

CARIBBEAN STEERING COMMITTEE

Sixth Pan African Congress.

c/o 50 Buxton, E.C.D.
GUYANA

The Secretary General,
Sixth Pan African Congress,
Dar es Salaam.
P.O. Box 9351.
Tanzania.

28th May, 1974.

Dear Brother Cox,

"In addition all African and Caribbean governments are being extended an invitation to participate with their respective Heads of State requested to serve as Patrons of the Congress.

But the focus and nature of the Sixth Pan African Congress is nongovernmental ... (your underlining) -- Sixth Pan African Congress, A Briefing Paper.

In my cable to you dated 22nd May, 1974, I sought clarification of the notes which appeared in your undated letter beginning "I have just returned from the O.A.U. meeting in Kampala," and in "Secretariat Report *- April, 1974"

On page two of the letter you give clear priority to government and political parties which you say (Secretarial Report) will "Send a national delegation." (page 8)

Letters of invitation have been sent to categories (a) and (b) since April, the month of formal invitations. We are told that "formal invitations are in process" for a number of categories.

Much of the effectiveness of the Congress will depend on the status of delegations, the rules of procedure and the agenda of Congress. Although a tentative agenda was to be issued early May we have not yet seen it.

In your undated letter you also promised to cable me as soon as you knew what travel assistance would be available for Caribbean delegates.

In a cable from you received by me on May 4th, 1974, you said that Ambassador Salim would arrive in Guyana soon with full details. Ambassador Salim, 22 days after and 20 days before June 19th has not arrived with details.

Towards the Sixth Pan African Congress, June 3rd to 13, 1974

NEW JEWEL MOVEMENT (GRENADA)

AFRO CARIBBEAN LIBERATION
MOVEMENT (ANTIGUA)

UNION FOR BLACK CULTURAL AWARENESS (ST VINCENT)

PAN AFRICAN UNION (JAMAICA)

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT (BARBADOS)

ASCRIA (GUYANA)

NJAC (TRINIDAD/TOBAGO)

1701 16th. Street. N.W.
Apt. 427
Washington D.C. 20009

June 9, 1974.

Brother Courtland Cox
Secretary General, International Secretariat
Sixth Pan African Congress
Dar-es-Salaam
Tanzania.

Dear Brother Cox,

I hereby resign my post as Sponsor of the Sixth Pan African Congress. My reason for so doing is as follows. For many months, under your guidance and often with your direct participation, I have spoken and written about the constitution of the Congress and the method of selecting delegates in various parts of the world. Today, June 9, I learn that the Caribbean and African Ambassadors, along with distinguished members of the Black community of Washington D.C., who, in good faith, lent their names to a function for raising funds to assist members of the Caribbean delegation, have found it necessary to withdraw their patronage. This action was the direct result of the circulation in the public press of brief, but pointed paragraphs intimating a direct violation of previous public policies concerning the composition of the Caribbean delegation.

I would have had no possible objection to African, Caribbean and other states holding a Congress to which they would have invited those whom they thought suitable for participation. That would have been their business, and I would have followed with interest the development of such a Congress. But that my name should be associated with this Congress and a certain type of representation to the degree that it has been, and today, June 9, to learn from stray paragraphs in the international press that whole categories of delegates are being rejected, makes it impossible for me to continue to be associated with the preparation for and participation in the Congress as it now presents itself.

I add as a further example of the imposition upon my goodwill and desire to assist the conference in every possible way, that although you are personally aware

of the wide scope of my representation of the previous structure of the projected delegations, to this minute I have received no communication either from you, or from the International Secretariat, of the changes that have been made.

I now face the overwhelming task of explaining to the thousands of people whom I have misled, as to the character of the Congress, as to why I did so.

I would like to add that I shall not, on my own initiative, in any way make public and express my disappointment at the causes which have compelled me to take this step. Nor shall I make public my decision. Please be assured that unless in reply to published statements by officials of the Congress, I shall do my very best to prevent this situation being the subject of unnecessary publicity which may, in any way, harm the Sixth Pan African Congress.

Yours sincerely,

C. L. R. James

C.L.R. James.

CC.: Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere
Chairman
Tanganyika African National Union
State House
Tanzania.

Brother Eusi Kwayana
Co-ordinator, Caribbean Steering Committee
Sixth Pan African Congress
Buxton, Guyana.

1701 16th. Street N.W.
Apt. 427
Washington D.C. 20009

June 5, 1974.

Brother J. S. Malecela
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
P.O. Box 9000
Dar-es-Salaam
Tanzania.

Dear Brother Malecela,

The International Steering Committee of the Sixth Pan African Congress has conferred upon me the distinction of preparing a paper on 'Growth and Future of Pan-Africanism'. I regret very much that I am unable to accept this invitation. The reasons for my inability are as follows:

1. I would not know what to write for such a Congress as it seems will be taking place. Paragraph two of your letter states, "You will be expected to attend the Congress which will take place from 19th. to 27th. June, 1974, so that you can introduce your paper and lead the discussion." Circumstances lead me to believe that I will be expected to attend the Congress only to introduce my paper and then take no further part in it. Under the circumstances I am not only unable to outline any analysis on the probable future of Pan-Africanism, but it seems that I am prohibited from taking part in the Congress except on the basis that you propose.

I have come to this conclusion from a series of events which show that the Congress which is to take place on June 19th. - 27th. is entirely different from the Congress we discussed with you many months ago, and with the President of the Republic, Mwalimu Nyerere. This conception of the Congress the Secretary-General, many others and I have been advocating for many months all over the United States, in the Caribbean, and even in Africa itself. I think that these matters need some re-statement, even though you may be aware of them. It is necessary that you and the International Steering Committee should see them as they have been presented to me, or as I have seen them.

The Congress of which I have been speaking aimed at having a single official representative from each African state, and, in addition, representatives of trade unions, political organisations, persons who represent a devotion to the cause of Pan-Africanism or some notable concern about African affairs. That is what was written in The Call, and it is on those principles that I have done an incessant amount of travelling and speaking for the Congress. For example, I have been to the West Coast (U.S.A.) from Washington D.C. on two occasions, to speak at Los Angeles, at Sacramento, and in San Francisco, sometimes three meetings a day, and to various individuals, I have, in addition, spoken to organisations and groups in Trinidad, in Jamaica, in Guyana, and in Europe, on more than one occasion. All in all I have written and spoken to thousands of people as to the kind of Congress which was being held. Quite often I was asked what were the responsibilities of those who were going to the Congress, and how they were to be chosen. Always I made it clear that there would be one member officially from the Governments, but that other persons would be taken from the trade unions, from various political organisations, and from people who were interested in Pan-Africanism or with the development of the people of Africa.

Particularly, the feature of the Congress which attracted interest was Science and Technology, I made it clear that people interested in Science and Technology, and who were willing to help to organise and gather together forces, theoretical and practical, to advance the cause of Science and Technology among Africans would be welcomed, without of necessity having to subscribe to the particular political orientations or decisions of the Congress.

That is what I have been doing for many months. I have done it in the presence of the Secretary General. I have done it from platforms on which he sat side by side with me, and from which he spoke. I have spoken in fact to thousands of people in various continents. Now today I learn from a statement reported to me by telephone from Guyana, that there has appeared in the Guyana press a statement to the effect that no people from the Caribbean will be admitted to the Congress unless they represent the Government or the party which forms the Government. This to me, is at first hearing, quite incredible. >

As a matter of fact, at a meeting held in the office of the Temporary Secretariat, Washington D.C., in early January of this year, the Secretary-General

wanted to co-ordinate, for the benefit of the International Secretariat, such organization as had been taking place in the North American region and in the Caribbean. (To be quite precise, the North American delegation obviously presented no difficulty in regard to the Government.) There were present at the meeting Eric Stark, Douglas Atkins, Anthony Ferguson, Veta Connor, Valerie Andrew and other persons who constitute the body of people most active in organising and giving information about the Congress in the United States and the Caribbean. Specifically, the question of the composition of the Caribbean delegation was raised. The Secretary-General stated that the International Secretariat had allotted thirty-five (35) delegates, non-governmental, to the Caribbean region. His main concern was whether that number would be satisfactory to the Caribbean Steering Committee, for one reason or another. He also wanted to know the criteria by which those in the Caribbean would select delegates. He suggested that the following divisions should be the basis of selection: Political groupings, Science and Technology, University and Professional elements, and trade unions. It should be noted here that he stated very clearly that the question of the Government delegation would be dealt with directly by the Washington office, whereas the selection of the non-governmental delegates from the Caribbean would be done by the Caribbean Steering Committee themselves.

The same was stated at the First Caribbean Regional Planning Conference held in February, 1973, in Jamaica. That was again the tenor of the discussion in Guyana in December. We emphasised what we had been aware of from the time that you, Mr. Minister, had spoken to me: that the Government of each independent territory should be asked to send one official representative. It was understood that if they wanted to send members who would take part in discussions in Science and Technology, or other political matters, that would be open to the Governments who of course would have that freedom. The question of how and when that official representative should vote was discussed, although no final decision was reached. I believe that the general opinion would have been that he should be allowed to vote in whatever way he chose. No other conflict over delegates faintly arose.

Those are the ideas that I have expounded and continue to expound to thousands of people. As late as yesterday, June 4, there was a Press Reception in Washington D.C., attended by a large number of the members of the middle class. There were present the Ambassador from

Ghana, the Ambassador from The Commonwealth of The Bahamas, the Ambassador from Trinidad and Tobago, the Ambassador from the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, the Ambassador from Jamaica and officials from the Embassies of Tanzania, Zaire, Liberia and Nigeria. Also in attendance were Sylvia Hill, General Secretary for the North American region and Edie Wilson, Administrative Assistant of the International Secretariat. This reception, hosted by His Excellency Douglas Fletcher and Mrs. Fletcher, was held at the Jamaican Embassy for the express purpose of promoting a Pan African Fete (dinner) planned for June 14. Special guests to this function include Mayor Walter Washington; Rev. Walter Fauntroy, Representative for the District of Columbia to the United States Congress; The Hon. Charles Rangel, Chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus; The Hon. Charles E. Diggs, Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Africa. And as was vigorously stated at the reception yesterday, this was being done for the specific purpose of raising money to help the Caribbean delegates to be able "to go to the Sixth Pan African Congress in sufficient numbers." That, Sir, was last night, and in preparation for the dinner that is to take place on the 14th. That is the kind of organizational policy for the Congress that we have been unremittingly putting forward. That has been accepted. That is what a large majority of people still know, and that is why these people of stature in the community, and a great number of middle class people came to the reception yesterday, preparing for the Congress. I who spoke dared not say what I had been told had appeared in the Guyana press.

How is it possible to let people know now that there will be no representatives except representatives from the Governments? In fact, what we are faced with today, (without any official information, because nobody has received that information at all) is in direct opposition to what we have been working with for months. We are now in a situation where I am not only unable to write about the future of Pan Africanism, I am unable to do or say anything more about the Congress. And what are we to say about the coming dinner?

I must ask you, Mr. Secretary, to take these things into consideration and to understand the reasons why I find myself unable to accept your invitation to prepare the paper that the International Steering Committee has asked me to write.

2. I have also to ask myself: what purpose can I serve in attending a Congress in which I introduce a paper (a paper which I say I am unable to write) and

to lead a discussion, and as it appears in your letter I am otherwise condemned to silence.

I must remind you that I am a member of the Caribbean Steering Committee. It was in the presence of the Secretary-General that I became a member. The fact is that I had gone back home (the Caribbean) to represent people to whom I feel a very great responsibility. That is where I belong, and I was received with enthusiasm. As far as I could see, the Secretary-General showed no hostility, expressed no dissatisfaction, but merely accepted that henceforth I would be a member of the Caribbean Steering Committee. I stated that I would be a member of the Committee with no other purpose in mind except to be able to represent the country from which I come, where I was born, and whose passport I hold. I take no steps except with the permission of that Committee.

This situation Sir, is so serious that I think I should spare no reasonable effort to make clear certain points which will enable you to understand more clearly the position that I here express. I enclose some material which expresses opinions that I have held about the Caribbean since 1963. I was asked by The Washington Post to express my views on Caribbean Independence. The article you will see (August 25, 1973) expresses fully and completely my idea that the Caribbean can no longer continue to function satisfactorily as a set of separate islands, but that a Caribbean Federation was necessary. I then went on to say what I have said many times: that there is a substantial portion of people, many of them well educated and of professional status, who know that to be really independent we will have to open a struggle with the worldwide corporations who still control life in the Caribbean.

I ask you to take note of what was printed in The Washington Star - News and The Washington Post the next day. It seems that the society that is of some stature in Washington D.C. was celebrating the independence of Caribbean nations, at a function held at the Washington Hilton Hotel. As you will see, The Washington Star - News reported, and The Washington Post also, that the discussion at this celebration revolved around the article which had appeared that very morning. It is again obvious that it is not only the rank-and-file people and the 'revolutionaries', but even the middle class understand what is the actual situation in the Caribbean. At the reception at which I spoke yesterday, I have given you a list of the persons who were present, and what I said was received with overwhelming satisfaction.

Such was the opinion that I had on Federation. That was the opinion I had previously expressed, but I went to Ottawa, Canada, on the occasion of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers Conference, and mentioned the question to Mr. Manley, Prime Minister of Jamaica. Mr. Manley said that he was against Federation: against Jamaica being included in a Federation. I was not able to discuss with him at any length and I have not submitted any related statements for presentation to the Congress. I did not wish to lay the basis for any unnecessary or avoidable dispute with any representative at the Congress. I thought that I would be able to work out the ways and means whereby this could be put to the Congress in a manner not to accentuate any difficulties. That has been my attitude to the Congress.

I would like you, Mr. Minister, to ask the Secretary-General directly, if in the course of the many months and on the many occasions, both publicly and privately, dealing with matters of the Congress, I ever in a single word, or a single phrase, implied that I would use the Congress, or would allow the Congress to be used for any personal or private quarrels between this or that person or organisation. As a matter of fact, I may state that when it was learned that someone might submit a document of Marxist orientation at the Congress, I was the first one who stated: Not at all; it was not necessary, and we should not accept any such article because the only result would be to cause useless and disruptive debate at the Congress.

I can only say in conclusion that the present attitude of the International Steering Committee shows a totally false belief that there are people in the Caribbean who would use the Congress as a means of making public, local, political feuds over politics and personalities. It is a poor recompense for the high principles which have, over many decades, distinguished the intervention of West Indians into African affairs. I have to state that I would have resigned instantly from any Committee which would have aimed at excluding legitimate political opinion from a Pan-African Congress. I am absolutely certain that if the International Steering Committee persists in this policy, it will not only castrate the Congress. It will be laying the basis for what is bound to be a mortifying controversy over the African realities, and place obstacles instead of clearing the road for the future.

More in sorrow than in anger.

Yours respectfully,

C. L. R. James

C.L.R. James.

cc. : President Julius K. Nyerere
State House
United Republic of Tanzania

His Excellency Paul Bomani
Ambassador
Embassy of Tanzania
Washington D.C., U.S.A.

Brother Courtland Cox
Secretary-General, International Secretariat
Sixth Pan African Congress
Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania

Brother Eusi Kwayana
Co-ordinator, Caribbean Steering Committee
Buxton, Guyana

July 12, 1974

C.L.R. James
20 Staverton Road, N.W. 2
London, England

Brother James:

I have received both your letters of June 5th to Minister Malecela outlining your reasons for not attending the Sixth Pan African Congress and also your letter of resignation as a Sponsor of the Congress. Needless to say I regret your not being present at the Sixth PAC because I know that you have worked harder than anyone to see that this Congress was promoted and you gave unselfishly of your meager financial resources whenever the Congress was in need. I remember whenever a request was made of you the response was always "I'm your man."

I would like to address myself to two points in this letter. First, the nature of the invitation to speak and secondly, the statement made by Ramphal on who could attend the Congress.

On the first point, the intent of the letter inviting you to speak was first to ask you to deliver the major speech in the plenary on the future of Pan-Africanism and second to lead the discussion on that particular topic when it came up in the political workshop. You were free to speak on any other topic that you chose to speak on without any prohibition from anyone.

If the above had been your sole objection, I would have written or telephoned you to clarify the matter immediately. However, the second question of participation seemed to me to be the substantive question.

As I told you early this year, the question of Caribbean participation came into serious doubt after the December meeting. Before that time participation of delegates to the Congress was left to the Secretariat to decide. And the thrust was as you indicated in your letter of June 5th.

However, after the December meeting there were complaints from the government of Guyana by letter and by a direct messenger to President

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Nyerere. There was, as I told you, a negative report from the Tanzanian Ambassador Bomani, who attended the Guyana meeting. I told you of the reports and you disputed what Ambassador Bomani and others had to say about the meeting. You and others thought it was a very good meeting. Other persons, not connected with Guyana government or the Tanzania government, also thought otherwise. It seemed that the people from the Caribbean thought the meeting to be a good and even great one; those from outside thought otherwise. Be that as it may, a letter was written by Mwalimu to Forbes Burnham stating that the Congress would have as it's participants from the Caribbean, delegates from both government and non-governmental sources. He also emphasized strongly that the Congress would not be used as a platform for internal political feuds.

As a result of T.A.N.U.'s urging, myself and the political secretary from TANU went to Guyana. The objective was to investigate the situation and try to bring together in some fashion the participants from both government-party and non-governmental delegations.

As a result of this trip to Guyana I wrote a report stating that the two groups couldn't come together politically or any other way but it was very important that they both be represented at the Congress. The TANU representative thought that emphasis should be given to the government's side.

You and I again travelled to the Caribbean and we again went over with Burnham and Shirley Field Ridley the situation at the December meeting. We also attended a two day Steering Committee meeting. At that meeting, as I saw it, the following things were raised: a. the question of cooperation between the non-governmental forces and the government; b. the accusation made by the government of Guyana about the December meeting; c. my expression of TANU's concerns about the political thrust of the non-governmental delegation; d. an explanation of what was going on generally with the Congress; and e. most importantly, the need for funds for the Caribbean.

The following things were concluded: 1. I would try to seek money for the Caribbean Steering Committee thru the O.A.U., and private sources; 2. I would try to secure seats for the delegation at reduced rates on the U.S. charter; 3. that the Caribbean Steering Committee preferred no relationship with the governmental forces; 4. that the Caribbean Steering Committee would write a letter to Burnham concerning the December meeting; 5. that the Caribbean Steering Committee would write a letter to T.A.N.U. outlining your views on the political situation in the Caribbean; and 6. that the Caribbean Steering Committee would raise a delegation to the Sixth Pan African Congress.

When I left the Guyana meeting I came to the O.A.U. meeting in Kampala. It was decided by Tanzania to only ask for political support. They would ask the O.A.U. member states to contribute financially, and they would ask for no contribution from the O.A.U. as a body.

The Sixth Pan African Congress had no status at the O.A.U. meeting and therefore only could be heard thru the Tanzanian delegation.

We received a thousand dollars from you and I wrote to various individuals for funds for the Caribbean Steering Committee. (Unfortunately I have just learned from Kwayana that the check for \$1,000 was not honored. I asked Edie why and she said that the office in Washington, after sending a regular check through the mail, by some mistake withdrew the money before the check sent to Guyana had cleared. I am trying to raise the money at this time to replace that \$1,000 check.)

When I returned to Tanzania, the government of Guyana had sent another letter of protest to T.A.N.U. saying that we spent all our time in Guyana talking with and to the Caribbean Steering Committee and only paid a courtesy call on them and it seemed that the wishes of the report and decisions of TANU had not been followed. The letter also mentioned the organizing of the Caribbean Steering Committee to raise a delegation to the Congress, and stated that the matter should be cleared up immediately as regards who would participate in the Congress.

The Foreign Minister of Tanzania had told the Foreign Minister of Guyana that Tanzania was to follow the guidelines listed below when allowing delegations and special guests into Tanzania to attend the Congress.

1. Government delegation
2. Delegates from ruling parties
3. Liberation movements
4. Delegates and guests who were not found objectionable to the government or ruling party

When the conditions for allowing delegates and guests into Tanzania was states in this final manner I registered my objections and asked that Ambassador Salim be sent to the Caribbean to explain Tanzania's position. I was told that he would be travelling to the Caribbean. He didn't make the trip.

I told the people in T.A.N.U. that it was important for someone from Tanzania to see the Caribbean Steering Committee. I felt--rightly or wrongly--that the way the decision was taken, that of Malcela to Ramphal, and the basis on which it was taken, Tanzania would not allow into their country anyone they thought objectionable to the government, that there was very little I could do but to ask Tanzania to assume full responsibility for it's decision by contacting the people in the Caribbean and informing them of these guidelines. This they did not do.

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After some protest by the Caribbean Steering Committee, I wrote Eusi a personal letter explaining what had happened. I felt that neither my resignation as Secretary-General (which I most seriously considered), nor my making this question a public issue (which I never considered) would do the Congress or Tanzania any good. I felt the enemies of Africa would use it to our discredit.

I have chose not to discuss the issue in any public forum. I did however, in my closing remarks to the Sixth Pan African Congress say that history will judge us negatively for excluding many popular movements from the Congress.

Many people, especially from the U.S., Caribbean, and Britain, made pointed remarks as to the absense of the Caribbean non-governmental delegation.

I write this letter not to continue public debate, place blame or avoid political criticism, but to clarify as much as I can remember the events surrounding the exclusion of the non-governmental delegation.

I must say that there were other delegations and individuals that the government said couldn't attend, but in fact did attend. And if the non-governmental delegation had chosen to come they would have been admitted. However, as we know, for the Caribbean Steering Committee it was the political principle that mattered.

I hope this letter will be helpful to you.

Again I must say sincerely that without you there could have been no Sixth Pan African Congress. Although in the end, because of political principle you withdrew, your dedication to the political struggles of peoples for liberation has been a guide to me.

Enclosed you will find the final resolutions of the Congress. Geri, myself and others are now working on the book and there will also be a move on the Congress.

Of course there are further things to be discussed on this and other questions concerning the Congress but I do not want to put them in writing because I prefer to talk with you in person about them. So until I see you, take care.

Yours in the struggle,