**NLI 13087/3**

**‘Foreign Office file of correspondence with the Peruvian Amazon Co,; 64pp 1909-10’**

**Hal Gielgud (Peruvian Amazon Company) to Under- Secretary of State, FO**

**3p. w. Casement notes**

**8 June 1910**

THE PERUVIAN AMAZON COMPANY, LIMITED

Salisbury House,
London Wall,

LONDON, E.C.

9th June 1910

Sir:

I am desired by my Directors to ask you to refer to the letter dated 8th March 1910 from myself, as instructed by my Directors, to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. In that letter I enclosed you copies of extracts from Minutes of the Peruvian Amazon Company at various dates, showing that commencing on 17th February 1909 a Commission was being prepared to proceed to the Putumayo district to report on the possibilities of commercial development of the properties of the Company and also to enquire into the present relations between the native employees and the Agents of the Company. As a consequence of this I am to inform you that the said Commission will leave England shortly. The proposed constitution of the Commission is as follows-

1. Col. the Hon. Reginald H. Bertie, C.B., late Commanding Royal Welsh Fusiliers.

2. One of the Directors of the Peruvian Amazon Company.

3. Mr. H.L. Gielgud, Secretary & Manager of the Peruvian Amazon Company.

and one or two other members, as may be suggested.

My Directors desire me once more to state emphatically that they are in absolute accord with the very clear denial given by the representative of the Peruvian Government in London, in his letter to the Editor of “Truth”, dated 25th September 1909, in regard to the atrocious allegations made against the Agents of the Company on its Putumayo estates.

My Directors see from your letter to the Anti-Slavery & Aborigines Protection Society of the 19th May, which has been published in the Press, that His Majesty's Government is taking diplomatic action with a view to investigating the charges which have been made against the Company. My Directors feel that they cannot in any way interfere with the action of the Government of Peru, in whose territory and under whose laws and protection the operations of the Company in the Putumayo are carried on, and who, as I have previously had the honour to point out to you in my letters of the 8th March and 27th April of this year, have already interested themselves in the matter.

At the same time, I have to inform you that Senor J.C. Arana, a member of the Board, gave instructions by cable and subsequently by letter from Manaos to the Iquitos office of the Company, to the effect that the office should ask for the making of a judicial inquiry into the accusations. This order was given immediately on recovering the first information of the allegations appearing in the newspapers “La Sancion” and “La Felpa” in Iquitos.

**[Casement note: Tizon told me that no enquiry was held. Zapata refused it.]**

I am further to inform you that the very employees against whom the accusations have been brought wrote to the chief authorities in Iquitos, on whom the territory of the Putumayo is dependent, asking that instructions should be given for the holding of a judicial enquiry, and there exists in the records of the Court at Iquitos a dossier dealing with the subject.

**[Casement highlights last three paras in margin.]**

Since, however, the Press continues to repeat the accusations previously made against the employees of the Peruvian Amazon Company - accusations in respect of deeds said to have been done since and during its constitution as a British Company - my Directors, in their desire that more light may be thrown on the matter and that abuses, if they exist, may be done away with, will give very clear and definite instructions to the members of the commission above referred to, as they have already given to the representatives of the Company in Iquitos and Putumayo.

In view of the fact that a letter from His Majesty's Foreign Office, dated 19th May 1910, addressed to the Anti-Slavery & Aborigines Protection Society has been published in the Press in regard to the matter, my Directors desire me to inform you that this letter has also been sent to the Press for publication, and that they most respectfully ask your permission to publish the whole of the correspondence that has passed between His Majesty's Foreign Office and the Company, in which it is clearly shown what is the character of the persons who have supplied to His Majesty's Foreign Office and to “Truth” the accusations against the employees of the Company.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble servant,

(sd) H.L. Gielgud

Secretary & Manager