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Author(s): M.G. Smith

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THE CARIBBEAN AREA IN PERSPECTIVETHE BRITISH CARIBBEAN

Address

by

Dr. M. G. Smith, University College of West Indies,

I have been asked to discuss the Caribbean area, directing attention to its major developments and problems in economic, social and cultural fields. Even if I had sufficient knowledge of this complex and very diversified region, I would be unable to deal with this subject adequately in my allotted time. However, I do not pretend to have an adequate knowledge of this area, and with your kind permission I shall confine my remarks to the British possessions. I hope that the following discussion will indicate the similarities or differences between these British territories and others adjacent to them.

I shall begin by distinguishing different types of societies within the British Caribbean. Then I shall summarise the region's history; and in conclusion I shall outline contemporary trends and problems as I see them. I should emphasize that I stand open to correction in all I say, and I hope you won't mind if I concentrate on troublesome points. I hope to show that the future of the British Caribbean is now very much at issue, and that the solution of the problems which now face this region requires new types of thinking and action.

I. Diversity within the British Caribbean.

The striking thing about these British territories is their diversity, despite many important common characters. They vary widely in size, Jamaica having an area of more than four thousand square miles and a population of 1.6 million, many of the other islands being less than one hundred square miles in extent, with populations below 100,000. The colonies are scattered along a wide arc between British Honduras in Central America and British Guiana on the North-eastern shoulder of South America. Distances between them vary, Jamaica being about five hundred miles from its nearest neighbour, British Honduras, while Grenada is 64 miles from St. Vincent and 90 miles from Trinidad. Some colonies, such as Barbados, have been British throughout all their history; others previously belonged to Spanish, French or Dutch. St. Lucia, for instance, changed hands several occasions. Grenada was colonised

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by the French, ceded to Britain in 1763, recaptured by the French in the American War of Independence, and finally returned to Britain in 1784. Trinidad and British Guiana were acquired by Britain at the end of the 18th century, from Spain and Holland respectively. The differing associations of these individual territories with European powers have left their cultural marks, and cultural differences arising on this basis are still important in the British Caribbean. Naturally the variations found within this British group are far less than those which characterise the Caribbean as a whole.

For most of their early development, the British Caribbean colonies were slave states engaged in commercial production of sugar cane on a plantation basis. The crops varied over the years, and between the different islands, but by and large British domination meant monoculture of sugar, and the development of a system of production based on slavery. The slaves were drawn from West and Central Africa. The masters were white, and the association of these two racial groups produced a sizeable hybrid population. The multiracial societies established through slavery were also culturally divided, the several sections or classes being culturally quite distinct from one another.

The 18th century was the heyday of West Indian prosperity and the West Indian slave system. Throughout these years the British West Indian planters wielded great political influence in Britain itself; and they used this influence to protect West Indian interests. In addition they dominated the colonies, politically and economically. They were able to influence the United Kingdom Government to seize more lands in this region, and at the turn of the 18th century the British finally took over Demerara and Trinidad, both of which were sparsely populated and underdeveloped. However, the end was not far off; powerful voices had for long been raised against slavery, and in 1808 the British Parliament prohibited further importation of slaves from West Africa. Thus Trinidad and British Guiana remained sparsely peopled.

In 1834 the British Parliament, after a long debate, decided to abolish slavery throughout the British dominions. The passing of this Abolition Bill demonstrated the loss of political power by the West Indian planters in Britain. It was proposed that there would be a brief period of apprenticeship before the slaves were given their complete freedom. The colonies varied in their reactions to this Emancipation Act. Antigua decided to liberate the slaves in 1834 without any period of apprenticeship; the Jamaican legislature, also dominated by planters, went on a strike and refused to vote any funds for the Executive.

West Indian planters faced serious problems of dwindling labour supplies, in consequence of Emancipation. Sugar was their only crop and it was also the basis of the colonial economics. They were therefore committed to maintain sugar production; but the ex-slaves, being free to move or to withhold their labour against adequate wages, were an unreliable labour force.

Labour supply problems were naturally most acute in Trinidad and British Guiana, which were still severely underpopulated. The colonial planters obtained support from their governments, for the importation of indentured labour, first from Europe, then from China, later and most successfully from India. These indentured labourers were brought to most British colonies during the mid-19th century. But the demand being greatest in Trinidad and British Guiana the great majority of these Indians indentured in the British Caribbean were taken there, and this traffic continued until the eve of the First World War. Places with failing sugar fortunes, like Jamaica or Grenada, or others with an adequate labour supply, such as Barbados, imported relatively few East Indians at this period, with the result that today East Indians form very small proportions of their total populations. However, Trinidad and British Guiana now contain very large populations of East Indian origin, and they are in this respect quite distinct from other British Caribbean societies.

Even so, there are important differences among the remaining British colonies, and to some extent the differences of today can be regarded as effects of differing adjustments to the Emancipation of yesterday. In Grenada and St. Vincent, substantial peasantries emerged when the colonial economies switched over from sugar production to the cultivation of cocoa and spices on the one hand, and arrowroot on the other. In Jamaica, approximately one-half of the estate labourers withdrew into the hilly interior within ten years of obtaining their freedom. Here also a peasantry emerged, culturally quite distinct from the population settled in the sugar-producing plains. In Barbados, on the other hand, the Master and Servants Act of 1840 and the Located Labourers Acts which followed, restricted the labourers' freedom of the movement within the island. The Barbadian ex-slaves were free to emigrate, and they moved in large numbers to and beyond St. Vincent, Grenada and Trinidad; but their fellows who remained were still subject to the effective control and discipline of the old plantation system. Antigua and St. Kitts more closely resemble Barbados in their post-Emancipation adjustment than they do Grenada or St. Vincent. In Trinidad and British Guiana the Negro labourers who withdrew from the plantations either moved into the towns or abroad, or became peasants cultivating their own land with cocoa, rice or ground provisions. They were replaced on the estates mainly by Indian labour; but many descendants of the Indian immigrants have also withdrawn from the plantations into business in the towns or peasant cultivation outside them. Nonetheless the bulk of the estate labour in both these southern colonies today remains East Indian. Another variation occurred within the smallest British possessions, such as the Grenadines, from which the planters withdrew by 1860 or 1870, leaving the ex-slaves or their descendants to occupy the islands undisturbed. In consequence of these different territorial responses to the circumstances of Emancipation, there are today quite significant social differences within the British Caribbean units.

Although Bermuda and the Bahamas are not generally included in the British West Indies, they may be mentioned here as representing the extremest form of racial discrimination within these British New World

Possessions. There, the white and coloured are sharply separated, politically and in most other ways. The racial position in Barbados, Antigua and St. Kitts is far less rigid than that in the Bahamas, but it is more clearly defined than are conditions in Grenada, Jamaica, St. Lucia or St. Vincent.

In Trinidad, and British Guiana, racial divisions between white and black are presently of less consequence than those between the negroid and Indian populations. I must stress here that there are wide differences in the interpretations of race relations among the Indians and Negroes of British Guiana and Trinidad. Some observers hold that race differences are by no means the most general or important features of Guianese or Trinidad society. Others argue that they may well become so quite soon. Both interpretations cite differing evidence and employ differing principles of analysis. Without adopting either of these positions, I may point out that it is only within the past five or six years that the Trinidadians or British Guianese have had an effective voice in the choice of their own government or the administration of their own affairs. Until recently, both the Indians and the Negroes in these colonies were alike dominated by the British; but now with the transfer of power from Britain to the colonial population, a situation within which Negro-Indian contraposition may harden and become explicit has at last been created. Moreover, in addition to these Negro-Indian rivalries, stratification by race and colour within the Negro-White sections of Trinidad and Guiana society is also important. In places like Jamaica, St. Vincent or Antigua, which lack large Indian populations, the hybrid group is far larger than the white, and is now politically the more important, although the whites retain economic dominance.

We have seen that the foundations of West Indian society were laid down in the 17th and 18th centuries. At that time many of the large landed proprietors of this region lived abroad in Britain; there, they represented the West Indian Interest in Parliament and outside it. The extent of this absentee ownership varied in different colonies. The majority of the Barbadian planters remained in that island. In Jamaica, the majority did not. Perhaps as an effect of this differing incidence of absenteeism in the years past, the whites today form a higher proportion of the Barbados population than they do in Jamaica or Grenada. Even so, they remain a minute fraction of the total population.

Given these historical conditions and territorial differences, it is useful to single out the Negro-White creole or locally-born population of these British colonies for special discussion. Relations within this group have provided the mainsprings of Caribbean political and economic development; and these Negro-White populations together represent approximately 75% of the British West Indians. We have seen that initially these racial groups were distinguished politically, economically and otherwise as free and slave, master and servant, the masters being white, the slaves black. For many years the masters opposed the Christian proselytisation of their slaves. Marriage was forbidden to them, and after the abolition of the slave trade in 1808

their manumission or self-redemption was also made more difficult. Accounts of West Indian society written at this period emphasise and document the cultural gaps and gulfs between master and slave. The former were white and Christians; they enjoyed full civil and political liberties; they were economically and technologically a dominant group. The latter were black, heathen, without civil or political rights, illiterate, technologically backward, themselves property rather than ^{owners} of property. Despite the inevitable exceptions, these these over-simplifications describe the position quite clearly.

II. Social and Political Development since Emancipation.

Shortly before the British Parliament decided to abolish slavery throughout the British dominions, the position as just set out began to change. British missionaries, working mainly in Jamaica, Barbados and British Guiana, were powerful instruments for the transmission of Christianity, literacy and other European cultural forms to the slave population. After their emancipation, the missionaries helped many groups of ex-slaves to establish 'free villages' on abandoned estates; and these villages were often centred about the missionary church and schoolhouse. Later the Indians and Chinese coming to the West Indies were also subject to Christianizing influences, and today large numbers of them are educated Christians. None the less, the missionary effort was insufficient for the task before it. As Lord Harris had said, "Emancipation freed a race but failed to create a society". The colonial governments did little to assist the missionary educational efforts, despite the urgency of their work. The divisions between masters and slaves continued among their descendants, bolstered by racial, economic, political and educational differences. The most effective response to missionary effort was found among those peasants who had withdrawn into the free villages from the plantation-dominated societies around them. So long as the economic setting was propitious, these peasant communities could flourish and thrive. During the slump which followed on the planters' loss of political power in Britain, and the abolition of Imperial sugar preferences in 1846, these peasant villages developed a fairly well-balanced autarchic economy, relying on production for local subsistence and exchange. They grew their own food crops and surpluses which were marketed in the colonial towns. They produced their own tradesmen, carpenters, masons, shipbuilders and the like. So long as the colonial export economy, based on sugar cultivation, continued to decline, abandoned estates became available for purchase at low rates, and the peasants were thus able to expand their holdings as their population grew. In the Lesser Antilles there was also considerable migration to nearby Islands with more easily available land. Some Jamaicans colonised British Honduras and the Baptists also drew missionaries from these peasant areas of Jamaica for work in their new West African mission field. However, by 1860 the great days of missionary effort were over, and the effects of the severe economic depression which followed the establishment of a free market in sugar could no longer be avoided.

In 1861 there was a frenzied 'Revival' outburst in Jamaica. Through this movement, many of the missionary teachings were reinterpreted and disseminated widely among the plains population, in somewhat alien forms.

Worship, beginning with Christian liturgy, sought to invoke spirit possession. Numerous small sects sprang up under individual leaders, who were as often as not healers and part-time sorcerers. The resulting complex is known in Jamaica, as 'pocomania' or 'revival'. Its southern parallels are the 'shouting' or 'shakerism' cults of the 'Spiritual Baptists' prevalent in Trinidad, Grenada, and St. Vincent. This 'shouting' is very similar to Jamaican 'Revival' in its ritual and ideology. In addition, there are flourishing African cults such as the Shango of Trinidad and Grenada, the Big Drum or Nation Dance of the Grenadines, the Cumina of Jamaica. With the development and spread of Afro-Christian revivalist cults in circumstances of economic depression, the missionary task became so complex as to be hardly manageable, at precisely the time when missionary efforts in Britain were being diverted to Africa and the Far East.

Throughout these years the colonial governments remained entirely unrepresentative of the populations over which they ruled. To quote one case, the twelve electors of Carriacou in 1859 chose three of their number to represent this district in the Grenadian House of Assembly, itself composed of 16 elected members, 9 of whom in 1865 were planters or attorneys, four merchants, two were professional men and one a journalist whose newspaper was also the official Gazette. The Carriacou population at this period was over 4,000. Jamaica fared little better, British Guiana fared not at all. In addition to this legislative dominance the planters provided the bulk of the unpaid, untrained magistracy which adjudicated petty disputes including cases between planter and worker, landlord and tenant. It could hardly be expected that magisterial benches composed of estate management and its affiliates would always take impartial decisions in matters of immediate personal interest to their members. After one or two warning explosions, there was a riot arising out of this situation at Morant Bay in Jamaica in 1865. The official response to this riot was rather severe; and as part of the reaction, the propertied classes who then controlled the Legislature but not the Executive, decided to surrender all political rights vested in the Colony to the Crown and its officials. In the next ten years the other British Caribbean territories were also persuaded to abolish their Constitutions, Barbados, being the exception. Thus began the long period of Crown Colony government, during which the white, brown and black creoles were governed by British officials whose closest contacts were naturally with the creole whites. In voting to abolish their Constitutions and legislative powers, the colonial propertied classes *implicitly* or otherwise rejected the notion of sharing these powers with members of the black ex-slave population by liberalising the franchise.

Under Crown Colony administration colonial finances were more efficiently managed than before, and government contributed larger funds to educational work among the ex-slaves. Some necessary roads were built or repaired, and there was an efflorescence of public works and buildings. A few secondary schools were started in some of the colonies, but throughout this period secondary education remained available only to the few from well-off families. Taxes were light, revenue low, and laissez-faire was the general rule of official policy, except with

regard to land settlement for the peasants. Lord Oliver has shown how the distribution of land among the Jamaican peasantry increased sharply during the first thirty years of Crown Colony rule; this is equally true of Grenada, St. Vincent and certain other units, but not of Barbados, St. Kitts or Antigua. Even so, the pressure of peasant population on land was also increasing, and apart from the increase of elementary education, very little action was taken to reduce the social and cultural gulf among the racial sections of the population. Indeed, in British Guiana and Trinidad, as we have seen, the large-scale Indian immigration of these years simply increased the cultural diversity and social divisions. Crown Colony administration froze the social order and prohibited rather than stimulated change or the solution of these problems. Sugar production having collapsed, in Jamaica and the Lesser Antilles estate labour moving into peasant proprietorship adopted the cultivation of new crops such as cocoa, nutmegs, banana or arrowroot. Other workers drifted to town or sought to emigrate. In Jamaica, where the depression was most acute and prolonged, thousands went to British Honduras, to the Panama Canal, to Costa Rica, to cut sugar in Cuba, then to the United States. From Barbados a steady stream of people have been moving westwards through St. Vincent, Grenada and Trinidad to British Guiana and beyond, as well as to the United States. When America restricted West Indian immigration, British Honduras and British Guiana appeared to provide the only immediate population outlets for the islanders. This misleading appearance was certainly one factor which influenced them to support the idea of West Indian Federation.

Throughout this Crown Colony period there was little chance of considered action to change the social order or eliminate its tensions and strains. Beginning with success, Crown Colony government soon became a dead hand. Its impartiality became indifference, as often as not, and while the populations grew and economic conditions worsened, while the social and cultural cleavages hardened and the strains increased, no direct action of any consequence was taken to reform the society. In 1937 and 1938 there were widespread riots throughout the British Caribbean. These riots marked the end of Crown Colony administration. Despite minor constitutional changes and renovations, the colonial legislatures of 1937 were dominated by the official Executive, property-based and unrepresentative. Middle and upper class people were by these franchises eligible to vote or stand for election; very few members of the lower classes could do either. There was at this time hardly any Trade Union organisation, very little industry apart from agriculture or sugar, and the colonial systems of commerce were usually based on monopoly commissions in the hands of small groups of traders. Viewed from below, the social order of these territories was a scene of domination, political and economic, a large un-enfranchised mass being ruled by a fairly small, securely entrenched group. Add to this the sharp sectional differences in education, aspiration, values, race and culture, and the severe economic depression of the thirties within which these colonial economies laboured, and it is easy to see that the conditions of 1937 which produced the West Indian riots closely resembled those of Jamaica in 1865 in many particulars.

We have now traced the development of West Indian society in the hundred years which followed Emancipation. This century was characterised by uncertainty, by refusal to formulate the problems which confronted local society, and by refusal to tackle these problems. The riots of 1937 brought this evasive adjustment to an abrupt conclusion. Britain appointed a Royal Commission to survey West Indian conditions, and among other things it recommended universal suffrage and a more liberal Constitution for Jamaica, the recognition and assistance of Trade Unions, the introduction of welfare concepts in local as well as Imperial administration. Prior to 1938, there was hardly any housing scheme worthy of note in Kingston, Jamaica, the largest British Caribbean city. When interviewed by the Royal Commission of 1938 about the island's education policy, the then Director of Education, Jamaica, was reported in the Press to have said that there was no need for a policy. The Colonial Government at that time contained no Department of Statistics; the colonial Department of Agriculture was purely concerned with the banana and sugar export crops. There was no Probation Service, no Department concerned with Child Welfare, marginal medical services, no income tax, no Town or Development Planning organisation. Since that date, Caribbean political changes have been marked by transfers of power from Britain to the Colonies, by shifts of electoral power from the upper classes within these colonies to the lower and middle classes, and by the introduction of welfare concepts and development goals. The British Parliament, by a liberal grant, established the West Indian Colonial Development and Welfare organisation in Barbados, and experts from this unit have materially assisted territorial governments to formulate welfare policies along lines similar to those in Britain. At the same time, the Colonial Office has supported the idea of West Indian Federation, and has taken a leading part in organizing it.

We may pause here to discriminate the three main phases of British West Indian history. In the first or slave period, the white planters who dominated these colonies politically and economically wielded important political power in the United Kingdom, and they used this power to ensure Caribbean prosperity and to protect West Indian interests, which were their interests. In the second phase, these planters continued to dominate the colonies after having lost power in the U.K., and during this period there was a long economic depression and political and social stalemate, which ended when the colonies lost their Constitutions and the Crown took full charge. At first, Crown Colony government enjoyed wide public support as an impartial referee and an efficient administration. It was later discredited by its failure to initiate or foster social change, by its failure to reduce the poverty of the mass or to improve their civil and political situation. In consequence of the riots which demonstrated this failure, the colonies were given responsibility for solving their own social and economic problems, and in this present situation they are no longer free to blame others for their own failure.

The emphasis on 'development' followed quickly on the idea of welfare. Economic development received a powerful stimulus from the example of nearby Puerto Rico and the writings of the West Indian economist, Professor Arthur Lewis. Industrialisation became a major

goal, but favourable conditions for industrialisation are not widespread in the British Caribbean. Poverty has for long been the local norm, and local investments have been traditionally house property, trade or land. The entrepreneurial classes which animated the island economies before 1938 were often unsuitable by attitude or experience for the type of enterprise demanded by economic expansion and industrialisation. The extremely defective educational provisions for our labouring class will hamper their transformation into an efficient industrial labour force. In areas of high unemployment, moreover, employers tend to pay little attention to training and personnel administration. Wage ceilings are often discouraging, and productivity reflects this lack of incentive; but this does not mean that productivity will rise in proportion to wages immediately, since the workers have often become habituated to low levels of aspiration and performance.

Colonial governments can only take effective action to foster economic development or industrialisation as their autonomy increases. In this particular also, there has been considerable variation within the British Caribbean. Jamaica received adult suffrage in 1944, Grenada in 1951, and Trinidad only a year or two ago. The Ministerial system was introduced in Jamaica in 1953 and full self-government was granted in November 1957, but Trinidad still had a constitution at its last local General Election. In British Guiana, the first popularly elected Colonial Legislature was assembled in 1953 on the basis of a new Constitution, which was withdrawn in the same year, when the Legislature was dissolved. After a decent interval the Guianese were given a new less liberal Constitution, the electorate returned the same leader, and after another decent interval he has begun to claim increased powers. Despite this political chiaroscuro, there has been a steady drive towards federation of these colonies; but with the establishment of the West Indian Federation in April this year, the political background to West Indian economic development becomes even more complicated. There is much interest in, and some fear of, a British West Indies customs union. There is considerable worry about probable economic competition between the units, especially Jamaica and Trinidad. The relative powers of Federal and Unit Governments to undertake development planning in the same areas have yet to be fully defined; tax exemption and other facilities which Unit Governments may extend to overseas investors can be quite sharply affected by Federal policies or divergent Unit interests. The establishment of Federal political parties with regional links provides one forum for informal negotiations between the representatives of the units on matters of this type. None the less there seems to be some inconsistency in the simultaneous pursuit of economic development on Federal and Unit levels.

Agriculture is by no means left out of current Development plans. The British Caribbean economies have always been heavily agricultural, and will probably always remain so. In Jamaica and Grenada, Antigua and British Guiana there are now quite imposing agricultural development schemes. One object of such schemes is to keep the rural folk from drifting into the towns, where they simply increase the numbers of

unemployed. However, there are at the moment far too many people engaged unprofitably in West Indian agriculture. To increase the income of agricultural workers, it may be necessary to reduce the rural labour force on peasant as well as other holdings.

Inevitably in discussing a dozen territories with diverse social and economic conditions, we must commit many sins of various kinds. Despite their common framework, the differences between these colonies are indeed striking. Some have for some time provided free secondary education for children who satisfy certain examinations; others, like Jamaica, have steadfastly maintained a deep gulf between elementary and secondary education for many years. Recently the Jamaican Government had proposed to breakdown this gulf by providing a large number of scholarships from elementary to secondary schools; but there is little sign that the regional requirements of graduates will be provided by the regional University College in the foreseeable future. Moreover, even the enlarged secondary school population aimed at by the Jamaica Government will not be sufficiently large to supply the island's expanding needs for University trainees. Similarly, the new Technical Schools being planned in British Guiana, Trinidad and Jamaica are not likely by themselves to satisfy the demands of industrial expansion. Provided that the apprentices' educational backgrounds are suitable, an enlarged apprenticeship programme would be a useful supplement to these Technical Schools.

The point here is that everything has to be done all at once, or not all, on the unit as well as on the Federal level; but unless there is a massive and well-organised programme of overseas assistance, the simultaneous achievement of all these aims and goals is almost certainly impossible. None the less, having adopted economic development as the solution for Caribbean ills, governments are committed to pursue the objectives of this development and to create its conditions. We may assume for the rest of this discussion that the Federal and unit governments work hand in hand on this attempt. We must also assume that they are successful in attracting overseas investors, in securing overseas aid, and in persuading colonials to invest in colonial development. Even with these assumptions, several problems remain which I now wish to consider. These problems are social and cultural, since we have assumed that all the economic and constitutional ones have been solved.

III. Contemporary Problems.

The first and most obvious problem which faces economic expansion in these areas is that of relations between employer and employee, individually or through their representative organisations. Often the employer wants a type of response, aptitude or interest which it may take the employee a long time to develop. The employer may want workers with special skills or powers of concentration; he may have to train some of these people himself. On his part the worker may require special incentives, including prospects of promotion and increased social status, in order to motivate him to undergo this training usefully. This sort of in-service training may be as important in some labour-intensive industries suitable for this area as it has proved in Puerto Rico. It may

very well be the case that some voluntary organisations could bring representatives of the employers and workers together on a regular basis in conditions which allow them to discuss these and other common problems informally and to their mutual benefit. Perhaps if it is possible to provide apprentices with hostel accommodation and opportunities for further education, the costs and periods of apprenticeship could be reduced through this effective supervision. Short courses giving practical skills for which there is a definite local demand are needed; but these can only be organised by some body which makes a special effort to discover what these needs are, and to meet them recurrently. Such work would be rewarding in any British Caribbean territory. If combined with supervised accommodation of trainees, further activities may be added.

Special efforts to break down the social and cultural gulfs between classes, or racial sections, could be made by arranging discussion groups and by emphasising the responsibilities inherent in new positions of social leadership. Social barriers in this region are such that many willing hands lie idle and frustrated for lack of tasks to do or invitations to assist. There is an important need for systematic efforts to develop traditions of voluntary social service and common citizenship at ^{all} levels of the social scale. For too long these populations have dealt with one another indirectly, through Government, shelving their responsibilities onto a structure which is by its very nature incapable of resolving their differences. There is a need for adequate recreational facilities for rural children and for those living in the crowded urban areas, and especially for work among adolescents and other young people in clubs and vocational classes. Such youth work could seek to develop the interests and attitudes of good citizenship, especially self-respect. Particular efforts should be made in these complex West Indian communities to attract members from as many sections of the population as possible, to bring these differing elements together in regular association, to give them joint responsibility, partnership in a common enterprise, to create among them a sense of mutual responsibility, understanding and respect, and thereby to establish the conditions of voluntary social service.

Essentially the British Caribbean territories now face two major problems. The first is economic, the second social and cultural. These societies now have to modernise their economies. Some industrialisation, some planning, some introduction of scientific agriculture, many improvements in communications and industrial organisation, all these and further changes are necessary. These changes and problems are unavoidable concomitants of economic development. They will make heavy demands on local resources of skill, capital and administrative ability. Their solution is also dependent on sympathetic interest overseas. Important as these problems are, they are probably less immediate than the social and cultural difficulties which West Indians now face.

These socio-cultural problems are closely related to those noted by Lord Harris a century ago. Emancipation indeed could not of itself create a society, and during the years which have followed, the societies which

emerged unplanned have continued the old social order and the given cultural materials, to greater or less degree. These societies are internally divided by status, culture, economic interests and to a lesser extent by race. Hitherto imperial control has prevented direct attacks on the social system, while the lack of local political experience has weakened the forces of revolt. In the near future both these safeguards will be lacking. With autonomy, West Indians will no longer be able to blame others for their own difficulties, and with autonomy there are ample opportunities of political education. If the current problems are not solved swiftly and smoothly, we can certainly look forward to difficult times.

The basic problem which now faces these British Caribbean colonies is that of social integration. Such integration presupposes the reduction of inequalities and social distance between social groups, and an increase of mobility between these groups. The need for social integration is even more apparent at Federal level. The Federation is a quite artificial unit, a State without a society. Indeed its component units are themselves divided societies. The Federation, moreover, is geographically scattered, and hence cannot draw on sentiments of common locality or nationhood in any of the most abstract sense. In seeking to resolve these problems of integration on the unit or Federal level, governmental action alone cannot be sufficient, nor can individual effort achieve the necessary end. There is here a need and opportunity for the development of regional associations working together on matters of common interest and bringing the members of different territories into regular association. Clearly these organisations most able to promote integration at the unit and Federal level will be the ones which dedicate themselves to the task of breaking down the social barriers, bridging social gaps and building a common understanding and loyalty among people of different social stations. This is indeed almost as forbidding a task as that which faced the missionaries a hundred and forty years ago. It is moreover, one we dare not ignore without courting disaster.

The British Caribbean future is a test case for the Western world. Here is an underdeveloped, multi-racial community which for centuries has been under Western tutelage. Now for the first time these societies have been set free to pursue their own integration and development in their own ways. If they are to succeed, their people will have to make special efforts, and so too will their overseas friends. If they do not succeed - if self-government perpetuates the colonial social order - then the Western belief that democracy can resolve colonial difficulties or flourish in colonial conditions will be disproved.