

Summary of passage in the Governor of Trinidad's
despatch to the Secretary of State for the
Colonies, dated October 22nd.

I have considered the whole question in
Executive Council and am advised that the acceptance of
the present proposals would undoubtedly cause great dis-
satisfaction among those elements of the community who
would be deprived of existing amenities and might well, in
view of this and of the siting of the proposed locations,
lead to serious difficulties during the period of the
lease. I hope to communicate to Your Lordship within
a few days a detailed description of the scheme advocated
by my advisers and also a description of the amenities
at present enjoyed by residents in and visitors to the
north-west peninsula, but I feel that it is not necessary
to await this before expressing my general opinion upon
the proposals put forward by the United States Mission.

My naval, military and air advisers, while
recognising that the area selected for the main fleet
base is the obvious and attractive one, are of the opinion
that, if Mr. Grinnell and Mr. Beard are right and the
United States Government are prepared to undertake the
expenditure involved, an equally if not more satisfactory
naval and sea-plane base, combined with an adequate and
suitable area for land forces and aerodromes could be
constructed south of the Caroni River. They point
out that the north-west peninsula is open to direct
bombardment from the sea without seaplane spotting; that
that Caroni site would be to some extent defended by the

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guns which are at present being mounted; that it would be a distinct advantage for the United States sea and land air bases to be in the same area; that the Caroni site would obviate the necessity of constructing a long and costly road to Sangre Grande and of widening and improving the road from Port-of-Spain to the north-west peninsula or diverting that to Macqueripe Bay; that supply and gun wharves on the Caroni site would be entirely under the control of the United States authorities, which would be better from their own point of view as well as that of this Government; and that two aerodromes five miles apart could be constructed on the Caroni site, thus obviating the necessity of an isolated aerodrome under United States control east of Longdenville.

From the administrative and political point of view the advantages of the Caroni site are that there would be only one leased area; that it would be unnecessary to provide facilities in Port-of-Spain itself; that there would be no interference with the quarantine islands; that road access to the bauxite wharves would be undisturbed; that there would be no interference with the amenities at present enjoyed by residents in and visitors to the north-west peninsula; that the Aripo Valley water supply, the development of which is required for civil needs, would be left available since the Caroni site could be supplied from any of the three valleys which lead down to it from the north; that road communications eastwards from Arima would remain undisturbed; that there would be practically no necessity for the United States Government to acquire

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-3-

any land or property; that the difficulties arising from public roads running through a leased area would be obviated; and that the development of the Caroni scheme would be accelerated. The advantage of the adoption of the Caroni scheme would be that the association between the two Governments in Trinidad would start upon a basis of mutual benefit and goodwill, whereas the adoption of the proposals put forward by Admiral Greenslade's mission would, I fear, involve the risk of misunderstandings between the two Governments, which might in the end lead to unfortunate results.