

The Wismar Commission Report

Day 14 – Wednesday, 2 December 1964

CHAIRMAN: This session of the inquiry is now called to order. Call the next witness, Sase Narine.

MR. SASE NARINE is sworn in and he states as follows:

RAMSAROOP: What is your name?

NARINE: Sase Narine.

RAMSAROOP: And you live at?

NARINE: At 54 Bel Air Springs, East Coast Demerara.

RAMSAROOP: You are also the president of the British Guiana Maha Sabha.

NARINE: Yes sir.

RAMSAROOP: Can you say what measure of assistance was given by your organisation to the evacuees in the disturbances at Wismar?

NARINE: On the date of the arrival of the R.H. Carr from Wismar and Mackenzie area, my organisation met these evacuees. On their arrival the Red Cross was present and provided them with light refreshments. My organisation then took them by all sorts of conveyance to a building at the industrial site, and there they were provided with food, clothes and bags to sleep on for about ten to fourteen days. During this period of time we fed them along with assistance of aid given to us by people, and we were able to provide homes for the entire set of evacuees through our various branches spread throughout the colony of British Guiana. There were some people who had relatives and preferred to go to them. In collaboration with Demba we were also able to receive stores and distribute some of them to some of the evacuees. This operation took three to four weeks with the assistance the Salvation Army which also distributed aid. Apart from all these, my organisation also made representation to Demba concerning the employment and rehabilitation of some their employees. Clothing and food were also received from our organisation and from the Red Cross Society and this was distributed from the headquarters of our organisation known as the Ashram in Lamaha Street. Through voluntary services we also provided medical attendance to some of them who claimed they were beaten and assaulted. The organisation also provided books to children and assisted in paying fees to school. On some occasions we also attempted to give advice and comfort in some measure to those who came to us. That is the sort of assistance we were able to render to the evacuees.

SHEPHERD: In your case has your organisation written a statement for the Commission?

NARINE: We submitted a memorandum.

SHEPHERD: Can you tell me the date?

RAMSAROOP: It is signed by the secretary of the organisation.

SHEPHERD: Were there any other organisations assisting the evacuees in the form of food and clothing?

NARINE: The Red Cross and Muslim organisation gave food. Demba gave \$5,000 and the people of the Salvation Army assisted in the packing of belongings that were salvaged. The Christian Social Council gave \$500.

SHEPHERD: Was there any united assistance given?

NARINE: There was assistance given.

Transcripts – Day 14

HAFEEZ KHAN: About how many people were assisted?

NARINE: About 2,500 including children.

HAFEEZ KHAN: How did they appear to you?

NARINE: They were packed like sardines. Their conditions were pitiable; some had tattered clothing and they expressed considerable fear to have the volunteer and police protection to take them to the industrial site.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did they say why?

NARINE: Many of them said they were raped and their houses burnt and the police and volunteers stood by without giving any assistance.

CHAIRMAN: Do you have an estimate of the amount of money expended by your organisation?

NARINE: About \$30,000.

CHAIRMAN: Would you say if all the families were settled as far as your organisation is aware?

NARINE: They were only temporarily provided for. Some homes had given them a certain amount of time because they were overcrowded, and after that the government formed a committee to solve this problem.

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SHEPHERD: What was the nature of the complaint given for not wanting the police and volunteers' protection?

NARINE: Sir, it was just said that they did not want the volunteers or police protection.

SHEPHERD: When the ship landed, were the police and volunteers all Africans?

NARINE: Many Africans.

SHEPHERD: I put it to you that many Africans were waiting to welcome them at the gangway.

NARINE: What they said was they did not wish to have the volunteer and police escort them. I think those statements were made in the presence of Superintendent Mc Gill Smith. They refused to come off the ship and, after much coaxing, they decided to so.

SHEPHERD: It was a natural reaction for people who have been beaten. It was not due to reaction of the government but a racial reaction. Was that the impression you formed?

NARINE: Yes.

SHEPHERD: Could you say the name of any one who was present?

NARINE: I think the leader was a man named Harry Seegobin.

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DRAYTON: Were there any Africans among the welcoming party that met the R.H. Carr other than the volunteer and police?

NARINE: There were some Africans belonging to the Red Cross.

DRAYTON: What was the reaction of the people towards Africans in Red Cross uniform?

NARINE: They didn't wish to accept what was offered to them.

DRAYTON: So you confirm that this was a racial feeling?

NARINE: My impression is, sir, that they had a natural feeling against Africans.

DRAYTON: Were there any Africans in the Red Cross assisting these Indian people in making them comfortable at the bond?

The Wismar Commission Report

NARINE: As time went on, one or two were there.

DRAYTON: How was their reaction to this?

NARINE: No indifferent reactions. They were accepted.

DRAYTON: Thank you, Mr. Narine.

SHEPHERD: There were no indifferent reactions?

NARINE: There were no signs of animosity.

SHEPHERD: At that stage.

NARINE: No sir.

CHAIRMAN: Thank you Mr. Narine.

DR. SHYMAL MITRA is sworn in and he states as follows:

CHAIRMAN: Your name, please?

MITRA: My name is Shymal Mitra

RAMSAROOP: Doctor, you are attached to the Georgetown Public Hospital?

MITRA: Yes.

RAMSAROOP: In this year, May 1964, you were also attached to this hospital?

MITRA: Yes sir.

RAMSAROOP: On the 27th May 1964, did you see one Doris Kuldip?

MITRA: She was admitted at 3.45 p.m. because she had a four-day old baby and was bleeding when I saw her. She had nowhere to stay so I gave her accommodation in my ward.

RAMSAROOP: In your ward, what was her condition?

MITRA: Her general condition was quite good.

RAMSAROOP: Did you see on the 27th May, 1964 also one Paul?

MITRA: That is the baby.

RAMSAROOP: Doctor, before you saw Doris Kuldip where did she come from?

MITRA: Wismar.

RAMSAROOP: How old was she?

MITRA: Twenty-five years of age?

RAMSAROOP: And Paul, on the 27th May at 3.47 p.m., was how old?

MITRA: Four days old?

RAMSAROOP: You have any record of this?

MITRA: Yes sir.

RAMSAROOP: Did you have a record of baby Paul?

MITRA: No sir.

Transcripts – Day 14

RAMSAROOP: What about a girl, Liloutie? Did you examine her?

MITRA: On the 27th at 3.48 p.m., she was admitted to the Georgetown Hospital. She came from Wismar, and had a fourteen-days old baby.

RAMSAROOP: What was her condition?

MITRA: Her condition was good; there were no injuries.

RAMSAROOP: Did you examine any of these persons?

MITRA: I saw one Ramrattie Persaud on the 26th May, 1964. She was in the surgical ward.

RAMSAROOP: Dr. Rahaman stated that he carried out superficial examination and you carried out detailed examination.

MITRA: There was an abrasion round the neck and on the left side of the jaw and an abrasion on the right forearm, and there was a ruptured hymen and bleeding at that time. There was laceration on the posterior wall of the vagina. The uterus was bleeding and we gave her some anti-tetanus serum. I did a D and C on the 4th June, 1964 and she was discharged on the 6th June, 1964.

RAMSAROOP: Doctor, you have records of other persons seen by you who were admitted and examined?

MITRA: The other person's name is Doreen Sookram. She is 15 years old. She comes from Silvertown, Wismar, and she was admitted on the 26th May 1964 at 2.55 p.m. She was admitted in the surgical ward and she was treated at first by the surgeons in that ward. On the 3rd June when I examined her there was a tear on the posterior vaginal wall and there was some bleeding. The hymen was perforated. Although there was no serious injury at that time, there were signs of recent bleeding there, so I presumed it must have been bleeding for a few days. There was some slight uterine bleeding so I decided to carry out a D and C operation. I carried out it on the 4th June, and she was discharged on the 7th June.

RAMSAROOP: Well, are these all the cases that you have seen?

MITRA: Yes.

RAMSAROOP: That would be all.

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HAFEEZ KHAN: Doctor, can you tell us if the posterior wall within the vaginal cavity was damaged? Can you tell us where it is situated?

MITRA: It is back towards the rectum.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Can you say how such lacerations can be caused?

MITRA: Through intercourse.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Normal intercourse?

MITRA: Normal intercourse in cases where the male organ might be too large for the person and it can cause laceration.

HAFEEZ KHAN: And can you say if there will be any effects if it is not treated immediately?

MITRA: If it is big it can cause a large amount of bleeding and in that case we have got to stitch it. If the laceration is small you treat it and it stops by itself.

HAFEEZ KHAN: If this laceration is caused by foreign bodies would it be dangerous?

MITRA: It would be dangerous.

HAFEEZ KHAN: If foreign bodies are being used it can have serious laceration? Can you say what is the effect of this?

MITRA: It might introduce some infection caused from tetanus.

The Wismar Commission Report

HAFEEZ KHAN: So what would be the effects on these parts if some foreign body was used?

MITRA: In the case of rupture of the hymen it is dangerous.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Can you tell us the danger?

MITRA: It might be a puncture of the posterior wall and she might die from shock.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Can you say that immediate treatment is required in such a case?

MITRA: Yes sir.

HAFEEZ KHAN: And can you say that this rupture can be due to rape?

MITRA: Yes sir.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Because of the force being used?

MITRA: Yes.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Can you say that in a woman just six or seven months pregnant, can abortion be caused by rough intercourse?

MITRA: Yes sir.

HAFEEZ KHAN: And in the case of a young girl or Miss Ramrattie Persaud or the girl 15 years? Would that cause a psychological effect on their later life with their husbands? What of having a baby and of future relationships?

MITRA: She had a light surgical operation. In the circumstances the girl had to go through this serious psychological experience and a medical operation because she was young.

HAFEEZ KHAN: This tearing of the wall – does this suggest that something must have been used?

MITRA: It seems to be so, other wise it is not likely to be caused by too much force.

HAFEEZ KHAN: And, Doctor, if there is any treatment there will be evidence of such treatment after a few hours? On the examination when she has been admitted, would there be any evidence of such treatment?

MITRA: It was prior to mine and there was no such evidence when I saw it.

DRAYTON: The opinion has been expressed about the laceration in the cases of Ramrattie Persaud and. Doreen Sookram. Could these have been caused by foreign bodies?

MITRA: I don't think that is concluded as it could be caused by rape.

DRAYTON: Does this mean that the laceration could be caused by foreign bodies rather than the male organ?

MITRA: It could have been foreign ones. Some male organs cause this type of laceration because the lady was afraid.

DRAYTON: But would you agree that it is impossible to have this development from ordinary rape?

MITRA: Not only in the vagina there might be injury, but there might be other inside injury.

DRAYTON: I thank you.

MOOTOO: Doctor, you haven't told us anything about Liloutie's baby.

MITRA: She was in the medical ward and she was attended to and discharged.

MOTOO: Did the child have any injuries?

MITRA: I would not know.

Transcripts – Day 14

MOOTOO: Can you also give us the time when Ramrattie Persaud was admitted in the ward?

MITRA: About 2.15 p.m. on the 26th.

MOOTOO: Thank you.

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RAMSAROOP: Before you go, Doctor, can you submit the report sheets to the Commission?

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JOHN JAGDAT is sworn in and he states as follows:

RAMSAROOP: Your name is John Jagdat?

JAGDAT: Yes.

RAMSAROOP: What is your occupation?

JAGDAT: Supernumerary constable.

RAMSAROOP: Attached where?

JAGDAT: At the Demerara Bauxite Company.

RAMSAROOP: What is your present address?

JAGDAT: Lot 49 Stanleytown, Berbice.

RAMSAROOP: Now on the Monday 25th May this year about 8.30 you were in company with one Chee-a-Tow and Mr. Gilbert Farnum and went to court with the Demba launch, Hawk?

JAGDAT: Yes.

RAMSAROOP: The court was adjourned at 11.00 a.m. and you left with the launch for lunch towards Mackenzie?

JAGDAT: Yes.

RAMSAROOP: Are you the owner of house at Mackenzie area?

JAGDAT: No.

RAMSAROOP: On your way to Mackenzie Hospital you saw three men in the river, two of them in a canoe and one who was hanging overboard calling for help?

JAGDAT: Yes.

RAMSAROOP: You told Mr. Chee-a-Tow about it that the men were calling help. He told you to go back?

JAGDAT: Yes, he was driving the launch.

RAMSAROOP: When you reached there Mr. Farnum held out his hand and pulled a man aboard the launch?

JAGDAT: Yes.

RAMSAROOP: A man then told you that he was going for one of his children who attended the Mackenzie High School and a Negro man had beaten him with sticks, and he had to jump overboard to save his life?

JAGDAT: Yes.

RAMSAROOP: Do you know the name of this man?

JAGDAT: No.

RAMSAROOP: He told you that the Negroes were killing all the Indians and burning their houses?

The Wismar Commission Report

JAGDAT: Yes sir.

RAMSAROOP: And as you were passing at the Wismar area you saw about one dozen houses on fire and you saw people running all over the place trying to save their lives? Can you say what these people were about to do?

JAGDAT: They were running towards the river.

RAMSAROOP: Could you say who these people were who were beating the Indians?

JAGDAT: Negroes.

RAMSAROOP: You saw that some of the people were members of the Police Force and Volunteer Force, and they were not doing anything?

JAGDAT: Yes sir.

RAMSAROOP: You further said that you saw members of the Volunteer Force, Police Force and members of the Demba Constabulary carrying looted stuff.

JAGDAT: Yes sir.

SHEPHERD: At what time did you see the volunteers and policemen carrying looted stuff?

JAGDAT: Around six o'clock on Monday afternoon.

SHEPHERD: And where were they carrying the looted stuff?

JAGDAT: They were taking it from one person and handing it to another.

SHEPHERD: What other person?

JAGDAT: Maybe their relatives.

SHEPHERD: Did it ever occur to you that it was part of their duty to take the stuff from looters and send it to the Police Station?

JAGDAT: I saw one of the members of the Demba Constabulary with looted stuff under his rain-coat and taking it to his home.

SHEPHERD: Could you give us his name?

JAGDAT: Clinton Blair, S.C. 96.

SHEPHERD: Let us have the name of any volunteer you saw with looted goods.

JAGDAT: B. King.

SHEPHERD: Where does he work?

JAGDAT: He works with contractors.

SHEPHERD: Where is he living?

JAGDAT: At Wismar, Silvertown.

SHEPHERD: What was he taking?

JAGDAT: He received suitings.

SHEPHERD: What did he do with it?

JAGDAT: He gave it to a Negro boy about ten to twelve years old.

SHEPHERD: Could you identify the Negro boy?

JAGDAT: Yes sir.

Transcripts – Day 14

SHEPHERD: Could you remember the name of other volunteers?

JAGDAT: No sir.

SHEPHERD: Would you recognise them?

JAGDAT: Yes.

SHEPHERD: What about the police?

JAGDAT: The policemen were a good way from me when I saw them with the looted stuff.

SHEPHERD: How far away?

JAGDAT: About 400 yards. The place was getting dusky.

CARTER: You are still a member of the Demba Constabulary?

JAGDAT: Yes. Number 139.

CARTER: Am I right to say that there are East Indians of the Demba Constabulary?

JAGDAT: They are there now.

CARTER: Did they leave the Demba Constabulary?

JAGDAT: No.

CARTER: Did you ever leave your job at any time during the disturbances?

JAGDAT: No sir.

CARTER: Did any Indians leave their job as a result of the disturbances?

JAGDAT: Yes, two.

CARTER: This Mr. Clinton Blair – when was it you saw him?

JAGDAT: Well, he went several other times over the 25th.

CARTER: And what time was this?

JAGDAT: Between 5.00 to 6.00 p.m.

CARTER: In the afternoon?

JAGDAT: Yes.

CARTER: On the Wismar side?

JAGDAT: Yes sir.

CARTER: He made several trips from the Mackenzie to the Wismar side on that day?

JAGDAT: As I was standing with some women at the constabulary door.

CARTER: He had a rain coat over him?

JAGDAT: Yes. I saw him two times and saw something under his rain coat.

CARTER: You assume he had looted goods?

JAGDAT: It looked bulky.

CARTER: What was the nature of these goods?

JAGDAT: It looked bulky.

The Wismar Commission Report

CARTER: Did you see what was the nature of the goods?

JAGDAT: No, I could not have seen.

CARTER: He looked bulky as if he was pregnant?

JAGDAT: Well, what I am telling you is facts.

CARTER: But you were in plain clothes?

JAGDAT: Yes.

CARTER: To whom did you report this? To Mr. Langham.

JAGDAT: Yes sir. I told him personally.

CARTER: When did you speak to him?

JAGDAT: Three days after.

CARTER: Was this about Wednesday or Thursday?

JAGDAT: Yes sir.

CARTER: Where did you see him?

JAGDAT: I met him by Choo Kang's store at Wismar.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Previous to the 25th did you know of any incident on the Wismar side?

JAGDAT: On the 23rd I was on duty on the Wismar side in plain clothes.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Yes, continue.

JAGDAT: When passing Wismar Market I saw Mr. Robert Jordan about to pass in. I heard him telling the Negro women that they kill you all family at Buxton and what you all are going to do about it.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Was this Saturday 23rd May from about five to six o'clock?

JAGDAT: That was Saturday the 23rd between 5.00 to 6.00 p.m.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you see him on the 24th May?

JAGDAT: He went up the very Sunday?

HAFEEZ KHAN: Was it raining when you saw Blair with the rain coat?

JAGDAT: Yes sir.

HAFEEZ KHAN: How long you have been at Mackenzie?

JAGDAT: About eight years, sir.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you know if there were any Indian policemen stationed at Mackenzie?

JAGDAT: About four or five B.G. policemen.

HAFEEZ KHAN: They were with Mr. Hobbs? Were they there at the time? Could you remember any of their names?

JAGDAT: Yes sir.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Yes?

JAGDAT: We have Constable Mangroo, Constable Beharry, Constable Mangra and Constable Singh.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Do you remember seeing any Indian policeman at the Wismar police station?

Transcripts – Day 14

JAGDAT: I don't think so.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Was Coporal Lall at Mackenzie?

JAGDAT: Yes. He was at Mackenzie.

HAFEEZ KHAN: At Wismar did you see any Indian policeman on the 25th May patrolling?

JAGDAT: No sir. They were inside the police station.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Mr. Jagdat, were they armed inside the police station?

JAGDAT: They were inside, sir. I would not know.

CHAIRMAN: Inside where?

JAGDAT: The police station.

DRAYTON: Where were you when you saw the volunteer accepting looted goods?

JAGDAT: I was near Choo Kang's store in Mackenzie.

DRAYTON: And this volunteer was doing what?

JAGDAT: Well, before he crossed I saw when he gave this boy some of the loot.

DRAYTON: Did this volunteer have anything in his possession as looted goods?

JAGDAT: Yes.

DRAYTON: What time was that?

JAGDAT: Between five and six.

DRAYTON: Between five to six you were keeping duty on the Demba side near the stelling? Where did you see the volunteer, King?

JAGDAT: By Bissoon's store.

DRAYTON: Where did you see the volunteer going?

JAGDAT: Opposite Bissoon's store.

DRAYTON: Where is Bissoon's store?

JAGDAT: Straight across the river.

DRAYTON: So you were looking from the Demba side across to Wismar and you saw the volunteer going there and receiving goods from the Negro man?

JAGDAT: Yes sir.

DRAYTON: When he got into a boat was he alone?

JAGDAT: No several other volunteers were in uniform.

DRAYTON: And they crossed over the Demba side. What did they do? What was your duty on that day?

JAGDAT: My job was to check the Demba property; check any squatters. I was supposed to see that Demba land was clear.

DRAYTON: What did you see a volunteer bring over?

JAGDAT: He didn't bring it over. He handed it to a person on the Wismar side and then he boarded the boat and came over.

The Wismar Commission Report

DRAYTON: Did you see him receiving any looted goods on any occasion?

JAGDAT: No.

DRAYTON: When was it that you saw Clinton Blair? Where was he?

JAGDAT: I saw him twice passing over from Wismar to Mackenzie.

DRAYTON: Was he in uniform?

JAGDAT: No sir.

DRAYTON: And you say you saw him with shirts?

JAGDAT: When I saw these shirts I knew it was shirts because he had them in his coat and his coat was looking bulky.

DRAYTON: Did you challenge him?

JAGDAT: No sir. His coat was not well buttoned and I could have seen through his coat.

DRAYTON: I am interested in this point. As a member of the constabulary at Demba, didn't you consider it your duty to report about the shirts within a matter of hours to Mr. Langham; that you had seen a member of the constabulary looting?

JAGDAT: Mr. Langham was too busy.

DRAYTON: Who was your superior officer?

JAGDAT: Inspector Young.

DRAYTON: Is it customary when you have done a period of duty to come back to your headquarters?

JAGDAT: Yes. But I did not work on shift. I work anytime.

DRAYTON: Did you report that incident about Clinton Blair looting when you got back?

JAGDAT: When you report these things it is left right there. They don't take it anywhere.

DRAYTON: Can you tell me one case, on one occasion, when you made a similar report and it was not taken up?

JAGDAT: Yes. I wrote and I have a duplicate copy about people stealing chickens on the farm, and I mentioned the names and it was not taken up to Mr. Langham. Then I told Mr. Langham that I saw it on Inspector Young's desk. I believe it didn't go anywhere. It is still there. I asked Mr. Langham, and he asked Mr. Young why he didn't take the report up, and since then Inspector got feelings against me.

DRAYTON: Is there an official report to Mr. Langham about the stealing of chickens?

JAGDAT: Yes sir.

DRAYTON: What date was this?

JAGDAT: This year.

DRAYTON: About how long have you known Clinton Blair?

JAGDAT: About seven months.

DRAYTON: Did you go over to Wismar side anytime during the 25th?

JAGDAT: No. I was at Christianburg magistrate court and after lunch I came by the launch and I passed by the river and saw everything.

DRAYTON: How far were you from the crowd of Indians whom you saw running away and were being beaten?

JAGDAT: About three or four rods.

Transcripts – Day 14

DRAYTON: And you saw any volunteers around?

JAGDAT: Yes.

DRAYTON: How many of them were there?

JAGDAT: Two.

DRAYTON: Thank you.

MACDONALD: In the statement which you just mentioned, did you report on the incident at Wismar market on the 23rd?

JAGDAT: No sir.

MACDONALD: Can you tell me what was your duty at Wismar side?

JAGDAT: Well, my duty is to see that no squatters come on the Demba railway road.

MACDONALD: Could you explain a little more?

JAGDAT: Well, they are expected to build a new railway road and squatters are supposed to come and build houses.

MACDONALD: This is a proposed railway line on Wismar side?

JAGDAT: Yes.

MACDONALD: This statement you heard from Mr. Jordon, you agree it is extremely serious thing for a man to say?

JAGDAT: Yes.

MACDONALD: Did you report it to anyone?

JAGDAT: No. If you tell my officer anything he would leave it right there.

MACDONALD: What if you told Superintendent Hobbs about it?

JAGDAT: Well, I made a statement. I was to send it to the Ministry of Home Affairs and it is still there.

MACDONALD: I am talking about the 23rd. You did not tell Mr. Young? You did not tell Mr. Hobbs because it wasn't important? And you did not tell it to any member of the constabulary?

JAGDAT: No. I told one Lalta Paul's daughter-in-law what I heard. She said that the place was insured and she did not care.

MACDONALD: You know her? You saw her?

JAGDAT: Yes.

MOOTOO: Did you say you saw Indians being beaten, and did you say that you saw police and volunteers standing around?

JAGDAT: That was on the 25th.

MOOTOO: Was it the day when you were coming back on the boat?

JAGDAT: Yes.

MOOTOO: So Mr Chee-a-Tow and Mr. Gilbert Farnum would have seen the volunteers standing by and did not rescue the Indians? Did they make any comments?

The Wismar Commission Report

JAGDAT: The lawyer said that all the houses were in flames and it looked as if there was a riot in the area and the police and volunteers were standing by and doing nothing. And I said, "More than riot; look the people are being beaten."

MOOTOO: You saw a number of Demba constables and volunteers on that day in Wismar and Mackenzie side, and you continued your normal routine duties?

JAGDAT: Yes.

MOOTOO: At any time during the disturbances were asked to do any other duties in Mackenzie?

JAGDAT: On occasion.

MOOTOO: Why did you leave?

JAGDAT: Owing to threats.

MOOTOO: Because of threats you removed?

JAGDAT: Yes.

MOOTOO: Were you still there after the Sun Chapman incident?

JAGDAT: Yes, three days after.

MOOTOO: That would be July?

JAGDAT: Yes.

MOOTOO: Did you see Robert Jordan on Saturday walking on the market road in Wismar?

JAGDAT: I saw him near the police station on that day.

MOOTOO: At what time?

JAGDAT: Between five to six.

MOOTOO: And he was talking?

JAGDAT: He was talking to a woman.

CHAIRMAN: He was walking?

JAGDAT: He was walking and he didn't see me because I was behind him, and he told the people that you all don't see they killing out your family.

CHAIRMAN: The woman saw you?

JAGDAT: Yes

RAMSAROOP: Did he whisper this to her, or you stood up and listened?

JAGDAT: I was riding slowly.

DRAYTON: You told anyone about this?

JAGDAT: I went to Lalta Persaud and told his daughter-in-law to put away all important papers, and she told me that they didn't care because the business was insured. And I went and told John Mohamed, and he accepted it and said thank you.

DRAYTON: On reflection don't you think that you should have informed the police at Wismar about what you heard?

Transcripts – Day 14

JAGDAT: When you are there the police do not want to hear anything, they tell you frankly they don't want to hear anything from Indians.

DRAYTON: Before the 23rd of May did you make any complaint to the police at Wismar or Mackenzie which had not been dealt with?"

JAGDAT: I went to Sergeant Chalmers and he phoned the inspector and told him I was pushing my nose in the police matters.

DRAYTON: On what date did you make a report to the police?

JAGDAT: I cannot remember exactly.

DRAYTON: Did you remember anyone saying something?

JAGDAT: No sir. I was just investigating. Somebody told me something and I was investigating.

DRAYTON: Mr. Jagdat, you made a complaint to the police on what date?

JAGDAT: This year.

DRAYTON: About what did you complain?

JAGDAT: That someone had stolen something. When he saw me at the place, Mr. Chalmers wanted to know what I was doing there. He started questioning me about what I was doing there.

DRAYTON: Mr. Jagdat, I am trying to get at the truth. Now, you didn't report this to the police because you had experience of the police neglecting complaints about anything. Therefore, it is very important if you recall instances prior to the 23rd of May when you made complaint to the police officer and no action was taken.

JAGDAT: Yes, I was investigating a case about someone who had broken and entered a building.

DRAYTON: Just now you told me that you were investigating about somebody who had stolen something.

JAGDAT: I told you when I said "stolen" I mean "break and enter."

DRAYTON: And you made a complaint to Sergeant Chalmers?

JAGDAT: Yes.

DRAYTON: Is there any other instance that you had cause to complain to the police?

JAGDAT: I didn't because they say I am pushing my nose in everything.

DRAYTON: There was no action prior to the 23rd May when you made a complaint to the police?

JAGDAT: No.

DRAYTON: Why do you think if you told the police that on the 23rd of May you heard that a man from the Legislative Council in this country inciting people to murder East Indians they would take no action?

JAGDAT: The police would not accept that.

DRAYTON: Do you think it would not be dealt with?

JAGDAT: I am in the area and I know what is going on in the area. And I sent information to the Ministry of Home Affairs before this incident.

DRAYTON: Thank you.

CYRIL SINGH is sworn in and he states as follows:

RAMSAROOP: Where are you living?

CYRIL SINGH: Kilcoy Road, Corentyne, Berbice.

The Wismar Commission Report

RAMSAROOP: In May this year where were you living?

CYRIL SINGH: In Wismar-Christianburg, Section C.

RAMSAROOP: Where were you working?

CYRIL SINGH: Demerara Bauxite Company.

RAMSAROOP: You said you went to work on the day the disturbances started, and that was the 25th May. While coming home about 11.00 a.m., you saw a lot of people being beaten up. These people that you saw being beaten up, what group do they belong to?

CYRIL SINGH: I saw Africans beating up the East Indians.

RAMSAROOP: You then went to the Mackenzie police station about 6.00 p.m. From there you were escorted to the Demba trade school; that was on the Tuesday morning. You asked for protection from the volunteers and police to take you home to Christianburg. When you arrived there your wife and children were in the house. Five minutes later Harry Grenville and Banker came in and started to carry away the radio and your wife's foot machine. Three more persons came to the house; one of them was a man called Duchie. You did not know what was happening to the people. What did he say to you?

CYRIL SINGH: When Duchie came in, he told me he was going to buy the house for \$2,500. I was forced to sign a receipt. One of the witnesses was Teresa Reid; and I cannot remember the name of the other.

RAMSAROOP: You were forced to sign it to save your building?

CYRIL SINGH: Two witnesses were present when I was forced to sign it. One was Theresa Reid, and I cannot remember the name of the other.

RAMSAROOP: The value of your building was \$8,000.

CYRIL SINGH: Yes sir.

RAMSAROOP: You didn't collect any money from this transaction?

CYRIL SINGH: No sir.

RAMSAROOP: And going out, the men set fire in front of the building?

CYRIL SINGH: Yes sir.

RAMSAROOP: You then took a boat, and a man by the name of Karran took you up in the launch. You then caught a steamer to Georgetown?

CYRIL SINGH: Yes.

SHEPHERD: Have you reported this to the police?

CYRIL SINGH: I reported this to P.C. 6279 Martin at seven o'clock. He told me he would put it to the head of the police.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you feel any tension in the area on the 25th?

CYRIL SINGH: Yes sir.

HAFEEZ KHAN: How long before?

CYRIL SINGH: That's the Saturday the 23rd.

HAFEEZ KHAN: You said that they made you sign the receipt? What do you mean?

CYRIL SINGH: They would buy the building to save it and pay later.

Transcripts – Day 14

HAFEEZ KHAN: Was this building destroyed?

CYRIL SINGH: The building was dismantled.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you recognise anybody in the gang of men?

CYRIL SINGH: Yes sir. Grenville and Banker.

HAFEEZ KHAN: What were they doing?

CYRIL SINGH: They were looting.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you recognise any volunteers?

CYRIL SINGH: I recognised two.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Were there any police around?

CYRIL SINGH: No.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Banker was with the other men when you were forced to sign the receipt?

CYRIL SINGH: Yes sir.

DRAYTON: How many people were present when you were forced to sign the receipt?

CYRIL SINGH: Theresa Reed and another follow.

DRAYTON: You did see two members of the Volunteer Force, Banker and Theresa Reid and another fellow?

CYRIL SINGH: Yes sir.

DRAYTON: The volunteers were armed?

CYRIL SINGH: Only Grenville.

DRAYTON: Only Grenville was armed? What about Duchie?

CYRIL SINGH: Grenville was armed, but not Duchie.

DRAYTON: When you say you were forced to sign the receipt of your property, you mean they threatened to injure you if you refused?

CYRIL SINGH: Yes sir. I did sign the receipt.

DRAYTON: Did they threaten you before?

CYRIL SINGH: Yes sir. They threatened me before.

DRAYTON: What did they say?

CYRIL SINGH: They say that they would beat me and my family.

DRAYTON: Was Duchie a friend of yours?

CYRIL SINGH: Yes sir.

DRAYTON: Did he want to buy your premises before?

CYRIL SINGH: He never told me anything before about wanting to buy my property.

DRAYTON: Previously he did not want to buy?

CYRIL SINGH: No sir.

DRAYTON: Thank you.

The Wismar Commission Report

MACDONALD: Just give me the answer to this question: Grenville was armed? Banker was not? Had Grenville a rifle?

CYRIL SINGH: He had a long one.

MACDONALD: Did you say that Duchie was not armed?

CYRIL SINGH: He was not.

MACDONALD: Were they carrying anything in their hands?

CYRIL SINGH: They were not carrying anything in their hands.

MACDONALD: Did you report this to the police? You do not know if the report has been given to the superintendent at all?

CYRIL SINGH: It was sent to the Commissioner of Police.

MACDONALD: He said that the matter was being considered. When was that?"

CYRIL SINGH: The last letter in October.

MACDONALD: I see that you have mentioned the last letter. Since then what happened?"

CYRIL SINGH: I have not received any letter since then.

MOOTOO: What exactly did they make you sign on that piece of paper?

CYRIL SINGH: They made me sign that they bought from me.

MOOTOO: Did the witnesses sign?

CYRIL SINGH: Yes.

MOOTOO: You did not tell us what happened to your family? You went into the river and what happened to them?

CYRIL SINGH: Nothing was wrong with my family. They were in the boat in the river with me.

MOOTOO: Were they chasing you?"

CYRIL SINGH: No. They were not chasing me.

SHEPHERD: I may have to recall this witness. Could I have a look at this letter from the Commissioner of Police? It may assist me in my cross examination.

CHAIRMAN: You desire that this letter be placed on file? It will be Exhibit "U".

SHEPHERD: Yes. Thank you.

[Letter admitted and marked Exhibit "U"]

WILFRED BATTERSFIELD is sworn and he states as follows:

RAMSAROOP: You are a police constable by rank?

BATTERSFIELD: Yes.

RAMSAROOP: You are presently stationed at the Wismar police station. And what is your number?

BATTERSFIELD: 4777.

RAMSAROOP: On the 25th May, 1964 you took over at the station from Constable 6531 James around 6.00 a.m.?

BATTERSFIELD: Yes sir.

Transcripts – Day 14

RAMSAROOP: Around 7.30 a.m. while you were on duty you received a report from one Boodram from the Valley of Tears. This report was that some unknown persons had set fire to his house and the fire was put out by him on that said day. While you were making this report, one Elsa Singh of 170 Silvertown made a similar report to you around 7.30 a.m. Both reported at the same time?

BATTERSFIELD: While I was working, one report of Singh came up.

RAMSAROOP: You said these reports increased within minutes, reports of fires being set to buildings, and other reports of assaults being committed to men and women of Indian race?

BATTERSFIELD: Yes sir.

RAMSAROOP: All these reports amounted to about forty-three?

BATTERSFIELD: Between the hours of 7.30 a.m. and 4.15 p.m. there were about forty-three to forty-five reports.

RAMSAROOP: From 6.00 p.m. on the 25th May you handed over inquiry office to Constable 6660 Beharry. These reports continued?

BATTERSFIELD: Yes sir.

RAMSAROOP: You then assisted persons who had run from their homes for fear, and these persons were about 1,000 in number? They were all housed in the police compound? You also escorted to the Mackenzie stelling some of the injured persons?

BATTERSFIELD: Yes sir.

RAMSAROOP: During these incidents and reports you did not see any assaults committed on any person? You did not see any buildings set afire or any damage to property or any looting being done in your presence?"

BATTERSFIELD: No sir.

RAMSAROOP: That would be all.

—
HAFEEZ KHAN: What did you do when you received these reports?

BATTERSFIELD: They were entered into the station's report book, and they were being investigated by other ranks.

HAFEEZ KHAN: How many other policemen were on duty at the time when you took over?

BATTERSFIELD: There were eight policemen at the time at Wismar police station, and two constables making it ten.

HAFEEZ KHAN: The question is how many were on duty?

BATTERSFIELD: All were on duty, including the supernumerary constables. About six constables were in the inquiries office, along with Corporal King and myself.

HAFEEZ KHAN: You were off duty when you came and relieved Constable James?

BATTERSFIELD: No.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Were you armed?

BATTERSFIELD: I was not.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Were you armed at any time?

BAKTERSFIELD: I was not.

The Wismar Commission Report

HAFEEZ KHAN: When these reports started to come in, did any of your constables or your officer go to investigate?

BATTERSFIELD: Yes.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Can you recall when the first party left with Boodram?

BATTERSFIELD: Around 6.15 to 6.20.

HAFEEZ KHAN: How many persons?

BATTERSFIELD: One Roberts went with Boodram.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Alone?

BATTERSFIELD: Yes.

HAFEEZ KHAN: No other policemen?

BATTERSFIELD: I can't remember.

HAFEEZ KHAN: These people that reported during the 4.30 and 7.30 period, how did they appear to be?

BATTERSFIELD: Some of them were crying while making reports.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Now, I was speaking about the condition. Did they appear to be injured?

BATTERSFIELD: Some of them were injured and they were being sent to the Mackenzie Hospital.

HAFEEZ KHAN: What about the others?

BATTERSFIELD: When they were not injured the report was entertained and they were kept for safety.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Now, when was the first time they started to evacuate these people from Wismar? A rough idea.

BATTERSFIELD: The first time? I cannot remember.

HAFEEZ KHAN: You were on duty on that day when these people to move?

BATTERSFIELD: The police stood by when they started to move. That was about 5.00 to 6.00 p.m. when they left they left the compound.

HAFEEZ KHAN: During this time you said you saw 1,000 people in the compound. What was that time?

BATTERSFIELD: Around 5 o'clock.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Were you reinforced from Mackenzie?

BATTERSFIELD: "Yes, the police and volunteers came.

HAFEEZ KHAN: About what o'clock?

BATTERSFIELD: Around 9.30 to 10 o'clock in the morning.

HAFEEZ KHAN: When were the first injured taken over to be treated?

BATTERSFIELD: Around 9.30.

HAFEEZ KHAN: How were they taken?

BATTERSFIELD: They left by police escort and crossed by the ferry, and they went over to the other side.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Now, you came off about 6.00 p.m. What about afterwards? What did you do?

BATTERSFIELD: I was still in the inquiries office.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you leave the office?

BATTERSFIELD: No, except to go and have lunch at home and cross to the stelling.

Transcripts – Day 14

HAFEEZ KHAN: How far it is?

BATTERSFIELD: About three houses from the station.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you see the outside of the area from your area of observation?

BATTERSFIELD: Yes. Straight across to Mackenzie.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you see any building on fire?

BATTERSFIELD: I saw smoke in the air. When I was in the yard I saw people going to the police station.

HAFEEZ KHAN: You saw smoke?

BATTERSFIELD: Only on one occasion.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you see crowds of people?

BATTERSFIELD: No.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you see crowds of Negro people?

BATTERSFIELD: No.

HAFEEZ KHAN: In your brief trip to the stelling you saw no crowds?

BATTERSFIELD: No.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you see anybody around?

BATTERSFIELD: Yes. There were people moving up and down.

HAFEEZ KHAN: The same people that passed you and passed back?

BATTERSFIELD: I don't know.

HAFEEZ KHAN: What they appeared to be doing? Were they going up and down, walking to their business?

BATTERSFIELD: Perhaps.

HAFEEZ KHAN: What sort of business?

BATTERSFIELD: Shopping.

HAFEEZ KHAN: They had baskets?

BATTERSFIELD: Some of them.

HAFEEZ KHAN: How do you know they were going shopping? How many were in the compound?

BATTERSFIELD: I do not know.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Were they talking to one another?

BATTERSFIELD: I can't remember.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you recognize anybody?

BATTERSFIELD: I cannot remember.

HAFEEZ KHAN: How long you have been living there?

BATTERSFIELD: About two to three years.

HAFEEZ KHAN: About how long you have been in the Police Force?

BATTERSFIELD: Twenty-two years.

The Wismar Commission Report

HAFEEZ KHAN: Now previous to the 25th of May, were any reports made to the station of any instances?
BATTERSFIELD: Like what?

HAFEEZ KHAN: Fire, looting, arson and beating.
BATTERSFIELD: There were reports, but of just pelting.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Were you on the 24th in the inquiries office?
BATTERSFIELD: Yes. Six in the morning.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Any report was made to you about pelting?
BATTERSFIELD: Yes, on Sunday.

HAFEEZ KHAN: By whom?
BATTERSFIELD: I cannot remember.

HAFEEZ KHAN: You made a note?
BATTERSFIELD: Yes.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you hear any explosion on 24th?
BATTERSFIELD: I cannot remember.

HAFEEZ KHAN: You know if that was entered in the book?
BATTERSFIELD: I won't be able to say.

HAFEEZ KHAN: You know Mr. Robert Jordan? Did you see him on the 24th?
BATTERSFIELD: No.

HAFEEZ KHAN: On the 25th and 26th?
BATTERSFIELD: No.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you see him for the month of May?
BATTERSFIELD: I cannot remember.

HAFEEZ KHAN: When was the last time you remembered seeing him?
BATTERSFIELD: He kept a meeting there some time. I cannot say if it was May or April.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Since then you didn't see him?
BATTERSFIELD: No.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you see Banga Mary on the 24th and 25th?
BATTERSFIELD: I saw him at the station. I cannot remember if it was on the 24th or 25th he was taken to the station for inquiry.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Were you on duty at the time? Can you tell us what the report was about?
BATTERSFIELD: I think it was for pelting.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Was Beharry at the station during the day?
BATTERSFIELD: I cannot remember seeing him there in the day.

HAFEEZ KHAN: But you know he came in at 6.00 p.m.?
BATTERSFIELD: Yes.

HAFEEZ KHAN: So the first time you ever took over was 25th May at 6.00 p.m.?

Transcripts – Day 14

BATTERSFIELD: Yes.

DRAYTON: How long were you on duty on Sunday 24th?

BATTERSFIELD: I was there for the day.

DRAYTON: You went off duty at 6 p.m. on Sunday?

BATTERSFIELD: Yes.

DRAYTON: You must have had some period when you were working and when you were off?

BATTERSFIELD: Six to six.

DRAYTON: Do you live at Wismar?

BATTERSFIELD: Yes. Gateway Alley.

DRAYTON: Were there Indians in the area?

BATTERSFIELD: Yes sir.

DRAYTON: What happened on the Sunday after you came off duty?

BATTERSFIELD: I went back to the station. It was on instructions from the officer.

DRAYTON: When were these instructions given?

BATTERSFIELD: I cannot remember.

DRAYTON: Which officer gave you the order to return to the station?

BATTERSFIELD: Superintendent Hobbs.

DRAYTON: Was it given on a Sunday?

BATTERSFIELD: I cannot remember.

DRAYTON: You must be able to recall whether you were on duty all day Sunday. When was it that Mr. Hobbs gave his order that you should be on twenty-four hours duty?

BATTERSFIELD: I cannot remember when the order was given.

DRAYTON: From the whole period that you have been there when was this twenty-four hours call given?

BATTERSFIELD: I think it was about a week before.

DRAYTON: Now, Constable Battersfield, I want you to tell me whether you were aware of any tension in the area?

BATTERSFIELD: There was no tension in the area.

DRAYTON: So you would say you were taken by surprise.

BATTERSFIELD: Yes.

DRAYTON: On the Sunday were there any fires in the area?

BATTERSFIELD: I don't think there were any fires on Sunday, but the Sunday night.

DRAYTON: Do you think it was a normal fire or suspected arson?

BATTERSFIELD: According to inquiries it looked like a normal fire; it was on the hill top. Sookram Singh had just left his house. Shortly after, the fire started but no one saw any person setting fire. When he was going down the hill he saw fire, but the neighbours did not see anybody around his house.

DRAYTON: You suddenly became aware that there would have been trouble?

The Wismar Commission Report

BATTERSFIELD: Yes sir.

DRAYTON: That was about what time?

BATTERSFIELD: Say about 9.10 to 9.30.

DRAYTON: You were on duty whole day on the 25th. You know Senator Ramjattan? Was a report made concerning her house?

BATTERSFIELD: Yes sir, but not to me.

DRAYTON: Senator Ramjattan was in Georgetown at that time, but someone made a report that Senator Ramjattan's house was on fire. Her husband was there and he was taken to the police station.

BATTERSFIELD: Not by me.

DRAYTON: Did you during the time you were at the police station receive any women who were raped?"

BATTERSFIELD: No sir.

DRAYTON: They did not bring in any women or girl that was raped?

BATTERSFIELD: Not at the station. There were other persons who were brought at the station. No rape cases were brought in.

DRAYTON: Did any volunteer bring in any woman at the station?

BATTERSFIELD: Several persons came into the station.

DRAYTON: Did you see a girl that was raped? Wasn't she brought to the station?

BATTERSFIELD: Probably they took her to the hospital.

DRAYTON: Did you yourself bring in two women to police station?

BATTERSFIELD: There were cases where women were beaten, not raped.

DRAYTON: Did you have any jeep or motor vehicle?

BATTERSFIELD: Yes.

DRAYTON: Was this jeep used to bring injured people to the station?

BATTERSFIELD: Yes along with a van, "Rockstone Express," from Demba.

DRAYTON: And these two vehicles took injured persons to the station?

BATTERSFIELD: Yes. To the station.

DRAYTON: Who was in charge of this jeep?

BATTERSFIELD: Constable London.

DRAYTON: What time were you at the station on Sunday night? From when to when.

BATTERSFIELD: For the whole night.

DRAYTON: Why did you keep awake?

BATTERSFIELD: We were making investigations in the Sookram Singh fire.

DRAYTON: Just for this one case it took the whole night?

BATTERSFIELD: We had to patrol the whole area.

DRAYTON: It is customary for you to patrol the area?

BATTERSFIELD: Yes.

Transcripts – Day 14

DRAYTON: For the past two years?

BATTERSFIELD: Day and night.

DRAYTON: Were all the police awoken that night?

BATTERSFIELD: No, I would not say that.

DRAYTON: On coming back to the point, was “Rockstone Express” made available to you that night?

BATTERSFIELD: I can’t remember.

DRAYTON: The jeep was in care of Constable London. Did you go with him?

BATTERSFIELD: I didn’t go with him, but I came back with him.

DRAYTON: On Monday night you made several trips with the jeep?

BATTERSFIELD: Yes.

DRAYTON: Anytime after 6.00 p.m.?

BATTERSFIELD: Taking injured persons to the station.

DRAYTON: Thank you.

MOOTOO: Did you hear rumours of trouble before that?

BATTERSFIELD: What trouble?

MOOTOO: Did anybody report to you that there would be trouble?

BATTERSFIELD: I didn’t hear.

MOOTOO: Did you hear that the water would be poisoned?

BATTERSFIELD: Not the water would be poisoned, but that somebody would be in the area.

MOOTOO: Could you remember who spoke this to you?

BATTERSFIELD: No.

MOOTOO: And you remember who made this report in the station?

BATTERSFIELD: No.

MOOTOO: Did Mr. Woolford go to you?

BATTERSFIELD: I can’t remember.

MOOTOO: On 24th and 25th when you were at the police station, did you give a hearing to everybody?

BATTERSFIELD: Everybody that came in to me at the desk I listened to them.

MOOTOO: At the desk or elsewhere did you take any complaints?

BATTERSFIELD: If they told me. When I am busy I would tell them to wait.

MOOTOO: You did not push them away?

BATTERSFIELD: No.

MOOTOO: Do you know any Indian lady by the name of Mangree who said she had something very important to tell you?

BATTERSFIELD: I cannot remember.

MOOTOO: She spoke to you?

BATTERSFIELD: If she spoke to me the report would be at the station.

The Wismar Commission Report

MOOTOO: Are you sure if she made the report?

BATTERSFIELD: It would be in the book.

MOOTOO: So if Mangree came and told you she had a report to make, would you tell her to go away; it was not your business?"

BATTERSFIELD: I wouldn't tell her that.

MOOTOO: Was she a personal friend of yours?

BATTERSFIELD: She is not a friend of mine, but I would not speak to Mangree like that.

MOOTOO: So Mangree's report is in the book? Because Mangree came here and told us that she had something to say and you shooed her away?

BATTERSFIELD: Not me.

MOOTOO: But she told us Constable Battersfield.

BATTERSFIELD: If Mangree told you that everything would be in the book.

MOOTOO: You are saying that you did not leave the station on that day? You were not in the jeep with a party of policemen when a girl was being raped, and a policeman told the girl, "Wait, we are coming back just now?"

BATTERSFIELD: I didn't leave the station on the 25th, not until later.

CHAIRMAN: Did you receive any terylene shirts?

BATTERSFIELD: I did not.

CHAIRMAN: Now, who is the one living in the third house at the back of the police station? Who is the police constable?

BATTERSFIELD: On the northern side is myself and Fraser. Then you have Timothy and Griffith on the southern side, and then on the northern side to the east Sergeant Chalmers.

RAMSAROOP: Now, on that day did you see any goods being taken in one of these houses?

BATTERSFIELD: No, I was busy.

SHEPHERD: Just one question. Were looted goods brought in?

BATTERSFIELD: Yes, they were brought into the station.

SHEPHERD: Were any of them claimed by the owners?

BATTERSFIELD: No.

SHEPHERD: Are they still waiting there to be claimed?

BATTERSFIELD: Yes.

SHEPHERD: Thank you. No other questions.

DRAYTON: You have lived in the area for two years? You got along well with both ethnic groups?

BATTERSFIELD: Yes, we were all friends.

DRAYTON: Where were you before you went to Wismar?

BATTERSFIELD: Mazaruni.

Transcripts – Day 14

DRAYTON: For how many years?

BATTERSFIELD: A year and some months.

DRAYTON: And before that?

BATTERSFIELD: Essequibo.

—
SHEPHERD: Sir, I hope it is possible to take the evidence of all the police because they are wanted desperately at the Wismar police station.

—
CORPORAL KING is sworn in and he states as follows:

RAMSAROOP: You are corporal 4434 King?

KING: Yes sir.

RAMSAROOP: Where are you stationed now?

KING: Wismar police station.

RAMSAROOP: About 8.15 a.m. on May 25th, 1964 you were on duty at Wismar police station?

KING: Yes sir.

RAMSAROOP: The telephone rang, and someone said that some Negro men had beaten an East Indian man and had thrown him in the river?

KING: Yes sir.

RAMSAROOP: You immediately contacted Constable 6243 Griffith and 5396 London to go and investigate that matter?

KING: Yes.

RAMSAROOP: Around 8.30 a.m. you brought Gobin Ramkumar who said he was assaulted by a Negro woman?

KING: Yes.

RAMSAROOP: About 8.40 a.m. you left the station on patrol to Christianburg, and as you reached Sue-Tang's shop you saw a crowd of about seventy-six persons standing there?

KING: Yes sir.

RAMSAROOP: The shop is at Wismar?

KING: Yes, about 600 yards from Wismar station.

RAMSAROOP: There you met a constable, 1798 Lashley, and he said that he overheard that an Indian man had kicked a Negro boy and had run in Sue-Tang's shop?

KING: Yes.

RAMSAROOP: You then went into Sue-Tang's shop and asked if anybody was hiding there. You were told no. Then you saw Sergeant Chalmers?

KING: Yes.

RAMSAROOP: Now, you then left and returned to the Wismar police station. On your arrival at the station you telephoned Assistant Superintendent Hobbs and you told him that people were gathering on the road.

The Wismar Commission Report

KING: Yes.

RAMSAROOP: What road was that?

KING: Wismar public road."

RAMSAROOP: About 9.20 a.m. Cleveland Paul an employee of Sue-Tang's reported that a Negro man was looting the shop?

KING: Yes, broke into the shop.

RAMSAROOP: You immediately left for the scene? On your arrival you saw the show windows in front of the shop broken?

KING: Yes.

RAMSAROOP: You went into the shop and again spoke to Sue-Tang? He told you that one Sonny, an Indian man who was once employed by him, had run through the back of the shop?

KING: Yes.

RAMSAROOP: There was trouble and that was the cause of the breaking up of the windows?

KING: Yes, because an Indian man went into the shop.

RAMSAROOP: Shortly afterwards, Constables 6405 Fraser and 6728 Hodge came opposite the shop?

KING: I left them there on duty.

RAMSAROOP: About 9.30 a.m. one Kenneth Simonds of 48 Wismar Hill reported that he saw an Indian man lying at the foot of the hill, and that man was bleeding through his ears?

KING: Yes.

RAMSAROOP: You left in company with 6291 in search of this man and you and your party did not find the man?

KING: At that time of the day.

RAMSAROOP: Violence and fire broke out?

KING: Yes.

RAMSAROOP: Where?

KING: From the back of the station, Wismar Hill, the foot of the hill and the Valley of Tears.

RAMSAROOP: You later learnt that the man you were searching for was Richard Khan?

KING: Yes. He was taken up and carried to the mortuary.

RAMSAROOP: While passing at the back of Silver City one William Subryan reported that some men were trying to break in his shop? You went with him and you didn't find anyone?

KING: No.

RAMSAROOP: You saw several fires in the Valley Of Tears? You saw several people going towards the Valley?

KING: I saw Sergeant Simon there, and I joined him.

RAMSAROOP: Superintendent Hobbs came up shortly afterwards and joined you? You went to the Valley of Tears and several buildings were on fire?

KING: Yes. We assisted to put out the fires.

Transcripts – Day 14

RAMSAROOP: Shortly after, you went into the Valley where several houses were burning and the fire was uncontrollable. One Paul Nirgin's home also burning, and his body was found in front of his gate.

KING: Not far away from the house.

RAMSAROOP: And he was hurried to the Mackenzie Hospital?

KING: Yes.

RAMSAROOP: Then you collected the people and children and brought them to Wismar police station for safety?

KING: Yes.

RAMSAROOP: About 2.20 on the 25th you went to Silver Town, Wismar, in company with one Richards of the Volunteer Force and four men where two houses were on fire. They were Ally's and David Perry's houses. The fire had then started and you went to get others to put out the fire. About 4.00 p.m. you went to Sand Road, Wismar, and saw Mr. Lashley and you saw four houses on fire?

KING: Yes.

RAMSAROOP: They were assisting a lady at Section B, Christianburg, and there was a crowd of 150 persons there? You then told them to disperse and they hesitated. You were instructed by Mr. Lashley to fire a tear smoke at the crowd on that day? You later returned to the station?

KING: Yes.

RAMSAROOP: About 6.50 p.m. Balbacoon Persaud reported he saw a man raping his sister-in-law in Silver Town. Constable 6238 Griffith was there.

KING: As I got to the scene I saw no one. I made enquiries that she had been already removed to Mackenzie Hospital. I went back to the Wismar police station.

RAMSAROOP: What happened on Tuesday 26th May, 1964?

KING: On Tuesday 26th May I received a report from a Chinese man name Yhip that there were some people gathered in front of his shop at Second Alley, Wismar. As I got there I saw a large crowd. I asked them to go to their homes. They hesitated but when I fired sticks of tear smoke they dispersed.

RAMSAROOP: What happened on the 27th May?

KING: On 27th, at about 1.30 p.m., I saw a crowd of people in a store. I again advanced towards them and asked the crowd to disperse and they hesitated, and I fired another tear smoke at them. I made an entry in the station's diary.

HAFEEZ KHAN: What time did you come on duty?

KING: I went on about 7.30.

HAFEEZ KHAN: What time did you leave for the first time?"

KING: Around 8.40.

HAFEEZ KHAN: You were at the station between 7.30 to 8.40. While you were there, was any report made?

KING: At least not to me.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Who was the constable of the inquiries office?

KING: I was. But I had Constables Roberts, Battersfield and Griffith working with me.

HAFEEZ KHAN: During that time did you see any Boodram there?"

KING: I didn't see him.

The Wismar Commission Report

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you see one Elma Singh?

KING: No.

HAFEEZ KHAN: On that day were they in line?

KING: No.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Were they, the policemen, on twenty-four hours duty?

KING: They were all in the station; the majority lived in the station.

HAFEEZ KHAN: But they had shifts?

KING: Four hours on and four hours off.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Could you say if Constable Battersfield left the station?

KING: Not a constable left.

HAFEEZ KHAN: So he could not have left the station?

KING: He could have left the station, if the sergeant had permitted him to go.

HAFEEZ KHAN: On that day did Battersfield worked four hours on and off?

KING: He would work from 6.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did the superintendent give orders for everybody to be in line?

KING: He gave orders that everybody must be in line.

HAFEEZ KHAN: From the station you could have seen the crowds?

KING: Not from the station.

HAFEEZ KHAN: You could have seen smoke and fire from the station?

KING: Yes, at the back of the station.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you know of any reports of assaults on people?

KING: I have received one from Persaud.

HAFEEZ KHAN: At that time were any civilians present in the compound?

KING: Having been brought from their homes they were put in the Wismar compound and shipped to Mackenzie.

HAFEEZ KHAN: This crowd – was it an ordinary crowd? Why did you ask them to disperse?

KING: It is not right for more than four to gather, so I told them to go to their homes.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you feel any tension?

KING: No.

HAFEEZ KHAN: What about the crowd that was gathered at Yhip's shop?

KING: I would not call that a hostile crowd.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Why did you not have time to waste?

KING: Well I had station work to do.

HAFEEZ KHAN: But there must be some reason.

KING: It was court time.

Transcripts – Day 14

HAFEEZ KHAN: Some matter that needed your attention urgently?

KING: I had to go to court that day.

HAFEEZ KHAN: That was on the 26th?

KING: Yes, at Christianburg.

HAFEEZ KHAN: On 27th what sort of crowd was that?

KING: An idle crowd.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Now, Corporal, you have an idle crowd and why did soldiers fix their bayonets?

KING: On the 25th and 26th and 27th there were houses that were on fire.

HAFEEZ KHAN: But an idle crowd? Why did they start throwing tear gas when the crowd was idling?

KING: They were looting around the place.

—

CHAIRMAN: What happened on the 27th?

KING: They were looting.

—

HAFEEZ KHAN: Were you aware that this crowd was looting? Did it not run through your mind that this crowd had gathered there to loot?

KING: Yes, they might have gathered there to loot.

HAFEEZ KHAN: What were they doing? Just idling?

KING: They were idling maybe out of curiosity.

HAFEEZ KHAN: On that day did it not occur to you that there might have been looting? Did you recognise anybody at that time?

KING: I can't remember anyone's name, even if I knew the people.

HAFEEZ KHAN: When you spoke to them did you speak to anyone in particular?

KING: I didn't see any leader.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you see any crowds or persons moving suspiciously?

KING: I didn't see any.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you see any crowds gathering at any time?

KING: There were always groups of people moving to and from Wismar-Christianburg, Section B to Section C.

HAFEEZ KHAN: And you patrolled that area?

KING: I could not go, but I sent other men.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Now on the 24th, you knew of any explosions around?

KING: On Sunday 24th I heard explosions in Silver Town, Hill, Half Mile, One Mile, Wismar.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you hear any explosions?

KING: Yes.

HAFEEZ KHAN: What time?

KING: Around 10.30.

The Wismar Commission Report

HAFEEZ KHAN: There were men patrolling?

KING: Yes.

HAFEEZ KHAN: How many men went on patrol?

KING: They went in groups about three or four.

HAFEEZ KHAN: But during the 25th and 26th you went in groups?

KING: Yes, we went in groups.

HAFEEZ KHAN: On the 25th, Mohamed Hackim's hotel was on fire?

KING: Yes, I did see fire there.

DRAYTON: Would you say that the crowd you saw on the 25th was necessarily interfering with your duty?

KING: Yes sir.

DRAYTON: Were you and your men equipped with rifles?

KING: Yes, I would say so.

DRAYTON: Isn't it the first thing to do when a crowd does not want to be dispersed to throw tear gas to disperse them?

KING: We had to get instructions.

DRAYTON: Do you know whether on May 25th you could have dealt with the crowd adequately?

KING: As soon as they saw a police they would go away.

DRAYTON: You saw a crowd over at Wismar side. What did you and your men do?

KING: I told you, sir, that Superintendent Lashley's men were with me.

DRAYTON: Don't you think that you could have saved several houses and disperse the crowds if you had used tear gas that day?

KING: But I did use tear gas on that day

DRAYTON: As an experienced member of the Police Force, did you say that you could have dealt with those crowds by using tear gas equipment on that tragic day of the 25th?

KING: Yes, we wanted to.

DRAYTON: How many tear gas shells were actually used on that day? Would there be a record?

KING: On the 25th I used one.

DRAYTON: How many were used in all?

KING: I would not be able to say unless I go back to the records.

DRAYTON: You must have had some rough idea. What is the stock of tear gas shells?

KING: At Wismar, thirty-six.

DRAYTON: And you could not say how many were fired on that day?

KING: I cannot remember the amount. But I can tell you how many I used.

DRAYTON: When it became apparent that there was serious trouble brewing in the area, did the superintendent call his men together and give you any instructions with regard to the dispersing of crowds, whether idle crowds or crowds that were seriously interfering with law and order? What to do on this day?

Transcripts – Day 14

KING: We are always instructed and we know what to do.

DRAYTON: What are your instructions? Did he actually call you together at any time during that day?

KING: He didn't call me because I was not there when he came in. I saw Mr. Hobbs in the Valley of Tears with some men who came and joined us.

DRAYTON: Was each equipped with tear gas?

KING: No. I know of myself and Sergeant Simon. The others had rifles.

DRAYTON: So only two had tear smoke. Corporal King, I am interested in this matter. Wouldn't you say that it would be wrong to discharge a rifle into a crowd so as to disperse the crowd?

KING: It would be wrong.

DRAYTON: Unless they are actually engaged in some activity, that is, if they wanted to shoot you. Therefore, if you were really interested in maintaining law and order and preventing crowds from gathering, wouldn't you say that it would be better to equip all not with rifles but with tear gas equipment?

KING: I think so. That is my opinion, and I have dealt with them by tear smoke – those whom I looked after.

DRAYTON: And you say there is a record of tear gas and you cannot get them now.

KING: Yes sir.

DRAYTON: Now suppose we remove from there to your period of duty? I mean on Sunday?

KING: From 7.30 to midnight.

DRAYTON: Is this usually such a long period of duty?

KING: Yes. It is always done.

DRAYTON: From 7.30 until midnight with Constable Battersfield and the other constable. What would be their period on Sunday?

KING: A man like Battersfield is from 6.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. and if you are not in line you can go home, and if you are given orders to remain you can't go anywhere.

DRAYTON: Was constable Battersfield at the station Sunday night?

KING: Yes, he was at the Wismar police station.

DRAYTON: And when you returned to Wismar police station at 8.40 was he there?

KING: Are you speaking about Monday?

DRAYTON: No, Sunday night. Where did you go?

KING: Silvertown.

DRAYTON: And when you finished your patrol duty?

KING: He was there.

DRAYTON: So you were in line on Sunday?

KING: Well, so to speak. Nobody was at home.

DRAYTON: Constable Battersfield did not live at the station. He told us he lives somewhere else. Did you say that the whole Police Force was in line on Sunday night?

KING: As a matter of fact there were volunteers patrolling on Sunday night. There were patrols all over the district.

The Wismar Commission Report

DRAYTON: Why?

KING: I don't know why.

DRAYTON: Was there any increased tension in the area?

KING: As I said before, there was no tension.

DRAYTON: So you would say there is nothing so far to explain why your superior officer put you in line on Sunday?

KING: I know for a fact that we sometimes carry out trial operations. So I thought these might have been trial operations.

DRAYTON: On Saturday were you in line?

KING: No.

DRAYTON: Were any orders given by Superintendent Hobbs that policemen should be on patrol?

KING: It was given to me.

DRAYTON: How long have you lived at Wismar?

KING: Three years.

DRAYTON: How long before the 24th you were aware of the trouble in the area?

KING: On Friday while I was on patrol. The people grumbling at something in the newspaper that a man and woman were killed Buxton.

DRAYTON: Who were grumbling?

KING: People around the place.

DRAYTON: Do you know any of these people? You know them personally?

KING: No, I know no one.

DRAYTON: What were they discussing?

KING: What they read in the newspaper.

DRAYTON: You heard of anything else? Do you know Mr. Robert Jordan? Did you see him on Friday among the people who were grumbling?

KING: I don't remember.

DRAYTON: Did you remember seeing him on Sunday?

KING: I saw him on the 27th. He went there with Mr. Burnham.

DRAYTON: Did you see him on the 24th?

KING: No.

DRAYTON: You were in the station on the Monday when someone came and reported about Senator Ramjattan?

KING: No.

DRAYTON: You were there at 7.30 in the morning? You were there on patrol and you saw Boodram came in?

KING: I can't remember seeing him.

Transcripts – Day 14

MOOTOO: At what time on the 25th May did you see fire and tear smoke?

KING: Around 4.20

MOOTOO: Where was this?

KING: Right by the region of Senator Ramjattan's at Section B, Christianburg.

MOOTOO: Were there any other members of the volunteers there?

KING: No.

MOOTOO: Did you report that the crowd was gathering?

KING: I went.

MOOTOO: Were any volunteers with you?

KING: No.

MOOTOO: Were there any members of the British Force in the area at that time?

KING: No. They might have been patrolling elsewhere.

MOOTOO: Were they any members of the Police Force with you on the 27th May when you fired tear gas?

KING: No.

MOOTOO: And on the 25th of May was Assistant Superintendent Hobbs with you on that day.

KING: Yes.

MOOTOO: On the 25th there were no British soldiers there?

KING: I went there alone.

MOOTOO: Corporal, do you know Major Langham?

KING: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: Major Langham gave evidence that tension was high between Saturday and Sunday. On Sunday there was definitely high tension in that area.

KING: I do not agree with him.

CHAIRMAN: Now on the 25th, about what time East Indians started to go in the compound of the police station?

KING: About 10.30, I should say.

CHAIRMAN: Did you form the impression then that there was a wholesale attack on property and life?

KING: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: Did you communicate this important information to the senior officers?

KING: No.

CHAIRMAN: Why not?

KING: Because Mr. Hobbs was not there.

CHAIRMAN: You feel that Mr. Hobbs was the only person you should tell?

KING: Yes. That's right.

CHAIRMAN: Did you all go on the same patrol?

KING: On that day in the Valley of Tears.

The Wismar Commission Report

CHAIRMAN: At that time you saw Mr. Hobbs you went with several patrols in that area that day?

KING: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: Now, wherever you saw fire you will go to that area. Did you communicate to any of your senior officers? When the patrol was over you saw large crowds of people wherever you went and then you returned to the station?

KING: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: You were not able to control the crowd from beating or looting? Was there any other discussion or suggestion that this method of patrolling in the area should be varied?

KING: Well, apart from that the other men in jeep were elsewhere.

CHAIRMAN: You had any discussion that other methods of patrol should be made available?

KING: I can't remember:

CHAIRMAN: How many men you had in Wismar on that day?

KING: Eight constables and two S.O.'s, and later, I spoke to Mr. Hobbs and he brought across some men to assist the police.

CHAIRMAN: About how many would you say came across from Mackenzie?

KING: About ten men.

CHAIRMAN: And the same method continued?

KING: They were dispersed all over the place.

CHAIRMAN: How many men would you say were engaged at the magistrate court?

KING: As far as I can remember four men; the court was adjourned that day.

CHAIRMAN: You are trained in dealing with riotous crowds?

KING: Yes sir.

CHAIRMAN: Did you know the magistrate was in the district? Did anyone suggest that the magistrate should be called out to read the Riot Act?

KING: Not as far as I know.

CHAIRMAN: Is your station equipped with a loud-speaker?

KING: Wismar police station hadn't, but we used Mackenzie's.

CHAIRMAN: You know Ramnaresh Etwaru of Half Mile, Wismar?

KING: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: Would you say that the night patrol was increased in numbers on the Sunday night?

KING: Oh, yes.

CHAIRMAN: He said on the 25th May, he saw some people walking around the place; he saw you and reported the matter to you.

KING: I did not see him on the 25th.

CHAIRMAN: So you could not have told him that you would send the Volunteer Force to give him regular check ups?

KING: I was on duty the whole of the 25th.

Transcripts – Day 14

CHAIRMAN: You know one Shirley Mohamed?

KING: I cannot remember her.

CHAIRMAN: She gave evidence. She said that you kept watch during the Sunday night. She said she saw some boys around Corporal King and about six policemen came up, and she pointed out a boy to you, and you searched the boy, and finding nothing you let the boy go.

KING: I cannot remember.

CHAIRMAN: Were you at Half Mile, Wismar?

KING: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: You left and you went to a shop and drank beers?

KING: I drank nothing.

—
SHEPHERD: At what time did Mr. Hobbs bring over the people?

KING: About 9.15 a.m. on Monday.

SHEPHERD: Do you know the magistrate knew that police who were in the court were required elsewhere on that day? Would you know?

KING: I would not know.

SHEPHERD: And for how long were you in the magistrate's court?

KING: About two hours.

SHEPHERD: By this time violence was everywhere on Monday. Is it not peculiar on your duty to make suggestions to your Superintendent of Police?

KING: I cannot, sir. That is improper conduct.

—
DRAYTON: Who decides on the equipment the police will carry? Should the policemen leave with any sort of equipment?

KING: Sergeant Simmons of the Mackenzie police station came across equipped, and I by myself as S.O. took a revolver and tear gas in the absence of an officer.

—
SHEPHERD: Are policemen within any rank entrusted to take tear gas with them?

KING: They give tear gas to them on certain occasions. Ordinary policemen don't use tear smoke unless they are instructed to in certain cases.

—
DRAYTON: On this occasion, did you receive instructions to use your rifles?

KING: Yes.

—
CHAIRMAN: You are acquainted with Section 48 Subsection 1(c) of Chapter 77 of the Laws of British Guiana?

KING: Yes sir. I know it well.

CHAIRMAN: Thank you much.

—
GILBERT LONDON is sworn in and he states as follows:

The Wismar Commission Report

CHAIRMAN: Your first name?

LONDON: My name is Gilbert London.

RAMSAROOP: You are Constable 5296?

LONDON: No sir. I am Constable 5396.

RAMSAROOP: You are a constable stationed at Wismar police station?

LONDON: Yes sir.

RAMSAROOP: At 6.25 on May 25th you left with Land Rover PL 91 conveying Sergeant Chalmers, Corporal Griffith and Constable Roberts?

LONDON: Yes sir.

RAMSAROOP: And you returned at 7.30 a.m.? What happened at 8.30 a.m. on the 25th?

LONDON: I went out at 8.30 and took Corporal Griffith and Constable Roberts and we brought in an Indian man by the name of Runkumar.

RAMSAROOP: What was the condition of this man when he came in?

LONDON: It appeared as if he was afraid of something.

RAMSAROOP: And then you continued to convey the people by the van from their homes at Wismar to the police station.

LONDON: Yes.

RAMSAROOP: What was the condition of these people?

LONDON: They were normal.

RAMSAROOP: Did you get any instructions?

LONDON: Yes.

RAMSAROOP: By whom?

LONDON: I was instructed by the subordinate officers.

RAMSAROOP: Who are subordinate officers?

LONDON: Officers in charge.

RAMSAROOP: What happened then?

LONDON: Well I kept bringing them in the station.

RAMSAROOP: You were assisted by other security forces?

LONDON: Soldiers.

RAMSAROOP: On Tuesday 26th at 6.15 a.m. what happened?

LONDON: I went out and brought in more Indian families.

RAMSAROOP: You went out and patrolled again?

LONDON: Yes sir.

RAMSAROOP: You were accompanied by soldiers?

LONDON: Yes.

RAMSAROOP: How long did you patrol that day?

LONDON: All through the day, sir.

Transcripts – Day 14

RAMSAROOP: During your watch did you see persons set fires to properties?
LONDON: No sir.

RAMSAROOP: How many persons did you convey to the station?
LONDON: About two or three hundred.

HAFEEZ KHAN: You said at that time Mr. Ramkumar was afraid? Why was he afraid?
LONDON: I don't know sir.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did he tell you why he was afraid?
LONDON: No sir.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Where did you pick him up?
LONDON: At Wismar public road.

HAFEEZ KHAN: What was he doing?
LONDON: I do not know what he was doing.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Was he standing?
LONDON: Yes, he might have been standing.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Not "might" – you don't know what he was doing?
LONDON: I am not sure.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Was he alone?
LONDON: No sir. He was not alone. There were other people.

HAFEEZ KHAN: What kind of people?
LONDON: There were Indians, Negroes, and Portuguese.

HAFEEZ KHAN: What were they doing?
LONDON: Going about their business.

HAFEEZ KHAN: And why did you pick up Ramkumar alone?
LONDON: Because he asked me to take him to the station.

HAFEEZ KHAN: And you normally take up people who ask you to take them to the station?
LONDON: Yes sir. Maybe he wanted to make statement.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Why did you go in Ramkumar's direction?
LONDON: Well, it was in the course of my patrol.

HAFEEZ KHAN: How many persons were on patrol at that time?
LONDON: Myself and Constables Griffith and Roberts.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Do you know why you took Sergeant Chalmers and Griffith and Superintendent Hobbs around that morning?
LONDON: No sir.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did they give you any particular direction in which they wanted to go?
LONDON: It was a general patrol.

The Wismar Commission Report

HAFEEZ KHAN: At that time did you feel any tension in the area?
LONDON: No.

HAFEEZ KHAN: On routine patrol, are you armed usually?
LONDON: No sir.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Were you armed at that time?
LONDON: At that time I was not armed.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Were the corporal and Superintendent Hobbs armed?
LONDON: I would not be able to say.

HAFEEZ KHAN: But that is possible?
LONDON: Maybe. I don't know.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Where did you take Ramkumar?
LONDON: To the station.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you make a report to the superior officer?
LONDON: Yes, it was recorded.

HAFEEZ KHAN: What did he say?
LONDON: I don't know.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you make the report yourself?
LONDON: No.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you see to whom Ramkumar went?
LONDON: No sir.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Who was the constable taking reports on that day?
LONDON: We had several constables on that day.

HAFEEZ KHAN: You are stationed at Wismar, and what time did you turn out to duty that day?
LONDON: I turned out from 6 o'clock.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Do you know what time you turned out on the morning of the 25th?
LONDON: Around 8 o'clock.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you see the constable in charge of the inquiries office?
LONDON: Yes. We had constables there.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you see one Constable Battersfield there?
LONDON: Yes.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Was he taking reports on that day?
LONDON: Yes, I suppose so.

HAFEEZ KHAN: And did you take Ramkumar to him?
LONDON: No, I didn't.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you see Ramkumar going to him?

Transcripts – Day 14

LONDON: I saw Ramkumar at the station.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you ever report that you had a man who was afraid inside?

LONDON: He appeared to be afraid.

HAFEEZ KHAN: And you, together with the police officer did not ask him what he was afraid of?

LONDON: No.

HAFEEZ KHAN: What family were you directed to bring in?

LONDON: No particular family.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Didn't you bring in a family immediately after Ramkumar?

LONDON: I brought in several families.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Why did you bring them in?

LONDON: Because in my opinion they were afraid of being assaulted. That was the statement they gave me.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Now, did you have specific instructions to rescue people being beaten?

LONDON: I don't know.

HAFEEZ KHAN: So you rescued them from what?

LONDON: I just carried out my instructions.

HAFEEZ KHAN: When you met Saturday to rescue people, were you armed?

LONDON: No, I was not.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Were the other people armed?

LONDON: I can't say.

HAFEEZ KHAN: You can tell the difference between a rifle and a piece of stick?

LONDON: Yes, certainly.

HAFEEZ KHAN: You saw any rifles?

LONDON: Yes, I did; at the station.

HAFEEZ KHAN: You didn't see any policemen with rifles or revolvers on the 25th?

LONDON: No. I can't remember.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Now, Constable, you were the only driver on the day?

LONDON: No, sir.

HAFEEZ KHAN: How long you drove that vehicle?

LONDON: For the whole day.

HAFEEZ KHAN: About how many miles did you cover on that day?

LONDON: I covered about 40 miles.

HAFEEZ KHAN: And in the course of that 40 miles, in the whole day, didn't see any policemen with revolvers?

LONDON: I cannot remember.

HAFEEZ KHAN: You didn't have one on that day?

The Wismar Commission Report

LONDON: No.

HAFEEZ KHAN: When you were rescuing people did you see any crowds on that day? What were they doing?

LONDON: They were assembling occasionally.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you stop to find out why?

LONDON: I did not, because I was on my mission.

HAFEEZ KHAN: And do you think these people were afraid of the crowds? What were they doing?

LONDON: Going to and fro.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you meet up the same crowd twice?

LONDON: I would not say yes, nor would I say no.

HAFEEZ KHAN: You recognised any people in the 40 miles?

LONDON: I don't know. I don't understand your question.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Going down the road you saw any person in the crowd that you knew?

LONDON: Yes, certainly.

HAFEEZ KHAN: You recognised them?

LONDON: Yes.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Now, did you see any person appearing to be looting?

LONDON: No.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Do you know that there was looting?

LONDON: No.

HAFEEZ KHAN: You heard that there were looters?

LONDON: No.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you go to look for looters?

LONDON: No.

HAFEEZ KHAN: When did it become obvious to you that there would be looters?

LONDON: I can't remember?

HAFEEZ KHAN: And there was fire on the 25th of May. You saw places burning or were on fire?

LONDON: Yes.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did it become obvious to you that looting was going on previous to your arrival?

LONDON: It is possible.

HAFEEZ KHAN: It became obvious to you then?

LONDON: Yes.

HAFEEZ KHAN: You saw crowds; you didn't stop to check?

LONDON: No.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Were you afraid of the crowd?

LONDON: No.

Transcripts – Day 14

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you see any crowds before seeing houses which were burning or stoned?

LONDON: Yes.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you see any of these people assisting to put out the fires? Did you see these fires?

LONDON: Yes.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you remember seeing anybody else stop?

LONDON: No.

HAFEEZ KHAN: But you stopped to see.

LONDON: Yes, I stopped to see.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you come out of the jeep then?

LONDON: Yes.

HAFEEZ KHAN: What happened with the other men with you? Did they employ themselves in the house where there was fire? You went at the back to see if you could have seen any body inside?

LONDON: No.

HAFEEZ KHAN: What method did you employ?

LONDON: I was trying to save the houses.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you ask people to assist you?

LONDON: No.

HAFEEZ KHAN: For what reason?

LONDON: I didn't have any particular reason.

HAFEEZ KHAN: There must be some reason?

LONDON: No sir.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Previous to the 25th of May were you on patrol on the day? I understand that on the 24th you were the only police driver at Wismar?

LONDON: Yes. I was the only police driver at Wismar.

HAFEEZ KHAN: You were all day on patrol?

LONDON: Yes, I was there all day.

HAFEEZ KHAN: You went patrolling in these areas in Wismar? How many people went with you?

LONDON: The officer.

HAFEEZ KHAN: On that first patrol did you leave the station?

LONDON: Yes.

HAFEEZ KHAN: When was that?

LONDON: On Monday.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you patrol on Sunday the 24th?

LONDON: I can't remember.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you use the police jeep on the 24th May?

LONDON: I can't remember.

The Wismar Commission Report

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you take any superior officer in the jeep on the 24th May?
LONDON: I don't think so.

HAFEEZ KHAN: So you didn't use the jeep at all?
LONDON: I cannot even remember. I might have used it for some reason.

HAFEEZ KHAN: You were at the station all day on the 24th of May.
LONDON: I didn't say all day.

HAFEEZ KHAN: You heard any explosion on the 24th May?
LONDON: No sir.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Were you asked to take any superior officer during the morning, midday, or evening to keep duty during that time?
LONDON: No.

HAFEEZ KHAN: What about the 23rd? Was there any patrolling? You didn't on the 24th?
LONDON: Yes I went on patrol.

HAFEEZ KHAN: When did you use the jeep then? At the time you were on the first patrol? What time you were on duty on the 23rd of May? Did you turn out to work? Did you see Robert Jordan on the 23rd, 24th, or 25th?
LONDON: No.

HAFEEZ KHAN: Did you see Robert Jordan for the month of May?
LONDON: I didn't.

HAFEEZ KHAN: During your patrol on the 25th and 26th of May did you see a man by the name of Banga Mary?
LONDON: I can't remember, but he was at the police station once.

HAFEEZ KHAN: On the 25th of May did you see Constable Battersfield?
LONDON: No sir.

CARTER: Am I right to say that Demba put at the disposal of the police five jeeps?
LONDON: Yes sir.

CARTER: On Sunday night the 24th of May did you drive in and tell the police that you saw fires?
LONDON: No.

DRAYTON: Did you offer any person a lift?
LONDON: Yes.

DRAYTON: About offering people lifts; besides those who were in trouble, could you have offered Mr. Jordon a lift without instructions?
LONDON: No.

DRAYTON: If you had got instructions would you have done it?
LONDON: I would have done it.

Transcripts – Day 14

DRAYTON: Now, you are the driver in charge of the jeep. Where do you get your gasoline from?

LONDON: The police bond opposite the police station.

DRAYTON: Which other vehicles get?

LONDON: Only the launch, and police vehicles.

DRAYTON: Do you have jerry can for the jeep?

LONDON: I would borrow from Demba.

DRAYTON: Do you usually have the jerry can or cans in your jeep?

LONDON: No sir.

DRAYTON: On occasions you have borrowed the jerry can and filled it up with petrol?

LONDON: On more than one occasion.

DRAYTON: You borrowed it for perhaps a day?

LONDON: No.

DRAYTON: Every time you have to fill up your jeep you would borrow a jerry can?

LONDON: Yes.

DRAYTON: About how many times you have to fill up your tank?

LONDON: Twice a week.

DRAYTON: Around 23rd and 24th you borrowed the jerry can?

LONDON: I may have run out of gasoline.

DRAYTON: Sometimes you would do this – fill up your tank, and then keep the jerry can?

LONDON: Not at all.

DRAYTON: The night of the 23rd May, were you on patrol in the area?

LONDON: I might have been.

DRAYTON: And you might have been also on the 24th?

LONDON: Yes.

DRAYTON: Who is in charge of the petrol station compound?

LONDON: Whoever is in charge of the station. The S.O is in charge of the compound.

MACDONALD: On this Monday 25th when you were rescuing people, would you have stopped if at any time a difficult crowd was around?

LONDON: I wouldn't stop.

MACDONALD: Supposing there were large crowds on the roads that would cause you to slow down, what would be the results?

LONDON: When they saw the jeep they would move aside.

MACDONALD: At any time when this jeep was passing the crowd, was anybody in the jeep ever being slapped at or rushed upon?

LONDON: No sir.

MACDONALD: Did you work during the whole night?

The Wismar Commission Report

LONDON: Yes.

MACDONALD: Could you think of a reason why some one might have seen you using a jerry can around the jeep on that night?

LONDON: No reason at all.

MOOTOO: How many passengers could you take in your jeep?

LONDON: About seven.

MOOTOO: When you were doing your rescue work was there any other policeman in the jeep with you?

LONDON: I had Constable Griffith with me.

MOOTOO: You could have taken five more passengers?

LONDON: Certainly.

MOOTOO: Did you pick up Mrs. Gopie and her child from an African lady's house?

LONDON: No.

MOOTOO: She said she was in the jeep and you passed the Chinese grocery and a group of people were looking on while a girl was being raped, and when your jeep stopped there, the girl shouted and you said, "Wait a second," and said you had no time right then.

LONDON: No.

MOOTOO: If you saw a girl being raped what would you do?

LONDON: I would have picked her up.

MOOTOO: If someone asked you for some gas, would you give it to them?

LONDON: No.

MOOTOO: Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN: You knew a man by the name of Ramkumar?

LONDON: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: Was he wet?

LONDON: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: Was he surrounded by a crowd of 300 to 400 people?

LONDON: No.

CHAIRMAN: How many?

LONDON: About twenty to thirty.

DRAYTON: About twenty to thirty people. Was he given few blows before he was picked up?

LONDON: Not in my presence, sir.

DRAYTON: But you do not know a man by the name of Reece? His name rings a bell? You did know the man Reece?

LONDON: No sir.

Transcripts – Day 14

SHEPHERD: As a policeman your duty is to drive Land Rover PL 91 and on the Monday and Tuesday, 25th and 26th. You wore on duty driving your Land Rover?

LONDON: Yes sir.

SHEPHERD: Did you help to burn the houses?

LONDON: No sir.

SHEPHERD: Did you give loose petrol to the crowd to burn the houses?

LONDON: No sir.

—

CHAIRMAN: A statement was made that a Negro boy was being kicked by an Indian man?

LONDON: Yes, it is true.

—

SHEPHERD: Did these remarks of a Negro boy being kicked by an Indian boy start up anything?

LONDON: It was an Indian man by the name of Sunny. He went away before I arrived.

—

DRAYTON: Was it this incident that started the disturbances at Wismar? Or was it the death of the Sealey family?

LONDON: Coupled with that.

DRAYTON: Thank you.

—

JAMES BROWN is sworn in, and he states as follows:

CHAIRMAN: Your name?

BROWN: James Brown.

RAMSAROOP: You are Police Constable 5436 Brown stationed at Mackenzie police station.

BROWN: Yes sir.

RAMSAROOP: Do you know one Mrs. Kowsilla Gopie?

BROWN: Yes sir.

—

CHAIRMAN: Did you ever ask her to be friends with you? I mean after the disturbances this lady went back to Mackenzie and went to the Mackenzie police station where it is alleged that you asked her to be intimate with you.

BROWN: No sir.

RAMSAROOP: Were you intimate with her?

BROWN: No sir.

CHAIRMAN: She then said that she went downstairs and with an Indian man who was resting there and awaiting conveyance for the night; and later you approached her again. Do you know about this?

BROWN: I don't know, sir.

CHAIRMAN: Did you see Kowsilla Gopie around 27th May to 6th June?

BROWN: No sir. The first of June I was in charge of Ituni police station, 30 miles away.

CHAIRMAN: Can you say when you went to Ituni?

The Wismar Commission Report

BROWN: I went to Ituni police station at 9.00 a.m. on the 15th May?

CHAIRMAN: How long did you remain there?

BROWN: Until the 16th June.

CHAIRMAN: Well, she said it was the early part of June in her evidence. Now, she also alleged that she went into the barrack room. She was called into the barrack room for bags as she had asked for some to sleep on, and when she went there a hand pulled her through the door into the darkness inside and indecently assaulted her.

BROWN: I don't know about that, sir.

CHAIRMAN: Then subsequently the door was opened, and another constable came in and said "Brown is that you," and he laughed and turned away.

BROWN: I don't know about that, sir. I was at the Ituni police station.

SHEPHERD: A record can be introduced to show that this constable was elsewhere during that day.

CARTER: Are there any other Constable Brown at Mackenzie?

BROWN: No sir.

CARTER: Are you a married man?"

BROWN: Yes sir.

CARTER: Do you know if Hackim sent his children over to you during the disturbances?

BROWN: He spoke to me at Ituni. I told him he could send the children to my home where he usually sent them.

DRAYTON: You told him he could send the children where?

BROWN: At my home. I am living at Mackenzie.

DRAYTON: How often do you visit Mackenzie?

BROWN: I didn't go down during the disturbances. I went to Ituni on the 15th of May and I didn't visit Mackenzie at all.

DRAYTON: Did you hear of the possibility of trouble in the area?

BROWN: Yes sir. I head over the radio.

DRAYTON: When you left on the 15th May did you know of the possibility of trouble in the area?

BROWN: No sir.

DRAYTON: Did you hear of the alleged poisoning of water?

BROWN: No sir.

DRAYTON: Thank you.

MOOTOO: Do you know Mrs. Gopie at all?

BROWN: Yes. I know her as a known character, a thief.

MOOTOO: What had she stolen?

Transcripts – Day 14

BROWN: She was convicted on the 22nd November for larceny on a dwelling house. Her criminal record Number is 358/62. She was convicted before Justice Date, and she was warranted on the sum of 500 dollars to be of good behaviour for twelve months.

SHEPHERD: I have a copy of her criminal record, sir.

CHAIRMAN: Would you tender this now as Exhibit "V"?

SHEPHERD: Yes sir.

BROWN: I also inquired into two complaints of larceny. The complaints were made by one Fields of the Wismar market. I went two or three times with Mrs. Fields to Mrs. Gopie's house. Mrs. Fields requested that the police should not take action, but she would like to get back her shoes, and Gopie gave back to her. Also another instance was up the Bank while we were travelling.

CHAIRMAN: Which Bank?

BROWN: East Bank. We travelled one night in 1963 by R.H. Carr and I met a woman who wanted to know whether she would meet Gopie there. Gopie had told her that her husband was an employment officer at Mackenzie and she could make her son get work. She had slept there the night and borrowed some money from the woman, and she borrowed the woman daughter's shoes. The woman came out at Wismar and asked if I knew where the girl was living and I told her yes. I went with the woman where she was living and I left them there.

MOOTOO: So you haven't had any respect for Mrs. Gopie. Did you have respect or regard for her?

BROWN: Yes. I respect her as a known thief.

MOOTOO: Then do you have respectable people in this country?

BROWN: Yes.

MOOTOO: Well, what respect you have for Mrs. Gopie?

BROWN: I respect her as a thief.

MOOTOO: Do you make a suggestion to a woman whom you really respected?

BROWN: That is my concern.

MOOTOO: Would you make such a suggestion to a woman if you respected her?

BROWN: No.

MOOTOO: Did you make suggestions to any category of woman that you have no respect for?

BROWN: No.

DRAYTON: How long you have been in the Police Force?

BROWN: About thirteen years.

DRAYTON: A woman or a young girl who had one conviction for larceny in a dwelling house? Obviously, she had no previous conviction, but you will respect this person as a thief so far as you are concerned?

BROWN: Yes.

DRAYTON: You categorise her as the others? Do you see any possibility of a person who has been guilty of this action at that age making up for it later on. You have no such feeling about calling her a thief. And therefore would you put her in the category of a thief and describe her as a known character? There are no

The Wismar Commission Report

other convictions against Mrs. Gopie's criminal record besides larceny in the dwelling house in which she was ordered to pay 500 dollars and be of good behaviour for twelve months. She did not lapse since that day, and she had kept good behaviour.

BROWN: In any case the record was in there. There are several other charges pending against her.

DRAYTON: I would not consider any other offence which does not appear in the criminal record. She was charged for larceny in the dwelling house and has behaved well, and no other offence was committed. And what I found extremely sad is that you said you are a member of the Police Force.

BROWN: No sir.

DRAYTON: I think it is sad from your side, and I think you cannot call a young girl a thief and as a known character in the first place. Was this intended to convey that you will lose respect for such a person as Mrs. Gopie who committed one offence which she has subsequently made up for and subsequently been good and has kept the peace – would you lose respect for such a person?

BROWN: Yes sir.

MACDONALD: Mr. Brown, would you say how many police officers and constables were at any one time in the police division? How many of them?

BROWN: About thirty-two.

MACDONALD: You had had to investigate Mrs. Gopie. Why did she choose to call your name? You have any idea why she took your name and nobody else's name?

BROWN: Because I investigated her several times. I noticed early that she kept away her speech from me. One day I said hello to her and she didn't answer me.

MACDONALD: Thank you. That's all.

CHAIRMAN: We will now adjourn for today.