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February 26, 1962.

Thank you for your letter on British Guiana. From our past discussions we have known your pre-occupations and you have known the efforts which we have made despite setbacks to provide for the orderly development of this territory. We are studying what best to do now to discharge our responsibilities and when we have decided, we shall be glad to see in a more official way what can be done to concert our action and yours.

Meanwhile there are some general thoughts which I should like to put to you privately and with the same frankness with which you wrote. I do so not only because I think this is right between us, but because you have often shown in the conversations which the two of us have had, that you recognise the sustained efforts

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The Honourable Dean Rusk.

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over long periods that we have made in our dependent territories to try to ensure that they have a reasonable chance of using and not abusing freedom when they get it. This must depend to a large extent on the progress of each different territory and its readiness to run its own affairs. But once this process has gone as far as it now has, there is bound to be an added risk over timing in the remaining dependent territories which are still either backward or have peculiar racial or other difficulties. This was inherent in the problem from the beginning.

Now it was your historic role to have been for long years the first crusader and the prime mover in urging colonial emancipation. The communists are now in the van. Why? Amongst other things because premature independence is a gift for them.

What I do not think possible is to beat them by cancelling the ticket for independence and particularly

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if this is only to be done in the single instance of British Guiana. You say that it is not possible for you "to put up with an independent British Guiana under Jagan" and that "Jagan should not accede to power again". How would you suggest that this can be done in a democracy? And even if a device could be found, it would almost certainly be transparent and in such circumstances if democratic processes are to be allowed, it will be extremely hard to provide a reasonable prospect that any successor regime will be more stable and more mature.

So I would say to you that we cannot now go back on the course we have set ourselves of bringing these dependent territories to self-government. Nor is it any good deluding ourselves that we can now set aside a single territory such as British Guiana for some sort of special treatment.

This of course does not mean that we should not try

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to mitigate the dangers in British Guiana as elsewhere in the areas of the Americas and elsewhere. You will know our present concern over Kenya, the Federation and other territories in East Africa. I take comfort from your letter to think that you will be ready to understand and support us in solving these problems. I do not want to go into them further here. But I should like to draw your attention to another territory in the area of the Americas, British Honduras. It will be difficult enough to provide for the future well-being of this territory. We now have in addition the President of Guatemala using language reminiscent of Hitler to press his claim. "The Guatemalans", he said publicly on February 20, "would maintain their unshakeable determination to regain Belize." As the present regime in Guatemala would hardly have come into being without your support in 1954 and since, I shall be asking you to use your good offices

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at the right time to prevent another possible misadventure on your doorstep.

Let us by all means try and do what is possible to prevent the communists and others from perverting our common aim of doing our best to assure a timely and orderly development of independence in the remaining dependent territories. But we must do this across the board and you will realise that while territories like British Guiana may be of special concern to you in your hemisphere, there are others of at least equal importance to us elsewhere.

(SGD) HOWE

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