



BELIZE

REPORT

from the

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE

together with the proceedings of the Committee,
evidences and appendices before the Joint Select
Committee on "The White Paper — Proposed Terms
of a Constitution for the Independent Belize".

Appointed by Order of the House of Representatives
dated the 29 January 1981 and of the Senate dated 3 February 1981.

Sixth Meeting of the Joint Select Committee appointed to examine, consider and report on the White Paper - Proposed Terms of a Constitution for the Independent Belize, held in Corozal Town on Monday, 23 February 1981.

Hon. C.L.B. Rogers, in the Chair

10:00 a.m.

CHAIRMAN: The Meeting of the Joint Select Committee of the House and the Senate is now called to order. The Committee gets its authority for the holding of these Sessions from a Resolution passed in the House and the Senate. The Committee is authorized to take evidence from citizens on the White Paper. The terms of reference, therefore, is only relevant to the White Paper and we are not concerned about whether we want independence or whether we don't want independence. We are concerned with the terms of the White Paper. Secondly, these hearings under the Standing Orders of the House of Representatives should not be published until the Committee tender its report, and anyone doing so will lay himself open to contempt of the House; that is a criminal charge. Having said that, we will now begin our Session here in Corozal Town. The Members of the Committee you all know, and there are two joint Chairmen.

Mr Luis Puc,
Chairman of San Joaquin Village Council

Mr Puc: Señores Honorables Ministros, buenas días y buenos hermanos en general. Estamos aquí en esta salon superior para dar nuestros resoluciones pues referente al Papel Blanco. Entonces yo, mi opinion mía, hemos estudiado estos numeros y yo por mi parte no veo ningun mal en ella. Estamos trabajando quiza como hemos dicho la independencia de Belice y entonces si nosotros trabajamos para eso y por mi parte yo dijera que ya tenemos en adelante nuestra oracion nacional que sea lo mismo; nuestra bandera en lo actual que sea lo mismo; nuestra oracion lo mismo. oracion, bandera y himno que seá mos mismos. Otro parte importante tenemos que formar la asamblea nacional, nuestros representantes en la camara de representantes y de senado. Mi opinion mio de estas personas sean

hijos del mismos pais Belice. Ademas que sus padres tambien sean nacidos en nuestra pais Belice. Que todos sean Beliceños y para terminar, repito, no veo ningun mal en neustros simbolos que decimos al Papel Blanco.

CHAIRMAN: Muchas gracias, Señor Puc.

Mr Blas Rosales,
Chairman, Caledonia Village Council.

Mr Rosales: Aprobamos todo lo que hay aquí en el Papel Blanco. Más le pedimos que la oración nacional, el himno nacional y que la bandera sea azul y blanco.

CHAIRMAN: Algo mas?

Mr Rosales: No.

CHAIRMAN: Muchas gracias.

Jorge Verde,
Sarteneja.

CHAIRMAN: Do you represent the Village Council there?

Mr Verde: Yes, sir, and the rest who are here too. I am the speaker of the group.

CHAIRMAN: Very well, go ahead.

Mr Verde: We have had several copies of the White Paper circulated around over the past ten/twelve days. We have met occasionally, and we are here to support the White Paper in its full, but begging for an amendment.

CHAIRMAN: Tell us where you want your amendment.

Mr Verde: In the Preamble. We acknowledge the Supreme Authority of God. We beg that we put into the New Constitution of Belize the Belizean Prayer.

Second, we acknowledge that every Nation should have its National Anthem. We beg that the Belizean National Hymn 'Lands of the Gods' be included in the New Constitution of Belize.

Third, every country has a flag of its own and all propose that the Belizean Flag, the blue and white with the Coat of Arms of the Baymen and the same that appears in our money be the Coat of Arms in the blue and white flag for Belize and that they be included in the New Constitution.

Fourth; noting also Article 43, we propose that it be more carefully watched and that Belizeans in this case,

in this particular case, may be referred as a true Belizean, born in Belize from parents of Belizean birth. Here we see a loophole that will not provide this privilege.

CHAIRMAN: Parents should also be Belizean. This is for the qualification of House and Senate?

Mr Verde: Gentlemen, this is all we have for this morning and once again, we support the White Paper. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN: One minute. Members, any question of Mr Verde? This Committee thank you very much, Mr Verde.

Mr Verde, could we recall you.

Mr Verde you spoke on behalf of a number of people just now. Could you give us, for the record, some of the names of the people?

Mr Verde: Yes. You have here Mr Victor Muñoz; Mr Alejandro Congora, Manager, Sarteneja Corporative; and Mrs Elbia Verde, a teacher; and we have four more who just came accompanying here..

Mr Victor Muñoz,
Sarteneja.

Mr Muñoz: Nosotros soportamos el Papel Blanco con la oración nacional, el himno, la bandera azul y blanco y nuestro representante que sea un Beliceño nacido en Belice y que su familia sean Beliceños. Muchas gracias.

CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

Mr Martin Canul
Libertad
(Chairman of Village Council)

Mr Canul: Solamente tengo tres puntos. El primero es el himno nacional. Secundo, nuestra bandera, el azul y blanco, y tambien la oración nacional.

En articulo cuarenta tres tambien - nacionalidad de ciudadenea parece que son dos cosas. Que todas personas, que nuestro representante sea un Beliceño nacido en Belice. Solo tengo eso para decir.

Muchas gracias.

CHAIRMAN: Muchas gracias, Señor Canul.

Mr Everaldo Puc,
Teacher, Xavier Infants
(citizen)

CHAIRMAN: Yes. What would you like to say?

Mr Puc: Mr Chairman, I would like to endorse that the proposals include the national flag, anthem and the prayer.

I further endorse the amendment already suggested for Section 43.

Section 16 - Citizenship... the Governor-General.

I would like the Governor-General to be a Belizean citizen by birth and that both parents be Belizean by birth also.

Apart from all that, I endorse the White Paper as it is.

CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for coming before this Committee.

Mr Idelfonso Gomez,
Chairman, Executive Committee, P.U.P.
Corozal North.

CHAIRMAN: Yes. Go ahead.

Mr Gomez: As we look into the Preamble, one thing I would like to be included as others have said, but for reasons. First of all, we would like the National Flag, the blue and white with the sub umbra flower so as to be known and that should be the flag to represent all Belizeans at home and abroad. With that also, I would like something to be included with the National Flag, and that is the National Anthem. As all nations in the world know and they are distinguished many a times not by their flag, but with their anthem and that is why I would like Belize to be known. So, therefore, I would like the National Anthem to be included also.

As you know Belize is a country very democratic and it has all sorts of religion; so, therefore, I would like the National Prayer to be included also. As we look into Section 12(b) "Any other person who has been resident continuously in Belize for a period of five years immediately prior to the day of independence". I, therefore, suggest that before any alien residing in Belize five years be given citizenship as a Belizean they should each be screened properly before that is granted.

CHAIRMAN: That would be in the law itself.
Mr Gomez: I understand.
All the Representatives of the National Assembly should be sons of the soil of their mother and father also.
Above all, I stand for the White Paper as it is, but with these amendments.
CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr Gomez, for coming before the Committee.
Mr Gomez: Do you want to write the names of the Executive Committee?
CHAIRMAN: Yes, we could do with that, indeed.
Mr Gomez: They are: Lucia Antonious, Avelio Ake, Pedro Villanueva, Abelina Velasquez, Joe Mai and Alvaro Ascencio.

Mr Mateo Ayuso
44 - 4th Avenue, Corozal Town.
(Small Businessman and a Belizean Citizen-to-be)

CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr Ayuso, what will you tell us about the White Paper?
Mr Ayuso: With your permission, may I begin with this?
CHAIRMAN: No. I would like your comments on the White Paper.
Mr Ayuso: Honourable Gentlemen, please refer to Page 1, section (c) and just to close the word in between and the last words where it says "believe that the will of the people shall form the basis of government in a democratic society in which the government is freely elected by universal adult suffrage". Now, in there I would suggest - I do propose that the following amendment be considered "and no re-election after serving for two five-year terms" after the word "suffrage", and including all the balance.
And I beg to add that this proposed amendment is in relation to Amendment 22 (ratified February 27th, 1951) Section 1 Article VII, the Constitution of the United States of America.
CHAIRMAN: You add that, but in the United States Constitution, you can go on serving, up to now, for as long as they elect you, Mr Ayuso.
Mr Ayuso: I am talking about the President.
CHAIRMAN: You should have said that.
Mr Ayuso: Only for President, indeed, like in Mexico. No re-election.

CHAIRMAN: Here we are talking about a Parliamentary System - Representatives, no President.

Mr Ayuso: Well, since there is no reference made to the Presidency, I thought of inserting it.

CHAIRMAN: But this is not a Republic; this Constitution envisions a Representative Parliamentary Democracy.

Mr Ayuso: I do agree with that. It is only my suggestion.

CHAIRMAN: You make your point. We are here to point out whether it is workable, you know.

Mr Ayuso: Now, Part (2), vide page 2, (e). It says there "requires policies of state which protect and safeguard the unity, freedom, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Belize; which eliminate economic and social privilege", and it goes on, up to "nations". All those things I agree with, but I beg to comment on this. It says, referring to "eliminate economic and social privilege" to "nations"; I beg to say that this provision is commendable, but bitter experience has proven several times, during the Colonial era, that it has not been executed accordingly.

Part 3 Section 3... "Regardless of race"; it begins there saying "Regardless of race". I beg to suggest to add the words "Spanish language" in between "place of origin" and "race" up to "freedoms". Because of English being the only official means of communication throughout Belize, the Mayas, the Mestizos, who generally use the Spanish Language as their only means of making themselves understood are at a great disadvantage.

Part (4) Page 3. Again, "the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the individual prescribed by the Constitution shall be defined and qualified in order to ensure that the enjoyment of these rights and freedoms by one individual does not prejudice the rights and freedoms of another nor damage the public interest." Now in between there I am suggesting this - I do suggest that explicit mention and insertion be made of these basic human rights and fundamental rights shall be consolidated and executed, strictly within the interpretation of the device called "Separation of Powers" as mentioned in The British Approach to Politics by Michael Stewart, Page 23, under the heading 'The Defence of Liberty';

and I quote: "The real defence for British liberty lies in the arrangements which make it difficult for a Government ever to become strong enough to twist the Constitution towards dictatorship without provoking revolt. Three powers are necessary for organizing a State: Legislative power to make laws; Executive power to carry them out; Judicial power to apply the law to particular problems. One view is that if these powers are placed in separate hands no one body of people will be strong enough to be tyrannical, and each power, jealous for its own authority, will keep watch on the others". The "separation of powers" may not be an absolute safeguard; yet, I think that this device could be the lesser of two evils.

Page 8 - Part 15 "Any person who by birth or otherwise becomes a Belizean citizen, shall have the status of a Commonwealth citizen." I understand that I would still be categorized as a 'British Subject' if I would get residenship in England, inspite of an Independent Belize. The Queen's constitutional position in a Dominion is substantially the same as in this country, though the work must be done by a Governor-General; Her Title in a Dominion will describe Her explicitly as Queen of New Zealand. The people of the Dominions are British Subjects, but have their own laws as to citizenship. India is a Republic with a President at its head: its people recognize Elizabeth II, not as their Queen, but as Head of the Commonwealth; they are not British subjects but would become such if they came to live in this country (England) - from the British Approach to Politics by Michael Stewart, Page 37).

HON. S. MUSA: Your proposal there is to change it to British subject?

Mr Ayuso: No. On the contrary.

CHAIRMAN: What are you proposing?

Mr Ayuso: I just don't like that thing there -in union with the Commonwealth, indefinitely.

CHAIRMAN: You don't want Belize to be a part of the Commonwealth?

Mr Ayuso: Yes, indefinitely.

Page 9, Part 16 - "There shall be a Governor-General of Belize who shall be a citizen of Belize". Now, I agree with that up to "otherwise"; but this is what I have to say: inasmuch as I do appreciate what England has done for Belize, giving us her language and her Judicial system of laws, etc. yet, sincerely and honestly, I do not think that this Monarchical Process is in complete rapport with our hemispheric neighbourhood. Even the great United States of America, Mexico, Guyana and other American nations, once independent, severed their close relations with their former imperialistic masters; and adapted the Republican system, which for centuries has been the axiomatic foundation of liberty, fraternity and equality. From page 9 onwards, the Governor-General's powers take priority. I would venture to state, Honourable Gentlemen, that our present Belizean Government has my entire confidence that it drafted this Proposed Constitution with full cognizance of all the facts at its disposal that would, undoubtedly, enhance the security and independence of our entire nation. But, notwithstanding my approval of the Monarchical System, now I would still hope and trust that whenever it is convenient and safe for Belize, we as a free people, adapt the Republican system, forever. Only thus, can we acquire our economic, social and political identity within this competitive world. And, in conclusion, Members of this Honourable Select Committee, I do appreciate the contribution that you all are making towards the final compilation of various ideas, thoughts, notions and general proposals emanating from different segments of our Belizean Society; and do express my gratitude for the attention and patience you have granted me.

Then I have some other point of view, Mr Chairman; if you permit me, I will make an addition.

CHAIRMAN: I permit you.

Mr Ayuso: I thank you.

I noticed that within the White Paper, Honourable Gentlemen, the system of Education was not given; what should I say; I won't say 'much thought'

because you are thinking people. But it doesn't mention much. I would suggest that as far as education is concerned so as to unify our people, so as to think Belizean, nationally Belizeans, we should standardize our text books. We should have one syllabus, one curriculum. We should not have books being bought or suggested by various religious denominations. People buy books, for example, this year and next year they can't use it because the denomination has changed the books. Such things cause havoc on the economic side of our people. The standardizing of our text books would make Belizeans people think in terms of Belize and not in terms only of the United States.

CHAIRMAN:

Are you proposing that we put that in the Constitution?

Mr. Ayuso:

Yes, indeed. I am suggesting that education embodies the standardization of all text books and also that those text books should be both in English and Spanish as the two predominant languages in Belize; and priorities should be given to them because the North has played its role and is living up to its end, and it should be recognized. We should have more ecumenical schools like Corozal Community College, like Stann Creek Ecumenical College.

CHAIRMAN:

You want us to put that in the Constitution?

Mr. Ayuso:

No. No.

CHAIRMAN:

That we understand.

HON. V. COURTENAY:

Mr. Chairman, with your permission, before you leave the subject of Education. You are not here suggesting that the Church/State policy of Government should be discontinued?

Mr. Ayuso:

Eventually; not discontinued completely. Allow the church to have their own private schools but let government eventually take over and have state schools. I am not saying that we should deny them the right to have church schools, like in Mexico, like in the United States. They have a right to have schools, that is, the denominations; but let the state step in and say 'this is our schools and this is what you should teach';

because that is one of the means that they use for dividing our people and we don't want that anymore if Belize is going to be independent and I trust that it is going to be independent. So we want to unify Belizean people.

Then I have here, now, as far as the National Anthem, I would suggest that the legislative body appoint a commission and let that commission take cultural essays and that other means decide or cause people the right and propose as to what anthem we should have in Belize; the words, the music and have adjudicators to say 'O.K. now, this is the better one from among all you Belizeans, therefore, we agree on it.

The national flag; I would say the same. Have a Commission put to the people culturally and then they will say, 'this is the flag that we want.

As far as the emblem within the flag is concerned. The emblem within the flag shows the very sons of slaves who had to use their hatchets and paddle. Now, that in itself is good in a way because it reflects hard working people, but I do not know if they will be conducive to our Independence. I think we should remove something from the emblem and add not only the paddle or the mahogany or the hatchet but add also that predominantly the North plants sugar cane.

CHAIRMAN:

What should we remove?

Mr. Ayuso:

Remove the paddle and we put sugar cane or something that is predominant.

CHAIRMAN:

I thought you were dealing with the human on the flag. You said something about sons of slave. I have to understand what you say so I have to ask you what is the reference to sons of slave.

Mr. Ayuso:

I would remove the person who represent slave.

CHAIRMAN:

History is history; past already. We can't change history. I wish that we could change some of it. But history is a fact, it is a reality; we have to recognize history. That is why these things, every country use

- their history. Our history had in slaves so we have to use the history.
- Mr. Ayuso: That is the reason why I am suggesting that now that we are going into Independence, let us see what we can do to unify our people.
- CHAIRMAN: Would that unify them? It doesn't affect my thinking. I am the son of a slave, it doesn't affect my thinking and once the mind is liberated nothing affect us.
- Mr. Ayuso: I want some amendment to the emblem. As I suggested that instead of having a slave there you can put also a man cutting sugar cane. Mr. Chairman, I am very grateful that you all have come and have listened to me but I really feel that I didn't explain to you what I wanted to explain.
- CHAIRMAN: We have taken your points. You have given us a number of amendments.
- Mr. Ayuso: Well, let me finish with just five sentences.
- CHAIRMAN: You are permitted.
- Mr. Ayuso: "Quod Omnes Tangit, ab omnibus approbetur"
"What touches all, should be approved by all"
"Lo que le concierne a todos, tiene que ser aprobado por todos".
"Le tulacac tiale u yutzile, tulaclon yan-aid malob".
- That is all. Thank you.
- CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Mateo for your presentations. Any questions of Mr. Mateo Ayuso? The Committee has noted your points and have no questions. I would like to thank you for coming before us.
- Mr. Ayuso: And I noted also, Mr. Chairman, that no paper should be published.
- CHAIRMAN: Oh, yes, no paper should be published. After the Committee reports you can publish it. Thank you, Mr. Ayuso.
- Mr. Ayuso: Thank you, gentlemen.
-

Margarito Vargas
Progresso

(Chairman Village Council)

CHAIRMAN: ¿ Bueno Señor Vargas que quieres decir?
Sr. Vargas: De parte de todos de Progresso, nosotros
aprobamos el Papel Blanco, solo pedimos que
incluyo el oracion nacional, la bandera y el
himno y que los representantes del gobierno
sean nacional beliceños. Eso es todo.

CHAIRMAN: Bueno. Muchas gracias.

Dina Shield
Corozal Town

(citizen)

CHAIRMAN: Tell us what you wish to tell us about the
White Paper.

MRS. SHIELD: Well, I support the White Paper. Included I would
like to have our national prayer, anthem and
my flag and I support Independence now and
forever.

CHAIRMAN: Well, Mrs. Shield, this Committee thank you
very much for making your views very clear.

Serafina Bab
6 - 8th Avenue Corozal Town

(representing the United Women's Group)

CHAIRMAN: Please tell us what you want to say on the
White Paper.

MS. BAB: We from the United Women's Group support the
White Paper. We would like to include the
national prayer, the anthem, the flag with the
coat of arms. Then we would like to see the
youths to serve an allegiance to the country.
We also want to have freedom of women and
children. That is all.

CHAIRMAN: Thank you for making such a clear statement
before us.

Ioni Price
Corozal Town

(citizen)

CHAIRMAN:

Now, Miss Price tell us what you want to say about the White Paper.

MS. PRICE:

I have studied the proposed form put forward by the Government in the White Paper and on the whole is in agreement with it and wish my support for that document to be recorded.

I believe that the Constitution should enshrine the national symbols of Belize; namely, the flag, anthem and coat-of-arms.

If you would turn to 4(b) on page 5 - Protection of Freedom of conscience. I think it should include women, children, health and trade unions.

12(b) on page 8 - in my opinion this is somewhat ridiculous. I think that we should have some sort of document or form that could prove that if any other person who has been continuously in Belize for a period of five years immediately prior to the day of Independence does not hold any criminal record or such as in any country.

37 on Page 13: I think 37 here 'The Governor General', he has unlimited nature of power and as far as I am concerned absolute power corrupts absolutely.

58 on Page 17. I feel that 58(a) - I think that the Constitution must be subjected to amendments because every generation has a right to self-determination and I don't feel that our present government should organize the government of our younger generation and the generation to come. They should be allowed to organize their own sort of government.

(b) I feel with this two party system, it is near impossibility for a majority of 3/4 to be a final vote because we are sure that with this two-party system nothing that our government put forth the Opposition is in agreement with. Regardless of how good the matter is they will disagree so, the idea of 3/4 majority should be removed from the Constitution.

100 on Page 20: I would like to compliment the government for the Code of Conduct and at the same time wish for them to put more enforcement provision included.

CHAIRMAN: Thank you Miss Price for coming before us.

Edmond Howell Longworth
(on behalf of the U.D.P. supporters)

CHAIRMAN: And you tender this Mr. Longworth?

Mr. Longworth: Yes, sir on behalf of the U.D.P. supporters.

CHAIRMAN: Thank you. It will be so put in the records.

Juan Garcia
Concepcion

(Chairman Village Council)

MR

Mr. Garcia: We the villagers of Concepcion village hereby support the White Paper issued by our government and would like to have the following points included:
the national flag,
our national anthem; and
our national prayer to remain the same.

On Page 14 (43): 'A person shall be qualified to be elected a member of the House of Representatives or to be appointed to the Senate if he is a Belizean citizen, eighteen years or older and has lived in Belize for at least one year immediately before the date of his nomination for election'. I want that to be amended. I want it as a law. I agree with this.

CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for coming before us.

Abel Flores
Copper Bank

(Secretary of Village Council)

CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr. Flores, please tell us what you want on the White Paper?

Mr. Flores: We the people of Copper Bank supports the White Paper. We would like something to be included: prayer, flag and anthem - Lands of the Gods. That all public offices be held by Belizeans, natural born Belizeans.

CHAIRMAN: Mr. Flores, this Committee thank you for coming before it and making your views.

Fabio Ucan
San Victor

(Chairman, Village Council)

CHAIRMAN: Please tell us what you think about the White Paper?

Mr. Ucan: We the villagers of San Victor propose the following 4 suggestions: we would like to have our flag to be made the national flag of Belize, our national anthem be the Lands of the Gods and that the national prayer remain the same. Under Section 43: 'A person shall be qualified to be elected a member of the House of Representatives or to be appointed to the Senate if he is a Belizean citizen, eighteen years old or older and has lived in Belize for at least one year immediately before the date of his nomination for election'. We want that all Public Offices should be held by Belizeans, born nationals and also the parents to be Belizeans.

CHAIRMAN: This Committee thank you very much for coming before it.

Abel Barbosa
Libertad

(citizen)

CHAIRMAN:

Sr. Barbosa:

¿Si, que quiere decir?
En primer lugar varios han comentado sobre este clauso 43 y yo tambien quisiera añadir a esto. Se debía especificar en primer lugar en vez de un ciudadano que leve siempre el nombre ciudadano pero nacido Beliceño. Tambien quisiera añadir

algo más a esto y eso es algo de la defensa, no he leído en el papel blanco pero quisiera decir que en la constitución específicamente que Corozal o el norte debiera mantener un cuartel o un ejercito bien preparado. Y los soldados debieran ser Belizeños, nacidos Belizeños y por lo menos, haber cruzado su primaria o su secundaria en Belice. Aparte de eso creo que la propuesta constitución es correcto. Muchas gracias señor Barbosa por la comite bilingüe.

CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Orvin Rancharan
Ranchito

Mr. Rancharan:

First of all I should say that it is a great privilege for me to address this gathering this morning. And on behalf of the majority of the people of Ranchito I want to tell you all that we endorse the White Paper which is Government's Proposed Constitution for the new and Independent Belize.

Having examined, I analyze the White Paper critically. We are convinced that it is the sound basis of which the majority of democratic countries operates and we are positive that countless generations of Belizeans yet unborn will look back on the pages of history and glorify the names of our present days Belizeans freedom fighters who have undoubtedly laboured very hard indeed to produce this Bill of Rights which shall be effective, I hope, this year. We believe that any country which praise God first in their natical life will inevitably experience peace, prosperity and freedom and this is given priority as I have noted in the proposed Constitution. I want to endorse the proposal that have

been mentioned, I suppose, by other speaker before myself. And they are the inclusion of our anthem, flag. I believe that this should be enshrined in our Constitution because it establishes the Belizean identity.

I am pleased to see that in section 3 of this Constitution there is the human rights and fundamental freedom which guarantees that we have our basic God-given rights and freedom. And while I was on my way here to this Court, I met one of my colleague and he asked me where I was going and I told him that I am coming here to say something on this Constitution; and he asked me to please mention, I think this is where section 3 comes in: liberty, life, security of the person and the protection of law, you know; and he called my attention to the fact that in Santa Clara there have been some very tragic deaths due to lack of enforcement of policemen. I think here it says 'protection of life, liberty, security of the person. I would like very much if this Committee could really see that this is being guaranteed to the people.

CHAIRMAN:

You want the protection of life?

Mr. Rancharan:

O.K. then.

Having analyzed this Constitution carefully we noted that considerable power and privileges have been vested in the Governor-General. I think quite a number of people are concerned about that point because they are saying that too much power is given to one person. O.K. then I have said here that considering that so much power is in the hands of a reckless, irresponsible or ruthless persons could create repercussions on the populace. We in Ranchito have proposed some criteria for the selection of this said Governor-General. First of all, we have here that he should be a Belizean by birth and parentage. I am suggesting at least up to the second generation. We don't want maybe an American come by, give birth and then you know; we want the roots to be here.

Also I believe that the Governor-General should show a positive fear of God. I think anybody who has a positive fear of God will be responsible for the actions not only to the people of Belize but to a higher authority. So this Government, nevertheless, should be definitely God fearing.

CHAIRMAN:

Should be a God fearing person? It could be a woman too, you know.

Mr. Rancharan:

I believe that the Governor-General should demonstrate intelligence, and a deep aptitude for administrative work. I'd also like our Governor-General to have been engaged for a long time, working in a hard way for this freedom of Belize. He should have been in this struggle for many many years. We don't want somebody to come here overnight and get this power. We want somebody who really deserves it, to get the power. We have here that he should be humble, patient, and not self-seeking. We don't want anybody to fill their pockets while the vast majority of the population, starves as in the case of Nicaragua. I think our Governor-General should be known and loved and respected by the majority of Belizeans. We don't want no unknown person to be of the helm of Government. We want him to be respected, well known, loved.

Sixth point here, the Governor-General must definitely show that he is bright and that he is good.

I conclude here with saying that, having examined most of the political characters in Belize, we propose that the best complying with most of these criteria, is none other than Honourable Premier, George Cadle Price, who I'm positive will lead Belize to safe and secure Independence this year. That's all we have.

CHAIRMAN:

This Committee wants to thank you. Now is there any questions of Mr. Rancharan? If there are none, then this Committee thank you for making a very clear statement.

Baltazar Vasquez
Paraiso

(Chairman, Village Council)
(Secretaria de la escuela)

Sr. Vasquez:

Le dio este el apollo, el papel blanco. Que todo esta corecto y suporto. Quiero que encluya el himno nacional, la oracion nacional y la bandera nacional, azul y blanco, y al mismo tiempo tambien la forsa militar Beliceños, que se quedan. Yo creo que es es todo.

CHAIRMAN:

Quiero dar las gracias de esta comitiva.

Nonato Gutierrez
Buena Vista

(representanto la Asociacion ganadero
de Corozal - 65 miembros)

Sr. Gutierrez:

Apoyo gustosamente el propuesto para la independencia de Belice como es presentada por la camara de representantes: el papel blanco. Tambien proponemos que adoptemos nuestro himno nacional "Tierra de los Dioses", la oracion nacional, la bandera, azul y blanco y dual lenguaje. En los despachos de gobiernos, ingles y español para mejor comunicacion para los ciudadanos.

CHAIRMAN:

Respetuosamente sometido por Señor Gutierrez, Señor Sosa, Dolores Loria, Rafael Ramirez, J.P. y Feliz Tzul. Muchas Gracias.

Gilbert Rivero
Corozal Town

(Association for the concern of the
economic welfare of Belize)

Mr. Rivero:

Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the association for the concern of the economic welfare of Belize I hereby submit this in writing.

CHAIRMAN:

Thank you, Mr. Rivero.

Marcelino Chi
San Roman
(citizen)

CHAIRMAN: ¿ Y que quiere decir, señor?
Mr. Chi: Bueno, en mi parte, yo soporto el papel blanco.
CHAIRMAN: Muchas gracias.

Regino Gonzalez (Councillor, Village Council)
Hipolito Santoya (Chairman)
Chunnox Village

Mr. Gonzalez: I wish to express to you that we fully support the White Paper completely in its context. Nevertheless I have one or two suggestions here. I wish to suggest that every village in the country should have a group of trained military youths. This could be voluntary or it could be compulsory, so that his training can serve us in case of any call to defend Belize. Whereas the people will be prepared to answer the call.

Next, I wish to suggest that the National Anthem our National Prayer and our blue and white flag be the national symbols of our independent Belize and, as such, be considered sacred and that also in our schools we make use of them in order to develop nationalism and patriotism in our children.

CHAIRMAN: We want to thank you both for taking the time to come before this committee. Please convey our thanks to your Village Council.

Elfrida Moguel
San Antonio
(Chairman Village Council)

CHAIRMAN: Please tell us what you wish to tell us on the White Paper.

Ms. Moguel: I support it. What I would like to add to this thing is the prayer, anthem and flag; if we are to be a nation.

CHAIRMAN:

Mrs. Moguel, your views are very clear and this Committee understand it properly and we would like to thank you for taking the time to come before us.

Simoon Botes
Cristo Rey
(Chairman, Village Council)

Mr. Botes:

Nosotros ya estudiamos un poco el papel blanco desde varios proposicion y realmente quiero que inserta la oracion nacional, el himno y tambien la bandera, azul y blanco.

CHAIRMAN:

Quiero dar las gracias de la comité.

Polo Riverol
(citizen)

Mr. Riverol:

Yo estoy en acuerdo con la independendencia. Además, yo represento todo mis hijos, Arturo, Agustina, Constanca y Arnelia. Quiero que inserta el himno nacional, la oracion y tambien la bandera.

CHAIRMAN:

Muchas gracias.

Asterio Ortega
(Teacher and President of the Corozal
Rural Branch of BMTU)

CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Ortega:

Mr. Ortega, would you state your views? First of all, I want to begin by endorsing Mr. Ayuso's proposal on the Presidential system, which I support. Secondly, I would like the official language of Belize to be both Spanish and English. All Belizeans, either by birth or otherwise, upon reaching the age of 18 years, should undergo military training, compulsory or otherwise. And, furthermore, all Belizeans who, on independence day, are between the ages of 18 and 40 years should undergo military training, or else otherwise he is incapacitated

by virtue of professional, or other physical illness. I would also like to see included in the constitution, that would be an amendment I would say, to pension, section 90, it says 'the law relating to pensions for members of the Public Services and to teachers shall remain in force and apply to persons in the Public Service'; I would like to have a new pensions Ordinance for teachers, especially. Page 13, section 41: I would like to suggest an amendment - instead of 2,000 registered voters be changed to 5,000 inhabitants; and then the number 3,000 to be 8,000. Then section 44, I want this included, 'a person would be disqualified for elections if he had served two consecutive terms immediately before this election. This will come into effect after independence day (the election after that).

Section 58(b): we want this to be included 'in regard to the provisions relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms,' no amendment shall be made to the constitution unless 90 days has elapsed. The change I want to do is this 'the bill is approved in the House of Representatives by a unanimous vote.'

Page 18, section 64: we are suggesting, or I am suggesting, that a Representative, a member of the House of Representatives, as well as a member of the Senate, and any Belizean citizen who is a qualified voter, should have the power to introduce bills.

CHAIRMAN:

Only members of the House can introduce Bills in any form of Government, but the citizen can ask him to move a Bill for him.

Mr. Ortega:

Well, I'm proposing that the Member, the Senator and the citizen have the rights.

CHAIRMAN:

How can a citizen do it if he is not a member of the House? You're telling us an impossibility. Any other point?

Mr. Ortega:

No. Any questions of Mr. Ortega? If not, we want to thank you for coming.

personas, yo creo que debia estabilizar una estacion de policia.

CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Pott, we thank you very much for coming before us.

Canuto Orosco
Cor. 8th Street and 4th Avenue

(Citizen)

CHAIRMAN:

What do you wish to tell us, Mr. Orosco?

Mr. Orosco:

I wish to tell you and the Members of the Committee that the purpose of my visit here is to give my full support to the White Paper. Included I would like to have the national flag, national anthem, a defence force and all protection for youths.

CHAIRMAN:

If you don't have any thing else, Mr. Orosco, we thank you very much.

Urbano Magaña
Libertad

(citizen)

CHAIRMAN:

What do you wish to tell us?

Mr. Magaña:

I will willingly give my support to the independence of Belize for the betterment of ourselves.

The other point of view is that I would like the strangers to have the same rights as us in our country. Those are my views.

CHAIRMAN:

We wish to thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN:

Ladies and Gentlemen, I would wish to thank you all for being present, especially those who have come forward and I wish to adjourn this session until 2:00 o'clock this afternoon. Thank you very much.

Adjourned at 12:00 noon.

Resumed at 2:00 p.m.

CHAIRMAN:

The meeting of the Joint Select Committee of the National Assembly is called to order.

Hanna Spencer
Rainbow Town
(citizen)

CHAIRMAN: Now, we are happy to hear whatever you have to say.
Ms. Spencer: According to the White Paper, I agree with everything.
CHAIRMAN: Is there anything you would like to add?
Ms. Spencer: I ask that we get independence as soon as possible.
CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much Ms. Spencer, for coming before us.

Solidad Lima
San Andres
(citizen)

CHAIRMAN: Diga, señor, lo que quiere decir.
Sr. Lima: Yo supporto el papel blanco.
CHAIRMAN: Algo mas?
Sr. Lima: Que se encluyan la bandera, el himno nacional y la oracion.
CHAIRMAN: Muchas gracias, señor Lima, de parte de esta comite.

Mitchell Walton
Corozal Town
(citizen)

CHAIRMAN: What would you like to tell us?
Mr. Walton: I support the independence of Belize with all our lands secured.
Secondly, our national Anthem.
CHAIRMAN: Anything more? What about the flag and the national prayer do you want to include them too?
Mr. Walton: Yes.
CHAIRMAN: Apart from these things, do you support the White Paper?
Mr. Walton: Yes.
CHAIRMAN: Since my colleagues have no question to ask you, Mr. Walton, I wish to thank you.

Lucio Teck
Buena Vista

(citizen)

CHAIRMAN:

What would you like to say to us, Mr. Teck

MR. TECK:

I support the Independence for Belize. I am also suggesting a few ideas. Could I please read it?

CHAIRMAN:

Yes, it is proper for you to read it but I'll read it for you. I'll ask you to sign this submission for us.

As Mr. Teck makes his first suggestion relating to the Executive; he proposes that 'in the Executive or Cabinet there should exist a balance of power so that no Minister should surpass their powers bestowed upon them as Ministers'.

Secondly, that 'the executive will have privileges and prerogatives in the government so that I suggest that the National Assembly should also have an equivalent privilege and prerogative so that it could check the powers of the executive. In this case the National Assembly should be empowered to impeach any member or members of the Executive who are guilty of robbery, civil offence, fraud, criminal offence, cover-up, embezzlements etcetera.

He thinks, thirdly, that 'the National Assembly should also be empowered to form a House Judiciary Joint Select Committee to deal with: the Judiciary matters, the Armed forces and that there should be an Armed Forces Committee, which would deal with disciplinary action, defence expenditure, draft recruitment and that there should be a Joint Committee for Foreign Affairs with the responsibility of confirming Ambassadors named by the Executive. Then he recommends under the Heading 'Free Expression' he says that it is not clearly specified. What I suggest is that each individual should be given the right to put forward his ideas whether it may be social,

religious, commercial or political. This means that every individual should have access to the radio, press or television for the above-mentioned. If this right be denied or neglected, the person has the right to sue the state or private enterprise and that the legislature will not make any laws to abridge this rights'.

Next he goes on to comment on the Election of Members of House of Representatives and he has this to say 'we need to establish that in the Constitution it will be the Supreme Court who will certify every result of any General Elections.

In the Constitution there should exist a law which sets a fixed date for the election of Members of our National Assembly and a fixed date when it expires.

There should also be a fixed date to form the Government which should be Inaugural Day, provided that there is a vote of no confidence which brings down the Government. We accept this in a Parliamentary democracy; that it also be stipulated that every election should be carried out every five years. Date should be clearly specified. Transfer of power from government to government should be on a specific date also; this day should be named Inaugural Day. This should be adopted for 1984 onwards.

Then under the heading 'citizenship' Mr. Teck makes these recommendations 'that any crime committed by the citizen, civil or criminal should be punished by the court but that the State should never have the power to strip any citizen of his or her citizenship'.

Then 'A Military Coup': There should be an impeachment for every military officer who intends to make a coup upon the duly elected Government of the people, the State should have the power to punish him or them, or extradite him from anywhere in the world. Belize should have no military government

under any reason. If the military coup succeeds or fail this would be unconstitutional. This would be a violation on our constitution. Any Member or Members of the military should be dealt with severely by our laws'.

Finally, 'In Public Emergencies, Article 7(c)': I suggest that this clause be deleted for this clause endangers the security of our liberty; or, it should be properly defined, in evidence, the types of subversions.

That was the presentation of Mr. Teck.

Members, any questions of Mr. Teck? If not, Mr. Teck, we thank you very much for your time and for your submissions.

Emir Acencio
1st Avenue, Corozal Town

(President, Belize Youth Movement,
Corozal North)

CHAIRMAN:

What does your Movement wish to say?

Mr. Ascencio:

We wish to support the White Paper with the following amendments: the national flag, the national prayer, national anthem, military duties from the age of eighteen, a pledge to the Belizean flag.

CHAIRMAN:

Those are the submissions by your Movement and you will leave us with this written submission, signed by yourself as President? We wish to thank you and your Belize Youth Movement for coming today and for sending this written submission.

Ernesto Murray (Supporter)
Beto Mena (Chairman, Village Council)
Chan Chen

CHAIRMAN:

You have something you would like to say to us about the White Paper?

Mr. Murray:

On behalf of the people of Chan Chen, we support the White Paper as presented by

conscripto aca. Que no demos el servicio para adelantar nuestra persona militar usar a los niños introducidos desde la escuela has que llegan a la edad dieciocho años y continuar adelante. Otra cosa en la escuela hay que añadir enseñanzas sobre los idiomas para lo más fácil de nuestra gente, el español que no se enseña y tambien el ingles que es apreciable. Desde que hablamos pero yo he visto que a los niños que les hace más duro aprender el ingles y después leerlo - ya por lengua tiene el español y solo aprenderían a leer en el español. Hasta ya eso es que ha olvidado que nos hace falta en el país y quisiera hagan.

CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for coming forward and letting us have your views.
Muchas gracias.

Alberto Villamil (Chairman)
Angel Tzul (Secretary)

(Patchakan)

CHAIRMAN: And you would wish to say something about the White Paper; you have brought something in writing? It's signed by the Chairman of Patchakan Village as well as three other Members. We have the following to read to the Commission:
On behalf of the council and people of Patchakan, we hereby submit our support to the White Paper. Nevertheless, we request that the following be included:

- (1) The Belizean prayer;
- (2) The Belizean anthem;
- (3) The Belizean flag (blue and white flag with the coat of arms);
- (4) The Language of Spanish, English and Maya;
- (5) The amount of square miles of our country of Belize.

CHAIRMAN: Any member has any question to ask?
Well, Mr. Villamil and Mr. Tzul, we wish to thank you very much and please, when you go

back to your village tell your village council and your people that we appreciate their sending you to represent them.

CHAIRMAN:

Oh: you have another one to submit by the Women's Group of Patchakan which says:

We the Women's Group of Patchakan hereby inform you that we support the White Paper.

We would like to include the following:

- (1) The Belizean flag;
- (2) The Belizean anthem;
- (3) The Belizean Prayer;
- (4) The language of Spanish, English and Maya;
- (5) The amount of square miles in our beloved country of Belize.

Signed by Mrs. Angela Arzu, President, and Mrs. Anastacia Acosta, Secretary.

Again, I must send a message to the Women's Group through you. Please tell them how much we appreciate their sending this to us and we thank you very much for bringing it to us.

Mr. Tzul presents another submission signed by the Chairman of the Patchakan Farmer's Cooperatives, Felipe Tzul and the Secretary, Catalino Reyes. The proposals that they make are: We the Members of the Patchakan Farmers Co-operative hereby write to notify you about our support of the White Paper. Nevertheless, we request that you include the following in the White Paper:

- (1) The Belizean national prayer;
- (2) The Belizean anthem;
- (3) The Belizean flag (blue and white flag with the coat-of-arms in the centre);
- (4) The amount of square miles in our country;
- (5) The language of Spanish, English and Maya.

Once again, I wish to thank you very much, Mr. President and the Association and the Cooperative. Please tell your members thanks for sending us their submission.

Reymunda Medina
Corozal Town
(citizen)

CHAIRMAN: You have something to tell us?
Ms. Medina: I am supporting the White Paper, including the Belizean flag and the Belizean anthem and the National mayer.
CHAIRMAN: Is there anything you would wish to have here?
Ms. Medina: And I want Independence with all its territory.
CHAIRMAN: Thank you very very much Ms. Medina for coming before us. Thank you.

Serafino Peña
(citizen)

HON. F.J. MARIN: Viene representando a alguien o de su parte de usted?
Sr. Peña: De mi parte de mi casa, de mi familia.

HE SUBMITTED WRITTEN SUBMISSION.

CHAIRMAN: Thank you very, very much Mr. Peña for coming before us and we will put this on record. Right? Thank you.

Julio Olivarez
Caledonia
(citizen)

CHAIRMAN: Do you appear on behalf of an organization or as a Citizen?
Mr. Olivarez: On behalf of my family.
CHAIRMAN: And what do you want to say to the Committee?
Mr. Olivarez: We support the Independence of Belize, with all its land intact; I want the flag to be blue and white, national prayer and anthem. And may God help all the members for the work they are doing.
CHAIRMAN: And you wish us God's help? Thank you very much Mr. Olivarez and your family for your submission.

Mario Ramirez
58 - 7th Avenue
(citizen)

CHAIRMAN:

What do you wish to tell the Committee?

Mr. Ramirez:

I have a question to ask. In the Preamble in Section (d) for moral and spiritual section I wish that in front of the word 'law', the word 'constituted' would appear.

CHAIRMAN:

Upon the rule of constituted law, that is the third line of the paragraph (d) in the Preamble.

Mr. Ramirez:

(2) That inclusion be made as to the loyalty to the flag of our country.

(3) The anthem as recognised as of when the party began to be included as a part of the Constitution.

(4) That the Citizenship that it be specified along with what we call the word 'sovereignty', that citizenship be linked with sovereignty.

CHAIRMAN:

May I just ask a question just so that I understand what you are saying? You ask for a link between the citizenship and sovereignty. It is not quite clear in my head exactly what you are after and what you mean. Perhaps you can tell us a little more.

Mr. Ramirez:

Yes, because of the world status that we might take, that we might be in the future and being that it is within the Commonwealth; I am suggesting that that word would be lawful and grammatical and what not; it's just that I would like that to be included in our Constitution so that it could further the status that we may have as an Independent Nation.

CHAIRMAN:

I see, so in other words if we become a member of the Commonwealth as the White Paper proposes and we should become first of all a citizen of Belize and secondly, subsidiary a citizen of the Commonwealth. Do you think that these follow suit and we would like that to be maintained.

Mr. Ramirez:

A chain not to be broken.

CHAIRMAN:

Now I understand it very clearly.

Well, all it remains for me to thank you very very much Mr. Ramirez for taking time out and for bringing us your ideas on the White Paper.

Robert Cuellar
San Andres Village

(citizen)

CHAIRMAN: You appear on behalf of any organization or as a citizen?

Mr. Cuellar: I appear as the Vice-Chairman of the San Andres Village.

CHAIRMAN: And what do you wish to say now, Robert?

Mr. Cuellar: Well, I am here on behalf of the People of San Andres to say that they are fully supporting the White Paper providing that you all could put in the White Paper, the flag, national anthem, national prayer; not only that, they want to say that they are having problems of Police protection and that they elected you all to work on that; that the people of the whole of this country would be more protected.

CHAIRMAN: Increase protection from the Police for the whole country.

Mr. Cuellar: Yes, for example, in Corozal we only a handful of Policemen.

CHAIRMAN: Is there anything else that you would wish to say to us about the White Paper?

Mr. Cuellar: No.

CHAIRMAN: Nothing more.

Gentlemen, I am sure this is quite clear to us. Thank you very much and we wish to thank the people of San Andres as well for sending you to come before us. Thank you.

Abeud Zetina
North Street, Corozal Town
(Belize United General Workers Union,
Libertad)

CHAIRMAN: Now, what have you to say on their behalf?

Mr. Zetina: Well, as I can see you have Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. In (j) it says

Protection of freedom of assembly and association: you have a sentence that says 'including the right to form and join trade unions for the protection of his interests. What I am saying Sir, is that a worker, he has a right within the Government law that he can join any trade unions but it doesn't say the employer has a right to accept union; the worker, the union, the worker's representation. I think that should be amended that whenever the workers, after a polling for union representation, and they win by the majority of 51 or whatever the case may be that Government should emphasize that employer must recognize the union representation at any enterprise.

CHAIRMAN: That is so long as the union represents 51% of the voters.

Mr. Zetina: Yes, sir. Yes, sir. That is all.

CHAIRMAN: Apart from that, does the Union members support the White Paper?

Mr. Zetina: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN: Mr. Zetina, please bear for us our thanks to your Union members and to yourself, for coming down this afternoon. Thank you.

Mr. Zetina: Many thanks.

Ricardo Zapata
4th Avenue, Corozal Town

(citizen)

HON. F.J. MARIN: Que dices?

Sr. Zapata: El Papel Blanco es perfectamenta bien.

CHAIRMAN: Y que mas?

Sr. Zapata: La forma de la ley esta demasiado bueno y experamos que si haga con la voluntad del todo el puelbo de Corozal.

CHAIRMAN: Well, I would wish to say to you, Mr. Zapata, thanks for coming before us and letting us know your opinions.

Sr. Zapata: Que dios bendiga a todos.

CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

Julio Katch
Xaibe

(representing a group of citizens from
Xaibe)

CHAIRMAN:

Que dice?

WRITTEN SUBMISSION HANDED IN AND READ BY
HON. F.J. MARIN

HON. F.J. MARIN:

La voz de los votantes de la aldea de Xaibe del P.U.P. unicamente una cosa queremos, la Independencia y la libertad, la que hemos luchado mucho con nuestros ministros y que es concedido para nosotros. No debemos hacernos para atras, sea como sea, no debimos torcer los brazos por un gobierno Guatemalteco, porque no somos Guatemaltecos. Asi como dice Don Aranda, si las cosas no marchan bien, tomaran las leyes por sus manos. Que dios nos ha dado tambien señores? Por eso hermanos votantes del P.U.P. de toda aldea, hagamos un solo pensamiento para ver el cambio del gobierno que no conocemos, solamente escuchamos su voz, y su ley. Si se nos llega a presentar, puede ser un conejo que no esta mandando, un gorilla, o un toro o un diablo con cuernos. Por eso seamos firmes come hombres, y las mujeres como mjeres, y en su puesto come Dios nos puso.

No tengan miedo, nosotros que estamos acostumbrados a sufrir golpes de la vida y del gobierno que hemos conocido. Nosotros pobres de la aldea por poquito vamos a ser esclavos del gobierno para siempre. Le damos las gracias a Dios y al Primer Ministro Jorge Price y al Ministro Florencio Marin que ahora somos orgullosos de ser propios de nuestro trabajos.

Muchas gracias.

CHAIRMAN:

Thank you very much Mr. Katch for bringing that message from your little group and thank them very much for sending you today and for sending the message, alright? Thank you.

Florence Franzoi
4 Santa Rita Road, Corozal Town

(citizen)

CHAIRMAN: Now tell us what you wanted to say.
Mr. Franzoi: I support the White Paper, I would like blue and white flag, national prayer and the anthem to be included in the Constitution as well.

CHAIRMAN: Well, thank you very very much Ms. Franzoi for coming forward and giving us the benefit of your opinion. Thank you.

Patrick Shield
Corozal Town

(citizen)

CHAIRMAN: Patrick Shield, what would you wish to say to us?

Mr. Shield: I agree with the White Paper and the man that made the Paper is not a Jackass - The Honourable George Cadle Price. I support the White Paper, you know, God never made a fool, but some people make a fool of themselves.

CHAIRMAN: Is there anything else you would like to say about the White Paper?

Mr. Shield: The White Paper left out the Anthem, the prayer and the flag; and I want Independence right now. That is all.

CHAIRMAN: Thank you very very much Mr. Shield for coming forward.
Thanks to you.

Mr. Shield: All right.

Alfredo Perez
18 Church Street, Corozal Town

(citizen)

CHAIRMAN: What would you wish to say to us Mr. Perez?

Mr. Perez: Well, I have read the White Paper. I know it has some big words I had to look at my dictionary after reading it.

I think I support the White Paper and I think Government should go direct with it.

CHAIRMAN: Is there any other comment you would wish to make?

Mr. Perez: Well, I don't have anything else to say; and I support it after reading it.

CHAIRMAN: Well, I wish to thank you very much Mr. Perez for coming forward and letting us know what is in your mind, that is the only way we can find out. Thank you very, very much.

Coronel ...
(citizen and on behalf of my family)

CHAIRMAN: What do you wish to say to us?

Mrs. Castillo: First of all, the way this Committee is going about taking the opinion of the people, I think it is a little bit unfair, because first of all I didn't think I had a chance to see you, but now you are asking for people to come forward. There are many people who would like to give their opinion on such an important subject as independence. There are a lot of things in the White Paper that we cannot accept.

CHAIRMAN: Well, the White Paper because our concern is on the White Paper. Would you like to tell us the things you do not accept.

Mrs. Castillo: First of all, I think it should have been done in simpler words so that more people would be able to understand it. Well, I think that is all I have to say on behalf of my family. Personally - I think that more people should have been able to come in and express their opinion.

CHAIRMAN: Well, thank you very, very much Mrs. Castillo for coming forward. We are very pleased to hear from you and your family. Thank you.

Mrs. Castillo: Thank you.

Gertrudes Acosta
Cristo Rey

(Representing Cristo Rey Farmers
Cooperatives)

Mr. Acosta: I have a letter for you. I can't speak
english too good.

CHAIRMAN: Now, does your cooperative wish to say any-
thing about the Constitution?

I will give you a copy and please study it.
We will not be in Corozal but could your
cooperative please write us a letter in
Belmopan and tell us what you think about
it. Do you support the White Paper?

Mr. Acosta: I support it.

I am the Chairman of the Cristo Rey Cooperative.

CHAIRMAN: I see and thank you very much and thank your
Cooperative Association for coming forward.

Herman Sanchez
Luciano Tzib
Valerio Pott

CHAIRMAN: And are you all officers of the Cane Farmers
Association? May I ask you what office you
hold? Mr. Sanchez - Chairman for Belize
Cane Farmers; Tzib - Corozal Cane Farmers
Pott - Representing San Victor Branch.
So you are all from the Corozal Executive
Right?

Well, thank you for coming forward and you
are representing the Association am I correct?
Would you please tell us what the Association
thinks about the White Paper?

Mr. Sanchez: Well, first of all, going through this White
Paper there isn't anything that we can be
against: just include national flag,
national prayer, national anthem. We want
the blue and white flag to be our national
flag to be put in the Constitution; that
the term of office should be no more than
five years. That is for the House of
Representatives. We from the Association
support the White Paper.

A SUBMISSION FROM BUENA VISTA VILLAGE COUNCIL

"We the Village Council of Buena Vista hereby support the White Paper issued by our Government, and would like the following points included:

1. That our present flag be made the National flag.
 2. That our national anthem be "lands of the Gods.
 3. That our present National prayer continues to be the same.
 4. All public offices be held by Belizean born nationals of Belize born nationals parentage e.g. Governor-General, Senators and Members of the House of Representatives.
- We trust that our humble request be considered.

We remain,

Yours respectfully,

SGD. Valerio Pott

CHAIRMAN:
Mr. Sanchez:

We thank you very much and your Village Council. We feel that Permanent Secretaries cannot be assigned to two or more departments at the same time. One Permanent Secretary should be assigned only to one Department at a time. Apart from that do you support it?

CHAIRMAN:
Mr. Sanchez:

Yes, we support it.

CHAIRMAN:

Well, I wish to thank you three gentlemen. First of all, we thank you for your time; I know you have a lot to do.

Secondly, I wish to thank the Association who have sent you to represent them.

Thirdly, your village council of Buena Vista for their recommendations which it has submitted. Thank you gentlemen very much for coming.

Lourdes Noble
35th North Corozal Town
(representing his family)

Ms. Noble: Quiero dar el apoyo al Papel Blanco pero.....
HON. F.J. MARIN: She wants to have included: the national prayer,
national anthem and the national flag, and
that all youths of the age of 18 should
be in the Military Service.
Ms. Novle: Eso es todo.
CHAIRMAN: Thank you very very much for coming before us
and making a clear statement Ms. Noble.

Felipe Carasco
#2 South Street
(citizen)

HON. F.J. MARIN: He would like the national anthem, national
prayer and national flag to be included.
CHAIRMAN: We thank you very much Mr. Carasco for
coming before us.

Valdemar Castillo
Corozal Town

CHAIRMAN: Mr. Valdemar Castillo, you are representing
the people of Corozal North, right?
Mr. Castillo: Chairman and members of the Commission, I
sincerely believe that this is a good
document, the White Paper and I personally
support it.
Just for clarification sake, I would like to
ask two questions: the first one is on Page
8 - No. 12 Part (b) - just a little clarifica-
tion: Any other person who has been resident
continuously in Belize for a period of five
years immediately prior to the day of
Independence, what I want to know is this:
the person involved will have to be residents -
would they have to have a residential document?
CHAIRMAN: First of all, I would like to answer it
generally and say that here we contemplate
that there is going to be a citizenship law

which is going to support and back up the things which are said here and is going to amplify very much more closely and in detail all the requirements that are going to be made of any person who claims either citizenship or the right to registration. That's the first I would like to say; we could not possibly put down all the details here. What we have attempted to do is to set out just the principles of those people who would be able to make an application for registration. That's what these are about; people who would be able to make application. It doesn't mean it will be necessarily be accepted. There would be qualifications set out there. There would be details there. There would be specification as to what they must do. But in general, what we are talking about is a person who has been continuously residents and can prove it. That person should have been registered as an Alien, but the fact that he or she has not been registered as an Alien wouldn't preclude that person from coming forward and proving good conduct. Proving good conduct and good behaviour and all the other requirements which would be a law that would back up the constitution.

Mr. Castillo:

I accept it.

The other thing is on Page 10 No. 21 -

They are talking about the Attorney-General, I just wanted to get it a little clear whether the Attorney-General would be from the House of Representatives or will he be someone from outside of the House?

CHAIRMAN:

The Attorney General will be a Member of the National Assembly, might necessarily not be from the House of Representatives, he might be from the Senate, but he would have to be a member of the National Assembly and he would be a Minister. As our present Attorney General that's what is contemplated there. The Public Officer would be the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Mr. Castillo:

Finally, I would like to request that in this White Paper, as we are a Christian Community, Christian Country and everyday we pray to the creation for guidance and protection that we include the Belizean national prayer; and I would also like to request that we include the symbols of Independence which is our Belizean national anthem 'Lands of the Gods' and the Belizean national flag, which is the blue and white flag with the sub umbra floreo in the centre.

CHAIRMAN:

Thank you very much for coming forward and giving us the benefit of your time.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN:

Unless there is anybody else who would wish to come forward; and there is still time.

If there is nobody else, who would wish to come forward, I will now declare this Sitting concluded until tomorrow morning at 9:00 o'clock in Orange Walk Town.

The Sitting is now declared adjourned.

Adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

February 23, 1981

Select Committee:

After studying the Proposals for a Independence Constitution it is crystal clear that Government intends to establish a dictatorial Government.

Sec. 21 dealing with Attorney General and
Sec. 37 dealing with Governor General and Prime Minister and many other sections clearly indicate the above.

If Government intends to provide citizens with a constitution that elevates Attorney General, Governor General and Prime Minister above the LAW this document must be considered dangerous, treacherous, and not of good faith.

Therefore, THE PEOPLE OF COROZAL, because of the lack of confidence in the Illegal Government and because of the fact that they understand that a satisfactory settlement must be secured on the Guatemalan claim and because they demand that their must be a proper defense guarantee and not a Shimay-Shanny promise by the British to protect us for a very limited time after independence and because they also demand that the Electoral System be revised, categorically refuses to offer any suggestions to improve the "White Paper" proposals for a constitution.

THE PEOPLE OF COROZAL also demand based on experiences in the last sixteen or more years of rule by the P.U.P. Government that the present Government be dissolved before any further steps are taken to plunge their Country into a dangerous and most unsafe Independence. If the Government has any doubts of the feelings of the people, a properly supervised Referendum will clearly prove the people dissatisfaction.

Signed

E. H. LONGSWORTH
Chairman U.D.P.
North Division
Corozal.

cc: Leader of Opposition - Dr. T. Aranda
cc: His Excellency The Governor of Belize

o

February 23, 1981

A.C.E.W.B.
Association For The Concern Of
The Economic Welfare Of Belize,
Corozal Town, Corozal
Belize, Central America.

National Select Committee.

Hon. Gentlemen:

The association on behalf of its members of the Corozal District rejects the "White Paper" and any discussions that would bring Belize to Independence under the present system of government:

- (i) The association charges that the last General Election was fraudulent and not acceptable.
- (ii) Governments' activities in its drive for Independence certainly is not in accordance with the will of the people.
- (iii) The association demands an internationally supervised referendum on the Independence issue.
- (iv) The association demand a reformation of the Electoral system and that the executive and workers include equal representation of members of both political parties.
- (v) The association demands a security guarantee arrangement which will be suitable and acceptable to the people of Belize.
- (vi) The association demands that there be a settlement of the Guatemala claim before Belize becomes Independent.

The association argues that Belize must achieve its Independence at the earliest time possible, however, not without adhering to the above mention points.

Yours truly,

signed

(G. RIVERO)
Vice President for Pres.

cc: The Leader of the Opposition - Dr. T. Aranda
cc: His Excellency the Governor

February 21, 1981

Corozal Town Board
6 First Street-South,
Corozal Town,
Belize C.A.

Dear Sir,

In response to your letter dated 3 February, 1981 re "White Paper", herein is the present stand of the Corozal Town Board for and on behalf of its constituents as decided at a 'Special Meeting' of the Board on February 20, 1981.

We reject the "White Paper" in its entirety because:

- A. The White Paper was written solely by the PUP Representatives;
- B. There is no need for a Constitution for Belize until the Anglo-Guatemalan Dispute over Belize is settled.

Kindly convey this message to the House of Representatives at the very first opportunity.

Signed

(ISRAEL ALPUCHE)
MAYOR, C.T.B.

The Clerk
National Assembly of Belize
National Assembly Building
Belmopan, Belize

cc: Hon. Leader of the Opposition
The Reporter Press
Amandala Press
Beacon Press