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STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER ON THE PROBLEMS OF LAND TENANTS

Mr. Speaker, to avoid further misrepresentations and for the information of the general public, I announce that a White Paper will shortly be issued setting out the major documents over the past six years related to the Government's actions on the problems of land tenants in the country.

The documents are as follows:

1. Petition to the Prime Minister from the St.James Land Tenants Association calling on the Government to appoint "a Tribunal or Commission of Enquiry into the land racket in St. James and the country as a whole" - March 2, 1970

2. Decision of Cabinet on the petition from the St. James Land Tenants Association to appoint a Committee to consider the question of legislation on the subject - March 26, 1970

3. Press Release on the appointment of a Committee by the Attorney General under the chairmanship of the Honourable Mr. Justice A, Fraser. (No report was received from the Committee)

4. Memorandum from the Chief Justice on proposed legislation re building land to the Fraser Committee - August 13, 1970

5. Excerpt from a letter from the Attorney General to the Prime Minister regarding a White Paper on the subject - October 16, 1972

6. Letter from the Attorney General to the Prime Minister, with a Draft Discussion White Paper entitled "Chattel Houses and the Problem of Tenants of Land Leased or Rented on Short Term for Residential Purposes - February 15, 1973

7. Extract from Minutes of a Meeting of the National Planning Commission - May 1, 1973

8. Revised Draft White Paper from the Attorney General entitled "Chattel Houses and Problem of Tenant and Lessees of Land Rented or Leased for Residential Purposes" - July 24, 1973

9. Extract from Minutes of a Meeting of the National Planning Commission, July 25, 1973, assigning various papers to:

   (a) Ministry of Planning and Development - The date from which values should be assessed

   (b) Ministry of Housing - The question of the term of the option as between tenant and landlord

   (c) Ministry of Planning and Development - Clarification as to whether the paper should be restricted to residential land or extended to commercial land

   (d) Attorney General - When should 30 year leases commence?

   (e) Attorney General - Should leases be for a period of 30 years or 50 years?

   (f) Valuation Division - Should a premium be paid in respect of a lease?

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(g) Ministry of Planning and Development and Ministry of Legal Affairs - What power should be given to the Town and Country Planning Division?

(h) Ministry of Housing - The problem of squatters

(i) Ministry of Planning and Development - Should Government estates be included?

(j) Attorney General - The problem of defective titles particularly in Tobago

(k) Ministry of Planning and Development - The Urban Redevelopment Council and the possibility of conflict

(l) Attorney General - Should the act apply to speficy areas and not generally?

(m) Ministry of Finance - What categories should be considered?

(n) Attorney General - The question of the rent payable throughout the course of a statutory lease

10. Prepare as assigned by the National Planning Commission from:

(a) Ministry of Finance, August 2, 1973: "The White Paper on Chattel Houses"

(b) Ministry of Housing and Ministry of Planning and Development, October 18, 1973: "Chattel Houses and Problems of Tenants and Leases"; with a letter from the Chairman of the Urban Redevelopment Council

(c) Valuation Division, September 24, 1973:
(The White Paper was never completed for publication)

11. Appointment by Cabinet of Commission of Enquiry on all aspects of tenure of tenants of building land including the complaints, hardships, problems and other incidences, arising from the letting of building land in Trinidad and Tobago - March 28, 1974

12. Cabinet's decision on the visit of Mr. K. de la Bastide to Malaysian States in connection with the Land Tenants Commission of Enquiry - September 19, 1974

13. Cabinet's decision on remuneration for members of the Land Tenants Commission of Enquiry - November 13, 1975

14. Memorandum by the Secretary of the Land Tenants Commission to the Attorney General - February 11, 1976.