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Message #: 1980GEORGE00274 (Film #: D800038-0205)
Systematic Review Decision: RELEASED, APPROVED

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PAGE 01 GEORGE 00274 01 OF 02 221549Z
ACTION ARA-15

INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 EUR-12 HA-05 SPH-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 EB-08 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /096 W
-----002222 221702Z /46

R 181814Z JAN 80
FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1497
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
USINT HAVANA
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

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E.O. 12065: GDS 1/17/86 (DWYER, RICHARD A.) OR-M
TAGS: PINT, BY
SUBJ: WPA LEADERS CALL ON AMBASSAODR TO OUTLINE PROGRAM

REF: 79 GEORGETOWN 5493

- 1. ~~(C)~~ ENTIRE TEXT
- 1. ~~(C)~~ ENTIRE TEXT

2. BEGIN SUMMARY: WORKING PEOPLES ALLIANCE (WPA)
LEADERS WALTER RODNEY AND RUPERT ROOPNARINE CALLED
ON THE AMBASSADOR JANUARY 15 TO OUTLINE THE WPA
PROGRAM. THEY CLAIMED US POLICY IN GUYANA WAS
SUPPORTIVE OF THE BURNHAMA REGIME DESPITE BURNHAM'S
INCREASING AUTHORITATIANAISM. THEY SAID THE US.
POSITION WAS DUE TO THE MISTAKEN USG BELIEF THAT
THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE TO BURNHAM WAS THE MOSCOW-
ORIENTED PEOPLES PROGRESSIVE PARTY OF CHEDDI JAGAN.
THEY MAINTAINED THAT A NATIONAL UNITY CARETAKER
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PAGE 02 GEORGE 00274 01 OF 02 221549Z

GOVERNMENT COMPOSED OF ALL PARTIES SAVE THE
RULING PNC SHOULD HOLD FREE ELECTIONS WITH OUT-
SIDE OBSERVERS. THIS WOULD BE A VIABLE ALTER-
NATIVE FAVORED BY THE LEAST 70 PERCENT OF THE
ELECTORATE.

3. RODNEY AND ROOPNARINE SAID THAT THE WPA
HAD SHOWN THAT THE RACES COULD WORK TOGETHER
AND THAT RACE WAS NO LONGER A VIABLE BASE FOR
A POLITICAL PARTY. RACIAL VIOLENCE ON THE
SCALE OF THE EARLY 1960S WAS A THING OF THE
PAST. THE WPA HAD NO TIES OR OBLIGATIONS TO
FOREIGN POWERS AND WANTED NONE. THE WPA
BELIEVED IN A SOCIALIST SOCIETY FOR GUYANA
BUT WAS FULLY WILLING TO LET THE ELECTORATE
CHOOSE. THE BURNHAM REGIME MIGHT LAST FOR
MONTHS OR EVEN YEARS, BUT IT WAS ALREADY
FAILING. THE USG SHOULD NOT BE TOO LATE,

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Systematic Review Decision: RELEASED, APPROVED

AS IT MAY HAVE BEEN IN NICARAGUA,
IN DISENTANGLING ITSELF FROM AUTHORITIARIANISM
IN GUYANA. END SUMMARY

4. WPA LEADERS DRS. WALTER RODNEY AND RUPERT
ROOPNARINE MET WITH THE AMBASSADOR AND DCM
ON JANUARY 15. RODNEY AND ROOPNARINE HAD
REQUESTED THE MEETING. RODNEY TOOK THE LEAD
IN DESCRIBING THE WPA'S
DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICIES. HIS PRESENTATION
WAS A SOMEWHAT MORE TAILORED VERSION OF THAT
WHICH HE HAD MADE TO AN EMBOFF IN EARLY DECEMBER
(REFTEL).

5. RODNEY MAINTAINED THAT THE BURNHAM REGIME

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PAGE 03 GEORGE 00274 01 OF 02 221549Z

HAD DECLINED INTO A VERY SMALL CLIQUE WHICH
RULED BY FEAR, GREED, AND VIOLENCE. THE US,
WHICH ACTIVELY PROMOTED HUMAN RIGHTS DOMESTICALLY,
RODNEY SAID, PROTECTED AN AUTHORITIARIAN BURNHAM
REGIME IN GUYANA BECAUSE IT MISTAKENLY BELIEVED
THAT THE ONLY REALISTIC ALTERNATIVE TO BURNHAM
WAS THE MOSCOW-ORIENTED PEOPLES PROGRESSIVE
PARTY OF JAGAN, ALTHOUGH THE PPP HAD BEEN, IN
FACT, DISCREDITED AMONGY THE PEOPLE. RODNEY
SAID THAT WHILE HE COULD NOT PREDICT THE TIMING
OF THE FALL OF THE BURNHAM REGIME, WHICH COULD
LAST MONTHS, A YEAR, OR EVEN SEVERAL YEARS,
EVENTALLY THE REGIME WOULD BE FORCED TO TAKE
EXTREME MEASURES TO STAY IN POWER SUCH AS
BRINGING TANKS INTO THE STREETS. NICARAGUA
WAS A CASE, RODNEY WARNED, WHERER THE US
MAY HAVE WAITED UNITL IT WAS TOO LATE. THE
US SHOULD NOT WAIT UNIIL IT WAS TOO LATE
IN GUYANA.

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6. RODNEY ALLEGED THAT THE ONLY REALISTIC
IMMEDIATE SUCCESSOR TO THE BURNHAM REGIME WAS
NEITHER THE PPP OR THE WPA BUT A NATIONAL UNION
CARETAKER GOVERNMENT. SUCH A GOVERNMENT WOULD
SUPERVISE THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE ECONOMY AND
THE POLITICAL SYSTEM, CULMINATING IN FREE
ELECTIONS SUPERVISED BY OUTSIDE OBSERVERS. HE
CLAIMED THAT AT LEAST 70 PERCENT OF THE ELECTORATE
FAVORED THIS COURSE, ALBEIT MANY WERE AFRAID
TO SAY SO PUBLICLY. THEHYPA FIRMLY BELIEVED
THAT THE GUYANESE PEOPLE PREFERRED A SOCIALIST
TYPE OF GOVERNMENT, BUT IT WAS COMPLETELY WILLING
TO LEAVE THIS DECISION TO BE DECIDED BY FREE
ELECTIONS.

7. IN RESPONSE TO QUERIES REGARDING THE SOUNDNESS

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PAGE 04 GEORGE 00274 01 OF 02 221549Z

AND SUITABILITY OF THE WPA'S ECONOMIC PROGRAM,

Classification: ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
Message #: 1980GEORGE00274 (Film #: D800038-0205)
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RODNEY MAINTAINED THAT THE US HAD OBSERVED BURNHAM'S ARTICULATION OF MARXIST SOCIALISM AND HAD CONCLUDED THAT SOCIALISM HAD BAILED IN GUYANA. IN FACT, HOWEVER, BURNHAM HAD NEVER MANAGED TO IMPLEMENT SOCIALISM, AND THE REGIME'S ECONOMIC PROGRAM CONSISTED ONLY OF UNSUCCESSFUL EXHORTATIONS TO INCREASE PRODUCTIIVITY AND PRODUCTION. ECONOMIC DECISIONS, AND THE ALLEVIATION OF SLOTH AND APATHY WHICH EVERYONE RECOGNIZED WERE WIDESPREAD, COULD NOT BE TAKEN

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PAGE 01 GEORGE 00274 02 OF 02 221528Z
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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ SECTION 2 OF 2 GEORGETOWN 274

UNTIL AFTER POLITICAL LIBERTY WAS RESTORED AND THE ELECTORATE HAD A CHANCE TO CHOOSE A REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT.

8. RODNEY MAINTAINED THAT THE WPA, EVEN THOUGH LESS THAN A YEAR OLD AS A POLITICAL PARTY, HAD DEMONSTRATED THAT A DYNAMIC MULTIRACIAL PARTY WAS NOW POSSIBLE IN GUYANA, AND THAT RACE ALONE WAS NO LONGER A VIABLE POLITICAL BASE. THUS LAST SUMMER THE RACIAL INCIDENTS ENGINEERED BY THE RULING PNC HAD NOT STIMULATED THE EXPECTED VIOLENCE WHICH BURNHAM HAD HOPED WOULD BRING BACK WAVERING BLACK SUPPORTERS INTO THE FOLD. RACIAL VIOLENCE SUCH AS HAD OCCURRED IN THE EARLY 1960'S WOULD NOT RECUR, RODNEY CLAIMED. SECONDLY, THE WPA HAD BEEN ABLE TO ATTRACT INDIVIDUAL LEADERS OF PROVEN PERSONAL INTEGRITY SUCH AS EUSI KWAYANA AND MOSES BAGHWAN WHO IN THE PAST HAD REPEATEDLY FORESWORN PERSONAL AGGRANDIZEMENT FOR PRINCIPLE. IN MARKED DIS-

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PAGE 02 GEORGE 00274 02 OF 02 221528Z

TINCTION FROM THE PPP AND ITS AUTOMATIC SUPPORT OF THE SOVIET UNION, SAID RODNEY, THE WPA AND ITS LEADERS WERE NOT BEHOLDEN TO ANY FOREIGN POWER AND DID NOT SEEK SUCH AFFILIATION.

9. ALTHOUGH THE WPA HAD STRIVEN TO OPERATE IN AN OPEN AND PUBLIC FASHION, GOVERNMENT HARASSMENT AND THUGGERY WAS MAKING THIS INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT, ACCORDING TO RODNEY. EVEN NORMAL ORGANIZATIONAL MEETINGS WERE DIFFICULT AND HAD TO BE ARRANGED QUIETLY. (RODNEY NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT HE HAD JUST RETURNED FROM A POLITICAL TRIP TO THE WEST COAST OF THE DEMERARA.) IT MIGHT WELL BE THAT THE WPA WOULD BE FORCED TO GO UNDERGROUND WHILE IT ATTEMPTED TO CONTINUE ITS PRIMARY PUPOSE OF POLITICIZING THE POPULATION TO DEMAND A NATIONAL UNION GOVERNMENT. RODNEY MADE NO DIRECT MENTION OF THE POSSIBLE USE OF VIOLENCE BY THE WPA.

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10. COMMENT: RODNEY AND ROOPNARINE WERE CLEARLY DETERMINED TO PRESENT THEMSELVES AS BROADLY-BASED OPPOSITION LEADERS INTERESTED MAINLY IN DEMOCRACY AND FREE ELECTIONS. NEVER-THE LESS, THEIR ULTIMATE SOCIALIST GOALS REFLECT GUYANA'S FUNDAMENTAL POLITICAL PROBLEM: THE COUNTRY'S LEADERS AND THEIR OPPONENTS ARE ALL TRYING TO OCCUPY A SMALL AREA AT THE FAR LEFT END OF THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM. BY SO DOING, THEY ARE MOVING FURTHER AND FURTHER AWAY FROM REFLECTING THE FEELINGS OF MOST PEOPLE, WHO AR BECOMING INCRESINGLY FRUSTRATED AND DISILLUSIONED WITH THE WHOLE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SYSTEM.

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PAGE 03 GEORGE 00274 02 OF 02 221528Z

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