

TRADE UNION ORGANISATION AND  
INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS IN TRINIDAD.



COLONIAL OFFICE

TRADE UNION ORGANISATION  
AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS  
IN TRINIDAD

Report

by Mr. F. W. DALLEY

LONDON : HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

1947

ONE SHILLING NET

Colonial No. 215

## CONTENTS

## Report :

	PARAS. NOS.	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION .. .. .	1 - 2	1
II. PROCEDURE .. .. .	3 - 8	1
III. GENERAL BACKGROUND :		
(i) Population and Occupational Distribution .. .. .	9 - 11	3
(ii) Races and Racial Distribution .. .. .	12	4
(iii) Industrial and Social Conditions .. .. .	13 - 14	4
IV. THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT :		
(i) Short History .. .. .	15 - 19	4
(ii) Legislation : Trade Union Ordinances .. .. .	20 - 21	6
(iii) Present-day Organisation and Inter-union Relations ..	22 - 25	6
(iv) The Trades Union Council .. .. .	26 - 28	7
V. THE STRIKES AND DISTURBANCES 1946-1947 :		
(i) The Housing Commission Strike .. .. .	29	8
(ii) The Waterfront Strike .. .. .	30 - 49	8
(iii) The Oilfields Strike Riots and Disturbances .. .. .	50 - 60	13
(iv) The Public Works Strike .. .. .	61 - 65	16
(v) The Sugar Estates Strike .. .. .	66 - 72	19
VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS :		
(i) General Conditions .. .. .	73	23
(1) The Cost of Living : Minimum Wage : Trade Boards .. .. .	74 - 78	23
(2) Housing : Water Supply : Sanitation .. .. .	79 - 80	25
(3) Social Welfare : Education .. .. .	81	26
(4) Casual Labour .. .. .	82	26
(5) Child Labour .. .. .	83 - 85	26
(ii) The Political Movement : The Labour Party .. .. .	86 - 87	27
(iii) The Trade Union Ordinances .. .. .	88	28
(iv) Lessons of the Strikes .. .. .	89	28
(1) The Waterfront .. .. .	90 - 95	28
(2) The Oilfields : Sugar Estates : Public Works ..	96	31
(v) The Police .. .. .	97	31
(1) General .. .. .	98	32
(2) The Oilfields .. .. .	99	32
(3) The Waterfront .. .. .	100	32
(4) The Public Works .. .. .	101	33
(5) The Red House invasion and the raid on Butler's Headquarters .. .. .	102	33
(vi) The Future of the Trade Unions .. .. .	103 - 107	34
(vii) Negotiating Machinery .. .. .	108 - 109	35
(viii) Economic Survey and Development .. .. .	110 - 111	36
VII. APPRECIATION AND THANKS .. .. .	112	37

## LIST OF APPENDICES

	PAGE
1. Workers' Trade Unions Functioning, 1947 .. .. .	39
2. Strikes in Trinidad 1946-47 .. .. .	40
3. Statement by the Q.W.T.U. on the December Strike in the Oilfields, issued 3rd March, 1947 .. .. .	41
4. Waterfront Strike : Letter from a Legislative Councillor and reply by Sir Bede Clifford .. .. .	43
5. Waterfront Strike : Government communiqué issued to make their attitude clear to both strikers and public .. .. .	44
6. Waterfront Strike : Additional Statement (not issued) by the T.U.C. ..	44
7. Waterfront Strike (A) Communiqué issued 5th December, 1946 .. ..	45
(B) Extract from telegram from the Governor to the Secretary of State and his reply .. .. .	46
8. Copy of Handbill issued by T. Uriah Butler .. .. .	46
9. (A) Correspondence between the British Empire Union and the Oilfields Employers' Association .. .. .	47
(B) Letter from T. Uriah Butler to the Governor of Trinidad .. ..	49
10. Butler's Notice of General Strike .. .. .	50
11. Extracts from the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Cost-of-Living in Nigeria .. .. .	50
12. Housing Reforms carried out .. .. .	51
13. Correspondence with T. Uriah Butler regarding the scope of the Inquiry..	53
14. Scheme for Training West Indian Trade Union Officials .. .. .	54

APPENDIX No. 1  
WORKERS' TRADE UNIONS FUNCTIONING 1947

TITLE	DATE OF REGISTRATION	DESCRIPTION
Amalgamated Building and Wood-workers' Union	30.3.36	For all building trade workers
*Federated Workers' Trade Union	27.8.37	For all workers in all trades and industries
*Oilfields Workers' Trade Union	15.9.37	For workers in Oil Industry
*Seamen and Waterfront Workers' Trade Union	19.11.37	For all waterfront workers
*Public Works and Public Service Workers' Trade Union	26.11.37	For all workers in trades and industries
*All Trinidad Sugar Estates and Factories Workers' Trade Union	8.6.38	For workers in the Sugar Industry
*All Trinidad Transport and General Workers' Trade Union	8.6.38	For all workers in all trades and industries
*Railway Workers' Trade Union revived 1945 after lapse of four years	25.7.38	For all male workers of the Trinidad Government Railways
*Civil Service Association of Trinidad and Tobago	23.3.39	For all officers on the fixed establishment of the Civil Service
*Trinidad and Tobago Teachers' Union	10.2.45	For all teachers in schools
Southern Taxi Owners' and Drivers' Association	11.7.45	For taxi owners and drivers
*British Empire Workers' Peasants' and Ratepayers' Trade Union	29.6.46	For all workers in all trades and industries
Tobago Peasants' and Industrial Workers' Trade Union	4.1.47	For all workers in all trades and industries
National Chinese Seamen's Union	27.3.47	For all Chinese Seamen
Petroleum Workers' Trade Union	May 1947	For all junior staff workers in the oil industry
†Women Workers' Trade Union	—	For all female workers in all trades and industries
*†British Colonial Taxpayers' and All Workers' Trade Union	—	For all workers in all trades and industries

\* Sent representatives to preliminary meeting 21st April, 1947

† Furnished information

APPENDIX No. 2  
STRIKES IN TRINIDAD 1946/7

INDUSTRY AND OCCUPATION	TRADE UNION CONCERNED	NO. OF WORKPEOPLE WHO WENT ON STRIKE	DATE		CAUSE OR OBJECT
			BEGAN	ENDED	
Government and Municipal Departments : (Building and Construction Electricity Supply Transport and Sanitation)	Federated Workers' Trade Union	1,522	1.2.46	18.2.46	Reduction in wage rates of 26 Lorry Loaders of Planning and Housing
Waterfront : (Stevedores & Dock Workers)	Scamen and Waterfront Workers' Trade Union	2,000 (approx.)	8.11.46	5.12.46	Wages and working conditions
Oil : (All classes of workers)	British Empire Workers' Peasants' and Ratepayers' Trade Union	3,220	19.12.46	petered out after 15.1.47	Non-recognition of Trade Union as bargaining body on behalf of workers
Government Departments : (All Industrial Employees)	Public Works and Public Service Workers' Trade Union	858	8.1.47	petered out after 4.2.47	Wages
P.O.S. City Council : (Scavengers)	Unorganised	490	8.1.47	24.1.47	Wages

## APPENDIX No. 3

STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE OILFIELDS WORKERS' TRADE UNION  
ON THE STRIKE IN THE OILFIELDS, DECEMBER, 1946

THE OILFIELDS Workers' Trade Union which represents the vast majority of oil workers in this Colony is recognised by the oil industry as the collective negotiating medium for wages, hours and working conditions for the labour factor of said industry. Such recognition was conceded on the 29th March, 1938. The Union itself was formed on the 25th July, 1937.

There has been no break in industrial relationship between our Union and the industry. The first major dispute was settled by arbitration, the award of which was issued on 21st January, 1939. Wage increases, holidays with pay and certain improvements in working conditions were obtained as a consequence.

On the 2nd February, 1940, a further agreement with the industry was executed. This agreement provided for yet further general increases on basic wage rates, together with establishment of principle of payment of cost of living bonuses on sliding scale over and above basic rates to be regulated by movement of Government Official Cost of Living Index Figures; and creation of Joint Conciliation Board for Industry, having equal number of representatives for Employers and Union. This agreement was for duration of the war and six months thereafter.

At close of war new agreements were negotiated and executed. On 18th December, 1945, and 30th January, 1946, the existing agreement and supplementary agreement were signed, again providing for further wage adjustments, improvements in working conditions, continuation of payments of cost of living bonuses, and apart from continuation of Joint Conciliation Board at the centre, the principle of establishing joint consultative committees of Employers' and Workers' representatives in each oilfield was agreed to. The industry also undertook to permit the exhibition on notice boards on their plants notices dealing with Union matters and to provide permits to Union officials wishing to enter company plants on Union business outside working hours. This agreement is operative for a period of two years. At any time after 12th September of current year either party may give to the other three months' notice in writing of its desire to amend or intention to terminate this agreement.

Throughout the industrial relationship between our Union and oil industry both parties at all material times have scrupulously observed every agreement to which their accredited representatives have attached their signatures.

To evaluate existing situation it is necessary to appreciate the foregoing background. In September, 1945, Tubal Uriah Butler who had been previously interned for conducting activities inimical to the successful prosecution of the war, appeared in the oil belt and commenced propagating hostile propaganda against O.W.T.U. Vulgar abuse of its leadership and ridicule and contempt of democratic procedures were the lines harped upon. Permission to form a union had been obtained by Butler and his colleagues from the Registrar of Trade Unions. This Union was registered towards end of June, 1946.

Whilst industry is executing terms of existing agreement with O.W.T.U. Butler, in name of his Fascist Union, served demands on oil companies demanding compliance within 48 hours otherwise he would call strike in industry. This occurred during November, 1946. O.W.T.U. promptly reminded and instructed workers of their duty to honour existing industrial agreements and not pay any attention to frothy propaganda of irresponsible demagogues. No strike eventually took place.

But Butler again served notice that on the 19th December, 1946, he would bring about strike in oil industry as he was not satisfied with reply he had received from representatives of industry and Government. In printed circulars he publicly proclaimed his belief that he "alone had legal right to negotiate agreement and smash or ignore old ones as may be found expedient".

O.W.T.U. again countered by pointing out to workers and public that it had no

dispute with oil companies at the present time and was not calling, supporting nor associating itself with any strike in the oil industry. Workers were warned to remain on their jobs and perform their work and to ignore foolish and irresponsible advice given by Uriah Butler.

The vast majority of oil workers heeded O.W.T.U. advice and instruction. A very small minority, however, stopped working in obedience to Butler's call. The normal operations of industry were not seriously affected by this abortive strike. Instead of accepting the logic of events which indicated clearly that the vast majority of oil workers had no faith or belief in Butler's unorthodox and Fascist methods, unlawful strategy was then employed. Intimidation and molestation in certain areas of those going to work started by strikers and hooligan elements who had not been employed in the industry.

Crude oil was thrown in the public road with a view to capsizing buses conveying workmen to work; bottles and stones were thrown at passing vehicles, particularly at nights; and crowds at certain points would block vehicles and pull out workmen on their way to work, forcibly relieving them of their breakfast baskets and tools and turning them back from work.

In the early stages the Police Authorities were exceedingly tolerant. The oil companies issued a statement in local press revealing to the public the nature of the correspondence they had with the Butler group and then issued public notices fixing a date for strikers to resume work. Situation became tense as O.W.T.U. followers became increasingly resentful and dissatisfied with intimidation and molestation tactics of the Butler group and began arming themselves with lethal weapons to protect themselves in going to and from jobs.

The Police then took a firm hand in dealing with the situation. All attempts at mob rule were put down. Government issued certain emergency regulations. Official posters indicating local labour laws relating to strikes, picketing and protection of property were conspicuously displayed for information of all concerned.

Firm handling by Police brought about an immediate cessation of intimidation and molestation tactics. But a new strategy was immediately embarked upon. Sabotage began. Fire was set to a number of oil wells, and water reservoirs in one district were emptied. The Legislative Council at this stage enacted an emergency powers ordinance and under its provisions the Governor issued a proclamation ordering Butler to leave the oil area and imposed a nine-hour curfew in one of the oil districts. These measures had the effect of curbing mob rule hooliganism, arson, sabotage and terrorism. Viewed in its correct perspective the strike was not primarily called for improvement in the conditions of employment for oil workers but to usurp the position of collective negotiating medium for the workers held by O.W.T.U. for the past ten years. The plea for better conditions had been used as a smoke-screen to disguise the real objective. Adequate machinery already exists for ventilating workers' grievances in oil industry as the established record clearly reveals. Butler's Fascist group is a disturbing element and his outlook is that of the charlatan. I was labour candidate for St. Patrick seat in the last July Legislative Council Elections. Butler opposed my candidature. He was in the service of Timothy Roodal a local millionaire who owns an oilfield at Fyzabad. The Roodal field is not a member of the Oilfields Employers' Association which represents the Trinidad Oil Industry in industrial negotiations with the O.W.T.U. Division in the labour vote created by Butler's queer activities caused capitalist millionaire Roodal to win the election.

Wage rates and conditions of employment on the Roodal field are inferior to and worse than those obtaining in the industry generally, which Butler has miserably failed to dislocate. Garbled and sensational reports having little or no relation to reality have recently been cabled to the London *Daily Mirror* by the New York correspondent of the same journal who came to the Colony after the events he is writing about had occurred. These reports have painted an entirely inaccurate picture of the true situation and it is very peculiar that the O.W.T.U. has never been once approached with a view to ascertaining facts in our possession. People abroad not knowing the



facts may be misled into believing that bad industrial relations exist in our oil industry when that is not the case. The right of oil workers to bargain collectively with them has long been recognised by the captains of this industry and since this recognition of O.W.T.U. all wage rates, hours of work and working conditions in the industry have been regulated by agreements executed from time to time. Whilst there is room for improvement and having regard to the prosperity of the industry it is only fair to state that the highest wage rates and cost of living bonuses paid anywhere in Trinidad and Tobago are those paid by the oil industry. Let it be clearly understood, however, that it is not O.W.T.U. view that the millenium has been established here. O.W.T.U. is honouring its existing agreement which has eleven months to run whereafter, as in the past, legitimate steps will be taken with a view to advancing and protecting workers' welfare. Meanwhile O.W.T.U. will continue to fight vigorously any Fascist intrusion seeking to destroy our democratic trade union.

JOHN ROJAS,

PRESIDENT-GENERAL.

CPD/AMM  
3rd March, 1947.

APPENDIX No. 4

LETTER FROM A MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND  
REPLY BY SIR BEDE CLIFFORD

(See paragraph 40)

12th November, 1946

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

THE UNION Secretary, Mr. Hartley, has made certain specific statements as follows :—

1. Since giving official notice of the strike, they have received no communication whatever from Government or the Shipping Association. No offer of arbitration has therefore been received.
2. If such an offer is made, the Union is prepared to submit to arbitration the proposals which they have put forward to the Shipping Association and which the Association have declined to discuss.
3. The ultimatum published in this morning's Press ought properly to have been sent formally to the Union.
4. If arbitration should take place, the Union will expect all strike-breaking action to cease during the period of negotiations.

I have the honour to be,

P. J. SOLOMON.

12th November, 1946

DEAR MR. SOLOMON,

I was busy in Council when your letter arrived and sent a message asking you to place your proposals before the Industrial Adviser. I have sent your letter to him and have asked him to see you about it, but Paragraph 4 suggests that you contemplate the strike continuing while arbitration is going on. This as you know is not at all in accord with practice since if both sides accept arbitration and pledge themselves to be bound by the award of the arbitrator (which is usually made retrospective) there can be no purpose in remaining on strike.

In haste,

Yours sincerely,

BEDE CLIFFORD.

## APPENDIX No. 5

## WATERFRONT STRIKE: GOVERNMENT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED TO MAKE THEIR ATTITUDE CLEAR TO BOTH STRIKERS AND PUBLIC

THE STRIKE called by the Seamen and Waterfront Workers' Trade Union on the 8th November, which still continues, has involved a complete stoppage of work on the Port of Spain wharves.

In order to ensure that food supplies do not fall below the level required to maintain life, the Government has invoked the assistance of the Military to off-load essential food which would otherwise be carried away in the ships bringing it whose departure cannot be delayed.

Both the Union and the Shipping Association of Trinidad have published statements relating to their case. The Association is not, however, the only employer of labour involved in the dispute, since the Wharves Administration also employs dock labour and the number it employs is actually larger than that employed by the Association. It is desirable, therefore, that Government should state the position of the Wharves Administration as an employer of labour involved in the dispute. The facts are these. On the 15th October the Union submitted representations and proposals to the Wharves Administration for a revision of wages and working conditions and requested that they might be discussed. Discussion was held on the 29th October when no agreement was reached but the acting General Manager of the Department made it clear that he was prepared to arrange a further meeting if desired by the Union. The Union representatives replied that should a further meeting be necessary they would communicate with the acting General Manager. The next communication received from the Union was a notice that the Union would create a stoppage of work within 24 hours. The Wharves Administration immediately reminded the Union that it had been and was still prepared to arrange a further meeting if desired. The Wharves Administration is prepared to submit the case to arbitration, if the Union agrees, provided work is resumed. A communication in this sense has been sent to the Union.

The responsibility of Government in the situation which has arisen is not of course confined to that of an employer of labour. The procurement of supplies to maintain life in the Colony and the preservation of law and order are primary Government responsibilities. The steps taken to off-load essential food have been mentioned. In the matter of law and order the Commissioner of Police has been instructed to take all necessary measures to prevent breaches of the peace.

## APPENDIX No. 6

## ADDITIONAL STATEMENT PREPARED BY THE T.U.C. OFFICERS ON THE WATERFRONT DISPUTE BUT NEVER ISSUED

ARISING out of exploratory conversations which T.U.C. mediators had with the Industrial Adviser and representatives of the Seamen and Waterfront Workers' Trade Union and the Shipping Association of Trinidad on Thursday, 21st November, it was revealed that while representatives of the Shipping Association were not disposed to discuss during the joint conference held between the Association and Union's representatives on 21st October, and later 30th October, when the Acting Industrial Adviser was Chairman, the portion of the Union's demands which dealt with wages increases and hours of work: the Association's representatives maintained that they had expressed willingness to conduct conversations on several other matters arising out of the demands which in their view were less contentious.

That being so, representatives of the Association stated that the portion of the T.U.C.'s statement which appeared in the daily newspapers on 13th November, viz.:

“ Viewing all surrounding circumstances, the Council are forced to place on record their unqualified condemnation of the attitude and behaviour evinced throughout by the employers which goaded the workers into taking direct action ”, was an inaccurate pronouncement which was rather uncharitable to them.

T.U.C. mediators explained that prior to the release of that statement the full history which led to the dockers' strike was read from the Union's official files which contained the relevant correspondence and minutes, and after careful analysis of those documents had come to the conclusion which was expressed in the statement. But now that the parties to the dispute have all agreed that the minutes were not verbatim but rather a record of the substance of what transpired at the joint conference of 30th October, T.U.C. mediators have admitted that if the full picture now given to them was produced in the minutes the pronouncement referred to might have been of a different character.

#### APPENDIX No. 7 (A)

##### COMMUNIQUE TO THE PRESS

REPRESENTATIVES of the Seamen and Waterfront Workers' Trade Union were received at their request by His Excellency the Governor this morning at Government House. The Colonial Secretary and the Acting General Manager of the Wharves Administration were present.

The Trade Union representatives complained that, although the Wharves Administration had “ Called on ” 800 men at seven o'clock this morning, no opportunity to work was available at the Harbour Engineer's branch. It was pointed out that among the requirements for work this morning which had been communicated to the Trade Union yesterday, men of the Harbour Engineer's branch had not been specifically included. The Union representatives stated that they had assumed from the terms of the communication made to them, which mentioned “ a number of other workers in the industry ”, that some of the men for this branch would be required. It was explained that, as a result of the strike, work at the Harbour Engineer's branch had been reduced to a minimum and that some days must elapse before work at that branch would return to normal. There was reason to anticipate that in the course of the next few days expansion of work in the branch would enable a few more men to be engaged. The Wharves Administration would investigate the position in this respect and undertook to explore the possibility of including in the roll of casual labour engaged for other branches of the department some of the men offering themselves for employment with the Harbour Engineer. The position in the branch under the Harbour Engineer's control is exceptional in that it contains so many former workers who are still at work.

It is to be noted that a return submitted on 30th November showed that of 116 men engaged in the Harbour Engineer's department 60 were men employed there prior to the strike, that of the 79 men at present employed on the slipway all were employed prior to the strike and no new men had been taken on, and of the 193 at present employed by the Harbour Master only 34 were new men.

His Excellency reminded the Union of the terms of the formula accepted by all parties at Government House on the 2nd December, and expressed regret and disappointment that 800 men had been delayed and kept from work for the sole purpose of discussing the question of the employment in the Harbour Engineer's branch of a number of men for whom no work was immediately available. It was felt that investigation of the position of these men could have been undertaken while work was proceeding elsewhere on the docks.

In the course of the discussion it was agreed that it must be the exclusive responsibility of the Wharves Administration to determine what men and how many of them should be employed.

5th December, 1946.

## APPENDIX No. 7 (B)

(See paragraph 47)

## EXTRACT FROM TELEGRAM FROM GOVERNOR OF TRINIDAD TO SECRETARY OF STATE

SECRETARY of Trade Union has now requested me to communicate following cable to you.

(Begins) Waterfront Workers Union call off strike harbour and wharves at Government request. Mass discrimination against Union members, volunteer labour replace regular dock workers. Grave dissatisfaction. Governor approached, situation unchanged, General Manager and Wharf Superintendent antagonistic, removal advocated. Please intervene. (Ends)

## REPLY SENT TO UNION BY THE GOVERNOR AT THE REQUEST OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

I am glad to learn of the formula adopted at Government House on the 2nd December in accordance with which work has since been resumed. I learnt with regret of the misunderstanding which arose on the 5th December as explained in the official communique which appeared in the local press next day. I feel that in the light of the circumstances set out and the principle accepted in the communique, it should be possible to avoid friction in the application of the formula agreed to at Government House. I have received the Governor's assurance that the Wharves Administration will continue to do all it can to assist in this respect, and that he looks forward to the time which I trust will not have to be delayed when, with harmonious relations restored and normal conditions prevailing, the negotiation of the agreement such as was envisaged at Government House may begin.

## APPENDIX No. 8

## COPY OF HANDBILL ISSUED BY THE BUTLER UNION DURING THE WATERFRONT STRIKE

*' Touch not mine Anointed and do my Prophets no harm '*

**BUTLER GIVES NOTICE!**

**STATE OF EMERGENCY DECLARED.**

**SHALL THERE BE PEACE OR "WAR"?**

MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE WORKERS PEASANTS AND RATE-PAYERS UNION in every Industry in this Country are hereby notified that the Union's Executive have, in view of their insistent and universal cry for "MORE PAY AND BETTER WORKING CONDITIONS", declared that a State of Emergency now exists in the Union following upon the drafting of Demands upon Oil, Sugar, Transportation, Shipping, Housing and Planning and every known employer of Labour (including Government and the American authorities) in the country, for more pay and better working, living and dying conditions for members of our Union specifically, and everybody in the Colony generally. You are also notified that this Union shall in no way give support to strikes of the "Unofficial Brand" and that they must wait for the order to Strike which can only come from Butler and Butler alone—in the name

of the Executives of course. To those who are yet outside our Union we should like to say this : JOIN OUR UNION NOW or you are bound to be sorry if you don't. We do not believe in a closed shop. But we do most certainly believe in Justice and in Right, and it is not just and right that Caesar should enjoy the things that are Won at the Price of the Liberty and the Life of Uriah Butler and his warrior-workers. So join with us now in the great fight now on. Share with us the heat and burden of " D Day " and you shall enjoy as by Right the fruits of the Victory that God Himself shall give us. Yes, sir, Victory Shall be Ours. For GOD IS WITH US.

Issued by U. BUTLER,  
President-General B.E.W.P. & R. Union

### APPENDIX No. 9 (A)

#### CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE BRITISH EMPIRE UNION AND THE OILFIELDS EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION

##### *THE BRITISH EMPIRE WORKERS', PEASANTS' AND RATEPAYERS' UNION*

Head Office,  
7A, St. Joseph Road,  
Port-of-Spain.

11th November, 1946

##### *UNION DEMANDS*

WE RESPECTFULLY beg to submit for, and on behalf of the members of our Union in your employ, the following demands :—

(1) A general all-round increase of ten (10) cents an hour for all hourly paid workers.

(2) An increase of eighty (80) cents per day for all categories of workers, not including monthly paid employees, and

(3) An increase of twenty (20) dollars per month for all monthly paid employees.

Further to the above-mentioned demands which we respectfully beg that you grant within forty-eight (48) hours after you shall have received this letter, we are to demand that at such time and place as shall be convenient to you, to meet representatives of our Union with a view to start negotiations for the signing of an Agreement, that shall guarantee Peace in Industry during our time.

In conclusion, we are to inform you that, among the many things, we shall ask that you agree to, will be the following :—

(1) The handing over to our Union of one penny on every barrel of oil produced in our Country.

(2) That lay-offs and dismissals shall take place only with the knowledge and consent of the Executives of our Union.

(3) That certain contracts you now give to private individuals, be given to our Union.

(4) That gangs and departments now under strength, shall be brought up to strength.

(5) That " Tasks " be greatly reduced ; and that where there is an eight (8) hour shift, a six hour shift be introduced.

(6) Free technical training for deserving employees ; and the granting of jobs to workers so trained before all other applicants—native or foreign, and

(7) A simpler and more just and comprehensive form of promotion to the higher Grades of workmen, for the employees who qualify themselves for such promotion.

These demands can bear long discussions, but we require you to know and to realise that our demand for more pay brooks of no delay whatsoever.

Failure to reach an agreement within (48) forty-eight hours, will of course place us before Government, with a view to secure their good offices in getting us to agree. If Government fails, then we shall be forced to take "Strike Action".

Yours for Peace in Industry,

Sgd. T. Uriah B. Butler

T. Uriah B. Butler—Pres.-Gen.

Sgd. Joseph A. Thomas

J. A. Thomas—Gen. Sect.

*THE OILFIELDS EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION OF TRINIDAD*

7 Pointe-a-Pierre Road.

P.O. Box 9,

San Fernando,

Trinidad, B.W.I.

14th November, 1946

The British Empire Workers', Peasants' & Ratepayers' Union,

7A, St. Joseph Road,

Port-of-Spain.

DEAR SIRs,

Members of this Association have received and forwarded to me copies of a communication from your Union dated the 11th November, 1946, setting out various claims for wage increases and other demands.

Wages and working conditions in the Oil Industry in Trinidad are governed by the Agreement of 18th December, 1945, and 30th January, 1946, entered into between this Association and the Oilfields Workers' Trade Union, and duly filed with Government. These Agreements were negotiated by joint consultation between representatives of the Employers' Association and the Trade Union under the Chairmanship of the Government Industrial Adviser, who was a signatory to the Agreements.

The Agreements, which remain operative at least until December, 1947, have been scrupulously observed and applied by the parties thereto and orderly procedure for the extension or amendment of the Agreements, if desired at their termination, is provided.

In these circumstances I am to inform you that neither my Association nor any of its member companies is in a position to entertain your claims and demands.

Yours faithfully,

F. E. HUNTER,

Secretary-Treasurer,

THE OILFIELDS EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION  
OF TRINIDAD.

*THE BRITISH EMPIRE WORKERS', PEASANTS' AND  
RATEPAYERS' UNION*

Office,

Main Field Road,

Point Fortin.

9th December, 1946

Please reply to

stated address :

The Oilfields Employers' Association,

San Fernando.

GENTLEMEN,

I am directed by the President-General of the above-mentioned Union to inform you that, following upon your very silly and stupid reply to the demands made on your Association by our Union for More Pay, etc., etc., for its members in your employ,

and of Government's failure to date to bring us together, the Executives of the Union desire you to take notice that strike action to win our rights will be taken at any time between now and December 19th, 1946.

You will appreciate that this is a pretty long warning notice. But, with an obvious desire for a peaceful settlement of all grievances motivating this letter a long notice of strike action is deemed essential to a last minute effort on your part to maintain peace in the Oil Industry.

Faithfully yours,

T. URIAH B. BUTLER (Pres.-General).  
MCDONALD STANLEY (Act. Gen. Sec.).

## APPENDIX No. 9 (B)

### LETTER FROM Mr. T. URIAH BUTLER TO THE GOVERNOR

#### *THE BRITISH EMPIRE WORKERS', PEASANTS' AND RATEPAYERS' UNION*

Head Office,

7A, St. Joseph Road,  
Port-of-Spain.

27th November, 1946.

From Citizen Uriah Butler  
to Citizen Bede Clifford :  
Governor of Trinidad & Tobago.

My dear Distinguished Fellow Citizen,

I deeply regret having to record my very strong disapproval of the action of Government to date in re our humble request to have Government bring Oilfields Employers and my Union (the legal bargaining Trade Union in the industry today) together, with a view to a peaceful settlement of the dispute arising out of the demands of more than fifty per cent. (50%) of Oilfields Workers, through my Union, for more pay, etc., etc., at the hands of their Employers—demands which were duly forwarded to the Employers concerned, and, of course, very rudely and contemptuously ignored.

Now, what I want you to know is this : The Members of my Union have insisted, and quite rightly so, that you be kept fully informed as to our every move towards betterment of their conditions. I therefore beg to inform you that on receipt of a letter from Government, through the Industrial Adviser or anyone else in authority, stating his inability to bring my Union and Oilfields Employers together to talk things over freely and frankly, with a view to establish Peace in the Oil Industry and not "War", for which you seem anxious to have, I shall be forced to give notice of a Strike to establish our clear right to bargain for Oilworkers, and to win for them a better, brighter and more secure and progressive day in the Oil Industry.

In conclusion I am to inform you that two very necessary and important telegrams have already been dispatched to London, England—one to His Majesty the King, and one to the British Colonial Secretary—our Fellow Citizen Creech-Jones.

I shall be pleased to discuss them with you. On your invitation I am prepared to visit you at any time of the day or night—Strike or no Strike, and without any "Safe Conduct" consideration, if you please. May Peace in the Oil Industry Prevail !  
Thanks in anticipation of an early reply.

Faithfully yours,

T. URIAH B. BUTLER.

## APPENDIX No. 10

## BUTLER UNION DEMANDS IGNORED

## BUTLER SERVES NOTICE OF STRIKE.

*BUTLER STARTS (\$100,000·00) HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS STRIKE  
FUND—SERIES OF MEETINGS PLANNED.*

THE EXECUTIVE Committee of the Butler Union, some thirty-one days ago, made demands on the Oilfields Employers' Association of Trinidad for more pay, etc., for members of the Union in their employ.

The reply of the Association has been received, and is considered by me to be very silly, stupid and contemptuous, in that it (Ostrich-like) hides its "head" in the "sand" of the so-called agreement between the Oilfields Workers' Trade Union (without legal rights to bargain for Oilfields Workers) and the Association and refuse "talks" with my Union which, from September, 1945, alone has the legal right to negotiate agreement—new agreements, and smash or ignore old ones as may be found expedient.

Fools, cowards and traitors on the executive of my Union planned another jail term for Butler as a necessary preliminary to a "sell-out" of the workers' cause. But, Butler, the man who has Championed that cause as no one has ever attempted or done before him, is no fool. He has decided to expel or suspend all traitors from the Union: and to accept the challenge of Government and the Association concerned to prove his Union's right to bargain for everybody in the Oil Industry of the Colony.

Notice of a Strike in the Oil Industry by 19th December, 1946, if the Oilfields Association fails to meet me, to talk things over with a view to a peaceful settlement of all our Union's grievances, has already been handed to the O.E.A. and of course Government with the hope that these "inseparables" will at last do something to show that they want peace and not "war" in the Oil Industry. And as I told the Industrial Adviser in an informal talk on Monday, 9th December, I am planning to have Mr. Clyde C. Vanderburgh, Mr. Gerald Wight, and the Bishop of Trinidad intervene to save the Industry from "war", whereas a legitimate Strike is concerned, with all its attendant pain and sufferings and all its frightful possibilities and probabilities and potentialities.

In conclusion, I am to notify British Empire Workers and Citizens all over the Colony that a Hundred Thousand Dollar STRIKE FUND has been launched by the Butler Home Rule Party, to back the Strike, if and when it comes. All members of the Butler Movement are asked to hand in donations to the nearest Union Branch Secretary; for transmission to: Uriah Butler, Chief Servant of the Home Rule Party, Butler Field Headquarters, Main Field Road, Point Fortin.

May God bless us all: May He crown our United efforts with success.

## APPENDIX No. 11

EXTRACTS FROM THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY  
INTO THE COST OF LIVING IN NIGERIA—COLONIAL No. 204, 1946

PARA. 69. Those methods (of compiling the Cost of Living Index) are derived from the Ministry of Labour's pamphlet on the cost of living index published in the United Kingdom. But the Commission does not consider that cost of living indices in Nigeria should take precisely the form designed by the Ministry of Labour for use in the United Kingdom. That form is open to criticism even there—firstly, of course, because in the main it ignores change in expenditure-patterns, so that the index-numbers derived



from it become in course of time inaccurate ; and, secondly, because it is rather complicated, so that people whose incomes in part depend on it are not really aware why their incomes are increased or decreased—and it is for four reasons certainly not applicable, without adjustment, in Nigeria. In the first place certain items play a part in many people's expenditure-patterns in Nigeria for which it seems difficult to find a place in so formal a scheme of analysis as the United Kingdom scheme. Illustrations are expenditure on dependent relatives ; whatever the word "relative" may mean ; expenditure on the purchase of wives ; expenditure on personal debt-service ; and, if an article in a recent number of *Africa* analysing the expenditure of 16 Ibos is to be believed, expenditure on corruption. In the second place it is doubtful if it is possible to obtain the co-operation by the public on which the accuracy of the United Kingdom index, if it is accurate, in part depends. Investigation by means of the household budget, in fact, is useless if the people supplying the budgets do not give the facts. In the third place it is difficult to feel that the system of checks whereby the Ministry of Labour can satisfy itself that the figures which it is handling are accurate exists or can be brought into existence in Nigeria. Finally, it is difficult to feel that so easily misled a race as the Africans should be left without guidance regarding the best expenditure-patterns for their own purposes : the Government is in fact missing an opportunity to guide expenditure along sound lines if it is content instead merely to investigate expenditure upon unsound lines.

Para. 70. The alternative to cost of living surveys of the Lagos type, in fact, and much to be preferred to them, is the compiling by the Government, in consultation with representatives of the African Civil Servants, of properly thought-out statements, in terms of a small number of essential items of expenditure, of what in fact the cost of living is if people spend their money wisely. These compilations would be both a record of movements of cost of living and an indication of the best expenditure-patterns. They would do something towards drawing the attention of literate Africans towards the fact that except in the lowest income groups part at least of their expenditure is at present mere waste of money and that getting sufficient food, clothing, house-room and so forth is a matter of wise spending as well as a matter of sufficient spending.

Para. 71. The task of arriving at simple statements of the best expenditure-pattern and of the movement of prices of the commodities involved would not be formidable. Thirty-five items of expenditure in Lagos and other towns and twenty-five items in rural areas would give quite as accurate a result as would many more items. It is important that the indices thus prepared should be based on a reasonable assumption regarding the size of the normal family : for example, on the assumption that the normal family comprises husband, wife, one other adult, and five children, and that the total of eight persons considered together are equivalent to five adults. By this means the indices would be not only studies in the movement of cost of living but also studies of the essential minimum expenditure and so of the essential minimum wage. It is the Commission's view that the Government should begin work on this suggestion as soon as it can obtain the services, presumably from the United Kingdom, of a team consisting of at least three statistical officers and one nutritionist who will be able to visit the areas in which indices will have to be constructed and to initiate them on right lines. The indices thus arrived at should be prepared each quarter and should not be regarded as being confidential or secret but should be published both in the official Gazette and in the Press.

## APPENDIX No. 12

### HOUSING

#### THE PROBLEM

The Royal Commission in their report stated that in both town and country the present housing of the large majority of the working people in the West Indian Colonies left much to be desired ; in many places it was deplorable ; in some the conditions

were such that any human habitation of buildings occupied by large families must seem impossible to a newcomer from Europe ; it was no exaggeration to say that in the poorest parts of most towns and in many of the country districts a majority of the houses were largely made of rusty corrugated iron and unsound boarding ; quite often the original floor had disappeared and only the earth remained, its surface so trampled that it was impervious to any rain which might penetrate through a leaking roof ; sanitation in any form and water supply were unknown in such premises, and in many cases no light could enter when the door was closed. These decrepit homes, more often than not were seriously overcrowded, and it was not surprising that some of them were dirty and verminous in spite of praiseworthy efforts of the inhabitants to keep them clean. In short, every condition that tended to produce disease was to be found in a serious form.

In his tuberculosis survey of Trinidad in 1944 Dr. Gilmour stated that housing must receive early attention. The conditions of housing, overcrowding and inadequacy, were such that special measures of tuberculosis control would inevitably fail till housing was improved.

#### ACTION TAKEN SINCE THE ROYAL COMMISSION REPORT

A Slum Clearance Committee has been appointed and slum clearance and housing legislation enacted. Government expenditure on housing and slum clearance 1942-46 was \$5,130,000 in spite of shortage of materials, compared with an expenditure of \$1,300,000 in the previous five years.

Developments in housing and slum clearance are financed from loan funds to be raised by Government. Slum clearance operations have been proceeding within the area of Port-of-Spain and San Fernando. At the 30th September, 1946, the Housing Commission had erected 34 one-bedroom apartment buildings, 18 two-bedroom apartment buildings and 48 three-bedroom apartment buildings in Port-of-Spain, and 12 three-bedroom apartment buildings in San Fernando. There were also under construction at that date 12 two-bedroom apartment buildings and 10 three-bedroom apartment buildings in Port-of-Spain, and 16 one-bedroom and 24 three-bedroom apartment buildings in San Fernando. 288 families and 62 single persons in Port-of-Spain have been displaced from slum areas required by the Housing Commission and with the exception of two families and four single persons have all been re-housed by the Commission.

The main housing schemes on which the Housing Commission is engaged are at Morvant, Monripos and Navet. At the 30th September the Commission had erected the houses shown hereunder :—

	One-bedroom houses	Two-bedroom houses	Three-bedroom houses
Morvant . . . . .	168	460	117
Monripos and Navet . . . . .	38	304	60
Broadway . . . . .	—	30	22

Work on the preparation of additional building sites at Morvant is in progress.

Two rural housing schemes are in course of construction on lands which were given to Government for the purpose free of cost by Caroni, Limited and St. Medeleine Sugar Company, Limited. The layout plans of these settlements have been approved after consultation with the Town Planning Adviser to the Comptroller. Selection committees have been appointed for the purpose of recommending selected tenants and the amount of subsidy which should be granted to them.

## THE FUTURE

In the sketch plan of the Ten Year Development proposals \$4,700,000 have been allotted to the Planning and Housing Commission (this is exclusive of the slum clearance programme for which a loan of \$5,000,000 was floated in 1945). In addition \$2,050,000 have been allotted for rural housing. These proposals are, however, still under consideration and have not yet been approved by the Legislative Council.

## APPENDIX No. 13

## CORRESPONDENCE WITH T. URIAH BUTLER REGARDING THE SCOPE OF THE INQUIRY

From THE BRITISH EMPIRE WORKERS', PEASANTS' AND RATEPAYERS' UNION,

7A, St. Joseph Road,  
Port-of-Spain,  
Trinidad, B.W.I.  
16th April, 1947.

Mr. Fred W. Dalley,  
The Colonial Secretariat,  
Red House,  
Port-of-Spain,  
SIR,

I am directed by my Executive to inform you that as a result of your expressed lack of authority to settle the existing dispute between my Union and the O.E.A., the hopes, the joys and even the very crown of rejoicing of thousands of our members affected by the Oilfields Strike now four (4) months (less four days) old, which your coming to our country quite naturally inspired and sustained up to yesterday, have all been shattered to pieces and placed at the feet of our distinguished fellow-citizen, Citizen Creech-Jones, the British Colonial Secretary.

In the circumstances my Executive deem it expedient in the interests of members of our Union on strike and in the interests of peace in Industry, and for the general good of the Colony as a whole, to make every constitutional effort to bring about a settlement in the aforementioned dispute.

With this end in view I am directed to ask that you cable the British Colonial Secretary asking him for the necessary power and authority to settle current disputes between Trade Unions and Employers of labour (including Government of course) in our country as a necessary pre-requisite for the success of your Mission in so far as the Butler Movement in the Colony is concerned.

Copies of this letter have been sent to the Governor, the Colonial Secretary and the Industrial Adviser.

Faithfully yours,

T. URIAH B. BUTLER,  
President-General.  
E. LIONEL CROSS,  
General Secretary.

To His Excellency Sir John Shaw,  
Governor of Trinidad,  
Government House,  
Port-of-Spain,  
SIR,

16th April, 1947.

Sadly disappointed in the Mission of Mr. Dalley and still fully resolved to win for Oilfield Workers who are members of my Union a better, a brighter and a more happy

and progressive day in the Oil Industry, I beg to enclose a copy of a letter sent to Mr. Dalley at the instance of my Executive and to ask that you be good enough to use your good offices to assist in establishing Peace in the Oil Industry of the country.

Meanwhile we shall continue to lift or resolve to help ourselves higher and higher in the firm belief that the God of Heaven who helps those who help themselves will again turn our sorrows into joys and our crosses into crowns in Jesus Almighty Name.

Faithfully yours,

T. URIAH BUTLER,  
President-General.

Stamped :  
British Empire Workers',  
Peasants' and Ratepayers' Union.

COLONIAL SECRETARIAT,  
Red House,  
Port-of-Spain.

DEAR SIR,

18th April, 1947

I have received your letter of 16th April. In order to prevent any further misunderstanding I am, as promised at the meeting of trade union representatives held on Monday last, sending a copy of the terms of reference of my Inquiry as given to me by the Rt. Hon. A. Creech-Jones, M.P., His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, and announced by him in the British House of Commons.

I made it clear at the meeting that such matters as the recent strikes and disturbances—including the non-reinstatement of strikers—come within the scope of my investigations, and this was confirmed by the typewritten list of points I handed to you as being among those I wished to discuss individually with the representatives of your Union.

You, however, spoke of the "power to settle disputes". Now, whatever may have been the beliefs and hopes of your members (hopes which I trust may yet be realised), I must say I find it hard to believe that you, at any rate, with your background and experience, could have conceived that I had come here with powers which, in effect, would have entitled me not only to impose a settlement on employers and workers but to ignore existing machinery and even to over-ride His Excellency the Governor of Trinidad. Nor must you put me down as so innocent as to credit that if I were to try to impose a settlement with which you disagreed you would accept it.

No. I must make it crystal clear : I am not here to dictate or to impose ; but to inquire, to advise, to persuade, to co-operate—and to report. I have no doubt whatever, that this is definitely understood by the rest of your trade union colleagues, and I shall continue to work for the co-operation of the members of the British Empire Workers' Union.

I note that you intend to make every constitutional effort to bring about a settlement in "a dispute between your Union and the O.E.A.", and I need hardly say that such efforts are in line with my own desires and intention.

Yours faithfully,  
FRED W. DALLEY.

Mr. Uriah Butler,  
7A, St. Joseph Road,  
Port-of-Spain.

#### APPENDIX No. 14

SCHEME FOR TRAINING WEST INDIAN TRADE UNION OFFICIALS  
IN CONSULTATION with the Trades Union Congress and the Ministry of Labour and National Service, a scheme has been prepared in the Colonial Office which will continue the correspondence courses for West Indian trade union officials, provided by the Trades Union Congress in 1942-43.

Ruskin College correspondence courses will be provided free of charge by the Trades Union Congress to 15 officials annually for a period covering, if possible, the next nine years. In addition, during the second, third and fourth year of the period it is intended to provide ten scholarships at the expense of the Colonial Development and Welfare Vote to enable selected students, who have completed the correspondence courses, to take a six months' practical course in Trade Union work in the United Kingdom. The plans for the practical course are that the selected Trade Union officials will spend their first month in this country in full time study on an intensive theoretical course conducted by the Trades Union Congress as part of their permanent provision for the technical education of trade unionists. This will be followed by four months' attachment to Trade Unions in this country, and the sixth month will be spent in seeing industrial machinery at work at the Ministry of Labour and National Service. The continuance of the practical training courses after the initial three years will be reviewed towards the close of that period, when it should be possible to determine whether funds for further scholarships can be provided over and above the original ten.

*Selection of Candidates.* For the annual correspondence course, the trade unions or the representative trade union organisations in each Colony will be invited by the local government to suggest a field of candidates. The names will next be communicated through the Colonial Office to the Trades Union Congress and the Governing Body of Ruskin College accompanied by observations on the merits of each candidate. Ruskin College will then select 15 candidates from the list submitted.

As regards the practical course, selection will be by joint collaboration between Ruskin College, the Trades Union Congress, and the Colonial Office.

*Crown Copyright Reserved*

LONDON: PUBLISHED BY HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

To be purchased directly from H.M. Stationery Office at the following addresses:

York House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2; 13a Castle Street, Edinburgh, 2;

39-41 King Street, Manchester, 2; 1 St. Andrew's Crescent, Cardiff;

Tower Lane, Bristol, 1; 80 Chichester Street, Belfast.

OR THROUGH ANY BOOKSELLER  
1947

Price 1s. od. net