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From 1638 to 1647

**76. DECREE FROM DON JUAN DE EULATE, GOVERNOR OF GUAYANA
[15 January 1838]**

In the town of the Assumption of this Island of Margarita, on the 15th day of January, 1638, the said Governor and Captain-General said that, having received a letter from the Corporation of the Island of Trinidad announcing the receipt of the things sent for their assistance, as set forth in these papers, and that the fact may be known, he ordered that a copy of the said letter should be given here, and so ordered, directed, and signed.

DON JUAN DE EULATE.

Before me:
FRANCISCO GONCALEZ DE BARRIONUEVO
Clerk

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Annex to Decree

Letter from the Corporation of Trinidad, 27 December 1637. [Document No. 65 (See *From 1629 to 1637*)]

**77. DECREE ISSUED BY DON JUAN DE EULATE, GOVERNOR OF GUAYANA
[19 January 1638]**

In the town of the Assumption, in the Island of Margarita, on the 19th day of January, 1638, the General, Don Juan de Eulate, Governor and Captain-General for His Majesty, said that, whereas he had received authentic testimony from Juan de Penalver, Notary Public of the Island of Trinidad, showing that, when the enemy entered Guayana, they carried off, among other things, the Most Holy Sacrament, which is kept by the enemy in their fort at Macaruni, that the above fact might be known, he ordered that a copy of the testimony should be added to these papers, to be taken with all the rest for His Majesty's information, and the order was thus issued and signed by Don Juan de Eulate.

Before me:

FRANCISCO GONCALEZ DE BARRIONUEVO

Clerk

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Attachment:

Testimony of Juan de Penalver, 28 December 1637. [Document No. 75 (See *From 1629 to 1637*)]

**78. DON DIEGO DE ESCOBAR TO DON RUI FERNANDEZ FUENMAYOR
[20 February 1638]**

I find myself in this government with the enemy so near and powerful that every day we are obliged to walk about armed. The work is already intolerable and I have no supplies, and the people are so exhausted and badly-clothed and so few in number that I fear much the issue will be bad, because the Hollanders hold in this province seven towns and armed forces. They are from this place a distance of six or seven days' journey, and that by the river, which is of great advantage to them, and with many gifts of articles of barter and clothing, which they give to the Indians, they hold all the country on their side, and being thus united and in particular to the Caribs, who are in great numbers, ships of war from Holland enter there, and thus it is so well provided with everything. It is seven years since even a bark came here from any part. His Majesty is greatly concerned in it, because if this town should be lost the enemy can with great ease overrun all this country of Caracas, and more easily go up to the new kingdom, and thus collect more than 20,000 Indians. His Majesty has in this river mines which promise a good deal of quicksilver, and so much so, that without melting the metal a large quantity is found on the bank. And if the enemy should seize this river they could avail themselves of food for as many of their fleets as come, and for anything else they might design.

Your Excellency in your wisdom will see how necessary it is that this country should be kept in obedience to His Majesty, as there are such great reasons for it. I find myself without men, and with unexpected attacks every day.

And the people are so exhausted and so desirous to abandon it, that unless they are helped, without doubt they will do so. And that in which they and I place our hopes is in the honour which your Excellency will do us, in sending us help in men and supplies, for there is no place in which the soldiers can gain so much advantage as here, because there is an infinity of Indians, and all are given as slaves, and in the name of His Majesty and God's name I offer my word to let them take away all that they can seize to [any place which] your Excellency may order. Do whatever you please with them. Though there are people of this city, who go in their company, they will not take any of them. We only wish for peace, and that this may be kept in His Majesty's name, because if you do not help them it will be impossible to stand out the summer. We received information that a fleet was coming, and we are still within our fortifications, for we expected that on the river side the ships could not hurt us with their artillery, and that we should thus hinder the enemy from their designs of occupying this territory, and of expelling us from a country which is on the point to suffer misfortune. I again supplicate your Excellency to help us, and to realize how much we need the pity, which I implore, offering myself as your Excellency's

servant, and with great miseries that you should be acquainted with the dispatch, bad as the news is.

I have been ill more than six months, and now I am so, but full of work and anxiety, and most of all distressed to see this country lost. I implore your Excellency to help me, in a case of so great difficulty, which truly I do not know how to explain to your Excellency how great it is except, by telling you that unless you send us help everything will be lost. The bearer is a very trustworthy man, and he will give an account to your Excellency of our unhappy state, and how low-spirited we are. He is a very superior person, and I pray your Excellency to honour him for your servant's sake. May God grant many years to your Excellency. Such is my desire.

Your humble servant, who kisses your hand.

DON DIEGO DE ESCOBAR.

Guayana, February 20, 1638

[Appended to the letter]

This is in accordance with the original, to which I refer, and which the General Rui Fernandez de Fuenmayor, Governor and Captain-General of this Province of Venezuela, lent to me, that I might procure this copy, and to whom I have returned it. And that it is evident that it is an order from his Excellency, of the said Governor and Captain-General, I gave the inclosed, which is written on two sheets, with this my signature and accustomed Seals; dated in the town of Santiago de Leon de Caracas, on the 25th day of the month of April, 1638. The witnesses its correctness and agreement being Joseph Rumbo de Mederos and Pedro de Zavala, residents in the town named. In testimony of the truth: -

DIEGO RODRIGUEZ ESPEJO

Public Notary

(Seal)

We, the Notaries of His Majesty, who here sign our names, certify and declare, as it is right, that Diego Rodriguez Espejo, who has written, and signed this instrument, is the Notary of that name. He has been and is entitled, in and out of Court, to full faith and credit for all the acts and writings that have passed and pass through his hands. We therefore wrote the present in this town of Santiago de Leon de Caracas on the 4th day of the month of May, 1638.

JOAN LUIS

Public Notary

JOSEPH LOPEZ VILLAN

Public Notary of the Government

(Seals)

79. LETTER FROM THE CORPORATION OF GUAYANA TO THE KING OF SPAIN

[February 1838]

This town is in a situation of great distress with the enemy so near and powerful. The enemy hold seven towns on this coast, and all the Caribs are joined with them, and form a league and confederation with the object of destroying us, in order to occupy this river. Such is their great wish. We are few and destitute of help on all sides. The land is rich in food, and there are many natives of different tribes, all of whom the Dutch enemy try to attract with large quantities of articles of barter, which they distribute on all sides, merely with the view of attaining their object. We have informed His Majesty of all this, and of a mine which has been discovered on the bank of this river very rich in quicksilver; and, without the employment of greater exertion, the same quantity flows out every summer. On the shore also the ore has been melted, and a good deal of quicksilver has been obtained. This promises a source of great wealth to His Majesty. The Governor, Don Diego de Escobar, and this Corporation sent the metal of the above mine, with the quicksilver which had been obtained from it, to give an account to the Royal Audiencia of the New Kingdom of Granada, so that those gentlemen may help us with troops and supplies (on account of the news that the Hollanders have received about these mines) until His Majesty orders what is best to be done, and the mandate comes from the Royal Audiencia with the Procurator, who went from this town, and to whom we sent vessels to bring the people. The Caribs of the Province of Caura, who are Indians under the jurisdiction of this town, killed the men who came with the said information and [took] all the despatches.

We hold for certain they sent them where the enemy are, because all was carried out by their order, merely to block the way against help of the new kingdom. So that until His Majesty's help comes we have no other protection left us but what we can expect from your Excellency, and thus this Corporation implores it. One grieves for so many women and children, who are here looking for death at the hands of inhuman savages, eaters of human flesh, and of heretics, enemies of our Holy Catholic faith, and for as much as God was pleased to deliver this town after its capture by the enemy, the Hollanders, the Caribs, and Aruacas, on the 22nd July, the Feast of St. Mary Magdalene; had not Don Diego de Escobar sent all the women and children and the rest of the servants to another place, which was chosen to be occupied, because we were so little protected in the first from the enemy, it is certain that we should have finished once and for all with so many hardships, because the fleet arrived an hour before daybreak, so unexpectedly, through not having been seen or heard because they came in pirogues. All the people were confused one with another, so that when they went to take arms the whole town had already been surrounded, and the Flemings were masters of the guard-house, opening a heavy fire with musketry and arrows, and beginning to set fire to the houses, which, being covered with straw, need very little to make them burn. It was a miracle that the Governor escaped, and the rest were left badly wounded. God for our great sins permitted it to be impossible to provide for the consumption of the Blessed Sacrament, because the priest and the vicar were amongst the first who fell under the weapons and arrows, and thus these heretics and savages took away the reliquary with its tabernacle. They say that, as we learned from a prisoner whom we made of them on another occasion, that they keep it in a house on a river, which is in this coast, which they call Esquebo, where they have a population with a good fort. And the captain who has done those things is called Captain Llanes, who speaks the Carib and Aruaca languages well. They burnt and cut to pieces all the rest of the images, profaning the temples with a thousand evil deeds. We have informed the Governors of Cumaná and Margarita of all that has happened, so that they may help us with troops

and supplies, or at least they should go and restore the Blessed Sacrament, which is in the power of those heretics, it being so easy to their Excellencies to send vessels by sea. They have not done so as yet. Immediately this war was finished the same fleet of pirogues took supplies of food at Amacuro, a river which is at the east entrance of the Orinoco. From thence the said Captain Llanes passed to Trinidad, where the same thing happened an hour before daybreak. Some neighbours of the island fell, and some were killed on the other side. All this country is in that state, and at present we have received information that they are making great plans and preparations for war with the intent to come and finish with us, and take away all the women and kill the children, and occupy this river. Seeing this, and that the clouds are getting darker and darker, with the Governor's sanction, we are leaving the town, and we have chosen a forest by a river, which is called Caroni, close by lands subject to overflow where no ships can enter, until your Excellency helps us with troops and supplies, because we have very little, and with that it will be possible to produce a very good effect, and frustrate the enemy's intention. And the soldiers who came would return enriched with the number of Indians which are given for slaves. The Governor, in the name of His Majesty, promises that all those whom they shall take they shall carry away to your Government, or any other part that your Excellency may order, as so great a soldier and servant of His Majesty will see how very important it is to his Royal interests that the enemy should not seize this country and river, and the loss which will follow to the New Kingdom of Granada. For in small vessels they can reach as far as that and to your Government of Caracas, without difficulty, for it is only ten days from here, and all the Caribs are ready to help them in their undertakings, and this river is windward of all the islands, and they could do much damage to all the islands on the coast. We remain day and night with our arms in our hands, awaiting the pity and favour of your Excellency, which we hope for. This town acknowledges always the favour and protection that it receives from your Excellency, and thus we will inform His Majesty very fully.

Most of the neighbours and soldiers have remained destitute of clothing because with the enemy's conflagration much was lost, and no ship from Spain has entered in this port for eight or nine years. The churches are in the same manner in great need, because they also lost everything. If your Excellency could help us with something, it would be very acceptable in God's sight, showing kindness to these poor people, who are with so much difficulty supporting this for His Majesty's sake, though it may be by asking alms among the gentlemen of your town. We beseech your Excellency to be pleased that a letter going with this should be forwarded on its way to Santa Fé de Bogota, which contains the same as this, warning His Highness of the state of this country, and begging help of him.

The bearer is an honest soldier, married here, and as there is so much distress here, ventures his life through so much danger, as there is in these plains of the Caribs, only to take these letters. He will inform your Excellency very fully of the fate which we are awaiting, and thus deserve that your Excellency will show him pity and charity, ordering some help to be given him towards the expense for the labour and danger which he undergoes in the journey.

May God preserve your Excellency many long and happy years, with the increase of happiness which your Excellency deserves.

CHRISTOVAL DE BERA
DON JUAN JARAQUEMADA

SEBRIAN FRONTINO
 ALONCO MONTES TRUCHADO
 DIEGO RODRIGUEZ
 PEDRO PADILLA.
 LUCAS BRABA DE LEON
 ANTONIO DE ARAUS
 DIEGO DE MENDOCA

Executed in my presence:
 DOMINIGO LOPEZ DE SIERRA,
 Public Notary of the Government and of the Corporation.

Santo Thomé de Guayana, February 1638.

[Statements appended to the letter]

This is in accordance with the original to which I refer, and which the General Rui Fernandez de Fuenmayor, Governor and Captain-General of this Province of Venezuela, gave me, that I might procure this copy, and to whom I have returned it. And that it is evident that it is an order from his Excellency the said Governor, I wrote the inclosed in two sheets with this my signature and accustomed Seals. It is dated in the town of Santiago de Leon de Caracas on the 26th day of the month of April, 1638. The witnesses to its correctness and agreement being: Joseph Rumbo de Mederos and Pedro de Zavala, residents in the said town.

Certified.
 DIEGO RODRIGUEZ ESPEJO
 Public Notary
 (Seal)

We, the Notaries of His Majesty, who here sign our names, certify and declare, as it is right, that Diego Rodriguez Espejo, who has written this instrument, is the Notary of that name. He has been, and is entitled, in and out of Court, to full credit and belief for all the acts and writings that pass through his hands. We therefore wrote these presents in this town of Caracas on the 4th May, 1638.

JOAN LUIS
 Public Notary

JOSEPH LOPEZ VILLAN
 Public Notary of the Government.

(Seals)

[Prepared in early 1638]

In the town of Assumption in this Island of Margarita on the 4th December 1637, the General Don Juan de Eulate, Captain-General for His Majesty, stated that he had received a letter from the Corporation of the Island of Trinidad, dated the 17th November of this year, reporting that the Dutch enemy, on the 14th October of this year, burned and sacked the town of San Joseph de Oruna, the principal settlement of the Spaniards in the said Island of Trinidad, bringing with them for this purpose a number of Indians, Caribs, Aruacas, and Nepuyos. In order to report to His Majesty (whom God preserve) in his Council of the Indies, it is therefore proper to ascertain from the persons who brought this report the manner in which the enemy burned and sacked the said town, and a few months before that of Santo Thomé de la Guayana, and the state of those two settlements, as well as the information they have as to the enemy, and what force they have in that country, so that when it has been considered His Majesty may signify his pleasure as to what should be done. A copy of the letter from the Corporation of Trinidad should be added to these papers, as well as another from the Corporation in this town, when it was decided what assistance was to be given, and the rest that appears therefrom and evidence of the assistance to be sent to them from this town, and so it was ordered and signed by

DON JUAN DE EULATE

Before me:

FRANCISCO GONCALEZ DE BARRIONUEVO, Clerk

(Archivo de Indias)

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Annex 1: Declaration of Miguel de Morillas, 4 December 1637 [Document No. 67 (See *From 1629 to 1637*)].

Annex 2: Declaration of Jacinto de Mendoca, 4 December 1637 [Document No. 68 (See *From 1629 to 1637*)].

Annex 3: Declaration of Lorenzo Manuel, 4 December 1637 [Document No. 69 (See *From 1629 to 1637*)].

Annex 4: Letter from the Corporation of Trinidad, 17 November 1637 [Document No. 65 (See *From 1629 to 1637*)].

Annex 5: Deliberation of the Chapter, (the Corporation of Royal Officers stationed on Margarita Island) 25 November 1637 [Document No. 66 (See *From 1629 to 1637*)].

Annex 6: Decree issued from Margarita Island, 12 December 1637 [Document No. 70 (See *From 1629 to 1637*)].

Annex 7: Decree Issued By Don Juan De Eulate, Governor of Guayana, 15 January 1838 [Document 76 above]. Attached to this Decree: **Letter from the Corporation of Trinidad, 17 November 1637** [Document No. 65 (See *From 1629 to 1637*)].

Annex 8: Decree Issued By Don Juan De Eulate, Governor of Guayana, 19 January 1638 [Document No. 77 above. Attached to this Decree: **Testimony of Juan de Penalver, 28 December 1637.** [Document No. 75 (See *From 1629 to 1637*)].

81. THE GOVERNOR OF CARACAS, DON RUI FERNANDEZ FUENMAYOR, TO THE KING OF SPAIN

[20 APRIL 1638]

Sire,

Don Diego de Escobar, Governor of Guayana and the Corporation of that city, have informed me (by a special messenger) in letters, copied of which I send to your Majesty, of the distress and trouble in which they are placed through the hostility of the Hollanders, and the Indians and Caribs and other nations joined with them. And that in order to save them from the destruction which threatened them with their small forces, it was necessary to send them help in men and supplies. For although they had asked assistance of the Governors of Margarita and Cumaná they had not sent it. Prevailed upon by this, and interested in your Majesty's service and in finding a means to prevent the inconveniences which might ensue to all this province, if the enemy seized that port, as it is so near, that in eight or ten days one can reach those parts, I have resolved to send fifty men and some gunpowder and supplies, notwithstanding that I am greatly deficient both in one and the other, as many have gone to the conquest of Cumanagoto under the charge of Dr. Don Juan Urpin, to whom I have written, that he should, with the people under him, send help as well to that place, as will be evident to your Excellency by the copy of the letter which I wrote to him and send herewith.

I give an account to your Majesty of this event, that you may understand it, and I will do it carefully because I desire that you should know all.

May God grant prosperous years to your Majesty. Such is the wish of your vassals.

RUI FERNANDEZ FUENMAYOR

(Seal.)

Caracas, April 20, 1638

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DOCKET

Caracas – To his Majesty 1638.

The Governor Rui Fernandez Fueumayor – April 20.

This treats of Trinidad and Guayana, and how he sent fifty men and other supplies.
Seen 23rd November, 1638

He did well in helping the Governor, and so far as he can let him do it always when there is a necessity for doing so.

(Here is the King's Seal.)

Please observe whether this is the same that the Governor Don Diego Descovar wrote.

(Here is the King's Seal)

It is the same.

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Annex 1: Don Diego de Escobar to Don Rui Fernandez Fuenmayor, February 20, 1638
[Document No. 78 above]

Annex 2: Letter from the Corporation of Guayana to the King of Spain, February 1628
[Document No. 79 above]. Attached **Docket**: Copy of the letter written by the town and Corporation of Guayana. It gives an account of the taking of that province, and begs for help.

82. ROYAL AUDIENCIA OF THE NEW KINGDOM OF GRANADA TO THE KING OF SPAIN

[22 June 1638]

Sire,

The Governor of Guayana, in the district of this Audiencia, wrote to us in the month of August of last year 1637 that he was besieged by the Dutch enemies who have generally infested those coasts, and that although he had sent advices to your Majesty, begging you to be pleased to help him, he was making the same request to this Audiencia, representing the injuries that would follow if these enemies should take possession of those provinces; and having seen the letters and despatches which he sent to us by Don Pedro de Bivero, it seemed desirable that the matter should be discussed in a general meeting, in conformity with Ordinance 66 of this Audiencia. And when they had been read, it was agreed by the majority that this help should not be granted for many reasons which were brought forward, not the least being that he told us that he had asked your Majesty for it, from whom it could have come more speedily and at less cost, and that what might be sent from here, besides being meagre and very costly, could not arrive in time to be of use, as had already been experienced on other similar occasions. A copy of all the Acts was given to Don Pedro, and we resolved that another should be sent to your Majesty, showing the further motives for the measures taken, in fulfilment whereof we now send it.

May God preserve your Catholic person.

Licentiate DON JUAN DE VALENZUELA
 Licentiate DON GABRIEL DE CARVAJAL
 DON DIEGO CARRASQUILLA MALDONADO
 Licentiate DON GABRIEL ALVAREZ DE VELASCO
 Licentiate DON GABRIEL DE TAPIA
 LUIS YGUNA TORRES.
 (Six Seals)

Santa Fé, June 22, 1638

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Annex 1: 1637

Acts concerning the relief of the town of Santo Tomé de la Guayana solicited from the Royal Audiencia of the New Kingdom of Granada, by reason of certain Dutch and other enemies having settled in its district, who are fortifying themselves in two settlements therein, etc.

This copy is sent to the Royal Council of the Indies.

Annex 2: Letter from Don Diego Lopez de Escobar to the King of Spain, 11 April 1637 [Document 61 (See *From 1629 to 1637*)].

Annex 3: Extract of Letter From Corporation of the Island of Trinidad to the King of Spain, 11 April 1637 [Document 60 (See *From 1629 to 1637*)].

Annex 4: Don Pedro de Vivero to The King of Spain, April 1637 [Document 62 (See *From 1629 to 1637*)].

Annex 5: Statement by Juan de Penalver, Notary Public, 6 April 1637 [Document 59 (See *From 1629 to 1637*)].

Annex 6: Decree by the Audiencia of Santa Fé, 14 August 1637 [Document 63 (See *From 1629 to 1637*)].

83. LETTER RESPECTING THE DESTRUCTION OF SANTO THOMÉ BY THE DUTCH
[1638]

(Extract)

The city of Santo Thomé de la Guayana, and the Governor of that province, having received certain information that the Dutch enemy designed to devastate that land, sent Don Pedro de

Bivero with this information, as Procurator-General thereof, to report the matter to our Lord the King in his Royal Audiencia residing in this city. And after he had departed in execution thereof last year, 1637, in the month of April, the news proved so accurate that, though, indeed, the enemy were not expected until the month of November, they were so active that, on the 22nd July, two hours before daybreak, they entered so suddenly, and in such force, into the said city that they devastated and sacked it, leaving it so poor and wretched, both as regards the churches and the Governor and residents, that when any one died they had to bury him without a shroud as there was nothing wherewith to make it. And the greatest misfortune was, Senor, that, among the other spoils, they carried off the Most Holy Host, and burnt the temples and the images of the Saints; and by a miracle of God the few people who were in the city escaped with the Governor, who passed through them miraculously seeing that the main part of the force was directed against his house, although, at the same time, they surrounded the town and carried off all the slaves, both Indians [negroes] and Indian natives, but only one of our men perished, whom they killed, and they carried off another alive, who made his escape, and some were badly wounded, especially the Vicar, whom they left for dead from clubbing, and it was a miracle of God that he survived, for he was utterly disfigured.

And our Lord permitted that there should be but one remedy that prevented the destruction of a large number of our men, namely, that the said town was being removed to another site, stronger, and on higher ground, for the existing one was exposed so that the enemy could enter without being perceived, as they did; and there were other disadvantages which, if necessary, will be stated. For if all the people had been there many women and children would have perished, owing to the great force which the enemy brought, and the fact that, it was impossible to resist them. So the few residents withdrew with the Governor, who was at that time very ill in bed; and they faced the enemy with the sole object of giving an opportunity of escape for the women who had remained, but not with any idea of obtaining success against the enemy, who came in such strength, combined with the Carib Indians, and, like robbers, they knew all the entrances so well that they were not perceived until they knocked at the doors and began setting fire on the houses. And the said entrance was made in that part where the houses were empty, and their tenants were rebuilding the settlement; and it is here, as already stated, that the enemy did all the damage possible, and while our people were retreating, the wounded were taken up, and the Governor withdrew to the town which he was rebuilding, where he fortified himself as strongly as he could, but he was entirely without munitions, as they were burnt in the fray, and his only object was, if the enemy should go thither, to show them that he was awaiting them in a fortified place, for he had no more munitions than those which each had brought from the fight. And, although the enemy remained for some days in the river, on account of the preparations which they heard of from the Indians, whom we regarded as friends, but who were much more devoted to them than to us, they did not venture to come to close quarters.

From there they went in a straight course and replenished themselves with supplies in their fort. On the 14th October of the same year they attacked the Island of Trinidad, in the said Government, just as they attacked Guayana, and sacked and burnt it, although they were awaited with great preparations, and it is more than a league from the harbour to the city. All the damage possible was clone to them as they retired, but they were in such force that it did not prevent them from carrying out their designs. They are settled in Amacuro, a river which falls into the Orinoco at 40 leagues from Guayana with a great population of Carib Indians. They have another settle-

ment on the River Demerari, and another in Essequibo, where they have forts and a garrison, and where they keep the Sacred Host strongly guarded, mocking and scoffing and pointing it out to the Indians as the God which the Christians worship, and saying that they wonder what sort of people they are who do not come to rescue him from their power. It is known from Aruac Indians that although it is true that they are in peaceful communication with Guayana, they also receive bribes from the Dutch, and have trade and intercourse with them. It is also known from a Spanish-speaking Christian Indian, who was among those carried off at the sack of Guayana, and who, while they were plundering in the Island of Trinidad, succeeded in escaping and coming to us, that they keep it as a trophy. This fort is twenty-four hours' voyage from the mouth of the Orinoco. They have another settlement on the River Marataca, and another on the River Guayapoco, and another on the River Quiana, and another in Berbis, and all the settlements are from point to point, even in sight of one another. From the fortress, as already stated, they trade and traffic with the Indians of the same settlements, and with those who are established in Aguire and in Abarima and in Bauruma; they trade in cotton and bija, and red and yellow dyewood, campeachy wood, striped wood, and other kinds, from which they obtain great profit in Flanders.

Now recently they have another settlement at the mouth of the Guayapiche, on the way from Trinidad to Guayana, where they have made themselves masters of a salt pit which lies between the said river and the creek of Curiaco, and of more than 20,000 head of cattle which they feed in a place they call Oquetay. All these villages are subject to, and under the protection of Essequibo, where the fortress is. It is possible with troops, before reaching the mouth of the said river where the guard is, to land without being perceived, and take the fort from behind, for the artillery is trained seawards, which is the direction from which they apprehend attack; and after the capture of this fort the rest of the villages could be taken with great facility. His Majesty can do them no hurt with his galleons, because the rivers are navigated in pirogues along their channels and in the flat boats they use which draw little water and in this direction there are 4 or 5 leagues of shallows to the sea, and the galleons would be lost if they tried to enter them.

It is known for certain from the same Aruacs who are the ones who always report these occurrences, that the Dutch sent to Flanders before they took Guayana for ships and barter, in order to settle it through the influence they already possess with all the natives of the Orinoco and interior, who are in communication with one another by land, and for the sake of the advantages they expect to draw from it in tobacco, and the large supplies which are in possession of the Caribs; and seeing that it is such a fertile country and the river is so full of fish, and that there are turtles, cassava, maize, and game and timber, and a harbour very suitable for building their ships and fortifying themselves; and in like manner as they have gone on making the aforesaid settlements to continue settling up the river where they can place, as they say, eight or ten villages, for there are natives in abundance, and they will do it very easily through the good understanding between the natives and themselves, and besides this there are within the jurisdiction of Guayana more than 50,000 head of cattle whereby with the hides they can make war against His Majesty or assist therein.

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Annex: (being part of the same *Expediente*).

Extract of Instruction of the Corporation, Justices and Magistracy of Santo Thomé de la

Guayana to Joan Baptista de Arezula, Procurator-General, on his Mission to the Audiencia of Santa Fé.

The enemy is settled in their first fort and settlement, at 40 leagues from this town, and whoever has said anything else to the Lords of the Royal Council has spoken according to his own fancy, and as persons who have not seen it and have not fought with them, nor even are acquainted with them; it is contrary to all truth to say anything else, as will be seen if His Highness sends assistance. You will report to those Lords the taking of this town and of the Island of Trinidad, and that they have carried off the most Holy Host, and are keeping it under great guard and custody in Essequibo, in the fort and settlement, which they hold there; and how friendly Indians have seen it who have not come to report it; and how a prisoner, whom they took, in the capture of this city, and who afterwards, in that of Trinidad, remained with our people, says that he saw it several times.

84. ACCOUNTS OF THE GREAT RIVER ORINOCO, META, AND CASANARE, WITH THEIR DEPTH OF WATER, AND THE TRIBES OF INDIANS WHICH INHABIT THEIR BANKS, AND THE MOST REMARKABLE THEREOF, UNTIL IT FLOWS INTO THE SEA IN FRONT OF THE ISLAND OF TRINIDAD, (1638-39)

[Undated document, but believed to have been written in late 1639]

Major Diego Ruiz Maldonado wrote it during the journey he made to aid Guayana by order of Don Martin Saavedra y Guzman, President, Governor and Captain-General of the New Kingdom of Granada.

He dedicated it to the Most Excellent Senor Don Garcia de Avellaneda y Haro, Conde de Castrillo, of the Councils of State and War of the King, Gentleman of the Bedchamber, and President of the Royal Council of the Indies.

Most Excellent Sir,

With very just reason I offer to your Excellency these accounts. For two reasons they are due to you. The first, because Your Excellency is the Principal Secretary of State and guardian of the extensive kingdoms and provinces of America, and with such incessant care repairs the ruin which threatens them from the already decaying state into which they are falling. The second, on account of the interest your Excellency manifests in having this information, protecting him who by his own toils and labours acquires it, and better regarded by your Excellency when he brings no other wealth with him from the new world than the virtue of poverty and the services rendered to his King.

In the year 1638 the Dutch enemy suddenly attacked the city of Santo Tomé de la Guayana, burned it and its temples, carried away the Tabernacle with the Most Holy Sacrament, keeping it as a prisoner in their Fort of Essequibo, with a guard.

To the help [of Guayana], and for the purpose of recovering what was stolen, Don Martin de Saavedra y Guzman sent a force of more than 200 men, of which I was appointed Major, with particular instructions that the navigation of the Great River Meta and Orinoco should be solely directed by my orders; and among various other points indicated in my instructions I was commanded to take soundings of the river, and carefully observe all that was most memorable or re-

markable in regard to it, the peaceful and warlike Indians who dwell upon its banks, and draw up a detailed Report of the entire expedition, which I might transmit to the Royal Council.

I fulfilled the order, without, however, having been able to carry it at once into execution, on account of various impediments, and also on account of having been detained in Caracas by the Governor for the purpose of recovering the Island of Curazao; and afterwards, when the enemy entered the lake of Maracaybo the first time, being Lieutenant of the Captain-General for the city of Coro, I aided with fifty Indians of the villages of the Real Crown. And upon the second invasion of the enemy, when they sacked it, and fortified themselves therein, I entered it with four companies [of soldiers], and 150 Indians of the villages of the Royal Crown, as Commander where I assisted in driving out the enemy beyond the bar [of the lake]; and afterwards, while scouring the country with eight soldiers and fourteen Indians, I made ninety prisoners from an English ship which was lost from the squadron mentioned, so that we recovered the prisoners of ours they had, and the arms I took from them were used in His Majesty's service.

And as I have served in His Majesty's service for forty-five years, I here enlarge upon other matters which appear to me, from the long experience I have had, to be of utility to His Majesty's service. Talent may err, but not zeal. I therefore entreat your Excellency to be pleased to excuse this from a poor soldier loaded with years and service, which do not, however, prevent his soliciting new occasions for seeking greater ones, honoured and protected by the greatness of your Excellency, whom Heaven prosper as your Excellency merits, and your servants wish.

Your Excellency's Servant,
DIEGO RUIZ MALDONADO

85. ACCOUNT OF THE HELP THAT WAS SENT TO THE PROVINCES OF GUAYANA; THE NAVIGATION OF THE RIVER META AND GREAT ORINOCO, WITH THEIR SOUNDINGS; THE BRANCHES INTO WHICH IT IS DIVIDED; THE FORESTS AND PLAINS; RIVERS WHICH FLOW INTO IT; AND THE INDIAN TRIBES WHICH INHABIT ITS BANKS, WITH THEIR CUSTOMS

[Undated document, but believed to have been written in late 1639]

Account of the body of Soldiers which departed from Santa Fé, and the Journey to the Port of Casanare, where the men embarked.

Account of the voyage on the great River Casanare, Meta, and Orinoco, with its remarkable features and soundings.

We departed on Thursday in the early morning, and at 8 a.m. we arrived at the port of Guayana, and there I landed the infantry, all provided with their arms. As the ground was rocky and covered with forests, I marched the force with the five standards in the middle of the battalion, and on reaching the high part of the city in front of the Governor's house, I ordered the soldiers to form into fours, and in their midst the lieutenants, who, with graceful sweeps, lowered the standards, so that they showed the obedience that was due to him. From here we went to the quarters indicated to us, and thus the navigation and journey of the great River Orinoco so far ended on Thursday, the 11th February.

Thanks be to God for ever, Amen.

Friday, the 12th February, I handed over the war stores and ammunition, the piece of artillery, petard, ornaments, tabernacle, chalice, and silver lamp, salver and cruets, and the clothing sent by the President to cover the naked people of Guayana, to Captain Frontino, one of the Royal officials, by order of the Governor, Don Diego de Escobar. Besides, I delivered 11 baskets of biscuits, 430 cheeses, 30 hams which remained over from the stores of the expeditionary force.

Account of what happened in Guayana with the Expeditionary Force, and the abandonment of the Province by the Governor.

On this day I dispatched forty soldiers with a sergeant and an ensign under the command of Captain Alonso de Aguilar, Resident of Guayana, by order of the said Governor, he telling me that they were going to take a rest there in the paradise of Mahomet.

Saturday, the 13th February the Governor was engaged in billeting the force in the houses of the poor residents, that they might be fed and lodged.

Sunday, the 14th February, the Governor asked me for sixteen soldiers to accompany him down the river, telling me he was going to destroy some vessels which the Indians had for the Dutch. I fulfilled his order, and he embarked with them, and occupied a place down the river in the farm of Oqueta (the fork or junction of the Caroni with the Orinoco, at which point lies the island of Fajardo) where he prepared meat and tallow; and in the meanwhile the body of men which he had sent to the paradise of Mahomet came out of the stockade, and thereupon Captain Alonso de Aguilar, having delivered over to him thirty Indians, male and female, he departed for the Island of Trinidad. He wrote me a paper or letter informing me that he would return soon to arrange the expedition against the Dutch of Essequibo and Berbice. And with that the expeditionary force suffered the greatest necessities from hunger, which obliged the several companies to disband. In this same manner the one from Caracas, with some people of the place and two troops of those that were under my command, and the Governor did not return until the 16th June; that was after four months and some days, with the excuse of being sick.

He then began to investigate the cause of the flight of the expeditionary force, and on concluding he tried to return to Trinidad, and did do so, taking me prisoner with him, for he had written to the President and Royal Audiencia of the New Kingdom of Granada, the state in which the military force was without considering that, in the articles of my instructions, I was ordered to do as I did. And he spoke injuriously to the Maestro de Campo, Don Francisco Vanegas Maldonado, to me and the other captains and soldiers, which was the cause of another troop of infantry taking flight. We departed for the Island of Trinidad on the Feast of Corpus Christi, and on this day the tabernacle, given as a gift by the wife of the President, was adorned with the Blessed Sacrament, the lamp and chalice and rich white vestments being used as I had been commanded.

And in this way we departed down the River Orinoco, and the Commander, Don Francisco Vanegas Maldonado, went up the river, the other captains and officers and remaining soldiers following the same journey, having received from the Governor permission to return, they being, as they were, all leading people who, from zeal for the service of God and the recovery of the tabernacle, and that the people of Guayana might settle the city for His Majesty, felt themselves obliged to leave their wives and families and their properties for this expedition; and I, having solicited and obtained the pirogues, they embarked and proceeded on their journey.

He commanded me in like manner that I should leave thirty-four soldiers in the city of Guayana for its defence. I fulfilled the order, and then, having embarked in the pirogues, we proceeded down the river, passing the mouth of the Caroni, which is very large, and on its banks there are some farms, and at the distance of a league therefrom is the quicksilver mine, which is certain; and continuing the journey we arrived at the place of Oqueta, where Captain Pedro de Padilla was with twenty-five soldiers of those of my command, which he had taken to make an incursion among some Indian settlements called Manapires, but with ten short, they having deserted from him, and some sick ones, whom the Governor ordered to be returned to the city, and the rest of us embarked for the Island of Trinidad, and this having been done, we sailed down the river, and we waited at the mouth, where this great river flows out, for three days.

There are on these banks large forests of good timber useful for ship-building. The Chaguana Indians dwell about these territories, where they have a village of about 1,000 able-bodied men, and another village of Tivitives, and on this bank the village of the Guayanos is also, who while they belong to His Majesty, have in all the invasions of Guayana that have taken place by the Lutherans, rendered succour; not only have they not united with them, but they have come to the help of the people with provisions on the occasions that have presented themselves. And on the other side of the river the town of the Aruacas, a very powerful people, and all enemies of the Caribs and friends of the Spaniards. None of these have any knowledge of the law of God.

They all trade and traffic with the Dutch and others of other nations in bartering striped wood, yellow and murrey-coloured, and planks of different kinds of timber, annatto, oil of Curucaï, dragon's-blood, and other spices in exchange for hatchets, cutlasses, beads, and knives.

And the Caribs sell these Lutherans the Indian women they steal from the villages, and thereby they are in their service; and they also barter pirogues to enter the rivers, and provisions.

We sailed out by the mouth of the Orinoco and crossed to the Island of Trinidad, which is 8 leagues distant, and doubling the "Punta de Gallo" we went to the bay at Cedar Point, where frigates and ships have been made, and from this place we drew up at Point Brea, where, through the outlet of a lagoon, the pitch flows, which emanates therefrom, and on reaching the sea-breeze we approached the land, and, making entrenchments, we here cut with crowbars and hatchets, by order of the Governor, two pirogues full of that stuff; which serves for pitching the canoes employed in pearl-fishing at Margarita.

We departed from here, and on the following day reached the mouth of the river of the city, and near it was a ship of the Lutherans laden with clothing, wines and spirits, and other goods, which had put in there for trading in tobacco. And there was only a Portuguese named Morera, and he told me he was married in the Island of San Miguel, and he pretended to be the owner of it.

With this party the Governor amused himself, and did not return to Guayana, which was the reason why the service of God and that of the King was not carried out in what was of such great importance as the dislodging of the enemy from these places and forts, which is the object for which the help was sent, and to secure that province.

We arrived at the city, and having kept me there twelve days, he arranged with Captain Pedro de Padilla that he should go to Margarita for salt with four pirogues, and giving me a certificate stating how I had arrived and seen the island, and that it was necessary to preserve it on account of the advantages it possesses, and in order that the enemy should not occupy it, he granted me permission, and therewith I departed, and the place of the Dragos and the coast, as far as Margarita and Cumaná, were safely reached, and from there I went to Caracas.

Account of other particular matters relating to His Majesty's service worthy of mentioning from the time I separated from the Governor of Guayana.

And in compliance with the instructions of the President, I made the Chaplains say Mass on all feast days during the journey. The soldiers were drawn up in front with their arms and the colours, and at the elevation of the Host the standards were lowered and the drums and fifes played, so that the Indians might be inspired with reverence to His Divine Majesty, and thus they knelt down, with great attention, both the Caribs those of other nations, who were to the number of 133 in all, being rowers of the pirogues. And there is no doubt that were they instructed in the Faith they would embrace it, as they are all very docile, especially the Chaguane Indians, who like the Spaniards much. The reason why this is not done is because the Bishop of Puerto Rico is so distant from Trinidad and Guayana. To ascend from Margarita, pirogues and an escort of soldiers are necessary, for Caribs are met with at every creek, and therefore, with that danger, neither the Bishop dare undertake the journey, nor will the priests go up. And as your Majesty desires the salvation of these miserable people, let this Government of Guayana and Trinidad be united to Venezuela in what relates to ecclesiastical matters. By the plains, during the summer season, the road may be traversed in ten days from San Sebastian, which is very flat, and thereby send to the Governor, Rui Fernandez de Fuenmayor, the valuable help of good infantry, whereby the natives will become more tractable and embrace the Faith, and the Caribs will soon cease from killing the miserable Indians in cold blood, and eating human flesh. And it will be a great service to God, and reduce many settlements and lead the more to Heaven.

And because it is important settle more people in the city of Guayana for its greater security and the reduction referred to, it can be done at very little expense. For if His Majesty commands the President of the New Kingdom of Granada, that being, as it is, notorious that numbers of Spaniards and half-breeds, with their wives, go idly from village to village of the natives, to support themselves, they shall continue sending them to the port of Casanare, commanding that, from one Corregidor to another, they be given some outfit, with beasts of burden and provisions, as the whole, both mules and provisions, are of little value, the Governor being advised, he will send pirogues with Guyanese and Mapoyes Indians. And there will be some Spaniards in the village of Chita and others in that of Panto, and in this way they will embark and go down the river, where there is plenty of fish, turtle and abundance of deer.

And the Governor, knowing that the people are coming down the river, will he prepared with provisions and tools in the mouth of the Guarico, or in that of Apure and Sarare, which are healthy places, and with cattle and other products; and there will be no want of work or assistance in their labours by planting corn, yucca, and other vegetables. And if they settle in Guarico the route from San Sebastian can be easily traversed; and it would be well to open this up, for it will be a depot in going from Guayana to the Kingdom [of New Granada] and for the route from Caracas.

And between this settlement and the city the Indians existing between these rivers will become domesticated, and on finding therein security from the Caribs they will serve with good will, and a hindrance will be put, so that these cruel wolves may not ascend [the river] to carry on the cruelties referred to, and to drive away the Caribs that are settling in the plains of San Sebastian, for some of the people, through fear of them, have gone to Cumanagoto.

And it is a great injury to depopulate a city of the King, and besides the loss which follows thereby, and want of cattle to the Government of Caracas, and therefore it would be well to apply

a speedy remedy thereto. And then it would be far better to settle this newly-discovered country, so rich and with so many people for service and labour, than that His Majesty should grant [permission] to make new discoveries, for they do no other good than to cause the loss of Spaniards, as from the example of the expedition of Uraba by Captain Pedro Martin, and that of Darien by Captain Lobo and Captain Tristancho, and the last one by General Don Francisco Maldonado, the danger will be well known, for more than 600 Spaniards perished therein. And this I have personally experienced, and seen the most of them.

On account of the great volume of the mighty River Orinoco, as shown by the watermark on its banks, indicating how high the water reaches in the last stages of its rise, its navigation from the city of Guayana to the port of Casanare must be made in the month of October, for from this month it begins to fall, and continues to do so for six months, and by the end of March it is at its lowest. Experience shows that this is yearly the case, for the rise and fall corresponds with the Tropic of Cancer and Capricorn more regularly than the Nile.

And when it is at its lowest the quicksilver is found upon the bank under the stones down the river, a league beyond the mouth of the River Caroni, in the site of the old village [of Guayana].

And to fulfil the instructions of the President, so that His Majesty might be informed concerning this substance, I say that not being able to obtain a knowledge of the vein from which it comes, by looking carefully at the cordillera of rocks which is above it, the cause of its being there will be found to be that the strength of the sun and of his great heat acting upon the said cliff causes what appears on the bank to exude, and thus it is found at this season.

The sun in these months passes through the tropic of Cancer: and when it returns thorough the Tropic of Capricorn, from March to September, at 23 degrees from the Equator, the river begins to rise; and when is at its height, all the plains are flooded, and the animals and cattle go to the high lands and other hiding places. And the Indians of all nations dwelling on its banks prepare large quantities of flour, fish, and turtle, dried in the sun, as they have no salt; and under tents or in canoes, covered with bihao leaves and palm mats, which they call "antivitives," they live until the river falls low enough to leave their dwellings uncovered in the place where each nation settles with their families, an affair which is like that of Noah's ark in the Deluge.

The navigation that has to be made in descending from the New Kingdom of Granada, from the port of Casanare to Guayana, must be from April to August, since the floods of the Rivers Meta and Orinoco fall with such a powerful current that, when the river has half subsided, with little work of rowing, and less risk of the pirogues driving against the snags below water, the journey can be made in less than twenty days to the port of Guayana. And because the two rapids of greatest danger, which are those of Carichana and Camiseta, and the other rocks and reefs in which there are many parts of the river can be passed while covered by the flood of both rivers.

The hookers and other vessels cannot ascend from the mouth of the Orinoco, which is in front of the Island of Trinidad, further than 50 leagues up stream to the Rock of Don Juan. The reason is because, during the time of the overflow of the river, it flows down with the swiftest current; and although the breeze may favour the sailing-vessel, it cannot pass above there, for, at a league from the said rock, a reef of rocks crosses the river. And if it be during the time of the fall of the river, still less will it be possible to navigate it. And experience proves it, for the pirogues being such small vessels, they are wont to be smashed to bits, as, in trying to avoid the current and reefs and hugging the banks, they drive against snags lying below the water; so that this navigation is noted with its inconveniences and dangers for large vessels.

The mouth of the Dragons is the name given to the stretch of sea from the Island of Trinidad to Paria on the mainland. And in this stretch there are many small islands; and as this navigation is not known to small sailing craft, they get lost. And the pilots wait until the sea-breeze calms down, for therewith the River Orinoco is impeded above; and when it ceases to blow, the water that is impeded above; and when it ceases to blow, the water that is impeded flows down with swift current. And before the tide falls they leave the mouth of the Orinoco or Trinidad, and cross to Punto del Gallo and to the Island of Yantias [?], and there await the fall of the tide, and then they set sail, or use paddles or oars, and cross over to Paria, which is terra firma, so that they are free from the dangers of the cliffs of the Dragons, but not from the Caribs. There is here a settlement of brave Indians; they are Christians, and their Encomendero is a resident of Margarita. They have abundance of provisions – of cassava-bread, maize, plantains and other fruits, plenty of good fish and fowl. And they give all to the passengers who put in there, or exchange it with merchants for knives and hatchets and other articles, with good-will.

From this place to the dwellings inhabited by people of Margarita there are some ports in which the Caribs hide themselves, for the purpose of making their raids upon the Indians or Spaniards whom they endeavour to murder, and then roast the quarters and store it for provision. And thus the pirogues which ascend from the Island of Margarita and Cumaná, up the coast to Trinidad or Guayana go with an escort of soldiers, and even with this protection they generally perish. And these Caribs, who are from the mouth of the Orinoco to the windward, are united with the heretics who are in a fort in the mouth of the River of Amacuro, to windward of the Orinoco 20 leagues, and at 30 leagues more, is the fortress of "Esquibo" (Essequibo) and "Bilviz" (Berbice), which are two great rivers that are in that part. And the military exploit that we were going to make by dislodging the enemy from these two places will succeed if the Governor, with such excellent infantry and stores, will enter upon it, and not abandon it altogether. And the Caribs there give to the Lutherans the spices which they have, as well to them as to those who arrive in ships which trade with those of the said fort. And from those places referred to there go forth every year a number of pirogues of Caribs to murder and rob along the entire coast during the summer, which is the most favourable time to do so, and to ascend with what they have robbed. And at this time war must be made upon them, by His Majesty commanding that the Governors of Caracas, Cumanagoto, Cumaná, and Margarita form a small fleet, and granting to them the Caribs they may apprehend for slaves, on the ground that they are such cruel butchers of human flesh, and have destroyed many villages of the natives of the coast committed to the charge of residents of the four Governments, and other people that have been settled in farms there, being, as they are, sacrilegious from the mainly deaths of Friars and other priests, they have caused. And in these past days, Father Seden, the Superior, while going in a pirogue from Cumanagoto to Cumaná, was carried away with all the others, and in an island, before reaching Paria, they were murdered and eaten. And on seeing any vessel passing along the coast they continue to follow it; and as the poor sailors and passengers are not experienced, in entering any port for water and wood, they do not take precautions against these inhuman barbarians, they perish with those cruelties, and lives and property are destroyed by them. And owing to this great injury, a small fleet must be fitted out, which must be placed in command of the Governor of Trinidad, in order that, with the pirogues that he may equip with his experienced men, this expedition may be arranged in a way that may prove effectual, and His Majesty be informed.

The number of Christians who meet their death so cruelly at the hands of these savages will excite sympathy for making this concession, and numbers of poor residents will willingly go forth for the purpose of having security in all the coast and farms, and on this remedy depends their removal from alliance with the Lutherans, the security of the peaceful nations of the River Orinoco, with peace to Guayana and security to the Island of Trinidad and the farms of the whole coast. And the greatest security of all, and what is most important, is to have, for account of His Majesty, a fort with 200 men or less should it seem desirable, and that the subsidy for them be paid from the Royal Treasury of Santa Fé, on the supposition that it be the best arrangement, being, as it is, of very little cost, so that the Corregidores of the districts of the new kingdom may give advice from one district to another, up to the River Casanare, and in its port the pirogues will be waiting that are to receive the money, delivering it to the person whom the Royal officers will send, and when the Caribs see these precautions they will by degrees become reduced to the law of God. For if this be lost, His Majesty will lose much, which God forbid, as will be stated fully in the following chapter; and, above all, an attentive and zealous Governor, who will have no other interest than to serve His Majesty, and reduce souls and preserve the two cities which it is so important to settle with plenty of people. This Island of Trinidad has been very frequently visited by the peoples of different nations, and they have tried to settle the Punta de la Galera situated at the head of the island, and in order to have greater security in making the settlement, the Dutch have united with the Carib Indians, and have attacked the town and killed some Spaniards and sacked it in the time of Don Fernando de Berrio, and it was taken again by Walter Raleigh, when he killed the Governor Patomeque in Guayana. And in the time of Don Diego Lopes de Escobar General Llanes, they burned the town and the sacred images, stole the tabernacle with the Blessed Sacrament, for the recovery of which the companies of Santa Fé came down with such a brilliant and noble body of troops. And while Aranda was Governor, the Caribs and Lutherans attacked the city of Trinidad. And at the present time, during Don Martin de Mendoza's government, they had constructed a fort on Punta de la Galera, and were making the settlement, and although he destroyed it, he did not do so by force on account of having no vessels to demolish it. And with these continual tumults the poor residents are very harassed. And on account of the island being so fertile, although it is wanting in cattle, numbers of the poor people would go there to settle it, but owing to the said danger they do not do so. And as these Lutherans are going about seeking with much care where they will settle, particularly having seen that they gained the Island of Curazao with the robberies they are making daily with their pinks and launches, and which even today is peopled, for they had the ports of the mainland at their will to such an extent that even the cattle farms at 2 and 3 leagues in the interior were entered and robbed, and they killed the cattle for their support. And they would not do it were it not for the help of the said Indians and those from the Island of Oruba, its neighbour, who are their guides for all.

The robbery of this wealth-inspired avarice, so that, numbers of merchants of their country fitted out ships of war and other vessels to carry on the same robberies, and thus they have destroyed numbers of subjects and hindered the frigates in their voyages from Carthage and New Spain to Santa Marta, Rio de la Hacha, Maracaibo, Coro, and Caracas, and the merchants flying from these dangers of the sea trade by land, where, in order to pass from Rio de la Hacha to the Lake of Maracaibo, and other parts, it is necessary to form an escort of soldiers in the city, on account of the danger from the Guajiro Indians who live in the savannahs of Orino, and this passage and the escort is so costly that, although they go by the fortified places of His Majesty,

which are those of Araya and Santo Domingo, they pay many ducats, the Governors of that province being responsible that the Indians commit these excesses, first, because they do not try to perform the service of God and His Majesty, but look to their own interests, and for a few years past, with the escorts he has formed for these passages, deducts from the sum given to each soldier on enlisting two or three pesos, and double from the corporal whom he appoints, whereby not only has the communication ceased, but the number of people is still less in Rio de la Hacha. And the pearl fishery has been destroyed, and the said Guajiro Indians have been the cause thereof, in having killed the negroes who served for bringing water from the watering-places for the use of those employed in fishing for the pearls, and they have destroyed the many and splendid cattle-farms that were in the savannahs of Orino, which were the support not only of the said city, but of the crews of the frigates and ships of war which came to that port, and where they went to obtain meat and tallow from Carthagena, so that the silver galleons might be the quicker dispatched, and procure it at lower prices than it now costs in Carthagena, and, considering the inconveniences referred to, the inhabitants of the said Rio de la Hacha are constantly, day and night, with their arms in their hands; and seeing themselves so little or not at all favoured, but, on the contrary, very much harassed by the Governors, they have gone into the interior, wherefore there is danger of that city being lost, as well as its fort with such good artillery as it has, precisely as the city of Santa Marta and its fort were lost, with like artillery. And a remedy, which is of so great importance, consists in the sending by His Majesty of a practical and zealous Governor, who, possessed of these qualities, will soon put a remedy, so that that city will again be settled, and the pearl fishery re-established, as also the cattle-farms. And the salt pits of Cubo de la Vela will have security, and the Guajiro Indians be chastised for the robberies, assaults, murders, sacrileges, and other grave sins which these infidels have committed and still commit. And so far has their daring reached that two or three times they have burned some houses of the city, and, the Governor being a man of the qualities mentioned, the intercourse will soon be re-established, with much splendour, and His Majesty will have his Royal fifths and increased dues from trade and commerce. And if His Majesty and the Royal Council of the Indies desire that the aforesaid should be carried out in this particular, with greater security, dispatch, and less cost, I will, on being commanded, report, with other particular, certain and true proofs.

And returning to the restoration of the Island of Trinidad, with the fort which it must have, which will hinder the enemy from settling it, because the perseverance they have shown in harassing it is with the object of making themselves master of the great River Orinoco, and having the nations of natives on its banks in their power and under their subjection, and obtaining meat, tallow, and hides at the place of Oqueta, on account of its immense herds of cattle, and the Carib Indians for the trade of their spices, and that they may help them, in their attempt to possess themselves of the places that are settled from the village of Los Parias to Maracapana, coasts and territories of the jurisdiction of Cumaná, inhabited by the people of Margarita, for the purpose of supporting themselves in the said city, and also for the negroes employed in the pearl fishery, and the other natives thereof; and the settlement of the Guayqueries Indians will be lost, who are so loyal to the Spaniards, proclaiming themselves subjects of His Majesty, so that the coast being occupied, there will be no commercial intercourse, nor will any ship stop at Punta de la Galera; and with pirogues and launches they will take all the salt they like from the salt mines of Araya for their use and that of the natives who may be in their service, and to insure the trade of hides and skins they might be engaged in. Wherefore the Island of Margarita will be depopulated for

want of provisions, as it is very certain that that land is dry, and, owing to its sterility, produces no fruits, and has scarcely water enough for its necessities, so that the gain from the pearl fishery will be ended, and His Majesty will have no Royal fifths nor dues from trade and commerce, and will lose a city settled for such a length of time, and the costly temples it possesses with their rich ornaments. Therefore it is that this danger is pointed out, and His Majesty and the members of his Royal Council of the Indies being informed thereof, the experienced men of the Court will apply a convenient remedy.

If His Majesty should resolve that the Province of Trinidad and Guayana be united to that of Venezuela in what relates to ecclesiastical affairs, so that the residents and their children may receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, and the suffering natives be catechised and instructed in the Holy Catholic faith, then Franciscan Friars will have to be appointed for this holy work, and see that the Religious of the Society [of Jesus] go to that Province of Guayana, because with their holy zeal and spiritual exercise they will instruct them disinterestedly. And the first village must be of the Chaguanes, as they are very numerous, and because these are very friendly with the Spaniards, beyond others of those nations, and it must be called the village of San Felipe de la Real Corona. And as regards the tribute or service, both for the matters of the Royal service in fortifications or in navigating pirogues or distribution among the people of Guayana, and in the sorties that may be made against the Caribs, on account of the injuries they receive at their hands, His Majesty will command the form it will have to take, and although this must be laid upon them, they will not refuse, as it is no labour to them, it being their recreation to row in the pirogues in those rivers; and supposing the Friars of that religious order go up whenever their Prelate commands them to do so, they may have help in the two convents there are in Trinidad or Guayana. They go with very good will, and as they get facilities, some being in Caracas, descending by San Sebastian to Guarico, and downstream to Guayana, and those who are in Cumaná or Margarita will ascend, as they are wont to do, in pirogues; and this will be a great service to God, and lead souls to heaven, and in the other villages His Majesty will make the necessary distribution, with the condition that the Governors bestow upon the deserving commissions to catechise and instruct them in the holy faith in virtue of the Royal powers; and herewith I end this chapter.

One inconvenience attends the principal remedy of the Orinoco. I do not mention it here because secrecy is important, and God permitting me to go into the Royal presence, I will inform His Majesty, or the members of the Royal Council of the Indies, of all I have seen, with great attention, as the map shows which the President commanded me to make, in order that His Majesty might properly understand this great River Orinoco and the rivers which flow into it, and through what courses, their names, and the depth of water they have, and the villages of the peaceful natives, and what I was enabled to see of the Island of Trinidad, in fulfilment of the instruction which the President, Don Martin de Saavedra y Guzman, Knight of the Order of Calatrava, Governor and Captain-General of the New Kingdom of Granada, gave me, and all the rest I have written concerning the mainland, through having sailed in the silver fleet and the guardships of the mainland, and having served in ships of war as a volunteer, in which I have seen some considerable service, and being one of the most experienced in the coast from the mouth of the Dragons to the fortification of Veragua and of the Windward Islands, always complying with the orders my superiors gave me, without being wanting in anything, owing to which punctuality in my duties I have occupied all grades in the army to that of Maestro de Campo, when I restored the city of Maracaibo, and on receipt of the news that the English flagship had been lost on the

coast of the Cocinas Indians, I started out to scour it with eight soldiers and fourteen Indians, and having encountered them I compelled ninety, with their arms, to submit to the obedience of my King and Sovereign; and as there was a want of arms in the city, I handed over for his Majesty's service those that were seized, which were forty-seven muskets and seven carbines, and I distributed the short swords.

And during all these times, in constant active service, I have spent more than forty-five years, and this fact is proved by all the Royal Commissions and other presents which will be seen. And with zeal to serve, even to death, my good King and Sovereign Philip IV the Victorious, whom God preserve for the increase of the faith and the chastisement of the heretic rebels against his Crown.

DIEGO RUIZ MALDONADO

(Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid)

86. EXTRACTS FROM SECRET REPORTS ENTITLED, "GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF ALL HIS MAJESTY'S DOMINIONS IN AMERICA," 2 VOLS. MS. ANONYMOUS, 1640 (?)

[Undated, but believed to have been written in 1640]

Description of the Dutch Settlements on *terra firma* and in the Islands (Appendix, vol ii, chap. 75)

Description of the islands settled by Holland; and the position she holds on terra firma, from the Island of Carpoy (?) to the River Poymaron (Pomaroon):

Immediately on leaving the River Amazon the River Baypoco (Waipoco ?) in front of the Island of Carpoy (?) is entered. At 65 leagues in the River Baypoco the States of Holland are settled, and have two very large and flourishing towns, formed from the remainder of the people they had in Brazil. The entrance to the river is well fortified.

At a distance of 20 leagues to the leeward of the last-mentioned river there is another city of the Dutch, situated on the banks of the River Caprehoca (?), called Parboin (?), where the same products exist as in the other Colony; the country is very fertile, and, there is a considerable trade carried on. Here there is no fort; 18 leagues to the leeward of this last is the River Baya (?), where there are many plantations, but no settlement or town. Much produce is however, here collected and transported in ships and large canoes, of which there are great numbers, to other parts. Then comes the River Cau (?), with a small town which they call Cotobain (?), and to the leeward of that is the Island of Cayana (Cayenne), in front of the River Veya (?). Ninety leagues to the leeward is the River Soronama (Surinam), where the Dutch have immense plantations and carry on agriculture; much produce is collected here. It is well fortified, being one of the principal settlements on this coast, etc. Thirty-seven leagues to the leeward is the River De Meray (Demerara), where they have a very important factory (which they call Sn. Juanes de Irlande), etc. Twenty leagues higher up to the leeward, in the River Paumaron, is the town of New Calandia (Zeenadia), which is very large and rich in all kinds of fruits, being the best settlement they possess in the whole of this coast; and on this account they carefully guard it, for this is al-

ready very near the River Orinoco, where the fort of Goyana (Guayana), which belongs to His Majesty, is situated. . . .

In the conclusion of this description the writer states, among other things, that "all he has described he has seen and examined during one year and a half he passed on that coast."

(Bibliotheca del Rey, Palacio Real, Madrid)

87. PROCEEDINGS OF THE WEST INDIA COMPANY (ZEELAND CHAMBER)

[30 June 1642]

The Commissioners charged with making up the cargoes for Arguin and Essequibo, and with matters completed therewith, would suggest, subject to the approval of this Board, that the yacht "Argyn" shall sail from here in company of the ship "Walcheren" for Arguin, and that the yacht "Argyn" should be got ready to depart from here for Fort Arguin about the end of next July, addressing it to the Commandeur Pieter Warnier, and placing in it the cargo required for the trade at the aforesaid fort.

Which cargo having been landed there, the skipper to be put on the aforesaid yacht shall take in a full cargo of such kind of fish as is caught there on the coast, carry it to Brazil, and place it in the hands of the Supreme Council for the especial benefit of this Chamber, by virtue of the resolution of the Board of Nineteen taken in this regard on the 18th April, 1642, according to which each Chamber is allowed to carry fish to Brazil, and the direction of Arguin belongs to this Chamber.

Having landed that cargo in Brazil, he shall take in the cargo which shall be given to the ship "Walcheren," or to any other, destined for Essequibo, and having unladen that cargo, he shall take in such dye and letter-wood as shall be in readiness at the time, and with it come straight to La Rochelle, whence he shall try to get home under convoy.

Here follows the Cargo for Essequibo:

400 large axes.

400 small axes.

300 medium cutlasses with curved points.

300 small cutlasses, with curved points.

60 canoe adzes.

200 cassava chisels.

3000 carniceros.

1500 large sailors' knives

800 small sailors' knives

(There still are 30 dozen large knives and 200 bundles small carniceros that were brought home by the "Jager").

40 doz. hair-shears, large and small.

20 doz. razors.

10 doz. small mirrors with lid.

20 doz, small framed mirrors.

10 large black mirrors.

40 doz. large thimbles.

10 gross of trumpets.
2 cases wooden combs.
300 large fish-hooks.
200 tinned fish-hooks.
400 cod-fish hooks.
30 doz. flint-steels.
2 doz. papers of pins.
200 large needles.
100 lbs. of yellow beads.
200 lbs. of violet beads.
50 lbs. of green beads.
60 lbs. of white beads.
60 lbs. of tierenarisen.
Lot trinkets.
[The beads and trinkets] To be like the lot that was sent the last time, since that was
praised).
500 large shark-knives.
4 gross of copper hells, large and small.
3 doz. common black hats for men.
30 pairs of shoes.
30 suits of duck clothes.
1 bale of gray duck.
50 shirts.
4 doz. of earthen jugs.
50 lbs. of thin brass plate.
100 lbs. of coarse gunpowder.
50 lbs. of fine gunpowder.
50 lbs. of iron shot of 1 lb.
12 carbines.
6 pistols.
200 flints for muskets and pistols.
12 swords.
3 carpenters' coopers' tools. Adzes.
2,000 5-inch nails.
2 doz. gimlets, up to 5 inches.
2,000 [screws?] a few of 5 inches.
6 iron wedges.
60 foot rules.
4 spyglasses.
2 cleavers.
2 cases adzes.
1 crucible.
1 branding iron.
5 wooden staying hoops.

1 groove plane.
 6 small coopers' gimlets
 2 compasses.
 1 small cask chalk.
 Medicines according to list, and surgeon's instruments, for Arguin and Essequibo.
 1 firkin of meat.
 1 firkin of lard.
 25 cheeses.
 1 hogshead of brandy.
 1 hogshead of Spanish wine.
 1 hogshead of vinegar.
 55 stoups of oil in a barrel.

(Original: Dutch)

**88. PROCEEDINGS OF THE WEST INDIA COMPANY (ZEELAND CHAMBER)
[5 May 1644]**

There were read the following letters: One to Adriaen Jansz, Commandeur, and Adriaen van de Woestyne, Clerk, at Fort Kykoveral in Essequibo, dated 5th May.

(Original: Dutch)

**89. PROCEEDINGS OF THE WEST INDIA COMPANY (ZEELAND CHAMBER)
[15 September 1644]**

As to the Petition of Joannes van Opstall, who four years ago sailed for the West Indies in de Zeeusche Jager, and, after a time, being employed in Essequibo, had there, in catching fish for the Company, his finger on the right hand pierced by one of the said fish and so lost it, wherefore he asks that there be granted him for the wound, pain, suffering, and mutilation what they shall think fit. After examination of the articulated-letter, and after hearing the opinion of the Committee on the soldiery, it was the understanding of the Chamber that it is under no obligation in this matter, and it was accordingly dismissed.

(Original: Dutch)

**90. PROCEEDINGS OF THE WEST INDIA COMPANY (ZEELAND CHAMBER)
[9 March 1645]**

After a vote had been taken, it was resolved that the letter of Aert Adriaensen van Scherpenisse, Commandeur at Fort Kykoveral in Rio Essequibo, mentioning that one Cornelius

Leendertsen and Cornelius Fransen Waterman, both of Flushing, had thereabouts seized and carried off certain Indians, as also that they of the Island of St. Eustatius had, three years ago, enticed on board, also by treachery, 81 persons, and carried them off, it was resolved that a copy of the aforesaid letter be given the deputies to the Nineteen, in order that it may there be brought up, and such action taken thereon as shall serve to prevent the carrying off of people.

(Original: Dutch)

**91. PROCEEDINGS OF THE WEST INDIA COMPANY (ZEELAND CHAMBER)
[29 May 1645]**

The Commissioners are of opinion that the River of Essequibo has now for some time been navigated with small profit to the Company; for the reason that private colonists are permitted to trade there as well as the Company, so that the goods coming from there cannot fetch their proper price on account of competition; they are, moreover, of opinion that at the expiration of the Charter, either the trade there ought to be reserved exclusively for the Company, or it were better that the aforesaid place should be thrown open under payment of proper dues.

(Original: Dutch)

**92. CONTRACT BETWEEN THE WEST INDIA COMPANY (ZEELAND CHAMBER)
AND ABRAHAM VAN PERE FOR THE BRINGING OF A CARGO FROM
ESSEQUIBO
[18 January 1646]**

We, the Undersigned, Directors of the Zeeland Chamber of the West India Company, do hereby declare that we have made a contract with the Honourable Abraham van Pere, merchant at Flushing, for the transportation of the annatto dye which the Company has in the River of Essequibo, at the Fort Kijkoveral, to be within the time of fourteen days after the arrival there taken on board of his ship de "Wildeman" and brought hither, by virtue; of the Resolution on this point taken by the aforesaid Chamber under date of the 18th January, 1646.

The aforesaid Abraham van Pere shall be required to let the aforesaid ship den "Wildeman" sail to the River Essequibo, and there deliver to the Commandeur of the aforesaid fort letters from the Zeeland Chamber, and deliver such provisions and merchandise as shall also be given to his ship in accordance with the inclosed list, without receiving freightage.

Having arrived there, it shall take in all the annatto dye which the Company has in stock, for the freight of which the Company shall pay him, Van Pere, 1 stiver per pound, according to its weight here at home, when it has been duly delivered and the tare of the barrels as weighed yonder has been deducted.

Finding in Essequibo any merchandise other than dye, it shall be required to bring that also, at such rates of freight as in fairness shall be found proper.

Which aforesaid Articles were approved by the aforesaid parties, and two or three similarly worded contracts were made thereof, and respectively signed.

Done at Flushing, the 18th January, 1646.

W. VAN DER HEYDEN
A. VAN HECKE
HENK. SOMER
D. BAUTE
ABRAHAM VAN PERE

(Original: Dutch)

93. CONTINUATION OF THE CHARTER OF THE WEST INDIA COMPANY [4 January 1647]

(Extract)

The States-General of the United Netherlands, to all to whom these presents shall come, greeting, make known:

That having further considered the affairs and constitution of the West India Company of this country, and having also in mind the fact that the welfare of the inhabitants of the same is principally based upon the navigation, trade, and commerce which from time immemorial have been carried on by this country, and have gradually increased with other countries of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America:

Having also taken into consideration the preservation and maintenance of the public faith and contracts made with many and divers nations, Empires, and countries in the West Indies, Brazil, New Netherlands, and other parts: . . .

We . . . in the exercise of our discretion and authority, did, on the 22nd March last, prolong and renew for the period of twenty-five consecutive years, commencing the 1st day of the month of January of this current year, 1647, the Charter of the aforesaid Company, dated the 3rd June, 1621, with amplification of the 10th June, 1622, together with that of the 13th February, 1623, and the Agreement of the 21st June, 1623.

[Dated] July 4, 1647

(Original: Dutch)
