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From crown colony to associate statehood : political change in Dominica, the Commonwealth West Indies.

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FROM CROWN COLONY TO ASSOCIATE STATEHOOD: POLITICAL
CHANGE IN DOMINICA, THE COMMONWEALTH WEST INDIES

A Dissertation Presented

By

CUTHBERT J. THOMAS

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

May

1973

Major Subject Political Science

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CHANGE IN DOMINICA, THE COMMONWEALTH WEST INDIES

A Dissertation

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May 1973

To the Youth of Dominica who will
replace these colonials before long

PREFACE

My interest in Comparative Government dates back to my days at McMaster University during the 1969-1970 academic year. My interest in that field was further heightened when I came into contact with Dr. Howard Wiarda at the University of Massachusetts. Studying under Professor Wiarda I decided to specialize in the area of Latin America and the Caribbean. During those three years I worked with Professor Wiarda and other graduate students at the University of Massachusetts, I was able to grapple with the concept of political change.

Writing my dissertation on Dominica, I was able to utilize my knowledge of political change. I chose to write on Dominica--a member state of the British West Indies--because this is one of the areas I know well. It is a small country which makes such a study manageable. And besides, to the best of my knowledge, no complete political analysis of this country is presently available.

Chapter I deals with the concept of "political change," which has been used instead of "political development." The latter word seems to impede agreement on the theoretical assumptions which are essential to ensure a clear cut understanding of the new nations in their attempts to improve social conditions. In dealing with

politics, "development" seems to be too vulnerable to value-laden concepts. "Development" as it has been used, seems to imply change in a certain direction. In contrast, "change" is a less specific concept on which wider agreement as to meaning might be possible. It is more general, and is less likely to have value judgments built into its definition. It seems to be more neutral.

A chapter is devoted solely to an examination of the many constitutions Dominica has had. Thus in a sense Chapter II is an extension of Chapter III in that, it examines the present constitutional arrangements in Dominica in relation to past constitutions. The constitutions of these colonial countries should always be examined because they have conditioned the behaviors of the actors in the political system.

Chapter III takes a look at the impact of colonialism on the Dominican political system. The component parts of the colonial situation are examined to determine the possible effect these may have had on the present political system.

The political parties in Dominica are analyzed in Chapter IV. The functions of the parties are examined to see if they are working to produce a "better" Dominican society.

Chapter V describes and assesses the activities of the Black Power Movement. This is not the most powerful

interest group in Dominica, but it is the only group which has openly challenged the Government and other supportive groups in the system. Presently the group is weak, but its leadership is both young and intelligent. It is getting more cohesive, and within a few years other groups in Dominica, such as the Roman Catholic Church and business elements, will be forced to reckon with it.

The many attempts at federating the British West Indian Islands are reviewed in Chapter VI. There have been two major attempts in recent times to form a "Westindian" nation, both having failed.

Finally in the conclusion, the problems which confront Dominica are reviewed. Possible solutions to these problems are stated.

I have tried to make this study as comprehensive as I could. But it must be emphasized that this is a case study which deals specifically with Dominica, British West Indies.

The findings here do not apply to all countries which were colonies. The problems of Dominica are unique in some ways, but they are not all that different from those found in the other former British colonies of the West Indies. Many of the problems, such as poverty or unemployment, are the same, but may be called by different names.

The usefulness of this case study really lies in

identifying and in attempting to solve the major problems which beset Dominica. If the leaders can agree with me that there are major problems in Dominica, then this study has more than an academic effect.

At this point let me express my great appreciation to Dr. Harvey E. Kline for accepting to chair my dissertation committee. He did a fine job in questioning my ideas on the subject. He was most sensitive to the need of reading the sometimes disorderly manuscript very quickly.

Thanks are also due to Dr. Gerard Braunthal for his many pointed comments on the study. He also did a good job in helping me finish my last few days at the University of Massachusetts.

Finally thanks are due to Dr. George E. Urch for accepting to be the third reader of the study. These professors only helped. The errors and interpretations remain the property of this writer.

Figure I. Dominica in relation to other islands in the Caribbean

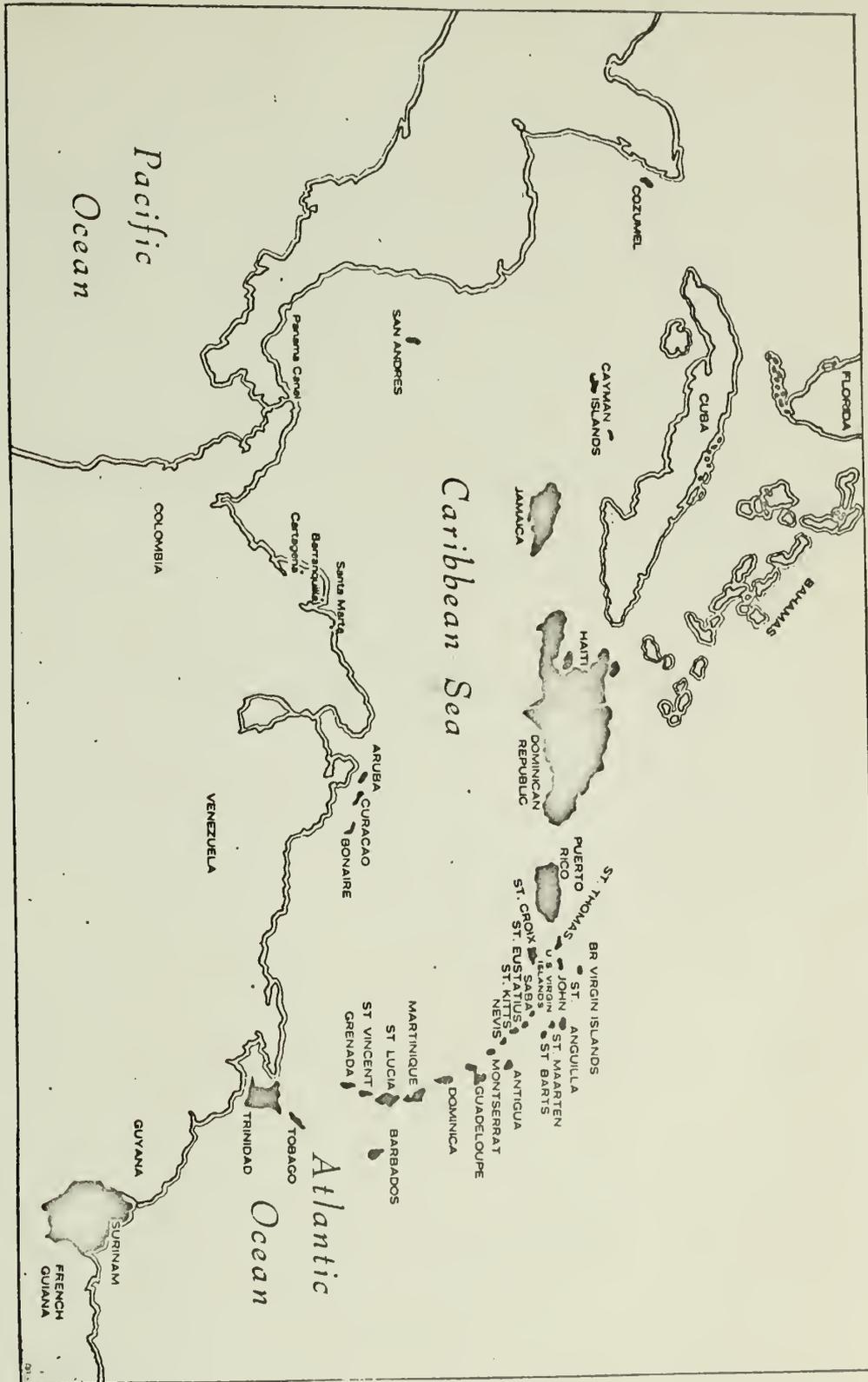


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. POLITICAL CHANGE.	1
II. CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN DOMINICA .	35
III. THE BRITISH VARIANT OF COLONIALISM IN THE BRITISH WEST INDIES	89
IV. THE PARTIES IN THE POLITICAL SYSTEM OF DOMINICA.	153
V. THE BLACK POWER MOVEMENT IN DOMINICA. .	213
VI. FEDERATIONS IN THE BRITISH WEST INDIES. .	261
VII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.	312
APPENDICES	325
BIBLIOGRAPHY.	342

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
I. Dominica in Relation to Other Islands in the Caribbean	ix
II. Diagrammatic Representation of the Dominican Political System	30
III. Eastern Caribbean Islands	38
IV. Election Returns for Selected Candidates in Dominica between 1951 and 1957	165
V. Election Returns in Federal Elections 1958	173
VI. Election Returns in Dominica: The Labor Party in Relation to its Opponent between 1961 and 1970	181
VII. Motorable Roads of Dominica	189
VIII. Black Power as Perceived by Forty-five Bureaucrats	243
IX. Number of Students Wrote-Passed Selected Subjects between 1966 and 1971	253
X. Population and Number of Schools	255
XI. Map of the "Little Eight"	265
XII. Commonwealth Caribbean	267
XIII. British Aid to the Commonwealth Caribbean before and after Federation	296
XIV. National Income Figures for the British West Indies, 1957	303

C H A P T E R I

POLITICAL CHANGE

Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to present the theoretical framework for the study. It attempts to review the literature on political change with a view to extrapolating from the literature a meaningful description of what change in the colonial situation might entail. This is to facilitate a clearer understanding of present day politics in Dominica. One cannot simply dismiss lightly the literature on political change, which has grown over the years, with the trite remark that it is neither value-free nor applicable to the emerging nations. This may be so, but ignoring it might be likened to building a costly road to a certain point when there is one already available. By all means new paths should be created, especially if they lead to the desired destination more quickly, but the contour of the old tracks can be of great help, especially if these can be widened, precluding the great expense of building brand new ones.

Introduction

Writing in 1966, Alfred Stepan lamented the fact that none of the major political scientists chose Latin America as an area of specialization to test their theories about nation-building. He was particularly disappointed since the study of a Latin American nation would have helped immensely in sharpening the tools used in studying political change. The same can be said for the Commonwealth Caribbean¹ countries since they too have many of the ills, albeit to a lesser extent in some cases, that Afro-Asian countries exhibit. The Caribbean was even better suited than Latin America for testing the models on development since they are relatively small. English is the main language spoken and it is relatively cheap to travel to and live in. But the Caribbean has been ignored, probably because its era of revolution was not upon it yet, in contrast to the exciting events in Africa and Asia.

Political change, and henceforth referred to as change, is a very elusive concept which has aroused an enormous amount of emotionalism. It is accepted that a political system is not a static one which has led some political scientists to look at the development of nations

¹In this study the term Caribbean will be used to refer only to the former British Colonies in the West Indies. The term will be used interchangeably with the West Indies.

as a mechanical process, meaning that development - reaching to that "higher and better" level - can be planned. This process has been deceptively likened to the building of a house which "one can fashion to one's taste."² Milton Esman writes of change as the ability to deliberately fashion a community in a fixed geographic boundary.³ He further states that innovative institutions engineer change and it is when these institutions are institutionalized that the developed society becomes inevitable.⁴ The question is can an institution build a society? An institution may disrupt a society rather than build it. It becomes more important for the institution to blend in with the people that it is serving. Even then, there is no guarantee that it will succeed in directing society to that higher goal because institutionality involves a complex set of interactions between the institution, with its component parts, the people and, of course, the environment. To survive, the institution may have to accommodate; if it cannot, this may be the source of its demise.

²Karl Deutsch et al., eds., Nation-Building (New York: Atherton, 1965), p. 3.

³Milton Esman, "The Politics of Development Administration," Comparative Administration, Group, Occasional Paper, 1963, p. 1.

⁴Ibid., p. 40.

Political Change and Traditionalism

This mechanistic view of development may be the result of the low regard that the theorists have shown toward what they consider a traditional society as opposed to an advanced society. Rupert Emerson writes that the first problem to be successfully handled in nation-building is to destroy tribalism because of its disruptive force.⁵

Still dealing with traditionalism, Claude Welch sees "traditional mores" as an impediment to modernization. The primary aim then is to weaken them. He quoted Gustave LeBon, approvingly, "to respect tradition is a condition of existence for a people, to know how to disengage from it is a condition of progress."⁶ To second Welch's position, S.N. Eisenstadt says that traditionalism retards creativity and innovation.⁷ For this reason, it must go because today, the very base of traditional instructions have been routed, of course, by the progressive life. C.S. Whitaker took off from where Eisenstadt left off and tells the world that psychologically a traditional people

⁵Rupert Emerson, "Nation-Building in Africa," in Nation-Building, by Karl Deutsch, et al. (New York: Atherton, 1965), p. 105.

⁶Claude E. Welch, Jr., ed., "Introduction" in Political Modernization: A Reader in Comparative Political Change (Belmont, Cal.: Wadsworth, 1967), p. 9.

⁷S.N. Eisenstadt, "Some new looks at the problem of relations between traditional societies and modernization," Economic and Cultural Change (April, 1968), p. 445.

have seen the need to emulate the more advanced peoples. The whole society of the new states must change concurrently since no segment of it can be held back by tradition no matter how deeply it is rooted. It has to be so, since the influential part of the society will be the first to enter the modern era, and having seen the benefits of modernity, it will make the whole society modern.⁸ Thus, Marion Levy writes gleefully that a universal solvent has penetrated the traditional society. It does not matter how this solvent came there, change is always "in the direction of. . . the modernized society."⁹

Perhaps the relationship between traditionalism and development has simply been misunderstood. Further analysis of this misunderstanding will be discussed below.

Political Development and Ethnocentrism

Concomitant with this belittling of traditionalism is the blatant ethnocentrism which has characterized the literature on change. Myron Weiner contends that it was because of the tremendous impact of Darwin's evolutionary

⁸C.S. Whitaker, Jr., "A Dysrhythmic Process of Political Change," World Politics (January, 1967), p. 198.

⁹Marion J. Levy, Jr., "Patterns of Modernization and Political Development," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science (March, 1965), p. 30.

theory of the survival of the fittest that Europeans sought to impose their model on the "New World."¹⁰ By implication, European governments were the fittest because they had "developed faster and better" than African systems. As a result, it became the "white man's burden" to direct and hasten positive government. As a start, cultural diffusion was the key to this new phase modernization. Eisenstadt admits, to confirm what had already been suspected, that the path to development came from Europe and spread during the 19th and 20th centuries to South America, Asia, and Africa.¹¹ Clearly, the non-Western models of governments (Latin America sometimes included), have been looked upon as infants or as deviant examples of the Western experience.¹² But the zenith of European ethnocentrism is seen in the following statement by B. Malinowski:

European agents [have] constitute [d] everywhere the main drive in change; that they were the determining factors as regards the initiative of change; that it [was] they who plan, took measures, and [imported] things. . . , that they withheld ; that they took away land, labor and political independence and that they

¹⁰Myron Werner, "Political Modernization and Evolutionary Theory," Social Change in Developing Areas: A re-interpretation of Evolutionary Theory, ed. by Herbert R. Barringer (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman Publishing Co., 1965), p. 105.

¹¹S.N. Eisenstadt, "Bureaucracy and Political Development," in Bureaucracy and Political Development, ed. by Joseph La Palombara (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 98.

¹²Peter Nettl, Political Mobilization, A Sociological Analysis of Methods and Concepts (London: Faber, 1967), p. 193.

themselves [were] in most of their actions have been determined by instructions, ideas, and forces which had their origin outside Africa.¹³

On first reading, it could be hypothesized that Malinowski was being sympathetic to the plight of the Africans, especially when he writes about the taking away of African property by the Europeans. But one quickly discovers that the reverse is the case since he asserts elsewhere that African culture had no discernible impact on other cultures. He advises the British that "a wise control of the forces of change can guarantee a normal and stable development" in Africa.¹⁴ Malinowski does not state why change is needed or why the British variant was meant to be imposed on Africans, but Cyril Black gives a partial answer. Writing as late as 1966, he says that African traditional culture has proven incapable of sustaining modern institutions,¹⁵ which the Africans, presumably, want.

In response to those who not only want traditionalism

¹³B. Malinowski, "Dynamics of Culture Change," in Social Change, ed. by I. Wallerstein (New York: Wiley, 1966), p. 13.

¹⁴Quoted in G. Balandier, "The Colonial Situation: A Theoretical Approach," ibid., p. 41.

¹⁵Cyril Black, The Dynamics of Modernization (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), p. 126.

wiped out but the European variant of developed government imposed, Henry Bernstein writes that the traditional/modern dichotomy is too neat. All traditional societies are not the same; in fact, the ideal traditional or modern society is non-existent. Consequently, the idea that the modern society is the "participant society"¹⁶ does not hold. Those societies Daniel Lerner would label traditional are also participant and the nature of participation in the so-called modern societies is not even clear. Henry Bernstein is of the opinion, and quite correctly so, that this dichotomy is purely heuristic. This model can serve as the basis of a dynamic approach which shows a relationship between traditionalism and modernity;¹⁷ that is all it can do.

In addition, the assumption that modernity and tradition are radically contradictory is a result of misreading what tradition is all about in a so-called backward polity. It also involves a misunderstanding of what modernity involves in an "advanced" polity. It seems that the close relationship between the two is not clearly understood.

¹⁶Daniel Lerner, "The Transformation of Institutions," in The Transfer of Institutions, ed. by William B. Hamilton (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1964), p. 23.

¹⁷Henry Bernstein, "Modernization Theory and the Sociological Study of Development," The Journal of Development Studies (January, 1971), p. 147.

This has to be the case because no society relinquishes its traditional mores totally. Elements of traditionalism always remain as indelible marks on the new born society. It is as though the umbilical cord of tradition has refused to be cut away because no instrument is sharp enough to perform the seemingly simple operation. The fact is in the Western sense, "no society is wholly modern"; some part of the old remains with the new.¹⁸ Indeed tradition can be used to bring about modernity.

Concept of Change

After considering various approaches, it was decided to handle this section topically. Only a few theories which deal with political change will be discussed here. To this end, it assesses the equating of political change with functions, the handling of a series of crises successfully, the growth in complexity of institutions, social mobilization, integration, the existence of democratic institutions, and the capacity of top leadership to control desired changes in a political system. The section ends with a treatment of the relationship between law and political change.

¹⁸Robert Ward and Dankwart Rustow, eds., "Conclusion," Political Modernization in Turkey and Japan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), pp. 444-5.

Barring the fact that Almond did not visit a "developing" country¹⁹ before he built his models for their development, one cannot minimize the impact that he has made in the field of political development. In the introduction to the book he helped edit, The Politics of the Developing Areas, he endeavors to show the importance of the political systems of the new states. He uses the systems approach of structural functional analysis to show the importance of the component parts of those political systems. Although Almond does not deal specifically with the concept of political change in that work, he implies that change entails the ability of any political system to deal with any strains which may impinge on it. He maintains that since all political systems have component parts which perform functions to sustain those systems where these functions have been performed satisfactorily, change has occurred.²⁰

It was in 1966 that Almond, together with Bingham Powell tried to articulate an explicit concept of political change. They wrote that "Change results when existing structure and culture of the political system is unable to

¹⁹Gabriel Almond. Political Development: Essays in Heuristic Theory (Boston: Little, Brown, 1970), p. 21.

²⁰Gabriel Almond and James Coleman, eds., The Politics of the Developing Areas (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960), pp. 8-11.

cope with the problem or challenge which confronts it without further structural differentiation and cultural secularization."²¹ The political system must be able to handle well what Lucian Pye would later call crises.

Thus for Almond, the theory of political change deals with functions.²² What he does is to stress the problem solving capacity of the system. It demands or draws attention to participation and centralization. It links new role structures and personal belonging. But there are some unanswered questions. To what extent should both participation and centralization be tolerated? Is participation absolutely necessary to keep any political system alive? Further criticism of the systems theory can be found at the end of the chapter, where the component parts of the Dominican political system are analyzed. But suffice it to say at this point that what detracts from Almond's description is his heavy emphasis on stability which gives one the impression that the dynamic system which he is after is in reality a very static one.

²¹Gabriel Almond and Bingham Powell, Jr., Comparative Politics: A Developmental Approach (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1966), p. 34.

²²Gabriel Almond, "A Systems Approach to Political Development," in Political Development and Social Change, ed. by Jason Finkle and Richard Gable (New York: John Wiley, 1971), p. 102.

On a more mundane level, Lucian Pye describes change as the successful handling of a series of six crises by a country.²³ These are that of identity, legitimacy, penetration, participation, integration, and distribution. Identity means simply that a people see themselves as part of something they call their country. Some have argued that the West Indies will never be a nation since its people have not been able to identify with something called the West Indies because they did not have to fight for their "freedom."

Legitimacy is the acceptance of the right of a government to rule regardless of how it came to power. But the accepted procedure for changing governments must be respected by the contending parties in the political system. Penetration is the ability of the governmental machinery to go out to reach the people to ensure a certain degree of participation. It also involves the conscious effort of genuinely trying to reach out to the people with goods and services. Participation is the deliberate encouragement of the masses to partake in the running of public and private affairs. Pye's shortcoming is that he does not indicate that extensive participation, which may jeopardize stability, may not be a necessary ingredient to the survival of a political system.

²³Lucian Pye, Aspects of Political Development (Boston: Little, Brown, 1966), pp. 63-66.

Pye refers to integration as the government's ability to effectively coordinate policy to ensure its efficient execution. Obviously, this is only one meaning of integration, but the other crises cover other meanings of the term to a great extent. Finally, distribution means the sharing of available resources with the polity at large. Pye cautions his readers that these crises may not necessarily occur simultaneously or separately. But when does one know that a crisis exists? A nation may misread a problem and act frantically to handle what it has diagnosed as a crisis, and it turns out that such did not exist.

Pye's description is too neat and he could have been more precise in indicating what each of these crises entails. His analysis is too broad; for example, a participation crisis for Burma may not be the same as one for Jamaica. But, as if Pye did not create enough confusion with his description of political change as the handling of a series of crises, in 1972 a group of scholars probably thought they were writing the definitive work on change by using the Pye approach.²⁴ All well-known scholars in the developmental field, Leonard Binder, Dankwart Rustow, James Coleman, are represented.

²⁴ Leonard Binder et al., eds., Crises and Sequences in Political Development (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971).

Leonard Binder leads the attack by charging that political change entails critical changes of identity from religious to ethnic, from parochial to societal groupings. To handle the legitimacy crisis well is to change from "the transcendental to immanent" realities. But contrary to this belief, Jon Rosenbaum writes that the beliefs in the nether world can be used to bring about modernization. Superstitious beliefs may create "a credible coercive apparatus in the formation of a functional political system,"²⁵ the same thing that people like Binder would like see happen. The Machiavellian dictum that if religion can help to keep the Prince in power, it should be used but otherwise it should be destroyed comes to mind. Likewise, if a people are steeped in other worldly beliefs, this can be used as a starting point to bring a desired change which might destroy those beliefs, but in a very deceptive manner.

Binder continues with his analysis and writes about participation as the masses getting involved in the affairs which touch upon their lives - in effect, the group should become more important than the family. By implication what the group can do for the individual the family cannot do as well.

²⁵Jon H. Rosenbaum and Peter C. Sederberg, "The Occult and Political Development," Comparative Politics (July, 1971), p. 566.

In dealing with distribution, Binder wants status to be based on merit and achievement. He insists on a degree of "control and management of capital," and also a "degree of administrative and legal penetration into the social structure and to the remote regions of the country."²⁶

Change cannot take place where advancement is based on nepotism and ascription. Binder does not end his discussion here but goes on to prescribe solutions to the problems of the developing world.

To him, the solutions of these problems rest with the type of institutions these nations possess. If the institutions are strong, complex, structurally differentiated,²⁷ the polity has a chance to develop; if it is not developed yet, by extension its problems become solvable. These institutions, namely, elections, bureaucracy, government, to name a few, must be big to facilitate the increase in services as the population increases. But Joseph La Palombara warns that the extension of services does not necessarily mean that modernization is achieved.²⁸ Henry Bienen echoes the same sentiment when he writes that change entails effective political institutions, but hastens to add

²⁶Binder et al., eds., Crises, p. 53.

²⁷Ibid., pp. 69-71.

²⁸Joseph La Palombara, Bureaucracy and Political Development (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 29.

that they could be competitive or decentralized in any system.²⁹ In fact, competition and decentralization are not in themselves hostile to change. A highly localized determination of political decisions may not be tantamount to chaos. (The reverse might be the case; both Canada and the Caribbean have demonstrated that point and even in the United States, a most "developed" society, the trend is toward local autonomy). Consequently, the literature which equates change with an increase of power or complex government must be read with caution. Power does not have to be moved from the village to the city and thence to the national level. A decentralized government does not necessarily negate a degree of secularization that is required to perform certain functions. But the degree of secularization, observes La Palombara, will depend on the goal the nation has set for itself.³⁰ Pye still insists that the ultimate test of change is the ability of a people to "establish large, complex, but flexible organizational forms." Simultaneously, there must be a multiplicity of individuals and procedures to settle disputes.³¹ And even prior to Pye and Bienen,

²⁹ Henry Bienen, "What Does Political Development Mean in Africa," World Politics (October, 1967), p. 141.

³⁰ Joseph La Palombara, Bureaucracy and Political Development, p. 40.

³¹ Lucian Pye, Politics, Personality and Nation-Building (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), p. 51.

Samuel P. Huntington was equating change with a respect for complex institutions. But he always warned that mass mobilization or a highly politicized people could prevent the growth of these complex institutions.³²

Using the differentiated syndrome as a guide, Wendell Bell sees Jamaican society as being developed since there is an increasing "scale of society." He was happy to report that the elites were responding to the demands of the system. Bell continues: "the organization of human effort had become more intricate in Jamaica, and managerial and supervisory personnel both in and out of government. . . had increased in importance. Differentiation of function, specialization, rationality and impersonality had increased." The society had developed politically.³³ But by 1970, the Jamaica Government has become increasingly repressive as citizens and residents demanded more services which the elites were unwilling to render. Bell was fooled into believing that mere passivity on the part of Jamaicans was a sign of satisfaction, hence change.

³²Samuel P. Huntington, "Political Development and Political Decay," World Politics, (April, 1965), pp. 386-430. Huntington has since changed his mind on change, in "The Change to Change: Modernization, Development and Politics," Comparative Politics (April, 1971), pp. 283-322. There he argues that it becomes superfluous to talk about change since all countries automatically go through that process.

³³Wendell Bell, "Equality and Attitudes of Elites in Jamaica," Social and Economic Studies (December, 1962), p. 429; (emphasis added).

On another level, Claude Ake sees political change³⁴ as nothing more than social mobilization. He concerns himself with the basic question which besets all developing countries: which political system, with the minimum amount of disintegrative effort, will in the short run bring about social mobilization. Ake is convinced that the authoritarian, paternal, identific, and consensual political system seems to be the answer to the political problems of the developing countries.

The process of integration is change for Myron Weiner.³⁵ To him, integration could mean any of the following: bringing ethnic groups together to form a nation out of a state, establishing central authority with the periphery acquiescing, linking the masses with the elite, having the minimum value consensus to uphold a social order, sustaining a capacity to organize for a common goal or holding a system together by whatever means available.³⁶ In the final analysis, political change concerns itself with "expanding functions of the political system," so it has to deal with the "new level of integration" which is essential to ensure a smooth functioning of the political system.³⁷

³⁴ Claude Ake, "Political Integration and Political Stability: A Hypothesis," World Politics (April, 1967), p. 488.

³⁵ Myron Weiner, "Political Integration and Political Development," The Human Factor in Political Development, ed. by Monte Palmer (Waltham, Mass.: Ginn, 1970), p. 191.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 194.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 200.

Supportive of Weiner is Claude Ake, who refers to the same phenomenon, integration, as "building a coherent political society. . . which involves an increase in cultural homogeneity and value consensus. The society elicits from the individual deference and devotion to the claims of the state."³⁸ As a result, social communication is broadened and intensified. Essentially these two writers are dealing with the ideal, but are not outlining how it is to be arrived at.

Disturbed by the inadequacies of the literature on change, Fred Riggs introduces a new phenomenon to the field. He dismisses the dichotomy between the traditional and the modern society described earlier in this chapter. Between these two societies, he puts what he terms the prismatic society.³⁹ But by doing that he falls into the same trap that those before him had fallen into, because by his definition of the prismatic society, not fully modern, not fully traditional, there exists no modern society since no society drops all its traditionalisms. A more detailed analysis of his prismatic society shows that he sees it as a halfway house where elements of the modern society exist

³⁸ Claude Ake, A Theory of Political Integration (Homewood, Ill.: The Dorsey Press, 1967), pp. 96-7.

³⁹ Fred Riggs, Administration in Developing Countries: The Theory of Prismatic Society (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1964), passim.

side by side with traditional elements. In such a system, certain people are favored because they have status. Law and practices are obeyed to the best of one's ability but are sometimes disregarded as the situation presents itself. The problem with this analysis is that he gives the impression that these very practices outlined above are not performed in the advanced societies. They may be more apparent in the new states because of their small size, but these very practices occur in other parts of the world and certainly in the advanced societies as well.

An additional problem with Riggs' analysis is his introduction of administration as an independent variable in the process of change. Administration is not static and not independent. It demands a lot of support from its environment. How it can effect political change drastically is still not very clear and Riggs has created more confusion than anything else. When he writes about formalism (legalism) in relation to the society, he does not show how it should be measured. For example, if the law makes school attendance mandatory, to Riggs that would be a degree of formalism. But, if in that same society, many schools remain unused, can a general statement be made that this society is prismatic since the situation warrants the disregarding of a law? Testing for formalism in regards to school attendance in this case becomes hazardous; some children may be attending school on a part-time basis.

How can that be measured?

Also, Riggs gives the distinct impression that the society is on an ascending order and is being dragged along by the main variable, the bureaucracy. He commits the same error that others before him had committed by insinuating that the traditional order will inevitably disintegrate and will be replaced by a higher and better one.

Chalmers Johnson⁴⁰ describes change as the capacity of top leadership to engineer complex programs to stimulate social and economic change. In the same vein, a few people have seen the emergence of a charismatic leader as an interim step to full political development which means that the leader's primary role is to convince the people to accept the state. As it were, he tries to handle the identity crisis satisfactorily. Immanuel Wallerstein⁴¹ conjectures that this is particularly useful where there are deep seated parochialisms. This sounds plausible and indeed is very simple. But one must exercise caution especially after reviewing the experiences of the developing countries with self-appointed messiahs. If a country is looking for a Messiah, so be it. But a charismatic leader, or what passes for such, is not necessarily a good leader. Carl

⁴⁰Chalmers Johnson, Revolutionary Change (Boston: Little, Brown, 1966), p. 104.

⁴¹Immanuel Wallerstein, Africa: The Politics of Independence (New York: Vintage Books, 1961), p. 99.

Frederick⁴² warns that it does not necessarily provide an adequate type of leadership, though it certainly provides power and selfishness and self-esteem which may preclude innovations and new leaders with new ideas. No further argument is necessary to demonstrate that point; the Caribbean has more than its share of examples (which will be discussed in Chapters Four and Six).

Political change is often equated with democracy.⁴³ Talcott Parsons is surely representative of this thinking. He writes that the terminal goal of the developed society is to be associated with democratic minded leaders. This destination seems to be based on the American model. Thus, the beginning of this long process is sometimes seen as negative and the phrase, the "non-Western political process," is used to describe it. The change process is analyzed as "problems," "conditions," determinants," and a progression toward this millenium. Obviously, to achieve this a "stable democracy"⁴⁴ is mandatory.

⁴²Carl Frederick, "Political Leadership and the Problem of Charismatic Power," Journal of Politics (February, 1961), pp. 3-24.

⁴³Talcott Parsons, Sociological Theory and Modern Society (New York: The Free Press, 1966), p. 519.

⁴⁴Martin Needler, "Political Development and Socio-Economic Development: The Case of Latin America," American Political Science Review (September, 1968), p. 889. In addition there are several other articles and books which see democracy as essential for development; among these are the following: Philip Cutright, "National Political Development:

La Palombara disagrees and says that the Anglo-American model is not the logical end product of political change. Democracy is utterly opposed to rapid change. He further states that the degree of complexity of the political system is not related to democratic forms.⁴⁵ To re-emphasize La Palombara's point, Karl de Schweinctz⁴⁶ argues that the political possibilities of the developing countries do not allow for democracy. Because the developing countries have been shown that there is a need to catch up with the advanced countries, they can ill-afford to practice American democracy.⁴⁷

Finally, political scientists increasingly are relating law to political change. They argue that the lawyers from the developing areas have all been trained in the metropole and for this reason bring certain values back to their countries. They become the leading politicians and

Measurements and Analysis," American Sociological Review (April, 1963), pp. 253-64; Seymour M. Lipset, "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy," American Political Science Review (March, 1959), pp. 69-105; David C. McClelland, The Achieving Society (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand, 1961).

⁴⁵ Joseph La Palombara, Bureaucracy and Political Development, p. 10.

⁴⁶ Karl de Schweinctz, Industrialization and Democracy: Economic Necessities and Political Consequences (New York: John Wiley, 1964), passim.

⁴⁷ C.B. Macpherson, The Real World of Democracy (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1966). Macpherson argues that they have a form of democracy peculiar to them.

get intimately involved in the nation-building process which often follows the state-building process.

Because of this fact, the pundits from the developed areas are increasingly writing about law as the basis for political change. Ralph Braibanti writes that law has acted as a guide leading people to this "collective earthly existence."⁴⁸ Others have seen law as a major obstacle to political change, especially in areas which were once under colonial rule. It is argued that since these lawyers were schooled in the metropolitan areas they were taught that rituals can regulate almost all disputes. They somehow believed that, and stopped any rapid change which is always seen as disruptive.⁴⁹

Of course, to accept this analysis is to accept Mr. Dunn's (quoted above) idea of change which essentially means emulating the more advanced countries. What Dunn fails to see is that a brake on rapid change may be positive contribution to development (more on that at the end of this chapter). Indeed law is related to political change, but the socialization process goes much further than that. It will be seen that there are other less tangible variables which have greater effect on change.

⁴⁸Ralph Braibanti, "The Role of Law in Political Development," International and Corporative Law of the Commonwealth, ed. by Robert Wilson (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1968), pp. 12-18.

⁴⁹W.M. Dunn, "Law and the Political Development of New States," Social and Economic Studies (March, 1971), p. 20.

Critique of the Systems Approach

It was suggested at the beginning of this chapter that the system theory would be used to explain and describe the political situation in Dominica. Thus, it is here that the shortcomings of this approach will be outlined, as far as the author can discern, in an effort to bypass the pitfalls of those before him, who have used the same approach.

System is here defined as an organized and apparent coherent body which tries to explain the inter-relationship between identifiable variables. "Identifiable" must be emphasized since unidentified variables may be just as important as the identified ones. Even when other variables are identified, the exact nature of their impact will probably never be made clear. Secondly, it is assumed that within this structure, the variables are sub-structures in themselves; even the individual is a sub-structure, in the sense that he possesses within him multiple variables. Thirdly, it is assumed that this system has a structure which implies a definite boundary and that its sole reason for being is to remain stable, to revert to a level of equilibrium, a situation where all parts function as they were meant to. Obviously, this is a ticklish problem, especially when one tries to identify how a certain element was meant to function. Then, finally, there is feedback based on inputs and outputs which eventually change the nature of the system, presumably in a positive way. By extension,

degeneration has no place in this scheme of things.

The system theory demands that an assortment of skills are available to ensure its smooth operation. The system is continually growing more complex and for this reason demands individually trained experts to man the emerging multi-complex structure.

All these factors sound good, but there are innumerable problems. First, one must set clearly where the boundaries of this system are to be marked. In a continually shrinking world, boundaries are getting more blurred by the hour. Where would one set the boundary of the Dominican political system? Does it include British politics? It is true that Dominican politics will never affect British politics as much as the British can still affect its politics, but what happens in each system may affect the other. For example, if for some reason civil war were to break out in Dominica and the British overreacted by deploying troops who went on to destroy Dominica, the British Government would surely be adversely affected by this action. There is no question that if Britain decides to cut all aid to Dominica, this will change the nature of Dominican politics in one way or the other. Does that mean that the Dominican political system may have to include outside limits?

Secondly, the system theorists give the impression that all the identifiable variables act in a reciprocal

fashion: people, things, institutions. The terminology employed is, to say the least, ambiguous if they are to be applied in all situations. For example, "interest aggregation," "communication," "rule application," and "adjudication" are always used with general applicability, with little or not regard for the specific situation under study.⁵⁰ The theorists fail to realize that a mass demonstration in Dominica may be as much interest aggregation as a wife insisting to her husband president that women deserve better treatment in the society. Labelling both as interest aggregation with no explanation does not seem correct. One critic writes that "a demand from a union leader might be both interest articulation and communication;"⁵¹ therefore, how does one label an action when it can fall under two or more rubrics?

Thirdly, reasons for failure in the system are sometimes tautological. The explanation for failure is simply put: the system failed to respond to the challenges of the time. The theorists never ask the critical question of why were demands made or why they had to come sooner or later? What really happened to bring about the system's downfall is never explained.⁵²

⁵⁰ Joseph La Palombara raises that very point in his "Macrotheories and Microapplications in Conservative Politics: A Widening Chasm," Comparative Politics (October, 1968), passim.

⁵¹ Alexander Groth, "Structural Functionalism and Political Development: Three Problems," The Western Political Quarterly (September, 1970), p. 489.

⁵² Ibid.

Fourthly, there is the problem of relationships. Why should one problem precipitate a crisis? Could it not be that the crisis was already in the making for years and it took one small event to set it off? In addition, all crises should not be labelled as pathological, as the system theorist implies. Further, how does one test the system to diagnose its adaptability or disintegration over a period of time? As Alexander J. Groth correctly asks, who is to say that an urban riot is more destructive to a system than the non-production of first-class music by a nation?⁵³

Finally, the over-emphasis on specialization because of the so-called complex nature of the system seems to be uncalled for. Because a nation has a shortage of manpower and it finds its several structures being manned by a few individuals is no sign of its inferior nature or its impending breakdown. The reasons for breakdown are far more complex than a lack of specialization. And, obviously, to go along with the several experts is to accept the need and inevitable democratic structure which the system theorists see as the best way to maintain the

⁵³Ibid., p. 492.

system on the desired course. Groth⁵⁴ argues that the opposite might be the case since democratic tolerance may precipitate atomic behavior. Open discussion does not necessarily lead to the maintenance of social order. By the same token, the autocratic system may not be more capable of distributing the services of a system. Groth calls upon the theorists to be more realistic in their model building by incorporating some history into them. La Palombara calls on them to explain the "black box," the system,⁵⁵ or go back to political science to explain the basic structures of the government. Only then can they get fancy with their explanations since by then the box will no longer be black, nor white, but transparent.

With these warnings in mind, we turn to a diagrammatic sketch and description of the Dominican political system which has undergone very little change from the time it was a colonial polity to its present status of Associate Statehood - semi-independence.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 493.

⁵⁵This point was made by Joseph La Palombara at a lecture at the University of Massachusetts during the Fall of 1972.

The Dominican Political System

The first major characteristic of the Dominican political system is that it is very small. This makes anonymity impossible. Second, the walls surrounding the various groups are not impregnable. In fact, the diagram shows that all the groups, save one, in the system are connected in one way or the other. The ruling party is in the center of everything and draws all other groups into controversies at will. The bureaucracy is under the power of the ruling party, with the local government agency replacing the trade union as an agent of political socialization. The trade unions have since struck up a relationship with the Employers Union, which has some of its key personnel in the ruling party. The dotted line from the ruling party to the Black Power movement indicates attempts made by that party to communicate with the Movement. The Movement has not returned the courtesy since, in its opinion, the ruling party has refused to tackle the major problems of agrarian reform in the country. But one may notice that all other groups have not tried to communicate with the Black Power Movement, though they have all shown a fear of it by their actions and pronouncements.

Another major characteristic of the political system is the fact that both the ruling party and Black Power Movement are highly influenced by outside forces. The ruling party has kept a close association with other

British Caribbean Governments. These governments have shown a desire to effectively contain any revolutionary elements which might upset the existing system. The Black Power Movement has been influenced by two sets of people. First, it has close ties with other movements like it in the Caribbean, and also corresponds with leaders who have been forced to live in places like North America and Great Britain. Thus, presently, the Movement in Dominica is fighting an uphill battle, as the government has all the machinery to stymie its drive.

The other elements who might otherwise join the Movement to fight the Government have weighed the credits and debits of such a move and decided against it. They may be able to see the demise of the present system in the long run but have chosen to disprove the Marxian rule that even the bourgeoisie will join the inevitable revolution to hasten the destruction of the system. Instead, the so-called opposition has joined forces with the Government on the major issues, such as keeping the system as it is. These elites have enough power to prove the Easton assertion that constitutional equilibrium will always be maintained in a political system as long as the various classes agree on the rules of the game.⁵⁶

⁵⁶David Easton, The Political System (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963), p. 296.

Although the elites have accepted the system and are generally satisfied with the scheme of things, those who do not rule want to rule. They want to enjoy some of the prestige that goes with ruling. For this reason, members of the opposition party will precipitate a conflict which ends in crisis. A minor issue can bring about a conflict which can be helpful in any political system. It can keep the Government from being too lackadaisical in dealing with the various interests. But crisis develops when the response to the precipitated conflict is a show of power. Thus, since 1967, Dominica has experienced two major crises which began as conflicts. The first surrounded the renaming of a street from Queen Mary Street to Freedom Street, the name of the party which made the change. The second dealt with the inability of a high school principal to communicate with a handful of boys.

The first conflict ended in a crisis because the Government responded by initiating legislation in the National Assembly to dissolve the local body, dominated by Freedom Party members, which had changed the name of the street. The Freedom Party responded by including the entire island in the struggle and marched to take over the national government. The second ended in a crisis (it was a crisis since all the teachers left and the school closed down) because instead of intervening peacefully to

investigate who was wrong, the government began accusing the Opposition Party of running the school. This was the same charge the school boys had levelled against the principal when he refused to see them.

Both of these crises cost the people a tremendous amount of money and the waste of valuable time. There are no signs that this pattern will not repeat itself in the future. The government is increasingly gaining support in the rural areas and encouraging a fight between the rural and urban elements. The Opposition Party is equally bad. It lacks any form of unity and many of its members lack credibility. But one group which stands to gain is the Black Power Movement. It is the only group which has had regional appeal in the entire Caribbean. The leaders in Dominica still feel that they can keep the Movement down, but, increasingly, the machinery of police and army is losing its monopoly on violence. The Movement has its own share of violent elements. And besides, it is making a concerted effort to educate the people politically while it continues to draw support of all kinds from the outside.

At present the system has shown no signs of changing. The power wielders have a firm grip, but they are losing their hold. Within five years, they will have to reckon with the Black Power Movement in Dominica.

C H A P T E R I I

CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN DOMINICA

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present a brief constitutional history of Dominica, to put the study in perspective. Having described the location, size and population make up of the island, the study moves to an assessment of the Spanish, French and British occupations.

It is significant to note that the story of Dominica really begins in the 1880's, when Britain saw fit to rule the island directly to protect the population against the upper class elements. This move, a good one in intention, turned out to be a major obstacle in the advancement of the island toward the intended goal of self-government. This had to be so because the person sent out of Britain to supervise that job did not want any "trouble" with the elites. It was one thing to protect the natives but it was another to ensure that protection. The Governor had his own career to protect and, further, he had to live with these elites. For these reasons, he played it safe by keeping government at the minimum.

One cannot ignore the importance of the colonial constitution. It has always been a crucial variable in the political system of former British colonies. In these

colonies, the British had impressed on the leader the importance of a constitution; though, they themselves never bothered to write one for themselves. The Caribbean leaders took the British very seriously. One cannot cynically appraise the constitutions of the Caribbean Islands. Any such appraisal is an indication of a lack of understanding of this instrument in its environment. One will always be fascinated by the independence constitution of a former British Caribbean colony because it marks the beginning of a very tenuous situation. In colonial times, a constitution existed; but the Governor was above that constitution. Now the leaders are told they cannot assume a similar position, though many try to. It becomes fascinating to see how the leaders react to the new situation. A piece of paper is now supreme and not the European.

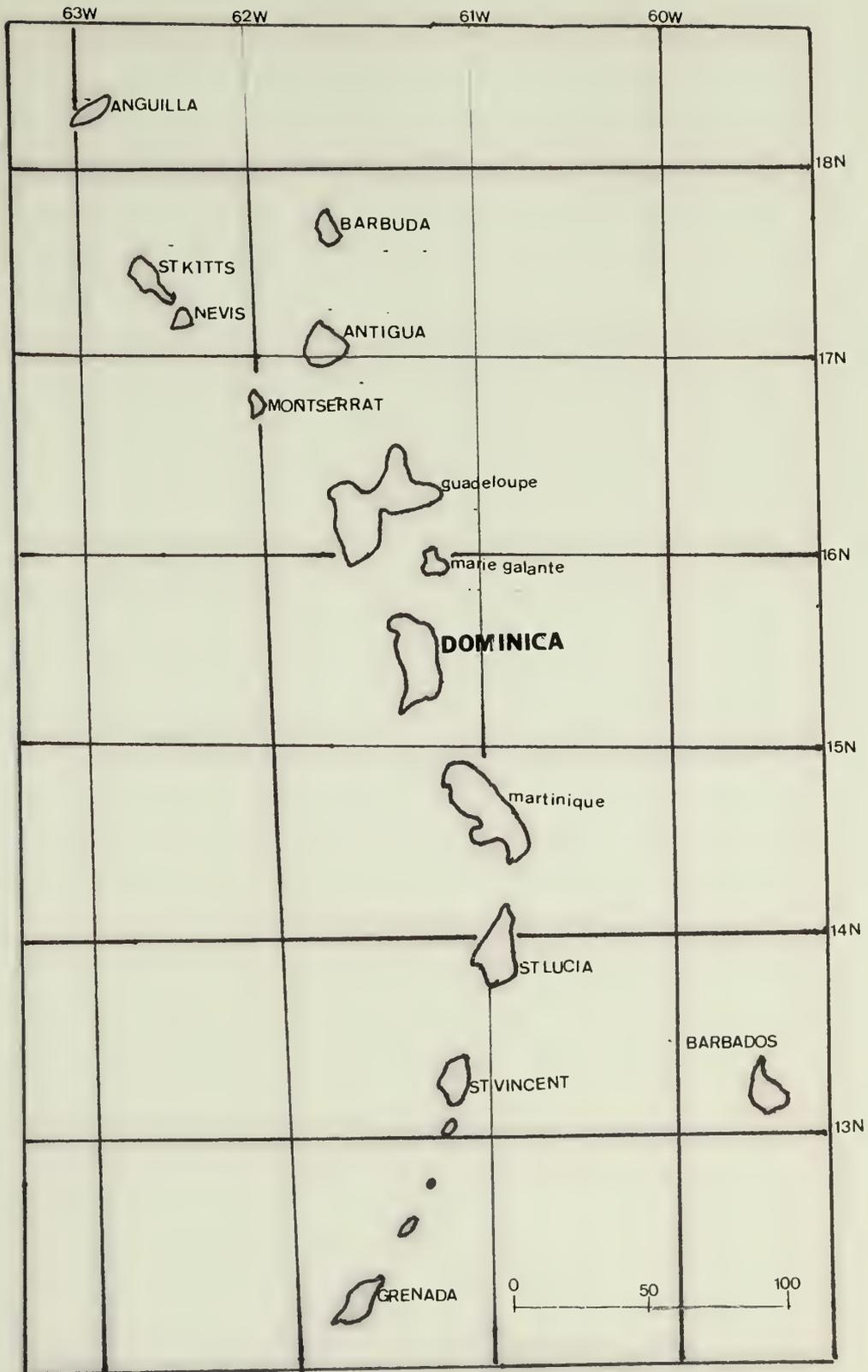
Another good reason for reviewing the constitution is the fact that it may derive its sustenance from the socio-political culture, and in the process, may alter that culture or be altered by it. It becomes important to look at the fine print to uncover the amount of "spirit" that is needed to keep the constitution operational. For, in viewing the Dominican constitution, if it leans heavily on props which are non-existent or alien to Dominica, trouble will inevitably ensue. In addition, various contending parties may enter the ring to interpret what might become a useless piece of paper. If the constitution is based on a model

which best suits an "advanced" country, and there are indications that it does, trouble might also result. If there are "rules of the game" which are frequently disregarded, breakdowns could become an established fixture of the system. Certainly, the constitution is not the only important variable in the colonial system, but it cannot be ignored. And it is precisely for this reason that it is being reviewed here.

Location - Size and Population

Dominica (pronounced Dom-in-ee-ka) is the largest of the six Associated States of the Caribbean, with an area of 287.9 square miles and a population of 70,000 (1970 census). The people are mostly of African descent with some European blood. The population of Dominica is said to be 99% mixed, though by 1973, they all considered themselves Black.

Located between Guadeloupe to the North, and Martinique to the South (French islands), on latitude $15^{\circ} 30''$ (N) and longitude $61^{\circ} 15''$ (W), it forms part of the Windward Group (not to be confused with the Dutch Windward group, see map on following page). Although so close to these French Islands, the relationship between them is often negligible. Most Dominicans speak a French-Creole, spoken in both Martinique and Guadeloupe, but its British background has precluded any French connection. Very few Dominicans speak pure French. If they do, this is no indication of the



Dominica in relation to the other islands in the Eastern Caribbean

French impact on the island. From time to time a group of French students and, increasingly, adults visit Dominica, only to be tucked away in some hotel. The native Dominican may come around to view them. The visiting French people may even be warned to beware of Black Power advocates who may try to indoctrinate them. Should such an attempt be made, they are warned, the police should be contacted immediately.¹ In any case, the Dominican youth must keep his distance, since he does not understand or speak French, in spite of the amount of French that he is taught at the schools. The Government has not seen the need to encourage the use of French but by 1972, the new wave was to learn Spanish since plans were in the making to establish some kind of relation with Venezuela, some six hundred miles away.

Let it be made clear from the start that Dominica is a land full of contradictions. Its leaders can be very unimaginative and incompetent. It is not unusual to hear the expression "typical Dominica" whenever something goes wrong. Anyone who studies Dominica's history closely, comes out with the idea that somehow nothing goes right for this unfortunate place. The following section will support that hypothesis.

¹Based on informal interviews with vacationing French students in Dominica during the Summer of 1972.

The Historical Overview

The Spanish and Dominica²

It is reported that Christopher Columbus came upon Dominica on November 3, 1493. He named it Domingo in honor of the day on which it was sighted. The original name of the island was Waitikubi. But this name change was an indication of things to come, the virtual annihilation of Dominica's original inhabitants, the Arawaks and Caribs. Thus, the years 1493-1635 marked the heroic attempts of the Carib Indians to prevent the Spanish from taking their island.

Very little is known about the history of the Caribs other than that they were very fierce and ate human flesh, preferably non-European. They lived in the smaller islands as they had pushed the less warlike Arawaks to the bigger islands. They were on their way to exterminating the Arawak men, when they were interrupted by the Europeans. Dominica still has some of its Caribs but these have been made culturally part of Dominica, though they live on a reservation, the only one of its kind in the Caribbean.

Columbus and his men did not remain on Dominica since prospects for getting gold were bleak. The inhabitants had given them a little less than a warm welcome.

²See Joseph Boromé, "Spain and Dominica," Caribbean Quarterly (December, 1966), pp. 30-46.

During the 15th century, the Spaniards returned to Dominica but were unable to establish themselves in the area because the Caribs were too unpredictable. Because of this situation many Spaniards tried to convince the Queen of Spain that Dominica should be taken forcibly but she refused, believing that the Bible could do the job of domesticating these natives. And since Dominica was too small to be made into a separate province, it was placed under the province of Puerto Rico. This was to increase the revenue of the Church and to pay for the maintenance of the colonial administration.

But as the 16th century came to a close, Spanish interests moved away from the West Indies to attend to more pressing problems at home. The Spanish Armada was defeated in 1588 and at the same time both the French and British were hurriedly trying to establish themselves in the Caribbean. At one time, the Spanish thought seriously of trying to reassert their dominance over the Caribbean by sending their nationals to reside there. But this came to naught as the harsh reality was only too clear: the golden century of Spain was at an end. Besides, this last effort was underscored by the move of the French to annex Dominica by Treaty in 1640, when Pierre Breton, a French priest set foot on Dominica. The Spanish never did settle Dominica.

The French and Dominica

To mark the beginning and end of the French occupation of Dominica is a problematic affair since it was during that era (1635 - 1804) that the island changed hands no less than fourteen times. Thus to label this era (1635 - 1805) as the French occupation is at best a neat way to get around a complex problem. There is no doubt that the French left an indelible mark on Dominica. This is reflected in the language of Dominica today. As stated, the majority of Dominicans understand and speak a French-Creole. In addition, the many names and customs introduced by the French still persist today.

From all reports, it seems that the French had a better encounter with the Caribs of Dominica. The first French inhabitants were Friars; the laymen were not too interested in Dominica because it was too rugged and intimidating with its warlike Indians. But somehow there were more enterprising Frenchmen who were willing to brave all the hazards. These were less fortunate Frenchmen who failed to make it elsewhere and decided to try their luck in Dominica. But during that time (1660's) the importance of Dominica was in the accessibility it offered to the French islands of Martinique and Guadeloupe. It was also in that very year, 1660, that Dominica was being signed over to

the Caribs,³ as though it did not originally belong to them.

This 1660 treaty came under the scrutiny of both the British and French in 1686, when the French claim was contested by the British who were settling in nearby areas. The problem was temporarily settled in favor of the French, because the British were not strong enough to forcibly land on Dominica. The dispute over ownership flared up again in 1715; but this time, the British were more concerned with St. Lucia, which was a better area. As Dominica was so close to St. Lucia, there was no harm in acquiring Dominica also. The British claim was even more "justified," since "Indian" Warner, son of Sir Thomas Warner, was Governor of Dominica. Such a heated dispute ensued that both warring nations suggested that they withdraw their claims and leave Dominica neutral.⁴

The War of Jenkin's Ear fought between the British and French, was to interrupt life in Dominica for four years (1744-8). Both the French and British fought hard for it. The ensuing peace treaty signed in 1748, at Aix-la-Chapelle, made Dominica neutral. This neutrality was to last eleven years, when the strategic value of the island

³This treaty was "signed" between the Caribs and the French. By this treaty, the Caribs agreed to have Dominica as long as they relinquished their claim to St. Kitts and St. Croix. An account of this treaty is contained in Cuthbert A. Burns, History of the British West Indies (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1965), p. 222.

⁴Ibid., p. 265.

was again recognized.

The war (1759 - 1763), again fought between the British and the French, brought Dominica under the wings of the British. It was during that time that the British chopped up Dominica into estates, sold them to British nationals and used the money to fill Queen Charlotte's dowry.⁵ Not a cent of the proceeds was returned to the colony. But although the British flag flew in Dominica, the French people were already entrenched there. When the French returned in 1778, their job was made much easier because of the presence of a huge French population. But the French soldiers committed the unforgivable mistake of burning Roseau, the capital city, and, in the process, earned the antagonism of their people since their property was destroyed.⁶ Consequently, by 1795 the remaining French people in Dominica began to change their allegiance to the British who had shown greater compassion. As it turned out, by 1804 when the French returned to occupy Dominica, they were successful initially but were quickly routed by their own mistakes. In the first place, they had already lost the respect of their own nationals. Secondly, they lacked the courage to fight on even after great successes. But the British remained and held on tenaciously, regaining Dominica

⁵ Alec Waugh, The Sugar Islands: A Collection of Pieces Written about the West Indies (New York: L. Cassell, 1958), pp. 281-284.

⁶ Cuthbert A. Burns, British West Indies, p. 520.

in 1805. The saga of Dominica under British began to take shape.

The British and Dominica⁷

The first phase 1805-1897. The slave trade to the Caribbean ended in 1807. Slavery itself was outlawed in 1832, followed by a period of apprenticeship between 1832-1838. This last period was intended to cushion the shock of freedom for the Negro and the acceptance of that fact by his former master. The story of the Negro begins with his plight to make it in a free but alien world. With the passage of the 1831 Brown Privilege Bill,⁸ the Whites wrongly assumed that the upper crust of the Negro element--the Coloreds--would push for more rights for the Negro. Little did the Whites realize that this "threatening" element could have been effectively coopted, and in the process dominated. In fact, the Coloreds did fight the Whites, but the former never intended to include the lower class Negroes in any gained benefits. The fighting Coloreds were acting on their own behalf and not that of anyone else.

⁷This section relies heavily on Joseph Boromé, "How Crown Colony Government Came to Dominica by 1898," Caribbean Studies (October, 1969), pp. 26-27. But the interpretation of the facts is that of this writer.

⁸The Bill granted full political and social rights to all non-Whites.

What emerged in Dominica were three group interests, two active and one very much passive. The passive section, the masses, were included in the conflict, only when it suited the purposes of the two other groups. The two active participants were the Whites, clearly in the minority numerically, and the more prosperous Negroes--the Coloreds--also a minority in relation to the masses. This conflict shed light on the intentions of the contestants. The two privileged groups were intent on not paying taxes for the upkeep of the colony. Though in all fairness to the upper class Negroes, the Whites had a greater obligation to pay for the colonial administration. Before emancipation, they received the benefits of the colony and even continued to do so after emancipation.

This era marked the quintessence of elite politics in Dominica. The bankruptcy of the politicians of the day was ably described in the following remark: "The politicians were ignorant of the principles of government. They were uneducated and revengeful."⁹

The first major fight came in 1850 when the Colored leaders were intent on enfranchising the masses although they

⁹The Dominican Colonist, July, 1854, quoted in Joseph Boromé, op. cit.

knew that the latter was mostly illiterate. This was seen as necessary to ensure the Colored elites continuous domination of the Assembly. Quite obviously, the Whites were afraid of that move since it would mark the end of their mastery of not only the Assembly, but also the society.

The masses were not enfranchised, and the next fight centered around making the Assembly¹⁰ a wholly nominated body to ensure wider representation of the people at large. Keeping in character, the Colored elites were opposed. They were sure to be replaced with more "acceptable" elements; elements who could work as a team to improve the island. The Whites were for the idea, although there was no guarantee that their interests would be protected. But the fact that one of their own, the Governor, would be making the appointments, was soothing enough to make the idea acceptable.

By the 1880's, there were other issues which commanded the attention of the Colored elites. Dominica was in a British federation with the Leeward Islands (Antigua, St. Kitts, Nevis-Anguilla and Montserrat), but few Dominicans were allotted key positions in the national government. Other nationals held key posts right in Dominica. This time the Coloreds were led by a certain William Davies who was determined to remove Dominica from that federation.

¹⁰From 1898, when Crown Colony Government was introduced in Dominica, the Executive and the Legislative bodies formed the Assembly. In 1951, the Assembly was renamed the Legislative Council. With Associate Statehood, the Legislative Council has been renamed Assembly.

The idea of enfranchising the electorate was brought up again in 1886; but this time, it was at the suggestion of the Governor who intended to "displace a conflict" he was having with the Colored elites. His plan was to get the people politically conscious to help him defeat candidates like Davies who had proven themselves a "nuisance."

The Colored elites were quick to catch on and informed the masses of the "conspiracy". But in the process, they demonstrated their disregard of and lack of trust in the people, whom they so frequently used in their fights against the Whites. They could have allowed the Governor to enfranchise the people. Then they could go on to beat him at his own game, by defeating the cronies the Governor would have put up for election. They were intensely aware of their own inadequacies, and were unwilling to put their "record" on the line. They had none. Besides, had they been defeated, they knew too well that what they had tried to avoid, paying their fair share of taxes, would have fallen squarely on them. By then, they were the biggest shopkeepers and land owners of the territory.

By the 1890's the Governor of Dominica had had enough of the reactionary elements in the Assembly. He requested direct supervision from the Crown. Before this could take place, the British recommended that Dominica be placed in the Windward group (Grenada, St. Vincent, St. Lucia and Tobago). The Colored legislators were so delighted that

they quickly filed legislation to have Dominica removed from the Leeward Federation. The British were not about to grant the request. Instead Britain decided to give Dominica a sum of \$15,000 (BWI), provided that the colony accepted direct rule from Britain.

Britain was willing to give the aid, but it wanted direct supervision of the allocation of those funds. At first, it appeared that Dominica was to lose its partially elected assembly and become a fully-fledged colony. But Davies was quick to see the writing on the wall, and took "his case" to the people by telling them that the anticipated move was tantamount to depriving them of their freedom. But in reality, Davies may have been afraid of losing the ability to stymie all unfavorable tax legislation in the Assembly. Had he said that, he would have had no case. But the idea of deprivation of one's liberty went well with the people.

With the proposed Bill to have Dominica ruled directly from Britain defeated, the Assembly, as was the custom, dissolved and new elections called. When the votes were counted, the Governor had gathered enough elected representatives to have Dominica become a Crown Colony.

The second phase 1898 - 1950. The era between 1898-1950 in Dominican history was one characterized by constant confrontation between the King's representative and the elites of the island. This era marked the "conquered

colony" phase in the island's history. It was an era of frustrations and travail, as the Dominican elites constantly put the British on the spot in an effort to have them release the island from colonial bondage.

The Assembly, to be described below, was made up of six Official and six Unofficial¹¹ members with a Governor having a deciding vote in case of a tie. All members of that body were White with the exception of two. Thus, there was no question that Templer, the one representing the Governor in Dominica at the time, would have little trouble in working with the "representative" body, since this was the exact composition of the Assembly when Dominica was voted a Crown Colony. His job was even made easier by the passing away from the scene of William Davies and A.D. Lockhart. Lockhart refused an Unofficial seat, although it was continually offered to him.

In the meantime, the promised money for Dominica was received. It was used to build the much needed roads. Because there was little planning, the result of the undertaking was a little less than a success.

¹¹An Unofficial member of the Council was one who supposedly represented the masses. The Official member was supposed to do the same, but it was generally accepted that he would side with the Governor on all issues.

Templer was succeeded by the youthful and energetic A. Heskeith Bell. For all intents and purposes, Bell must have been a good administrator, for he gained the respect, admiration, and praise of all elements of the Dominican society, including those who at one time had little to do with any English official. His tour of duty in Africa may have been beneficial to him where he must have learned a great deal about black people. There seemed to have been little question about Bell's competence for he was quickly removed from Dominica and rewarded with a more prosperous post elsewhere in the Empire.

But the good work of Bell was not enough to hide the harsh realities of the unrepresentative nature of the Crown colony system. Agitation began in Grenada and spread to the neighboring islands, such as Dominica. The elites of Dominica moved to join the bandwagon to demand more representation for Dominica.

In 1919 a Representative Government Association was created in Dominica by members of the upper class. Its sole purpose was to fight Crown Colony Government. One year later, widespread protest against the colonial system intensified. Increasingly, the British got more sensitive to these requests and sent out a Commission of Inquiry under the command of Major Wood¹² to investigate the problems of

¹²The Colonial Office, Report by the Honorable E.F.L. Wood on His Visit to the West Indies and British Guiana, Dec. 1921-Feb. 1922 (Cmd. 1679) (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1922.

the islands.

As a result or in spite of Wood's recommendations, a new constitution was introduced in 1924. It made provisions for a Governor to preside over the Assembly which was made up of six Official and six Unofficial members. The Official Members with the Governor formed the Executive Council, the administrative arm of the Government. This new constitution was advanced in that it made provisions for the election of four members of the Unofficial delegation to the Assembly. The other two on the Unofficial side were still appointed by the Governor. This in effect marked the beginning of the demise of Crown Colony Government in Dominica.

The provision for the election of four members could be interpreted as a reversal of the pre-1898 conditions of elite domination of the political system. In spite of the introduction of rudimentary political participation in Dominica politics, one still has to wonder whether this type of participation can eliminate elite domination in politics. The four elected on that first occasion support the idea that elite domination of the political systems always seems inevitable. The first elected officials were Cecile A. Rawle, representing Roseau, the Capital. He was a Trinidadian, who had since made his home in Dominica. For his services to West Indian and Dominican politics, he has been acclaimed a national hero. The other representatives

were A.A. Baron, from the Northern district; H.D. Shillingford, representing the Eastern section, and Sidney L.V. Green, representing the West. Anyone who is familiar with Dominican society must agree that these four did not and were never really representatives of Dominican society. They could not sympathize with the plight of the poor Dominican since they were so steeped in making it big in their own businesses. They were, in Dominican parlance, Nogocians (big shots). In any case they wielded very little power in the Assembly. They were outnumbered by eight representatives. And besides, the Governor had the power to frustrate any "deviations" to maintain control. The system was meant to tantalize the people who came close to power. When they attempted to grab power to use it, they were denied it.

The Dominican leaders were determined to wrest more power from the British. To this end, in 1927, they formed the Tax-Payers Association, followed, in 1931, by an association named Constitutional Reform. Both were simple pressure groups, and, as the names imply, were composed mainly of those who were directly affected by the modified Crown Colony Government. This writer does not accept the view that these leaders were motivated to obtain "liberty" for their people. The people would have remained in the same conditions of poverty had the local elites initially been made rulers of Dominica.

In 1932 two significant events occurred in Dominica

which affected Crown Colony Government. First, the six Unofficial members of the Assembly, including the two appointed by the Crown, stormed out of the Assembly in protest against the system.¹³ It is not clear what precipitated that event, but there were so many things wrong with Dominica and so little was being done, that a walkout was justified. The second event, which will receive greater attention in Chapter Six, was the conference held at St. Gerard's Hall, Roseau, presided over by Dominica's Rawle. This conference was not only attended by Dominicans but by all leading politicians in the Caribbean. The topic for discussion was ways and means to have the British give up their tight control of all the islands.

Between 1932 and 1936 nothing substantial took place in Dominica. After the 1932 Conference, the Caribbean leaders had much praise for each other and in the characteristic Caribbean fashion, everyone lost interest in the idea of federation.

In 1936, another "advanced" constitution was imposed on Dominica. This change provided for a majority of Unofficial members in the Legislative Council. But again, it did not bring any meaningful change. The Governor still retained the power of absolute veto on any piece of legislation (an idea which received praise from the local newspaper.¹⁴

¹³F.A. Hoyos, The Road to Responsible Government (Barbados: Letchworth, 1959), p. 57.

¹⁴Chronicle, September 24, 1949, p. 6.

The Governor's judgment counted far more than the other parts of the Council.

Since the Second World War was already then in the making, and utmost loyalty was demanded from the Crown, the situation quieted down a little. But between 1938 - 1939 riots broke out all over the Caribbean, beginning in Jamaica in the North to Trinidad in the South, including Barbados which was least expected to go against the Crown since it had prided itself as being little Britain. The riots were not initiated by the elites of the islands, as they had too much to lose financially, but by trade unionists, who were by any standards, very poor. The trade unionists were forced into prominence by the very elites who could have helped to better social conditions. The riots of 1938 were not politically motivated, but they soon took on a political character as the political elites, like Bustamante of Jamaica, joined the fighting to benefit themselves. The system had created a situation where partially educated people, local elites, used the people's fight to further their own careers. These are the present day politicians of the islands.

The political elites quickly seized the cause of the people and became heroes. In a sense, the elites were a retarding force to this revolutionary drive because they were the ones who reached a compromise with the British. Had the fight been left in the hands of the masses, little

compromise would have been made. There would have been more massive destruction, but Britain was now being criticized by its own people for the way it had "joined forces" with the island elites to keep the poor in their places.

The war years (1940-45) saw an air of domestic complacency, but also emergency measures undertaken in the island to successfully prosecute the war. As soon as the war was over, the fight against the Crown began again. Nineteen hundred and forty-five saw the emergence of the first island-wide Trade Union Movement, under the leadership of A. Christopher Loblack. But Loblack had to wait until 1949 to show his close connection with the people. He successfully prevented the estate owner of Geneva Estate (Western part of the island) from forcibly expelling "squatters" from the land. Loblack was so strong that the Governor himself, with an entourage of native policemen, had to accompany the owner of the estate (Nassief, a foreigner) to meet the people.¹⁵

Adult Suffrage - 1951 and 1959 Constitutions

Adult Suffrage and 1951 Constitution

Britain was always reluctant to allow the natives of its conquered colonies to select their rulers. This fear was sustained by the fact that the leaders of these polities

¹⁵The Chronicle (Dominica), December 7, 1949, p. 8.

had shown themselves to be great opportunists. These leaders were able to manipulate the system to arrive at their goal. But the refusal to allow the people to choose their intermediate leaders should have been followed by some form of training to acquaint the people with the idea of voting for their representatives. Britain believed that somehow the people could learn on their own. When the time was ripe, they would be allowed to choose their own government. By 1951 the 21-year-old-Dominican was able to exercise that British given right.

Adult suffrage. The coming of adult suffrage did not cause great stirrings in Dominica. In fact one prominent citizen, who at that time was the editor of a leading newspaper, told this writer that it was "no big thing." Adult suffrage was proclaimed for the Dominican, and people voted in the ensuing elections.¹⁶ On further investigation, this assessment turned out to be correct. The leaders were apathetic and even apprehensive about the ability of the natives to select their leaders. The people were even less moved. They certainly had little knowledge of its meaning. In fact, right about that time, the nascent banana industry was being pushed. The papers were criticizing the British for not paying more attention to that event rather than giving the people adult suffrage. The paper went on to say

¹⁶Interview with J.H. Carlton Grell, who was the editor of the Dominica Tribune.

that Dominicans did not need adult suffrage.¹⁷ It is also interesting to note that the then editor of the major paper in Dominica, The Chronicle, was a politician and was in the process of running for the mayoralty of Roseau. He did not see the contradiction in his position of wanting to serve, and at the same time not wanting to be appointed by those who he desired to serve. But today, the political elites are sounding a different tune. Though one can still suspect their contempt for the people's ability to choose their leaders "rationally," they all say that the introduction of adult suffrage was not a mistake. Their reasoning is that it had to come some time.

The basic structure and philosophy of elite domination of the Dominican political system did not change. But the new Order in Council¹⁸ (adult suffrage) had the following provisions which deviated from past practices:

(1) Literacy qualifications were abolished which allowed the unlettered to mark his ballot with an "X" next to the symbol of the candidate of his choice.

(2) The ownership of large property as a provision for candidacy was dropped. Now anyone who can muster f25 can become a candidate. This did not have the effect of increasing the quality and quantity of candidates since the

¹⁷The Chronicle, (Dominica), April 5, 1950, p. 5.

¹⁸The Dominica (Constitution) Order in Council, 1951 (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1950), p. 4.

very ones who had run previously continued to dominate Dominican society.

(3) The Government was given the chore of compiling lists of all eligible voters throughout the island and to make them available in public places to ensure that everyone, twenty-one years and over, was placed on them.

(4) The secret ballot was introduced, with proper provision to ensure "secrecy" for the incapacitated to cast his vote.

(5) The sale of intoxicating beverages was prohibited on election day. This last provision has not closely been adhered to, but since all parties have broken that provision, it goes unnoticed.

(6) Finally, a district residential qualification of six months was imposed on voters, but no restrictions were placed on candidates.

This last provision has had negative results in Dominica. It is not certain how many voters are disenfranchised because of this provision, though it really does not matter. The Government has no adequate measure to check one's place of residence. But the non-residency requirement for the candidates is not the best provision. It was based on the British view that once one is elected, the national interest will somehow be served over any local interest. This view should hold more so for a small island like Dominica, but it does not. Once a candidate is elected,

invariably, he pushes for his own district. And in the present era of party politics in Dominica, a government can withhold services to any district which did not vote for it. An added anomaly of this fact is the relative ease with which a national figure can change his constituency and win in his "adopted" district. He can place weak candidates in "safe" districts and himself run in a "difficult" area where he is sure to win because of his national appeal. In the event that he loses he can make a weak candidate resign, force a by-election and get himself elected. The "forced-out" candidate is given a job in the Government.

The 1951 Constitution. The provisions of the 1951 Constitutions were good in principle, but they did not change the power relationships in the society. The Governor could allow them to take effect, since whatever the outcome of an election, he still had sufficient power to keep the elected at bay by his power to veto everything.

The nature of this constitution was such that provision was made to have a majority of the members of the Legislative Council elected. This might give one the impression that Dominican politics were at long last dominated by the people. In theory, this was the case but in practice the people were dispensable. The majority of the Legislative Council was popularly elected, but the Constitution stipulated that if the Legislative Council "failed to pass a bill or motion within such time and in such form as the

Governor may think reasonable and expedient, the latter at any time in his discretion may. . . declare that such bill or motion shall be in effect as if it had been passed by the Council."¹⁹ Ultimate control of Dominican local politics remained in the hands of Britain.

The 1956 "advanced" constitution. There was a vague attempt in the 1956 Constitution to transfer some responsibility to the people's "representatives" by earmarking the Executive Council as the "principal instrument of policy." But the Governor remained the ultimate head of Government, giving and taking power away. The law was very explicit. He could ignore the Executive Council "in any case which was of such a nature that in his judgement Our British services to the masses would sustain material prejudice by reason of his consulting with the Executive Council."²⁰ He could also act with prior approval of the Secretary of State for the Colonies in Britain, contrary to the advice of the Executive Council "in the interest of public faith, public order or good government" and in the interest of financial control at any time when the colony received money from Britain to balance its

¹⁹The Dominica Constitution, 1951, Article 12, paragraph 3. (Emphasis added.)

²⁰Great Britain, The Windward Islands Royal Instructions (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1956), Article 12, paragraph 3.

budget²¹ (Dominica has remained on the British "payroll" for a long time).

In this Executive Council, the elected members held half the number of available seats. Membership to it was not based on membership in a party, but on the basis of having been elected by the Legislative Council. In that Council, both elected and non-elected members were to be found. All members of the Legislative Council had an equal chance of being selected to serve on this "policy making body."²² Those elected to the Executive were named Ministers and were made "heads" of departments. Each department had a Principal Secretary appointed by the Governor. The secretaries were above the Ministers but could not dismiss them. Any Principal Secretary could submit disagreements directly to the Executive Council without the prior knowledge of the Ministers.²³

The possible power struggle which could have ensued was alleviated by the fact that the first set of

²¹The Dominica (Constitution) Order in Council, 1956 (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1956) Article 13, paragraph 2.

²²Great Britain, The Windward Islands Royal Instructions, Clause 21, section 1.

²³Ibid., Clause 8, Section 3 (f).

Ministers in the Dominican system were not the best. They realized their limitations and vented their frustrations on the British rather than on the first three Principal Secretaries who were all Dominican and had served in the Colonial bureaucracy for some time. But clearly, the position of the Ministers in the Executive Council was tenuous at best, because the Governor had the authority to declare a seat vacant at his own discretion. For all intents and purposes, the Executive Council was responsible to the Governor and not the Legislative Council.

Dominica's thrust into that brave new world in 1956 was a little less than spectacular. In the first place, it can safely be said that there was absolutely no training in the workings of a ministerial system. Apparently no one knew about it anyway. To be sure, an Englishman was sent out to "train" Dominicans on the workings of the British House of Commons. The accounts of the three lectures were reported in The Chronicle which praised the Englishman for the splendid job he had done.²⁴ Of course, the naive and unpretentious Dominicans did not see the stupidity of the whole affair. They could not understand that the operational structure of the British system was

²⁴An Englishman named D.W.S. Lidderdale prepared Dominican leaders for the new ministerial system. He delivered the following lectures: a) Parliamentary Government in Britain, b) How the House of Commons Works - General Principles, and c) How the House of Commons Workd - Rules of Procedure. The Dominica Chronicle reported that Lidderdale was able to "keep the audience spellbound with the

just not applicable to the Dominican context precisely because "the spirit" which accompanies the British system could not be transplanted to their own leaders.

The 1959 "more advanced" Constitution. The 1959 Constitution was not that much more advanced than the 1956 Constitution. The Executive Council was kept as the principal instrument of policy, but this time it was explicitly stated that it would be "collectively responsible. . .to the Legislative Council."²⁵ In theory, that was a good idea. The Governor was part of the Executive Council. Thus, if this provision was observed, he would have come under the scrutiny of the Legislative Council. In addition, there was provision for a Chief Minister. He had to be an individual who, presumably, would command the respect of a majority of the members of the Legislative Council.²⁶ This was hard to achieve since the underpinning structure of a party system was non-existent in Dominica at the time. This was another one of these contradictions found in the colonial situation. An instrument was imposed on a people

fascination, grandeur and beauty of every aspect of his subject matter since this knowledge could hardly be found in books." February 11, 1956, p. 7.

²⁵ Dominica Imperial Instrument no. 3 of 1959, Statutory Instrument 1959 no. 2199. The Dominica (Constitution) Order in Council, 1959, (London; Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1959), Article 12, Section 2.

²⁶ Ibid., Article 13, Section 1.

to bring about "political advancement" but no foundation was erected to sustain this "progress." Out of necessity, a very tenuous party coalition was created (discussed in Chapter IV), and it subsequently suffered the fate of "new wine in old wine skins."

In consultation with the Chief Minister, the Governor appointed three other Ministers from the Legislative Council.²⁷ The intent of this new constitution was to bring Dominica up to the same level of political development as found in Jamaica and Trinidad to ensure a better working of the proposed federation of 1958. But the Governor still retained the absolute veto over all legislation. He had to consult the Council, but could act against its advice if "law and order was being disturbed." The Governor did not use his veto power frequently but the fact that he could may have had a dampening and intimidating effect on the Council members.

General Characteristics of the Dominican Political System Before 1967

The following seems to be the more salient features of the colonial constitutions of Dominica. The Colony was tightly controlled by the intimidating power of the Governor. Britain inserted this power in all Dominican constitutions because the British taxpayers' money was being used to

²⁷Ibid., Article 14, Section 2.

sustain Dominica. On the other hand, the machinery to sustain parliamentary government was not encouraged and could not be encouraged because of the nature of the system. The system gave all power to one man, a principle which clashed with both modern British tradition and the parliamentary system. The parliamentary system demanded the machinery of a party system to ensure a comprehensive policy. The system demanded discipline from groups who sought to win elections to implement their programs under their own power, regardless of how wrong these may be. Then it becomes incumbent on the Opposition, which will have developed, to convince the people that it can do a better job than the ruling party.

Unfortunately, that was not the case in Dominica. The system allowed individuals to win elections, but did not allow them to be responsible by being forced to implement their declared programs. This writer finds it hard to believe that the British did not allow elected officials to exercise power only because Dominica could not balance its own budget and needed British financial aid. This denial of power must have been rooted in the fact that the British did not have faith in Dominican leaders. And quite understandably so; the leaders of Dominica did not prove themselves capable of ruling themselves. They could not, because they were never given a chance.

If British colonial policy had been meant to develop

Messiahs like the Governor, it was surely successful in Dominica. But this was not the intention of the British. British colonial policy failed because the desired objective, to "guide the colonial territories to responsible self-government within the Commonwealth in conditions that assured the people concerned both a fair standard of living and freedom from oppression from any quarter"²⁸ did not always materialize. In fact, this overly cautious nature of British policy did keep Dominica, and others like it, in a state of immaturity. And when Dominica "arrived at statehood," it did not know the responsibilities of an "adult."

The nominating system has persisted. It has been increasingly used to place incompetent people in the Assembly. It was meant to be used to get deserving people who might be intimidated by the pains of electoral politics to sit in the Council. But it has been used to provide seats in the Council for defeated candidates.

In the final analysis, we cannot accept a statement by Lord Beswick that the islands have all had a "long experience with democratic government."²⁹ The intention may

²⁸Quoted in D.W. Stammers, "British Colonial Public Finance," Social and Economic Review (June, 1967), p. 195.

²⁹Great Britain, Parliamentary Debates, House of Lords Official Report, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, February, 1967), p. 1001.

have been to achieve that. But the authorities fell far short of the mark.

The 1967 Constitution .

In 1967 Dominica became an Associate State of Great Britain which meant it was "no longer a colony." It has internal self-government and Britain is responsible for its defence and foreign policy. The exact nature of this arrangement is still developing and the only way to understand is to look at the provisions of the latest Dominican Constitution.

The Setting

Sir Ivor Jennings wrote, the "constitutional developments in the dependent territories are not always empirical because these places have different origins and traditions."³⁰ Although the British relied on the "man on the spot," the Governor, Constitutions for the colonies emanated from 6, Downing Street. The Constitutions were first debated in the British House of Commons and then discussed with the leaders of the colonies just around the time of their independence. The leaders in turn, imposed them on the people. To be sure there have been deviations from this rule, but Dominica is not one of them. The 1967

³⁰Ivor Jennings, The Approach to Self Government (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), p. 165.

constitution was made and approved in London. This writer even suspects that not too many Dominicans are even aware of its existence.

It is important to understand the economic and political background in which this constitution was implemented. Dominica is small and sparsely populated, making administration very costly. Minerals are non-existent. In fact, Dominica has been a victim of boom and bust in the Brazilian style, albeit on a smaller scale. The latest saga of Dominica was the folding up a trucking company which had promised great prospects for development and employment. The banana industry, the life line of Dominica, is ailing very badly. Even tourism, a one-time thriving industry, has been crippled by the latest wave of West Indian nationalism. The Government has tried to help, and keeps repeating that things will be better, but conditions worsen and jobs get fewer.

There is a general shortage of skilled labor since the skilled Dominican can command better salaries elsewhere. Those who remain are not called on to help because they may be of a different ideological bent. This policy precludes meaningful cooperation with the Government.

Dominica is no longer a grant-aided territory, but still receives sizable aid in the form of schools and teachers from Canada, Great Britain and even the United States.

The bureaucracy is not the best and is very inefficient. Quoting from the Report of the Director of Audit for 1970 the following statements adequately describe the state of affairs in the bureaucracy, beginning with the major department, the Treasury Division:

"43 - A Treasury Cash Book Bank Reconciliation susceptible to audit has not been prepared since 1968."³¹

Ministry of Agriculture, Lands and Cooperatives:

"52 - This Ministry has repeated its performance of previous years, by failing to submit any statements. It might well be that it has lost count of its outstanding debts during the period 1968-1970, and its account book was inaccurately kept."³² . . .

Ministry of Education and Health:

". . .expenditure was exceeded by a total of \$42,541.54 BWI without the necessary authority of virements or special warrants, and store recording remains unsatisfactory."³³

Ministry of Communications and Works:

". . .has fallen in line with other departments by exhibiting to some extent a lack of proper control over expenditure, the amount of \$659,602.00 were exceeded without the authority of virements or special warrants."³⁴

³¹Report of the Director of Audit on the Audit of the Accounts for 1970 (Roseau: Government Printing Office, 1971), p. 7.

³²Ibid., p. 8.

³³Ibid., p. 9.

³⁴Ibid., p. 11

Ministry of Home Affairs:

"the errors brought to light in the cash book appear to be the result of carelessness and disinterest on the part of the officer responsible for the record."³⁵

The above speak for themselves and require no further comments. These are the few errors made public; others remain hidden.³⁶

The constitution refers to advancement in the civil service system on the basis of merit. It is assumed that all persons are equal until one has surpassed another by way of one's work. For example, the British bureaucracy may be able to tolerate and handle well the appointment of individuals in key positions purely on the basis of party affiliation. And surely that is not the only variable considered in making appointments to the British bureaucracy, since the appointee is usually competent in his own right. What is being argued here is the fact that in Britain the appointees to the bureaucracy may belong to the party in power but they are as qualified as any other person who could be considered for the same job. The Constitution assumed that this practice would be followed in Dominica, where appointees would be party men and would also be qualified.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 12.

³⁶ This writer has been able to discern greater irregularities in the course of his research which he can not document here.

Such has not been the case as both key members of the two major parties admitted to this writer that neither organization had enough qualified men to fill the available political jobs. Thus, the critical function of elite recruitment in both the bureaucratic and political realm needs to be handled more seriously.

The present recruitment pattern in a system may be a reaction to previous custom; but if the present system demands a certain procedure or pattern which is not available, the system itself may crack under the heavy strains that may follow. It may be reshaped if it is sufficiently flexible or be completely destroyed. But under no circumstance will it remain the same if the factors which sustain it are radically changed by the personnel who man its sustaining elements. It is too early to predict the future of the Dominican political system, though already heavy strains have been brought to bear on it.

It is no secret that recruitment to the bureaucracy and the parties has been along particularistic lines while the system is demanding universalistic principles, as will be indicated later. The civil servant is so aware of that fact that he is unable to express his opinion in the newspapers. He is forced to pass his opinion to a sympathetic editor who in turn composes a letter for him and

publishes it under a pen name.³⁷ Quite obviously the civil servant is forced out of politics and sees it as the game of a chosen few with large followings.

This condition precludes mass participation in politics (participation defined here as taking part in decision making, etc.). It is the small group which can convince more people to its persuasion and which becomes the dominant party. Such a party becomes very hard to beat. All benefits which come to the country from the outside arrive in its name.

The Component Parts of the 1967 Constitution

The entire constitution will not be examined. It is only those parts which this writer believes that have to function well to ensure success which will be reviewed here: the Governor, the electoral process, the Assembly, and the Judiciary.

The Governor.³⁸ The Governor is the ceremonial head of State and has no legal responsibilities for running the Government. He is supposed to be dignified and above party politics since his constituency is the whole of Dominica. Holding office at Her Majesty's pleasure, he may

³⁷ Interview with a prominent editor of a leading paper in Dominica.

³⁸ The Dominica Constitution Order 1967 (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1967), pp. 20-21.

be allowed an additional five years duty after the first five, the traditional term of office. In the past, a Governor could be elevated to a higher post elsewhere if he had done his job well. This practice is unlikely to continue in the Caribbean. What is more likely to happen is to allow a man an indefinite tenure, especially if he satisfies all interests well.

By inserting the phrase "at Her Majesty's pleasure" when referring to length of office, Britain is showing concern over that office, lest it be used as a political prize. Britain does not want that now, but in the heyday of colonialism, that is exactly how it was treated. Be that as it may, the vagueness of the phrase, "Her Majesty's pleasure," demonstrates the British lack of appreciation of Dominican patterns of behavior. The governorship should be used as a political prize. Since the Governor does not have the role "to protect" the masses against the "irresponsible," "demagogic" local politician, his job could be used to reward a faithful party follower. But the British rationale for the protection is to ensure a second term for the Governor who would otherwise be replaced after a first term.³⁹

³⁹Presently the Governor of Dominica has very little political power, but he is the highest paid public official of the territory. Thus, rewarding a loyal party official with that job is quite appropriate.

Apparently both the British and Dominicans are operating under different assumptions. The British assume that the Governor is head of State because he attaches his signature to legislation, while all Dominican bureaucratic, business and political elites admit openly that the Premier is the de facto head of State.⁴⁰

In effect Britain is forcing a spirit, a kind of "gentleman's agreement" on Dominica, where it is not necessary. It tells an incoming government to accept, without question, a man appointed by a previous government. It is more appropriate to have this office as a political prize than that of Speaker of the House, Public Relations Officer, or even Local Government Commissioner. The Office of Governor has become negligible, ineffectual and very subordinate to the Premier of the country. The offices of Public Relations and Local Government Commissioners are critical ones, since they can help build up a credible image for the government in its efforts to penetrate and communicate with the people. In addition, if local governments are organized well, there is no question that these could provide able leadership for the national level, even though the emerging leaders may oppose the government. In the long run the national interest will be served.

The Constitution itself shows the futility of the

⁴⁰Based on interviews with twenty political elites and forty-five bureaucratic elites.

Governor, since he cannot act on his own, but in conjunction "with the cabinet." He attends no Cabinet meetings. He is given "the power" to remove the Premier and the Cabinet, but this is superfluous because of the nature of the arrangement. In the past, whenever this was attempted, crisis was precipitated.⁴¹ Presently, there are many things working against the Governor. He is a local man, which takes away from him "the respect" which was afforded the European. As a local, he just does not have the finesse or charisma that his predecessor possessed. An effort has been made to keep him on par with the European-born Governor by keeping all the dressings and ceremonies that Dominicans are so used to. But these do not lend credibility to his person. He remains a "juju," "a mas," "a papishow"⁴² of a papiermache.

It was anticipated that these external trappings would create legitimacy for the Black who occupies that office. But the fact remains legitimacy is one of those concepts that is hard to transfer. The European had legitimacy because he was white and because he was put there by the Queen. His intellectual background was not important.

⁴¹A constitution has never been suspended by a Governor, but one was suspended in Grenada in 1962. Rioting broke out when the leader of the dismissed government contended that the Governor had no right to suspend the Constitution.

⁴²These are Creole-patois words meaning a clown on display.

No one in the colony cared about that anyway. His decorative medals and MBE's and Sir's and OBE's were sufficient to make him competent. Attempts have been made to give the local the same titles, but somehow he is plagued by the fact that he is a local. The situation is even aggregated by the known fact that the present Governor of Dominica got his post not so much because he was competent, but primarily because he had always allied himself with the Government in power. Dominicans have not cared too much about their present Governor. They only poke fun at his speech defect. He stutters a great deal.

It is not being argued here that the Governor should have his dictatorial powers restored. This writer believes that the office should be abolished in its present form, since it is too costly. In a society where unemployment is about forty percent, and the average pay is only \$100 a month, the office of Governor becomes an expensive luxury. His annual salary is in the range of \$13,200. He has an annual allowance of \$3,000 duty free and in lieu of customs duty he receives \$1,200, payable during the period of performance in Dominica. For domestic staff, he gets an additional \$1,300.⁴³ The present Governor already has

⁴³In addition he receives retirement and gratuity benefits: gratuity equivalent to 1/10 of the aggregate of the salaries paid to him during his term of office and an annual pension of 1/2 of the salary paid to him at the date of his retirement. If he has a previous pension, he will not receive that one.

retired from a job as Secretary to the Windward Islands.⁴⁴ But the Ordinance does not say that he could accept this last retirement if the money received is greater than that of the previous position.

The Electoral Process.⁴⁵ Elections in most small countries can be a risky business. It becomes even more risky when the small country is carrying out the process by "itself" for the first time, as is the case in Dominica.

The basic assumption of the Dominica constitution is that free elections will decide who wields power. The winner will assume office, while the loser will wait in readiness to form a government should the ruling government falter for whatever reason. But the size of Dominica makes electioneering both easy and difficult. Most constituencies contain about two thousand voters. These are further broken down into smaller sections, to facilitate voting. The supervisors of these polling stations are supposed to be non-partisan but some "break the law" and campaign secretly for "their" candidates. Thus, there is no telling what form this campaigning may take.⁴⁶

⁴⁴Dominica Official Gazette, "Governor's Emolument Ordinance 1967." (Roseau: Government Printery, 1967), p. 4.

⁴⁵The Dominica Constitution Order 1967, pp. 32-34.

⁴⁶This writer was reliably informed by the son of a top civil servant that during the recent election in Dominica (1970), his father campaigned secretly for the Dominica Labor Party. In addition, there have been charges made against the Labor Party for promoting certain members

Smallness is an asset, since the candidates can easily reach their voters. But this smallness is also conducive to buying votes through various means such as throwing a party in a constituency. Smallness leads to gossip and false accusations, which may lead to unnecessary confrontations.

In Dominica, the Governor, supposedly non-partisan, supervises and runs elections. This does not mean much. The only implication of this provision is that the report of the elections can be picked up from the Governor's office.

The supervisor of elections has always been a civil servant. For this reason, he has always been intimidated by the incumbent government.⁴⁷

The method outlined for setting up the borders of the constituencies seems pretty safe, at least on paper. But the spirit which should go along with it does not seem to be present. The Speaker of the House, a political appointee, is Chairman of the Constituency Commission, which is made up of four other members. All are appointed by the

of the Police Force immediately after the said elections. These charges seem to be true in part, because there were relatively unknown policemen who made it to the top in a short space of time. They could not have made it on ability, since there is no objective test in Dominica which seeks to evaluate the performance of policemen.

⁴⁷In an informal interview with the last supervisor of elections, he told this writer that during the court fight of the two factions of the Dominica Labor Party, a top Government Official wanted him to favor the LeBlanc faction of the Party. It is interesting to note that the Courts subsequently decided against the LeBlanc faction. This did not matter since LeBlanc went on to win the elections (1970).

Governor, two with the Premier's advice and two with the advice of the leader of the Opposition. From the start, the Commission is heavily in favor of the ruling party because members of that body are prone to be highly partisan. Except for the Speaker, membership in the Assembly or in any public service disqualifies one from membership on this Commission. Legally, this body can act on its own and generally a member will vacate his seat every time the Assembly is dissolved. Anyone on the Commission can be removed if he becomes incapacitated or misbehaves as determined by a Commission appointed by the Governor. A charge of misbehavior can only be brought against a member by the party which appointed him. The report of this Commission must be presented to the Assembly as soon as possible. Any modifications of the report can be carried out in the Assembly by a procedure outlined by the ruling party. This may lead to many charges of gerrymandering districts to ensure the return to power of an incumbent government. This eventuality is mitigated though, by the fact that no modifications will have to be made in the Assembly since the prepared report of the Commission will reflect the wishes of the ruling party.

There are several flaws with the Commission. As has been said, it favors any ruling party. The Speaker, in British fashion, is supposed to be non-partisan, but this is not the case in Dominica where he always has been a

staunch member of the ruling party. Secondly, the two members appointed by the Government are supporters of the ruling government. They are given instructions as to how the constituencies should be divided. On the other hand, the two appointed by the Opposition are also highly partisan. The only way the Opposition members can come close to having their way is by taking their cause to the people. If they can generate enough sympathy to effect a major confrontation with the Government, they may influence the Government. But in its present form, a government can increase or decrease the number of constituencies at will to ensure its success at the polls.

For this reason, in regard to elections, the Constitution is too legalistic and formal. It does not take into account that politics in Dominica revolve around rewarding friends and punishing enemies. This writer is surprised that the present electoral process has not caused major confrontations, although the 1970 election reports speak of a tense atmosphere which prevailed in Dominica.⁴⁸

The House of Assembly. The Dominica political system is unicameral. The legislative body is called the House of Assembly. It is made up of eleven elected men, representing as many constituencies (districts). There are in addition, three nominated members, two of whom are

⁴⁸Dominica, Report on the House of Assembly General Elections, 1970, (Roseau: The Government Printery, 1970), p.5.

Government nominees, including the Deputy Speaker, and one an Opposition nominee. The House is directed by a Speaker. The Attorney General is a member of the House, he could either be a civil servant or a political appointee. In either case, his role is to defend the government.

The Cabinet. The Cabinet is made up of the Premier and four other Ministers who meet every week, to "discuss" public policy. Cabinet members are termed Ministers and they now head departments or divisions. They are appointed to their posts, even before elected, by the Premier, who is also leader of the majority party. But the Constitution specifies that it is the Governor who appoints them officially. Those elected on the slate of the majority party who do not hold the title of Minister are presently referred to as Parliamentary Secretaries. (Formerly they were called Ministers Without Portfolio). The latter can substitute for any absent Minister. But Dominica, in its typical own way, has had the "normal" situation persisting for some time, where Parliamentary Secretaries are not qualified to substitute for absent Ministers, far less to take over the job permanently (Chapter IV).

It might be incorrect to assert that the Cabinet system in Dominica is not working if the past history of Dominica with Cabinet Government is used as a yardstick for evaluation. But since the Constitution was not made by Dominica, one must admit that the imposed system has

failed. The Cabinet system of Government meant that there would be collective responsibility, but that did not preclude individual inputs into the decision making process. In fact, it anticipated and demanded a differentiation of functions to reach a higher level of collective responsibility. It required that many avenues be considered before a plan was implemented. As will be shown in the following chapter, collective responsibility in Dominica has meant one or two men's responsibility. The majority of members in the Cabinet seldom make an input into the decision making process.

Procedure in the House of Assembly. All the trivialities of the British House of Commons are to be encountered in Dominica. The House of Assembly in Dominica meets every six months to tell the people what has already been decided by the ruling party. Since only a majority is required to enact most legislation, and any party with a majority forms the Government, meetings in the House to present programs become a mere formality. The meetings only build up unnecessary tensions which have the negative effect of making the people think even more unfavorably of the politicians. Making it harder for the Government to have its way is not the answer. The answer seems to lie in finding better qualified men to take over the government. The following exchange between the Deputy Premier and the Leader of the Opposition on August 17, 1972, is fairly

typical. It demonstrates the level of debate in the Assembly.

The Leader of the Opposition was requesting more time to consider a five year plan for Dominica which the Government was about to enact.

Question: Leader of the Opposition (L.O.) Mr. Speaker I would like to make a suggestion to the House.

Interrupted by Mr. Armour, Deputy Premier (D.P.):

Mr. Speaker, please tell the Honorable Leader of the Opposition that suggestions are not allowed in the House.

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Moise (L.O.), you can make a motion but suggestions are not allowed here.

Answer (L.O.): Mr. Speaker, I cannot make a motion because I know it will be defeated the composition of the House at the time was 8-2-1 against him. But I would suggest that we postpone debate on the five year plan. This would give us some time to read it the plan had been a secret before that day. We should also leave out some elected representatives, including Ministers, who have no mind of their own.

Mr. Armour (D.P.): Mr. Speaker, under no condition we should allow that. These people are paid \$600 a month to come here twice a year. They have no excuse for not knowing what's in the plan. Besides, Moise is an illiterate, he will not be able to understand the plan anyway.

Moise to Armour: Shut up you pig, I don't see how they could make you a lawyer.

There is no question that the caliber of this exchange is very low. Any ruling government has it so easy that the Deputy Premier could tell this writer that the political system has failed. It is always taken for granted that Government will have its way and counting of votes is rarely attempted in the House.

The Speaker of the House has shown himself to be

very partisan. Morely Ayearst is wrong when he writes that political advancement has taken place in the Caribbean because the presiding officer, the Speaker, favors no side.⁴⁹

The Judiciary.⁵⁰ The 1967 West Indies Act introduced a common judicial system for all the Associated States of the Eastern Caribbean. There is also a common Judiciary and Legal Services Commission for the territories. The system consists of a Court of Appeals and a High Court. The Queen, on the advice of the Lord High Chancellor, appoints the Chief Justice while the Puisne Judges (High Court Judges) are appointed by the Legal Services Commission. Tenure ends because of age (for the Justice of Appeal age 65, and for the Puisne Judges age 62), sickness of body or mind, and misbehavior. Misconduct is determined by a tribunal of judges which has power to look into issues at hand and make its recommendations. Removal from office because of misconduct can only occur on the advice of the British Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. Only the Premier of each territory can bring a complaint against the Chief Justice.

The judiciary remains regional and seems to be above politics. Its powers also seem to be great. The Constitution does not specifically state that there is judicial

⁴⁹Morely Ayearst, The British West Indies: The Search for Self-Government (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1960), p. 163.

⁵⁰The Dominica Constitution Order, 1967, pp. 58-59.

review of legislation passed by the Dominica House of Assembly. But judicial review seems to fall under the clause which states that the Assembly may make only laws which the Constitution allows. And there is no doubt that the Court can interpret the Constitution. This is another area which the framers have taken for granted. They assume, maybe incorrectly, that the spirit of cooperation will always prevail between the judicial and legislative systems.

Finally, the highest court of appeal is the Privy Council in Great Britain. This attachment to the Privy Council is an umbilical cord which holds Caribbean law to a high level giving it credence and legitimacy.

Conclusion

The Constitution is meant to be supreme. Up until now, no one has paid much attention to it. In fact, when Government denied due process to a group of misinformed students, who went around insulting White people (Chapter V), the Opposition reported joyfully that Government was doing something positive about this problem. No one saw the contradiction in this stance and all condemned the boys. Increasingly, it becomes clear that there is no assurance that basic human rights will be protected in Dominica. In fact, those who need this protection most cannot afford to lose such rights.

The new Constitution has added new elements, such as equality before the law, which have traditionally been taken lightly or ignored. Law and order may take precedence over everything else. Conditions for such are ripe indeed.

The judiciary may not remain as apolitical as now. It has managed to survive all political manipulations, but its future is not that bright. The politicians of the islands will be filling this agency with personnel. Like in all advanced countries, that is the way it should be, but the stage is now set to involve this body in the realm of politics.

The personnel to the judiciary will be coming from the ranks of Attorney Generals and Magistrates, as has been the custom. The only difference is that the present Magistrates and Attorney Generals are appointees of the local politicians. And, increasingly, those who are raised to these posts are the Government's sympathizers. There is no guarantee that they will remain loyal to the Government after they become judges. But the temptation to support their former superiors, or be influenced by them, can be great.

If the effects of smallness have any bearing on aspects of Dominican life, the judiciary will not escape this effect. As the judicial system gets situated in its environment, it will suffer the same fate as other component parts of the political system. The politicians may be able

to influence decisions. It can safely be said that the new Constitution is proving too comprehensive and unintelligible to most Dominicans.

C H A P T E R I I I
THE BRITISH VARIANT OF COLONIALISM IN THE
BRITISH WEST INDIES

This chapter deals with the colonial condition as it existed in the British Caribbean. It is divided into six sections. After raising some questions about the definition of a colony, the study assesses the colonial situation vis-à-vis the metropolitan area. The social, psychological, and political impact of colonialism is next examined. The chapter ends with a look at the type of political leader that the colonial condition has produced, and with some basic questions which can hopefully be tackled throughout the rest of the study.

Defining a Colony

There are about as many definitions of a colony as there are writers on the subject. Each writer has found it necessary to define a colony to suit his ideological orientation. But in all the definitions this writer has uncovered, one point comes out clearly; and that is, a colony is established when a stronger power has asserted

its superiority over another territorial entity.¹ In addition, one writer, Archie Singham, has added a new dimension to the ideal of a colony. He makes a distinction between conquered and settled colonies.² He sees the British Caribbean islands as settled colonies which were later treated as conquered ones. This distinction is not simply academic. A settled colony enjoyed the privileges of British citizens. On the other hand, a conquered colony had limited rights.

The Colonial Situation

The colonial situation is a special phenomenon which has not received the attention which it merits. The tendency has been to look at the colony as an extension of the metropole, which emphatically it is not. It has its own component parts and has a dynamism which can be discerned on close examination. This is not to play down

¹For a legalistic and static definition see Hans Kohn, Idea of Nationalism, a study in its origin and background (New York: Collier, 1967), pp. 4-5. For a very polemical definition see John Kautsky, The Political Consequences of Modernization (New York: John Wiley, 1972), p. 60

²A. Singham, The Hero and the Crowd in a Colonial Polity (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 101.

the close connection between the colony and the colonial power. In fact, somehow this connection acquires its own dynamism and get institutionalized in the colony. Thus the connection becomes paradoxical - it is there but has become a part and parcel of the colonial situation.

The colonial condition in the Caribbean was not a happy one. It was so great and intense that a backward island like Dominica was never influenced by its more advanced French neighbors of Martinique and Guadeloupe. It is true that the people of all three and Haiti speak the same French-creole language, but that is not due to any direct influence of either Martinique or Guadeloupe. Of course, the influence of Haiti is out of the question, since it is too far. French-creole is spoken in Dominica because the French once occupied the island.

British colonialism in the Caribbean had the effect of destroying any cohesion that existed in these societies. Where cohesion never existed, it was not allowed to take root. It even destroyed the island's integrity. There were no further divisions to be created in the Caribbean, nature had made it easier on the British. Its colonial rule only heightened and accented those divisions. Yet a tenuous unity emanated between the natives and the dominating European. The indigenous culture, whatever little amount that was available, did not affect the

imposed European culture, which did not completely remain the same for long. Some kind of marriage of convenience emerged.

Writing of the Caribbean experience, Hugh Tinker ✓ says that the colonial impact was far deeper there than elsewhere since the resistance to colonialism was at a minimum. There was no unifying element of, say, an Indian religion type to offer meaningful resistance.³ Philip Mason adds that the Caribbean is the essence of colonialism. "The imposed spiritual yoke is far greater than the physical force which lay in the background." He continues, "nowhere did this happen more completely than in the Caribbean."⁴

It is somewhat ironic that Crown Colony Government was brought about to eradicate what slavery had brought upon the Caribbean countries. Crown Colony Government lasted for some sixty-nine years in Dominica (1898 - 1967),

³Hugh Tinker, "The Impact of Western Democracy on Asia," Democratic Institutions in the World Today, ed. by William Burmeister (New York: 1958), p. 97.

⁴Philip Mason, Patterns of Dominance (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 276.

and after all that, the living reminders of the slave system are so apparent. The old huts surrounding the Great Houses are around. Agricultural work, detested after slavery ended, is detested today, because little effort was made to show its value. The words "driver and gang" with all their derogatory connotations are still used on the large estates when one refers to a group of field hands and a leader-supervisor. The persistence of the slave mentality, reinforced by the colonial condition, has led Eric Williams to write that "Emancipation has left the new freemen as much dependent on and at the mercy of his king, Sugar, as he had been as a slave."⁵ And where sugar has become less important, bananas, "green gold," has stepped in to take its place.

Politically it was assumed that a benevolent democratic British Government would gradually confer self-rule on the natives,⁶ but in the meantime the Caribbean area was used as an administrative experimenting ground. Such experiments would not have been tolerated

⁵Eric Williams, The Negro in the Caribbean (New York: Negro University Press, 1942), pp. 17-19.

⁶Paul Blanshard, Democracy and Empire in the Caribbean (New York: Macmillan, 1947), pp. 79-80.

in the mother country.⁷ Further, the West Indian islands were only too happy to be associated with the British to reject their close friendship with one another.

A colonial situation in the Caribbean developed as soon as the British had explicitly asserted their superiority over the natives. This assertion was made first in the area of economics when the British companies took it upon themselves to run the oil industry in Trinidad and the bauxite in British Guyana. Gradually this assertion entered the political sphere and thence the social sphere by a policy of discrimination and segregation.⁸

The colonial situation is a collective fact. It is a sort of relationship between human groups; it involves intercommunication,⁹ but it always remains one of dependence and subordination of the dominated.¹⁰

⁷ John M. Lee, Colonial Development and Good Government; a study of the ideas expressed by the British official classes in planning decolonization 1939-1964 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), p. 3.

⁸ Marian Mushkrat, "Some Characteristics of Colonialism and its Product, African Nationalism," African Studies Review (September, 1971), p. 222.

⁹ Rene Maunier, The Sociology of Colonies, Edited and translated by E.O. Lorimer (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1949), p. 5.

¹⁰ Thomas Hodgkin, Nationalism in Colonial Africa (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 20.

Fanon writes that this relationship degenerates into one of lust on the part of the colonized. The native wants what the settler has¹¹ and the settler is aware of that fact. The European in such a situation also undergoes tremendous psychological strains. He is aware of the heavy toll that his assertion of heroic superiority has taken of him. He is constantly worried about his numerical minority status and "hovers the constant fear that the natives might some day overpower him."¹² The colonial situation in the Caribbean was most cruel.

The Reluctance to Give Up Colonies

One is often amused at the reluctance with which colonial powers relinquished some of their costly colonies. One is even more surprised at the overreaction of the British during the Anguillan crisis in 1967.

Clearly the rationalization for maintaining the Caribbean colonies was based on the assumption that the

¹¹Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth (New York: Negro University Press, 1960), passim.

¹²Robert Louis Delavignette, Freedom and Authority in French West Africa (London: Oxford University Press, 1950), p. 353.

West Indian was incapable of governing himself. Britain might have been afraid of the despotism of local leaders. It was also believed that the feeble financial resources of these islands precluded independence.

John S. Furnivall writes that colonial policy was dominated by the economic motive, followed by the humanitarian element to justify further policies.¹³ Thus, it is safe to assume that independence for the Caribbean was ruled out from the very beginning because of its tremendous source of sugar and other commodities for the British.

But the general reluctance to give up colonies is echoed in what Ivor Jennings has to say about independence for some countries which were showing signs of not being able "to make it." He writes that another six months of imperial rule would have helped India, two more years would have put Burma on the right track, and Ghana would have benefitted from another year's experience with domination.¹⁴ Had he written about Trinidad, he would

¹³John S. Furnivall, Progress and Welfare in Southeast Asia: A Comparison of Colonial Policy and Practice (New York: The Secretariat, Institute of Pacific Relations, 1941), p. 6.

¹⁴Sir Ivor Jennings, Problems of the New Commonwealth (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1958), p. 23.

probably have said another so many years could have helped Prime Minister Williams correct the racial problems of his country.

But Lucian Pye has written that the major flaw of the Burmese political system has been the inability of the leaders to communicate with each other.¹⁵ Would the recommended two years correct a problem the British could not correct in the many years they dominated that country? Why the magic number of six months or two years, while the British had so many hundred years and they did not get these colonies to be viable nations?

The reluctance to give up the colonies seemed to have been couched in the absurd idea that they were being prepared for self government. Self government was never defined and one suspects that it often meant an increased familiarity of the natives with the British way of life so "that the peoples under temporary tutelage shall be enabled and encouraged to participate in the more sophisticated culture."¹⁶ The British conveniently ignored the fact that these dominated peoples had governed themselves long before Europeans infiltrated their midst. As John Plamenatz writes, the colonies may have been

¹⁵Lucian W. Pye, Politics, Personality and Nation-Building: Burma's Search for Identity (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1966), passim.

¹⁶The Times (London), June 22, 1949, quoted in J.M. Lee, Colonial Development, pp. 14-15.

governed badly by European standards, but "by their brutality, Europeans have proven themselves unfit to govern others."¹⁷ If the intent was to prepare the natives well to take over the reins of government someday in the future, how does one explain the rush with which an "advanced" constitution was thrust on the Windward and Leeward Islands during the early sixties? It was done to bring them on par with Trinidad and Jamaica in order to form a federation. Of course, this is an unacceptable reason since "advanced" constitutions by British reasoning do not bring with it experience. It is still very puzzling when one looks at the slovenliness with which Britain has given the islands a chance to rule themselves. The British should have listened to this pithy remark by Plamenatz that "there are many countries independent which are not free, and no one would suggest that they ought to be deprived of their independence in order to make them capable of freedom,"¹⁸ or of ruling themselves.

¹⁷ John Plamenatz, On Alien Rule and Self Government (London: Longmans, Green, 1960), p. 35.

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 22-23. For a defence of the colonial system see The Colonial Problem: A Report by a Study Group of Members of the Royal Institute of International Affairs (London: Oxford University Press, 1937).

Since it cannot be discerned why Britain has been reluctant to release its costly colonies of the Caribbean, it would seem that it is just too proud to do so. The colonies cost it a great deal (see chart on aid, p.), but the British still feel that they have not been given enough credit for the wonderful work they have done for the natives. In British eyes, the natives are ungrateful. This lack of appreciation is a sure sign of immaturity which precludes independence. Finally, it is the general feeling of Dominican leaders that the present generation of British leaders should not be blamed for the poor conditions and inadequacies of the islands since whatever damage was done, occurred at an earlier period of history. This is correct, but it is because of this abuse that the present generation of West Indians have had to live in poverty. Had much of the money derived from the islands been invested there, the story today might have been better. Thus, the apparent hostility of the present West Indian generation towards the British today is not without justification.

But the indictment of the colonial condition has not all come from those affected by it. There have been British critics who have voiced their objection to the attitude of the British toward the colonies. Ruth Hinden

writes that: "We [British] cannot teach and preach democracy and liberty and equality between all men, far less to practice these principles. . . without challenging the system" which exists because of the very opposite principles.¹⁹ Another critic, Sydney Olivier, a former Governor of Jamaica, stated: "it is impossible for any white official to understand that these people [Caribbean natives] are poor. . . and what they produce costs them a physical and intellectual labor of which any white man would be simply incapable under similar conditions."²⁰ He was a little too sympathetic with his assertion that a white man could not work under similar conditions; anyone can work under any conditions if he has to. But the point is well taken; what do these hungry people care about democracy when they have daily cares about the basic necessities of life?

One of the most biting criticisms of the idea of preparing the natives for self rule came from Plamenatz

¹⁹ Ruth Hinden, Empire and After (London: Essential Books, 1949), p. 169.

²⁰ Sydney Olivier, Letters and Selected Writings, edited by Margaret Olivier (New York: Macmillan, 1948), p. 32.

who simply says that "foreign rule, in the very nature, is undemocratic."²¹

Today, Britain still has colonies in the Caribbean and this will be the case for a long time to come. The study will now turn to an analysis of the social and psychological impact of colonialism on those who have and are experiencing it.

The Social and Psychological Impact of Colonialism

In the Caribbean, the social and psychological impact of colonialism has been a lasting one. A distinct new culture was created in the Caribbean since the original inhabitants were annihilated. Whatever culture the slave brought with him from Africa was wiped out. He was discouraged to continue in his old ways and could not even communicate with others since a conscious effort was made to keep people from the same tribes apart in order to contain any rebellion. Consequently, a European society emerged in the Caribbean for which the British have taken the credit. They had done such a good job that it was reported that during the 1938 riots in Jamaica

²¹Plamenatz, On Alien Rule, p. 92.

a woman defended the British Empire by saying that "it is next to the Kingdom of God."²² In the same vein, the ugly treatment of the West Indian during slavery did not deter his reverence for the Crown. West Indians honor the Queen on her birthday, and sing praises to her on Commonwealth Day (which used to be Empire Day).

How does one account for this intense love of the master? It seems to be in appreciation of the protection afforded by the Crown during the period following emancipation (1832-1838). In 1832, slavery ended but the ex-slaves were still attached to the plantations. They did not know what it was to be free, and from all reports the planters were not about to cushion this trying period for this unfortunate people. The British stepped in to help but that help did not last too long as the Negroes showed signs of asserting themselves by entering politics. The British were to return again to help the Negro cope with the harsh realities of living in an extremely poor environment. In retrospect, this second return proved a stumbling block to West Indian nationhood. Since

²²B.L. St. John Hamilton, Problems of Administration in an Emergent Nation: A Case Study of Jamaica (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964), p. 12.

changes came to each island in isolation, it has produced a bitter rivalry among the islands. Further, changes were made in institutions rather than within the people of each island, who were not taught to work together on a regional basis.

Colonialism robbed the West Indian of his individuality and, in the process, his self-respect. His personality was impoverished while his pride suffered and his creative power was dulled. The colonized was made to feel that he had no culture, no history; he was not even part of humanity. Consequently, an inferiority complex crept in; he hated himself. He had nothing; but he wanted something. The only alternative was to mimic his master. The West Indian now has the reputation as the great mimic man. The West Indian was totally emasculated as an individual.

This sense of worthlessness and dependence was further rivetted into him because everything came to be done for him. He could not help himself. For example, after a Commission of Inquiry had exposed the benign neglect of the West Indies, Paul Blanshard reports that "a comptroller for Development and Welfare for the West Indies [was appointed] but he did not need West Indian help, he came with a "staff of economic and educational experts." 23

²³Blanshard, Democracy and Empire, p. 323.

With their expertise, they missed the importance of training West Indians themselves.

The hatred of West Indianism was inevitable. For example, a conscious effort was made to remove creole-patois in Dominican society because it was generally believed that it had the adverse effect of hampering one's ability to speak English well. To speak English well was to be superior. This is clearly demonstrated by the opinion of a member of the Dominica House of Assembly who raised serious objections to giving additional funds for Radio Dominica since the announcers pronounced English words incorrectly.²⁴

Philip Mason is not too far from the mark when he writes that "the deepest wrong that has been done to the Caribbean people is that they have been brought up in a society in which traditionally everyone wishes he was someone else."²⁵ Various methods of attempting to induce physical changes were even attempted; attempts ranging from marrying "light" to the use of cosmetic preparations. The quintessence of this rejection of the Black self came from the mother who happened to have a light skinned child when she reminded the child that he had to be

²⁴This exchange took place in the presence of this writer during debate on a motion by the Government to increase funds for the Radio Station, August 17, 1972.

²⁵Mason, Patterns of Dominance, p. 288 (my emphasis).

careful in what he does to prevent letting down his color. The so-socialized child had little trouble in associating black with dirt, idleness, unreliability, and even stupidity.

The colonial condition heightened the importance of skin color. Increasingly, whites in the colony refused to associate with the darker people, and anyone of the colony who could "pass for white" tried to be white. Still to a great extent, one's color is a very important variable for advancement in society. The two major banks in Dominica only began hiring people of darker complexion in 1965, but they came from the upper classes. Originally, Dominicans were kept away from the banks by the ridiculously high qualifications that they demanded, qualifications which were in no way connected with banking.²⁶ By 1965, Dominicans still did not have those qualifications; therefore, either banking got easier or Dominicans got smarter. Besides the banks, the religious bodies took part in this form of discrimination by favoring lighter skinned people over the darker ones in their hiring practices.

²⁶Originally they were required to have at least the equivalent of two years of school after Grade 12 or two Higher School passes, but by 1965 some people who did not even have a High School Certificate were being employed.

The other side of the coin has been the class question. As in many other places, class is acquired through a family name. The family name plays an important role and takes precedence over color. Certainly, this class distinction was acquired from British rule. The Dominican knew his place, but did not always struggle as Marx suggested because he wanted to be like the first classes and be accepted by them.

Class distinction is especially noticeable in Dominica where the language one speaks may indicate one's class. There are two languages: one "superior," one "inferior"; English and Creole-patois respectively. The upper classes may insist, through various means, that they do not understand the inferior one; though members of the family may speak it at home. Furthermore, anyone who has spent some time abroad inadvertently "forgets" his creole-patois. If he has not forgotten it, and speaks it on his return, his admiring and often surprised peers are flabbergasted and may even lose respect for him.

On the other hand, if one were to approach a person from the rural districts, where creole-patois is the language and make an attempt to initiate a conversation in patois, the one approached might feel offended, even though his mastery of the English language is not good, of

course, some people will not marry into such a family because it is too low. This forces the family to have a black sheep who gives up family prestige to "uplift" a darker skinned family.

The class syndrome was so deep in the West Indian that when the "first-class" English rejected his company, the West Indian smoothed his hurt feelings by surmising that this breed of Englishman is not the real thing, and that somehow the better Englishman resides in Britain²⁷ though this breed rarely reached the Caribbean. The resulting complications of race, color, and class in the Caribbean are well documented by C.L.R. James. There were clubs which simply did not admit Blacks. One good example was the Dominica Club, whose show piece was the Governor; it was rechristened the White People's Club (no derogation intended). There were instances where heated discussions were carried on as to the possible effects of lowering the tone of an institution by including a Black man. In 1933, Cyril Lionel Robinson James writes that "the surest sign of a West Indian having arrived is that he keeps company with people lighter in complexion or

²⁷Raymond T. Smith, "Social Stratification, Cultural Pluralism, and Integration in West Indian Societies," Caribbean Integration: Papers on Social, Political and Economic Integration, ed. by Sybil Lewis and Thomas G. Mathews (Rio Piedras, P.R.: Institute of Caribbean Studies, 1967), p. 237.

bigger in name."²⁸ The reverse of that is also true; that the light-skinned or big-named is doing the darker-skinned or small-named a favor by being in his company. But it must be emphasized that in Dominica the family name is taking precedence, though color is still very important. However, the color question revolves around the major cities unless the light-skinned from the rural district also has an important name. A light-skinned person from the rural area is usually poor like other villagers. He is often ridiculed for being that color. He is usually called one or all of these names: backra, vieux blanc, or shaben, or bakay povre (poor white).

During and after slavery, the slave was often rebuked for his "slovenliness." It never occurred to the master that this could have been the result of exhaustion precipitated by undernourishment and a lack of incentive. The same attitude of expecting maximum output of the present-day worker has persisted with little or no change. It is reflected in the answers given this writer by the business elites of Dominica who felt that Dominicans should be working harder to better the country.

²⁸ C.L.R. James, The Case for West Indian Self Government (London: Hogarth, 1933), pp. 8-9.

The following question was asked of twenty business elites: "Are Dominicans contributing enough toward the economic development of the island?" All twenty said no. The follow-up question posed was: "In what ways could they (Dominican people) contribute more?" This was not an open-ended question though the interviewees were invited to add comments to the following options: by (a) working harder; (b) using more local products; (c) saving more; (d) investing more at home; (e) making less demands for wage increases and, (f) any other way. All twenty respondents chose option "(a)" and declined to give additional comments.²⁹

Apparently it has not struck the interviewees' fancy that poverty and low wages engender apathy and lack of enthusiasm for productive effort. Indeed people resort to a kind of foot-dragging slow-down strike to resist

²⁹This writer is satisfied that the twenty were representative of the Dominican business elite. He even feels that his sample was too large since an association, the Dominica Manufacturers' Association, represents the views of the elites. In interviews with people very intimately connected with the Association, the author was able to discern a yearning to have more production from the average worker.

that excessive exploitation. They work at half-speed; just enough to get by and this is the "laziness" that they are often reproached for. These assessments are often misleading, intolerable, and malicious. West Indians working abroad have proven themselves to be hard and productive workers. West Indians still live in Panama after having worked hard to build the Canal which bears the name of their new country; and, of course, innumerable West Indians migrated to the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom to work in the lowest jobs. They now own their homes and many businesses. But, instead of trying to find out the cause of this "laziness" of Dominicans, Peter Simple of the Dominica business elites quotes Gunnar Myrdal approvingly when Simple lists characteristic traits and attitudes that hamper development - in Dominica, the people are the main stumbling block.

The traits listed by Myrdal and quoted by Simple are:

1. Low levels of work discipline, punctuality, and orderliness;
2. Superstitious beliefs;
3. Irrational outlook;
4. Lack of alertness - young boys stay away from sports;
5. Lack of adaptability, ambition, and readiness for change and experiment;

6. Contempt for manual work, submissiveness to authority and exploitation; low aptitude for cooperation;
7. Refusal to admit error (no doubt stemming from strong personal pride);
8. Chronic dishonesty, both large and small scale.³⁰

But Simple chose the part of Myrdal's work which suited his purposes, his own biases, and his lack of understanding of Dominican society and people in general. He should have continued a little further and he would have read that Myrdal writes that "a stagnant society does not come into existence except as a result of State policy,"³¹ and he could have added, business policy too.

It is underemployment and unemployment which induce people to stretch jobs. These are obviously compounded by the no-name nobody who is forced to be unambitious. He cannot take a loan to begin a business; he does not know how to run one and does not receive any help either.

³⁰Peter Simple, "Of Men and Mice," The Dominica Chronicle, May 25, 1968, p. 4. Peter Simple took these ideas from Gunnar Myrdal, Beyond the Welfare State: Economic Planning in the Welfare State and International Implications (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), pp. 90-92.

³¹Myrdal, Beyond the Welfare State, p. 99.

As these islands get more industrialized, no effort is made to cushion the transition for the worker whose working habits have been patterned on his former condition of seasonal work. As one expert has so ably put it, the transition from "agraria to industria" is hard.³² In agraria, life was leisurely. People worked their "tass" (certain amount of work in one day). They worked when they wanted money. In industria, it is different; production is the name of the game. The biggest piece of decoration in the factory is not the human being, but the clock which is always punctual. It takes time to get adjusted to this new life style. The pressure on the individual is so unbearable that there are high rates of turnover, absenteeism, tardiness, which in turn discourage investors, which lead to further unemployment. But in spite of this gloomy situation, the West Indian can make it in the West Indies if he is sufficiently motivated. He does not have to leave his home to prove himself. If the average peasant could receive the needed advice, he would stop looking at the land as a place to scrape up a bare existence until

³²Fred Riggs, "Agraria and Industria," Toward the Comparative Study of Public Administration, ed. by William J. Siffin (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1957), passim.

something better comes along. He will change the attitude that land is just to be had for the keeping and that efficient methods could make production profitable.

The peasant could not see production on a large scale because the trained agriculturist in the islands was not interested in passing on that information. The latter was more interested in setting up a horticultural experiment station to show the Royal Family or its representative on their annual tours. Furthermore, these agriculturists did not reside in the areas where the productive land existed; they remained in the cities to enjoy the fruits of the city. The new brand of agriculturists have not done much better either.³³ They now have elaborate offices in the city while the rural areas are manned by the beginners. Of course, there are exceptions, and serious work has been done in certain selected areas. But considering the fact that many of these countries have agricultural economies, more could have been done.

³³This writer was reliably informed of deals which could not be accounted for when the new Director of Agriculture, Dr. J. Bernard Yankey, took over in Dominica in 1966.

The Colonial Impact on Education

An area which has received little serious attention because of the sensitive nature of the subject is the impact of colonialism on Caribbean education. The British system of education was transplanted wholesale to the Caribbean with little or no modification, and with it came the attitude that education was for a select few. One observer, William J. Foltz, writes that the educational structures of the newest states reinforced polarization between elites and masses.³⁴ Schools concentrate on elementary subjects; high schools are few (four and a half in Dominica) and these are run by religious sects, except for the one and a half which is run by the Government.³⁵ A university was absent, until one was established in 1948 in Jamaica. Subjects such as international relations, which could have given the West Indian an idea of the non-role his country was playing in the world, were almost always avoided. Of course, subjects dealing with the West Indian's heritage were unheard of and the authorities did not have to explain their exclusion. Raymond Kennedy writes that

³⁴William J. Foltz, "Building the Newest Nations: Short-run Strategies and Long-run Problems," Nation-Building, ed. by Deutsch et al., p. 119.

³⁵This writer refers to the newly built school at Portsmouth as a half school since it goes up to Grade 9 only, though the Government refers to it as a complete High School.

these "subjects were deliberately avoided to hide from the native students their lowly status in comparison with free people and thus keep them from inevitable discontent and rebelliousness."³⁶ This last statement does not hold completely true for the Caribbean, because by all indications had the West Indian been told about his past, chances are that he would have opted to discard it. He would have acquired British ways since the latter had been so deeply inculcated into him, or if not fully inculcated, dangled in front of him long enough to make him want it over his own.

To complicate matters, secondary education has never been free, though now it is less expensive than it used to be. The masses received primary education only. A select few from the masses made it socially, but that did not do the poor elements any good, since that meant the "better" part of them was bought off at an early stage. British examination was, and still is, more highly valued; thus, the reason for the long connection between the only University of the West Indies and that of London was to keep the former institution both honest and acceptable.

³⁶Raymond Kennedy, "The Colonial Crisis and the Future," quoted in Blanshard, Democracy and Empire, p. 17.

The West Indian University has been so proud of that connection that it can still boast that a second class honours degree in the West Indies may command first class honours at London. As a result, American degrees are considered second rate regardless of place of graduation. Ironically, the people making the comparison between systems base their judgments on feelings since they have never been exposed to either educational system. This indifference towards American degrees is shown by an account of attempts to recruit teachers for Jamaica. The informant writes that no efforts were made to contact Jamaicans in the United States, although many Jamaican agencies could have obtained more than the required amount. The writer surmises that the deliberate oversight may have been made as a warning to those Jamaicans "buying" degrees in the United States. He based his conclusion on the following statement by the Jamaica Board of Education:

Students to American Universities and Colleges who intend to teach in secondary schools might find it well worth their while when they are deciding on the nature and content of their study courses never to lose sight of the British background and tradition against which they will work.³⁷

³⁷ G.I. Durrant, "American University Degree," The Torch (July 1958), quoted in St. John Hamilton, Problems of Administration, p. 34.

Colonialism gave a certain direction to education by encouraging certain professions. In the colonies, education was for a limited purpose, to benefit the administration. No attention was given to vocational training; there was no need for such since no factories of any significance were maintained. All "unnecessary" skills were discouraged. Education was associated with the present needs and opportunities afforded by colonial rule which emphasized law and white-collar jobs in the civil service bureaucracy. This general lack of interest in education for its own sake (which a country like Dominica may not be able to afford) is reflected in the lack of a plan for education in Dominica.

In summation, the catastrophic effects of colonial education are these: there is an overproduction of unemployable semi-educated people, with primary or secondary specialization. The lopsided distribution of specialization has the infuriating effects of inviting expatriates to take technical jobs such as in the communication and teacher training fields. These have to be heavily subsidized, as Ivor Jennings warns, to lure them out of their secure jobs at home to the tenuous positions in the Caribbean, which entails a tremendous amount of sacrifice.

Associating a highly educated person with a white-collar job has produced an inefficiency in human resources which a new nation, like Dominica, can ill-afford. Consequently, the Government has a monopoly on talents which it cannot transfer to the private sector. But why the attraction to the public service?

Historically, working for the Government has meant job security and an inefficiency which has become unbearable. The private sector has not provided that security; hiring and firing were carried out on a very informal basis. In addition, Government has encouraged the talented people to leave the more productive private sector to join the non-productive service sector after colonialism in its crudest form has all but disappeared. For example, at one time, the privately owned Bulletin Office was the biggest printing concern in Dominica, but now it is on the verge of closing down because Government has inadvertently lured the better Bulletin Office personnel into its printing concern. This move was wrong on several counts; a loan to the Bulletin Office to expand its facilities would have been much better, in that this concern was helping to expand the economy while the Government printery is maintaining yet another bureaucracy which offers more security but does not help expand the economy. Government may have been reluctant to subsidize The Chronicle since it is owned

by the Church, which is foreign. Another printing concern, The Herald, could have been substituted.

The unavailability of talented people in the private sector gets translated into the attitude of the local business people toward expanding their enterprise. They have been taught to be satisfied with what they have. They have learnt not to be too avaricious, leaving the outsider the chance to risk his fortunes.³⁸

Because of the psychological content of Caribbean education which taught the recipient not to be too uppity or dynamic, it is faulty to assert that Western education hastened the demise of colonial rule.³⁹ In fact, it reinforced the rule. The British never overtly taught British ways to West Indians or even to Africans; or the importance of proper English as emphasized by two educators in Dominica. It was the local master, the West Indian himself, who took it upon himself to transmit

³⁸The biggest business concern in Dominica is owned by Astaphans, a one-time foreigner. Astaphans has made enough money by now, and has since sold out the business to the people of Dominica.

³⁹James Coleman, ed., "Introduction: Education and Political Development," Education and Political Development (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 1.

formally what he had acquired from the British. The local headmaster took it upon himself to teach about the grandeur of the Empire and the tremendous deeds people like Sir Winston Churchill et al., had accomplished to save that empire. The general knowledge class was devoted to drilling the students to memorize the meanings of KCMG (Knight Commander of St. Michael and St. George), Q. or K.C. (Queen, or King's, Council), MBE (Member of the British Empire), and OBE (Order of the British Empire). The unassuming headmaster saw to it that all stood at attention on singing "God Save the Queen." The child had to abandon class for some two weeks to practice his drills to give a presentation that befits the celebration of the Queen's Birthday. Of course, songs such as "There will always be an England," and "Rule Britannia" became standard renditions and every school day began with the salute to the Union Jack. Having accomplished this, the Headmaster feels his job has been well done and he may even receive one of the citations from the Queen for his efforts.

Another myth which needs to be set straight is the general belief that education hastened independence or whatever variant the countries have of it. It is correct to say that those who pushed for independence were educated in North America or Britain, but they would have been educated there anyway. They were already independent

since they were able to leave their countries at will to study abroad. In fact, many of the educated returnees had become American citizens. Further, most educated West Indians were not concerned with the uneven political and economic development among the islands. The British had instilled pride of being better than the next, while a well-controlled communication system kept the less developed islands satisfied. No well educated West Indian rose to the occasion to correct these disparities; a hasty attempt was made in 1959 to correct the uneven political development to bring about federation (see Chapter VI) but this was done by Britain, not by any educated West Indian. The educated West Indian, for the most part, is afraid of independence because this might spell trouble for him in his attempts to keep the masses in their places. As to the do-gooder who has been educated abroad, one finds that he is a product of the colonial situation regardless of how one may think he detests the metropolitan master.

The Political Impact of Colonialism

The present political situation in the British Caribbean is a direct result of the colonial condition. During colonial rule there were two important components which affected the political situation. They were the bureaucracy and the aspiring politician who had either

refused a job in the bureaucracy or had been hurt by some policy which had adverse effects on his business. With the end of colonialism, one sees the struggle for supremacy between the two forces. It is, of course, only the people who suffer the consequences of this fight.

For these reasons, this section is divided into three parts. The first deals with the general political atmosphere under which colonial rule has operated. The second part deals with the bureaucracy, with an examination of the role of the Governor during colonial times, together with the British attitude toward incorporating local men in the bureaucracy. It includes an assessment of the emerging bureaucracy, as politicians acquire the power of appointment from the colonial master. A strange situation has developed since independence in many of these Caribbean countries, as all the old bureaucrats are faced with getting orders from politicians they once could ignore. As vacancies occur, they are increasingly filled with men who are more likely to be supportive of the ruling Government's policies. The old hands have nothing to lose, but still feel threatened both by the new hands and by the politicians. The third part deals exclusively with the type of politician produced in the colonial situation.

Development in the Colonial Situation

Crown Colony Government⁴⁰ was introduced to the West Indies in 1878; it came to Dominica in 1898. It is important to note that it did not make its appearance in all the colonies at the same time. This promoted insularity and hampered Caribbean political integration (Chapter VI).

Crown Colony Government was introduced in Jamaica first because the whites were afraid that the newly enfranchised Negroes would dominate them because of their numerical superiority. Earlier, the whites could rule in all the colonies since slaves were not allowed to partake in politics. But now the slaves were freed and the operating system was open to anyone. Rather than work with the Negroes, the whites preferred added protection from the Crown. There was no guarantee that the new situation would give them either more protection or prestige. The whites knew fully well that they had been cruel to their slaves. By inviting the Crown to take direct control could also mean added protection for the ex-slaves; but that was the chance they had to take.

⁴⁰There were two types of Crown Colony Government. The "mild" form meant that a certain proportion of members of the national legislature was elected, but the majority was nominated by the Governor. The second type, the pure form which Dominica experienced, meant that all members of the legislature were hand-picked by the Governor, the lawful representative of the Crown. In both cases, the Governor was able to rule the territory single-handedly.

Britain may have waited for this invitation. It had refused to take the initiative and its taking over was timely. But in retrospect, the British blundered very badly in their handling of the islands. After so many years of British political coaching, the level of politics in the islands is still extremely low by any standards. The British may have missed a golden opportunity to train responsible local leadership in the unit legislatures.

One basic feature of this type of government was its strict constitutionalist nature, which made the West Indians great law abiders and stymied any form of initiative on the part of West Indians. They may fight the British system, but never want to destroy their inherited system. They only want to replace the Englishmen who hold key positions.

The system also brought with it the situation where few people made decisions; this still persists today, and has led the present leaders to remark that responsible government does not exist in the Caribbean. Responsible government signifies that the "Cabinet is responsible to the Parliament." This is a mockery since the statement implies that Parliament is larger than the Cabinet and can, in fact, overrule the latter. In the small islands, the reverse is the case; the Cabinet, or even an individual, makes a decision and Parliament cannot muster enough votes

to defeat it. In Dominica any dynamic leader can have his way in the present situation. When one looks back at the past history of Dominican politics, one sees that a Governor performed a similar role, though his method of operation might have been harsher.

During recent times, Dominicans either went to the streets, or were forced on the streets, when they did not get favorable legislation. They did not always win since the Crown had a monopoly on power and sometimes used it to contain resentment. The system had a way of pushing programs on the people with or without their consent. The same pattern is repeated today, which leads to frequent breakdowns which fall short of a major challenge to the system.

The system failed to promote local government, probably because local government machinery was not considered necessary for an efficient colonial administration. The national government, if it could be called that since it was never national in character, could and did stifle local attempts to provide services to the grass roots. The local man who developed a reputation may rival and even challenge the legitimacy of British rule; for this reason he was thwarted. And even after independence, lip service has been paid in Dominica to the development of local governments. The situation has often been aggravated if the party or people in power in the local body is not in the party of the national government. Any action the local

body may take which is seen as inimical to the ruling party can precipitate a crisis.

The British had thought that the best way to deal with rancorous critics in their colonies was to throw them in prisons to bring them back to their senses. In fact many national leaders were taken from jail and brought to the Prime Minister's palace to lead their countries to independence.⁴¹ The same practice persists in the Caribbean. A state of emergency lasted for six months in Trinidad while many people were held without trial during that period. In Dominica, two days before the Government planned to dissolve the local government, it banned public meetings to prevent local government members from presenting their cases to the people.

In commenting on the inherited political systems in the Caribbean, Charles C. Moskos, Jr. and Wendell Bell chose Jamaica to show that democracy and the general working of the system were most apparent there. It is their opinion that the long experience Jamaicans had with the system they now have is responsible for their success.⁴³ In the first place they

⁴¹In the Caribbean, Bustamante fits that description, though he was not removed from prison to lead his country to independence. In addition, Uriah Butler was jailed in 1939 for this trade union activities in Trinidad, while a Jamaican writer was interned in 1945 because he criticized the British system during the war of 1940.

⁴²Charles C. Moskos, Jr., and Wendell Bell, "Attitudes Toward Democracy," Democratic Revolution in the West Indies ed. by Wendell Bell (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman, 1967), p.74.

chose the wrong example; if they are concerned with longevity of a political system in the Caribbean, Barbados is the best example. To show the superiority of Jamaica, they used the following criteria:

TABLE Political Types By Territory

Percentage of West Indian Leaders who were:

PLACE	Demo- crats	Authori- tarian Idealists	Cynical Parlia- mentarians	Authori- tarians	No. of Cases
JAMAICA	39%	9%	26%	26%	23
TRINIDAD	18%	14%	27%	41%	22
BR. GUIANA	8%	8%	38%	46%	13
BARBADOS					
DOMINICA	19%	2%	26%	53%	53
GRENADA					

Source: Wendell Bell, ed., Democratic Revolution in the West Indies (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman, 1967), p. 70.

This table does not explain the high incidence of authoritarianism in Trinidad and British Guiana (Guyana). Perhaps the race question has forced the leaders to be authoritarian and thus want to settle "this problem" once and for all. Their combining Barbados, Dominica and Grenada does not help this analysis since it prevents a comparison

between Jamaica and Barbados, which has had greater experience with self-rule. Barbados never had Crown Colony Government.

Bell may have fallen in the frustration-aggression syndrome when he says that aggression is the result of frustration.⁴³ It does not necessarily follow that the incidents of dissatisfaction in the smaller islands are the result of frustrations engendered when they were faced with working with an "advanced" political system. The system in the smaller islands is not delivering services which it can deliver; thus the people are not satisfied. The ills of the small islands cannot be hidden as easily as in the larger ones. Wages in Jamaica or Trinidad may not increase in relation to rising prices but that fact is hidden by the fact that wages do increase annually. Increasingly people can work two jobs and keep themselves busy. An individual in Jamaica or Trinidad can move with relative ease from one job to another. He has countless ways to release pent-up energy while the small islander is not as fortunate as his other brothers; and, besides, the low level of resistance in Jamaica before 1970 was no indication of the acceptance of the system.

It would be well to take note of Peter Lupsha who writes that "Political violence is not the result of the frustration-aggression syndrome. When frustrated, an

⁴³Ibid., p. 76.

individual may forget his goal and become apathetic."⁴⁴ Aggression can result without frustration. The events in all the islands, big and small, demonstrate that there is something wrong with Bell's analysis. If the system was so very much accepted how does one explain the revolution in the Caribbean, beginning in Jamaica - not Montserrat, the most backward and last colony to receive a little self-rule? But developments in the system cannot be fully understood unless one gets a clear understanding of the role of the Governor and bureaucracy, and how they worked to run the system with the exclusion of the colonial politician.

The Governor and The Bureaucracy

Crown Colony Government in its crudest form meant direct rule from Britain. Its ultimate purpose was to prepare the West Indian to rule himself. The one who was designated to perform that task was none other than the Governor, the cog of the system. He was the "man on the spot" who listened to public opinion; in him all social and political legality of the system came to a head. He had to be close to the natives, yet keep his distance. He had the power to appoint people to the legislature to ensure maximum representation. But the word "minimum" was substituted for the original "maximum" as one interest

⁴⁴Peter A. Lupsha, "Explanation of Political Violence: Some Psychological Theories Versus Indignation," Politics and Society (Fall, 1971), p. 96.

was represented, and that was that of the Governor. His interest was to make himself look good in the eyes of the Colonial Office to ensure his promotion. To ensure that, he appointed people who would go along with his measures for the colony.

The result of such appointments created a great deal of irresponsibility and cynicism on the part of some people who read the motives of the Governor. The idea of having to support Governments' legislation had the effect of defeating the whole purpose of direct British rule. Further, the principled few refused appointments because that meant giving up one's individuality.

The Governor continued to maintain the class structure by keeping company with a few and shunning the majority. He recommended a few cronies to the Queen for citations while more deserving people refused them or were disregarded. This practice continues and those recommended and receiving are usually friends of the Government. Elite selection is nothing short of decapitation of a native society by removing the native leaders from the people.⁴⁵

⁴⁵Paul Blanshard, *op. cit.*, p. 83. But the biggest joke of itaall was when an M.B.E. was bestowed on a Carib Chief in Dominica. This can be likened to Harvard's bestowing an honorary doctorate to the first Indian it picked up from the Reservation.

The Governor and his lady, the island's temporary Queen, stood at the head of everything. His presence was always punctuated by the rendition of the first bars of "God Save the Queen," while those present stood at attention. If he were to appear at a function where a crowd was expected, the people had to be at their posts minutes before his grand entrance; when he entered the people would stand at attention, face him and remain standing until he had taken his seat. But people should not have been deterred at the coldness and aloofness of the Governor, wrote Sir Ivor Jennings, since this was no indication of his attitude toward the natives. He was so because he was English; if he were an Irishman, he would have known how to act.⁴⁶

The result of sending incompetent people to teach something they did not know or understand was disastrous. Its effects are now being felt throughout the Caribbean. In England, the Governor may have been a nobody, but, on becoming a Governor, he was suddenly catapulted into the ruling class. In England, he may have heard of the Empire probably did not care too much about it, but now he formed an important part of this one time nebulous society. He convinced himself of his own importance. But when he took up his post in the Caribbean, he realized that the natives

⁴⁶Sir Ivor Jennings, The Approach to Self-Government, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), p. 131.

were not as stupid as he had once heard. He was even impressed with the natives' ability to speak English and dress just as well as himself. He began to compare himself with the natives to find out why it was necessary to keep them in bondage. At one point, he even relaxed and tried to be part of the people, but he suddenly became uneasy in their company and withdrew. He rationalized his position with the thought that he had a job to do and it was not his business to worry over the people. He convinced himself that the present condition was a necessary phase in the scheme of things; the time would come when they would be able to stand on their own.

Yet the Governor was uneasy; he knew that he owed his raison d'être to the system and for that reason could not show his lack of respect and ungratefulness by challenging it. He also knew that by being ungrateful to the system, he would be acting in the interests of the natives whom he had already begun to respect. But love of Britain took precedence over everything else. He even eagerly awaited such events as the Queen's Birthday or Empire Day to pay his respects to the head of his country. On such occasions, he would spout out some platitudes to a gathering of hungry and underfed children who had gathered under the lashing rays of a tropical sun while he himself, dressed in full uniform, stood shaded at the head of the gathering.

In the midst of such pageantry, the Governor forgot

that the people he was addressing were not Englishmen, they would never be, even though some would, in the future, try hard to be. They were brought up where they were and the great majority would die where they were. In the final analysis. the Governor developed a morbid desire for the respect and homage of those over whom he ruled. One unadmiring critic puts it this way: "Uneasily conscious of the moral insecurity of his position, he was further handicapped by finding himself an aristocrat without having been trained as one."⁴⁷ Little wonder that many a Governor became neurotic. The intense contradiction within one person had to surface somehow.⁴⁸

Harold Laski was very unhappy with the narrow base from which Governors were selected. He writes that the quality was such that the one so appointed rarely questioned the system or attempted innovations.⁴⁹ On the same point, Paul Blanshard writes that most Governors had no first hand knowledge of dealing with the "institutions of responsible democracy." They were not recruited among those who would most likely criticize the system. "They had to conform to

⁴⁷C.L.R. James, West Indian Government, p. 11.

⁴⁸Gordon Lewis makes mention of two governors, one in Antigua and one in British Guiana, who were sick. The Growth of the Modern West Indies (London: MacGibbon and Kee Ltd., 1968), p. 22.

⁴⁹Harold J. Laski, "The Colonial Civil Service," The Political Quarterly, Vol. 9 (1938), p. 546.

win British approval. . .and if they were not a conformist in the beginning, they usually attained that status long before the end of their career," or even current tour. One gets the impression that it was beneath their dignity to submit to the approval of the people with whom they were supposed to work.⁵⁰

The intent here is not to condemn all governors, because there were some good ones. But they were so rare that one has to search hard to find them. However, there is no question that generally the ones on the Caribbean circuit were not the best. The one so appointed in the Caribbean arrived without any detailed knowledge of his post and within days he would be commanding people who had lived in that very area all their lives. This situation was that way only because he carried the title of Governor and, of course, he was a European.⁵¹ Of those appointed to the Caribbean, Thomas E. Simey writes of their qualifications: that their social backgrounds did not qualify them to handle administrative planning; that they were engaged in miseducating the people.⁵² And, interestingly enough, of the Governors working in Dominica, this writer was unable

⁵⁰Blanshard, Democracy and Empire, p. 14.

⁵¹Morley Ayearst, The British West Indies: The Search for Self-Government (London: Allen and Unwin, 1960), p. 150.

⁵²Thomas E. Simey, Welfare and Planning in the West Indies (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1946), pp. VI-VIII.

to find out their qualifications. Their arrival usually made the papers and their inauguration made the headlines, but usually the only qualification published was the M.B.E. (Member of the Order of the British Empire) they may have acquired and their having worked in Africa.⁵³

⁵³A detailed account of the quality of men appointed to the Governship during the war years is contained in Kenneth E. Robinson, The Dilemmas of Trusteeship: Aspects of British Colonial Policy Between the Wars (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 46-47.

As of 1957, Governors who made the Caribbean tour and their previous experiences are:

JAMAICA:	Sir Hugh Foot; Palestine, Trans Jordan, Cyrenacia Cyprus, Nigeria. Sir K. Blackburne; Nigeria, Palestine, Gambia.
GUYANA:	Sir Patrick Renison; Ceylon, India, Trinidad and British Honduras.
BARBADOS:	Sir Robert Arundell; Tanganyika, Uganda.
WINDWARDS:	Sir Coleville Deverell; Kenya, Jamaica.
LEEWARDS:	A.T. Williams; Northern Rhodesia - for both the Leewards and Windwards there were white administrators on each island and almost all had served in Africa previously.
BELIZE (British Honduras)	C.H. Thornley; Tanganyika, Kenya and Uganda.
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO:	Sir Edward Betham Beetham; Kenya, Swaziland, Bechuanaland and Windwards.

In summation, it can be said that many incompetent people were placed in critical positions which adversely affected the desired progression of the political system. The Governor's role was to teach a people how to be politically sophisticated by maintaining an air of compromise and strong leadership without dictatorial measures. His role was to develop a complex and structurally differentiated system which could bring a better life for the people. These ideals were never approximated; it became increasingly necessary for the Governor to demand conformity which negated compromise and responsible government. The Governor became a pattern to be emulated in the system by the aspiring politician.

The Colonial Bureaucracy and the Governor

In the first section of this chapter, the idea of introducing the bureaucracy as a way to explain political development/change was criticized, but no attempt was made to portray it as an unimportant variable in the political system. In fact, a country which has experienced the colonial bureaucracy and in the process inherited a certain structure during independence, can be understood a little better through an understanding of what that bureaucratic system entails.

Paradoxically, the colonial bureaucracy was above politics, but yet continually in the midst of politics. The Governor, already portrayed as the king-pin of the political system, was at the apex of the bureaucracy; he made all appointments. Because his judgment was superior, there was no need for close supervision by the British Government. In any case, the top personnel were white and knew how to administer. Although the white bureaucrat was paid twice as much as the local West Indian, the best did not make the Caribbean tour since both Africa and the Far East were more exciting. The Caribbean was kept at the bottom of the ladder and even there, there were levels of better areas;⁵⁴ an Englishman would opt to work in Jamaica over Dominica. But Jennings has offered an explanation for paying the English more: that was to get the best to come.⁵⁵

The main feature of the colonial bureaucracy, whose members will be referred to here as the old hands, was that entrance to it was open. But when the Colonial Office stopped staffing it with their own kind, only certain people made it to the top. It had a class bias

⁵⁴Blanshard, Democracy and Empire, p. 15. Also in Ayearst, The West Indies, pp. 150 ff.

⁵⁵Sir Ivor Jennings, The Approach to Self Government, p. 129.

and its own form of stratification. This sub-system guarded against encroachment from all sides, from politicians, from the people, though encroachment was very unlikely to occur; lines of command were clearly marked internally. It was powerful but not innovative and was ambivalent toward any progressive movement or person. The Crown gave it adequate protection; thus worrying about its legitimacy was not the rule. From the interviews which this writer conducted, the impression was given that the Dominican bureaucracy was always manned by locals. This was not the case, and even those who have since taken over from the British still do not show any noticeable break with the system they once served as junior clerks. They are still the carbon copy of their past seniors and sometimes even more rigid in their actions.

The colonial bureaucracy was intimately connected with the Government which was for all intents and purposes the Governor, the leader of the country. The old hand was not part of nation-building; he was an advisor or something less in this writer's view, but in the bureaucrat's view he was an administrator.⁵⁶

56

G.A. Campbell, The Civil Service in Britain (New York: Penguin Books, 1955), p. 308.

The old hand, steeped in his colonial ways, today is not that efficient. Procedure becomes more important simply because that is how he has known and done it over the years. But there were a series of changes in the colonial situation which did have tremendous effects on the old hand. As Government and Civil Service became separated as a result of the imposition of "advanced" constitutions, an intense battle between the colonial politician and the conservative colonial bureaucrat developed.

With the introduction of the ministerial system where politicians, elected representatives of the people, acquired power from the Governor and from the old hands, the latter began to feel threatened. Some made their departure very quietly, though at times he became a politician. But the old hand was still in command; he was the one teaching the politician the ropes of the new system. He seemed to have done a good job of it. But suddenly something had gone wrong because in many interviews, the sentiment expressed was such that the old days were better, the days when the elected representatives did not have too much power.

It was not the good old days that were being idealized for their own sake but a disappearance of

power was being bemoaned. This writer must sympathize with some civil servants who have had to put up with many incompetent politicians with the coming of the new system. Although the politician was gradually being made the leader of government, the Governor was still the unquestioned head in 1956. The Governor could accept the erosion of power because, as soon as his major powers were removed, he left the territory, and returned home. But the old hand saw the erosion of his powers and could not leave the system, especially if he was not of retirement age. He has commanded respect; knew his job, and was never pushed around. In short, he had grown to appreciate his "well deserved importance," though his salary remained the same and increased even at faster rates. In spite of what he may say, he had to make tremendous adjustments when the clean break was made in 1967, when the Premier of Dominica acquired the powers of the European Governor.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Eighty per cent of top civil servants interviewed by this writer indicated that they had to make little adjustments when this break occurred. On the other side of the coin, about sixty per cent indicated that the politicians were doing their jobs well. Expectedly, about fifteen per cent did not answer that question which tells this writer that they have negative opinions about the competence of politicians. Twenty-five per cent admitted that the politicians were incompetent. This question of competency of politicians could have been more accurately stated - the respondents could have been asked to name competent

The old hand's staying in the bureaucracy may have hampered Dominica's development. He may have prevented dynamic ministers from initiating new programs, since he himself can be very hesitatnt to try new things.⁵⁸ The old hand is used to doing things slowly but now interprets the leader's actions as being forced on him because of votes to be obtained by certain programs.

Independence did bring a change of attitude for the old bureaucrat. The new politics has made him switch roles with the politician; he now answers to the latter. He finds himself subordinate to the very people he once snubbed and ignored at will. But there is one other important feature of the new system he finds hard to accept, although he once practiced it himself in his own way. Politics in Dominica today is the game of rewarding friends and punishing the enemies; in many instances, he himself is the number one enemy. Decisions are crudely made on the basis of how many votes such and

and incompetent politicians-ministers. But the writer knows too well that no answers would have been given. The civil servant is afraid of reprisal if he expresses a negative opinion of the politician.

⁵⁸The same point is made by La Palombara, Bureaucracy and Political Development, p. 18.

such a policy will bring in the next election, though a certain policy may in the long run have adverse effects on the government. Thus, the old hand gives the impression that he is spellbound. He balks at the relative ease with which the common people can approach their elected representative. He sees that as a breakdown of discipline.

This so-called breakdown in discipline is very revealing. It throws some light on the attitude of those bureaucrats toward the masses and the social relations that exist in Dominican society. Under the colonial system, the ultimate head of government was the Governor. Because of the amount of paper shuffling and decisions the Governor had to attend to, the civil servants interpreted the few citizens who dared to go to Government House to lodge a complaint. The civil servant did a good job in screening the "unnecessary" visitors and allowed the few chosen friends to see the Governor, but with the coming of the present government in Dominica (1961), an open invitation was extended to Dominicans to visit government at will. To be sure, many unnecessary complaints will be made, and have been made, but because of the past history of the old hand's turning the people away, the present government has seen fit to pass on that invitation to the people. Taking away this important responsibility from the old hand has

precipitated a major crisis because everywhere, everyone is talking about breakdown in discipline at all levels of society. The old hand sees the removal of this responsibility as yet another way the politician has decided to get votes, but he seems to forget that he was the greatest politician in his heyday when he kept the more "disturbing" elements away from the Governor.

The old civil servant cannot see any good in an open door policy of government. He does not realize that if people are sufficiently moved to visit government that this is a good sign of government's ability to penetrate the society and make the polity feel part of the system. The old hand must see politics in such a move because he is the product of his environment. He is very shortsighted and also small-minded, which is not unusual in any small society where the one who makes it to the top has had to struggle very hard and will do anything to gain respectability and admiration to keep his position which he conceives as very tenuous.

The old bureaucrat in Dominica has been so hurt by being pushed around by local politicians that he deliberately shirks a responsibility and function for which he is the only one qualified to perform by the mere fact that he is more familiar with the governmental machinery than the "new"

politician. He has refused to get warring politicians together because he somehow enjoys the open conflict among some ill-informed and ill-prepared politicians. In addition, he has failed to prepare the system for any meaningful change. He performs his duties callously and very mechanically. For example, the Deputy Premier of Dominica told this writer in an interview that for two years his government has requested a comprehensive plan for the Department of Housing and it was not received up until then. This lack of interest is further precipitated by the fact that the old hand's opinion is seldom requested unless he has shown a sympathy for the government or has shown himself to be decisively apolitical. The politician criticizes him openly, something he was not used to and, whenever the opportunity arises, he is replaced by a new set of people, called here "fresh blood." But these, by all indicators, can be equally bad, if not worse, than their former senior counterparts. The new bureaucrats are now directly under the control of the politician; this fact could lead to better results if used properly but, at the moment, that does not seem to be the case.

The New Bureaucrat

The old bureaucrat owed his legitimacy to the Crown; he could, and did, ignore locally elected representatives. But the new bureaucrat owes his job to the politicians of the day, though the myth is still perpetuated that the civil servant is apolitical. This is the case if apolitical means one cannot be objective, or if one has to side with a party, the ruling party takes precedence. This myth about the apolitical nature of the civil servant is further expressed in the attitude of the leading politicians of Dominica and even among the top civil servants themselves. All of the top civil servants interviewed indicated that the service should be apolitical, but they refused to indicate whether in fact it was.⁵⁹ The fact is that the service was never apolitical. Promotions were almost always based on political juggling and in the process good people who never were able to prove their worth were snuffed off at the bud. Politics went so deep into the service that it entered the awarding of college scholarships. It was not uncommon for a deserving student to be denied a "schol," as it is called, because his family was not known,

⁵⁹They may have been afraid that the author would have tried to find out why it is not apolitical. And it is not apolitical in this writer's opinion, because of no great fault of either the politicians or even the new civil servants.

or hostile to the government, or for an undeserving civil servant to grasp a schol for himself and go on to fail the course (degree).

But the comments made to this writer in interviews concerning the desired apolitical bureaucrat are very interesting and revealing. Just a few will be reproduced here: the Dominican civil servant is "to be like the British Civil Servant," which means he must be just as apolitical in disposition. Another respondent put it this way, "In the first place, no civil servant should align himself with any party - if he had and his party failed to form the government, then he should play it cool." Quite interestingly, some civil servants were willing to concede that it was hard to remain apolitical but were always ready to put the interest of the State before the Party. This in itself is superfluous since they are civil servants precisely because they are expected to put the State's interests first. One suspects that their concession for party affiliation is a means to accommodate their partisan inclinations.

The politicians are overwhelmingly in favor of an apolitical bureaucracy. But one cannot discern clearly what they mean by that. If the present practice is an indication of what apolitical means, this writer will have to conclude that apolitical has a special meaning in Dominica because clearly the top civil servants are not

allowed to make any decisions which will not benefit the ruling party. Perhaps that is the way it was meant to be, but the politicians do not seem to realize that a short term hurt may well turn out to be a long term gain. In support of this argument this writer can document several decisions which would have had bad short term effects but long term benefits to the government. As was anticipated, these policies went by the wayside along with the experts who had initially recommended them.

The positive aspect of the new bureaucrat is the fact that he can be molded but cannot be removed at will by a new government. One individual may be transferred from one department to the next, but he may still remain as a thorn. Besides, there are just so many departments in a small country like Dominica. With every change of Government, a top man cannot be asked to resign because the treasury can support only so many pensioners, while gainful employment is not easy to find. In days gone by, the so-removed bureaucrat could pack up and head for the mother country to begin a new life.

When all is said and done, the new bureaucracy in all the former small colonies disproves the Riggs' hypothesis that the bureaucracy can be a key variable in political development. The new bureaucracy has shown itself able to adapt very easily to its environment, and become a

football. To put the pieces of the colonial condition together, one will have to review the type of politician produced and his view of the whole colonial system.

The Politician
Immediately Before and After Independence

Colonialism had installed a Governor as a virtual dictator; he could veto any legislation. The bureaucrat accepted this fact blindly since he was effectively co-opted into the system. But the politician remained a most "horrible" element who was always irresponsible in the eyes of the British. The politician had been refused a say in the running of his country, even when he was an elected representative. He often saw himself as the savior of the masses as opposed to the Governor and bureaucracy, whom he often criticized as the greatest enemy of the people. But because of his inability to make policy to benefit members of his constituency, he read that as a carte blanche to make the wildest of promises during election time. When elected and quite expectedly did not make good his promises, he was not honest enough to show the impracticality of his promises. Instead, he lashed out at the system for not allowing him to implement his programs. The sad part of it was the fact that the very people, the masses, whom both politicians and British

tried to protect, suffered at the end. The British were not tactful enough to pull the rug from under the demagogues by putting into effect more adequate programs. Instead they were out to teach these "irresponsible" politicians a lesson by bringing change when they thought it was right. What they failed to realize is that no matter how long they waited to bring these changes, the politician would always accept and receive the credit for the changes. And when he accepts the credit, he expects the people to receive him as their Messiah.

In his drive to get changes, the politician was able to appeal to most mischievous passions of the people who rarely knew why they were so emotionally moved to partake in the satisfaction of one man's ego.

On the achievement of independence, the leader has to find a scapegoat to vent his frustrations. Before it was the British, but now it becomes anyone who happens to have a different idea of how the country should be run. The legal situation of the State changes but the leader with his cohorts remain the same. Eric Williams of Trinidad is an excellent example of the mind produced by British colonialism. He feels very happy about every detailed gain he has made over the British. He is always revengeful and bitter. He can write that all British historians spoke ill of the West Indies (very much untrue)

but can refuse Stokely Carmichael entrance to Trinidad because he was preaching a radical form of black pride, the very idea Williams himself wrote about as early as 1939.⁶⁰ The colonial politician carries with him to independence a hatred he once reserved for the British, but now his disposition demands he passes it on to his own people and the bureaucrats.

The politician usually presents a political party as a front to hide his own authoritarian personality. He speaks of all kinds of reform, but refuses to allow all others to partake in this enterprise since he, like his masters before him, has a monopoly on expert knowledge of reform. Thus, one sees a system which has a leader who jealously guards his position against all encroachments. The "new" politician may strike a responsive chord by echoing the need to build roads, but by and large, placing of roads might be restricted to areas where the politician has garnered many votes and other rewards. The colonial politician becomes, after independence, aggressive, vindictive, and of course afraid.

⁶⁰Eric Williams, Capitalism and Slavery (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1939), passim.

Conclusion

It has been argued in these pages that the colonial situation is something special. It is not a mere appendage of the mother country. Further, it was stated that the present pattern of politics in the British Caribbean is a reflection of the "training" received during colonial rule. But the colonial situation, on the surface, looked harmonious, though realistically it was riddled with contradictions. For one thing, the Governor owed his legitimacy to an outside power, the Queen. But increasingly, the local politician was getting the people to back him during his frequent attacks on the political system. The politician saw himself as getting his power from the people. For this reason, he felt he should enjoy more power than the Governor, who was an outsider. This rivalry did not lead to many open confrontations because the politician knew quite well that the Governor was stronger than him because he was white. Secondly, the politician had seen the British use force to quell disturbances elsewhere. Under these circumstances, the politician waited for his chance to assert himself when the British left.

When colonialism ended, the politicians were quick to institutionalize the machinery which could give them back both legitimacy and respect. They created the army and with British help, built more police stations. Law

constitutions, outlining people's rights and duties, were also introduced. The politicians were only copying what the British had done before them. The strictures indicated that the wielders of power were anticipating the same confrontations which did not quite materialize during the colonial period. The politicians were correct in anticipating trouble. But in their desire and drive to be like the British, they forgot that time was against them, and that all groups in the political system were just waiting patiently for the superior power, the British, to leave in order to assert themselves. Thus, the confrontations in these former colonies have become more frequent and more serious. The results are described in the rest of this study.

CHAPTER IV

THE PARTY IN THE POLITICAL SYSTEM IN DOMINICA

Introduction

The two previous chapters dealt specifically with the effects of colonialism on the Dominican political system. It was concluded that both the colonial constitution and other aspects of colonialism did influence and sometimes determined the shape of the component parts of the Dominican political system. Thus this analysis was deemed necessary to set the stage to review the actions of the present actors of the system. The political party is presently considered, while a later chapter is devoted to other actors of the system.

The purpose of this chapter is to identify the functions of the Dominican political parties. It is taken as a given that there is a structure called party. The structure acts and is acted upon in an environment. This writer is aware of the hazards of trying to identify the functions of any single structure vis-a-vis several structures in any given system. Thus measuring the functions of the party alongside other groups and individuals in those non-developed countries where, according to Gabriel Almond and Bingham Powell, structures are not

sufficiently differentiated and individuals take on multiple roles,¹ can be problematic. The party may effect changes on many objects. Indeed, in the "non-Western" world, the role of the party is often blurred and will be that way for a long time to come. Let us now review a few definitions of the structure called party to extrapolate a working definition for this study.

Defining the Party

The experts do not agree as to what constitutes a political party, when they are dealing with the non-advanced world. The tendency has been to use the structures which exist in the "advanced" world as a yardstick to measure those in the "less" developed world. The following definitions, though they were not devised expressly for the developing world, are sometimes used when dealing with it. Andrew Milnor writes that the party is the sine qua non of liberal democracy; it is an organization of people with a mission to provide alternative programs. Thus it exists to seek power.² The exact number of people in this

¹Gabriel Almond and Bingham Powell, Comparative Politics: A Developmental Approach (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1966), p. 29.

²Andrew J. Milnor, ed., Comparative Political Parties (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1969), p. 1.

organization does not seem to be important; it does not have to be open to all. The fact that it exhibits the tendency to have its own place and wants power makes it a party. Milnor's definition is sufficiently broad to include all groups regardless of their chances of winning at the polls.

Joseph La Palombara defines a party as a continuous living organization which is always prepared to assume power.³ It is an open body with dispensable individuals and permanent local units and it must be constantly organizing. Its leaders must make a conscious effort to seek national power to wield power with the backing of the people. This definition is extremely tight and rigid. The Dominican parties under review would disqualify under it. They both depend heavily on their leaders. Local cadres are virtually non-existent, and are certainly not autonomous, as La Palombara's definition demands. Finally, the dynamism which was so often attributed to African political parties during the early 1960's is nowhere to be found in Dominican parties since they crumble as soon as elections are over; the winning party becomes the government, while the defeated one loses its touch, its elites get disenchanted and resign.

³ Joseph LaPalombara and M. Weiner eds., Political Parties and Political Development (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), p. 6.

The losing party is usually taken over by a new set of elites who proceed to change its name. If that does not happen, they become dormant to be resurrected once, annually, at what they call a convention, where lavish praise is given to the leaders.

Joseph LaPalombara's definition is not useful for this study, although ironically, though not surprising, he was writing on the developing areas when he used that definition. Of course, LaPalombara is not alone in devising unrealistic definitions to be applied to developing areas. Samuel Eldersveld's definition that the party is an open organization with autonomous wards,⁴ is even more rigid. It is cited here only to demonstrate that at times parties in the non-advanced world can approximate in many ways the roles attributed to parties found in the advanced world.

Roberto Michels sees the party as a clique dominating the masses but this clique will prostitute itself to garner support to continue its domination.⁵ Both Eldersveld and Michels emphasize the open party to a certain extent, and this openness can be found in the non-developed areas, including Dominica, but it is the nature of this openness which needs closer assessment. It is one thing to encourage

⁴ Samuel J. Eldersveld, Political Parties: A Behavioral Analysis (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1964), p. 3.

⁵ Roberto Michels, "Organization and Discipline," Comparative Politics, ed. by Roy C. Macridis and Bernard Brown (Homewood, Ill.: The Dorsey Press, Inc., 1961) p. 233.

mass participation, but it is another thing to have the same people devise and carry out policies. One quickly realizes that mass participation is not necessarily the best way to satisfy the needs of the people. At the same time, elites should not be blamed for a lack of mass participation. In all fairness to the elites, it must be said that generally the people do not know how to participate; consequently they give up and allow things to be done for them.

This study could go further with definitions of party and the implications for the non-developed world, but that is not necessary. The only crucial point now is to state clearly a workable definition for the chapter. For this reason the writer has chosen the Epstein definition stated succinctly: "a party is any group, however loosely organized, seeking to elect people in government under a given label."⁶ The definition is sufficiently broad to include all the groups in Dominica which have paraded under the banner of party. This researcher's job is made easier because he does not have to be too concerned with the "imposters," since they have usually been unmasked very quickly. And quite frankly, if a more rigid definition were adopted, what exist in Dominica would not pass as parties.

⁶Leon D. Epstein, Political Parties in Western Democracies (New York: Frederick Praeger, 1967), p. 3.

The important thing about the group is that it seeks to win elections regardless of its chances at the polls. The label is even unimportant as both party members and supporters show little understanding of it. But before we discuss Dominican parties, let us discuss party systems and functions.

Party Systems

The number of parties found in separate political systems have often been neatly labelled under different categories, with little knowledge of their strengths and attitudes. This has been done to make for easy analysis of parties in environments with which they are constantly interacting.

What is a party system? Maurice Duverger defines it as the number of parties found in the political system.⁷ In undertaking a count, Duverger cautions against carelessness since parties come and go very rapidly. But this writer does not have to exercise this caution since he accepts any group which seeks to win elections as a party.

Duverger divides the party system into three major categories, and under each he has sub-categories. The first is the two-party system which does not preclude the existence of minor parties. In that system, there are two major

⁷Maurice Duverger, Political Parties: Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1963), p. 282.

parties of almost equal strength. Then he categorizes the multiple party system as the system with three or more major parties of equal strength, and finally, the single party system where one major organization exists, but not necessarily excluding minor parties.

Joseph LaPalombara⁸ writes that competition is the key to party systems and more so in the non-developed world. The important thing to be considered in dealing with these structures is whether competition is open to all. His typology reverts around the acquisition of power and how it is preserved. He detects two major systems; one Hegemonic, where a party or its philosophy dominates over an extended period, and two, the turnover system, where as is implied, governments change hands very often. The amount of time required to consider a system Hegemonic does not seem to be too important and yet it is not arbitrary.

LaPalombara has come up with four heuristic models. There is the ideological-pragmatic model where a party is interested in staying in power first, so it will yield to some interests to achieve that end. Second, the Hegemonic-ideological system, in which the party has kept its ideological purity and wins elections or has had its philosophy perpetuated even in defeat. Third, the Hegemonic-pragmatic where the party has won elections because it has been

⁸ Joseph LaPalombara and M. Weiner, eds., Political Parties, p. 33.

sensitive to both changing times and people. Finally there is the turnover-pragmatic system. Party competition is intense as the people respond to the parties on the basis of past performance. Using LaPalombara's model as a guide, the Dominican political party system would fall under the Hegemonic-pragmatic continuum, as the Dominican Labour Party has dominated the system since 1957 and officially since 1961. If it were to be defeated at the polls, and this is very unlikely, its programs would be continued by the opposition.

In dealing with the so-called one party states, LaPalombara specifies three varieties.⁹ First, there is the authoritarian type which is non-totalitarian, monolithic, and ideologically unclear. This is so as invariably the chain of command in the party is unclear as one man directs the operation. The leader almost never states clearly the policy to be pursued. Almost everything is improvised, which has disastrous results, as subordinate leaders are often reluctant to take the initiative lest they make a mistake and earn the scorn of their superior. In this system, opposition is not tolerated; it is seen as a conspiracy to detract the people. The major setback in that system is that the party, because of a lack of coordination of policies, proves itself unable to carry on nation-building.

⁹Ibid., pp. 34-40.

Second, there is the one party pluralistic type where competition is allowed and somehow the best leaders do emerge to conduct the nation's affairs. Third, the totalitarian party type which becomes the state. But the African countries which have dabbled with socialism put it differently, and Dominica may one day put it that same way. They argue that with independence there is only one interest, and since parties emerge to protect interests, there is no need for more than one party.¹⁰ Of course, the other side of the coin is that there is also a need for one leader who has a monopoly on solutions to the nation's problems.

The one party totalitarian type has a very rigid ideological bent which gets the nation built, but at tremendous cost, especially when the nation in question is simply underdeveloped and not undeveloped. The party usually ends up squeezing water out of stones, which precipitates frequent national crises.

Party Functions

The political party plays a function in the system, although it is problematic to discern what these functions are. It works not in a vacuum, but with other actors. This gives it a status in relation to these actors, which presumably gives rights and duties to it.

¹⁰ Quoted in Rupert Emerson, Political Modernization: The Single Party System (Denver: University of Denver Press, 1963), p. 24.

The party has been seen as a modernizer, which means that it is charged with bringing the traditional to the modern age with its structural complexities. But Epstein disagrees stating that it is not an agent of change.¹¹ Others see it as a mediator of social conflict since it establishes allegiances cutting across social divisions.¹² The party, as it were, establishes a link between the people and the institutions of government which makes it mandatory, writes Milnor, for the party to include as many people as possible in its ranks and to make the issues clear to the people.¹⁴ Quite obviously a party does not have to include the people in its fold to make them relate to institutions. The people can even relate and respect existing institutions without understanding anything about government.

The party, it is said, articulates and aggregates the wishes of the people. As a go-between, the people let the party know what they want and the party in turn lets the government know the people's wishes. But what about situations, like the Dominican one, where the parties disintegrate after elections.

The party is supposed to socialize people into accepting the political system. In the process, it has the

¹¹ Leon Epstein, Political Parties, p. 9.

¹² A. Lifphart, The Politics of Accommodation: Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), Chapter 1.

role of recruiting the potentially best to rule. Thus, the party is expected to take an active part in the educational process to create better citizens for a stronger nation. Obviously, the party in every system does not perform all these functions; they may not even perform well the few they attempt. But because they have tremendous responsibilities, people often forget that the party is an artifact and, like everything man has made, has its shortcomings and failures.

Of course these warnings are even more conspicuous in Dominica where the parties have "a limited life span" and are limited in scope and imagination. Other agencies and individuals have continued to perform the role of the parties perhaps because they were hurriedly started in Dominica to support a democratic system - which has not enhanced their position. It has required the presence of the "strong man" to keep parties from bursting apart since the delaying tactics of democratic party politics continually threaten an erstwhile dictatorial system.

Worrying over the functions of parties has not reached Dominica yet as more pressing problems such as Black Power and full political and economic independence attract more than their share of attention. But there is one problem related to parties which continues to cause alarm in countries like Dominica; that is, how to achieve unity without having to use dictatorial measures to maintain it.

Lack of unity may lead to sterility and may cause considerable turnover in government as slim majorities are overturned by the defection of one or two members of a ruling party. The leaders of Dominica do not seem to realize that a certain amount of internal disunity is healthy. This may make the party more responsive to whatever element which causes this disunity. If unanimity always prevails, it may drive the party into complacency or into demise.

Electoral Politics in Dominica

The "No-Party" Era

Before discussing the era of organized party politics in Dominica, it is important to review the Dominican people's involvement in politics. The people had the franchise since 1951 (discussed in Chapter II). And judging from the results of the election returns between 1951 and 1957, when parties were formed, one sees a degree of sophistication in voting behavior which approximates any developed country. The Dominican voted for the individual who made good his promises. The figure below illustrates the voting pattern between 1951 and 1957.

There is no question that the people did very well when they exercised their British given right to vote for the people of their choice; only 1309 ballots were rejected. They had no previous training in the art of voting and there are reasons to believe that the Dominican elites never even

Figure IV Number of Votes for Selected District Candidates in Given Elections.

District	Candidates	1951		1954		1957	
		Number of Votes	Per cent	Number of Votes	Per cent	Number of Votes	Per cent
Roseau-North	Jules Winston	358	32.0	145	15.5	109	11.0
	Boyd	717	64.0	751	80.6	217	21.8
	Ducreey					651	65.3
Roseau-South	Baron			553	48.3	697	60.0
	Charles, L.					271	23.3
	Dupigney	287	19.3	125	11.3	154	13.2
	James	226	15.1	395	35.8		
Eastern	Royer	125	8.4				
	Harris	688	46.2				
Western	Alfred	596	28.0	159	7.1		
	Didier	542	25.5	919	41.2	1165	52.2
	Laville, F.			852	38.2	985	44.2
Southern	Henry	847	29.2	1352	48.0	912	31.4
	Charles, J.					605	20.8
	Alfrey	1242	42.8	197	7.0	562	19.4
Northern	Fontaine	602	22.1	1618	62.4	1139	43.2
	St. Luce	959	35.3	912	35.2	645	24.5
Northern	Pemberton						
	Laville, L.	778	39.8	1470	85.4	1628	58.5
	Telemaque	591	30.3			469	26.6

Figure IV Continued

Number of Votes for Selected District Candidates in Given Elections

District	Candidates	1951		1954		1957	
		Number of Votes	Per cent	Number of Votes	Per cent	Number of Votes	Per cent
Portsmouth	Douglas	1607	55.0	1917	67.4	1250	43.6
	Bertrand	321	11.0	753	26.5		
	LeBlanc					1347	46.9
Northwestern	Prosper	867	35.4	638	25.5	766	31.6
	Shillingford	1512	61.7	1383	55.3	1053	43.4
Total of Eligible Voters			23,288		23,835		23,348
Number of Votes Cast			17,680		16,746		17,634
Void			1,309		977		1,013
Percentage Voting			75.9		70.3		75.5

Source: Dominica, Report on the Legislative Council General Election, 1951, 1954 and 1957 (Castries, St. Lucia: The Voice Press)

bothered to explain it to them. Secondly, the chart shows that by 1954 apathy takes hold of the people, as only 70% bothered to vote. The people had been disappointed with the performance of those they chose in the previous election and those who bothered to vote told them about it, too.

By 1957 voting percentage went up although there was an actual drop in voters from 23,835 (1954) to 23,348 (1957). The reason for this drop is not clear. It might be that the trek to England was responsible because it was during the mid-1950's that the largest number of Dominicans emmigrated to Britain in search of a better life. Be that as it may, enthusiasm, reflected in the turnout at the polls, was due to a number of reasons. The idea of West Indian unity was in the air and all the talk was to get Dominicans involved in sending a solid team to negotiate with Britain to get a Federation from which Dominica could benefit. Secondly, a group of young individuals were able to foster this enthusiasm by making better promises to the electorate. More importantly, the people were fielding for the first time their own candidate or candidates who looked like them. The 1957 elections marked the beginning of the Dominican Labour Party which was largely made up of the masses of the trade union movement. This last fact was enough to get spirits to run high.

Let us discuss the people's response to specific candidates. In Roseau North the chart shows that candidate

Winston, a prominent estate owner, handily defeated his opponent in 1951 but lost out in 1954; the reason is simple. He was one of those nogocion roseau (big shots) who felt he could win elections by simply presenting himself to the electorate. He won in 1951 because it was believed that he could use his influence to provide more jobs for the unemployed. He did not live up to expectations and was defeated by Boyd in 1954, not because the latter had better plans for the people, but because the former had failed the people. Boyd suffered the same fate as Winston in 1957 because he was too crude and rude, getting into frequent slanderous fights for which he was once convicted. His attacking the Church in a predominantly Catholic country proved a fatal mistake.

In Roseau South, the winner is not the one to be assessed but the loser. When adult suffrage came in 1951, James was the editor of the newspaper which constantly criticized the British for allowing adult suffrage at that particular time. For his arrogance he was repaid by a sound defeat by Harris.

In the Eastern district, from the start, the people were not too impressed with any of their candidates until 1957. In 1951, they allowed the winner only 28 percent of the votes and went on to turn him out of office in the following election. Then another candidate, Didier, continued to dominate the scene because he was close to

the people, having lived with them as a headmaster for some fifteen years.

The story in the Western district is similar to the Roseau North district. No one candidate won twice in a row. Jeffers was favored over Charles because he was more trustworthy. Charles had shown himself to be very stingy and hard with the masses, hoarding his wealth to make around the world tours while people remained unemployed in the island. But by 1954, the people gave him the chance to mend his ways. He did not and suffered a defeat. And of course, his meddling with the Church did not help his cause either.

In both the Southern and Northern districts, the candidates had a perfect record. They were re-elected every time they presented themselves at the polls. St. Luce, a carpenter in the South, was always close to the people in contrast to his opponent, Pemberton, the owner of large estates. Although Pemberton had such a great fortune, by Dominican standards, he did not put it to good use to benefit the people. Thus, he was never given a chance.

In the Northern district, Laville had provided work on his plantation to those who needed the jobs, but his big jump from 39.8 percent of the votes in 1951 to 85.4 percent in 1954 must not be interpreted as a greater vote of confidence. This last figure was inflated because only

one rival candidate contested the election in 1954; the same was the case in 1957, although by then his margin was considerably lower. It is also significant that a certain Armour ran in 1951 and got only 200 votes (10.3%). The people were not to be fooled; he never ran in another election. He was one of those foreigners who had acquired large estates in the district in which he was running. He had always tried hard to displace the "squatters" from his property and because of this lack of empathy for the people, he did not stand a chance of winning an election.

There are many interesting things about the Portsmouth district; it was dominated by R.B. Douglas and his cronies. Douglas had Portsmouth wrapped up because he had his roots in every facet of its life. He was the manager of the biggest industry (bananas) in the district. He also had the biggest business at sea, where he controlled a steamboat line, which plied between Portsmouth and Roseau, the only means of connection between those two towns during that time. It had to take a man like Edward Oliver LeBlanc to unseat Douglas, and it was by a very slight margin as the figures show; Ironically, the very theme which had precipitated the downfall of two previous candidates in other districts was the one to unseat Douglas. LeBlanc carried a campaign which emphasized the dictatorial measures of Douglas, such as putting cronies in key positions in the Portsmouth district, and the role of the Roman Catholic

Church as the blood sucker of the people. In 1957 the people from Portsmouth were responsive and sent LeBlanc to the legislature over their long time favorite, R.B. Douglas. It is true that the attack on the Church may not have helped to unseat Douglas, but the people were intelligent enough to see that Douglas was not doing enough for them.

Finally, one sees in the Northwest district that Shillingford was returned consistently. Shillingford, an estate owner, was a staunch supporter of the Church and provided employment for the many people in his district. Everyone in his district had some kind of connection with him. He was a friend to his people.

With little help, the Dominican voter has rewarded his friends and punished his enemies. He did return to office the individuals he perceived to have performed well. The others he turned away. The same pattern seems to be repeating itself in the era of party politics in Dominica.

The Organized Party Era

Accepting Epstein's definition of the political party, there are two in Dominica. One, the Dominica Labour Party, has retained power from 1960 to the present. The other, known as the Dominica United People's Party has regrouped only during election time. The latter is very competitive, but has been unable to make a meaningful dent in the lead of the Dominican Labour Party. Before discussing

the roles of these parties in the political system, a brief history of each is in order.

The Dominica Labour Party. The Dominica Labour Party was an externally¹³ created party. In 1955, Mrs. Phyllis Shand Allfrey formed it while in England. At the inaugural meeting, Arnold Active, then in England, was elected secretary (now nominated member of the House). Mrs. Allfrey was president, with her husband Robert, treasurer. The party was heavily influenced by the British Labour Party with its brand of Fabian socialism. When one takes a look at the first constitution of the party, it is almost an identical replica of the British Labour Party Constitution with its desire to support the laborer. It was because of its socialistic stance which many members and leaders did not understand that the party was always in a running battle with the Roman Catholic Church over the ownership of property.

By 1957, the party had convinced the workers, the poor elements, that this was their party in spite of or because of the fact that its president was white, an emblem of British colonialism. Thus, by 1958, the party got almost all Dominicans, especially the lower class elements, keyed

¹³The idea of an externally created party is contained in Joseph LaPalombara and Myron Weiner, Political Parties, pp. 10-12. An externally created party is one which comes about to challenge a group or party in a system. An internally created party is one formed after elected representatives have taken office and decide to form a party.

up on the word of "labour." The party would get labor--work--for the people, was the theme of the time. The results of the 1958 federal elections are shown in the figure below.

Figure 4. Election Returns in Federal Elections 1958

VOTES CAST FOR:	PARTY	TOTAL
Allfrey, Phyllis	Labor	9,345
Bellot, A.	Labor	1,836
LeBlanc, E.O.	Labor	8,968
Lestrade	Independent	1,101
Lockhart	Opposition	1,492
Royer	Opposition--DUUP	975

Source: Dominica, Report on the Federal Elections, 1958 (Castries, Voice Press, 1958), p. 5.

It will be noticed that Allfrey came out on top this time, although she was defeated in the Western constituency in 1957. It is also significant to note that only 57.6% of the registered voters bothered to go to the polls. This would lead one to believe that although the masses were not sufficiently moved to go out to vote, the upper class candidates were unable to carry the election. The election marked the coming to power of the party. By then Christopher Loblack, a trade union man, together with other subordinates had effectively sealed the working man to the party. He made the party a mass party. Between 1957 and 1964, Loblack was behind the party helping its leaders to make it big. He used to open all public meetings of the

party by singing "We Shall Overcome" and closing them with a heated indictment of the power structure. Loblack, more than anyone else, was responsible for the penetration, communication, and integration which the party had achieved by 1966.

The elections of 1961 effectively destroyed the other party, as the Labour Party asserted itself under the able leadership of Edward Oliver LeBlanc. He has since led the party to victory in every election the party has participated in, save one: the Roseau municipal elections of 1971. While the 1961 election marked the entrenchment of the party, by 1967 it began to lose power.

Between 1961 and 1966, the party continued to stretch its lead over the opponent as it opened up the bureaucracy to the people and delivered goods and services to them. In the meantime, a power struggle developed between LeBlanc and Allfrey over the party's leadership. Allfrey lost out and was expelled because she had not established herself well enough with the sub-elites of the party. She overestimated her influence and openly challenged LeBlanc for the leadership. For that, she was dismissed from the Party. Subsequently Loblack was expelled. The exact reason for this action has not been made clear, but it can be assumed that Loblack's lack of tact may have been responsible for his dismissal.

Loblack has shown himself to be man who likes to

"expose" everything. It is only ironical, though certainly not surprising, that Loblack, although a loyal party member, would be expelled because he frequently took independent positions which went against the party norm. The norm reads "A member shall not make any public statement orally or in writing which tends to discredit the Party."¹⁴

Loblack is like any average Dominican politician; he is not tactful enough. He was never schooled in the art of circumlocution and will say anything without first reflecting on it. Dominican politicians do not understand that disagreement can sometimes be shown by remaining silent. The average Caribbean politician is too crude; C.L. Robinson James' description of him is surely applicable to those in Dominica: "West Indian politicians only help those who praise them and can be savage and vicious as snakes to those who are not helping them win the next election."¹⁵

The Labour Party has served the people, and it was repaid with a landslide victory in 1966 with a margin of 10-1. The turn of events since 1967 has had disastrous consequences for the party and the people. The party began to be infiltrated with elements of the upper class who now realized that this party was there to stay. Unfortunately, this last assertion cannot be supported with figures since

¹⁴ Dominica Labour Party, Constitution and Rules (Roseau: Bulletin Office, 1963), p. 31.

¹⁵ C.L.R. James, Party Politics in the West Indies (Port-of-Spain: People's National Movement Press, 1960), p. 85.

the parties hardly keep a count on their membership; and besides, the upper class elements do not have to be registered members to reap the benefits of the party. They benefit through tax incentives on their businesses. These take the form of pioneer status for new industries, which means that a company is not required to pay taxes over a period of time, sometimes as long as five years.

In addition to the businessmen, the character of the party was changed as more lawyers and doctors became part of it; one observer has termed this transformation as the "enbourgeoisification" of the party. The same people who indicted Dominicans for not working hard enough suddenly took control of the people's party. Some ten years ago, these elements would not be seen in the company of laborers like Loblack, who has since been referred to as "LowBlack." At that point, the party preached socialism, although no meaningful move was made in this direction; but just the talk of it was sufficient to drive the elites away to preserve their property.

The last major upheaval which the Party had to handle successfully if it was to stay alive was the crisis of 1970. At that time, three Ministers were dismissed because it was alleged that they conspired to overthrow the leader, Edward LeBlanc. This caused the party to split in two to contest the 1970 elections. One faction was led by LeBlanc and the other Nicholson Cucreay. Thus

the 1970 election was a three way contest with the Freedom Party as the third challenger. LeBlanc was up to the occasion and beat his opponents, winning no less than eight seats.

The Opposition Party of Dominica. The opposition party has changed its name so frequently that it defies more precise identification. The succeeding body always tries to disassociate itself from the past body whenever it suits its purpose to show that it has a new image. But on other occasions, it will show that the new is only a continuation of the old.¹⁶

Adult suffrage did not bring with it political parties, but the "advanced" constitution of 1959 required that disciplined parties in the legislature be in operation to complete the political system.

As the constitution said, a Chief Minister had to be appointed; that is, a minister who seemed to command the respect of a majority of the legislature. Originally the governor relied on his own judgment to pick a leader but the members of the legislature realized that the best way to lend legitimacy to that leader was to create a group

¹⁶This writer raised that issue with a prominent member of the Freedom Party. The member said that the link of the Freedom Party with past opposition parties of Dominica was a conspiracy to detract from the originality of the party. But the leading theorist of the Freedom Party wrote in the Star on October 10, 1970, that his party could be considered a direct continuation of the dead Dominica United People's Party.

of which he can become head, thus making the Government's job easier.

As a result, an "internally"¹⁷ created party, the Dominica United People's Party (DUPP), emerged which formed the first government under the 1959 constitution. But this coalition of individuals was very tenuous since it was made up of elites who had either been expelled from the Labour Party (Didier, 1957) or those who joined the coalition to get a prominent place in the prospective government. While the leader of the DUPP was already designated as the first head of government, it had no roots and had no island-wide support as a party. Its base of support was the major city, while those elected in the rural areas won on their own (Shillingford, Didier, Pemberton, Laville). The breaking up of the party was in the making from the start; a new election was forced in 1960 when four members of the party resigned from the Government (Didier and Laville). In that election, the heaviest blow was struck when that party's leader was defeated. This signalled the end of the DUPP. The island was left without any meaningful opposition during 1961-1966 though this party tried a comeback in the elections of 1966. But Labour's lead was too much.

¹⁷ See footnote no. 13, p. 172.

Between 1966 and 1968 there was only one party in Dominica, the Labour Party, which continued to enjoy the confidence of the rural elites while the urban lot tried to be vindictive through the newspapers. This caused the Government to overreact and give the bourgeois element a reason to regroup to save their interests. But increasingly, both the Labour and Opposition parties were showing similar interests in maintaining the status quo.

In any case, the government's attempt to silence its critics through muzzling the press created an interest group, the Freedom Fighters, composed predominantly of the urban elite, including the hierarchy of the religious bodies in the island. The group was relatively successful in getting the government to rescind the harsh and repressive piece of legislation.¹⁸ Subsequently, many fighters left the group since their job was done. But one faction had a taste of power and went on to organize a party.

The Freedom Party. This organization has tried to involve itself in the problems of Dominica by organizing every community into units of the party. At present membership (paying) stands at about two thousand out of a possible twenty-six thousand eligible voters (1970). The party suffers from lack of unity. As one prominent editor has

¹⁸1968 Seditious Act was withdrawn by Government on the instigation of the Freedom Fighters.

put it, he is afraid of the competence of the Freedom Party; there are too many leaders and not enough followers. Besides, the party has been unable to convince the rural elements that it is not a party of the urban elite. It is dominated by the very elements of the more conservative Dominica United People's Party. By 1972, after four years of existence, it has shown signs of deterioration. Key members have since left the party, after they were stymied by another Labour Party landslide in the election of 1970. The figure reproduced below shows the success of the Labour Party in the past three general elections.

The figure shows the number of votes the Dominica Labour Party received relative to the strongest rival in the elections of 1961, 1966 and 1970.

After the 1961 elections, the Labour Party secured eight seats and formed the Government. The people of Dominica must have been satisfied with its performance between 1961 and 1966, because they returned the party to office in 1966, and gave it an additional two seats. In the process, the Dominica United People's Party was destroyed. Dominica was without an organized opposition party between 1966 and 1968.

The 1970 election was contested under strange conditions. Two weeks before the election, the Labour Party

Figure VI Election Returns in Dominica: the Labor Party in relation to its Opponent¹⁹ between 1961 and 1970

Party	1961		1966		1970	
	Number of Votes	Per Cent	Number of Votes	Per Cent	Number of Votes	Per Cent
1. Labor	807	60.5	1067	60.0	1256	57.8
Opponent	321	24.0	461	26.0	755	34.7
2. Labor	912	39.0	1374	53.3	1417	48.5
Opponent	843	36.1	1075	41.7	1254	43.0
3. Labor	743	34.5	1199	49.5	924	35.0
Opponent	872	40.4	1036	42.8	923	35.0
4. Labor	179	13.3	969	66.8	977	63.6
Opponent	564	42.7	418	28.8	353	23.0
5. Labor	492	30.9	728	44.3	528	29.0
Opponent	512	32.1	918	55.9	1144	62.8
6. Labor	329	24.9	705	55.0	729	52.7
Opponent	485	36.6	542	42.3	539	39.1
7. Labor	1149	64.2	1397	72.3	615	28.2
Opponent	453	25.3	425	22.3	758	34.8
8. Labor	941	77.8	976	75.8	851	62.4
Opponent	214	17.7	248	19.9	472	34.6
9. Labor	707	56.9	1193	84.5	942	65.0
Opponent	422	34.0	153	10.8	267	18.4
10. Labor	759	51.0	1190	76.5	1030	65.8
Opponent	588	39.1	86	5.5	423	27.2
11. Labor	830	47.0	937	45.8	607	29.1
Opponent	636	36.0	693	33.9	1214	58.1

¹⁹Source: Dominica, Report on the Legislative Council General Election, 1961, 1966, 1970 (Dominica: The Government Printery). In 1961 and 1966 the Opposition Party was the Dominica United People's Party, and in 1970 it was the Freedom Party.

suffered a split.²⁰ Three of the Party's elected representatives were dismissed. They were accused by the Party of planning to overthrow the Party's leader. The three dismissed individuals formed a party to contest the elections, while the leader of the Labour Party chose his own candidates, and went on to win the elections. The split in the Labour Party resulted in its losing two seats in the Assembly to the Opposition.

But apparently the leader of the Labour Party was able to show the majority of Dominicans that his faction of the Party was the one responsible for the "better times" they were now enjoying. Be that as it may, the issue at hand is not to determine what Dominicans have been led to believe. That is important; but the issue is to decipher to what extent the promised policies of the Labour Party have been realized. This is done with a view to assessing the impact of these policies in the state building process.²¹

²⁰This split centered around an alleged conspiracy by three top officials to unseat the Leader of the Party. But on further investigation this writer was able to find out that the split was concerned more with disagreements on land policy. One faction of the Party opposed selling land to aliens; while the other was in favor of it.

²¹State-building refers to the structural difficulties of establishing control over an area and devising policies to develop a bureaucracy, judiciary and party system. Nation-building is making a people feel a part of some entity they call their own. Nation-building seems to be getting harder than state-building.

The conversion process. In Chapter I, it was stated that the systems theory would be utilized to investigate the Dominican political system. This approach seems comprehensive and can be made dynamic. Its essence seems to hinge on what is termed the conversion process, which means how inputs are translated into outputs. The programs of the Government of Dominica are seen as inputs. And the effects (success or failure) of these inputs are seen as outputs. In short, the role of the party, translated into such things as interest articulation, interest aggregation, rule making, rule application, rule adjudication and communication is reviewed here.

Even though it has been argued elsewhere that the party in Dominica loses its mass character once the election is over, what remains of it seems to perform all or most of the above functions. But it must be made clear that most of what follows applies only to the Labour Party. In addition, it must be stated that the distinction between the Party and the Government is often blurred. The two are referred to interchangeably in discussing the conversion process.

The Labour Party and the conversion process. The Dominica Labour Party has not tried to impose unity in Dominica in the form of creating one political party. But it has pledged to create "social justice for every citizen

regardless of race or status, whether poor or prosperous."²² Apparently the party was aware from the start that this assertion could be meaningless unless it was translated into reality. To achieve this, the party began a number of projects.

Social Development. In the area of social development, the party has sought to improve the water supply. The United Nations has been approached to provide technical advice. The party also pledged to create more community centers, equipped with libraries to improve the reading habits of the people. There were plans to have island-wide electricity and telephone services to improve the communication system. The party had plans to initiate a housing loan program and "a stage by stage promotion of better housing and sanitation facilities for the people." Low income housing projects at Canefield, Calibishie, Trafalgar were to be implemented, with additional plans for new schemes at P. Michel, Platte Ma Pierre, Soufriere and Bath Estate. Finally, a comprehensive social security plan was to be implemented to provide for workers' compensation in the event of sickness or incapacity. The National Provident Fund, as the program came to be called, had to "provide a

²²These programs of the Labour Party are not contained in any one document of the Party. These pronouncements have been extrapolated from several sources such as the Party's Manifesto for 1961, 1966 and 1970 elections.

pension for incapacity or old age."

Agriculture and lands. Dominica is dominated by agriculture, with the mainstay of the economy being bananas. The party which can implement more schemes will command the people's confidence. The Labour Party devised plans to push agrarian reform by acquiring land to redistribute to the people in addition to the Crown lands that were already available. Plans were in the making to improve production by getting scientific methods to the people. Soil surveys were to be started and an Agricultural and Industrial Development Bank was to provide the necessary credit to underwrite the new undertakings. Both an oil and fruit canning factory was to be built. With the increase in production, hopefully the economy would begin to expand which would be conducive to governments' plans to assist Dominicans in their efforts to make it.

Large scale development planning and financial backing for Tourist Centers in areas of special attraction such as Prince Rupert and Douglas Bay areas, and the Fresh Water and Boiling Lake areas were to be created.

Education. The party had plans for a massive increase in the number of primary schools to absorb the growing number of children of school age. A technical college at Storkfarm was to be constructed to cater for students in Agriculture, Technology, Commerce and crafts. Adult education programs were to be increased and an

Industrial School at Mount St. Mary was to be built to accommodate the country's delinquents who would hopefully develop skills in the construction and industrial fields. The University center was to be fully financed by the Government to allow it to make maximum use of facilities. The party's document reads that there was to be a "much greater emphasis on technical education" to increase the capacity of Dominica to industrialize and make basic technical education "a feature of all Primary schools."

International communications. It has always been the plans of the party to build a deep water harbor to facilitate large ocean-going vessels. First, this would bring more tourist vessels into the State, thus giving a lift to the economy. Second, it would improve the banana trade since the long trek from shore to the large boats, which carry this fruit to England, would be eliminated. The fruit would be less likely to be damaged if transported in boats which would anchor right next to the jetty. Finally, an international jet airstrip has been planned to "increase the growth of the export potential and any substantial tourist development schemes."

Sport and culture. These two items were originally not included in the Party's program. But over the years, it has seen fit to lay heavy emphasis on both. The Party planned to assist the island's only sport association, which operates in the urban sector. It indicated that it would

provide "proper coaches and improved playing fields all over the island." Culturally, the Party said that it would encourage the cultural potential of the people.

Health. Because of the poor quality of health facilities in the island, the party prepared a very impressive and comprehensive program. There were to be no less than thirty health centers and five small hospitals in "strategic" areas. The best treatment was to be available to the mentally ill. All schools were to be inspected at least twice yearly by medical doctors. Each district was to have a trained midwife.

The output side. The output side of the conversion process is the policies of the Government. Evidently, the Party seems to have successfully implemented its policies since the people have returned it to power in three consecutive elections, 1961-70. But this writer refuses to accept this simple analysis of equating success at the polls with successfully implementing policies. Thus each policy discussed above will be assessed individually.

The road-building program which cuts across every facet of Dominican life has been very impressive. Speaking with the rural elements, one cannot but be impressed with their satisfaction with this program. Presently, every village in Dominica is served with a motorable road. It is because the people never had it so good that they are prepared to overlook the state of disrepair that these

roads are presently in. Quality does not matter, as long as the peasant can ride the jeep to his home without having to walk part of the way. It is this misapprehension on the part of the opposition of why the peasant is thankful that the former tries to tell the latter that the badly damaged roads are a deliberate move on the part of the Government to frustrate non-supporters. This might be the case. But the people have common sense which tells them that the roads are bad because the rain destroys them. The peasants reason that the Government cannot prevent rain. The extent of the road building program of the Labour Government appears on p. 189.

The Government has reorganized the Water Authority, but it continues to serve the urban area. The rural areas are left unattended. To date, only twelve villages out of thirty receive tap water in the homes. Quite recently, four more villages had water facilities installed at a cost of \$73,249.00 (BWI) to the Government.²³ Though the topography of the island does not lend itself to easy penetration with water carrying facilities, its record could have been much better when one considers that there are no less than 365 rivers in the area. Government could have used more effectively technical advice from outside agencies such as the United Nations. But of course, the political

²³"Four Villages now get Pipe Water," The Dominica Chronicle, July 15, 1972, p. 4.

gain to be had through a gradual increase in water facilities should not be underplayed.

As reported in an earlier chapter, the Government has not completed its plan for a comprehensive housing scheme. The schemes mentioned in its place have increasingly benefitted the upper class elements while it has become more difficult for the lower class people to own their own homes. The lower class elements cannot afford the loans, and are forced to live in slums. But the government has spent about a million dollars to construct government offices and some two million dollars on a new police station in Roseau, the main city. It is true that the funds for the police station were earmarked in England to make Dominica able to protect itself against an emergency, but Britain did not send its construction firm to build the building. The Government could have constructed a police station, and did not have to destroy an already existing sturdy building, with some of the funds and use the rest for some other meaningful project. Instead, it followed the letter of the law and put every cent in building this which may cause the younger elements in the urban area to be further alienated.

Both cooperative and local government agencies are not functioning well. In an interview with a prominent member of the cooperative division, the writer was led to believe that Government has not shown enough interest in

this agency. It has not allowed enough funds to recruit the field staff to educate the people in the working of cooperatives beginning at the primary school level. Thus, although registered cooperatives have increased over the years, there seems to be little incentive given the members to keep the movements alive. On the other hand, this writer discovered that certain cooperatives like the poultry cooperative, have used its special privileges granted by government, to create a shortage of the commodity it is involved in to make the Government look bad. For example, a restriction on poultry imports could put the poultry cooperative in a good position to foster this situation.

The Local Government departments do not seem to be playing their intended roles. They were instituted to stymie the growing power of the national government, but instead they have been used as a means to sustain the national government. The reports indicate that local governments do not enjoy autonomy and the more autonomy they enjoy, the less benefits they receive from the national government. This hypothesis is supported by the accusation by a top government official that this agency was receiving too much attention over other more meaningful agencies which have affected Dominica in a more positive way. Finally, the national government has put itself in the ironical, but not surprising situation of wanting to promote local

government island-wide, but at the same time wanting to disband the foremost local government body, the Roseau Town Council, because that council tried to exercise its autonomy by renaming streets with names which better "suited" Dominica.

In the area of agriculture, some attempts have been made to present better programs to Dominica but the results are yet to be seen, as the main stay of the economy, bananas, dissipate precipitously. The problem has been aggravated by the departure of top personnel from the island. Some have obtained better jobs, while others have gone to further their studies, may be never to return. An agricultural bank has been set up to sustain many schemes, but the sad report for 1972 reads: "So far requests for assistance have been registered but few projects have been approved and disbursement of funds have not commenced."²⁴ The report continues that lands designated to continue the agrarian reform have been withheld.

Further, in an effort to preserve the best lands of Dominica for Dominicans, the Government has prohibited their sale to aliens. This seems to have been done too late. One can even question the sincerity of this policy since subsequently aliens, probably seeing the writing on the wall,

²⁴Dr. J. Bernard Yankey, "A General Review of Agricultural Developments in Dominica for Period 1969-1972," Dies Dominica (November, 1972), pp. 18-20.

have offered to sell their holdings. People have approached the Government with very comprehensive plans which could facilitate the transfer of ownership of these foreign-held lands, but the Government has categorically refused to accept them.²⁵

The Government's record in dealing with education is not a good one, as cited earlier. The Government has not made public a comprehensive plan which was intended to include all facets of education. It continually allowed the missionaries to take on the responsibility of educating the people. Many school buildings were erected but they continued to be staffed with predominantly untrained elementary school graduates and high school dropouts. No attention was given to technical, agricultural or adult education, until very recently. In 1972 a technical college was opened but its fees (\$90.00 a semester) are prohibitive. The Government has failed to provide the much needed training school for the children labelled delinquents while a poor attempt was made to start a youth camp which is terribly understaffed. No particular attention was paid to secondary schools as the government personnel dealing with education were oriented toward primary

²⁵In July 1972 a group of farmers approached the "Socialist" Labour Government of Dominica to have it sanction the purchase of farms in the Castle Bruce area. The Government refused to help on the grounds that the project was motivated by Communism. The details of this affair are contained in Movement for a New Dominica, "Working Class Struggle in the Caribbean: The Case of Castle Bruce, Dominica." Unpublished paper.

education. The Government has not even provided a secondary school for girls yet, although one exists for boys. There is no teacher training college. Indeed, in 1972, Dominica had the distinction of being the only island in the British Caribbean without such facilities of its own. The most that has been done as of 1972 is that the Government now pays the salaries of all the teachers of the four secondary schools of the island, and this was at the request of an outside force (see Chapter V).

The jet air strip and deep-water harbor have not materialized though as of 1972 they were seriously being considered. The Government had already initiated plans to study the suitability of a particular site to locate the airport. In the meantime, extension facilities were being considered for the present inadequate facility at Melville Hall Airport. The deep water harbour was coming close to reality by the passage of the Port Authority Act. This legislation was passed in anticipation of the heavy traffic that this port would handle. It is not too important at this stage, but the location of this port may prove costly. The Government has decided to locate it on an open roadstead in Roseau, while better natural facilities at Portsmouth, the second town, are passed over.

The state of sports and culture in Dominica is very low. Coaches and available fields are virtually non-existent. There are no full time organizers for sports and

the little organizing which exists is primarily directed to the major city. In this respect, the government had failed to encourage island-wide participation in sports. Thus, to be recognized in sports one has to travel to the major city.

The state of culture, simply defined as exhibiting what is typically Dominican, is in an even sadder situation. The more "cultured" elements group themselves into cliques to sing Dominican songs of old. They use much of the taxpayers money to travel abroad to cut records and to wear Dominican "national" dress. These groups are made up of the same elements who a few years ago would never think of singing a local tune because it belonged to the lower classes. But since government has shown an interest in reviving these, the elites jump on the bandwagon to deprive the masses of what is their own.

Like all non-developed countries, the health problem is such that one often wonders why epidemics are not more common. There is one major hospital and two half-way houses, all with inadequate facilities. The better trained doctors remain in the city while the recently graduated man the rural posts with even less facilities. There has been no noticeable improvement in the treatment of the mentally ill as they are still kept in the same compound as prisoners. The only mental institution is badly staffed and the personnel are poorly trained. The availability of free

medical care to the school children is simply non-existent. An attempt was made by a politician of the opposing party to initiate a free program of eye testing in the schools, but it was discontinued as the authorities became unco-operative. To be sure, this move of free testing could have been politically motivated. But the point is, it was a free service which was beginning to show results as the doctor began to detect, at an early age, eye defects which would later affect the productive ability of these same youngsters, who might later become leaders of the country.

In the final analysis, the Dominica Labour Party has not delivered all the promised services. Therefore, its successes at the polls must be the result of a successful political socialization process, which makes the people satisfied with what they have received.

The Organized Parties in the Political Socialization Process

The parties of Dominica are also confronted with the problem of nation-building.²¹ This refers to the psychological dimension of creating a country as opposed to the structural dimension. It is an attempt to form a homogeneous, national political culture. This "political culture . . . consists of attitudes, beliefs, values and skills which are current in the entire population, as well as those special propensities and patterns which may be found within separate parts of that population (subcultures)."²⁶

²⁶Almond and Powell, Developmental Approach, p. 23.

Political socialization is a process whereby political attitudes and values are inculcated as children become adults and as adults are recruited into roles.²⁷ Political culture is continually molded by various agents in the environment by the process of socialization. This section deals with the Dominica Labour Party and the Dominica Freedom Party, and their role in political socialization.

The concept of secularization is used in discussing the evolution of a political culture. Secularization is comparable to complexity in structure and is defined as ". . .the process whereby men become increasingly rational, analytical, and empirical in their political action."²⁸

This section is divided into three parts. The first deals with the ideology of the Labour Party, the second assesses the pattern it has adopted to push this ideology, and the third deals with the results of attempts to inculcate that ideology. The last two are juxtaposed against the attempts of the Freedom Party to carry on a similar process, with a view of indicating why the latter has been unsuccessful thus far.

The ideological orientation of the Parties. The parties in Dominica are very hard to follow since they have changed their positions so many times on issues which

²⁷Ibid., p. 24.

²⁸Ibid.

are diametrically opposed to each other. Thus to label this or that party socialistic or capitalistic on the basis of party actions and pronouncements can become very hazardous. But on the basis of the constitutions of the two parties one can discern the orientation the parties would like to undertake, but have been unable to follow because of the environment in which they operate.

The original constitution of the Dominica Labour Party pledged its commitment to "democratic socialism", a concept which was introduced by Mrs. Allfrey when she returned from England in 1955. As reported elsewhere, she was heavily influenced by the British Labour Party's brand of socialism which envisaged the participation of the State in many areas where private concerns had involved themselves. But with the expulsion of Mrs. Allfrey from the party, the party did not change its orientation, although it has done nothing which approximates socialism. It continues to speak about securing for the workers by hand or by brain the fruits of their industry "and generally it seeks to promote the political, social and economic emancipation of the people."²⁹ It does not say explicitly in its constitution that it is only for the lower class elements, but by implication it does, since it is determined

²⁹Labour Party Constitution, pp. 1-2.

to work on behalf of those who have been exploited. Surely that does not include the elites of the country.

In spite of these platitudes, it is safe to say that this party has no ideology, if ideology is defined as a commitment to a principle. This does not imply that an ideologically oriented party cannot waiver a little to secure its domination of a political system. One thing certain is that the upper class element of the party either does not understand the meaning of socialism or they are using socialism to disguise their non-ideology, which the Deputy Premeir told this writer is pragmatism. For example, when this writer asked of the elites what their party stood for in relation to the opposition, they all said that their party was socialist and that it was for the small man. On the other hand, they saw the opposition as capitalist, meaning that the opposition stood for its own class interests, and not for Dominica.

Like the Labour Party, the Dominica Freedom Party does not have a clear-cut ideology. Its leaders with few exceptions accuse the Dominica Labour Party of being for themselves while they are for Dominica. This party speaks of the four freedoms as an ideological stance and emphasizes the importance of putting people before politics. But the Freedom Party seems a little more confused than the Labour Party. On the basis of interviews, the following came out of the top leadership in response to the question: What does

your party stand for? Answer A: "The party stands for four freedoms, people before party"; Answer B: "practical education for the country"; Answer C: "Development and bring in foreign capital"; Answer D: "largely socialistic, taking the best from the Communists and Socialists." This last response is interesting since the party has constantly accused the Labour Party of being a communist party, a very far-fetched statement, to say the least.

How the parties inculcate their ideas. In the section dealing with the conversion process, it was difficult to show a distinction between the Labour Party and the government in the process of State building. The difficulty is even greater in dealing with the role of the party in the socialization process as distinguished from the role of the Government, because essentially it is the Government which does every thing while efforts are always made to show that the party helps in this important role. The Government is the party and the rest of the party withers away temporarily. Almost to the last man, party officials are involved in the planning and execution of government policy. Increasingly, even people in the bureaucracy, in top positions, including police and army, are sympathizers of the party.

The Dominica Labour Party has changed in composition over the years. When the party began it used the already established Dominica Trade Union as a base to bring the

lower class elements into its fold. The union had already established itself in almost every section of the island, making it easier for the party to gain members once the union had accepted that relationship. In fact, today there are two former union leaders in the Government, Patrick John, who was once secretary to a Waterfront Workers Union, and Earle Leslie, who organized unions at Portsmouth beginning in 1945. The Union which John led was at one time hostile to the Government when the latter tried to pass restrictions on strikes, but John was quickly won over and the law was passed. But the Government had to contend with the fact that the President of the union was affiliated to the opposition. The president was quickly "forced out" of active politics because in his words: "people saw him as a politician and not as a humble man negotiating for his workers."³⁰

The Labour Party has since ignored the unions as a means to lure members into its fold. It has taken on the agencies of local government and cooperatives to accomplish that end. The two agencies are not used to bring an ideology to the people, but instead are used to bring recalcitrants into line. They are used, though not overtly, to sustain the rural support that the Government has enjoyed.

³⁰ Letter of resignation from Louis Benoit to Miss Eugenia Charles, President of the Freedom Party.

The agencies will be used even more for this purpose as the Roseau constituencies (urban) have turned down every member of the Labor Government who sought election to the Roseau Local Government Board in 1971. Of course, there are other agencies which can be used more effectively to ensure a victory for Labor and that is the Constituency Commission, discussed in Chapter III.

The party continues to give the image that it is open and that it belongs to the common man, but the ultimate leader of the party has openly said that his best friend is Astaphans, the richest man in Dominica, because he pays the most taxes.³¹ Indeed, at one time 1958-1966, the party was open, even though the masses might have belonged to the party to be entertained. It is no secret that the party has always been dominated by a few, who at one point were as poor as the ordinary Dominican. Increasingly, one man asserted himself to the point where he can now choose his own successor. The party has had "open" conventions. But these have been for the purpose of proposing new plans and that of praising Mr. Edward LeBlanc and his cohorts. He has entrenched himself so deeply that now only a special conference can unseat him,³² and not a

³¹Based on interview with Edward LeBlanc, Summer 1972.

³²LeBlanc Labor Party, "Constitution," Dominica, 1970, p. 3. (Mimeographed.)

normal vote at a convention. To show its openness and youthfulness, the party has attracted some young and educated people. It does not see the entrance of these individuals as a minus factor. These individuals may have joined the party because it shows no signs of failing at the polls, and as a way of ensuring their dominance of the political system. In effect, the party rules against itself by accepting these elites into its fold, thus against the people whom it always wanted to protect. The changing nature of the party has not sapped its strength, because it has been able to make the people feel part of the Government. The Government officials and Ministers live in their districts and if they do not, they have a "home" there, where they can be seen with "their" people.

The Opposition Party tries to give the image that it is open to all, but it is yet to get this message across. It is not manned with people who can relate to the masses. The elites of the party are mostly old politicians who tried many times at the polls and were turned back by the people. Presently, like the Labor Party, the Opposition is ruled by a chosen few who are not sufficiently united to effect any meaningful change within it. This lack of cohesion has manifested itself in many ways both openly and secretly. One former top executive of the Party has openly disassociated himself with it. To him, party politics is a waste of time in Dominica. Further, according to him, the parties

have not been responsive to the people's desires.³³ Ironically, this is the very man who drew a standing ovation at his party's convention in 1972 when he reported that he was a Professor of Black Studies at an American university. This only demonstrates that leaders like him are interested in "open" parties to satisfy their own inner selves.

The Dominica Labor Party has introduced an emphasis on Dominican culture by encouraging groups which study Dominica's past. It celebrates the country's semi-independence day with a carnival jump-up, which many Dominicans enjoy. On Dominica's last national day, the Party published articles which praised the land with its heroes. The Party also invited outside dignitaries to heighten the importance of the occasion. But all these nationalistic drives run counter to the keen desire to bind Dominica in a Caribbean Federation, without looking closely at the implication of that union. It might well be that the leaders themselves have not formulated for themselves a Dominican nationalism. One observer has written that Dominica is one of the Caribbean islands which would be the first to give up its sovereignty to join into a bigger union.³⁴ This nationalistic

³³Lecture delivered by Edward Scobie to Dominicans in Support of Progress (Summer, 1972).

³⁴Carleen O'Loughlin, Political and Economic Development of the Leeward and Windward Islands, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 44.

outburst during its most recent national day celebration is even more surprising when one considers that the Government, through its newspaper, saw the need to explain to Dominica about the superiority of the Dominican Constitution, "which is on Imperial Order issued by Her Majesty, The Queen at Buckingham Palace on 22nd day of February 1967."³⁵ The Government must have seen the need for this explanation since the editorial stated it was being done to clear the confusion, so that the people will know. This must have done to lend credence to the Constitution, which would in turn attribute added legitimacy to the Government. For this reason, the Government could not emphasize that Dominica's leaders did participate in devising the Constitution. The fact that it came from the Queen was more important.

One would expect that the Government would use the educational system to effect changes in the political system, since the most overt attempt to control political socialization has been through education. The leader of the party has criticized the Church in its relation to the people and would probably like to replace the Church with the school to create a new Dominica. But he does not know how to achieve that end. The Government emphasizes the number of schools built but rarely take into account the quality of

³⁵ Editorial, The Educator, September 1, 1971, p. 2.

the people who staff them or the quality of the product turned out. This will continue to be the case since party leaders have mostly been self-made men, which forces them to play down the importance of formal education. They still believe that high standards are the key to success, disregarding the type of courses attempted to achieve the high standards. In any event, the amount spent on education is totally inadequate (\$1.5 million or 13.7% of the budget during 1969).³⁶

The Results of These Efforts

Dominica is still very much affected by an elite dominating the lower class elements. The latter has refused to accept that fact when it is told so by the more "radical" elements of the society, the Black Power men (see Chapter V). In other words, the Labor Party has shown itself to be for the lower class, though on occasion the Labor Party has tried to compete with the lower class to suppress its aspirations.³⁷ The Freedom Party is also for the poor man though somehow the poor cannot see the benefit. The youth are left out by both parties because they do not know what they want yet, the parties believe.

³⁶ Dominica, The West Indies, Annual Report, Education Division, 1969, p. 3.

³⁷ A good example is the Castle Bruce Affair recounted in footnote no. 25.

Evidently, the Labor Party has seen no need to foster a national identity since it is so intent on joining any federation in the Caribbean. It waives in its pronouncements on Black Power, and on creating a new Dominica. But that same party can condemn the Black Power movement when the latter criticizes the Government for wasting valuable resources on national day celebrations (1972 cost about \$100,000). State-building is virtually at a stand-still as the leader of the Party is determined to keep Dominica a "colony" as long as it is "Britishly" possible, to gain as much aid from the British treasury. This is done in retaliation for those "horrible" years when Britain ruled with an iron hand, maintains Mr. LeBlanc.

If state-building has been consciously stopped by refusing to have political independence, one would expect that nation-building would proceed at an accelerated pace. This would be to ensure a better acceptance of independence, regardless of whether Dominica would be independent on its own or be in a federation with the other islands of the Caribbean. But instead, the Labor Party continues to allow itself to be drawn into useless debates with the Opposition. It has allowed the renaming of a street to cause so much controversy, to the point that it cost the country \$16,000³⁸ to investigate the resulting damages from the ensuing

³⁸This figure was arrived at by this writer from a response given in the House of Assembly by the Minister of Finance--the amount he quoted was \$5,270.19 (BWI), but he

confrontation. In spite of that waste of time and energy, the rural elements and some urban people feel a pride in Dominica. Many others have very few good things to say about the country and both parties can accept the credit for that. The alienation of the youth is reflected in their indictment of the Government for not allowing the Opposition time on the radio station.³⁹ On the other hand, those who feel part of Dominica were not necessarily motivated by the policies of the Labor Government, though the influence of that party must never be underplayed.

One should not get the impression that a participant society is about to dawn in Dominica. Before 1967 there were glimpses of such a society, because at that time the British still had a tight control of the island, with much executive power in the Governorship. Then, the Labour Party was in the same boat with the people: both were powerless. But since 1967, the Leader of the Party has acquired all the power of the Governor. The Party has somewhat left the people behind, making Dominica a partially integrated society. The elites are integrated in the sense that they have many common interests to preserve. Those who dominate both parties have agreed to disagree on minor issues such as who

pointed out that this was in addition to the "extensive repairs to the House of Assembly." The cost was further increased by the necessity to import an overseas magistrate to prosecute the wrong-doers.

³⁹ "Role of Mass Media Discussed," Dominica Herald, December 2, 1972, p. 1.

owns a public market. On the more important issues of redistribution of income and provision of better housing, the elites agree not to talk in order not to undermine their own positions. They would have to give up one of the three or four houses they own individually.

Even though the Labor Party started to wield power only in 1967, it is safe to say that it has failed at the socialization process. The Party has made some rural elements feel part of the nation, but feeling is not enough. The party has failed to recruit the better qualified people to execute policies which can benefit the island. It has placed ministers and other cabinet officials in jobs which they cannot handle. It is afraid to recruit men with new ideas, with imagination to undertake the task of nation-building. Every recruitment has followed two patterns; either the recruit is of such "low" quality (education-common sense) that he can win an election, but once he has won, he cannot handle his assignment well. Or second, the recruit is of such "high" quality that he joins the Party to gain something for himself or for his business. Of course, the latter understands that he is to behave himself and not try to be too uppity, for if he gets out of hand he will be dismissed.

Credit must be given to the Leader of the Labor Party, Mr. E.O. LeBlanc. At times, he has done some strange things but he has kept the party together. He has kept one

foot among the masses, giving them their wants on occasions. He has allowed some incompetent Ministers to have their way when he knew that they were not acting in the best interest of the people.⁴⁰ His democratic orientation has detracted from his established able and honest leadership. He has been slow to recognize a crisis and has refused to take command of a situation even though it does not come directly under his ministry.⁴¹ He is somewhat arrogant and has not involved the Opposition Party sufficiently in the major issues which confront Dominica. But this mentality is a direct result of the training he and others had under colonial rule. The colonial Governor almost never involved the local politician (at that time the opposition) in any major issues confronting the country. The Governor had a job to do and he did it without any help. Mr. LeBlanc has followed this tradition and has been quoted as saying that he cannot involve the Opposition because in the British tradition, which Dominica follows, Edward Heath does not send Harold Wilson to negotiate issues which Heath's Government is involved in.

The Labor Party has not produced a political culture. The people have not been made to accept the legitimacy

⁴⁰The Premier must have been aware of the practice of a certain Minister who used to spend months in Barbados on his private business while in the pay of the people.

⁴¹A good example was the St. Mary's Academy crisis. The Premier refused to take over the Ministry of Education to handle the affair even after the School was closed down.

of institutions and elected officials. They have become cynical of elected officials, referring to them as stooges and stand-ins for a leader who is directed by law to have a certain amount of elected officials to maintain the leadership of the country. Increasingly, politics in Dominica has revolved around confrontations where both the Labor and the Freedom Parties propagandize the masses. The Freedom Party does not have enough members in the legislature to overturn Government legislation, thus it takes its disagreements to the streets. It has legitimized violence whenever it is the one using it to achieve its objective. And of course, in an effort to show who is the head of the country, the Labor Party quickly takes on the challenge since it knows it has the machinery of both police and army at its disposal to beat off the Opposition. Fortunately and very surprisingly, bloodshed has not resulted from the constant confrontation as both parties try to either their dominance or capture power.

One might expect that the lack of clear-cut ideology would lead to a pragmatism in politics, which would force the parties to maintain a good record to retain power. This has not been the case. The Government has had its way in virtually all major issues such as massive police brutality against Black Power elements. It has been ably supported by the Opposition Party, the Dominica Freedom Party, whose basic principles supposedly, are to uphold

freedom of expression, and freedom from fear, among other things. Evidently, freedom of expression does not include saying that the bourgeois elements dominate the poor class. It has to be so because the Freedom Party condoned the policy of Government to stop free expression. Little wonder that of the twenty members of the political elite interviewed, no less than eighteen said that the two party system in Dominica was working and that system was there to stay. But as far as this writer is concerned, the system could be better. There could be more meaningful communication and cooperation in a positive way to change the society, to make the people a little better off. Since the parties have shirked that responsibility, the Black Power Movement has come on the scene to perform that task. The role it has played in the political system and its relationship with other groups, institutions and people in the Dominican society form the basis of the following chapter.

C H A P T E R V
THE BLACK POWER MOVEMENT IN DOMINICA

Introduction

The previous chapter dealt with the failure of the party to handle the processes of State and nation-building. This was seen to be the case since the party has been unsuccessful in outlining precisely in which direction Dominica should be heading. Further, it has failed to draw on the available talents to tackle the critical problem of making Dominicans feel a part of Dominica.

Because the party has failed to carry on the task of nation-building, the Black Power Movement has been forced, according to its own prognosis, to undertake that task. The activities of that group are reviewed here because the group is the only one which has dared to challenge the Government. It has not been too successful at that, but it has received more than its share of attention. It has threatened the very foundations of the present society. This threat, whether real or imaginary, has caused those who "have a stake" in the system, as the elites like to refer to themselves, to scamper for cover.

The Concept of Black Power

Black Power is one of those concepts which has been discussed for some time now. It has been defined both literally and figuratively, and it takes on a new meaning depending on the user's disposition. That is why there is still a running debate in the Caribbean between the more progressive elements which see its relevance, and others who see it as irrelevant. Walter Rodney of Guyana, the first exponent of the concept in its present form, has shown its relevance.¹

Walter Rodney understands Black Power to mean three closely related things: "(i) the break with imperialism which is historically white racist; (ii) the assumption of power by the black masses in the islands; (iii) the cultural reconstruction of the society in the image of the Blacks." But who are the Blacks of the Caribbean? Rodney writes in response:

I shall anticipate. . . questions on who are the blacks in the West Indies. I maintain that it is the white world which has defined who are blacks - if you are not white then you are black. However, it is obvious that the West Indian situation is complicated by factors such as the variety of racial types and racial mixtures and by the process of class formation. We have, therefore, to note not simply what the white world says but also how individuals perceive each other. Nevertheless, we can talk of the mass of the West Indian population as being

¹No attempt is being made here to inquire into the concept as it relates to the American context. This is not to be taken to mean that the two situations are radically different.

black - either African or Indian. There seems to have been some doubts on the last point, and some fear that Black Power is aimed against the Indian. This would be a flagrant denial of both the historical experience of the West Indies and the reality of the contemporary scene.²

Though somewhat of a militant definition of Black, no doubt it was precipitated by the reality of the situation in Jamaica where Rodney worked. In Jamaica, 76.8% of the population is Black, but the 0.8% European element has controlled every pary of Jamaica's life.³

The second part of the phrase, Power, is simply put by Rodney: "The Caribbean is predominantly a Black nation, and as such the Blacks have a right to power commensurate with their own numbers."⁴ On first reading, his position seems contradictory to his stance on "Black." But further analysis reveals that he is willing to accept anyone, Black or White, who is willing to give a fair share to the people who, by their hard work, keep the opportunists afloat. He then cites the Cuban experience where a white man, Castro, has brought more benefits to the Blacks than when Batista, a Black man, was in power.

²Walter Rodney, The Groundings with my Brothers (London: The Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications, 1969), p. 28.

³Ibid., p. 30. Of every 100 Jamaicans (1969), 76.8% are visibly African, 0.8% European, 1.1% Indian, 0.6% Chinese; 91% have African blood, 0.1% Syrian, 14.6 Afro-European and 5.4 other mixtures.

⁴Ibid., p. 29

The Black Power advocates of Dominica have accepted Rodney's definition. They call for a reassessment of the self to generate black pride and dignity. They want the people to cease thinking in terms of themselves as a wicked people, whose only ability is to cause harm through Obeah and Voodoo. They write:

We must stop seeing ourselves as a people full of hate, deceit, jealousy, sorcerers and see ourselves as people full of potential and see Dominica as a land full of potential.⁵

The Dominican movement has further clarified its position in its journal Flambeau in the following way:

that all Dominicans must realize that they have been exploited in many ways and they should rise up from their complacency because things do not have to be as they are.⁶

At the beginning Black Power meant a rejection of everything white. But now the Movement sees Black Power as

the uplifting of the lower class of Dominicans to enjoy a decent standard of living, free from inadequate medical attention, poverty, humiliation, illiteracy, and shabby housing.⁷

Anyone, of any color, who can help in this undertaking is welcomed to join the Movement. But in spite of the ideological bent of the Movement which approximates Tanzanian

⁵Hilroy Thomas, "A New Look" The Dominica Herald, August 1, 1970, p. 2.

⁶Flambeau, October, 1970, p. 11.

⁷"Caribbean Rebellion and Social Change: Towards an Understanding of the Black Power Movement in the Caribbean," Toronto, 1972, p. 8. (Mimeographed.)

socialism, the Movement will not accept Whites in a leadership position. There seems to be a contradiction in this position. If the Movement is concerned purely with ideology, the color of one's skin should not preclude acquiring a leadership position.

The Movement in Dominica

The Black Power Movement in its present form was begun in Jamaica and then transported to Trinidad. From there, Dominican university students brought the idea to Dominica. But like all groups which relied on "outside" sustaining power, it was doomed to failure. In addition to these university students, there was another, Roosevelt Douglas,⁸ who occasionally gave life to the Movement during his frequent visits to Dominica.

The Movement in Dominica was officially organized during May, 1970. Previous to that, no attempts were made to start a movement, though many discussions were carried out in public places condemning the disparities in the society.⁹ At the beginning, the Movement was very active as it was something new. It began with one man at the head, a man who had suffered directly because of the inequalities

⁸He is one of the Dominican students who was tried in Canada in 1969 for taking part in an alledged smashing of computers at Sir George Williams University. He was a one time ideologue of the Movement.

⁹During the Summer of 1969, Dr. Bill Riviere held numerous discussions about Black Power in Dominica.

and contradictions of the existing society. No constitution was developed; concrete and realizable projects were not outlined. It had the sweeping mandate to change the human relationship in the society. The group had failed to realize that the present system was not created overnight and that it could not be dismantled overnight. Changing it required much more time and commitment than the group was willing to allow. The situation was even compounded by the fact that there was only one main organizer while the others were pursuing more important things outside of Dominica. The organization engaged in rhetoric and had affinity for the dramatic. That in itself was good since attention was concentrated on it for a time, but it did not do anything good with that attention. It even alienated many of its would-be supporters.

But it was during 1970 that the group made its major contribution for which it is yet to receive the credit. Then, the leader of the group, Hilroy Thomas, approached the National Government to have it support more fully the three private secondary schools. Previously these schools had been partially supported and this caused tuition to be very high, in contrast to the sole school for boys which the Government was running.

The Movement reasoned that these schools had a right to receive more attention from the Government. Even though they were being run by foreigners, the students were

Dominican nationals. Besides, the Government was unable to provide places for those students who chose to attend private schools.

For the above reasons and the fact that it was an election year, the Government agreed to underwrite the expenses of the three schools. Thus, as soon as the Heads of these schools returned to the island, Mr. LeBlanc took the "initiative" and announced his Government's intention to help the private schools. At first the schools were not too happy about the affair. They were afraid that this involvement was a back door route to take complete control of their schools. Their fear was justified, considering that LeBlanc had shown himself not a friend of the Roman Catholic Church, the owner of two of the three schools. Thus, in an effort to sabotage the move, the missionaries at the Catholic schools demanded pay for themselves which would greatly increase the cost of maintenance. This last demand was very significant. In the first place, the missionaries were not interested in the money for themselves, but only whether they had enough money to pay their lay teachers a reasonable salary. Secondly, if the Government was able to pay them, this meant that they were dispensable since any qualified person could take command of the school. But apparently the missionaries must have been misled by members of the Opposition Party that the deal would fall through if they demanded compensation for their services.

Both the Opposition and the missionaries were wrong. The overriding variable, the election year fever, was not weighted enough. The Government was not going to let this golden opportunity to slip away. It decided to pay the salaries of every member of the staff, in addition to a sum for the upkeep of the schools. The Government made the mistake, through its ineptitude, of not paying every member of the staff individually, but gave the authorities a grant to pay the staff. Thus, the Principal of St. Mary's Academy, one of the private schools, could say that the Government did not pay the salaries of his teachers. He was right and the accompanying letter with the grant read: "I am directed to inform you that Government has decided to make a Grant available to the secondary schools."¹⁰

The Government subsequently acknowledged the efforts of the Movement for initiating the move by sending a copy of the very letter it directed to the Secondary Schools to the Movement's leader. With this success, the Movement began plans to organize a Secondary School Teachers Association. But two important events pre-empted that fact. The first was a massive demonstration against a Canadian official who had come to Dominica to see in what ways his Government could help Dominica. The Movement did not take

¹⁰Letter from the Office of The Premier to the Principals of the four secondary schools of Dominica, dated 29th August, 1970, Ref. No. E and H-300/780/2.

too kindly to this visit and carried placards at the demonstration which told the mood of the people: "Investigate the racist Canadians." "West Indians are catching hell in Canada." "Give Black people a chance." This was an indication of things to come as the authorities were caught unawares. The second major event was related to the first; Hilroy Thomas, the main organizer of the Movement and himself a teacher at St. Mary's Academy, was dismissed from his post. It was reported that his dismissal was based on the grounds that he refused to wear a tie to work. But the real reason seems to be to get back at him because he had organized the protest march against the Canadian and because his employers were Canadian, even though the Government paid his salary.

The Movement tried desperately to gather momentum, to make an issue of the Hilroy affair. It failed because there was no one to generate support. The only one who could have helped was the very person in the midst of the controversy, Hilroy himself.

By 1971, the Movement had split up into no less than five factions. They were without leadership as Hilroy left the island to pursue further studies overseas. In the meantime, the others were either employed away from Dominica or were at school in Jamaica, Trinidad or Barbados. In 1972, the Movement tried once again to regroup with the return of two able leaders. It moved to change its name from Black

Power Movement to Movement for a New Dominica. This move is to build a better image in Dominica. As this is being written, there are several supportive groups in North America and Canada who are helping the Dominican Movement by way of sending equipment and money to it. A discussion of the Movement in relation to other groups in the society will form the subject of the following sections.

The Movement and The Dominican Press

Universally, the press has shown an affinity to expose sensational news. In their efforts to capture the largest reading public, the press must extrapolate the bad which can command attention. This is understandable in an advanced country where the practice has been in existence for a long time and where it becomes hard to break away from. Besides, in the developed countries, like the United States, making money is the name of the game. This is not to imply that the same drive for money is not to be found in the developing countries, but when it comes to the press, there is no need to report the bad to sell papers. For example, the same "elites" buy all four newspapers in Dominica regularly to see what slant each has taken on an issue.

But in spite of the lack of great competition to capture the reading public, which is small anyway, the Dominican Press has gone out of its way to blacklist the

Black Power Movement. Thus, the Dominican Chronicle could give front page coverage to the fact that Roosevelt Douglas, a Black Power leader, "could get five years following his conviction in Canada in connection with the February 1969 Sir George William (University) Computer Centre Affair."¹¹ There was no analysis of the implications or reasons for the conviction because the paper was already convinced that Douglas was guilty.

The Star was happy to report on one occasion that Black professors were against Black Studies since it did not qualify the recipients of such an education to become competitive educationally.¹² The paper missed the point as it conveniently left out the real reason why Black Studies are so widely condemned among Blacks. The fact is that too many Blacks have been put in high positions for which they were never qualified. They are the ones who make the programs so inferior and a waste of time. The editor of the paper should have reported that it is the Whites like herself who staff the programs with inferior men and that the programs could be good. To show how destructive this paper can be, it reported with "sadness" the departure of the white Christian Brothers from the island. According to it, the Black Power Movement was

¹¹Dominica Chronicle, May 1, 1971, p. 2.

¹²The Star, May 10, 1971, p. 4.

responsible, but ironically, the editor of the paper was the very person who chastised the white priests and white nuns for owning too much property in the island. At that time the editor felt that they should leave the country or give up some of the real estate they owned at the time. In fact, she was against the white nuns' acquiring a piece of public property to provide greater recreational facilities for the girls on the island. But now the editor of the paper saw fit to defend the very people she once detested.

The Beginning of the Dialogue

The first attempt to begin a dialogue in the press on Black Power was in 1968. At that time Swinbourne Lestrade was very disturbed by the fact that a little white girl was a Carnival Princess of Dominica. He was of the opinion that since Dominica is a black country, all its representatives should be Black.¹³ Of course, this was a poor analysis of Black Power, although at that point in time the leaders were still groping to make their positions clear on the meaning of the concept.

The second attempt was made in 1969 by Julian Johnson.¹⁴ His article contained essentially four points

¹³Dominica Herald, April 10, 1968, p. 6.

¹⁴Based on private conversation.

which Walter Rodney had articulated in Jamaica: a) the black community must aim to create an awareness of being black; b) Black people must be mobilized to act in their own interest; c) white cultural imperialism must be stopped; d) black rule must be established in black society. It took him a long time to get this published since the topic was then considered too explosive. But a year before that, in 1968, the four papers were embroiled with the Government over the issue of freedom of the press.¹⁵ In fact one paper, The Herald, accepted the article for publication but instead published an article by Marie Davis Pierre "Has Black Any Meaning in Dominica?"¹⁶ In this article, Pierre admonished the young to stop using the beaches as latrines and urged Dominicans to stop being lackadaisical. She has since continued to express her opinion freely on this topic in just about every issue of the papers.¹⁷

In the Davis Pierre genre, Androcles of the Freedom Party called on the police to stop the imported revolutionaries. The peace of the community, he argued, could not be allowed to be disturbed by persons "indoctrinated in undesirable, or at best, irrelevant philosophy (Black

¹⁵The 1968 Seditious and Undesirable Publications Act was a move to prevent any and all anti-Government publications.

¹⁶Dominica Herald, April 15, 1969, p. 2.

¹⁷It is ironic that such an ardent "exponent" of Black Power, Davis Pierre, refused to fill out a questionnaire for this writer, which dealt with Black Power.

Power)." ¹⁸ If he knew anything about Black protest, he would have known that Black Power is not an import to the Caribbean. History has shown that West Indians have been forced out of the West Indies to carry on their protest. They have been forced out because the Caribbean is so small and so poor that a true revolutionary cannot remain there and survive. The authorities can effectively starve him literally by not giving him a job. And besides, he cannot become anonymous because the place is too small. He is forced out and returns periodically to let the authorities know that he is still around to rouse them from their complacency. It is this going and coming which drives the reactionaries to believe that Caribbean revolutionaries are imports. But notice Androcles' quick desire to have the police enter the contest. This is the chief ideologue of no less a party than the Freedom Party. The Government seems to be right when it says that freedom has no meaning in Dominica. ¹⁹

In May, 1969, a columnist for the Dominican Chronicle, quite appropriately named Peter Simple, condemned Black Power since it was too radical and destructive. It was his contention that the Movement started in the

¹⁸The Star, July 7, 1972, p. 1.

¹⁹The Educator, July 28, 1971, p. 2.

United States and it must be rejected in Dominica. In his simplicity, he stated that most West Indians do not accept Black Power because "they know that Whites are more advanced than Blacks." But the main reason for rejecting the Movement is:

They West Indians view its leaders with suspicion, most of the staunch advocates seem to be people with little background. . .or of no well-developed stature in society and thus have absolutely nothing to lose if there was any radical change in our present socio-economic structure. What those B.P. fanatics must realize is that many West Indian Blacks, Whites, but mostly Browns have worked hard. . .to carve out a future for themselves and children.

This was a frightened man writing. He was determined to preserve the status quo. He was begging people to come to his aid. But more importantly, Simple, himself a member of the propertied class, saw no contradiction in the society. He was not moved to give the lower class elements a better chance in the system.

The 1970 election year-politics-press-Black Power.

By 1970 the press was noticeably changing its attitude toward the Movement. Both political parties were trying to make some gains against each other by using the Movement. This is somewhat strange as the Movement was not that powerful to hold the balance of power between the two parties.

In October, 1969, the Premier made a speech in his district and attacked the Church for portraying all its saints as being white, while the devil was black. The Herald, the Opposition's paper, came out with a headline

which read: "LeBlanc Makes Black Power Speech."²⁰ When this accusation did not produce the desired end, the Freedom Party, headed by Edward Scobie, started to speak Black Power. He began talking about his problems as a black man in white Britain, and portraying his party as sympathetic to the Movement. Once again, the Opposition had been drawn into a controversy with the ruling party. This demonstrates that Edward LeBlanc was able to condition the Opposition, to take it on head-on and defeat it. But as the 1970 elections approached, both parties tried to include the Movement into their respective parties. The Labor Party tried to co-opt it since it had criticized the Freedomites for allowing two "outsiders" to contest the general election. At the same time, the Freedomites thought that the Movement was on its side since it was using the same symbol as itself.

The post-election period of 1970. The elections over;²¹ both parties returned to character and tried to undo the Movement. But 1972 saw the publication of a series of articles explaining the "real meaning" of the Movement. Of course, the exponents were self-made experts

²⁰Dominica Herald, April 26, 1969, p. 1.

²¹The Labor Party won seven seats, the Freedom Party two and Independent numbered one.

who did not belong to the Movement. The first of the articles made its appearance in June 1972, and its author ventured to give "an objective analysis of Black Power in Dominica."²² To him, Black Power meant that the black man had the potential to look after his own affairs. This is confusing; either the black man can manage his affairs now but has never been allowed to do that, or, the black cannot manage his affairs now, but in time will be able to do it. The writer contended that the concept had relevance in Dominica since black Dominicans do not control their economy now. He concluded, quite characteristically, that violence is not the answer since alternative means can be used to achieve power.

His analysis is not strong enough. It does not touch on the vital issues of discriminating justice, the widespread inequalities based solely on one's name and place of origin. It fails to see that meaningful change will come about only when the political elites can communicate with each other in the interests of the masses. Things will change when the politicians can keep away from devious means to stay in power. But to expect these changes in Dominica is to expect tomorrow not to come. There must be massive destruction of person, property, and all the rest to achieve any meaningful change. The leaders

²²Dominica Chronicle, June 17, 1972, p. 3.

are too secure and ably supported by the business elements to give up their life styles to satisfy the "lazy" Dominican. But the lazy Dominican has nothing to lose but time, and that he has a lot of. How long can it last? He might just come in the morning!

Another one of those "objective" analyses came from Rupert Sorhaindo, an important member of the Freedom Party. He alerted the Movement to the big problem of "after the revolution." He lamented the fact that revolutionaries concentrated on breaking down existing systems too much. They ignored in the process what they would do after power was acquired. Sorhaindo then cited examples of past instances where failure was inevitable since no thought was given to this all important problem. He is very ambivalent. He is against the present system and on many occasions has been highly critical of it, at the same time he does not understand that nothing short of violence will change the existing structure. In his naivete, he believes that a simple change of personnel will bring the desired change in the society. He fails to realize that Dominican society had created the men who run it and they will do anything to keep it as it is. Thus, the urgency of the situation and the slim possibility of success negate any precise planning about the future. The future is just too far away in time to consider it. And besides, the future will plan itself since the Movement has no blueprint as

such to hand to the people. The people have first to be made aware and then they can partake in the planning process. History has shown that those who have succeeded at a genuine revolution have always been able to muster their own resources to lead. The fact remains, planning the revolution and executing it become more urgent. Besides, since Sorhaindo has raised that fundamental point and has shown a commitment to changing the personnel in the government and not the system, it behooves him to worry about the aftermath of the revolution. If he and others like him are afraid of the revolution, they should quickly take over the reins of Government to demonstrate to the Black Power Movement that exchange is better than revolutionary change.

In the final analysis, all four papers at one time or another have tried to show that the Movement is a fraud. The Herald accused its leaders of intellectual dishonesty.²³ Then it showed that people in Dominica have never ignored Black Power. They have tried to analyze it from the point of view of black consciousness. The Chronicle has given the Movement its share of criticism and although not using those specific terms, accused it of being dishonest. The paper demanded of its leaders that they reveal their true intentions and present themselves to the electorate. Of

²³Dominica Herald, July 29, 1972, p. 5.

course, the paper has missed the whole point behind the Movement. At present, the Movement is not interested in party politics. At a future date, it may have to present itself to the people at the polls, but this time is a long way off, since the people do not sufficiently understand the Movement now. When the people realize that what the Movement has been talking about is true, the Movement will be ready for the polls.

Finally, The Educator, the Government's paper, has shown itself to be both irresponsible and ambivalent. On one occasion it can carry a story depicting the achievements of Blacks in all fields to taunt the "lazy" Black Power advocate,²⁴ while on another occasion it reported in an irresponsible way that a white man had kicked a black boy at a racially tense school.²⁵ Probably in an effort to ingratiate itself with the Black Power elements, it saw fit to make headlines with this incident. Since the Movement was not properly organized at the time, rioting did not break out. Such has been the relationship between the press and the Black Power Movement, though increasingly the sole radio station in Dominica has begun to be receptive to the Movement. This is because the Movement does not carry the name of Black Power any more, is better organized,

²⁴The Educator, August 11, 1971, p. 4.

²⁵Ibid., May 3, 1972, p. 3.

and has produced some meaningful results over the past year. The results are assessed in the conclusion of the chapter.

The Movement and the Students

In Dominica, it is very difficult to make a distinction between the Black Power Movement and the High School students, especially those from St. Mary's Academy, the leading Catholic school. To be sure the students have their own organization but they are very much part of the overall movement. St. Mary's Academy students have highly influenced their contemporaries at the Dominica Grammar School (public High School) and the Convent High School (Catholic girls school - private), and have been at the forefront of the Movement. But the great majority of students in Dominica is not involved in the Movement. There are various explanations for this: they are still very young and are controlled by their parents. Moreover, the school authorities together with the Government have acted as an effective deterrent against their "revolutionary" zeal. The few who are involved have to be reckoned with and cannot be taken too lightly. The authorities realize that and have had them under constant surveillance. But by and large, the revolutionary drive of students is short-lived. Once they are faced with the crude reality that they need jobs to survive, the picture changes drastically. The situation is even more critical and urgent for the Dominican

High School graduate because jobs get fewer every day.

Protest at the High School level is not really new in Dominica. Students before did have their own form of protest but they were effectively dealt with. This new group of students has only been a little more vocal and has established greater contact with their seniors who have travelled abroad. The students now act as lieutenants to these revolutionaries who, for one reason or other, are unable to remain in Dominica. The students are a good stand-in because at the time of service they are not constrained by the harsh reality of having to support themselves. Besides, they have enough time to devote to "revolutionary" work. They can organize the young unemployed and others to get ready for the rebellion.

By the late 1960's and early 1970's, Dominican High School students were made aware of the blatant disparities which existed in the society. And on a very simple level, they even began to question their own ascribed status in the society. In fact, five of them together with Hilroy Thomas formed the first organized Black Power Movement in Dominica.²⁶ This movement began emphasizing the cultural aspect of the struggle by insisting on the wearing Afro-hairdo and dashikis. Then the fashion spread to the student

²⁶Flambeau, October, 1970.

population as others from the outside helped in bringing in the style. The students began to be led and misled by "outsiders." They began to use slogans, such as the "domination by the bourgeoisie," which they did not understand. They were effectively propagandized and keyed-up and then left alone to fight their own battles with their superiors at the school and at home. But after spending so much energy on useless encounters, the students could not point to one significant achievement, though by then they were feared.

Their actions were seen simply as rebellious. One erudite observer explained it this way: secondary education was no longer the preserve of the upper class and that had brought an integration of youth of different backgrounds. He continued, "There is, in other words, a unified mind among youth and a breakdown of the old class barriers nurtured by a system handed down from the old colonial masters and which most parents. . .are loathe to break away from."²⁷ Of course, his analysis of the situation is wrong, as the number of students involved in the Movement is no more than twenty-five at the most out a possible total of some nine hundred. Of the twenty-five in the Movement, probably ten really understand and are

²⁷Pat Pierre, "Why is Youth Rebellious?" The Dominica Chronicle, August 5, 1972, p. 7.

committed to the philosophy of Black Power, though at present, understanding of the concept is spreading to all elements of the society.

The Academy affair - the movement and the students.

The role of the High School students in the Movement can best be explained through an analysis of the Academy affair. St. Mary's Academy is a secondary school in the capital of Dominica with an enrollment of some four hundred boys. In its present form it was staffed by a group of missionaries first from the United States and then from Canada. Under the first set of missionaries, the school had grown in number of students as it produced good results in the final examinations which were graded in Britain. But over the years, it had been poorly administered as the principal was changed every three years. The important point to remember was that discipline had deteriorated as recent principals did not live up to the standards of the past. But the last principal was determined to bring back the school to normal again by tightening up on discipline. He had become principal after having spent some time in the school just as one within the ranks. But his drive to shake up the school was ill-timed. It was then that the Black Power Movement was taking a hold in Dominica, and that the students began seeing everything white as anti-black.

At the same school, the Black Power leader had been

dismissed and the students had not forgotten it. From this fateful day on, a handful of students began to ask for a greater say in the running of the school. At the same time, they were having frequent meetings with members of the Movement on the outside. Had they not been sustained by these outside leaders, they would have gotten nowhere.

Still, the confrontation with the school authorities could have been handled peacefully. The students would have lost but the new principal, who had made it to the top through devious means, was to be stern and inflexible. He committed a great error by being drawn into the controversy of the warring political parties. His allowing the bourgeois elements to give advice as to the running of the school was responsible for his downfall. He believed that the Government was behind the students in the former's attempts to end the Church supremacy in education.

In its characteristic erratic behavior, the Government became involved. For example, when a group of students were turned down by the Principal for a hearing, they brought their complaint directly to the Head of State. They were right to do this because it was intolerable to have a secondary school in a small country like Dominica with no supervision from the national Government. The Principal of the Academy saw the reception afforded the students as the Government's intention to interfere in the

running of the school. No doubt the Government wanted to get into the act because LeBlanc had always been anti-Catholic. Secondly, the Principal had already involved the Opposition, by using its leader, Miss Charles, as legal counsel to the school. Knowing the nature of politics in countries like Dominica, where every politician wants to be recognized, Miss Charles was a poor choice. But her selection as legal advisor was no surprise as the Principal had always shown himself to be a great friend of the elite. And when this writer questioned him on that matter, he responded that his job was to take from the rich to give to the poor. In this writer's opinion, his shortcomings were just too many to be made principal at that critical time but his superiors in the United States appointed him. Even as an ordinary member of the staff, he always had his few favorites with whom he communicated. On becoming Principal, this same pattern was continued which only lowered his own credibility. Had he been more tactful, the events which precipitated the closure of the school would have been averted.

The organized few. The crisis at the Academy seemed to have spurred a few Academy students to form a group they called Student Movement Against Oppression. They put out a two-page mimeo to explain their side of the story as opposed to the authorities side. In short, they refuted the charge that they were determined to destroy the school.

That would be foolish, they argued, since that would mean their own destruction.²⁸ Subsequently, they produced two periodicals. In both they have found it necessary to reiterate their position; they say:

"Our basic aims are:

- (1) to educate the masses; (2) to unite the youth of the state."

How will they educate the masses. . . ?

- (a) the publication of a youth magazine
- (b) organize debates. . .
- (c) identifying ourselves with the masses
- (d) help the youth in education

On unifying youth they propose:

- (a) infiltrate youth organizations. . .
- (b) substitute cooperation for hostile competition
- (c) be a moral example
- (d) change values toward manual work
- (e) agitate for educational reform²⁹

Quite characteristically, the manifesto ends with a number of quotations of Mao, Forbes Burnham, Prime Minister of Guyana, probably for the effect of engendering commitment and enthusiasm. But the group has not said how it plans to identify with the masses and how it wanted to achieve the rest. Not one of the programs outlined has been given serious consideration. Besides, these are not only impractical but are full of deceit. This group has proven itself unable to live up to expectations. It is very much part of the ongoing order, wears Afros to be part of the

²⁸Student Speaks, August, 1972, p. 1.

²⁹Ibid.

crowd, and is the same group which remains in the urban area, but looks down on the rural elements.

The university students. Today Dominica has a number of its students attending the University of the West Indies. They are like the High School students in their "commitment" to change. They were in the larger islands when developments were taking place. When they returned to Dominica, they took it upon themselves to pass on the newly seen light to the masses. But they lacked the commitment to immerse themselves into the people's struggle because they had too much to lose. They are the sons and daughters of the people who now run the establishment. Thus, only a few among their number have been able to "expose" the inequalities of Dominican society. And even they are suspect.

The university students from Dominica do not have an organized group. They have limited themselves to signing petitions which they do not hope to stand by. Their June 1972 manifesto showed their stand with the masses. Among the many things outlined in it, the individuals "committed themselves to working only in areas where they could benefit the masses." They were also committed to fight the bourgeoisie and the Church.³⁰

³⁰"Our Stand with the Masses," The Star, June 30, 1972, p. 5.

They are still at the university; they must be given a chance to prove themselves one way or the other. But if their past actions are an indication of future behavior, they may as well settle down and accept their position in life and forget the masses. In the past, they have shown themselves to be very hypocritical and inept. They may just provide the editor of The Herald with enough examples of intellectual dishonesty. At the same time, it cannot be expected that all students will become revolutionaries. It is one thing to be very progressive while still at school, but it is another when one is faced with the reality of physically immersing oneself into the daily struggle.

The Movement and the Polity

Attention will now be focussed on the relation of the Movement with the masses, the bureaucrats and business elements of the society. The strange relationship which exists between these elements and the Movement is not surprising. Black Power advocates are have-nots with nothing to lose but to keep frightening the masses and the "haves." In the process, the Movement has been hurt by many factors. In the first place, it is not united and has not been able to expose its ideas clearly. Such is not possible as several factions have to be satisfied. Vaguely, the Movement is for the betterment of all Dominicans. This has not been carried across too well. The Movement is further

plagued by the fact that its leaders do not trust each other completely. But these dangers and impediments can be corrected.

The Movement and the bureaucrats. The Dominican bureaucracy is a strange mixture of people. Its composition and peculiarities have been discussed in Chapters Two and Three. The bureaucrats, although very dark in complexion, are now even more frightened by the Movement.³¹ They are afraid that a new idea will penetrate their heads and are determined to keep the younger elements of the society in their places. They will do everything to crush any perceived enemy.

To test their reaction to the Movement, they were asked by this writer, "What does Black Power stand for in Dominica?" They were next asked, "What are the contributions of the Movement to the island? Responses to the above questions were negative.³² They were convinced that the Movement was hurting Dominica. Then without being asked, many of them outlined what Black Power should mean. But on

³¹This leads back to the original definition of Black Power in Dominica. The Movement does not consider the elites of the bureaucracy as being Black, since the latter have not shown their commitment to uplifting the poorer elements of the society. The Movement applies the concept of "Black Skin White Mask" of Franz Fanon to the bureaucrats.

³²This writer is convinced that the two bureaucrats who gave "favorable" responses to the above questions were not being honest. They had been members of the Movement, but when they had learned enough about its activities, they left it to inform members of the Government about the

close examination, their "shoulds" and what the Movement stands for are almost identical. They both speak about the uplifting of the black man by providing more and better services. On the basis of answers to the question, "What does Black Power mean in Dominica?" the following could be discerned from the responses of the forty-five bureaucrats :

Figure VIII: The Meaning of Black Power as Perceived by forty-five bureaucrats.

	Number	Percentage
Favorable	2	4.4
Violence	21	45.0
Anti-White	10	22.0
Take from White for Black	10	22.0
No response	3	6.6

The response, though revealing, is not surprising. This is an indication that the great majority of bureaucrats do not like the Dominican brand of Black Power while only a few were favorably disposed to it. Even this 4.5% favorable response becomes suspect since the respondents were formerly part of the Movement. They also knew that this writer was aware of their previous affiliations, so for this reason, they felt obligated to give a favorable response. There were a few who chose not to answer the question on Black

Movement's activities and strategies. This explains why why in the final analysis, their responses were considered negative.

Power since they were afraid to let their true feelings be known. This demonstrates that bureaucrats in developing areas are often pressured on all sides. They are constantly presented with a situation where their principles are tested and many times they give in rather than fight.

The Movement and the masses. The assessment here is very impressionistic, though the conclusions drawn are fairly accurate. The people can be divided into two groups, the urban and the rural. The rural elements seem to be more politically conscious than the urban masses because the former are more able to see contradictions in society. The politically conscious in the rural area can see that the politicians spend much of their time in the urban area. But the rural few who are aware of these disparities are not numerous enough to turn down the politicians at the polls. In spite of their small number, they are larger than the few urban people who see the same pressing problems.

The masses in Dominica are never asked for their opinion. It is just assumed that they will accept programs without questioning them, although the immediate urge in the people is to become "better." And to be better in Dominica means to be like the upper rich class and not to disturb them. The masses have become convinced that the rich had to work hard for what they have got. They do not see this class as exploiters. These naive and simple people have not felt the squeeze that the Black Power

advocates are talking about. The world of the masses is very narrow. If they want a good job for their children which they all do, they will seek a recommendation from a member of the upper class. The person writing the recommendation may not even know the candidate being referred, but Dominica still talks about opportunity for all on the basis of merit. The picture is fairly clear that the masses of Dominica want to be like the upper class people and will always support them.

The following encounter with a man of about forty-five reveals how the people think. He was asked to explain his position on Black Power. He was very critical of the Movement and went on to talk about their many senseless acts. He could not cite anything good about the Movement. His position is quite understandable when one considers his life story. He had worked all his life in a thirty-dollar-a-week job. He once lived in a shack and was now living in his own well-built home. He recounted his troubles to this writer and concluded that during the time of his problems no one ventured to assist him. He was even opposed to the idea that it was the duty of the Government to either provide decent jobs to earn enough to build a home or provide such homes to people like him. He was particularly critical of his neighbors because they did not like him for having uplifted himself. But he seems to be blaming the wrong people.

His neighbors are no Black Power advocates. They are all members of a small society which is always enmeshed in petty jealousies and bickerings. The neighbors are equally hostile to the Black Power Movement. Besides, the Movement could not have helped that man because it did not have the means. The Movement cannot even help itself, far less help others.

By and large, the masses hate the Movement intensely because they do not understand it. They cannot understand that their miserable lives did not have to be the way they are. They are simple people, with simple aspirations and do not want any trouble. The masses have been placed in a position of dependence vis-a-vis the wielders of power in the society. They do not want to upset the situation.

The Movement, the church and education. When the Movement speaks about the Roman Catholic Church, it is referring to the hierarchy. It does not include members of the Church, estimated at 95% in Dominica. This is a correct assessment since all decisions in the Church are taken by the hierarchy, composed of the priests and one bishop, with a few chosen laymen from the upper class. In other words, the Church has lived up to its tradition by leaving out the laity in decision-making processes.

The Church is closely related to education. While the Government administered the colony, the Church ran the schools. In fact, in 1836, it started the first secondary

school and at one point owned every primary school building. Today, it runs the only secondary school for girls, one of the two secondary schools for boys, the largest and best primary school in the island, and two other primary schools in separate villages. It was the first to introduce technical and vocational training and still runs the only placement service for school graduates. In addition, it erected, with outside help, the first day care centers and pre-school programs. All these achievements were made with little or no help from the Government. In fact, there have been instances where some primary school teachers have had to be paid by the Church itself, although the Government was committed to pay the salaries.

In the area of social services, the achievements of the Church have been equally impressive. It has provided training for many in the health field. Doctors sponsored by it have spent years in the public hospital. Nurses from the United States have been brought down by it to help alleviate the shortage in Dominica. It has undertaken to distribute free food provided by outside agencies. It has provided gainful employment to young girls by establishing an industrial school to produce rugs and local shirts. Through its youth organizations, the Young Christian Students and Workers, it was able to instill a sense of responsibility in many young men and women. These young people now staff the bureaucracy and other

private organizations.³³ Also, through these organizations, many individuals were able to receive scholarships to pursue leadership training courses in Canada and returned to Dominica to be of service to the people. Above all, the Church brought the Cooperative Credit Union to Dominica. This Union has been able to keep Dominica's money in Dominica. It has taught the Dominican that with a little help, he is able to help himself and lead a better life.

Thus, to say that the Church has not done anything is to be uncharitable and irresponsible. Even the politicians agree that the Church has helped Dominica. But everyone is disturbed, for different reasons of course, about the overemphasis the Church has laid on damnation. Edward LeBlanc, no friend of the Church, has seen this emphasis as using the superstitious tradition in Dominican society to force the people into submission. But why should the Church want to force that submission. LeBlanc and others like him were unable to give a satisfactory answer. This writer agrees that the Church has always wanted to force submission but he has been unable to discern precisely why this is the case. One can only guess that the Church wants submission to assert its superiority

³³The list of those who got their first professional "push" from the Catholic Young Christian Workers Movement is impressive. The few named here are representative: Charles Maynard, Havis Shillingford, M.C. Doctrove, Gifford Dorval, Robert St. John, LeRoy Mitchell, Barnett Defoe, Henry John.

and to get the job done very quickly.

Thus, in spite of the impressive record, the Dominican Church has not become a friend of the people. It has kept its distance. This is reflected in the few native Dominicans who have been accepted into its ranks, though it keeps talking about the desire to have more native priests. One can only surmise that the priests of Dominica do not consider the native their equal. This also holds true for the priests who man the rural districts and who are from a different order than the ones in the urban area. They look at the natives with contempt. To them, the natives cannot measure up to the desired standard.

For these reasons, the Movement and the Church have been at odds. The Movement is convinced that the Church cannot act in any fashion other than in concert with the elite to maintain the status quo. And it is also true that the Church has always been a follower rather than an initiator of meaningful change. Throughout its history, it has hardly ever tampered with the society in which it is found. It is only in rare cases where it stands to gain that it has taken a controversial stand, and then often only by the "defrocked" priest who does not represent the viewpoint of the Church. Ironically, the Church is one of those few organizations which has the greatest chance to forcefully speak out against injustice. In the first place, its mission is to do just that. Secondly, it does not

depend on any Government for its livelihood. Its directives come from Rome and whenever its priests are expelled, the Holy Father is prepared to welcome them. Even the persecuted native priests have on occasion taken advantage of this warm abode. Thus, one might be inclined to agree with the Movement that the Church has joined the conspiracy to stifle the aspirations of the powerless in Dominica. This comes in an era when the Head of State, E.O. LeBlanc, has consistently accused the Church of being the number one enemy of the people. He has said on occasion that once the Church keeps insisting that the "devil is black and St. Michael White, it will be difficult for us (black Dominicans) to make the sort of progress to show that we, too, have a claim to heaven."³⁴ And if that is any consolation, the heir apparent to LeBlanc's job, Patrick John, has condemned the Church for not providing more for the masses since it pays no taxes.³⁵

The Movement has taken the position that arguing whether God exists or not becomes meaningless as long as people are still hungry and homeless. Further, the idea that Dominica is 95% Catholic does not shed light on the poor quality of life. If Christianity can bring about a better life to the common man, then it becomes relevant.

³⁴ Dominica Herald, April 26, 1969, p. 1.

³⁵ Interview with Ronald Green in Dominica, January 10, 1973.

But in Dominica the Church has shown itself to be somewhat reactionary. And though on the surface the politician and Church seem to be fighting each other, in reality the two are working toward the same end. They both do not want trouble. Instead of making earthly promises as the politicians do, the Church speaks about the coming after life. While on earth, the sinner must pray, the Dominican is told. He must suffer now to be happy later. Does it follow that the priests are having their good life now and will have their hell later? This question must be raised since there is no indication of suffering on the part of the priests. They live in the best houses and are well fed. They have no daily cares about sustenance since it is provided for. Their cares on earth are minimal, at least on the surface.

The Church has done a lot for the people but very little with them. It has preached about the unpredictable after life but has refused to consider seriously the present which has more than its share of tribulations. Its company has been privileged class and in the process has made that class feel superior to the lower class. With its emphasis on pomp and pageantry, the Church has been served by the people and has not served the people. By its silence, it condoned the dehumanizing practices of the upper class against the poor. It has acquired property and on a few occasions has forcefully evicted Dominicans from its premises when they were unable to pay rent. But

more tragically, its shortcomings have been brought out in the open by the poor quality or personnel who manned its posts. On many occasions, the priests were poor examples to the people. Some took to drinking, while others pursued other activities which were not in keeping with their own principles. But the greatest harm the Church committed was to continue and reinforce the discrimination begun by colonialism. It weakened the people, who were unable to "lift themselves up by their bootstraps." The people had no other choice but to feel inferior, to feel that they were nothing and will always remain nothing. This contempt for the masses can be documented in many ways, but the best was the attitude of those priests who during their weekly confessional sessions openly chastized the natives.

The Movement on education. Every time the subject of education has been brought up in this study, the story has been the same. It is in a dismal state. Curriculum development is non-existent. There is hardly a curriculum for any course, the teacher is simply handed a text and directed to teach. Education for the most part takes the form of memorization and repetition in order to write an examination, graded in Britain. The exact nature of the system has been treated in Chapter Three. But it is interesting to note that in spite of the overwhelming failure of the system no effort has been made to change it. Failure here is measured in terms of the number of people

who write examinations and the number who are successful. The following chart shows the situation in selected subjects; it needs no further explanation.

Figure IX.. Number of Students who Wrote and Passed Selected Subjects.

SUBJECT	1966		1967		1968		1969		1970		1971	
	WRITE	PASS										
English language	99	51	88	55	124	40	119	80	120	75	156	103
English literature	53	29	50	27	81	64	67	58	52	22	94	60
Mathematics	50	23	35	21	91	54	96	59	87	46	100	41
Physics*	None		8	4	12	5	10	5	20	9	22	13

* All Males

Source: Dominica The Statistical Division, Department of Development, Annual Statistical Digest No. 4 1972, Roseau, Dominica. Table 32.

Change cannot be initiated by Dominica alone since the Dominica system is part of a broader system which includes the entire British Caribbean. If Dominica were to change its system completely, there is no guarantee that other islands would either change or even respect Dominica's move. That is something the Movement which has talked about change, has not fully understood yet. Change is easy to talk about; the Movement can even speak about phasing out secondary education to replace it with technical education.

These are good ideas and even desirable but will hurt Dominica. The change would call for a change on the regional level. It would mean that Dominican students would not be able to attend the University of the West Indies. In itself this would not be a bad idea since that archaic institution does more harm than good to the Dominican graduates. It generally makes him feel superior to other Dominicans. But severing relations with that university would entail imposing a restriction on the individual who may still want to attend it. To compound this issue, Dominica cannot afford a university of its own. It cannot even afford a good secondary school which could produce "desired" results. Clearly, should Dominica move to change the system drastically it will be at a decisive disadvantage vis-a-vis the other islands of the Caribbean. This change the Movement speaks about must be regional.

On another level, the Movement's view on education is not so radical. Many of the issues it talks about have been raised by the politicians before, but they have done nothing about them for obvious reasons. The Movement is dissatisfied with the expensive nature of education. This precludes massive education with the rural areas receiving the least attention. The peasants, by their labor, are the ones who sustain education but are forced to send their children to the main town to get a secondary education. Because of the costly nature of this undertaking,

the great majority of the peasants' children never finish high school. The injustices of the situation can be demonstrated by the following figures. They show the density of population in the main town vis-a-vis three districts.

Figure X. Most Populous Districts and Number of Secondary Schools.

Location	No. of citizens	No. of secondary schools
Roseau	20,114	4
St. Andrew	11,998	None
St. David	6,709	None
St. Patrick	10,085	None

The Movement has also shown concern over the content of education generally. It contends that it is too white oriented and almost totally irrelevant, since the purpose of education is to build and preserve a desired society. Therefore, since Dominican society is an appendage to white society, it stands to reason that the content of education will be geared to maintaining and preserving what was introduced. Further, since education is an import, it will always reflect the biases of the designer of that system.

The Movement seems to be too presumptuous on this point. It is giving credit where it is clearly not due. The British gave direction to education but never left a

concrete plan. The present plan for education seems to be an oral one. Those who received the plan, by observation for the most part, have endeavored to continue to stick to it as best as they can remember. But when all is said and done, the Government does not seem to have any definite plans for the educational system other than their perennial empty assertion that Government seeks by "an intensive program. . .to provide free education."³⁶ Quantity is the first priority and not quality, according to this one sentence plan.

The desired new look in education. The Movement wants the people to be made aware of the usefulness of the land and move away from unproductive work in the bureaucracy. It wants to draw a distinction between certification and education. The certified students must be made aware to stop looking down on the peasant. The new Dominican must know the history of the struggle of his black brothers.³⁷ In dealing with examples to illustrate a point, efforts must be made to use relevant examples. For example, instead of having a problem in mathematics which deals with a train leaving one point and arriving at another in Britain, it should be stated, according to the Movement, thus:

³⁶The Educator, September 29, 1971, p. 12.

³⁷Caribbean Rebellion, Dominica, p. 24.

A bus leaves Marigot going to Roseau, a distance of thirty miles, driving at twenty-five miles per hour, because the roads are bad, it makes a two hour stop on account of landslides, how long does it take that bus to reach Roseau."³⁸

This is a more meaningful example, asserts the Movement. It makes the young Dominican question everything. It will make him ask how is it that the road get blocked so easily. It will change his attitude toward the Government which seems to be doing so much, while in fact only a few programs have been successfully completed.

But the most distressing aspect of the educational system, according to the Movement, is the rapid realization that the British have effectively conditioned the Dominican to feel that everything white is superior. The Movement states its position succinctly: "We are like dummies being brainwashed for the ultimate benefit of the white boy and preserving the upper class dominance in Dominica."³⁴ What is being argued here is the fact that the British have inculcated such high standards which often are irrelevant in the Dominican context that standards become an end. The only way out of this situation, asserts the Movement, is by completely destroying the whole system--but how?

³⁸Ibid., p. 25.

Conclusion

The Black Power Movement is not the strongest interest group vis-a-vis the political parties in Dominica. But it is the only group which has been able to openly challenge the power structure while all other groups work together with the Government. The group is still very weak since it does not have a sufficient supply of able leaders. This is due to the fact that anyone who challenges the existing system has been forced out of Dominica. Such leaders cannot remain because they have to find some means of livelihood. The few who remain have not shown themselves "radical" enough to be forced out yet. Further, the Movement has been plagued by the many splinter groups which developed as leaders disagreed on tactics. Some leaders believed in giving public lectures to educate the people. Others felt the era for this was over. It was now time for action. But the major stumbling block to the Movement is its low membership, which might not be all bad. Few members can be more easily controlled and directed.

At the end of 1972, the group had decided to make a concerted effort to change its image and become more unified and constructive. By then, three able leaders were permanently residing in Dominica; they reorganized the Movement and changed the name from Black Power to the Movement for a New Dominica. Secondly, they have established five task forces to tackle the problems of Dominica. The

unemployment task force attempts to find out who is unemployed and to place them in appropriate jobs. The political education division tries to inculcate a sense of Dominican history in the people. The Communication Committee tries to bridge the gap between Roseau, the capital, and the rural areas. Two task forces deal with publication and fund raising.

This is a good beginning. If the dynamism of the Movement continues many changes will result. The Movement will increase its credibility with the masses. It will demonstrate that it is not all talk but can do things with the people. But its major problem seems to be its heavy emphasis on Roseau where all task forces are situated. If the Movement could physically move away from the major town, it could obtain better and faster results. For one thing, the Government could be caught more unawares. The Movement would be working to undermine the Government without causing any great stir. That is precisely why Government response to these programs has been favorable. The Government does not understand the implications of political education. It has never tried and will probably never try it on its own behalf.

The Movement seems to be on the right track. And even though the Government is still amazed at the Movement's commitment to destroy the present society, the Government has allowed it to operate. The Government has allowed

"its Radio Station" to be used to explain the position of the Movement. But it must be emphasized again that the Government is no friend of the Movement and does not really understand the implications of its actions. If everything goes according to plan, the Movement could produce tremendous results at the expense of many other more powerful interests in the Dominican political system.

In the final analysis, the Movement may be accused of proposing only incremental change. It would probably answer that incremental changes are only feasible presently. It is only when the masses of Dominica have become conscious that they will rise up and get all that they deserve. The people are just not yet ready for immediate revolution.

CHAPTER VI

FEDERATIONS IN THE BRITISH WEST INDIES

Introduction

This case study has treated Dominica as a complete political system, although it was emphasized that the system was affected by other political systems. It is true that Dominica should be treated as an entity on to itself. But since 1932 there has been a Caribbean regional feeling which has affected its political system. Thus the purpose of this chapter is to analyze the two major attempts at federation in the West Indies.

The chapter begins with a brief discussion of the meaning of federation, and why territories decide on forming a federation. It leads to a discussion of the specific situation in the British West Indies. Throughout, the Dominican political system is treated as a subsystem of a larger entity, the British West Indies.

Definition and Reasons for Federating

A definition and reasons for a federation pose problems. It is generally accepted that a federalized state is "one in which the several units and their respective powers are constitutionally or otherwise legally united under

the ultimate powers of a central state and government."¹ Secession for any one participating unit is virtually out of the question. This is ensured in some federations by the fact that the participating units retain some powers which they can apply to the same people regulated by the federated state. At the beginning of such unions, it could be problematic to draw with precision the sphere of influence of each unit vis-a-vis the union. But with time, such demarcation could become clearer. The balance between the central unit and the separate units usually decides the success or failure of the union.

But the question is why do people join in federations? The answer is because they see more to be had from that enterprise than remaining as separate units. William Riker argues that federations are set up because they provide a wonderful opportunity to acquire territory without the use of force. He states further that federations occur to ready a government for some military-diplomatic threat or opportunity.²

Frank Trager adds that the economic motive and the cultural tradition of a number of states are driving forces

¹Frank Trager, "On Federalism," Why Federations Fail, ed. by Thomas Franck, (New York: New York University Press, 1968), p. X

²William Riker, Federalism: Origin, Operation, Significance (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1964), p. 5.

which may foster federation.³

Surely, the above is an incomplete list of the reasons for the creation of all federations. In fact, each federal attempt has its own inner dynamics. According to Wheare, modern federations have come about because there has been

A sense of military insecurity and of a consequent need for common defence; a desire to be independent of foreign powers, and a realization that only through union could independence be secured; a hope of economic advantage from union; some political association of the communities concerned prior to their federal union either in a loose confederation, as with the American States and the Swiss cantons, or as parts of the same empire, as with the Canadian and Australian Colonies, geographical neighbours; and similarity of political institutions. . .⁴

But motives are not enough to explain federalism, according to Henry Teune.⁵ The perception of the means and the seriousness of the actors to achieve it also becomes important.

In relation to federation in the British West Indies, the question arises whether these conditions were present there. Keeping the above definition in mind, one can ask whether the islands were ready for federation.

³Frank Trager, "On Federalism," p. XIV.

⁴K.C. Wheare, Federal Government (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 54.

⁵Henry Teune, "The Future of Federalism: Federalism and Political Integration," Federalism: Infinite Variety in Theory and Practice, ed. by Valerie Earle (Itasca, Ill.: F.E. Peacock Publishers, Inc., 1968), p. 214.

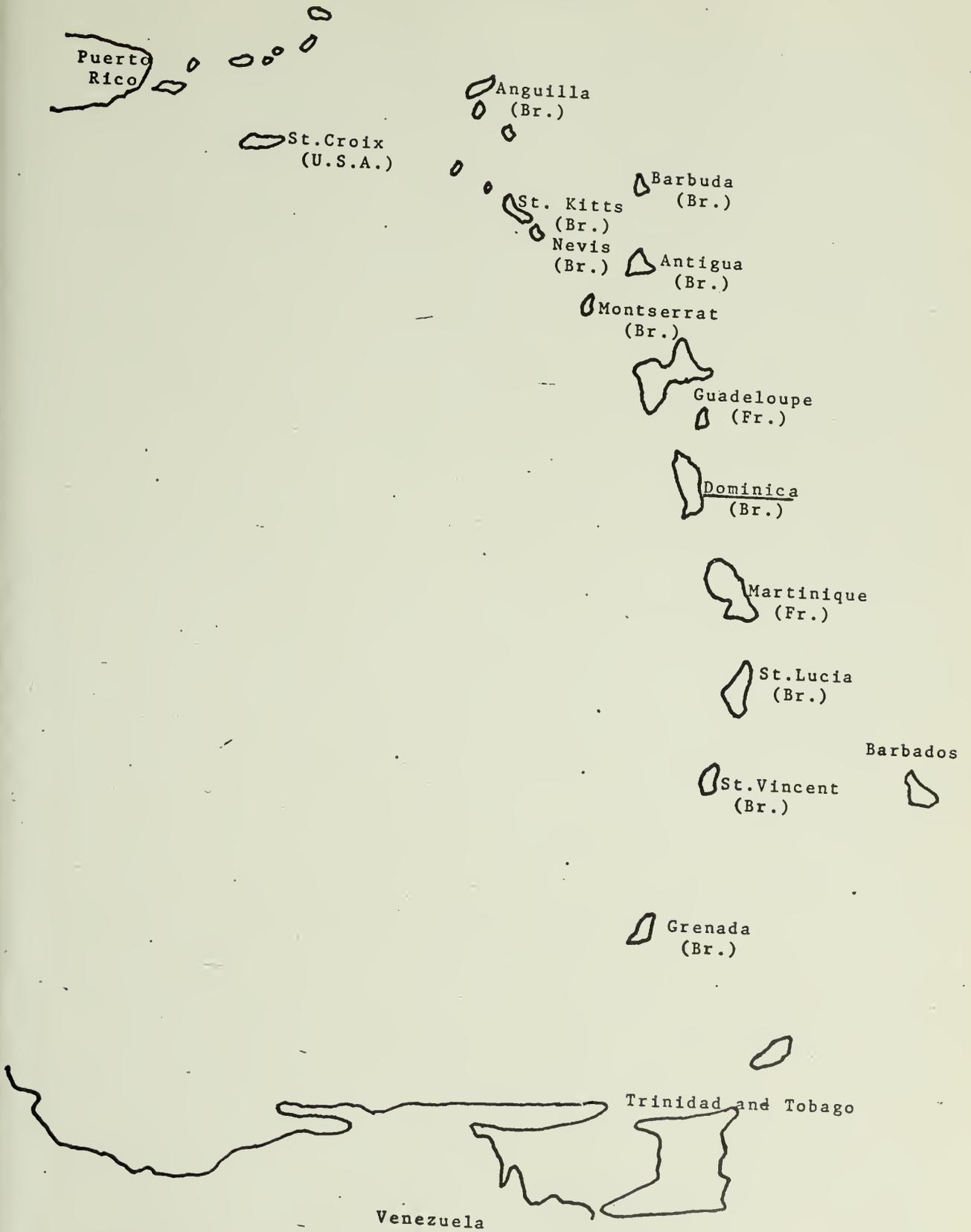
Federation - A Caribbean Panacea⁶

The list of suggestions, exhortations and attempts at getting the British Caribbean islands into a union is indeed impressive. Federation seems to be second nature to the Caribbean, but that is a very deceiving assumption. As early as 1705, the Leeward Islands (see map) were joined in an association that did not last. Fifty-eight years later, the islands (Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent) captured by Britain in the Seven Years War (1763) were formed into the Government of Grenada. By 1830, Tobago, Barbados, Grenada, St. Vincent and St. Lucia were under one Governor. But each unit retained its legislature.

The main feature of these pseudo-federations was the all powerful Governor who controlled the units with an iron fist. No "deviation" was allowed on the part of the local politicians. Thus, the federal principle affected only the judiciary, agriculture and education. It was a federation of bureaucratic structures. The federation did

⁶The data dealing with the several attempts at Federation in the British West Indies were collected from the following sources: Bernard Marshall, "Attempts at Windward/Leeward Federation," unpublished paper. Honorable S.S. Pamphal, West Indian Nationhood, Myth, Mirage or Mandate (Georgetown, Guyana: Ministry of External Affairs, 1971). Cheddi Jagan, A West Indian State Pro-Imperialist or Anti-Imperialist, (Leytown, Guyana: New Guyana Co. Ltd., 1972). C.M. MacInnes, "British Caribbean Federation," Developments Towards Self Government in the Caribbean (The Hague: W. van Hoeve Ltd., 1955), pp. 151-175.

Figure XI. The "Little Eight" Islands



not create a regional feeling and Britain was not concerned with that; but instead, tried to create yet another federation within the Caribbean region. The attempt involved uniting Barbados to St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Grenada and Tobago. Barbados was the unwilling partner this time. It objected on the grounds that federation would mean a step backwards. The islands with which it was to unite were not as politically "advanced" as it was. Barbados had always prided itself as little Britain since it never was "graced" with Crown Colony Government, while the other units were still Crown Colonies.⁷ Barbados never joined the union but the remaining islands of Grenada, St. Vincent, St. Lucia, and Tobago were joined together to form one administrative unit. Thus, in the British scheme of things, there were two distinct federations, the Leeward and the Windward,⁸ existing side by side with little or no contact maintained between them. It never occurred to the British, or even the islands themselves, that they could more efficiently use their resources by coming together in a larger union.

The federations were weak and artificial. They were not spontaneous, but were imposed from the outside. One cannot accept the statement made by Hubert Rance, a former

⁷J.H. Parry and Phillip M. Sherlock, Short History of the West Indies (London: McMilland and Co., 1960) passim.

⁸See map on p. 267 for islands in each group.

Governor of Trinidad, that "it has always been Britain's policy to make the islands work together to be a stronger unit."⁹ At times, they were forced to work together because it suited Britain's purposes. But from the very beginning the islands have not looked at each other for help, and instead have been taught to imitate the British. Each island has learned over the years to agitate for "advanced and better" conditions for itself in isolation rather than fight for regional advancement. And Britain did help this state of affairs since it always responded to each island's demands in isolation rather than on a Caribbean level. Consequently, all attempts at federation have been seen by the more politically "advanced" islands as a burden. Indeed it had to be a burden since the less "advanced" islands were not ready in many instances to man the mechanics of modern sophisticated government which gave great responsibility to elected representatives.

Toward the end of the 19th century, the idea of West Indian federation came to a standstill. Britain was responding to the needs of the time. It was busy consolidating the power of the Governors in the separate units. By then, it was taken as a given that the Governor was going to institute the machinery of representative

⁹Sir Hubert Elwin Rance, "Towards a Federation of the British West Indies," The Caribbean: Contemporary Trends, ed. by A. Curtis Wilgus (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1953), p. 244.

government. He would later turn over the administration of the units when the natives were ready.

During the first three decades of the 20th century, the spirit of federation was revitalized, but two major Commissions of Inquiry¹⁰ sent to the Caribbean during that time ruled out federation. They felt that the people were not ready yet, though no plans were made to get them ready. The Commissions were mistaken by blaming the wrong people for the lack of enthusiasm for federation. They should have said that the politicians did not want a federation because they were happy to be rulers in their own domain. But by 1945, with nationalism in the air, the separate units of the Caribbean together with Britain embarked on a venture which was destined to produce different results. The British wanted a British West Indian Federation more than the West Indians themselves, to get rid of the ever increasing administrative cost of the colonies. On the other hand, the larger islands of the Caribbean embarked on a course to get their independence from Britain, not in association with the smaller units. They only used West Indian federation as a device to get their own

¹⁰ The Colonial Office, Report by the Honorable E.F.L. Wood on His Visit to the West Indies and British Guiana, Dec. 1921-Feb. 1922, Cmd. 1679, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1922 and West Indies Royal Commission (1938-9) Report Cmd. 6607 (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1945).

independence.¹¹

The Modern Era of West Indian Federation

Different writers give different beginnings to the modern drive for Caribbean regional unity. This writer chooses to mark the starting point as 1932 because then the first genuine move undertaken by West Indians to show their desire for a political union in the region occurred. After this move, it will be shown that it was all "downhill" as the British undertook to fashion West Indian unity in its own way. And every time the British tried, the Caribbean was unable to provide the leadership to counteract unwanted British influence. The leaders simply became followers with little imagination or ingenuity.

The First Serious Attempt at Federating the British West Indies

The 1932 Dominica conference. The 1932 conference was called by Cecil A. Rawle of Dominica in response to a British move in the same year to impose a federation on

¹¹ During this London Conference, Jamaica took time to talk with Britain about its own constitutional advancement. During the second attempt Barbados showed the same ambivalence by pushing for West Indian unity and at the same time was looking after its own constitutional advancement. See Michael Hewitt, "The Tragedy of Sherbourne," Advocate, April 9, 1965, p. 3. Hewitt wrote: "I cannot understand his (Barbados leader Errol Barrow) simultaneous occupation with the federal efforts, his summit meetings and his insistence on independence for Barbados."

West Indians. The West Indian leaders viewed this move with suspicion.¹² They were of the opinion that Britain wanted the credit for getting the islands federated. Secondly, the type of federation Britain wanted to impose was a reactionary one since federation at that time would not bring with it political independence. Britain wanted only unity to save money. To the West Indian leaders, this federation was a step backwards.

The conference was timely, but was not well planned and was poorly run as a result. In the first place, the delegates found it necessary to show their allegiance to the Crown, thus dampening the "revolutionary" zeal of the conferees.¹³ Secondly, not all the islands sent delegates. Some were in Britain asking for more advanced constitutions for their separate units. Lastly, the participants could not agree on the type of federation they wanted. Some wanted a federation even though it did not guarantee immediate independence. The Trinidad delegate, Arthur Cipriani, wanted a federation only if independence was guaranteed immediately.¹⁴ In retrospect, it is easy to see that this disagreement was unnecessary and puerile.

¹²F.A. Hoyos, The Road to Responsible Government (Barbados: Letchworth Press Ltd., N.D.), p. 58.

¹³Roy Augier and Shirley Gordon, eds., Sources of West Indian History (London: Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1962), p. 288.

¹⁴Hoyos, Responsible Government, p. 59.

Of course, this is because the delegates who attended were not the best educated ones of the area. They could not see that having a federation was far more important than whether it was politically dependent or independent. Had they been able to achieve a partial unity first, then they would have been able to press for independence. Their lack of leadership was reflected in the fact that the idea of West Indian unity was dropped from that time onwards. The British revived the idea of West Indian unity in 1947, although in 1945 they released a report which had ruled out the readiness of the Caribbean for federation.

The 1947 Montego Bay conference. The British generally regard this conference as the first serious attempt to discuss West Indian unity. The seeds of this conference were planted in 1947 when a dispatch was sent out by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, urging West Indian leaders to meet to discuss their future.¹⁵ Thus, in February 1947, the British Government invited the West Indian leaders to Montego Bay, Jamaica, to discuss Caribbean regional unity. One would have expected the West Indians to invite the British as observers. The British did not only do the inviting, they even chaired the

¹⁵ Douglas A. Anglin, "The Political Development of the West Indies," The West Indies Federation, ed. by David Lowenthal (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), p. 40.

meeting. Reports circulated that some West Indians had pushed to have the meeting take place in London rather than the Caribbean because they all wanted the meeting held in their islands.

The conference went very smoothly and passed several resolutions. The significant commissions, chaired by Englishmen, were the Regional Economic Committee, to estimate the economic needs of the separate units, and the Standing Close Association Committee, appointed to draw up a preliminary federal constitution.¹⁶ Lloyd Braithwaite described its meeting optimistically. He wrote that "hopes ran high. . .and so general was the agreement that actual federation was imminent."¹⁷

The hopes were surely premature in spite of the fact that a spirit of compromise, alien to West Indian politicians, reigned at the meeting. Alexander Bustamante, representing Jamaica, was the only one to indict the British for lack of concern for the islands.¹⁸ But before the meeting ended, Bustamante seconded a resolution for creating a federation. He went on to remark that he was aware of the many difficult days ahead, but there was no

¹⁶Sir John Mordecai, The West Indies: The Federal Negotiations (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1968), p. 37.

¹⁷Lloyd Braithwaite, "Progress Toward Federation, 1938-1956," Social and Economic Studies (1957), p. 146.

¹⁸Gordon K. Lewis, The Growth of the Modern West Indies (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1968), p. 355.

problem since they could be surmounted.¹⁹ The meeting had indeed proceeded so well that Morley Ayearst could write in 1960 that it was a "valuable training ground for federal politics." One wonders about the sincerity of this statement, but Ayearst continued: "it helped the island politicians to become better acquainted and accustomed to the problems" of the area.²⁰ What was so magical about this meeting? No substantial resolutions were drawn up. The delegates simply agreed to meet again sometime in 1953 to discuss a proposed federal constitution, which was hoped would have been available by then.

The Hubert Rance Report and the 1953 London Conference. The 1953 conference was convened to discuss the federal scheme outlined by Commissioner Hubert Rance, an Englishman and the then Governor of Trinidad and Tobago. His work on the federal scheme covered the years 1948-1950, during which he travelled the entire British Caribbean to gather people's feelings about a proposed federal constitution. Many of the pro-federation leaders of the Caribbean were part of the Rance Commission, but not a single member came from Jamaica, the largest of the units of the future federation. Apparently, Norman Manley, the Jamaican pro-federationist, could not have been included

¹⁹ Proceedings of the Montego Bay Conference, Col. No. 218 (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1960), p. 230.

²⁰ Morley Ayearst, The British West Indies: The Search for Self-Government (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1960), p. 230.

since at that time he was a member of the Caribbean Organization.²¹ The same applied to Eric Williams, who had not yet shown a desire to enter Trinidad electoral politics. But the predominance of the pro-federationists on the Commission leads one to suspect that Britain wanted to release the Caribbean islands at all cost. Further to cut down on too much bickering which would probably have hastened the destruction of the federal idea, all key personnel in the preparatory stage were British. This could have had two results and in both instances, the British would have reached the objective; to be relieved of the burdens of the Caribbean administration. The predominance of the British could have spurred the West Indians to a nationalistic drive, making them break away from British tutelage much faster. This did not happen because colonialism in the British Caribbean has not made the leaders develop a regional spirit to strengthen their positions. The British have allowed each territorial unit, through its leader, to be strong as an individual, precluding the need to join forces to become powerful. The second effect, the predominance of the British could have had, was to make sure everything went right. Evidently the expected results

²¹This was an organization jointly established by the British and the United States after the Second World War to oversee their operations in the Caribbean. For an account of its activities see: Herbert Corkran, Jr., Patterns of International Cooperation in the Caribbean 1942-1969 (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1970).

were not realized. Britain was satisfied to get rid of some of its obligations: both Jamaica and Trinidad became independent nations.

The more salient recommendations of the Rance Report²² were the following: a Federal Parliament would consist of an elected Assembly and an appointed Senate. The latter was to be very weak but could delay money bills passed by the Assembly for three months. The Governor had tremendous power. He would appoint a Council of State consisting of six persons. In addition he would appoint seven Ministers with the advice of the Prime Minister.

The Report also allowed each island of the federation to retain all its powers unless each one agreed to give them up. The Committee prepared two areas; one, where either the Federal Government or the units had exclusive control, and one where the two bodies could share control. The "concurrent" area, where both had power, but with the Federal Government superseding in case of conflict, were trade, commerce, development of industries, and movement of persons.

This Committee made three major blunders. First, it did not allow the islands to be represented in one of the bodies of the federal legislature, on the basis of population, as is done in all successful federations. The

²²Report British Caribbean Standing Closer Association Committee, 1948-49 (Barbados: Advocate Company, Ltd., 1949).

committee, reflecting the British desire to prevent Jamaica from dominating the federation, ruled against the "one man, one vote" principle for at least the Assembly. Thus, on the basis of some mathematical formula which was never explained, Jamaica was to receive 16 seats, though it would pay 40% of the upkeep of the federal structure. Trinidad was to have 9 seats, paying 38% of the federal budget, Barbados 4, British Guiana 6. All the other units had two seats with the exception of Montserrat which receive one. The House was to be made up of 50 representatives.

The second major blunder was the Committee's negative reaction to dual membership in unit and federal legislatures. The Committee was not far-sighted enough to realize that the uncertainty of federal politics would have inevitably kept "able" men on the islands. Dual membership could have forced the holder to relinquish one of the two as the federation became stronger and the work became too much. Lastly, the Committee, without being asked by the island leaders, recommended that Trinidad be the federal capital site. Subsequently, the Caribbean leaders asked an Englishman to make that decision for them but, at that point in time, this opinion was not sought. In West Indian parlance, the committee was too "fast" (too uppity).

By and large, this report was reactionary. It reflected the British view of what the Caribbean federation should be. That was no tragedy. The lack of commitment

the report showed for immediate independence should never have been seen as a stumbling block to federation. In fact, a golden opportunity was presenting itself to the West Indian leaders to reject the report and write one for themselves. They did not have to rely on the British for a constitution by which they were to be ruled. On the other hand, it can be hypothesized, the islands of Jamaica and Trinidad used the federal negotiations as a way to buy time. They did not reject totally the federal scheme but at the same time did not accept it. They kept it floating to achieve their own ends and in the process used the smaller units like Dominica to hide their own selfish motives, that of achieving their own independence.

The 1953 London conference. It was at the 1953 London conference that the Hubert Rance Report was discussed. The Caribbean leaders must have been overjoyed with the location of the meeting since they had always preferred to discuss their future outside the Caribbean. Lloyd Braithwaite wrote of the politicians attending the meeting that they came not as statesmen to discuss substantive issues,²³ to demand of Britain what type of federation they wanted, but came shouting slogans. On paper, the conferees "solved" many problems. They accepted

²³Lloyd Braithwaite, "Federation," p. 153.

the holding of dual office in the unit and federal legislatures, in effect rejecting Rance's suggestion to the contrary. The federal government was given the power to raise revenue through taxes. It was decided that amendments to the federal constitutions should not be made until five years after the federation was established. Then a constitutional convention was to be held to consider revisions.

The report of the 1953 conference²⁴ was presented to the unit legislatures. It did not cause much stir in the area probably because the Caribbean was engaged in more important matters. In the first place, the people were busy celebrating the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. Secondly, the smaller units like Dominica were only getting used to the idea of being able to vote in their representatives. Thirdly, the economic situation in the small units was difficult enough to devote attention to something the leaders themselves did not even understand. For example, it was more important to tend to the nascent banana industry which was going to become more important than to waste time on federation, a nebulous idea, at best.

The 1953 meeting solved nothing. Like the 1947 conference resolutions were passed and more committees

²⁴ Plan for a British Federation of the West Indies Cmd. 8895 (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1953).

appointed to solve problems at a later date. One such committee was to see into the feasibility of allowing citizens of the federation to move freely within the territorial units.

Between 1953 and 1956, no effort was made to get the people better acquainted with the federal idea. The partners to the federation still believed that small meetings could solve all major problems, of course neglecting to take into account that the leaders had never shown a desire to solve the immediate problems such as communicating with each other.

Nearing a federation - 1956 London conference. At the London conference of 1956, the Secretary of State for the Colonies made two major statements at its opening. He insisted that no one island would be allowed to become independent in isolation. Secondly, aid would continue after the federation was established. It was this last factor which made the British insist on giving the British-born Governor final power in financial matters. The Colonial Office wanted close supervision of the British taxpayers' money. But there were major issues which were never satisfactorily settled in the opinion of those who raised them. Britain did not envisage immediate independence because a grant-aided territory could not be an independent territory. Jamaica saw the issue differently. It insisted on immediate independence probably because

Britain had given the instruction, for the first time, of not allowing any one unit to go it alone. Secondly, Jamaica balked at the idea of having an elected Senate but did not want the Governor to have the power to appoint it. Rather, Jamaica felt the Prime Minister should have the power to appoint the Senate. Thirdly, Jamaica did not like the power the federal government was to wield in dealing with customs. It felt that its own industries would be hurt if its products were made available indiscriminantly to the other islands. Of course, most of that fear was based on intuitive feeling rather than facts. As a consequence, a committee was appointed to study the customs issue. The 1956 meeting also rejected Trinidad as the capital site; a committee, composed entirely of British members, was appointed to suggest another site. At the close of the 1956 meeting, it was decided to meet the following year to make plans to launch the federation in 1958.

The 1957 federal conference. The 1957 meeting was the last conference before the federation was launched. Reportedly the West Indian leaders met under tension. They had received the Site Committee report which had cited Trinidad as an unlikely place for the capital because of the unpredictable nature of its politics.²⁵ The Site

²⁵Report of the British Caribbean Federal Capital Commission, Col. No. 328 (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1956).

Committee felt that the racial troubles of Trinidad were too intense to burden the political system with an additional superstructure, the machinery of federation. Further, the British had already announced that a Briton was going to be Chief Justice of the West Indian Supreme Court. Braithwaite wrote later that it had been confidently expected that a local would have been made the Chief Justice.²⁶

This writer cannot agree with this statement since from the very beginning the West Indian leaders had shown a lack of trust in one another. Each unit guarded against what it already had and refused to share with the less fortunate islands. Thus, the British appointment could have been welcomed. The British Government was just not playing favorites and under these conditions was right in appointing an outsider. This writer is more than convinced that the way these leaders were behaving indicated that even placing the West Indian federal capital outside the West Indies would have been more acceptable than having it in the Caribbean. So why could they not do with a British Chief Justice? They had always revered everything British. This last act was merely in keeping with their own desires and behavior patterns.

²⁶Braithwaite, "Federation," p. 162.

Federation created. Although the major issues which were absolutely essential to make a viable federation were not yet resolved, the British Parliament made the West Indies Federation a reality in 1958. Perhaps the British thought that the problems would somehow disappear with the arrival of this "long awaited day." One often wonders, who was really waiting for this day, the British or the West Indians, though the first Prime Minister, Grantly Adams, was quoted as saying that "we cannot wait any longer, we might not have another chance."²⁷ Be that as it may, Princess Margaret declared the federal legislature open in June 1958. To substitute for any real excitement which could have generated a full commitment to federation, the islands made large sums, which they could ill-afford, available to send entertainers to Trinidad for this opening of parliament.

The West Indies was not an independent state, though. In reality, it was a joining of all the colonies into one to make for more efficient administration. This interim period before full independence was also meant to solve the other pressing divisive problems of the union. But as it turned out, between 1958 and 1962, when independence was to be worked at, the leaders at the federal level began to disagree openly with those at the unit level.

²⁷Quoted in Gordon Lewis, Modern West Indies, p. 384.

They adopted what Arthur Lewis has called "open diplomacy," shouting at each other to show their strengths. Finally Jamaica felt prepared to go it alone and Britain was not about to stop it. In 1961, after it had singlehandedly rewritten the federal constitution to reflect its desires, it decided to withdraw from the Federation to become an independent state. Trinidad followed in the footsteps of Jamaica and became an independent state in August 1962.

The Second Attempt at Federating the British West Indies 1962-1965

The First West Indian Federation ended when Jamaica and Trinidad decided to leave the union. But like everything else which went before, an act from Britain was required to dissolve the federation. The leaders of the remaining Little Eight were not dismayed and may even have been overjoyed with the defections of the larger units. They moved quickly to begin a new federation. Their enthusiasm for the federal idea was great, but this time Britain was to stop them. In effect, Britain was warning them that it was not going to allow another failure.

Apparently the leaders were not intimidated by Britain's dealying tactics and at a meeting held in Barbados, in 1961, they pressed the British to consider the new federation as created on the very day the first one ended. It was also at this meeting that the second attempt at federation began to fail even before it came into being.

The leaders learned that "considerable economic aid was going to be needed."²⁸ This meant immediate independence was again out of the question. In fact, two things were coming out in the open which went against the grain of the desired unity to achieve statehood. The first was that the British were unwilling to provide the necessary funds to prevent overburdening the more prosperous islands with financing the federation. The second was a denial of immediate independence for the federation. Both became unacceptable to the West Indian leaders.

Between February 26 and March 3, 1962, the leaders of the Little Eight met with Sir Arthur Lewis to hammer out plans for a new federation. After the meeting, spirits ran high and it is interesting to note what Dominica's chief of state, Edward LeBlanc, had to say on that occasion. It was his opinion that the new federation "would preserve democracy in the area." He insisted that there was no reason why the present leaders could not formulate an acceptable plan of which this generation would be proud.²⁹ Evidently, LeBlanc was not too impressed with the way Jamaica had handled the other units during the first federal attempt. He must have felt that the remaining units could negotiate as equals to achieve their objective and not be

²⁸The Federal Negotiations, 1962-1965 (Barbados: The Government Printing Office, 1965), p. 5.

²⁹Emile Lancelot, "Constitutional Developments Five Years Before and After Statehood," Dies Dominica (November 1972), p. 5.

dominated by an unyielding chauvinist power.

The leaders met again in May 1962 to frame a new constitution for themselves. The meeting used the Arthur Lewis suggestions³⁰ submitted to them, and two other suggestions dealing with specific issues of federation sent out by the British Colonial Office. It was at this meeting that the Eastern Caribbean leaders officially adopted the motion that the new federation would come into being the day the old one died. Up to that point, the British Government had not been party to this new venture, but the West Indian leaders found it necessary to include it in order to receive added revenue to balance the proposed federal budget. This invitation to London took the shape of the leaders sending a report of their meetings to Britain, asking the latter for its approval. Britain was negative to the idea of a new federation. It further suggested that the proposed federation be a stronger one. But the greatest blow to this new drive at regional unity was the message passed on to the unit leaders that "the British Government. . .was unlikely to assist the West

³⁰ Arthur Lewis, Proposals for an Eastern Caribbean Federation Compromising the Territories of Antigua, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, St. Lucia and St. Vincent (Port of Spain: Government of the West Indies, 1962). The specific suggestions are contained in Appendix A.

Indies Little Eight on a greater scale than has so far been envisaged." The British advised that aid would have to be sought elsewhere.³¹

Instead of allowing a new federation to take effect, a White Paper³² dealing with the pros and cons of federation was published by the British. It was intended to make the people better acquainted with the idea of federation. This was ill-timed, to say the least, for the British were merely delaying the new federation. The British used the idea of educating the people on federation as an excuse to postpone its commitment of a continuous subsidy for the new federation. In the first place, the people were never considered before. They had nothing to do with the collapse of the first federation. And, most certainly, the publication of this paper was not going to make any difference in conditioning their attitude to the federal idea.

What occurred in Dominica was fairly typical. Only a few people were informed about federation,³³ and as late as 1965 when the federal idea was all but buried, the

³¹"Dispatch from the Colonial Office of August 9, 1963 to Caribbean Leaders" Regional Council of Ministers, Draft Federal Scheme, As Amended at Ninth Meeting (October, 1964), p. 33.

³²Report of the East Caribbean Federation Conference, 1962 Cmd. 1946 (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1964).

³³Letter in The Dominica Chronicle, November 3, 1963, p. 2.

Barbados Advocate was still asking the leaders to let the public know about federation.³⁴ And even a year before that (1964) The Dominica Chronicle editorialized:

Although we have to rely entirely on news from outside sources, we think that it is generally agreed that plans for a new Federation are well advanced.

The second paragraph read:

It is regrettable to have to repeat that our sources are entirely unofficial. . .As far as we are aware, no public and authoritative statement has been made or document published to acquaint the electorate with the positions agreed to at any stage of the discussion.³⁵

What is being argued here is that, although it was a good idea to inform the masses on federation, nothing of the kind occurred. Had genuine consultation of the people taken place, one of two things would have happened. Either the people would have asked to be let out of this controversy or they would have decided not to have the type of federation that was envisaged. On a very impressionistic level, this writer suspects that they would have opted for the first. The people of the Caribbean have never been consulted on the simplest things which impinge on their lives, far less to be asked to decide on federation, something they barely understood. David Smithers supports this theory for he wrote that after his travels through

³⁴ "Federation: Open Debate in Public," Barbados Advocate May 29, 1965, p. 4.

³⁵ "Federation," The Dominica Chronicle, December 16, 1964, p. 3.

the units in 1965, he found that the people generally were apathetic to the idea of federation.³⁶

It must be noted that even prior to the British move to stop the federation, the leaders had surmounted the major difficulty, each territory contributing to the union according to its ability, which allegedly destroyed the first attempt. The leaders had already decided to have a stronger government than the previously proposed one. The new federal government would have had the power to tax at all levels. In short, the new federation was already acquiring what the first did not have, an independent constituency. On the surface at least, the leaders were showing signs of desiring a federation. This commitment must not have been too great because as soon as the British refused to guarantee the recommended \$215 million³⁷ over a five year period, the Federal idea began to wane. Arthur Lewis did not quite see the situation in the same light. He did not blame the leaders but chastized the British for not allowing the West Indian leaders to have what they wanted, a new federation.³⁸

³⁶ David Smithers, "Federation of the Seven is Dead," Barbados Advocate, April 1, 1965, p. 4.

³⁷ Carleen O'Loughlin, A Survey of Economic Potential and Capital Needs of the Leeward and Windward Islands and Barbados (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1963), p. 136.

³⁸ Arthur W. Lewis, The Agony of the Eight (Barbados: The Advocate Press, 1965), pp. 24-25.

The events of 1963 and 1964. The Little Eight was reduced to Little Seven in 1962 when Grenada showed a desire to join Trinidad as a unitary state. Several regional meetings were held during 1963, and during each one the politicians continued to destroy West Indian unity. Their reliance on Britain had driven them to give up federation since they thought they could not afford federation on their own.

But there were other events which led to the demise of the yet to be established federation. A new government came to power in St. Lucia in 1964 which meant that a new leader was now at the federal level representing the island. This new leader, John Compton, found it necessary to make new demands on the proposed federation. Thus, issues such as the taxing power of the federal government, which were thought to have been solved, were brought up again for further discussion. In addition, Compton found it necessary to initiate a rivalry between St. Lucia, Dominica and St. Vincent against Barbados.³⁹ Compton's reservations about the federal scheme were followed by those of Vere Bird of Antigua. The latter was of the opinion that the federal government should not appropriate any power which was formerly exercised by the territorial governments unless the latter chose to relinquish those powers.⁴⁰

³⁹St. Clair Daniel, "St. Lucia Tough on Federal Plan," Barbados Advocate, November 1, 1964.

⁴⁰Appendix II to Draft Federal Scheme "Reservations to Draft Federal Scheme," Barbados, 1964, p. 2.

Later, Dominica objected through its chief, LeBlanc, to the power of taxation given the federal government. He was of the opinion that banana producing countries like Dominica would be most hurt by it.⁴¹ He was only showing the true nature of all Caribbean politicians, that they are unable to see beyond the shores of their territories. They have been unable to see a regional gain at the expense of the individual territories. Every individual leader began to object to some part of the very constitution they had jointly devised and even accepted.

Quite obviously, many of these objections were puerile and untenable. For example, Vere Bird of Antigua worried at one time that the federal government might acquire the power to direct industries in the region. This to him meant that Antigua's "industrialization" drive would have been halted since it had more industries than some of the other territories. Of course, the possibility of this occurring was high but Antigua was sure to benefit if this was made a fact. Antigua was in such bad shape economically that Britain had to give it money to salvage its sugar industry.⁴²

⁴¹Ibid.,

⁴²David Smithers, "Case of the Irsome Crumb," Barbados Advocate, April 15, 1965, p. 7. The fact was that Antigua was operating its sugar factories very inefficiently, producing 125,000 tons of sugar in factories with 300,000 ton capacities.

With these internal fights, the Eastern Caribbean federation was never created, though it would have had a better chance for survival than its immediate predecessor. It is now generally accepted that the second attempt was a fiasco because Britain refused to guarantee long term finance for the scheme. It is more correct to assert that it failed because the leaders were not committed to West Indian federation. Barbados has since gone it alone, receiving no aid to sustain its independence. Likewise all the remaining territories have achieved some form of independence without a great amount of money aid from Britain.⁴³

The Failure of Federation

The reasons for the failure of the first federation are indeed many. Some observers have emphasized the weak federal structure. Others have written about the inability of the islands to handle the representation crisis,⁴⁴ such as Jamaica's inadequate representation in the first venture. This does not hold true, for in 1961, Jamaica got

⁴³While these pages were being written, the writer received a memo from Dominica which indicated that Jamaica's banana industry has had to be subsidized by a grant from Britain in January 1973.

⁴⁴Explanations for failure have fallen under three main categories: The Sociological by Amitai Etzioni, Political Unification (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965) the legalist constitutional by Jesse Proctor Jr., "Constitutional Defects and the Collapse of the West Indian Federation," and those who emphasize the clash of personalities. Hugh Springer, Reflections on the Failure of the First West Indian Federation (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1964).

everything it had requested, such as the proposal to have about fifty percent of membership in Parliament. Still others have emphasized the lack of a true West Indian character to create a federal culture. This is partially true but history has shown that federal cultures are created after a federation is in progress. Gordon Lewis has written that it is precisely an absence of a federal culture which drives countries to federate.⁴⁵

Yet another group of theorists have explained the failure by emphasizing geography.⁴⁶ It is argued that the islands were too far apart to develop any lasting bond. But these theorists fail to take into account that geography has not prevented either Alaska or Hawaii from joining the American Union. Of course, because the distance did not hamper Alaska's bid to join the American union does not mean that distance could not mitigate against the Caribbean situation. In fact, it did hamper unity. The island leaders did not know their counterparts in the other islands. And besides, Jamaica did not want to associate with the smaller islands. Alexander Bustamante of Jamaica continuously referred to his personal wealth in comparison

⁴⁵Gordon Lewis, Modern West Indies, p. 369.

⁴⁶Charles H. Archibald, "The Failure of the West Indies Federation," World Today, (1962), pp. 233-242; He cited geography as one of several reasons for the failure.

with the budget of say Montserrat.⁴⁷ Furthermore, the American comparison does not hold too much weight because Alaska or Hawaii were no great burden to other members of the American union while the smaller islands were to Jamaica, Trinidad and even Barbados.

All these explanations are partially correct but these obstacles could have been more easily surmounted than three other obstacles which this writer has chosen to highlight. The federal attempts failed because (1) the Caribbean leaders did not want a federation, in spite of their rhetoric to the contrary; (2) Jamaica and Trinidad did not want to have a federal government which could control customs, and (3) Trinidad did not want freedom of movement of persons within the territories.

The leaders did not want federation. In this writer's judgment, there were four key people in the first federation. They were all shortsighted. Alexander Bustamante always wavered on the idea of federation. He was concerned about his own political future and not that of either Jamaica, his adopted home, or the West Indies. During 1949 and 1955 he wanted federation because he had no other program to present to Jamaicans. In 1961, he

⁴⁷At all major meetings Alexander Bustamante boasted that he carried more money in his fob (small pocket) than the budget of Montserrat - based on interview with E.O. LeBlanc, Premier of Dominica, during Summer of 1972.

began speaking against federation because the ruling party of Norman Manley was for federation. Opposition to federation was a good idea since the ruling party had deceptively made Jamaicans believe that they could receive more prosperity than they were receiving without federation. Thus, when prosperity did not come, Bustamante blamed it on the federation. He convinced Jamaicans that their growing economy would be hampered and was already hampered by federation on several counts. In the first place, Jamaica would receive less aid from Britain when the federation was created since more funds would be given the less developed islands. He was correct as the proposed allocation of funds during the first five years of the federation shows. See Figure XII.

Clearly Jamaica and Trinidad stood to lose funds under federation. Under these circumstances, Bustamante had struck a responsive chord by "showing" Jamaicans that federation was going to be even more a liability in the future.

Norman Manley was equally shortsighted. By 1961, he had already gained for Jamaica the control of the federation by getting its allotment of representation raised to fifty per cent. He thought it was a good idea to let the people decide on the question whether Jamaica should remain in the fold. Many had already warned Manley that his referendum on the federal question was untimely

Figure XIII British Aid to the British West Indian Before and After Federation. (In millions of dollars.)

Area	Amount to be received during 1959-1964	Received between 1951-1960
Federal Government	3.2	
Dominica	1.0	16.5
St. Kitts	.9	5.0
St. Lucia	.9	14.5
Antigua	.68	17.0
Grenada	.54	6.0
St. Vincent	.54	12.5
Montserrat	.2	6.5
Barbados	.5	5.0
Jamaica	.25	31.5
Jamaica dependencies	.15	
Trinidad	.1	9.1

Source: Grants 1951-60 from The Nation (Port of Spain, Trinidad), July 1, 1960.

Grants for 1960: West Indian Economist, January, 1960, pp. 10-11.

and unnecessary. He was merely allowing the demagogic Bustamante to further his own political future. Similarly, Eric Williams alienated many would-be backers of federation by his arrogance. He chose not to be a part of the federal machinery by not running in the first and only federal elections, but wanted to run the federation from his home in Trinidad. And, of course, Grantly Adams must be included in the long list of incapable leaders the Caribbean has produced. By default he was the first and only Prime Minister of the federation, since both Manley and Williams had chosen not to be part of the Federal Government. Adams made many unclear statements which often required lengthy explanations. For example, in 1961, after Jamaica had reluctantly allowed the Federal Government to have the power to levy taxes, Adams said openly that Federal taxation would become retroactive to 1958. This statement was made without even consulting the leaders of Jamaica and Trinidad; the two most reluctant partners of the already sinking federation.

Apart from this general poor leadership, the Caribbean leaders never wanted a federation in spite of their perennial rhetoric to the contrary. In the first place, the federation was not undertaken on West Indian initiative. At the start, it was quite appropriately called the British West Indian Federation. The word "British" was later dropped when the West Indian leaders

were beginning to show some signs of West Indian nationalism. But dropping the word "British" was not enough to sustain nationalism. It never lasted because all major conferences dealing with the union took place in Britain. As it was, the federation became dominated by the British, who were going to be a part of it. The West Indian leaders did not worry about that because they had no reason to foster any form of union. They were not threatened by any outside force. They could allow every major committee dealing with their federation to be headed by the British. Their lack of commitment was adequately shown by their non-interest in federal elective office. All the pro-federation giants, Manley, Williams, Vere Bird, chose to remain in their secure positions at home. They could not risk their political future by acquiring a larger constituency, the West Indies, which they could not handle. One cannot accept Williams' excuse that the federal constitution was too weak,⁴⁸ thus precluding his participation. It is true that Britain granted the constitution, but Eric Williams had enough influence to change it. Previously, Norman Manley was the one who advised the influentials to run for federal office.⁴⁹ But he was one of the

⁴⁸Eric Williams, Inward Hunger: The Education of a Prime Minister (London: The Trinity Press, 1969), p. 244.

⁴⁹Thomas Franck, ed., Why Federations Fail (New York: New York University Prss, 1968), p. 183.

first not to heed the advice and kept clear of federal office. His excuse was that he had to remain in Jamaica to prevent Bustamante from leading Jamaica out of the federation. One cannot accept the excuse that Manley was only a mouthpiece for Jamaican isolation. The low voter turnout (60.8 per cent) during the 1961 referendum,⁵⁰ which determined the fate of the federation demonstrates that Jamaica could have been kept in the federation had its leaders wanted to remain.

The lack of commitment to Caribbean unity among the leaders showed itself in many other ways. First they began quarrelling over how much federation would cost even before they could decide on what type of federation they wanted. As Thomas Franck has correctly asserted, once one starts to inquire into the cost of an item which one supposedly wants, the indication is that one cannot afford it.⁵¹ To have any successful union, federation must be

⁵⁰ A referendum was called in Jamaica by Norman Manley, after he had already received the proposed federation which Jamaica wanted. But he felt he had the obligation to ask Jamaicans if they still wanted federation.

The final results of the Jamaican Referendum were:

No. of Jamaicans against Federation	256,261	54.1%
" " " for "	217,319	45.9%

Report of the Chief Electoral Officer, Jamaican Referendum, September 19, 1961, p. 2.

⁵¹ Franck, Why Federations Fail, p. 183.

an end in itself. All secondary considerations such as cost to individual territories will eventually fall into place as the primary consideration is unity leading to independence. Thus, little wonder that the Eastern Caribbean Federation failed. It failed because Britain refused to commit itself to its long range support. Had the leaders been committed to what they liked to call their freedom, they would have forgotten British aid and declared independence. A unilateral declaration of independence would probably have been quietly welcomed by Britain, but the latter would have known that the Caribbean would no longer be content to remain a colony. But many Caribbean leaders have continued to delude themselves into believing that their colonial status was and still is an asset. For example, leaders in Dominica privately admit that Britain's grants to Dominica are justifiable debts. Publicly they maintain that Britain owes Dominica nothing for past practices. The government of Dominica takes this dual position to impress on Dominicans that the government has done a great deal for Dominica, to get it off British Grant-in-Aid.⁵² By implication, this is something the Opposition cannot do.

⁵²Based on an interview in Dominica.

Caribbean leaders never talk about the real factor which has kept the British Caribbean islands apart. In each territory, an unquestionable leader has always emerged, who enjoyed legitimacy because the masses looked up to him. And, as the years went by, he began to own the careers of many would-be leaders. He always showed his ability to singlehandedly run the government for many years. He became secure, especially as the power of the British Governor dwindled. This state of affairs approximated the Latin American form of personalismo - though a cult of personality does not exist in the territories since no one leader has been able to rule in absentia. But the dictatorial tendencies of the individual are ably encouraged by the pseudo-parliamentary and weak party systems. To leave these safe positions of power in the separate islands and to expose themselves to regional politics does not make sense to the leaders on several counts. In the first place, there has been no pressing reason, such as an outside attack, to make the leaders come together; not even a communist Cuba seemed to threaten Jamaica sixty miles away. Secondly, regional unity will lessen the bargaining power of the individual leader in his attempts to lure foreign business into his island. Any personal power over business in each territory might terminate with federation. Thirdly, in a larger unit, the prominence of the individual leaders will be lowered. Thus, they must first be

decolonized to achieve Caribbean nationhood. They must accept the fact that inter-island rivalry works to the detriment of the region. When they can accept the fact that the future of the Caribbean, if there is any, lies in a strong federation, all other obstacles could be surmounted. More than anything else, Caribbean leaders have failed the cause of Caribbean unity because they have put themselves above regional interests.

The uneven economic situation in the territories 1960. Another major difficulty deterring federation was the economic disparity among the islands. During the formative years of the federation, this received very little attention. But increasingly, Jamaica and Trinidad became industrialized, raising their standards of living and leaving the other territories behind. Simultaneously, the smaller islands remained one crop economies and even showed signs of not improving.⁵³ The data for the national incomes for the units of the federation in 1957 are shown in Figure XIII.

The gap between Jamaica and Trinidad on the one hand, and Montserrat on the other, in Figure XIII, was wide indeed, since Jamaica and Trinidad showed a reluctance to share their wealth with less fortunate islands.

⁵³Carleen O'Loughlin, Economic and Political Change, p. 4.

Figure XIV . National Income Figures for the British West Indies - 1957.

Island	Total in millions of B.W.I \$	Per capita in B.W.I. \$	% of total West Indian Income
Jamaica	821.8	510	54.6
Trinidad	471.5	612	31.3
Barbados	100.0	431	6.6
Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & Dominica (Windward Is.)	79.7	244	5.3
Antigua, St. Kitts, Nevis, Anguilla	15.9	284	1.1
Montserrat	2.8	195	0.2

Source: National Income Statistics, The West Indies, Federal Statistics Office, No. 1, 1960.

instead of helping, Jamaica had chosen to dominate the banana market in Britain, and, in the process, to exclude the smaller islands which relied solely on bananas as an export crop. Jamaica did that when it had moved away from agriculture as its main export industry. For example, in 1950, Jamaica's exports consisted almost entirely of agriculture, but by 1960, bauxite and aluminium accounted

for more than half of its exports.

Trinidad had followed a similar pattern of development.⁵⁴ The discovery of oil made it move away from its reliance on sugar as a major export product; that was in the wake of replacing Cuba as the main supplier of sugar to the American market. And as an aside, Trinidad and Jamaica were cutting their economic ties with Britain while the smaller units remained tied to Britain. Jamaica's and Trinidad's industrialization drive were sustained and conditioned by United States business concerns. In the process of switching major trade partners, Jamaica and Trinidad got involved in a rivalry to promote their own economic development. For this reason, in the midst of West Indian unity talks in 1958, Jamaica announced plans to set up an oil refinery to process crude oil from Venezuela and not from Trinidad.⁵⁵ Clearly, the cause of West Indian nationhood was taking secondary consideration, as Eric Williams of Trinidad protested that this move was threatening the Trinidad oil industry.

At the heart of the problem was the unwillingness of Jamaica and Trinidad to shoulder the greatest share of running the federation. It was their opinion that it

Amitai Etzioni, Political Unification, A Comparative Study of Leaders and Forces (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1965), pp. 158-159.

West Indian Economist, August 1958, pp. 17-22.

was Britain's responsibility to pay the share of the small islands to the federal venture. Williams once entertained the idea that it was the responsibility of the wealthier islands to maintain the federation,⁵⁶ but this idea quickly evaporated when Jamaica decided to leave the union. Williams then warned that the burden was too much for Trinidad and dropped the idea. The economic disparity among the islands forced Jamaica to vote against a federal customs union.

If the federation had a chance, a customs union among the islands was absolutely essential. It entailed allowing the federal government to impose a tariff on all goods which came from outside the Caribbean region, while all movement of goods among the islands was to be duty free. Jamaica protested because it felt that it would have been most affected, in that the high tariffs it had imposed to protect its nascent industries would have had to be removed. It is interesting to note that this came in the wake of evidence to the contrary. This evidence was inconclusive, but it showed that there could have been less potential conflict between Jamaica's drive for industrialization and the overall development of the region.⁵⁷ Secondly, the opposite was likely to happen.

⁵⁶Eric Williams, The Economics of Nationhood (Port-of-Spain, Trinidad: Government Printing Press, 1959).

⁵⁷Report of the Trade and Tariffs Commission, Part I, West Indies (Port of Spain: Government of the West Indies Printing Press, 1958), paragraph 66.

It was true that cheaper labor cost in Trinidad could have affected Jamaica's internal markets, but the Eastern Caribbean islands were potential dumping grounds for both Jamaica and Trinidadian goods. If anyone stood to lose by a customs union, it was not Jamaica, but rather the smaller non-industrialized islands like Dominica. Besides, Jamaica had already won a compromise whereby a customs union would have been gradually introduced over a period of nine years. This would have given the Jamaican economy, with adequate federal guidance, a transitional cushion period. It would have brought Jamaica's developmental goals closer to that of the West Indian nation.

In spite of all these considerations, the Jamaican leaders used the customs union issue to destroy federation. Gordon Lewis wrote that Jamaican business elites did not want a customs union because the Federal Government would have made them more responsive to producing quality goods to remain in competition with other goods from the union.⁵⁸ Customs union did threaten the dominance of another set of highly entrenched people in West Indian society, the businessmen. It would have made them more regionally conscious and more responsive to the needs of the highly impoverished Caribbean societies. It

⁵⁸Gordon Lewis, Modern West Indies, p. 377.

would have forced them to drop their money conscious attitudes they had picked up in their frequent trips to such places as Puerto Rico and New York.

Freedom of movement as a deterrent to federation.

Closely associated with the economic disparity in the islands was the freedom of movement of people among the territories of the federation. The idea that this issue could cause a breakdown in Caribbean unity may sound unreal. It is hard to conceive of a political union where the members of that union cannot move freely within the units, but that was exactly what Trinidad wanted to do. Trinidad's lower prices in goods, coupled with much lower shipping rates had put it in a good position to dump goods on the Eastern Caribbean markets. But Trinidad was unwilling to accept some of the unemployed and unemployable small islanders who bought most of these goods. The rationale behind this refusal was the fact that Trinidad had been able to employ most of its people who had been willing to work and did even absorb a substantial amount of immigrants. But it wanted to have the option to close its doors to immigrants when it got crowded. It was of the opinion that its nascent social services, such as police and schools, should not be overburdened by large numbers. If they were allowed to be burdened, Eric Williams stood to lose his unquestionable hold over Trinidad politics. Thus Trinidad, like Jamaica, made

the Federal Government stay out of immigration policies. Immigration, like customs, was to remain the business of the individual territories for some six years after the federation was established. The Federal Government was to assert itself in that sphere only gradually and only on Trinidadian terms. These terms were that any territory could refuse entrance to a member of another territory on grounds of security.

Conclusion

The Federations of the West Indies failed because they were forced unions. The islands have a great deal in common, but this commonality has been hampered by the desire of the leaders to retain their position of prominence. The leaders have effectively kept the island peoples apart, though these people get along well when they are away from the Caribbean. And it is not because they find themselves in a foreign country like the United States, for Caribbean people live well there and in Britain. It is the masses from the separate islands who have been kept apart.

Caribbean leaders did not play politics with federation either, as it is sometimes charged, for they have little knowledge of what politics or a federation were all about. They did not compromise or even try to

communicate with each other.⁵⁹ They adopted open diplomacy. In practice, this meant they shouted at each other through the press, the radio. In addition, Arthur Lewis cites the example of the leaders securing binding resolutions from their respective legislative assemblies before discussing the crucial issues with each other. In effect, the leaders of the larger and more prosperous islands rarely worked with their counterpart from the smaller islands as equals. They did not know that federations drew people together, but this togetherness generates more conflict than agreement. They should have known that to accomplish anything meaningful, they must concentrate on what they could agree on, leaving disagreements to seek their own solutions when the union got more stabilized. By then a federal spirit would have grown to counteract all parochial feelings. Each leader tried, with little success, to impose his conception of federation to reflect the bias of the individual country he represented.

In the final analysis, the federations of the West Indies failed and will continue to fail because a series of crises were not handled effectively. The "desire"

⁵⁹Pattern of behavior of the leaders of the Caribbean is aptly demonstrated by the exchange between Sir Grantly Adams and Albert Gomes, contained in "Extract from a speech by the Prime Minister of the Federation of the West Indies, Sir Grantly Adams, in the House of Representatives, 16 June 1958," Documents and Speeches on Commonwealth Affairs 1952-1962, ed. by Nicholas Monsergh (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), pp. 166-168.

crisis was never tackled. The leaders never genuinely wanted federation. They demonstrated that very well by finding fault with every aspect of the federation but refused to do something about the apparent defects. The "participation" crisis could not be handled because the leaders were never faced with this problem before, not even on their own islands. They did not know how to make West Indians partake in the federation in order to solve the "identity" crisis. The inhabitants of the larger units did not feel West Indian. The leaders who could have made them feel that way, never rose to the occasion to accomplish that feat. This was no setback at the outset, since it could not be expected that a feeling of being West Indian would emerge overnight. In that case the leaders could have acted as a necessary succor to help the individual islander make this not so difficult transition. A federal union could have solved the identity crisis. Finally, the "brother's keeper" crisis was never solved. By this is meant the larger islands refused to accept the responsibility to help the smaller units develop. Since Federation was clearly an initial liability to Jamaica and Trinidad, it was doomed to failure. The islands were stronger individually, they broke up the union, and achieved their independence individually. A federal union of the types so far envisaged would have weakened them. Under these circumstances,

federation will always be a non-starter in the British Caribbean; it is even more ludicrous to envisage a union of all the members of the Caribbean area; English, Dutch, French, and Spanish.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

An effort has been made in this case study to test some hypotheses as they relate to a recently semi-independent country like Dominica. It was found necessary to review the literature dealing with what has been called political change. From the literature this writer was able to extrapolate an approach which would meaningfully assess the Dominican political system. This explains why the systems approach was chosen to carry out the study.

The systems approach is by no means complete, but it can be made comprehensive. To an extent, it is dynamic and may explain, though superficially, the actions of some participants of a political system. Its shortcomings lie in its inability to explain why actions precipitate certain reactions. It also assumes that all parts have specific roles to perform at critical stages to ensure the continuity of the system. But apparently these roles cannot be accurately identified since all the actors of the political system can never be identified. What is being argued here is that an unidentifiable part of a system may as critically important as an identifiable one.

The very nature of this study of Dominica illustrates the above point. Of all the actors in its political system, much attention was paid to the Constitution, the Governor, the politicians, the parties, the Black Power Movement and some outside forces such as the politics of other countries. In effect, many parts or actors of the system, such as trade unions and the Roman Catholic Church, were not treated at great length. This should not be taken to mean that they are not important. They have been very important in the past but, in the judgment of this writer, their importance relative to the actors analysed is minimal.

Chapter I discussed the concept of political change. It formed the theoretical setting for the study. Both Chapters II and III reviewed the impact of colonialism on the colonized society. Chapter II examined the role of the colonial constitution in shaping the society, while Chapter III looked at the social and psychological impact of colonialism. The political parties of Dominica were reviewed in Chapter IV. Chapter V was devoted to an analysis of the Black Power Movement. It was studied because it is the only group which challenged the political parties and their supportive groups in Dominica. Chapter VII concerned itself with the several attempts at federation in the British West Indies.

From all this one conclusion comes out clearly: Dominican

society is divided into two camps. The boundaries of the two may not be clearly defined, but this division seems to be a continuation of the colonial situation.

During colonial times, the two camps were not always hostile to each other. The European segment or camp had effectively co-opted the more educated Dominicans. The latter were never part of the European camp, but they were given enough privileges to feel like the European. The educated Dominican felt European. Consequently the Dominican found in the bureaucracy became very supportive of the colonial administration. The Governor was the head of this camp.

The other camp was made up of the local politicians. For the most part, they were uneducated and sometime irresponsible. They usually came to power through confrontation and stayed in power through similar means. They came from the rural areas, which made them unacceptable to the more educated urban element. The bureaucrats often looked at them with contempt.

As the years went by these politicians were allowed to wield a certain amount of power. But their roles vis-a-vis the bureaucracy and Governor were never clearly defined. This seemed to have been deliberate to ensure control of the colony. Since roles were never clearly defined, the outside authority always had the option to dictate the limits of one's power in any given situation.

The colonial administration granted constitutions but always left the role of the politician vague. The constitutions gradually allowed the election of the people's representatives, but went on to deny power to those elected. The colonial politician was sufficiently naive to believe that once he was elected by the people, he would run the government.

The Governor, ably supported by the Colonial Office, saw it differently. He continued to see himself as the ultimate head of the government, regardless of the number of elected officials in the colony. He was even surer of his position, since the Colonial Office continued to underwrite the budget of the colony. The intended result of that arrangement was to produce responsible government. The Governor had to instill in the people, especially the emerging political elites, the idea of national interest.

But things did not quite work out that way. The role of the Governor frustrated the politicians. The politicians were forced to remove the confrontation with the Governor from the level of bargaining.

As the confrontation between the colonial authorities and the politicians came to a head, the former relinquished gradually their hold on the colony.

In the process of decolonization, the structures which maintained the colonial condition were not dismantled. The succeeding "advanced" constitutions only became more precise in

outlining the specific roles of the two major power contenders in the Dominican political system, the Governor and the leading politician. The Governor transferred his power of appointing members of the bureaucracy to the politician. In fact, the 1959 Constitution specifically stated that there had to be a politician, whose role would be that of head of state.

Thus the idea of personal government first personified in the Governor, was now finding itself in the local politician. In the same way the Governor had been the epitome of the colonial system, the local leader is presently performing a similar role. He sets the goals of the Government, and also sees to their execution. He handpicks all his major personnel for the bureaucracy. In addition, he sets the goals of the society. He expects everyone to aspire to these ends. He has even chosen the national dress. As expected only the Opposition Party and its followers do not wear the national dress, probably in defiance of the present Government.

The idea that an all powerful leader should emerge in a colonial situation might not be all that bad. As was pointed out in Chapter I, a powerful leader could be useful in handling the identity crisis in a country. This could be particularly useful in a place such as Dominica where the crisis of identity has not been handled well.

It is what the powerful leader does with the newly acquired power that concerns this writer. The tendency has been to

use power to frustrate possible challengers. The colonial politician used to accuse the colonial power of all the ills which plagued the society. With the disappearance of the colonial power, the politician is forced to find a scapegoat. Thus the ultimate leader in Dominica has seen an oppressor in the Roman Catholic Church. Even the Opposition Party has fallen in this role. Since the leading members of that party seem to be very affluent, it becomes easy to portray them as oppressors of the people.¹

In effect, the unquestionable leader of Dominica has shown the people their enemies. And he has shown himself to be their friend by opening the doors of Government to them. Quite obviously, the people are in no way involved in the decision making process. In fact, LeBlanc has developed an actor - audience relationship with the people. He has started a show which he must keep moving to keep the people sufficiently entertained. This does not mean that the show is always exciting; in fact, it could become intensely dull. But LeBlanc has developed such a reputation as being a great "actor" he cannot go wrong!

The tendency is to believe that that kind of relationship is confined to the rural areas since the politicians are from these districts. This relationship might be more apparent in the rural districts, but some urban elements are very

¹The leaders of the Labor Party are just as affluent as those of the Freedom Party.

much part of this actor - audience relationship. They are more reluctant to talk about it because they are ashamed of that reality. They are placed in a situation of having to accept the politicians they once laughed at.

Everyone who wants to survive in the system is forced to become part of the audience. And not only that, all must applaud at all times. Since the locale of the performance is so small, the one who does not applaud is likely to be reprimanded. The leader in Dominica has been made to believe that he has done so much for the country that no one should challenge him.

Very surprisingly, the unquestionable leadership LeBlanc has maintained has not precluded his commitment to West Indian Federation. Since coming to office in 1961, he has always supported West Indian unity, both in words and deeds. He was the first to speak for a federation in 1962. In addition, although he was not an original signatory to the Carifta Agreement of 1968, he accepted the agreement when approached.

LeBlanc joined the Caribbean Free Trade Association (Carifta), even though Dominica stood to lose from that union. Carifta is not a common market, but it allows goods regionally produced to be imported tax free in the British West Indies.

In 1971, LeBlanc was the first to sign the "Grenada Declaration", which was intended to produce a federation of the West Indies. The idea was short-lived as the opposition

parties of the islands concerned mustered enough support to defeat the proposal. LeBlanc was the last leader to withdraw from the proposed union!

How does one explain that desire for unity? One would expect that the safe position LeBlanc has carved out for himself would negate his desire for a larger union, where he would certainly be a subordinate.

There are several explanations for LeBlanc's acting out of character. First, it is typically Dominican to be self contradictory. Second, Dominica is one of those few islands which has not developed an identity yet. It comes out clearly in the Dominican students who study in Jamaica, Trinidad and Barbados. Within a year the Dominican student takes on the ways of his temporary home. He speaks like the people around him and may even dress like them. On returning to Dominica, he passes these on to his brothers. It is not being argued here that the few Dominicans studying abroad are responsible for the lack of identity in Dominica. The example simply demonstrates that it is because of a lack of identity that the Dominican easily falls prey to "alien" cultures.

A third reason for LeBlanc's drive to have West Indian unity could be couched in his knowledge of his own limitations. He might be aware of the fact that he is unable to satisfy the demands made on the political system. A West Indian Federation could help solve some of the pressing problems.

Lastly, since LeBlanc may be coming to the end of his political career, he could secure an appointive post in any federation. He would be going on record as the one Caribbean politician most in favor of West Indian unity.

This is not to imply that all of Dominica is for any type of federation. There are two groups who were opposed to the Grenada Declaration, the Opposition Party and the Black Power Movement. The Opposition claimed that the Declaration was negotiated secretly. Both the people and the Opposition Party were left out of the discussions leading to the Declaration.

The Black Power Movement was against the Declaration because it felt that the people were not consulted properly. Further the Movement believed that a federation at that time would only make it easier for the "imperialists" to control the islands. The Movement reasoned that presently the "imperialists" were forced to deal with the separate islands, a chore which made it discouraging for concerted exploitation. In its view, a federation would be a liability to the islands.

Presently the Movement believes that each island must first have political independence. Then they can jointly consider federation. With political independence, leaders of Dominica will be able to control the economic life of the island. If all the islands follow a similar pattern, unification can have meaning.

Of course, the leaders of the Movement are not that naive

to believe that the present leaders of Dominica will automatically extend their control in the economy with the coming of political independence. The Movement cautions that there must be a fundamental change in attitude of present leaders. This change involves a commitment which calls for sacrifices by all. But on the idea of expecting all to make sacrifices, the Movement seems to be too idealistic.

This summary leads to one basic question - what are the prospects for a stable society in Dominica? There is no question that the present political climate is not a healthy one. Since 1967, when the island got its last "advanced" constitution, there have been no less than three major confrontations which have reached crisis proportion. In one, the Defence Force was alerted to contain the people. In the second, one of the only two boys' schools closed down because of racial problems. In the third, one of the most productive estates closed down. Presently anyone visiting Dominica is struck by the hidden tension which pervades the entire society.

The tension is further maintained by poor economic conditions. Jobs have become scarce, while unemployment remains at about thirty to forty per cent. The major crop, bananas, which accounted for seventy per cent of the island's exports, is virtually a disaster.²

²Ministry of Agriculture, "Radio Address by the Minister." In his talk the Minister revealed that Britain was about to give \$744,000 (BWI) to save Dominica's banana industry.

The social system is equally bad. The masses are kept in their places and are continually told that things will be better. The party system and other institutions such as the Church and the bureaucracy continue to foster the inequalities in the system.

As a result of the disparities, protest groups such as the Black Power Movement develop. As was explained in chapter V, the name of the group is a misnomer, since the perceived oppressors are just as Black as members of the group.

Groups like the Movement seem to be endemic to colonial and recently "liberated" societies. The movements are created because the distinction between the haves and the have-nots is easy to perceive.

The Dominican situation is further complicated by the fact that the society is far from being integrated. The political elites numbering no more than fifty, may form a closely knit group to protect their vital interests. They may even receive outside help from the British or the United States. But this outside help can only provide temporary solutions to a grave problem.

But why should confrontation remain a fixture of the Dominican political process? Why does it always have to take a confrontation to attempt rectification to obvious problems? Confrontation will remain an important ingredient of the political system because imaginative leaders have not been produced.

Ironically the inherited system does not operate on the crisis phenomenon. It calls for and demands a great deal of spirit, discussion, compromise and friendship. Unfortunately, these qualities are alien to Dominica's politicians.

If the present system is failing, what are the alternatives open to Dominica? In answer, there are several issues to be considered. Firstly, the present system was not created overnight, even though certain parts of it were hurriedly imposed. The social underpinnings of the present system began to evolve as early as 1898, when Crown Colony Government was introduced.

Secondly, political independence might not be the answer. If history is any guide, the politically independent islands of Jamaica and Trinidad are exhibiting the same problems as Dominica. In fact, they seem to be worse off, they both have experienced urban riots. Further, Dominica is not existing in isolation. It can become independent and adopt any system of government it desires. But it must take into account the political systems which surround it. Thus political independence however exciting, could be more harmful. The poor economic conditions seem to negate independence in isolation anyway.

Because Dominica is intimately connected with its

neighbors, does not preclude an attempt to uplift its poor. Clearly the uplifting of the poor is in no way related to the type of political or economic system in a country. At least the two should not be related; a socialist or capitalist system in Dominica can be equally effective in dealing with the problems of its poor. And the politicians would be the first to admit that the two are not connected. This writer is not even advocating that the politicians consult the people on all the issues which beset Dominica. Chances are the people are not interested. At the same time, it is not being argued that the self appointed messiah should impose his system on Dominica. The best political system for Dominica does not lie in whether it is democratic, autocratic or even socialistic. The system which can tackle the problems of unemployment, social injustices and the like seem to be the best suited for Dominica.

But on a more realistic and concrete level, the answer to Dominica's problems lie in the West Indies and not necessarily in Dominica. The West Indian islands could get together, pull their resources together and solve their common problems. Too much has been done for these islands. They can now manage their own affairs. If only they are left alone, they might come up with their own "Westindian" know-how.

A P P E N D I X A

Professor Arthur Lewis had prepared and submitted to the leaders of the "Little Eight" a document entitled Proposals for an Eastern Caribbean Federation Comprising the Territories of Antigua, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, St. Lucia and St. Vincent. He stressed at the beginning of the document that "these proposals (are) merely a starting point for discussions between the Governments concerned. I have no official authority for any of these proposals, and do not necessarily myself feel committed to any of them."

The main features of Professor Lewis' proposals for "a new independent state" were:

CONSTITUTIONAL AND ECONOMIC

- a. There should be a Governor-General for the Federation, and the unit territories should not have Governors or Administrators, but Lord-Lieutenants to perform ceremonial duties.
- b. The federal capital should be located in Barbados.
- c. There should be a single chamber (therefore no senate), and each unit should elect one member per 40,000 population, with a minimum number one member per unit.
- d. Provisions for amending constitution.
- e. Provisions for accession of new units.
- f. Provisions for freedom of movement.
- g. Provisions for customs union as from the day the Federation comes into existence.
- h. The transfer of services from Units to Federal Government e.g., Inland Revenue, Audit, Postal Service, Judicial, Police, etc.
- i. Freedom of the Federal Government to levy any kind of tax.

- j. Commencement of the Federation on the day Jamaican secession from the West Indies Federation comes into effect. Provision for the Governor of Barbados to become the Governor-General of the Federation. Provision for an interim Federal Cabinet.
- k. Budget for first three years to range from \$4 million to \$14.5 million.
- l. Recommendation that the United Kingdom Government should continue to pay grants-in-aid for the ten years on a tapering basis.

The Secretary of State had also submitted a memorandum containing the views of the Colonial Office with respect to proposed Federation.

- a. Provisions for a strong Central Government with diminished powers in the individual units. The Federal Government should exercise general financial control and should be responsible for economic development.
- b. Provisions for certain service to be added to the Exclusive list e.g. Customs, movement of people, banking, currency, income tax, ports and harbours, etc.

A P P E N D I X B

Methodology

The research for this study was carried out during the Summer of 1972. Previous to that I kept in touch with the events in Dominica through the newspapers, personal correspondence and direct contact with those who visited the island from time to time.

During my stay in Dominica, many documents which dealt with the political situation were made available to me. I also had the good fortune of attending the national party convention of the Freedom Party. From that meeting I was able to observe the elites of the party in action in dealing with the party members. In addition, I interviewed twenty leading politicians, ten from the Dominica Labor Party and ten from the Freedom Party.

Twenty leading businessmen were also interviewed. An attempt was made to identify their party affiliation, to ensure a balance appraisal of the two major parties. But it became very difficult to solicit such information. A few were frank enough to state their party affiliation, but the great majority refused.

In a small society like Dominica, it is almost always difficult to conceal one's party leanings, but businessmen will try hard to do so. This is quite understandable considering that one's success or failure at business depends on the type of tax incentive the politicians are willing to offer. For example, I was reliably informed that the present

Government of Dominica has raised the tariff on foreign car imports to put a non-Government supporter out of business. There is no question that Dominican businessmen have had to be very cautious in their dealings with the Government.

This same caution exercised by the business elements was very evident when I tried to interview the elites of the bureaucracy. The plan was to have them respond directly to a questionnaire. But after the first encounters, the series of "no comments" became very disconcerting. A new approach had to be devised. I finally decided to distribute the questionnaire to sixty bureaucrats.

These bureaucrats were all heads of their departments or divisions; some assistant heads were also included. Of the sixty distributed, forty-five completed forms were gathered. The uncollected ones were either conveniently misplaced or kept for whatever reason. There was one interesting case where the bureaucrat "lost" the questionnaire, but was able to reproduce it to make the desired answers. I can only conclude that this was done for self preservation. If I did quote him by name, he would have been able to defend himself by presenting what he actually wrote.

But of all the elites interviewed, the bureaucrats proved the most difficult and uncooperative. I should add here though, that I was able to gather a great deal of information through informal interviews with my friends, even

though they too showed some hesitancy.

I spent a lot of time in the government buildings. This made them very curious about my activities. In addition, talking with me gave the observer the impression that they were very busy. After they had found out all they had wanted to know, I was able to discuss their attitudes and frustrations in Dominica. To an extent, these comments apply to some of the politicians I interviewed.

Generally the politicians were easy to talk with. My approach was to put them at ease first by asking them to relate the good thing I "know" their parties were doing for Dominica. They were particularly happy to set the record straight by showing that they were the ones who could solve Dominica's problems. In their opinion, the real enemy of the island were the other political party or the Black Power Movement. But when it came to discussing their own "faults," they were usually reluctant commentators.

Another approach which I found very rewarding was to be where the politician would be delivering a speech. He usually came over to say hello and showed interest in the progress of my work. On such occasion the politician was usually at ease and was able to talk at great length.

I was unable to carry any in depth interview of the masses. I travelled around the island observing the reactions of the people to current government policies. I was fortunate to be present when both the St. Mary's Academy

and the Castle Bruce crises were coming to a head. From the St. Mary's Academy crisis I was able to assess the attitude of the students to the government's policy of non-intervention in the crisis. I was able to do the same for the Opposition Party and the Black Power Movement.

The inability of the political system to muster the desired unity to handle this relatively minor crisis was clearly shown. The Opposition together with its supporters were delighted that the Government showed signs of being unable to handle the crisis. The Government, on the other hand, blamed its inability to handle the crisis on the Opposition Party. The masses were of the opinion that the Black Power Movement had driven the White Brothers away from Dominica. The newspapers of Dominica agreed with them.

During the Castle Bruce crisis, I was able to observe how the masses from one district could get united behind one leader who was only articulating the demands of the people for them. The Government erroneously concluded that this leader was putting revolutionary ideas in the people's heads. The people showed their lack of trust in the Government and in especially their representative from the district. It is important to relate here that both the Government and the Opposition Party joined forces to deny ownership to the people of the land under contention. In addition, both the Government and the Opposition blamed

the Black Power Movement for the unrealistic demand of wanting ownership of that land.

In my travels and in informal interviews with the people, I was able to find out that some have the highest regard for the present Government. It was particularly hard to determine their party affiliation, but the rural sector favored the Labor Party. In addition, the present Government occupies all three seats from the urban areas. But presently, the people are beginning to show concern over the high cost of living and in the low prices for bananas. The anxiety of the people are not sufficiently grave to cause a major crisis.

Final Note on the Selection of Elites

"Elite" is being used here very loosely, anyone in a leadership position in politics, the bureaucracy and business is referred to as an elite. In a small island like Dominica, these people will always know of the factors which affect the island.

The political elites were chosen from the executives of the two major parties. The secretaries of both parties were also helpful in identifying certain individuals who were once involved in electoral politics. The twenty interviewees related sufficiently well the political situation in Dominica from their point of view.

It was a little more difficult to select the bureaucratic elites. No effort was made to distinguish precisely,

between the "old" and "new" bureaucrat. It was only after I had started to carry out the interviews that I realized that the two had different assessments of the problems of Dominica.

The "new" bureaucrat seems to be more submissive to the politicians because the former owes his position to the latter. Be that as it may, the interviewed bureaucrats were chosen on the basis of the job they held. For this reason only assistant heads and heads of departments were interviewed. Of the sixty bureaucratic elites originally approached for interviews, forty-five cooperated.

I used the Dominican Annual Statistical Digest to select the business elites to be interviewed. I chose to deal with the twenty richest businessmen in Dominica. I was unable to speak with the foreign business elements who own property in Dominica. Instead, I spoke with their Dominican representatives. In addition, the Dominica Employers' Federation, which represents the interests of the business elements in the Dominican society, provided me with some valuable insights on the situation in Dominica.

QUESTIONNAIRE USED FOR DOMINICAN ELITES

Bureaucratic Elites

1. When did you join the service?
2. Present post
3. Post held at the achievement of Statehood?
4. Did you or any others receive instructions about a semi-independent state?
5. Do you know if Ministers receive training on the same?
6. Would you say that on a whole ministers are unqualified by experience and education to be in charge of ministeries?
7. What proportion of civil servants do you think hold the view that ministers are unqualified for their positions?
(a) few (b) large number (c) the majority.
8. What problems have you had to face adjusting to associate statehood?

9. If you minister wished to pursue a line of action with which you disagreed, what would you do (a) do it without question (b) press your point of view (c) take some other course of action.
10. Which of the above would the majority of civil servants follow in your opinion?
11. Whom did you regard as the ultimate head of state as of 1967?
12. If you are given conflicting instructions by you minister and the premier, which course of action would you follow:
(a) obey your minister (b) obey the premier (c) consult the premier?
13. When a new government comes to power, what action would you recommend to a civil servant who has aligned himself with a particular government, (outgoing).?

14. Could you comment on the events of December 1971?

15. How do you the present role of the police?
16. In your opinion what will be their role in the future?
17. Would you say that the two party system is working in Dominica?
18. Why did you take the position you did?
19. Who is the real leader of the Labor and Freedom Parties?
20. In your opinion, how much power does Armour have?
21. If elections were held now, which party would win? Why?

22. Why do you think people vote the way they do: because of (a) party, (b) leader (c) other, be specific?
23. Why did you answer the way you did?
24. What are the good and bad points of LeBlanc as a leader?
25. What are the good and bad points of Miss Charles as a leader?
26. Was Dominica under colonial rule? Why?
27. Did Crown Colony government prepare Dominica for Associate Statehood?
28. Is Dominica ready for full independence now? Why?
29. Does Britain owe Dominica grants with no strings attached?
30. In your opinion where has government wasted too much time? How could government have gone around these problems?
31. In your opinion what precipitated the split in Labor in 1970?
32. What does Black Power mean?
33. Could you comment on the Grenada Declaration?

Business Elites

1. What are your views concerning the general economic prospects for Dominica?
2. What sectors of the economy do you think have the most potential for development?
3. What are your views concerning the prospects for your own business expanding?
4. Do you think that Dominicans are contributing enough toward the economic development of the State?
In what ways could they contribute more a) working harder, b) using more local products c) saving more d) investing more at home e) making less demands for wage increases f) any other ways?
5. Could you comment on the events of Dec. 1971.
6. What has the Church done for Dominica?
7. How do you see the Police?
8. What will be its future role?
9. Could you comment on Carifta and tell me how it has affected your business?
10. Do you think that Dominica's problems can be solved in the capitalist system?
- 10B. Would you say that the two party system is working in Dominica?
11. If you don't mind could you tell me for which party you voted in the last election? Why?
12. Who is the real leader of the Labour and Freedom parties?
- 13A. Can the parties do without either of them?
- 13B. What are the good and bad points of LeBlanc as a leader?

14. What are the good and bad points of Miss Charles as a leader?
15. What power does Ronald Armour wield?
16. If elections were held now which party would win. Why?
17. Why do you think people vote the way they do--because of
a) party b) leader c) other.
- 18a. In the final analysis do you think that government is corrupt?
- 18b. Was Dominica better under colonial rule? Why?
19. Did Crown Colony government prepare Dominica for Statehood?
20. Is Dominica ready for full independence? Why?
21. What do you fear most if independence comes now?
22. Does Britain owe Dominica grants with no strings attached?
23. Could you comment on government's ways of making public policy.
24. Name a few good policies of government since associate statehood.
25. In what areas has government wasted too much time?
26. Who is behind most of government's policies?
27. Should medical care be available to all regardless of ability to pay? Why?
28. Please comment on the educational system of Dominica.
29. Should secondary education be available to all? How would you implement such a program?
30. In your opinion why was there a split in labor in 1970?

Political Elites

1. When did you get involved in politics?
2. What event or persons influenced you?
3. What are the major problems of this country?
4. How did you see the events of Dec. 16, 1971?
5. What should be the role of the newspaper?
6. What has been the role of the Church?
7. What does Black Power mean to you?
8. What is the present role of the police?
9. Why did the first federation fail?
10. Could you comment on the Grenada Declaration?
11. Evaluate parliamentary government in Dominica.
12. What should be the role of the civil servant?
13. Is the two party system working?
14. What does your party stand for?
15. What does the other party stand for?

16. Who is the real leader of Labour and Freedom?
17. Can both parties do without the two you have mentioned?
Why?
18. What are the good and bad points of LeBlanc as a leader?
19. Do the same for Miss Charles.
20. How powerful is Donald Armour?
21. If elections were held now, which party would win? Why?
22. Why do you think people vote the way they do? -- Because
of a) party b) leader c) other, specify.
23. What do you regard as the most important: a) Dominicans
should elect any party or system of government they want;
b) they should choose a government that will attract a
lot of foreign capital; c) they should elect a government
that will encourage only local investments?
Why did you choose the one you did?
24. In the final analysis you think government is corrupt? Why?
Be specific.
25. Was Dominica better under colonial rule? Why or why not?
26. Did Crown Colony Government prepare Dominica for Associate
Statehood?
27. Is Dominica ready for full independence?
28. What do you fear most if full independence is given?
29. Does Britain owe Dominica aide with no strings attached?
30. Could you comment on why Trinidad asked for independence?

31. How do you see the making of public policy here?
32. Name a few good policies of government since 1967.
33. In which areas have government wasted too much time?
34. Who or what is responsible for this waste?
35. Who or what is behind most of government policies?
36. Should medical care be available to all regardless of ability to pay? Why did you take such a position?
37. Could you comment on the educational system in this country?
38. Should secondary education be available to all and free? If you say yes, how would you implement such? Why did you take such a position?
39. Why did the Labor Party split in 1970?

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