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Title: "Review. *Britain and the U.S.A. in the Caribbean*, by Mary Proudfoot"

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lacking in intelligence, and one can hardly accuse him of that, then most certainly was he lacking in good will. One stroke of the pen, the removal (which in the end of course did take place) to another sphere of "usefulness" of a very queer Chief Justice, and peace would have been restored. Instead of which, Governor, Acting Governor, Attorney and Solicitor Generals, and Members of Council were, as one might almost say, hauled over the coals, and all on account of a Catholic priest, suspended from the use of his priestly functions by the authorities of the Church. Manifest contradictions mattered not at all, as when the Acting Governor was found guilty of "systematic persecution" of Catholics, and at the same time of giving too much "recognition to their establishment".

For years the whole Colony was in a state of confusion over this petty affair which James Stephen had it in his power to assuage and failed signally to do so. Little wonder that the two local newspapers, rivals of course, and both under Protestant management, were in agreement over this, voicing as both of them did public opinion.

There is no need then for the devil's advocate to do more than to point to the respectable people of Grenada, who were all loud in their disapproval of the decisions, most of which emanated originally from the mind of one who was to become Sir, but not quite Saint, James Stephen.

Yours faithfully,

FR. R. P. DEVAS, O.P.

Grenada

## Review

*Britain and the U.S.A. in the Caribbean: A comparative study in Methods of Development.* By Mary Proudfoot. London, Faber, 42/-.

THE object of this study is to focus attention upon a very small area, viz., the British and American Caribbean islands, in an attempt to review these different methods (of development) in some detail, and to determine, in each case, the results (p. xi). 'It would seem highly desirable that these two Great Powers . . . should pay close attention to each other's methods, so that each may derive the maximum benefit from the experiences of the other (p. xi)'.

The book is thus directed towards British and American audiences, rather than the Caribbean. It further seeks to influence those in Britain or America who are concerned directly or otherwise with Caribbean problems. Its interest to Caribbean readers therefore consists primarily in the fact that it is an example of the type of approach and argument which influences or typifies policy discussions at the metropolitan level. In this context it is revealing in many ways.

For example, the object is to assess the results of British and American programmes in their Caribbean dependencies. In the Preface we are informed that the study lasted roughly six years, only six months of which were spent in the Caribbean. 'This study is based for the most part on official reports, many of which are only available in the area (p. xii)'. Thus administrative reports and pronouncements are taken at face value, both as evidence of intentions and results of action. This type of procedure is stultifying at best, and can be seriously misleading. It virtually rules out the chance of independent estimates of the success of administrative schemes, when these estimates reflect administrative reports mainly.

The comparison issues in a type of discursive inventory approach similar in character to Government Handbooks. The spotlight is focussed on the social, economic, or political *problems* facing the agents of metropolitan administration, and these problems are given serial treatment in a 'comparative' review

which is insufficiently detailed for illuminating analysis on most topics. The systematic relations of these various 'problems' to one another is also obscured, though development programmes must take these inter-relations into account directly if they are to succeed.

The book is disappointing therefore because it does not fulfil its object of comparing American and British policy in the Caribbean fruitfully. The comparison it presents is not useful for many reasons. Firstly, as mentioned above, it is attempted without adequate information on the *results* of such policy. Quite apart from the ambiguities and vagueness characteristic of policy formulation for the British West Indies it may well be much too early to make any useful assessment of the 'results' of recent policy.

Secondly, one would expect that the conclusions from a comparative review of this character would show that particular methods enjoyed differing degrees of success in dealing with or reducing particular problems. But this expectation is not fulfilled, and the concluding summary after reviewing each topic simply restates the data already reported and attempts to hold a magisterial balance between the two metropolitan actors. This balance itself relies heavily on value-judgments and clichés, which destroy the virtue of the comparative method.

Finally, neither the objects of British and American policy, nor the contexts, metropolitan and local, in which policy

is applied offer the type of data essential for a useful comparison. The dissimilarities between Puerto Rico and the British West Indies are greater than a rigorous comparison at this level can accommodate. The same point applies to the objects of British and American policy in many ways, as for instance is illustrated by their differing conception of constitutional development, the role of the Governor, housing programmes, University education for the area, and the like.

But the failure of this comparison to indicate any general principles or pattern of colonial development does not warrant the author's conclusion that no such pattern or method exists. This may well be true; but it does not follow from this study. What becomes clearer as one reads through the volume is that the comparative method is here being misapplied.

In the end one is left with a feeling that the real purpose of the book is not so much to attempt a comparison, but to inform Britain and the U.S.A. of the type of action that is being taken in the Caribbean by one another, and the type of consideration on which that action is based. The volume may, in fact, simply be regarded as an apologia for current British Caribbean policy. As such it may fail to impress the Americans and be unnecessary in Britain, but still be worth study in this region.

M. G. SMITH.