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Short-range Prospects in the British Caribbean^a

By

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Projections

Prediction is not the favourite pastime of social scientists. It can be risky business, even for journalists. When unavoidable, one favourite solution is to develop oracular statements, cryptic or general enough to rule out disproof. An alternative evasion is to set up a chain of dichotomous contingencies without indicating their relative probability.

Projections and predictions differ sharply. Predictions are verifiable, specific statements about future events. Projections indicate trends of development, their conditions, directions and strength. A rigorously formulated projection may permit predictive tests in certain areas. Where feasible this is of value. But it is neither a necessary nor a sufficient feature of useful projections. A good projection sets out the implications of present trends for future developments, and thus presumes understanding of relations between the present and past. All projections presume some continuities in the field at certain levels; and these continuities are certainly more evident in history than speculation. A reasoned projection accordingly rests on detailed knowledge of given historical fields, on analysis of their current structure and trends, and on certain assumptions or conclusions about their external contexts. In addition, a systematic projection presumes integration of two quite distinct types of theory, one dealing with the nature of the units in question, the other with continuity or change. Unless these two streams of theory are integrated in it, there is little to differentiate the projection from *ad hoc* guesswork.

It happens that I have been gradually developing two relevant bodies of theory which can provide the basis for reasoned projections about British Caribbean probabilities in the near future. One of these theories applies a framework of social and cultural pluralism to the study of Caribbean societies.¹ The other deals with processes of structural maintenance or change.² By combining relevant ideas in these two theories, and applying these to the Caribbean future, it is possible to avoid *ad hoc* guessing, to test the

^aFor reasons apparent below, I do not believe that the date of composition determines the value of a reasoned projection. I have accordingly prepared this forecast in June 1961, so that members of this conference may evaluate the forecast in the light of developments during the interval between the drafting and presentation of this paper.

¹M. G. Smith. (a) *A Framework for Caribbean Studies*. Extra-Mural Dept., U.C.W.I., Jamaica, 1955; and "Social and Cultural Pluralism", in *Social and Cultural Pluralism in the Caribbean*, Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences, Vol. 83, 1960, pp. 763-777.

²M. G. Smith. (b) *Government in Zazzau, 1800-1950*. Oxford University Press for International African Institute, London, 1960; and "Kagoro Political Development." *Human Organization*, Vol. 19, No. 3, pp. 137-149.

general conceptions, and to explain both the present and the future which spring from it. To merit scientific consideration, projections must be grounded on formal theory as well as on empirical knowledge of the relevant field.

Population

The British Caribbean consists of twelve dependent territories, two of which, British Honduras and British Guiana, differ in their mainland situation, large empty interiors, low overall population densities, and aloofness from the Federation which the ten island-units formed. Such differences of size, position, population, and relations to the Federation require attention.³ Important differences of racial composition, cultural structure and economic level are also present.

The principal features shared by these units include colonial status, economic dependence, racial and cultural heterogeneity, dependence on British institutional models, social pluralism and malintegration, histories of slavery, monoculture, and frequent transfers between European powers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Today, except in Dominica, Guiana and Honduras, population densities are overly high in most units. Since 1955 several thousand West Indians have migrated to Britain, mainly from Jamaica, Barbados, the Windward and Leeward Islands. Although population problems are acute, population policy is almost absent. Only Barbados presently has an officially sponsored programme of birth control. For most of the other units, population policy is uncontrolled emigration. Trinidad prohibits West Indian immigration for political and economic reasons. The future of these Caribbean societies is thus closely related to their demographic conditions and development. West Indian migrants are not welcome in most countries of the world. Only Britain has recently accepted them in large numbers, and for various reasons. How long this will continue is not quite clear; but West Indian leaders are rightly worried at the prospect that Britain may stop this migration when the West Indies obtain independence.

External Relations

These British Caribbean colonies are dependent units. They are so weak and poor that their influence on developments elsewhere is negligible. By the same token, they are easily affected by policies in the metropolitan countries with which they have close relations. These units are chiefly significant to foreigners because of their geopolitical situation and problematic social stability.

I cannot consider the global context of West Indian societies at length here. West Indian units must adapt themselves to this context as best they can. There is little they can do to influence its development. Nonetheless, as this context provides the background for our projection, its implications should be defined.

³David Lowenthal, "The Range and Variation of Caribbean Societies," in *Social and Cultural Pluralism in the Caribbean*, Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences, Vol. 83, 1960, pp. 786-795.

I assume that the cold war continues in the near future, and that during the next two or three years with which this paper deals, the world remains uneasily in the indeterminate *status quo* based on shifting distributions of global pressures and power. I assume that a nuclear war would rob the immediate future, and any projections, of meaning. West Indian contributions to this global struggle depend entirely on West Indian stability. A reasonably stable British Caribbean represents a stable sector of the global arena, small and poor no doubt, but not entirely unimportant. A West Indies in turmoil provides opportunities for political exploitation revolutionaries would be silly to miss. I assume that both the Anglo-American and Sino-Soviet blocs share this assessment, and that these considerations give Dr. Castro's Cuba her present importance. I cannot imagine that any Communist forces would attempt to invade the British Caribbean units; but it is possible that such forces would assist a popular revolt in these units, if properly invited.

I assume that Britain is anxious to give these colonies independence, and that her main concern is to create conditions which promote their stability and economic growth. It is clear now that Britons wish to control West Indian immigration. Britain can hardly do so before the West Indies become independent. It is thus probable that the in-flow will be restricted shortly afterwards, perhaps on a basis subject to periodic revision. Such restrictions on emigration will increase economic distress and social malaise in some West Indian units, unless compensations are found. The Trinidadian Premier, Dr. Eric Williams, has already announced that revolution would break out within twenty-four hours of British action to stop this immigration.⁴ Dr. Williams did not say where, how, or why this "revolution" would take place, and his statement expresses anxiety rather than analysis. This anxiety undoubtedly rests on hard demographic and economic facts, but the significance of these facts depends on certain social and cultural conditions which also require study. If there is a West Indian revolution within twenty-four hours of British action to stop West Indian immigration, it would clearly be due to West Indian social and economic conditions rather than British migration laws.

It is already clear that the central theme of our projection is the question of stability or change. For this reason, I shall only discuss the present situation, its immediate antecedents and immediate future. West Indian stability is not identical with persistence of the *status quo*, formally at least. The West Indian *status quo* is now future-oriented, at least formally. The West Indies Federation should become independent on May 31st, 1962. British Guiana and British Honduras which remain outside this grouping expect further increases of self-government shortly. All units in the Federation will receive full powers of internal self-government before the date of federal independence. However, the West Indian present is bound as fully to its past as to the future. Pursuit of present goals presumes continuity of

⁴The *Daily Gleaner*, 14th June, 1961. Vol. CXXVII, No. 134, p. 1.

the social movements and trends which established and support them. Continued operation of these social forces at present levels of strength itself presumes continuity of the basic societal processes from which they derive. Thus if the West Indian present is a moving equilibrium oriented to certain goals and problems, maintenance of this *status quo* is equivalent to continued pursuit of present goals and continuity of present trends. The maintenance of such conditions itself presupposes continuity in the basic processes and forms of West Indian social life. Accordingly the maintenance of present trends and directions expresses West Indian stability and implies maintenance of the social structure.

Creole Society

West Indian society is Creole society, with certain variations. Creoles are natives of the region, other than Amerindians, Chinese, East Indians, and some occupationally specialized minorities, such as Lebanese or Jews. These exclusions define Creoles as native West Indians of European, African, or mixed descent. The Creole society and culture accordingly derives from Europe and Africa. Expressed in terms of colour, Creoles form a trinity of black, white, and brown. Despite obvious debts to Europe and Africa, the Creole society and culture are distinctive local products, part amalgam, and part mixture of discordant and incompatible elements. The Creole milieu provides a classic example of social and cultural pluralism in its extreme form, the plural society. Historically based on European control of African slaves, the current social order reflects these antecedents. As David Lowenthal says:

Many coloured people are as wealthy as some whites; many black people hold high political office; social mobility is probably increasing in most of the islands. Nevertheless, it is still true that black folk in The West Indies are generally the poorest and have the lowest status; the small, but increasingly important, middle class is chiefly composed of coloured people and special minorities; while the upper class—with the most money, the highest status, and the greatest power — is chiefly confined to a small group of whites and near-whites. Racial composition and social situations vary from island to island; there are many "poor whites" in Barbados who are not considered upper class, while in Grenada and Dominica, where whites are few, the local élite is predominantly light-coloured. But these are minor variations within the general social alignment of classes. As in post-revolutionary Haiti, so in The West Indies . . . Every rich Negro is a mulatto, every poor mulatto is a Negro.⁵

Creole status hierarchies are conceived and expressed in terms of colour. General stereotypes equate high status and light pigment, low status and dark pigment, medium status and medium pigment. In addition each colour-class exhibits cultural peculiarities and distinctness to itself as well as others. These social and cultural differences include language skills and habits, literacy, education, occupation, property forms, employment patterns, saving institutions, mating, family, and kinship practice, local groupings and other associations, religion, magic, ritual and belief, customs, norms, ideologies and values of the most trivial or important kinds. These cleavages of culture between high-status "whites", mid-status "browns", and low-status

⁵David Lowenthal, "The Social Background of West Indian Federation", in David Lowenthal (Ed.), *The West Indies Federation: Perspectives on a New Nation*. American Geographical Society, Research Series No. 23, Columbia University Press, N.Y. 1961, p. 76.

"blacks" ramify throughout all phases and aspects of inter-sectional relations and activities in the West Indies, and underlie the discontinuities between these social sections noted by Leonard Broom.⁶ The resulting combination of economic, behavioural, cultural and colour differentiation reduces social cohesion and inter-sectional mobility in Creole society to a minimum.

The Analytic Frame

Pressures for change which seek to redistribute social values focus directly on the positions and relations of the social sections which are the principal components of this social structure. Accordingly structural changes involve changes of sectional relations and cannot develop except under conditions of maximum strain and instability in which the continuity of the social system as a unit is clearly at stake. The Grenadian crisis of 1951-4 which I have described elsewhere illustrates the general pattern of West Indian movements for change.⁷ As I have also shown, structural changes in Creole society are changes of status structure, and thus involve changes of inter-sectional relations.⁸ Other studies also show that basic changes in the status of government and society proceed together with changes of status structure. Changes in the status of a society involve changes in its external relations, and these may find expression in changes of governmental regime. Changes in the status structure of a given society proceed by political action which redistributes social values and redefines the composition or inter-relations of status-groups. Typically these processes also involve changes in governmental system and ideology.⁹

These principles provide the theoretical basis for our projection. Their implications are quite clear. They indicate that structural variations of Creole society will reflect differing racial and cultural ratios and composition. They show that recent constitutional advances, negotiations for independence, nationalist ideologies and stress on federation and economic development reflect and accompany certain changes of status structure in these Creole societies, and of their statuses as separate units also. Careful study of these governmental changes indicates the changes of social structure which underlie and promote them. We must therefore focus attention on those conditions which must prevail if current movements for independence, national status, and economic development are to maintain their strength. Our theories must explain the selection and pursuit of these targets,

⁶Leonard Broom, "The Social Differentiation of Jamaica," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 19, 1954, pp. 115-123, Washington, U.S.A.; and "Urbanization and the Plural Society", in *Social and Cultural Pluralism in the Caribbean*, Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences, Vol. 83, 1960, pp. 880-891.

⁷M. G. Smith, "Structure and Crisis in Grenada". Background Paper for Conference on Political Sociology of the Caribbean, UCWI and RISM, December, 1961.

⁸M. G. Smith, "Slavery and Emancipation in Two Societies", *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 3, Nos. 3 & 4, 1954, pp. 239-290; and "Ethnic and Cultural Pluralism in the British Caribbean", in *Ethnic and Cultural Pluralism in Inter-Tropical Countries, INCIDI*, Brussels, 1957, pp. 439-477.

⁹M. G. Smith, 1960a, *op. cit.*, 1960b, *op. cit.*

their distribution and differences in different Creole societies, their appeal, support, and opposition. The essential basis for projections about British Caribbean developments accordingly integrates the theories of pluralism and structural change, so that current trends in these Creole pluralities may be evaluated and understood.

Territorial Differences

There are marked structural differences between British Honduras, British Guiana and Trinidad, and between these units and all others. Trinidad and British Guiana contain large East Indian populations. In British Guiana, East Indians have a population majority and support Dr. Jagan, the present premier, who is also East Indian. In Trinidad, East Indians represent approximately 45 per cent of the population, and the Creole premier, Dr. Williams, seeks to keep race and politics apart.¹⁰ British Guiana under Dr. Jagan has kept aloof from the West Indies Federation, and has established friendly relations with Dr. Castro's government in Cuba. Under Dr. Williams, Trinidad is the foremost advocate of a strong centralized Federation, charged with power and responsibilities for regional development. Dr. Williams has used every chance to promote a vigorous national sentiment in Trinidad, and on occasion has generalized this Trinidadian nationalism throughout the Federation, for example in his dispute with the United States over Chaguaramas, the site of the future federal capital. While Dr. Jagan's programme for the economic development of Guiana places primary emphases on the peasants,¹¹ most of whom are Indian, Dr. Williams' economic programme for Trinidad stresses industrialization and restricts Creole immigration.

These differing orientations of Guiana and Trinidad reflect their differences of structure. Trinidad with its Creole majority and premier is explicitly Creole in culture and orientations.¹² Guiana with its Indian majority and premier lacks this commitment to Creole culture or values.¹³ Many Indians in Trinidad as well as British Guiana are weakly acculturated to Creole norms;¹⁴ but their number is greater in Guiana, where they are

¹⁰Eric Williams, "Race Relations in Caribbean Society", in V. Rubin, Ed., *Caribbean Studies: A Symposium*, Institute of Social and Economic Research, UCWI, Jamaica, 1957, pp. 54.

¹¹Peter Newman, "The Economic Future of British Guiana", *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 3, 1960, pp. 263-96; also K. Berrill, A. P. Thorne, G. E. Cumper, K. E. Boulding, "Comments on 'The Economic Future of British Guiana' by Peter Newman", *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 1961, pp. 1-34, 1961. Peter Newman, "Epilogue on British Guiana", *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 1961, pp. 35-41.

¹²L. Braithwaite, "Social Stratification in Trinidad", *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 2, Nos. 3 and 4; 1953, pp. 5-175, UCWI, Jamaica; also 1954, "The Problem of Cultural Integration in Trinidad," *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1954, pp. 82-96, UCWI, Jamaica.

¹³Elliott P. Skinner, "Group Dynamics and Social Stratification in British Guiana", in *Social and Cultural Pluralism in the Caribbean*, Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences, Vol. 83, 1960, pp. 904-916.

¹⁴D. J. Crowley, "Plural and Differential Acculturation in Trinidad", *American Anthropologist*, Vol. LIX, 1957, pp. 817-824, N.Y. Morton Klass "East and West Indian: Cultural Complexity in Trinidad", in *Social and Cultural Pluralism in the Caribbean*, Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences, Vol. 83, pp. 855-861.

free to choose other goals. The prevalent ideology in British Guiana is socialist; in Trinidad, Dr. Williams emphasizes nationalism, federation and economic development. By these means, Dr. Williams hopes to replace racial divisions with national identity, defined by contradistinction with other national units. Such an ideology may encourage the Creolization of enough Indians in Trinidad to preserve the unit's Creole orientation, despite the Indians' superior fertility. Dr. Jagan and the Indians of British Guiana need no such creed, and may well regard it as retrogressive for Guiana.

The position and society of British Honduras are structurally unique. This territory straddles the boundary of two quite different worlds, the Negro-White Creole and the Spanish-Indian Mestizo culture-areas.¹⁵ This cleavage divides Hondurans culturally, linguistically, and by race. In consequence Hondurans hold conflicting loyalties and orientations. Many wish to quit the British Commonwealth and the Creole cultural province for Guatemala and the Central American Mestizo field. Others wish to remain Creole and British. As Honduran autonomy increases, this cleavage will tend to deepen, and some choice between membership in the West Indies Federation or closer association with Guatemala will have to be faced. The final decision may be determined by the balance of forces within Honduras.

Apart from Trinidad, Honduras and British Guiana, all other British Caribbean units have a similar basic structure.¹⁶ They lack important East Indian enclaves and the basic Indian-Creole cleavage. None face the problem of choice between Creole and Mestizo ways of life. All either have or will shortly enjoy internal autonomy. Excluding Barbuda and Dominica, all these units are overpopulated. All are under-capitalized and have considerable unemployment and underemployment. All are too small and weak to compete successfully in the world market. All depend on preferential treatment in British and other Commonwealth markets. The racial composition of all these societies is essentially the same, white, brown, and black accounting for the overwhelming majority of their people. All display the Creole social structure in its simplest, purest form. In all the handful of whites have highest status, wealth and power. In all four-fifths of the people are black, poor, ill-educated and of low status, the majority of the remainder being coloured of middling wealth, skill, status and cultural allegiance.

These structural uniformities are found together with significant differences of size and position. Jamaica is several hundred miles removed from her nearest federal partner, but only 90 miles from Cuba. With an area of 4,400 square miles, a population of 1.6 million, and a gross domestic product estimated at c. £230 millions,¹⁷ Jamaica could perhaps form a viable

¹⁵M. G. Smith, "West Indian Culture", *Caribbean Quarterly*, Extra-Mural Dept., UCWI, Port of Spain, Trinidad.

¹⁶Morley Ayearst, *The British West Indies, The Search for Self-Government*. Allen and Unwin, London, 1960; also, G. E. Cumper (Ed.) *The Economy of the West Indies*, Institute of Social and Economic Research, UCWI, Jamaica, 1960.

¹⁷*Economic Survey for 1960*. Prepared by the Central Planning Unit, Government Printer, Kingston, Jamaica, 1961.

independent unit. This is one aspect of the choice Jamaicans will have to make in their referendum on federal membership. Of the other islands, excluding Trinidad, only Barbados could conceivably stand on its own. Several Windward and Leeward Islands already depend on grants from the British or Federal Treasuries. These units already share certain services, and have long histories of mutually unsatisfactory association. Thus, of the nine islands, only Barbados and Jamaica enjoy sufficient independence of action to permit internal movements for change.

In Jamaica, programmes of economic development stress tourism, industrialization and increased farm production as the major means of prosperity and progress. In Jamaica, the ideology of nationalism dates back to 1939, when Mr. Norman Manley founded his People's National Party. Progress is now defined as prosperity¹⁸ and nationalism as racial harmony in an integrated ideology which receives strenuous elite support.

In Barbados, the fantastic population density restricts the scope for social reform most severely. Barbadian population density stands now at approximately 1,400 per square mile, and is still rising. In addition Barbadians have a history of stable sectional symbiosis. Ideologies, national or socialist, are difficult to implant or nourish in these conditions. Their absence perpetuates parochialism and traditionalistic orientations. Sugar and emigration together just keep the Barbadian economy afloat. Since Trinidad began to restrict West Indian immigration, Barbadians have been moving to Britain. Without freedom of movement within the Federation, Barbados may withdraw. An independent Barbados could perhaps maintain its present population at current levels of living by extracting special concessions from Britain, by importing capital, by increasing its tourist trade, and by exporting surplus Barbadians to new areas if Britain excludes them. There is no obvious gain for Barbados to remain within a Federation which does not furnish either of these conditions. As a colony with full internal self-government, Barbados may in many respects be better off alone.

For the Windwards and Leewards, dependence on some larger unit is the only feasible prospect. Their withdrawal from Federation would rob this body of its connecting links and major objective. Failing freedom of migration to Trinidad, or federal funds to finance local development, some of these units are now rethinking the value of federation for them. Recognizing this, Great Britain has promised interim economic aid to these islands and to study the future needs of their economies. There are signs that the United States may also offer help.

The West Indies Federation

The future of this Federation is now obscure at two levels. It is not clear whether the Federation will hold together until independence on May 31st 1962, or how many units will elect to remain in it. Assuming

¹⁸A *National Plan for Jamaica*, Government Printer, Kingston, 1957; also *The Economic Development of Jamaica, Report of a Mission of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1952.

that the Federation persists with all or most of its present members and receives independence as currently planned, it is also not clear how the newly independent state will meet its pressing problems. These two sets of difficulties are best discussed separately.

At present, the Federal Government maintains its personnel in temporary headquarters at Port of Spain, Trinidad, one battalion of the West India Regiment, a shipping service between the islands, responsibility for British West Indian Airways, the University College of the West Indies, and certain minor agencies. Under its present constitution, federal funds and powers are strictly limited, and the small populations of the Windwards and Leewards are over-represented in the Legislature, while the peoples of Trinidad and Jamaica who supply 85 per cent of federal population and funds do not have proportionate representation. There is yet no permanent capital, no customs union, no freedom of entry to Trinidad, no regional development plan, or federal powers of taxation.

In anticipation of Federal Independence, all member-units will receive internal self-government, and a new federal constitution will provide for legislative representation on a basis corresponding with population size. The Federation will in future be financed from customs duties, and over the following nine years, it is planned to establish a customs union throughout the federal area. In step with the establishment of this customs union, restrictions on free movement of persons between the territories may be removed. Federal responsibilities will increase at the same rate. The West India regiment is to have two battalions. The Federal Government will represent all its units in the United Nations, the British Commonwealth and external relations generally. Each unit will separately control its own income tax and industrial development. Each unit will be able to veto further proposals for constitutional change. These are the legal blueprints and bureaucratic programmes of Federation. The problems for which this machinery has been designed are scarcely indicated there.

The persistence of Federation presumes ratification of these arrangements by each member-unit separately. Hardly any of the units are fully satisfied with the present federal blueprint. Barbados demands freedom of entry at once to Trinidad, and some smaller islands support this. Trinidad refuses to permit this movement until the customs union is fully established nine years hence. Trinidad advocates a strong federal centre equipped to integrate the unit-economies and to promote development on a regional basis. Trinidad has also threatened to quit the Federation if Jamaica withdraws. Trinidad contains the site of the future federal capital, and leads in the promotion of West Indian nationalism. The Windward and Leeward islands have looked to Trinidad for ideas, migration opportunities, and funds for local investment. Their present disappointment at Trinidadian policies is expressed as demands for freedom of entry backed by threats of secession. Jamaica has compelled the other units to grant all her chief demands. These include Jamaican control over local industrial develop-

ment and taxation, coupled with representation in proportion to population and safeguards against further constitutional change. Nonetheless, Jamaican membership of the Federation remains uncertain. A referendum on this question will be held when Jamaicans will decide whether to continue in the Federation or to withdraw. If Jamaica withdraws after an anti-federal majority vote, Trinidad may wish to do likewise, unless important new resources become available to the Federation.

It is idle to speculate about current threats of withdrawal from the Federation. The association will only collapse if Trinidad or most of the small islands leave it. A West Indian Federation is quite viable without Barbados or Jamaica. Moreover, if Jamaica secedes, British Guiana may decide to join the Federation. If the small islands withdraw as a group, or if Trinidad secedes, the federal form and idea will lose its value. However, it is unlikely that the small islands will agree to withdraw as a group. There are obvious advantages in their federal membership, if foreign aid is funnelled through the Federal Government. Thus even if Jamaica secedes after her referendum, the Federation may persist, provided its dominant member, Trinidad, can secure the additional help she will need to meet her new responsibilities. The United Kingdom, United States and United Nations will certainly assist an independent West Indies Federation, whatever its membership; and British Guiana might be willing to enter if Jamaica withdraws. It is thus possible that the Federation will survive, with or without Jamaican participation.

The problems which will face an independent West Indies Federation, whatever its composition, are severe but manageable.¹⁹ Overpopulation, under-capitalization, and unemployment are obvious economic ills. But members of an independent West Indies Federation may enjoy rights of free entry into the United States similar to those of other free nations in the New World. Important increases in West Indian migration to America should reduce the movement to Britain together with British anxieties about this influx, and strains in the West Indian economy. Foreign aid has already been offered the new state, and this might include the skills and resources to promote economic development. In such conditions unemployment rates should fall. Policies to control population may then develop. Although the West Indian economy would still face difficulties even in such favourable conditions, it would then provide a firmer basis for the social order, and might promote social change and stability together. Thus the most important factor in the immediate future of the West Indies is undoubtedly opportunities for increased emigration.

British Guiana holds a unique position. Its present government has Marxist orientations, friendly relations with Cuba, mass support from Guianese Indians, and dislike of West Indian Federation as presently constituted. However, an independent Federation may attract Guiana, especially if Jamaica withdraws and the Indian and Creole populations become more

¹⁹D. Lowenthal, Ed., *The West Indies Federation, Perspectives on a New Nation*, N.Y., 1961.

nearly equal. One advantage of federation in such conditions to Dr. Jagan might lie in the strategy of political expansion. In event of Guianese independence, the Caribbean will have governments sympathetic to Marxism at either end. Recognizing this, Britain may seek to delay or otherwise limit Guianese independence. Guiana's entry into West Indian Federation provides the most promising solution of this problem, if Dr. Jagan can be made to agree.

The Position of Jamaica

In various ways Jamaica holds the key to developments in the British Caribbean in the immediate future. It is in Jamaica also that the general question of structural maintenance or change is most immediate and critical. Analysis of Jamaica's situation may thus throw light on the basic forces and tendencies of Caribbean social structure. This unit has certain advantages of size, situation and structural simplicity which together explain its relatively rapid political development. Issues which remain obscure in other parts of the Caribbean emerge clearly in Jamaica. There is no Indian-Creole or Creole-Mestizo cleavage to override or conceal them.

Jamaican society is a hierarchy of three social sections differentiated by colour, culture, status and interest.²⁰ Of these, the minute white upper section represents one or two per cent of the population, the black lower section includes four-fifths, and the brown middle section, the remainder. Until 1938, whites monopolized decisive power in Jamaican political and economic affairs. In 1938, the blacks protested against social and economic conditions; their protest was canalized and organized by members of the brown middle section, who differed from the blacks in colour, values, norms, aspirations, education, beliefs, associations, wealth, status, and occasionally language. Two men became outstanding leaders, Bustamante in the Trade Union field, Norman Manley in political party and constitutional development.²¹ Of these men, Bustamante first championed the cause of the workers and of the black lower section generally. The devotion he aroused was intense, and for years his leadership was secure. Manley advocated responsible government based on universal suffrage, socialism based on nationalization of property aggregates, and nationalism based on the need to weld the three Creole sections into a solidary unit which could claim independent status. The introduction of universal suffrage and a more liberal constitution in 1944 was largely due to Manley's demands; but in this and the succeeding election of 1949, Jamaicans rejected Manley's socialist programme and elected Bustamante's candidates.

In these years Manley's socialism represented an explicit programme of structural change aimed at redistributing social values and changing inter-

²⁰M. G. Smith, "The Plural Framework of Jamaican Society", *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XII, No. 3, 1961, pp. 249-262, London.

²¹C. Paul Bradley, "Mass Parties in Jamaica", *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 4, 1960, pp. 375-416, UCWI, Jamaica; O. W. Phelps, "Rise of the Labour Movement in Jamaica", *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 4, 1960, pp. 417-468, UCWI, Jamaica.

sectional relations. The two upper sections were accordingly alienated. The large lower section supported Bustamante, whose championship in 1938 they never forgot. Among the factors which frustrated Manley's efforts were certain differences of orientation which communications could not bridge. Manley's programme of reform was conceived in terms of economic means and objectives. Bustamante offered no programme for reform. He represented social protest in and against conditions as they were. The mass of the lower section were accustomed to thinking about their position in fatalistic racial and magico-religious terms,²² and did not respond to Manley's rationalistic economic programme or to his advocacy of nationalism and constitutional reforms. Bustamante's charisma and bread-and-butter union leadership suited them better.

By 1955, when Manley finally won power, social reform and social protest had both ceased to motivate Jamaican politicians. Manley proclaimed new goals of economic development, constitutional reform and federation. His early programmes of socialism and structural change were thoroughly abandoned.²³ Manley's adoption of economic development instead of socialism was forced on him in two defeats by an electorate opposed to structural change. Like his rival, Bustamante, Manley's capacities for political action and social reform were limited and defined by the structure of his situation as a Jamaican leader. Like Bustamante, Manley has accommodated himself to his situation in perfect good faith. But this situation has permitted the middle section to appropriate the powers and positions of that above without any corresponding changes in the position or prospects of the black section, despite unionism and universal suffrage. Members of the middle section manage the political parties and trade unions alike. Other members of this section staff and manage the expanded bureaucracy, and some have also moved into new economic positions under development schemes. Well-paid Unionized workers enter the lower fringes of the middle section, just as leaders of this section moved into positions formerly monopolized by whites.

Since 1955, Manley's government has concentrated its energies on promoting internal autonomy, tourism, industrialization and agricultural improvement. It has done important work in negotiating favourable terms of trade, in road-building, airport improvement, improving technical education, and in modernizing and expanding the bureaucratic machinery to match Jamaica's economic growth. For the lower section, piped water supplies and local health centres are becoming available. In 1957 the Government introduced a ten-year programme to provide 16,000 scholarships to Secondary Schools. Half of these scholarships are annually won by pupils of fee-paying

²²George E. Simpson, "Political Cultism in West Kingston, Jamaica." *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1955, pp. 135-149, UCWI, Jamaica; also, *Ibid.*, "Jamaican Revivalist Cults, *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 4, 1956, pp. 321-442, UCWI, Jamaica; also Philip D. Curtin, *Two Jamaicas; The Role of Ideas in a Tropical Colony*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., USA, 1955; also, Peter Abrahams, *Jamaica: An Island Mosaic*, Corona Library, H. M. S. O., 1957, London.

²³M. G. Smith, "Politics and Society in Jamaica", 1956. (Unpublished Manuscript).

schools, very few of whom may belong to the lower section. After a grant from the British Government was exhausted, low-cost housing programmes came to a virtual halt. Unemployment may have increased during this period, due to recent technological changes, population increase, and the failure of industrialization or tourism to provide sufficient jobs. Mr. Manley's nationalist ideology, constitutional reforms and advocacy of federation have meant progressively less to the Jamaican lower section, whose hopes of change under his leadership or Bustamante's have been disappointed. Since 1955, over 100,000 Jamaicans have moved to Britain, the overwhelming majority being of very low status.

As disaffection increased among the lower section, so did their demands for emigration to Africa. In 1959 and 1960 this movement produced increasing unrest. A conspiracy to overthrow the Government by violence was unearthed. Further violent encounters were followed by an investigation.²⁴ In March 1961 the Jamaican Government despatched a Mission to certain African countries to explore opportunities for Jamaican immigration. Most members of this Mission were advocates of emigration to Africa. The strength of this demand reflects the measure of disaffection current in the lower section.

When Jamaica holds its federal referendum, this disaffection of the lower section will decide the issue. Jamaicans have little understanding of or interest in the Federation. Independence and national status are at best ambiguous concepts in these conditions. Since Mr. Manley has now won federal concessions on all important Jamaican interests, there should be a heavy vote in favour of federation, if this is indeed the issue on which Jamaicans will vote. In fact, the maintenance or change of Jamaican society and of its present government and regime are the issues really at stake in this referendum. Its unresolved problems of 1937-8 confront Jamaica in 1961-2.

The current emigration and desire of low-status blacks to quit Jamaica recall the exodus of ex-slaves from plantations to the hilly interior immediately after emancipation.²⁵ The disaffection which prompts this current withdrawal may also prompt revolt. This disaffection is concentrated in the lower section whose frustration equals their disillusion with the governments of Manley and Bustamante. From 1938 to 1944, expectations of structural change were widely encouraged. Manley's radical socialism expressed this systematically. Changes indeed took place. Power and responsibility were progressively transferred from the upper to the middle section. As this proceeded, the status of Jamaican society and its government were also redefined by federal involvements, increased local autonomy, and bureaucratic expansion. Goals of social reform and structural change were replaced by programmes of economic development which represented a compromise of interests between the politically expansive middle section and the economically dominant upper one.

²⁴M. G. Smith, Roy Augier and R. Nettleford, *The Ras Tafari Movement in Kingston, Jamaica*. UCWI, Jamaica, 1960.

²⁵M. G. Smith, 1954, *op. cit.*, pp. 276-7.

After some years the limitations of this programme are painfully evident in mass unemployment, slums, demands for withdrawal and violent black racism. The rural and urban proletariats of the black lower section are naturally the most disaffected elements, but many peasants are also alienated after years of frustrated expectations. Such people see the upper sections enjoy higher standards of living and the benefits of recent development, while their own position changes little. Accordingly they regard the current government, its members, regime and ideology, as alien or inimical to their interests. Current policy is interpreted as an instrument for pursuit of interests of the white and coloured sections. The elite ideology of nationalism is challenged by a black racist ideology of the lower section, and elite programmes of federation and economic development compete with threats of revolt and demands for withdrawal to Africa. The current predominance of the middle section in the political parties, trade unions, and bureaucracies is questioned and challenged by the black. The present parliamentary regime is discredited by comparison with one-party systems such as Cuba's which seek to promote social reform. Thus the maintenance or change of current inter-sectional relations underlies questions of federal participation. A vote to remain in the Federation involves a permanent change in the status of Jamaican society and its government alike; it also completes the appropriation of local power by the middle section, and thus concludes those changes of inter-sectional relations which have been pursued actively since 1938-9. A vote to withdraw from federation reverses these recent trends and repudiates the ideologies of economic development and Creole nationalism which legitimate them. It implicitly rejects the current structure of inter-sectional relations, and sets new directions of change. It opens the way to further structural revisions during which the sections as presently constituted and related may undergo change, along with the status and format of the governmental regime. The implications of an anti-federal majority in Jamaica's referendum are far-reaching, for other British Caribbean societies as well as Jamaica.

We can only understand the current disaffection in Jamaica if we recognize how its pluralism has regulated Jamaican social and political development. The same principles which "explain" Jamaica's current situation enable us to perceive the conditions and outlines of its future development. Seen in perspective, the forthcoming referendum on federation is far less significant than the balance of forces for the continuity or reversal of recent trends its results will represent. Jamaica is currently divided between those whose loyalties lie towards the current governmental regime, the two-party system, the ideology of national development and the current social structure, and others who reject these values and dream of withdrawal, change or revolt. Those who support current programmes generally oppose important modifications of the social structure which may reduce their social status or prospects of social mobility. However, since members of the black social section have little prospect of social reform or social mobility, they

are forced to choose between withdrawal, resignation or revolt. The longer present trends and policies continue, the greater will be the number of black Jamaicans who choose withdrawal or revolt. Accordingly, the maintenance of current social trends and the current plural structure depends on the export of black Jamaicans, to Britain, America, or Africa, where many wish to go. Failing an African emigration, violence is likely, and could lead to structural breakdown if not to radical change. To win his referendum, Mr. Manley must convince the black lower section that he is genuinely in favour of emigration to Africa and can promote it, given the chance. To preserve current adjustments after this referendum, further opportunities for emigration are essential.

Conclusion

Analysis of Jamaica's situation throws light on the general dynamics of Creole society, and so on British Caribbean prospects and problems in the immediate future. The motive forces of Jamaican developments are the sectional interests and conflicts. The current Jamaican dilemma is a conflict of sectional goals and orientations. The dominant upper sections espouse economic development, the *status quo*, the parliamentary system and the West Indies Federation. The black lower section in its disaffection demands withdrawal from Jamaican society, supports Bustamante's opposition to federation, proclaims black racism or resigns itself to the *status quo*. The federal referendum cannot itself resolve these differences, but will merely express them. The results of this referendum will probably reflect various contingencies. If Mr. Manley dies or if other federal units secede, the referendum may be postponed, perhaps indefinitely. The sectional contraposition will continue whether or not the referendum is held, until such time as social mobility and cultural change eliminate the current exclusive socio-cultural sections and establish some other system of stratification.

In Trinidad, differences within the Creole section comparable to those in Jamaica lose their structural primacy and dynamism in face of the overriding division between Creoles and Indians. This racial contraposition is central to future developments in Trinidadian society. In British Guiana, where the Indian majority is sure, the Creole segment has limited effect, but indirectly this explains Guianese aloofness from federation and support for explicit socialism. In Barbados the basic division is that between whites and non-whites; coloured Barbadians with black support can win political positions formerly reserved for whites; but the Barbadian economic and demographic situation rules out drastic programmes of internal change. Such programmes are also impracticable in the smaller islands with their heavily dependent economies. Nonetheless, an upheaval in Jamaica may be followed by upheavals in these units, perhaps in St. Lucia and St. Kitts first of all.

I conclude that at present the West Indian future is rather problematic. The present federal organization and social order rest on insecure founda-

tions. To enhance stability at either level, emigration, population control, education and economic development are all required. Without sharp increases in current rates of social mobility, migration and education, social breakdown is probable in the immediate future — but not inevitable.

It remains to show how this projection derives from the theories of structural change and Creole pluralism mentioned above. Although pervasively pluralistic, the British Caribbean colonies vary in sectional composition and structure, in situation, complexity and scale. While all share a preoccupation with problems of political stability or change, consequent on withdrawal of the system of Crown Colony rule from this region, their differing responses to the common challenge of autonomy express their differing situations and social constitutions. In the political developments which have followed withdrawal of Crown Colony rule, changes of governmental form, status, and ideology have been functionally inter-dependent with changes in the structure and status of the units themselves. Although analytically separable, neither of these two levels or aspects of change can be understood in isolation.

In these processes of political development, the conditions of social structure provide the regulating forces for each unit separately. Common or convergent developments within this group of societies correspond initially to their communities of structure and situation. Thus neither British Guiana nor British Honduras have espoused federation, while Trinidad, with its fast-dwindling Creole majority, championed it keenly.

The structural features which affect these processes of political development most directly and profoundly are the networks of relations between the culturally differentiated social sections. This system of relations has political primacy for two reasons. First, the social sections are sharply distinguished in status as well as culture. They constitute separate status-units. Secondly, the network of inter-sectional relations corresponds to the status structure of the colonial society and thus to its political order. Inter-sectional relations are *ipso facto* political relations and serve to regulate and express maintenance or change of the colonial status structure which they subsume. Moreover, since sectional norms, interests and institutions are sharply divergent and often conflict, the balance of sectional forces will regulate the course of political development. Convergence of inter-sectional interests is thus the measure and condition of social stability. Changes in the relative position or power of these social sections constitute changes in the colonial social structure, and are mediated through changes of inter-sectional relations which are typically accompanied by changes of governmental form, status, programme, and ideology. Often these processes of structural revision involve changes in the status of the society as a unit also.

Data supporting this generalization are readily available. In this region, the Crown Colony governments maintained and expressed a quite specific mode of inter-sectional relations, represented a unique governmental form, and entailed a specific international status for these societies. The up-

heavals of 1937-8 which led to abandonment of this system and status themselves involved and expressed signal changes in traditional patterns of inter-sectional relations. In the following years, as power was transferred from London, the form and status of these Caribbean governments continued to change, and so did certain sectors of their inter-sectional networks. The historically dominant upper section lost political power to that immediately below. These two upper sections developed a symbiotic association. Together they promoted the development of federal government and ideology, a process which itself involved further changes in the form and status of these colonial governments and societies. Thus continuation of recent trends presupposes persistence of the new inter-sectional accommodations and may serve to consolidate them further. Reversal of recent trends accordingly presupposes rejection of current inter-sectional relations, and might signify further changes in the distribution of sectional power, the nature and form of inter-sectional relations, and the structure of social status. Expressing and mediating these structural changes, we will find other changes in the form, status and ideology of government, and perhaps in the status of the society as a unit. The West Indian case illustrates the proposition that *changes in the status structure of a given society proceed by political action which re-defines the form, status and ideology of its government, and often the status of the society also.*