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LYNDON B. JOHNSON **(/PEOPLE/PRESIDENT/LYNDO** **N-B-JOHNSON)**

Remarks of Welcome to Prime Minister Burnham of Guyana on the South Lawn at the White House.

July 21, 1966

Mr. Prime Minister, Mr. Secretary:

We are delighted today to welcome the distinguished Prime Minister to the Capital of our country.

Mr. Prime Minister, you are welcome as an old friend, as the Prime Minister of a sister American State, and as the most distinguished leader of the newest independent nation in our hemisphere.

A few days ago we celebrated the 190th anniversary of our independence. You are embarked upon your first year.

We know, as you do, that the early years of independence are years of challenge and trial, but they are also of great hope and promise.

The task of nation-building really never stops. We devoted the first decades to mastering the frontier of our rivers and our forests, of our plains and our mountains. And then next we tackled the frontier of industrial

development. Today we are pushing forward the frontiers of human aspirations and the needs of humankind.

We are now engaged in a great struggle to eliminate the last elements of racial discrimination from our society. We are pressing the attack on poverty with equal zeal. We will not rest until our entire educational system has been revamped. We are equally as determined to improve the health of our young, to meet the medical needs of our old.

We are committed to rebuilding our blighted cities and preserving the beauty of our land and our landscape. And while doing all of this at home, we will never falter in our commitment overseas in the defense of freedom and in support of economic development.

Guyana has many of the same frontiers that we have to conquer. You have an interior to be opened, a modernization process to be undertaken, and economic and social goals to be achieved.

You begin your task with a heritage from England not unlike the one possessed by our forefathers two centuries ago. With dedication and patience, skill and hard work the Guyanese people under your leadership will score impressive victories for yourselves and for the other free nations of this hemisphere. I think you know, Mr. Prime Minister, of our desire and our willingness to try to assist you in every way we can with your task.

Your presence here symbolizes the ties which unite us and the common objectives we share. You are an important part of this hemisphere. Your security involves our own security. Your welfare touches our own welfare. Your success in making democracy work will strengthen the exercise of democracy elsewhere. So we look to the day when you will join us in the councils of the Organization of American States and become full participants in our Alliance for Progress.

You will be among close friends, Mr. Prime Minister, here in Washington and as you travel throughout our country.

We are glad you have come and we hope you enjoy your stay.

Thank you very much.

Note: The President spoke at 12:40 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, where Prime Minister Linden Forbes Burnham was given a formal welcome with full military honors. The President's opening words referred to the Prime Minister and to Secretary of State Dean Rusk.

Prime Minister Burnham responded as follows:

Mr. President:

On behalf of the Government and the people of my country of Guyana, may I express the deepest gratitude for the warmth of your welcome and the warmth of the weather which you have provided for me today.

We have in the past--especially in the more recent past--been undoubtedly impressed by the friendship which we have recognized on the part of the United States of America for our own growing country, even in our most difficult days.

We have no doubt that we belong to the hemisphere. We have no doubt, from past performances, that we can look forward to continued assistance and a kindly friendship from the United States Government and people. And we have no doubt that small though we are, young though we are, so far as independence is concerned, that we have a tale to tell in this Western Hemisphere and that we can make our contribution to the preservation and maintenance of democracy.

I thank you once again, Mr. President.

Lyndon B. Johnson, Remarks of Welcome to Prime Minister Burnham of Guyana on the South Lawn at the White House. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project
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