to make an attack in the Windward Isles, owned by the French. And that in one of the tenders the pirate Erasmus is going, who is well known through having, with a small frigate, plundered the Island of Granada, which belongs to the French, and that Pedro Constante is well acquainted with those parts, for he was Governor of the Island of Tobago, and was in the Tortuga Islands when the inhabitants revolted against their Governor, Augeron. And Manuel de Belmonte suggests that this is the best opportunity for driving the buccaneers and French from the point on the north of the Islands of Santo Domingo and Tortuga, and that although they demand such a large sum for doing it, they may be induced to accept lower terms; but action must be taken without delay, for, if peace follows, that thorn will remain, and, added to that of Jamaica, will be the ruin of everything.

The said note having been seen in the Council of War, it has been decided to place it in your Majesty's Royal hands, pointing out that Don Manuel de Lira gave notice of another proposal made by the States of Holland, offering to go with naval forces to dislodge the French from the settlements which they have on the Windward coasts, and to demolish their fortifications, without the Dutch being allowed to settle on the same places, or gaining further advantage than seizing the negroes and other goods and properties possessed by the French, whereof I, Count de Medellin, gave a report to your Majesty. But (according to the contents of the note from Manuel de Belmonte) what the Dutch are now desirous of attempting is more absolute, for their object is to increase plantations in the Indies by conveying men and everything else necessary thereto, and to extend them along the coasts of the mainland in order to get the trade more into their hands, to the serious loss and prejudice of the inhabitants of those ports, and the evident risk of the Indies being lost through the numerous settlements which the Northern nations have made in those provinces, for which there is no other remedy except the re-establishment of the Windward fleet, in order that it may hasten wherever the necessity may be most pressing.

And therefore the Council finds itself compelled to bring the matter under your Majesty's consideration, that you may deign to order the necessary measures to be taken without delay; and that a letter may be written to the States-General, or that they may be given to understand from the proper quarter the annoyance which would be occasioned if they were to make new plantations in the Indies without informing your Majesty, since it is a matter of such serious prejudice to your Royal Crown. For although the Island of Curazao is so insignificant and sterile, notorious inconveniences result from its possession by the Dutch.

Your Majesty will resolve whatsoever may be most conducive to your service.

(Signed) Conde de Medellin  
 (And seven other Councillors of the Indies, viz.)  
 Duke de San German.  
 Marquis de Hontiveros.  
 Don Baltasar Pantoja.  
 Don Antonio de Castro.  
 Don Joseph Ponze.  
 Don Bernabe Ochoa.  
 Count de Paredes.

(Five Seals)  
 Madrid, March 12, 1676

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**Annex: Letter of Manuel de Belmonte to Count de Medellin of the Council of the Indies, 17 February 1676.** (See Document 133 above)

*(Archivo General de Indias, Seville)*

**135. MINUTE OF THE COUNCIL OF WAR OF THE INDIES, WITH ROYAL DECREE, IN REFERENCE TO A NEW SETTLEMENT OF THE DUTCH ON THE COAST OF GUAYANA BETWEEN THE RIVERS AMAZON AND SURINAM [19 March 1676]**

*Council of War, March 19, 1676.*

**Docket:** – Places in your Majesty's Royal hands the note sent by Manuel de Belmonte, reporting that the States of Holland have resolved to establish a Colony on the coast of the mainland at Cape Orange upon which the Council offers its opinion to your Majesty.

*Decree of Council.*

The formation of the Windward fleet being of the greatest importance, which the Council represents, and which is recognized, I charge the Council, in fulfilment of what I have resolved to apply its greatest care to the furtherance of the execution thereof, and to seeking the necessary means for this object; and, in view of the time and season, it does not appear advisable at present to bring the proposed complaint before the States-General of the United Provinces.

[Published on the 14th April 1676]

(Signed) DON FRANCISCO DE MADRIGAL

*(Archivo General de Indias, Seville)*

**136. RESOLUTION OF HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF SPAIN ON THE “CONSULTAS”  
[14 April 1676]**

What the Council represented being of great importance, the formation of the “Armada” of the Windward, is fully recognized as necessary; and I charge you, in conformity with what I have resolved, that you bestow the greatest care in forwarding the execution of the same, and that all necessary means therefor be procured; and in respect of the time and season it does not appear convenient to bring before the States-General of the United Provinces the complaint proposed.

Published on the 14th April [1676].

*(Archivo General de Indias, Seville)*

**137. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF ALL HIS MAJESTY'S (THE KING OF SPAIN'S)  
DOMINIONS IN AMERICA**

*[Anonymous and without date, but apparently of 1676. It is difficult to fix the date of this document. It could not well have been earlier than 1665, at which date the Colony of Pomeroon was in its prime. On the other hand, the mention of a Colony on the Waipoco points to 1676, or thereabouts.]*

Description of the Dutch settlements on the islands and their possessions on the mainland between the Island of Carpoy and the River Poymaron.

Immediately on leaving the River Amazon the River Bayapoco (Wiapoco ?) is entered, which is opposite the Island of Carpoy. At a distance of 65 leagues on the River Bayapoco, the States of Holland have established two very large settlements formed by the remainder of the people whom they had in Brazil, and have strongly fortified the mouth of the river. They obtain abundant produce in tobacco, sugar, indigo, and rum. They also obtain some gold up the river by barter with the native Indians, who have moved into the interior, although the Dutch, alarmed because some of them have been shot with arrows, are afraid to carry on the traffic often, or to explore the resources of this great river, which must be very great, as it is one of the mighty rivers of these coasts. All the land is very low in the district, which begins at the island and extends to the River Aapreboca, twenty leagues to leeward of the above-mentioned river. Here the Dutch have another town, which they call Parboin, where they obtain the same produce as at the other; both are in rich, fertile land with much commerce; at the latter they have no fort 18 leagues to leeward is the River Baya, where they have some farms though no settlement; but they obtain abundant produce, which they carry to their other ports in boats and canoes, of which there are many on this coast.

Then comes the River Cau with a small settlement called Cotobain, and to leeward of it is the Island of Cayana, opposite the River Viya. Ninety leagues to leeward is the River Soronama, where the Dutch have large plantations and carry out agricultural operations, for they obtain abundant produce there; moreover, the settlement is well fortified, being one of the most important on this coast. It is much frequented by vessels of medium size, as there is not much water in the river. 37 leagues to leeward is the River Demerary, where they have a very rich trading establishment (which they call San Juanes de Irlande). The whole of this river is free of shallows, and

affords good anchorage for ships, which always carry on a considerable trade there in the export of the produce of the land, by means of the many Indians and negroes employed for the purpose. Twenty leagues to leeward on the River Paumaron is the settlement of New Zelandia, which is of considerable size and rich in produce, and the best trading establishment which they have on the whole coast; consequently they guard it very carefully, for it is very near the River Orinoco, where your Majesty's garrison of Guayana is placed.

So this anxiety, as well as that caused by a settlement belonging to the King of France on that shore, which they call St. Thomas, compels them to take these precautions. All this I know and saw in full detail, as I came from Cabo Verde to the Portuguese dominions, where I remained nearly a year and a-half, passing up and down these shores in the service of the Portuguese, with all those who came with me in the ship, for after taking our ship from us they did us the kindness of taking us from port to port in Brazil, treating us worse than their slaves; this lasted until the Governor of the Marañon, touched by the great sufferings we had undergone, gave us a canoe and a *piroque* with a small stock of provisions to enable us to reach the Orinoco. There great misfortunes befell us in consequence of our having no pilot, and because we did not venture to put to sea in such small boats; moreover, our provisions failed and we were obliged to forage every day for food, because in the heavy rains we had nowhere to keep what was given us on the Marañon, and it was all spoiled by rain and the foam of the waves which came into the boat. Thus we suffered many hardships, until our fate willed it that one of the boats, being insufficiently fastened, was carried out to sea, while the other was staved in by a heavy sea, so that we were left with none, and were compelled to go on foot along the shore for many days, till we came to the River Demerary, where we found an English sloop, which picked us up and took us to the Island of Barbadoes, from which she had come.

*(Bibliotheca del Rey, Royal Palace, Madrid)*

**138. RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE, PRESIDED OVER BY THE DUC DE MÉDINACELI, AND AT WHICH DON DIEGO DE PORTUGAL, DON JOSEPH DE AVELLENADA, AND THE MARQUIS DE VARINAS ASSISTED**

**[1677]**

About Trinidad, of the Windward, it was said to be a very unhealthy place for Europeans, for which reason the French had not occupied it, . . . that there was some trade with the Dutch; that the River Orinoco was the highway to the new kingdom [of Granada]; and it was agreed that the Island of Trinidad defended itself by its bad climate and the barrenness of its soil; that the River Orinoco, with a width of more than 20 leagues at its mouth, should not be occupied; and although it was proposed that Araya should be abandoned on account of the expense of maintaining 300 men there, it was agreed it should be maintained, as it had also been constructed for the defence of that coast; though quite true it was considerably distant from the River Orinoco to be able to guard and hinder it from being entered, still it always served as a hindrance and embarrassment to enemies who would like to attempt some conquest by that river.

*(Archivo General de Simancas)*

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**139. WEST INDIA COMPANY TO COMMANDER, ESSEQUIBO**  
**[6 November 1677]**

*(Extract)*

You will do well to send hither by this ship some of the balsam that is there, unless it might be disposed of to greater advantage and profit on the River Orinoco, where the trade should be kept up as much as possible, and we shall hope to hear, through your letters, from time to time, of your success in the matter.

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**140. WEST INDIA COMPANY TO COMMANDER, ESSEQUIBO**  
**[30 December 1678]**

*(Extract)*

And inasmuch as we have received reliable information that on the Orinoco a good trade could be established with the Spaniards, we shall by next letter expect a list, or petition, of the goods and merchandise required therefor, together with a specification of the goods and effects that might be got in exchange; how and in what way the aforesaid trade is carried on there, whether by the Governor, by private inhabitants, or, perhaps, by the natives of the country: what craft is ordinarily used therefor; and all further particulars about persons, place, time, and season, so that we may take our measures accordingly, and that you will especially have to take good care that the river may be navigated by no other ships than those of the Company alone. . . .

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**141. COMMANDER, ESSEQUIBO, TO WEST INDIA COMPANY**  
**[20 October 1679]**

The River Pomeroon also promises some profit; for, in order to make trial of it, I sent thither in August last one of my soldiers to barter for annatto dye. But there lately came tidings of the approach of a strong fleet of Caribs from the Corentyn with intent to visit this river and Pomeroon, having perhaps a secret understanding with the Caribs dwelling here to make a common attack upon us. This danger, thank Providence, we have escaped, for I now learn from Berbice that they long ago passed this river on their way from Barima, and, seizing in Berbice an Indian boat, have gone back to their home again. On receiving the aforesaid ill-tidings I called in to the fort the above-mentioned outlier in Pomeroon, both to save him from being surprised, along with the Company's goods, by these savages, and to strengthen ourselves in case of attack. Accordingly he came to the fort on the 8th instant with all the goods, bringing with him a barrel of annatto dye, which he had there bought up. The scare being now over, I shall send him back there within four or five weeks (the dye season not fairly beginning there before that date) and, if

the trade prospers, it would not be a bad idea to build there a small house for two or three men, so that they may dwell permanently among the Indians and occupy that river. They would thus be stimulated to furnish a deal of annatto, for the place is too far off for them to bring it here to the fort. In that event you ought to send me more men from the Fatherland. . . .

As regards the trade in Orinoco, it would succeed satisfactorily if only I were properly supplied with wares. I have twice now sent thither a Christian – one of my soldiers – with axes, cutlasses, knives, beads, etc., and with good result, except the last time, when almost all the wares were brought back because of their unsuitableness; moreover, their Silver Fleet from Peru had not yet arrived. The old Governor there had, on account of his evil ways, been carried to Spain a prisoner, and a new one put in his place. The latter has promised and assured me in writing, that the forty-six pieces of eight for axes, etc., due to me from his predecessor, by whom they were taken on credit, shall certainly be paid me; for before the second trip thither he had already been carried to Trinidad, so that this new Governor has virtually pledged himself for those moneys. These two voyages have brought the Company more than 200 pieces of eight. The date set me some time ago for the third trip by the said Governor has long passed; but for lack of wares it has to be given up. This trade must, as much as possible, be kept secret, that strangers may not spoil it. The Spanish brandy is very acceptable there, also the fine linen and the scarlet cloth; for the other things there is no demand. Great profits may be reaped there if the business be well managed – above all, we must stand well with the Spaniards, for else they will not buy. We must note well, too, the date of the arrival of the Silver Fleet. This is now at hand; but, for lack of everything, it cannot be taken advantage of. By your next ship [I shall] send you a detailed Report with a further description of the good opening there, along with an itemized statement of my trade and an account of sales.

In conclusion, I earnestly recommend you to send, as early as possible, the necessary goods, wares, merchandise, materials of war, and provisions both for Christians and for the slaves, as specified in my previous letter, so that trade and our mouths may not come to a standstill. I hope they are already on the way. It would not be amiss to send 300 to 400 medium-quality axes, 100 to 200 dozen rivetted knives, and several lbs. sky-blue beads more than is mentioned in the list sent you, [all] greatly needed, and the best wares and most acceptable to the Spaniards – one m[edium] axe for one piece of eight, one mass of beads for three pieces of eight, one dozen rivetted knives for two pieces of eight, etc., and everything accordingly.

#### 142. COMMANDER, ESSEQUIBO, TO WEST INDIA COMPANY

[16 April 1680]

Trading to Orinoco must, to give least umbrage, be carried on by canoe. On the 14th November of last year, I, for the third time, sent there a soldier with a canoe manned by Indians, [and] with a fair stock of goods. He was well received by the new Governor and clandestinely allowed to carry on the aforesaid trade, and favoured to such an extent, although at that time the silver had already been taken to Trinidad on account of my long delay for lack of the necessary stock, that he actually arrived here safely at the fort on the 28th December following, with about 200 pieces of eight, consisting of shilling pieces, with an elaborate missive from the Governor aforesaid, full of expressions of his wish to enter into relations of sincere confidence and correspon-

dence with me, fixing the time – to wit, in October next – for the return of the same soldier, when he will be back from Peru, whither he was more than four months ago dispatched in person by the Governor of Trinidad for the execution of certain orders. But, to my sorrow, I have not been able to recover the 26 pieces of eight, which the old Governor, who was carried off as a prisoner, as mentioned in my former letter, still owes; I am referred to Trinidad, the place of his detention. . . .

**143. COMMANDER, ESSEQUIBO, TO WEST INDIA COMPANY**  
**[28 June 1680]**

The trade in hammocks and letter-wood has this year not had the desired success, on account of the war between those [i.e., the Indians] of Cuyuni, Essequibo, and Mazaruni, and the Accoways who live up country; and we have repeatedly, with many but fruitless arguments, tried to persuade the highest Chief to make peace with the aforesaid nation, to that end offering axes and other wares. They even threatened, if we would not let them continue the war, to depart in great numbers to Barima and elsewhere. These being the most important traders in dye, I was, to my sorrow, compelled to desist; and hereby the River Cuyuni, our provision Chamber, is closed. In addition, we lately have been embittered by the death of Gilles, an old negro of the Company, recently poisoned up in the Cuyuni, as the Caribs pretend, by the Accoways. On that account the aforesaid old negroes have become afraid to have intercourse with that tribe; I shall, however, bethink me of means for conciliating that tribe. . . .

**144. COMMANDER, ESSEQUIBO, TO WEST INDIA COMPANY**  
**[1681]**

By reason of the Accoway war in Cuyuni, of which you have heard, the trade in hammocks, especially in new ones, has resulted badly, for no one dares to trust himself among that faithless tribe, so that no more than six common ones could be sent; the others were too small and not good enough for your Honours' persons.

As for the trade in Orinoco, it has turned out ill and deplorably this year, since, in the place of the old genial Governor, there has come another very ill-natured, and a kinsman of the one of Trinidad. Not only did he prohibit the trade, but he even caused Pieter Laman, who, in January last, was sent there by me to trade for the profit of the West India Company, to be put in irons, together with one of the Company's old negroes, although, according to their report, they had given not the slightest cause. And, while he was thus in prison, the faithless soldiers, or rather creoles, like robbers, broke open the barrel of axes and stole some thirty-four thereof, and from his valise or package also took and appropriated more than thirty pieces of eight, and after he had been detained for two days, he was expelled from that river, without obtaining from the aforesaid Governor the least satisfaction, much less restitution, and was tolls never to come there again, or they would send him to Spain. Nevertheless, he still obtained, by secret trade, 418 shillings, besides five gold rings, as is seen from the inclosed account under No. 5. But later I have heard that the new

Governor has lately been relieved, and the old kind man has succeeded in his place. If I find this to be true, I shall have this voyage undertaken once more with caution, and in that case have no doubt of success, and hope that this loss may be compensated by successful trade – which may God grant. I have deemed it advisable to keep for the present the remainder of the above-mentioned sum of forty-two pieces of eight, to be employed in case of great necessity or for your profit, but subject to your full approval by next letter. The five gold rings are, however, sent to you now, as appears by bill of lading.

Moreover, it would not be amiss to send the fishing-smack in the approaching dry season to the mouth of Orinoco, to salt manatees and turtles for the sustenance of your garrison here; the smack has been overhauled, and is capable of navigating these waters for two or three years. . .

We know as yet, thank God, of no war, nor even of rumours thereof, and now live on satisfactory terms with the natives of this country, being inclined to bring annually a still greater quantity of annatto to market. On account of the constant rain I have obtained little food from them, and this want has been supplied by the sea-side, and again two canoes have gone there, one of them to Amacura to salt manatees and wild hog's flesh. . .

On a certain island in the mouth of the Cuyuni I have had a cassava field cleared by three Indians, after which the Company's slaves from the fort (and one day those of the plantations) prepared the ground and planted cassava for the sustenance of your garrison there. . . .

#### **145. COMMANDER, ESSEQUIBO, TO WEST INDIA COMPANY**

**[18 July 1682]**

Among the natives of the country, thank God, there is peace as yet, and we hear no rumour of evil, except only that the French are keeping Trinidad and Orinoco blockaded and invested, though we do not yet know the exact outcome.

Trade to the first-named place has been reasonably successful, with a return of between 200 and 300 pieces of eight. For lack of necessary wares it could be undertaken only once. . .

The victuals, and especially the sweet oil, will soon begin to run short; for, since on account of the war between the Caribs and the Accoways the River Cuyuni no longer furnishes provisions, we have to make shift with the seaside alone.

#### **146. COMMANDER, ESSEQUIBO, TO WEST INDIA COMPANY**

**[27 February 1683]**

*(Extract)*

I have sent a negro up the Cuyuni in order, if it be possible, to establish peace between the Akuways and the Caribs, so as by this means to get hold of the wild-pig hunting there as formerly.

**147. COMMANDER, ESSEQUIBO, TO WEST INDIA COMPANY**  
**[25 December 1683]**

*(Extract)*

I have caused one of the Company's servants to reside in Barima, as couch annatto and letterwood is obtainable there, and it lies near to Pomaroon, and has recently been navigated two or three times by Gabriel Bishop, and traded in with great success, to the great prejudice of the Honourable Company. I hope their Honours will approve of this. I have prohibited him and all others trading from there and in Barimaroom [sic].

I wish their Honours would take possession of that river as well, which has been done by me provisionally in order to see what revenue it will yield, since I am of opinion that the Honourable Company has the right to trade and traffic there in an open river as much as other private persons.

**148. COMMANDER, ESSEQUIBO, TO WEST INDIA COMPANY**  
**[31 March 1684]**

*(Extract)*

Pomeroon begins annually to deliver much and good annatto, and much was supplied from Barima, as appears from the inclosed list under No. 7. [not printed] From this their Honours will see how much has been procured and brought to the fort by all the Postholders; but Gabriel Bishop, and other interlopers from Surinam, spoil not only that trade, but buy up all the letterwood, which is there both abundant and good, as well as madder oil and hammocks, whereby I have this year received very little and bad dye. They traverse and overrun the land right up to the River Cuyuni itself.

In order somewhat to check this, I have caused a small station to be made in Barima, and Abraham Baudaart, who is there as Postholder in place of Daniel Galle, who is going home, shall occasionally visit those places and encourage the Caribs to trade in annatto and letterwood, which the French even from the islands in the river frequently come with their vessels to fetch. I submit, therefore, under correction, that it would not be inequitable for the Honourable West India Company to take possession of the River Barima in order to acquire the trade aforesaid, and to command the erection there of a permanent place for a Postholder. . .

The *copaiba* and *curcai* are much bought up by the Spaniards. The war which various nations there carry on with one another has been the cause that Daentje the negro has not been able to get so far up among that nation, and therefore has made a fruitless journey, and could get only a few bad hammocks for the negroes. The time of the *copaiba* season and his departure is now at hand, and an Indian who just now came from that region reports that at present there is a good stock on hand there.

The Jew Salomon de la Roche having died some eight or nine months ago, the trade in vanilla has come to an end, since no one here knows how to prepare it so as to develop the proper aroma and keep it from spoiling. I have not heard of any this whole year. Little is found here; the

most of it is to be had in Pomeroon and Barima, whither this Jew frequently travelled, and he used sometimes to make me a present of a little. In navigating along the river, too, I have sometimes seen some on the trees, and picked it with my own hands, and it was prepared by the Jew -- although I was never before acquainted with the virtue and value of this fruit, which grows wild and after the fashion of the banana. I have, indeed sometimes used it in chocolate. The Jew has without my knowledge secretly sent a deal home; however, I shall do my best to obtain for the Company, in Pomeroon or elsewhere, as much as shall be feasible, but I am afraid it will spoil, since I do not know how to prepare it. I shall take care that no private business be carried on in it.

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**149. RESOLUTION OF THE COMMANDER AND PLANTERS IN ESSEQUIBO**  
**[10 July 1684]**

*Monday, July 10, 1684.*

Resolution adopted by the Commander and the planters in Rio Essequibo as to the erection of a redoubt, or strong-house on Stamper's Island, otherwise New Walcheren:

Firstly, it is approved and resolved to erect and make a strong-house, or redout, of palisades, on the said island of Walcheren, inasmuch as, through Abraham Baudart, Postholder in Pomeroon, we have, received certain news and information that recently two or three hostile [bands of natives?] from Coppenam surprised and attacked the barque of Captain Gideon Biscop, lying in the Barima for trade with the said natives, massacred and killed the said captain, with all his men, and sunk the said boat by chopping a hole in it, threatening to come and make an invasion at the earliest moment, and, if possible, lay waste all the plantations. . . .

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**150. COMMANDER, ESSEQUIBO, TO WEST INDIA COMPANY**  
**[18 August 1684]**

*(Extract)*

Subsequently, through Abraham Baudaart, Postholder in Pomeroon, and divers Indians, I have some time ago obtained information that the French, who are at war with the Spaniards, and are apparently (as I hear indirectly) about to come into collision with our nation, have, now two or three months ago, made themselves masters of the fort in Oronoque after resistance from those inside, and after the loss of their Commander and many persons on either side, and they have taken prisoner the Governor of Trinidad as he was on his way to the said Oronoque, but obtained little booty, since information of this going inland reached the silver on its way down.

It is still unknown whether the said French have abandoned the fort. They have for their assistance many Caribs from Copename expelled by his Excellency Baron van Sommelsdyk, and taking refuge here to our great disquietude.

Just previously Captain Gabriel Bishop, with his barque from Surinam and Berbice, coming into the Barima in order to trade there in annatto, letter-wood, etc., being surprised and overtaken by the Caribs aforesaid, he, with fifteen of his men, was slain, and the barque was cut to pieces and sunk to the bottom, with threats to some other Indians friendly to us, that they, conjointly

with the French, will probably come to destroy all the plantations outside the fort at Essequibo, so that apparently we have an attack to expect soon. . .

All these successive evil rumours have made me resolve to make a strong-house on Stamper's Island, in the shape of a redoubt with two double palisades. . .

Inasmuch as the trade to Orinoco has, by reason of this invasion, come to an end, of which trade a detailed account will be submitted to you by the next homeward-bound ship. . .

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*[Inclosure in above letter]*

**Resolution of the Commander and planters in Essequibo, July 10, 1684** [Document No. 149 above]

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**151. COMMANDER, ESSEQUIBO, TO WEST INDIA COMPANY**  
**[15 January 1685]**

*(Extract)*

Even old hammocks for negroes are scarcely to be found for the prosecution of the annatto trade, as the planters also collect these from far and near for their slaves.

The French in the Barima come and fetch them even as far as up in the Cuyuni, and have burned there the houses of the Pariacots, and have driven them away; the latter collect the balsam from the trees, and this is the reason that Daentje, the negro, has come back two weeks ago without bringing with him a single pound of balsam.

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**152. COMMANDER, ESSEQUIBO, TO WEST INDIA COMPANY**  
**[1 May 1685]**

*(Extract)*

The Spaniards having resumed possession of Oronoque, the dispersed and hunted-away Caribs from the Copename River are flying to leeward about Barima, Weyni, Amacoora, often alarming this coast, and sometimes slaying some unlucky Arowak Indians or Christians, as happened to Bishop and the men from Berbice.

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**153. PROCEEDINGS OF THE WEST INDIA COMPANY (THE TEN)**  
**[17 October 1685]**

*Wednesday, October 17, 1685 (afternoon).*

There was read the Petition of Jacob Pietersz de Jongh, whereby he requests payment of a sum of 42. 13s. 4d. [Flemish pounds], according to the account given him by the Commander Abraham Beekman on the 10th April in Rio Essequibo; and, furthermore, that he be allowed to settle as a free planter on the River Pomeroon, together with other planters who have also made a request to this effect, and that for this purpose the Rivers Essequibo and Pomeroon be thrown open; whereupon, there having been heard the considerations and opinion of the Committee of Directors of the Zeeland Chamber, it was, after discussion, approved and agreed that the first request of the petitioner, concerning the payment of a sum of 42. 13s. 4d. [Flemish pounds], be hereby referred to the Directors of the aforesaid Zeeland Chamber, in order that they decide thereupon as favourably as they shall deem consistent with the interests of the Company. And it was furthermore approved and agreed to throw open hereby the rivers of Essequibo and Pomeroon to each and every one who shall desire to navigate and trade thither, or to settle and dwell there, on condition that he pay to the West India Company the dues and commission receivable, as others of the second class are required to do who navigate to the district of the Charter; the West India Company reserving to itself expressly the trade and the exportation in the aforesaid rivers [of ?] the annatto dye and the letter-wood, with prohibition to all others, on penalty of confiscation of the annatto and the letter-wood exported by others beside the Company, to be applied to the profit of the Company.

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#### **154. PROCEEDINGS OF THE WEST INDIA COMPANY (ZEELAND CHAMBER)**

**[January 1686]**

*Thursday, January 3, 1686.*

There was read a letter from the Committee of Directors from the respective Chambers of the General Chartered West India Company, dated the 24th of last month, concerning the establishing of a new Colony in the River Pomeroon and the appointing of a Commander over the same...

*Monday, January 7, 1686.*

The Minutes were submitted and approved, with the exception of the Resolutions passed concerning the appointment of a Commander and further control for the River Pomeroon, it being taken into consideration that the cities of Middelburg, Flushing, and Vere had, as early as 1657, made a contract with the Company in regard to the settling of the aforesaid river, and thereafter had actually established there a Colony called Nova Zeelandia, for which and other reasons the Burgomasters of this city had requested that the Resolution upon this subject passed last Thursday by this body be not carried into effect, at least not until such time as, this matter having been more fully examined, it should be found that the Company was entitled to assume the aforesaid control. Whereupon, the matter having been put to the vote, it was resolved not to approve the aforesaid Resolution, much less to carry it into effect, until a conference had been held with their Honours, and in the meanwhile Messrs. Van der Merct and Biscop were, together with the Advocate, requested and deputed to examine the Minutes kept by the Directors of Nova Zeelandia, and also the contracts made upon this head by the aforesaid cities with the Company, and to the respective Chambers the necessary communication was to be given of this Resolution, with the request that they appoint Delegates to confer upon this matter with the aforesaid cities,

and to adjust this affair with their Honours, or else to authorize this Chamber to do so.

*Wednesday, January 9, 1686.*

There was heard the Report of Messrs. Van der Merct, Biscop van Serooskercke, and the Advocate concerning the Colony of Nova Zeelandia.

Whereupon, the question having been put, it was approved and agreed to thank the aforesaid Commissioners for the trouble they had taken, and to insert here the aforesaid Report.

[*Insertion*]

Messrs. van der Merckt and Biscop, together with the Advocate, having examined, in pursuance of the commissorial Resolution of the 3rd instant, the Minutes and Resolutions kept by the Directors of Nova Zeelandia, and having compared therewith the Minutes of the old Company, both those kept here in this city and those of the Assembly of Nineteen, have reported:

1. That the Administration of Nova Zeelandia was established in the year 1657.
2. That as Directors thereof were appointed two members from the Magistracy of Middelburg, one from Flushing and one from Vere, together with four Directors from and on behalf of the aforesaid cities, in such manner that the aforesaid Administration consisted of eight persons.
3. That the city of Middelburg shared in the aforesaid Administration to the extent of one-half, and the cities of Flushing and of Vere to the extent of one-quarter [each].
4. That the Book of Minutes kept by the aforesaid Directors concerning the aforesaid Administration was entitled: "Resolutions concerning the new Colony in Essequibo."
5. That the first sitting was held on the 1st November, 1657.
6. That on the 16th December, 1657, the aforesaid three cities made an agreement together concerning the distribution of the outlays to be made for the support and maintenance of the aforesaid Colony; and that the conditions drawn up for the planters had been settled and promulgated everywhere, before even a provisional agreement had been made about the aforesaid Colony between the aforesaid cities of Walcheren and the Company, and certainly before it had been approved by the Board of Nineteen.
7. That the aforesaid agreement was approved and signed by the members of the Committee on the 24th of the same month.
8. That on the 21st January, 1658, there was made between the Directors of this Chamber on the one part, and the Burgomasters and Magistrates of the cities of Middelburg, Flushing, and Vere on the other part, a provisional Contract, containing, among other things –
  - (i) That the aforesaid cities be considered as founders and colonizers of the aforesaid coast;
  - (ii) That the aforesaid cities shall have jurisdiction over it after the fashion of a fief, to this end appointing in turn a person on whom the fief shall be conferred upon payment of certain seignorial dues;
  - (iii) That the aforesaid Colony shall extend between 1 and 10 on the aforesaid Wild Coast, which agreement was also approved by the Assembly of Nineteen.
9. That on the 9th September, 1658, the cities began to consider about making the aforesaid Colony provincial; and that on the 3rd October, 1658, Deputies were appointed to broach the matter to the respective members of the estates of the province.

10. That the invested capital was increased or augmented to the sum of 12,000 Flemish pounds.

11. That on the 15th April, 1659, the deputed Councillors wrote to the aforesaid Directors, sending them an extract from their Minutes of the 11th of the same month, requesting them to give the provincial estates their opinion on it, and especially to make a statement of the sums which would be required for the maintenance and continuation of the aforesaid Colony.

12. That the members for Vere as early as 1660 failed to furnish their quota, and that in view thereof on the 16th December of the aforesaid year a discussion was begun as to the measures that should be taken in order to constrain them thereto.

13. That the Directors having, on the 12th March, 1663, very earnestly considered the condition of the aforesaid Colony, and especially the capital still necessary for the continuance thereof, had approved and agreed to make report thereof to their principals, in order that their Honours might deliberate and decide thereon for the best interests of the Company.

14. That the Minutes of the aforesaid Directors end with the 19th November, 1663, and that the Company, both before and after that date, had advanced the sum of 7,000 Flemish.

15. That the River of Essequibo, being in the year 1665 captured by the English, and these being driven out again in the same year, under the leadership of Matthys Bergenaar, Commander of Berbice, with some troops drawn from the garrison there and joined to the Company's negroes and other servants who had retired from the aforesaid river into the woods, the soldiery of this State at last stationed itself there and continued to occupy the aforesaid River of Essequibo until the year 1670, when the river was again given over into the hands of the West India Company in its Chamber here, as appears more fully in the conditions made therefor on the 11th April, 1670.

16. That the aforesaid Contract made with the deputed Councillors was also, after various remarks, finally approved by the Assembly of Nineteen, containing among other provisions that the Company was required to furnish every year a goodly number of slaves in Surinam for a certain reasonable price, so that the restitution of the aforesaid Colony took place only under an onerous stipulation. . . .

## **155. WEST INDIA COMPANY (ZEELAND CHAMBER) TO COMMANDER, ESSEQUIBO**

**[14 January 1686]**

*(Extract)*

And this, too, when the annatto dye is fairly a drug on the market, since it not only comes in large quantities from the River Essequibo, but is also brought hither from other lands and regions. For this and other reasons, therefore, the Assembly of Ten has decided that the River of Essequibo, together with that of Pomeroon, shall be thrown open, and that henceforth each and every one who shall desire to found plantations there shall be permitted to do so, and under not unfavourable conditions, as you will see from the missive written you by the Assembly of Ten aforesaid concerning this matter, and from the commission given Jacob Pieters de Jonge as Commander of the River Pomeroon a copy of which is inclosed herewith for your guidance.

**156. RESOLUTION OF THE AMSTERDAM CHAMBER OF THE WEST INDIA COMPANY**

**[5 April 1686]**

(With reference to Resolutions of the Amsterdam Chamber of the 4th December, 1685, and 29th November previous:)

*(Extract)*

Concerning the populating and cultivating of the River Pomeroon lying near the River Esse-  
quibo on the coast of America, that their Honours have provisionally decided to appoint a Com-  
mander for the aforesaid river in the person of Jacob Pietersz de Jonghe . . . but that previously  
the gentlemen of Middelburg and other towns, as owning an interest in the river aforesaid. . .  
formerly named Nova Zeelandia, had on this account opposed [the Resolutions], yet subse-  
quently declared themselves content to allow them to pass.

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**157. MINUTE OF THE COUNCIL COMMANDING COPY OF THE ROYAL "CEDULA" OF 1682 TO BE ADDED TO THE FILE.**

**[26 April 1686]**

For the purpose of being annexed to an "Expediente" of the Capuchin Missionary Fathers of  
the Province of Cumaná, the Council has agreed that a copy be taken of the "Cedula" issued in  
the year 1682, in which, at the instance of Don Tiburcio de Axpe y Zuniga, orders were given to  
abolish, in the Province of Trinidad of Guayana, every sort of bondage-contract of Indians, in  
order that they might enjoy their liberty. And as it concerns the Secretariate under your Honour's  
charge, you will please be good enough to order search to be made for this "Cedula" and a copy  
thereof to be sent to me to place with the said "Expediente."

May God, etc.

(Signed) ANTONIO ORTIZ DE OTALORA

(Seal)

Madrid, April 26, 1686

*(Archivo General de Indias, Seville)*

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**158. DON FRANCISCO DE AMOLAR TO COUNCIL OF THE INDIES**

**[30 April 1686]**

In execution of your Honours' directions I forward herewith the copy of the "Cedula" re-  
quired.

May God, etc.

(Signed) FRANCISCO DE AMOLAR  
(Seal)  
Madrid, April 30, 1686

*(Archivo General de Indias, Seville)*

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**159. DON TIBURCIO DE AXPE Y ZUNIGA, THE FISCAL OF THE KINGDOM OF SPAIN, TO SECRETARY OF THE COUNCIL OF THE INDIES, DON ANTONIO ORTIZ DE OTALORA**

**[26 April 1686]**

*Madrid, April 26, 1686*

In fulfilment of what is contained in the letter which you were pleased to direct to be forwarded to me, and which bears the date of the 3rd instant,\* wherein you direct me to give my opinion, from the experience I possess of the mainland provinces of the Indies, upon the proposal which has been made to the Royal Council of the Indies by the Capuchin Fathers who are conducting the Mission in Cumaná, as to whether it will be advantageous that the Indians of that province should be prohibited from binding themselves for service when first converted, as was done in Trinidad and Guayana at my instance, in order by these means to secure the preservation and perpetuation of the freedom of the said Indians; and likewise as to providing a measure for removing the Carib Indians from their present place, on account of the injury which they do to those provinces, and the conveyance of them to another part, where it might be hoped that with change of climate they would change their habits, as we have experienced with those who were brought from Brazil, and who are now peaceful; and the Royal Council orders me to point out the advantages which will ensue or any objections there may be.

With reference to the first point of the advantage which may ensue from recently converted Indians not binding themselves to servitude, I consider it very much for the service of God and the King that the Indians should remain subject to the missionaries for the space of ten years, and should afterwards be under the Royal Crown, and that, in recognition of vassalage, a small tax be placed upon them, not exceeding 12 reals yearly; and when they are more advanced they will be able to contribute a larger amount, for at first they will not be able to do so until they become capable of cultivating the land. And in order that the Indians may not give themselves up to idleness, and likewise that they may have sufficient to clothe themselves and may be able to go to church more decently, for at present they go naked, and also in order that the Spaniards may have some assistance in erecting their buildings, it will be advantageous that the said Fathers should distribute some Indians for monthly service at a wage of 16 reals per month and their food, and thus they will have what they need; and when they have to pay tribute will be enabled to meet it by devoting one month to labour.

The injury which results to the Indians and to His Majesty through the bondage system is: firstly, that their liberty is taken from them, and they are oppressed with personal labours for which they receive nothing; secondly, that they remain untaught, the result of which is that, although among Christians, they are still as barbarous as they could be in their solitudes, and are worn out with continual work; so that, with this experience, the Indians of those regions with-

draw and defend themselves in order that they may not be compelled to settle; and they regard the proposal to convert them as a snare, for they say that it is only for the purpose of making them work; and so His Majesty is continually defrauded, without any advantage, in his primary rights to extension of territories and feudal dues. And with respect to this very proposal, when His Majesty was giving his attention to the conversion of the Indians, he charged and ordered me, by his Royal "Cedula," dated in this Court on the 29th May, 1682, not to permit personal service, and to attend with care and vigilance to the conversion and settlement of the Indians, which I did. This is my opinion upon this point.

In regard to the removal of the Caribs to other regions, I have to observe that this nation is very numerous (not, however, in those parts about Guarapiche or the Golfo Triste, described by the Capuchins, where they are few in number), for on the mainland various places are occupied by them, as, for instance, Amana, Pao, Caura, and all the coast from the River Orinoco to the Marañon. And respecting the place spoken of by the Capuchins, it will be very advantageous if the said Caribs are compelled to leave it; and the method which seems most suitable is that His Majesty should bestow upon any one who will drive out the Caribs from that part the grant of an appointment of Captain Conquistador and a claim to the first vacancy in Cumaná, upon condition that he raises the necessary troops at his own cost, and bears the expense of their maintenance, in which case he might be assisted with some munitions; and also upon condition that all the Carib Indians, men and women, above the age of 14 years, who might be captured, should be conveyed to the islands of Puerto Rico, Santo Domingo, and Havannah, and that the others who, upon the attack against their nation, might retire to other places should be left alone, for it is impossible to conquer them all owing to their great number and the various territories they occupy in a space extending over 300 leagues in length. And if this measure should seem harsh, we must bear in mind their mode of life, which is very harmful, for they regard human flesh as delicate food, and kill Indians who are not of their nation, and even white people, without any cause, but simply from their evil nature; and those of the Golfo Triste in particular have committed much slaughter and devastation in alliance with the French, with whom at the present time they have traffic and communication, and it is much to be feared that they are going to help the French to settle on the mainland. These Indians likewise prevent the conversion of the others, and have on various occasions sacked villages of Indians already subdued. For these crimes such a race may be chastised by force of arms. And by these means and by occupying the ancient fort of San Carlos Fernandez de Angulo, it will be rendered certain that the Caribs will not return to give assistance in the Golfo Triste. And thus the Capuchin missionaries will easily convert the rest of the Indians.

I must not omit that the Brazil Indians who are in Trinidad, Margarita, and Cumaná, and who came with the Portuguese when they arrived in the year 1666, being strangers and few in number, have been and are very obedient, and the same thing will happen with the Caribs who may be captured, if they are transported to the said islands. This is all that occurs to me, and that I am able to say in reply to the questions addressed to me, desiring that the results most conducive to His Majesty's service may be obtained.

May God, etc.

Your very obedient Servant,  
(Signed) TIBURCIO DE AXPE Y ZUNIGA.  
(Seal)

Madrid, April 26, 1686

To Secretary Don Antonio Ortiz de Otalora

[*Annex 1 of the Report of the Fiscal*]: **Don Tiburcio de Axpe y Zuniga, the Fiscal of the Kingdom of Spain, to Secretary of the Council of the Indies, Don Antonio Ortiz de Otalora, 26 April 1686.** [Document No. 159 above]

[*Annex 2 of the Report of the Fiscal*] **Don Sancho Fernandez de Angulo to Don Antonio Ortiz de Otalora, 2 May 1686.** [Document 160 above]

[*Editor's Note: \*That letter is not included in this collection.*]

(*Archivo General de Indias, Seville*)

**160. DON SANCHO FERNANDEZ DE ANGULO TO DON ANTONIO ORTIZ DE OTALORA OF THE COUNCIL OF THE INDIES**  
[2 May 1686]

Madrid, May 2, 1686

Sir,

In fulfilment of the order you sent me by direction of the Council concerning the representation made by the Capuchin Fathers of the Mission of Cumaná, that every kind of bondage-contract of the Indians should be abolished in those provinces, and that at the same time a remedy should be provided against the Carib Indians on account of the mischief they do to those provinces, and that they should be taken from there, and transported to other parts, showing the disadvantages or advantages which might result therefrom; it seems to me that in regard to the first point which concerns the bondage-contracts it is desirable to abolish entirely this abuse, which is not only productive of harm to the service of God, and to the preservation and increase of the Missions, but is likewise contrary to the interests of the vassals themselves, to whom the said contracts are given, although, led by covetousness and their own interest, they would deny it; for when they go to fetch the Indians, whom they hold under bond for the labour and cultivation of their farms, they give them compensation in the form of axes, pruning knives or cutlasses, beads, knives, and other things, in payment of their labour (and these are called Indians of barter) from which the grave inconveniences result, of the vexations experienced by the Indians when they are fetched away, and of irregular payments of their compensations, of making them work on feast days and of entering the Missions to seize them by force, causing scandals under the pretext that they are Indians in bond to them, in contempt of the Fathers and to the ruin of the Indians. These scandals will cease when such contracts are no longer granted; and the Spaniards will not on this account fail to have the Indians necessary for their labours; for the Fathers themselves, when they are asked for them, if they have any, will make them go to work with the Spaniards; they know the compensation due and its proper payment, and this will result in advantage to the Indians from the protection of the Fathers, and subordination to them, and likewise in

their defence and preservation and in their attendance at the instruction and catechising. And thus the object for which the Fathers went will be attained, and all the Spaniards will enjoy their advantages at the hand of the Fathers, who have always taken care and will take care that the Indians are not idle and that the Spaniards make use of them without violence. And I do not see any disadvantage in this matter being in the hands of the Fathers, owing to their great virtue and disinterestedness, and because from the alms they obtain they are continually helping both Indians and Spaniards, desiring and soliciting the welfare and convenience of all, whereof I had great experience.

As regards the Carib Indians, they are a nation very numerous in various parts, and in the Island of St. Vincent (one of the Windward Islands) they are proud, valiant, warlike, and the arbiters of peace and war, and trample on the other nations; they eat human flesh generally, and every year at a fixed time they gather together and go to the districts of the River Orinoco to make war on other nations, and they eat the Indians whom they kill, and of the Indian women and men whom they capture they keep the former in their service, and fatten the latter for consumption.

They summon gatherings among themselves and other nations to rejoice in these feasts, wherein they usually decide on warlike expeditions, which are very pernicious, both against the Spaniards and against other Indian nations, and against the Missions and the Fathers.

Upon entering the interior, which I did with a large body of troops, when I was Governor and Captain-General of the Provinces of Cumaná, for the purpose of pacifying it and administering punishment for certain disorders and serious crimes which had occurred in the time of my predecessors, I held a Council in one of the Missions then existing upon the advisability of commencing a war against the Caribs; but for reasons which then prevailed it was suspended as far as they were concerned, and they remained in perfect security, for it was then advisable, and they assisted me by a national force against the nations I was attacking.

When the war was ended, and I had left the whole country peaceful and generally disposed to receive the word of the Gospel, I founded the city of San Carlos Fernandez de Angulo, for the maintenance of the peace in which I left it and for the increase of the Missions (all at my cost – houses, church, and other things, of which I gave a formal account to the Council, where it can be seen). And this foundation I made in the most suitable spot that could be desired both for the present time and for the future; for it is near the rich lands of the River Guarapiche, which are excellent for every kind of industry and produce, and where there is the largest number of Carib Indians; at the same time, it enjoys the conveniences of the sea through the mouths of the said River Guarapiche; and it was in this part that they permitted the French to enter and gave them assistance in the time of my successor, Don Francisco Ventura de Palacios Rada, which resulted in the abandonment of the said city of San Carlos (which I have heard His Majesty has ordered to be re-established) and of the Missions of Our Lady del Pilar, St. John the Baptist, and St. Francis, which I knew and saw in a flourishing progressive condition.

From the above statement the consequences may be perceived which will follow to the service of God and His Majesty from dislodgment and ejection of the Carib Indians, from those lands (especially from the districts of the Vegas and mouths of the River Guarapiche) and the evils which will result if they remain therein. For, in addition to the reasons upon which I rely, it is not of less weight that (as I hear) they sell to the French like merchandise, the Indians they capture, for having tasted this devilish profit, the very Indians of the Missions, will no longer be

safe from them, nor will any one else in the country. And in order to fulfil their ambition and that of the French, they will make joint incursions with the latter, and it is to be feared will proceed to occupy the territories and ports of His Majesty as they have done in other parts, and as the Dutch have also done with some settlements on the River Orinoco in the region of the mainland. And passing on to consider the effect of taking the Carib Indians from there and transporting them to other parts, it seems to me that not only should the Council allow and approve the execution thereof with vigour and force of arms, but should encourage it by orders and by giving countenance and reward to those who may serve in this war, and that His Majesty should make some grants of commissions in those parts to the person or persons who (at their own cost) will undertake the duty; and I think it probable that the former settlers of the city of San Carlos will offer to do it and would return to settle there again. And this is better for His Majesty's service, seeing that they themselves will endeavour (for the advantage they will derive therefrom) to clear the land of such evil neighbours, so as to live quietly and securely. And if in this invasion any Indians, men or women, are taken prisoners, they can be easily transported to the Islands of Puerto Rico and Santo Domingo, or to New Spain, in the frigates which frequently come to the Port of Cumaná, and in other vessels which proceed from it, with cargoes for various parts; and not one of them must be allowed to remain in the country under any pretext on account of the facility with which they would return to their own place. And if it is not carried out in this manner I consider it not only difficult, but even impossible, that it can be done, humanly speaking, in any other, even though His Majesty were to expend much from his Royal Treasury. This is all I have to report upon this matter.

May God, etc.

Your obedient Servant, etc.

(Signed) SANCHO FERNANDEZ DE ANGULO SANDOVAL

(Seal)

To Senor Don Antonio Ortiz de Ojalora.

*(Archivo General de Indias, Seville)*

## **161. REPORT OF DON TIBURCIO DE AXPE Y ZUNIGA, THE FISCAL OF THE KINGDOM OF SPAIN**

**[22 May 1686]**

The Fiscal has seen the Reports of Don Tiburcio de Axpe and the "Cedula" of the 29th May, [16]82, which has been annexed to this "Expediente," and says that, in view of what these papers contain, and of the last Resolution taken by the Council respecting the abolition of the personal service of Indians or any other kind of service, real or apparent, in regard to the first of the two points reported upon he has nothing to say, but is strongly of opinion that the measure proposed for obtaining the service of the Indians for the public advantage, without injuring them, could not be more suitable; of course always leaving to the Indian the amount of his hire.

And with regard to the removal of the Carib Indians, who are close to those Missions, he agrees with the Report of the said Don Tiburcio and Don Sancho; in whose proposal and in their

method of carrying it out by hostilities, which are rendered necessary by the character of the Indians, the Fiscal sees nothing objectionable; nor in laying this duty upon the Spaniards of the province, with certain honorary rewards and a claim upon the first commissions which may fall vacant; for being thus encouraged by their own advantages and the quiet they will obtain, they alone will be able to carry out the enterprise successfully; and when it has been carried out it will be possible to place the Caribs in other islands and in the neighbourhood of Spanish settlements, so that by change of climate, and by being held in subjection on all sides, they may live as rational beings and in safety to the increase of the public good, and may be better educated in the Catholic faith and doctrine.

Madrid, May 22, 1686

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**162. COMMANDER, POMEROON TO WEST INDIAN COMPANY**  
**[May 1686]**

*In River Essequibo, May 1686.*

Noble, Worthy, Honourable, Wise, Prudent, and very Discreet Lords,

To give your Honours news of our journey, we have progressed as well with it as could possibly be. On the 31<sup>st</sup> January we started from before Flushing, and henceforward Your Honours will be pleased to see it as per accompanying day register [*not printed*]. To give Your Honours news of our arrival in River Essequibo, it took place on the 4<sup>th</sup> April, as Your Honours will also be able to see by the accompanying day register. As soon as I arrived in the aforementioned river I addressed myself to the Commander Beekman, whom I showed my letters from the Noble Chambers, so as to be able to make my voyage to Pomeroon as speedily as possible. I therefore requested the aforementioned Commander to cause me to be convoyed in the boat to the river aforesaid, with my necessary provisions, for the purpose of surveying, that I might find the most suitable spots for being able to place the fort and the plantations. Then Commaudeur Beekman told me that he had orders from the Noble Lords to assist the skipper, Machiel Dircksen, but that I could easily make a journey to and fro to Pomeroon in the boat, in order partly to survey it.

As he had no immediate need of the boat aforesaid, my intention was to give Your Honours information as to the condition of the River Pomeroon, but through lack of time I have but caused the river to be laid with buoys. I should willingly have gone there alone, but was compelled to take all my people with me because the Commander Beekman said that he was not well furnished with provisions, so that I have only left my assistant by himself at the fort. Concerning my goods, have duly received all the provisions with which Y H. have been pleased to supply me; all has come safe to hand with the exception of a half hogshead of prunes and other groceries besides that were therein. So my assistant has been on board of the ship "De Vrijheijt," and asked the mate if he did not know anything of it, who showed him his Memorandum book, and found there nothing about it, so that I believe has happened through fault of the purveyor. I having thus arrived in Pomeroon, the natives of the land have been very friendly to me. I have been well able to see that it is a good land; by surmise, about 11 to 12 miles in the river, I have found the most suitable places, where formerly the magazine stood, for the purpose of constructing a stronghold

there, because nowhere lower is there any land so suitable for laying out plantations except in creeks.

I have no doubt but that the river will shortly become inhabited. Had there been but some more room on the ship "De Vrijheijt," I feel certain that several planters for the River Pomeroon would have accompanied me. The planters were very anxious for the conditions which Your Honours should be pleased to draw up. Will also Your Honours be pleased to send me the orders or conditions, in case any French or English or Spaniards came there with their vessels, what recognizance they should be obliged to pay as anchor-money or in case they also came to cut down any timber for erecting a mill, or firewood, or anything else, that Your Honours be pleased to advise me in your next despatch.

The goods sent for, which I, as per accompanying Memorandum, have sent for, is simply wherewith to obtain some red slaves, oriane dye and vessels, and provisions, and whatever turns up. But if Your Honours be pleased to send further wares in order to make a journey as occasion offers to Orinoco, for which Your Honours will be pleased to send, also other wares, in order to traffic among the Spaniards there, Your Honours will likewise be pleased to send some slippers and shoes and white shirts, as well as hats and white fustian, in order to sell them at a good profit to the soldiers and other folk; also, Your Honours will be pleased to send me five or six red coats and breeches, with some sham gold and silver lace, to keep on friendly terms with the Chiefs of the Indians.

I have made request to Commander Beekman to give me some assistance in the matter of pieces of artillery to place on the four corners of the fort, but he has given me only two. But whenever Your Honours be pleased to have the solicitude to provide me with the necessary artillery, which Your Honours be pleased to order according to the inclosed list, then will I restore his two pieces again to the Commander Beekman, since the Commander Beekman did not assist me with it as he might. I have therefore bought from the Captain Machiel Dircksen four "schiethake," which are very serviceable to me both in a canoe and on the fort, and that for a sum of 22 fr.; that without question was a good bargain, so that I hope Your Honours will not take it ill of me. Will Your Honours be pleased to give orders that Commander Beekman supply me with some cows to rear, as in these parts they are 40 gulden. I hope Your Honours will shortly supply me with slaves, since I hear that many intend to go with me here from Essequibo and also from Berbice into the River Pomeroon; the Commander Beekman has promised that he will render me assistance with a boat and young plants; the Commander Beekman has also supplied me with two old negro slaves, by name, Lucas and Renier, and various others besides, as Your Honours will be able to see from the inclosed Memorandum. As regards the plantations, we shall, in the first instance, plant against the arrival of the slaves, cassava, potatoes, beans, maize, yams, and everything. The Postholders placed in Pomeroon to barter dye I had determined to keep, but the Commander Beekman said that he had need of his people, so the Commander summoned them and made them stay here at the fort. I shall give my self the honour to inform Your Honours of everything from time to time. I beg Your Honours will be pleased to instruct me, if by chance it happened that I accepted any person who could do me service, as also that I should see that some one deserved more wages, and gave him two or three guilders more, whether such action on any part would be taken amiss by Your Honours. Meanwhile I return thanks to Your Honours for their singular favour to me without any deserts, praying God Almighty to bless more and more your noble persons and Government, and besides, not to make me unworthy of the of-

fice so generously conferred upon me, praying God Almighty to do me the favour of permitting me to live for the service of the noble Company, and more specially for the advancement of the aforesaid Colony, and I remain. The half hogshead of plums with the other groceries before-mentioned are found, and that is important to me, remain, etc.

(Signed) JACOB DE JONGE

**163. REPORTS CONCERNING THE CARIB INDIANS OF GUAYANA, WITH REPORT OF THE FISCAL OF THE KINGDOM OF SPAIN**  
[1686]

[*A compilation*]

**1. Minute of the Council commanding Copy of the Royal "Cedula" of 1682 to be added to the File, 26 April 1686.** [Document No. 157 above]

**2. Don Francisco de Amolar to Council of the Indies, 30 April 1686.** [Document No. 158 above]

**3. Report of the Fiscal of the Kingdom of Spain, 22 May 1686.** [Document No. 161 above]

(i) Annex 1 of the Report of the Fiscal: **Don Tiburcio de Axpe y Zuniga, the Fiscal of the Kingdom of Spain, to Secretary of the Council of the Indies, Don Antonio Ortiz de Otalora, 26 April 1686.** [Document No. 159 above]

(ii) Annex 2 of the Report of the Fiscal: **Don Sancho Fernandez de Angulo to Don Antonio Ortiz de Otalora, 2 May 1686.** [Document 160 above]

**164. COMMANDER, ESSEQUIBO, TO WEST INDIA COMPANY**  
[7 June 1686]

(*Extract*)

Just as I am closing this Daentje, the Company's old negro, comes from the savannah of the Pariakotts up in the Cuyuni River. He has been away for fully seven mouths, and was detained quite three months by the dryness of the river. All that he has been able to obtain is a little balsam oil and hammocks, because the French are making expeditions through the country up there in order to buy up everything.

**165. EXTRACT FROM ESSEQUIBO COUNCIL MINUTES (INCLOSURE IN  
DESPATCH FROM COMMANDER, ESSEQUIBO TO WEST INDIA COMPANY)  
[20 October 1686]**

We certify that we were invited by the Commander Abraham Beekman, this present day, to hear the report of a certain Indian dispatched by Jan Genasie, chief Captain of the Caribs above in Mazaruni at the annatto store, to wit, that some months ago another Carib Captain in Mazaruni, Makourawacke, father-in-law of the Company's old negro Jotte, had slain, at a Carib [village] assisted by his friends, in presence of Jotte, though, as the latter says, without his knowledge, some Akuwayas dwelling not far from the annatto store before mentioned, and friends of ours and of the Caribs, who had often brought their annatto and provision to the annatto store, and were also often of assistance to our people employed in the annatto collection. Their friends seeking revenge, now lately above the annatto store in Mazaruni, having killed both married women and children of the Caribs, have so intimidated the rest that they, having abandoned their houses and gardens, have fled to the forest and can produce little or no dye this year, nor provide provision to supply our requirements; he, Jan Genasie, giving warning that he should send few wares by the Postholder Groot Jan; so that it is patent that there will this season be little annatto or provision forthcoming from that side to the fort; and Jacob, the Company's old negro, also reports that, when Makourawacke, with his tribe, were wishing to go to war with the Akuwayas up in Demerara, they were then dissuaded from the war by the Commander aforesaid, and advised to go and salt pork above in the Mazaruni River with Jotte aforesaid, for which purpose a cask of salt was sent to him by the Sergeant; but that if they had war in their minds, they should make war far away in Mazaruni and moreover inland against their common enemy, not against their and our friends who dwelt close by the Caribs and the annatto store, who had always been their friends. This the aforesaid Makourawacke would not comply with, and this is the chief and most principal cause of this misfortune, which now falls upon the innocent.

Done in Kijkoveral, in Rio Essequibo, the 20th October, 1686.

**166. COMMANDER, POMEROON, TO WEST COMPANY  
[8 May 1687]**

*In River Pomeroon, May 8, 1687.*

Honourable Sirs,

Your Honours' despatch of the 2nd January has come safe to hand, as also the goods and cargoes sent me by Your Honours, as Your Honours will be able to see per accompanying list, wherefore I return Your Honours my best thanks, praying God to bless Your Honours persons and Government more and more, and to do me the favour that I may continue to live for the service of the Noble company's general welfare and right, specially for the advancement of this river.

Have seen that Your Honours have found good to send me, in place of the surgeon Du Castel, a certain Piter de Cock; this man, on arrival here, I have therefore entered as surgeon on the books, and given the aforesaid Du Castel his dismissal.

Have seen that Your Honours would like to know how I find the country here. It is very remarkable, as likewise seen by various planters, and be it also said by me without exaggeration that never had I seen any finer bread, as also of everything according to wish. Now it is certain that the river has been cried down by various persons, and is apparently well known as being unhealthy, and other trifles besides. That here, indeed, there have been some sick is true, at which I am not astonished, as we came into a closed-in wood; but now there are some openings, we are all well again. God be praised.

With regard to advising Your Honours whether planters are coming here or purpose to come, that is so, yet no one dares to be so bold as to come here before he has seen the conditions of Your Honours, because they are sensitive about the affair of Ferdinand van Overschilten. I know well, however, that some planters would have been here, whose destination was this river, but as soon as they arrive in Essequibo this river is so despised that they remain there. However, I am certain that whenever Your Honours be pleased to send the conditions to the islands, as, by name, Bardades, St. Tomie, Curacoa, Antiges, and Seratte and surrounding places, the planters will quickly come here, so as in due course to found a good Colony on this river. With regard to the planting of sugar-cane, it should thrive well, since I have caused full 20 acres to be cleared to the ground, as the Commander Beekman had promised to provide me with five to six large barge-loads of sugar-cane plants; but to my regret I got but one, so that all the trouble of clearing has been thrown away, besides the waste of the slaves' time. The aforementioned land also is now better fitted for making a pasture than for planting with cane. So that I judged Your Honours to be interested in it, I had intended to send for everything required for sugar culture, so as to let Your Honours by the next despatch receive some of the first fruits, as a return for the outlay that Your Honours have made on this river. The fault, however, lies with the Commander Beekman, who had given me promises to forward several barge-loads of sugar-cane, for which I in person went to the River Essequibo, where the aforementioned Commander promised me it himself by word of mouth, but nothing, however, arrived. It is wretched that one can place no reliance on the Commander Beekman's words. While writing this, Gerrit Schonck, Captain of the "Jonge Indiaen," has arrived quite well, who has stopped here for two or three days, in order, according to his request, to make with me here a partial survey of the country. That is pleasing to me, since he will be able to inform Your Honours fully of everything. Now, with regard to the slaves which Your Honours will be pleased to send me, I would that they came, as it were, so to speak, within a month, since I have victuals enough, were it needed, for example, for 100 slaves. Rochier Abrahamsen has begun to make a plantation with free Indians over against the fort, and that through lack of negroes; as likewise Jan Joost Lansheer, who also intends to come shortly; as also Piter de Bruijn, who also within two or three months will quit his service, according to the request made by him to me, to make a food plantation on this river. Whenever Your Honours be pleased to send me some goods, then I beg that Your Honours yourselves will allow them to be properly marked, as the goods forwarded to me by Your Honours are struck open in Essequibo, which is not right. I am thinking of sending Rochier Abrahamsen, who is a judge of a good vessel, to Surinam, with a canoe and one or two red slave girls, to get a vessel in exchange for the service of Your Honours Company, which I have no doubt will be approved by Your Honours, since the same is very necessary here to fetch young plants for the existing and future plantations. Instead of Daniel le Roy, I have taken, as cooper, the person named Huijbrecht Rosleen, at the rate of 14 gulden per month, but he is a good cooper, whom I have sore need of to make

board-sheeting for the fort, with which I am now at the present moment busy, the name of which I shall expect per next despatch from Your Honours The cooper is likewise very necessary to keep my casks and one thing once the other closed. I only wish I had had him long ago, as there I should not have had the misfortune to lose a cask of oil, which has taken place through lack of a cooper. Meanwhile, Your Honours have sent me no oil, so that this will be much missed. Meanwhile, I must return again the pieces (of ordnance) to the Commander Beekman, so beg that Your Honours be pleased to send me four others per next despatch to place at the four corners of the fort.

I have, along with skipper Joost and Rochier Abrahamsen, who likewise has been a skipper in Berbice, been into the mouth of this river to gain further knowledge of the depth. There we found with low water and dead tide 4 feet of water, and the water with spring here was 8 to 9 feet, and 7 at the least, according to which Your Honours can regulate yourselves, and if it chanced that a ship came here before this river drawing from 9 to 10 feet, then must the skippers but send up their boat, and the aforementioned Rochier Abrahamsen will bring the same in. Herewith is some dye marked as in margin, that mostly is fine dye, and if Your Honours are pleased to have more common dye, be pleased to advise me by next despatch, then will I cause it to be prepared by the Indians, which I should not willingly do without Your Honours orders, because the dyes at present are at a bad price; but if Your Honours be pleased that I barter for this, will Your Honours be pleased to advise me of the same per next despatch, or if it happened that French or English or Spanish barques came here to stop, to fell timber for mill-building or fire-wood, what recognizance the same should be obliged to pay. I would beg Your Honours to be pleased to direct Commander Beekman to supply me with some cows, since he has full fifty head, great and small, and also here is pasture enough to pasture some cows, and they should breed well, too, since here near at hand capital cattle thrive. Will Your Honours be pleased to be so kind as to send me a cask of good beer, and to place one cask of wine at least on the list. I am much put about for small articles of exchange, as knives and beads, and though the Commander Beekman has supplied me with a small quantity, I shall look for some per next despatch. Also will Your Honours be pleased to send me per next despatch another assistant, since this one would be glad to leave, because he says his wage is too small; so whenever Your Honours send anybody be pleased to send at any rate a person who has a little intelligence; for this I would myself gladly give up 4 gulden per month from my own account, and remain, etc.

(Signed) JACOB DE JONGE

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**167. PROCEEDINGS OF THE STATES-GENERAL OF THE UNITED PROVINCES**  
**[16 January 1688]**

*(Extract)*

*Friday, January 16, 1688.*

There was read to the Assembly the Memorial from Mr. Coloma, Envoy Extraordinary of the King of Spain to this country, concerning a certain Company which he said was to be newly

formed at Amsterdam in order to trade to the West Indies; which Memorial is here inserted, word for word, as follows:

The undersigned, Envoy Extraordinary of Spain, having received orders from the King his master to represent to your Lordships that, His Majesty having been informed that at Amsterdam and other places of these provinces several private persons are uniting and seek to establish a free port in the form of a new Commonwealth, and this wicked design being to the prejudice of His Majesty, and contrary to the peace and good understanding which exists between His Majesty and your Lordships, the Envoy Extraordinary, to confirm the above, places in your Lordships' hands the inclosed printed document, whereby is made evident their intention to establish the aforesaid Company, which would be a novelty in Europe as regards the West Indies, as it can also be seen from the distribution which is made of the said printed documents that it is without the knowledge, consent, and special charter of your Lordships, who have reserved to themselves that disposal, leaving granted it to the West India Company of Holland, and, lastly, by the request which is made to those persons who would like to take part in that detestable Company to address themselves to the bookseller, Rets Ferner, dwelling near the Exchange in Amsterdam. And the Envoy Extraordinary, not believing that your Lordships will approve of so wicked a design, thinks it his duty to inform you thereof, in order that you may be pleased promptly to prevent the execution of the undertaking they have planned and to have the originators thereof punished; he having been informed that their design is to establish themselves in the neighbourhood of the great river of Darien, which notoriously belongs to the King his master, and of which he is in possession; wherein the aforesaid Envoy Extraordinary is convinced that your Lordships will not permit His Majesty to suffer any damage there, inasmuch as this would be in direct contravention of the Vth Article of the Treaty of Peace made between His Majesty and your Lordships in the year 1648, which is religiously observed by both parties. And, lastly, the aforesaid Envoy Extraordinary expects from the equity and the good-will which he has experienced at your Lordships hands, that you will remedy this irregularity, as it is your custom to do in what concerns the interests of the common cause and those of the King his master, and so afford a sure proof of your kindly goodwill.

Done at the Hague, January 16, 1688.

DON MANUEL COLOMA

Whereupon after discussion, it was approved and agreed that a copy of the aforesaid Memorial be placed in the hands of Messrs van Els and the other members of the States-General's Committee on Marine Affairs, to investigate, examine and thereupon to hear and receive the arguments and opinion of the deputies of the respective Boards of Admiralty who are present in this city, and to make report in full to this Assembly.

**168. COMMANDER, POMEROON, TO WEST INDIA COMPANY**  
**[28 January 1688]**

*In River Pomeroon, January 28, 1688.*

Noble, Great, Honourable, etc.; and very Discreet Lords:

Whereas I have been informed by his Excellency the Heer van Sommersdijck, in a letter of the 5th January, 1688, that since the Indian war was spreading itself in the neighbourhood, it was advisable for we to proceed to River Essequibo to help to free that river, since Your Honours would be chiefly benefited in that. His Excellency has by letter informed Commander Beekman that he took the responsibility arising from this towards the Noble Company upon himself until such time and season as orders and an answer from Your Honours be obtained, or at least until the aforesaid war begins to be allayed. I find it then advisable to lay a burden upon my own post, since, when things are quiet, I have no reason for leaving it, because my assistance then would not be required in River Essequibo. I have no doubt but that the present war will be willingly settled by mediation later. This is very probable, and, furthermore, the greatest "Owls," or Chiefs, are apparently on the side of Heer Sommersdijck.

Likewise it is very necessary that Your Honours send slaves, and also the conditions. Your Honours will also do well to consider that otherwise all the expenses that have been made by Your Honours are for nothing, since from various places I have letters which are to hand exclusively on the subject of the conditions and slaves.

I have also sent for three or four soldiers from the Heer van Sommersdijck though not knowing whether the same will come. As I had become very weak in guards through the decease of two soldiers, I have asked for these same in order to strengthen my guard, and remain after commending Your Honours to the protection of the All-High God.

Your Honours' willing Servant,

(Signed) JACOB DE JONGE.

## 169. PROCEEDINGS OF THE STATES-GENERAL OF THE UNITED PROVINCES [4 February 1688]

*Wednesday, February 4, 1688.*

There was heard the report of Messrs. van Els and the other members of the States-General's Committee on Marine Affairs, who, in pursuance of the commissorial Resolution of the 16th of last month, have investigated, examined, and received the arguments and the opinion of the deputies of the respective Boards of Admiralty who are present in this city with regard to the Memorial of Mr. Coloma, Envoy Extraordinary of His Majesty the King of Spain to this country, concerning a certain Company which is said to be newly formed in Amsterdam for the purpose of trading to the West Indies, more fully mentioned in the Minutes of the 16th January last; whereupon, after discussion, and there having been read also the written opinion of the deputies present in this city from the Boards of Admiralty sitting in Holland, Zeeland, West Friesland, and the North Quarter, it was approved and agreed that a copy of the aforesaid Memorial shall be sent to the Estates of Holland and West Friesland, and that they, by an accompanying letter, be requested to gather exact information about the aforesaid affair and write to the States-General what they shall have found out in this regard; that likewise a copy of the aforesaid Memorial be sent to the Directors of the General Chartered West India Company in the Presidial Chamber, Amsterdam, in order that they may transmit to the States-General their report upon it; to the end

that, this having been done, such action may be taken regarding this matter as the States-General shall find proper in pursuance of the Treaties made between His Majesty the King of Spain and this country.

**170. COMMANDER, POMEROON, TO WEST INDIA COMPANY  
[6 April 1688]**

*In River Pomeroon, April 6, 1688.*

Noble, Great, Honourable, etc., and very Discreet Lords:

Your Honours of Zeeland inform me that you will send me per next (despatch) another assistant as soon as the Noble Council of Ten shall have agreed to such a step.

Likewise, Your Honours forbid me expressly to allow any foreign ships or barques to enter this river for cutting wood or for any business transactions. As to this I shall observe Your Honours' orders. And that I should send another small barrel of fine dye, like I sent before, but it is difficult to get the Indians to consent to do so, so that I have bartered little or nothing, and that which has been bartered I have done amongst other [tribes], the which altogether fills but a small anker, and is not worth sending to Your Honours I will do my best to barter some fine dye.

Should Your Honours like to have dye like that bartered in Essequibo, I should easily be able to barter a quantity of a similar quality for the service of Your Honours the Commander Beekman has promised that he will provide me with cows. I have understood through my assistant and other friends besides, who have been in Essequibo, that there was an English barquantine which the Commander Beekman has laden full of wood by the Company's negroes and allowed to depart again for Barbadoes, which I tell Your Honours for your information.

It would, according to my judgment, be not unserviceable that Your Honours should allow five or six sugar works to be erected in order now or in the future to serve for the greatest profit of Your Honours, since there is capable land to be found here at hand. Yet slaves are especially necessary, since without, them nothing can be done; there are also much required by the planters, who are also very desirous to have the conditions settled.

I shall per next despatch expect the necessaries for erecting a sugar work, so as with the arrival of the slaves to give with the fruits of the land a proof that it is good and capable.

Should Your Honours not deem it well for the welfare of the river, and so as to put greater hindrances in the way of the young planters and other settlers having intercourse with the Indian women, if Your Honours sent five or six vigorous young girls, and paid passage for the same, then will I here bear responsibility for the money which Your Honours have expended. I would also have liked to have known the origin of the war, but they write from Berbice that they know nothing about it; yet the Indians tell me – the good as well as the evil-disposed – that this is the cause, to wit, that they had erected a gallows in Berbice, and on it intended to hang the "Owls," or Chiefs of the Indians. This belief then was further encouraged by the negroes, and they have together made an attack on the whites, who, however, some five days before, had been warned; that was credited by some, by some not credited; so that some unfortunate whites have been obliged to pay the penalty for this with death; but the Indians are day by day pursued in such a manner that scarcely one of the murderers is to be found. The Indians, however, say perhaps the best of it they can; but this has been said from first to last that it has come about through the

erection of the gallows. In the next place, I have found still great fidelity in the Indians, as they brought me the news before any whites, and said that they were not well pleased at it, but that they could not help it. They likewise begged that here one should be at peace, and in time of need, whether against Caribs or other tribes, they wished to assist me and offer a helping hand.

As I would have written Your Honours per skipper Joris Adriaensz, but when the boat arrived in Essequibo, the aforementioned skipper departed, so that Your Honours be pleased to excuse me as to this.

I have now the fort completely finished, except that everything, for want of nails, is tied together. The size is under 80 feet long and 20 feet broad, and from above 84 feet long and 24 feet broad, as it overhangs so much, and it would have been made much larger, but the very excess of size with few people would have rendered it weak. It is therefore but so large in its capacity. For Your Honours' information I have written to their Honours of Zeeland for a competent carpenter, one who is capable of building a mill. Inclosed is the day register, whereby Your Honours will be able to see how I have placed myself in danger with the Essequibo journeys in the troublous times, which now – God be praised – are mostly quieted down, in which, according to my power, I have striven to the utmost to do my duty, when the Indians from far and near came to complain to me, the which I have with great diplomacy and trouble managed to satisfy, and remain with good wishes for much health and blessing to Your Honours' persons and Government, praying God to do me the favour to spare my life for the service of the Noble Company in general, etc.

(Signed) JACOB DE JONGE

## 171. PROCEEDINGS OF THE STATES-GENERAL OF THE UNITED PROVINCES [27 July 1688]

*Tuesday, July 27, 1688.*

There having been brought once more before the Assembly the Memorial of Mr. Coloma, Envoy Extraordinary of His Majesty the King of Spain, concerning a certain Company which is said to be newly formed at Amsterdam for the purpose of trading to the West Indies, more fully mentioned in the Minutes of the 16th January and the 4th February last, after discussion it was approved and agreed to reply to the aforesaid Envoy Extraordinary, in answer to his Memorial, that the States-General, having obtained information with regard to the design which certain citizens of this country are said to have of settling in the neighbourhood of the River Darien, situate in the West Indies, on the coast of America, had found that certain citizens had indeed formed a design to that effect, though not with the intention of thereby undertaking anything which might be contrary to the Treaties existing between His Majesty and this country; that they also have no intention of taking steps towards the execution of their aforesaid design without having obtained consent and permission thereto from the States-General; so that the States-General can assure the aforesaid Envoy Extraordinary that as yet nothing has been undertaken by their citizens which could give any cause for complaint, and that, before giving permission for the aforesaid establishment, the States-General will thoroughly investigate whether the aforesaid purpose is in any respect contrary to the Vth or to other Articles of the Treaty of the year 1648, and in case this were found to be so, the States-General not only will give no permission thereto, but will prevent

the aforesaid design, since it is their purpose not only to fulfil towards His Majesty the tenour of the aforesaid Vth Article, but in all respects religiously to comply and enforce compliance with the Treaties which have been made between His Majesty and this country. And an extract of this Resolution of the States-General shall be placed by the Agent Roseboom in the hands of the aforesaid Mr. Coloma, that he may make use thereof where and how he may deem fit.

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