



DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

WEEKLY SUMMARY



43

20 December 1968

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Exemptions: NOT RELEVANT

[REDACTED]



BURNHAM RECEIVES CLEAR MAJORITY IN GUYANESE ELECTIONS

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BURNHAM RECEIVES CLEAR MAJORITY IN GUYANESE ELECTIONS

Guyana's Prime Minister Forbes Burnham won a clear majority in the elections on 16 December and will not need a coalition partner when he forms the next government.

Burnham received a bare majority of the domestic vote, but the newly enfranchised overseas Guyanese backed him solidly to give his People's National Congress a comfortable majority--30 seats in the 53-man National Assembly.

Relations between Burnham and Peter D'Aguiar, leader of the United Force party that until recently was a member of the government coalition, deteriorated steadily throughout the campaign, and Burnham was determined not to have to rely on him again. The prime minister, in fact, made his biggest election gains at the

expense of the United Force, which lost almost half of the voters who backed it in the 1964 election. The United Force won only four seats and pro-Communist Cheddi Jagan's People's Progressive Party 19 seats. Burnham also won some votes among the East Indians, who in the past have almost unanimously supported Jagan.

Election day was quiet,

Both defeated parties have consistently charged that the election was rigged against them, and are now stridently pressing their claim. The carping will further antagonize Burnham and be a major nuisance to him, but in the long run is likely to have little effect. For the present at least, the Guyanese public, as opposed to the defeated politicians, will be eager to forget politics and turn to the traditional holiday revelries.

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