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The United States in the Caribbean: The Dominant Power and the New States (Dialogue #3)

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THE CONTEMPORARY BACKGROUND

The independence of the larger British Caribbean states Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica, took place at a time (August 1962) of intense American concern and activity in the Caribbean, dominated by the United States' difficulties with the new revolutionary regime of Cuba. The Government of the United States sought to isolate that regime and country from the other countries of Latin America and the Caribbean; and to ensure that those states would not be affected by any spread of communism and Soviet influence. This was the rationale for the American intervention in the Dominican Republic in 1965.

The United States expected, and her expectation was largely met, that the new Caribbean states that achieved full sovereignty during this period, would follow the guidelines about inhibition of Communist influence laid down by herself in and for the Inter-American system. And from the point of view of these Caribbean states, the active demonstration of this requirement was the determined exercise of American influence in the resolution of the racial/political dispute in Guyana (then British Guiana) during the first half of the 1960's. The United States government was at that time concerned to ensure that any regime taking the country into independence would give allegiance to the U.S. Inter-American system position.

The eventual mode of resolution of the Guyana issue, indicates an important fact of Caribbean domestic politics: the element of voluntary cooperation and subordination in relations with the United States, borne in part of the socialization of most of the political elite of the period into pre- and post-war ideologies of anti-communism and anti-Stalinism.

But it indicated also, at the level of the external relations the changing nature of hegemonic relationships in the Caribbean: the *de facto* cession by the British, of responsibility for the maintenance of order and regional security for what had been up to then their segment of the Western Hemisphere. This cession to

the United States paralleled the British decision to reorganise the international economic relationships (and by implication political relationships) of the United Kingdom, through her application for entry into the European Economic Community. This decision was in turn perceived by the new Caribbean states as having the potential for threatening their own economic viability; for it would in effect remove the economic underpinning of the old imperial (hegemonic) relationship.

For the Caribbean, these processes in fact reflected the gradual domination by North America of the Caribbean economic staples (export commodities producing foreign exchange) - bauxite, tourism. (We might note too, the American purchase of the small British petroleum facilities in Trinidad). The expansion of tourism particularly in Jamaica, was itself partly a consequence of the United States' difficulties with Cuba and the virtual ending of the U.S.-Cuba trade and communication.

In passing we might note also that the United States opposed the initial United Kingdom/EEC proposals for a set of reciprocal relationships in trade and investment - the so-called reverse preferences - between the Caribbean and the Community. But this was done not so much with the possible volumes of Caribbean trade and investment in mind, but with the view that it would set a negative example for global trading arrangements; the United States being concerned to ensure that there was no increase in trade discrimination against herself. This is, however, an early example of the American tendency to safeguard her Caribbean and Latin American interests, and to treat them as exemplary in the context of the patterns of global arrangements which she wished to see exist.

Nonetheless, into the first half of the 1970's, a general stabilisation of these new Caribbean states' relationships appeared to have been arrived at, satisfactory to all. The states (with the exception of Guyana for special reasons) joined and accepted the obligations of the Inter-American system - the O.A.S.; their traditional international economic relationships were regularised in the Lome Convention within which were included new arrangements for economic and technical aid. And within the sub-region itself, some stability was apparently given to country-to-country relations, and to the possible trends in their foreign policies, through the attempt to institutionalise the harmonisation of foreign policy decision-making within the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

In general, the Caribbean countries, and in particular Jamaica and Guyana were deemed to have benefitted from the isolation of Cuba. North American investment in tourism and bauxite in Jamaica secured continuously high rates of economic growth. Jamaica in turn had accepted all the American institutional terms for foreign investment: the Hickenlooper amendment, OPIC and ICSID (within the World Bank system). The new regime in Guyana under Forbes Burnham set out to reap the financial rewards of fealty to the United States Hemispheric line after its independence, and quickly dismantled previous economic arrangements with Cuba established by the government of Cheddi Jagan.

Many of these independent Caribbean states now came to be considered "middle income countries" with respect to the international aid institutions; incidentally thereby disqualifying themselves from receipt of "soft" loans.

In this overall appearance of stabilisation in the late 1960's and early 1970's, there were one or two dark clouds - intimations of the potential for disorder. Domestic economic difficulties after 1965 culminated in a youth-cum-military rebellion in Trinidad in 1970. Trinidad's oil production had entered

a period of persistent decline, the government had begun to experience foreign exchange difficulties, and difficulties in raising loans on external markets on reasonable conditions; the Government was increasingly incapable of satisfying the demands for employment of a youth population which had been the recipient of a substantially expanded educational programme; and in the face of all this the Government's own sense of self-confidence began to decline.

In Jamaica too, the pace of economic growth, however impressive, was not capable of satisfying the requirements of those placing themselves on the job market. Increasing social discontent found expression in the brief spell of rioting in 1968 (the Rodney riots). This the government was able to subdue, but it thenceforth increasingly displayed a degree of nervousness towards its own population.

The quick muting of these uprisings in the two leading countries of the sub-region, was accompanied by a tendency on the part of the Governments to increase their emphasis and dependence on instruments of security. The political directorate was inclined too, to attribute the disturbances not to the development of broad social discontent in their communities, but to small fringes of the intelligentsia and others attracted to Marxism and other radical ideologies. Conspiratorial explanations were evident in, for example, the Report of the commission of inquiry established in Trinidad during the 1960's; and in the speeches and activities of members of the Jamaican Government. American diplomacy also, was not unaffected, as is evident from the report prepared by Ambassador Milton Barrall for the United States State Department. In general, however, the Governments felt themselves capable of maintaining local stability.

Finally, as far as the rest of the colonial Caribbean was concerned, the dominant American problem of securing proper arrangements for regional order and security was ensured by linking the territories in these areas (defence and foreign relations) to the metropolitan centres. For the territories in the British Caribbean the institution of Associated Statehood was devised. Such arrangements allowed for swift intervention in the event of local disorder.

This appearance of general stability seems dramatically changed today. In the American view, a major crisis appears to exist in the archipelago Caribbean (the West Indies). There is a perception of Cuban "expansionism", and the making of diplomatic "gains" by that country in both the large and the small states. There is a perception of danger implicit in the development of communication and relationships between the hitherto institutionally separated sub-regions of the West Indies and Central America, suggested in relationships between Grenada, Cuba, Jamaica (before the recent general election) and Nicaragua. The recent election in Jamaica has been interpreted as a victory against "marxism" and "radicalism". For American policy-makers and corporate interests, the central concern has been the effect of the assumed radicalisation of Caribbean internal and external policy on American interests, in which are included American security interests, in the area.

We can examine the rationales for these perceptions of crisis by looking first briefly at the American perception of her interests in the area; secondly at the issues or forces giving impulse to what are deemed to be foreign policy directions different from the essentially pro-American ones of the 1960's; and thirdly, at the American attempts to come to terms with them.

UNITED STATES INTERESTS: A SUMMARY

(i) The United States considers the area in general as an important security zone, along with Central America; and considers instability there as threatening to her own security, where such instability is likely to serve as a magnet for non-hemispheric (that is, communist) intervention or interference. While it is the case that other areas of the globe are perhaps given a greater day-to-day significance in strategic terms, this zone represents the fundamental underpinning, as part of the geographically proximate hemisphere, of the American system of security arrangements. Hence the term "America's backyard", frequently used to describe it.

Since the revolutionary regime of Cuba is seen as a local proxy for the global socialist system, a Cuban presence in any country is now automatically perceived as "outside intervention". In American perceptions, some administrations and congressional leaders distinguish between a Cuban military presence (as did Kissinger in 1976) which is considered unacceptable, and a Cuban technical assistance and diplomatic presence. Others however hold that there is no *a priori* difference between the two kinds of presences, and that the security implications of each need to be examined on a case by case basis.

(ii) The Caribbean Sea, linking the West Indies and Central America is seen as the American Mediterranean whose security constitutes a part of the general area of American hemispheric security. The Caribbean Sea remains an important transit route for trade to and from the United States, petroleum, for example, being an especially important economic and strategic commodity transported therein. The Caribbean thus becomes linked with the Panama Canal which still retains important economic and strategic interest for the United States and her allies. For an important American hemispheric economic and security partner, Venezuela, the passages through the Caribbean islands constitute her gateway to the North Atlantic.

(iii) The United States is concerned in this era, to ensure the uninterrupted continuation of trade in Caribbean mineral resources, in particular bauxite. This requirement becomes linked to the questions of local policy on the terms of foreign investment, and policy relating to the diversification of Caribbean mineral exports.

(iv) The United States is today increasingly concerned with the effects within the U.S. itself, of the movement - both legal and illegal - of Caribbean peoples to America.

(v) The United States is increasingly concerned also with the effects in the U.S. of the illegal movement of drugs from and through the Caribbean states. These last two areas of interest induce in turn a concern with the economic and institutional weaknesses in the structure of Caribbean political and social systems.

The American interests in these varieties of areas give rise, given the over-riding U.S. concern with security, to what appears to be an American perception of a general incapacity on the part of the regimes of the islands, either because of smallness and/or weakness, to hold autonomous positions in relationships deemed actually or potentially hostile to the United States. In that context, the American response is to react negatively and preemptively - to act "in anticipation" so to speak, of the development of any such relationships. Her perception of the recent experience of Jamaica (seen as nearly having slipped away into the Communist camp) reinforces this orientation. In the Caribbean the United States perceives, then, a potential vacuum, in the traditional international relations sense.

But what the United States policy makers suddenly see as a crisis of regional security - specifically of Cuban communist expansion into a weak area - in the short time perspective of American decision-making, can more usefully be seen (and many in the Caribbean prefer to see) as a slowly developing crisis of economic and social (dis)organisation implicit in the economic and social development strategies of the 1960's, and maturing at the present time; a crisis not susceptible to military/security solutions, or solutions designed essentially to inhibit the normalisation of relations between the Caribbean states and Cuba.

Of course, the mere fact that the United States arrives at the situation of defining a period as one of crisis in security terms, or a geographical area as a crisis zone, becomes, or ought to become a factor and an input in the structure of Caribbean decision-making. It was perhaps one of the errors of the Manley administration in Jamaica that it failed to assess in time, and to attribute sufficient significance to, the American definition of its policy as having the potential of creating a security crisis for the United States, however invalid such a definition might have been.

SOCIAL CRISIS AND POLITICAL ORIENTATION

As we have indicated above, the slowly maturing process of socio-economic disorganisation in Trinidad in the 1960's, provided an illustration of the eventual transformation of such a crisis into a process of political disorder and instability. The case of Jamaica provides a good illustration for the 1970's of the general problem.

Jamaica, as we have indicated above, had experienced fairly rapid economic growth in the 1960's, fuelled by substantial foreign investment in the bauxite and tourism industries, and by investment in manufacturing partly for the country's domestic market, on the basis of incentives to both local and

foreign investors, provided by the Government. As a result, there was also an expansion of the commercial and services sectors, and an expansion of the range of indigenous skills appropriate to the degree of economic expansion. On the other hand, during the period, the country's range of agricultural exports, relatively diversified (bananas, sugar, citrus, tobacco, coffee) began to experience for the most part, fairly persistent declines. In spite of the existence of strong trades unions, wages in the agricultural sector lagged (as is not uncommon) behind those in the new industrial and service sectors.

Fairly rapid population growth, combined with improvements in health and welfare, when added to these phenomena, resulted in a situation of large resources of labour which the industrial sector was incapable of absorbing, in spite of the rapid rates of growth. Large pockets of unemployed, in particular unemployed youth, became visible; a visibility exacerbated by the fact of substantial shifts of population from rural areas to the urban centres experiencing economic growth. Towards the end of the 1960's the political elites were becoming uncomfortably aware that these large pockets of unemployed, many functionally illiterate, and perhaps unemployable individuals, could provide dangerous political fodder.

The Caribbean political elite is particularly sensitive to the question of large scale unemployment and its possible political effects, since for the most part that elite derives from the trades union movement which entered political office when the British conceded universal adult suffrage. This political elite gained office on the specific promise to the working class that they could and would provide this class with the economic inheritance from which it had previously been deprived by colonialism and the local landed oligarchy which dominated the economic systems of the Caribbean territories. With the maturing of the investment process in bauxite and tourism in Jamaica by the beginning of the 1970's, the political directorate of that country now had to seek other,

or additional, means for coping with the surge in unemployment, to meet the expectations of the working class.

The relatively minor riots in Jamaica in 1968 (the Rodney riots), induced the Government to increase its emphasis on security measures, as it sought to maintain the degree of social and political stability deemed necessary for the attraction of new foreign investment. But this had the domestic consequence of an increasing sense of social crisis for which new solutions had to be sought. This was the context of the entry into office of the People's National Party Government of Michael Manley in 1972, the party having run its campaign in the two-party competitive system of Jamaica, on the basis of a promise of modernisation of the economic system in such a manner as to maintain economic growth while ensuring the unemployed masses their legitimate economic and social rights.

The rhetoric of the party and the new Government suggested a platform of populism, not uncommon in systems of this kind when they have reached social crisis. But populism does not constitute a programme or policy, and this the new government eventually found by taking recourse to its historic doctrine, recently however muted, of socialism. Democratic socialism was now given a programmatic content, and asserted as the alternative solution for the country's socio-economic problems. This populist response (though not the specific content of socialism) was not unlike the political response of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago after the uprising in that country of 1970.

We have discussed the specific foreign policy complement to the domestic assertion of socialism by the Jamaican Government elsewhere. Suffice it therefore to say that this complement of populism and socialism took the form of acceptance of the policy of non-alignment as the central feature of the Government's political foreign policy, and along with that, acceptance of the thesis of national liberation.

This thesis suggested that Caribbean regimes themselves should define the parameters of their external relations activities; that the American hemispheric security system and its assumptions should not necessarily take precedence as the determining framework of their international relations. Later the diversification of their external relations with countries to which the United States was not necessarily sympathetic was to be legitimated by the doctrine of "ideological pluralism", originally formulated by Venezuela.

This then, was the kind of domestic socio-political context in which some of the Caribbean regimes undertook the regional normalisation of relations with Cuba, and began to explore the possibilities of relations with the socialist bloc - perhaps the most extreme of these explorations being the Guyana application for membership in COMECON.

Those countries, for example Guyana but to some extent Jamaica, which sought particularly close relations with the communist bloc, while pursuing alternative domestic solutions, now sought also to restructure their domestic economic and political institutions in ways more appropriate to the effective conduct of relations with the socialist countries. This was, in part, the rationale for the decisions to move somewhat away from the orthodox Westminster institutional system which they had inherited from the British.

But these various innovations in internal and external policy began to disturb American perceptions of the Caribbean countries' acceptance of the rules relating to Hemispheric security; and even more importantly, of the rules relating to foreign investment and the political attitudes and forms that should accompany those rules. The Jamaican refusal of international arbitration after its implementation of its bauxite levy, provided a particularly important instance of the developing American sense of unease. It should be said also that these various innovations began to disturb the local dominant socio-economic sectors,

a factor which marked the beginning of a certain coincidence of interest between these local sectors and segments of the American economic and political systems. In Jamaica, by 1975, this unease indicated the end of the Government's attempt to conduct policy on the basis of broad national ("all-class")unity. (In Guyana this was the case much earlier on).

Thus by the end of the Nixon-Kissinger-Ford regimes, the relationships between some of these countries (Jamaica, Guyana) and the American government and companies had become strained. This strain was characterised by a slowing down of economic assistance, of investment, and by Caribbean claims of "de-stabilisation" and by American denials of this.

In effect, the national liberation orientation was beginning to come up against the known facts of the small, dependent, character of Caribbean economies, and their vulnerability to external political/economic pressure. The decline of the Jamaican and Guyanese economies by 1976 indicated the problem. The pressures which were now initiated against these Governments were intended to reverse the national liberation orientation. (We are not, of course, here saying that external pressures were solely responsible for the decline of the economies).

UNITED STATES RESPONSES

The Nixon-Kissinger-Ford approach of subtle, persistent, mo e often than not covert, pressure, was one response to the changes in Caribbean foreign policy. It was being undertaken at a time when American policy was in general being subordinated to the internal and external effects of Watergate and the failure of the Vietnam adventure; and when, also, the national liberation orientation appeared to have, still, local (Caribbean) support and popularity. The political crisis concerning the ethics of intervention by the United States was at this

this time at its height (1975-76). One need only compare the debates in the American congress then (resulting in the Clark Amendment), with the sense of confidence and legitimacy with which Arthur Schlesinger writes (in A Thousand Days) of the American determination of the nature of the Guyanese regime in 1964, to get a sense of the difference in political climates.

The new Carter Administration (Carter-Young-Vance we might say), sought at first to accept the apparent constraints on American international policy, the relatively greater presence in global relations of the Soviet Union, and that country's assertion of the necessity to continue détenté and 'normalisation' of international relations. In the Caribbean, it appeared to accept the view of the necessity for reorganisation of domestic structures and domestic economic policies, so as to make the regimes more capable of coping with socio-economic crises. The Administration accepted the view also (already partially accepted by Kissinger), that a normalisation of relations should take place regionally in the Caribbean and Central America, by beginning the process of resolution of Cuban-United States problems, and concluding resolution of the Panama Canal issue.

This approach was generally in concert with that of the Caribbean states, themselves aware of the fact that relaxation of tensions between the U.S. and Cuba would assist in their attempts to construct diplomatic relations in the Caribbean between that country and themselves.

TWO VIEWS OF CUBA'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE HEMISPHERE

The early Carter approach to Cuba reflected in fact the second of two differing views about approaches to Cuba, which had characterised American and Latin American attitudes towards that country:

(i) The first was the view indicating the necessity for isolation of Cuba, either (a) to cause maximum domestic difficulties for, and therefore

dissatisfaction with, the regime at home; or (b) on a medical analogy of Cuba as a virus, to inhibit the infection of other regional countries.

(ii) The second view, which began to gain adherents in the late 1960's, was that the first approach had definitively failed, and that the best approach was to attempt to draw Cuba into a network of economic and other arrangements in the region/hemisphere that would induce on her part continuing cooperation with various important countries; and at worst, entail recognisable sanctions for initiating disorder. This process of "opening" to Cuba can be seen in the shift by Argentina in the early 1970's to extensive trade and financial credit relations with her; and in discussions about the possibilities for a triangular Venezuela-Cuba-USSR arrangement on petroleum supplies for Cuba.

It is generally accepted that the Cuban military assistance to the MPLA in Angola, and then to the revolutionary regime in Ethiopia, were the occasion for a new disintegration of the gradually developing bipartisan approach to Cuba in the United States. We should, on the other hand, note that Cuba's assistance to Angola was supported by two Caribbean governments,and tacitly assisted by a third. But these Cuban activities also mark a break in the developing process of harmonising of approaches to Cuba among Anglophone Caribbean governments; Trinidad taking the view that for small countries, non-intervention on such issues is the appropriate diplomatic approach. A certain diplomatic cohesion within CARICOM as an institution also began to loosen, leading the Trinidad Prime Minister to question later on (1979) whether there might any longer be a basis for co-ordinated diplomacy within the grouping.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF COMBINED INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL DIFFICULTIES

The Prime Minister of Trinidad, in making these observations, alluded also to the fact that domestic economic difficulties in major Caribbean states were contributing to the distortion of the attempt to undertake coordinated external activities. This developing diversity of external relations, especially as it related to the world socialist bloc and to the more radical section of the non-aligned movement, began to take on, for the Carter Administration also, the aura of hostility to the United States. The Administration's response was, in brief, to begin a process of ceasing its policy of differentiation between states on the basis of the efforts that they might be making to reorganise domestic economic structures and policies (for example its support for Jamaica in its relations with the IMF while not being necessarily sympathetic to the Government's foreign policies). Instead the Administration now began to place emphasis in its relations with the states, on their attitudes to security and external relations questions.

In practice, this meant not overt acts of hostility to countries like Jamaica and Guyana: not so much acts of commission, as acts of omission. That is, no assistance - private or public - would be given where the U.S. had not been previously obligated to do so, where such assistance might have been useful in allowing the Government greater domestic flexibility. Assistance would be given to the Governments, or to sectors within the societies, where this coincided with the American national interest. Given the known vulnerability of these countries, deriving from location and economic dependency, such pressures could have multiplied (ripple) effects on the local economies and socio-economic systems.

This policy of "hands off" took place - in both Jamaica and Guyana - in the context of their recourse (*de jure* or *de facto*) to I.M.F. stabilisation agreements that led inevitably, to major social difficulties, placing governments

on the defensive at home, at the same time as their external contexts were becoming increasingly rigid and restrictive.

This conjuncture of internal and external difficulties had one of two effects: either (i) radicalisation of external policies to counter or alleviate domestic political (and party) pressures, this radicalisation itself then inducing further hostility from the United States; or (ii) an increase in internal domestic control and repression, in order to effect the stabilisation policies, a recoil from radical external policies deemed hostile to the U.S., and a certain acceptance of American security definitions.

In this atmosphere, the revolution in Grenada, led by the New Jewel Movement, with its partiality to Cuba, was enough to reinforce and maximise the American concern with security. Economic aid, now more than ever, became the handmaiden of security stabilisation; an orientation reinforced by electoral/political changes in St. Lucia and Dominica, simple-mindedly read, in the climate, as instances of radical change. Then, in the context of the dispute over American policy in respect of Nicaragua in a developing electoral season in the United States itself, came the spectre of the development of tight diplomatic relations between radical governments in a manner not hitherto in existence, across the whole breadth of the "American Mediterranean": Nicaragua-Cuba-Jamaica-Grenada-Guyana. It is an open question whether, for American diplomacy, the development of coherent Caribbean-Central American relations or alliances, unmediated by American interest and power, is acceptable. What, nevertheless, is noticeable at this time (1979-80) is an American orientation towards differentiation of policies towards the areas deemed possibly hostile - Jamaica, Guyana, the Lesser Developed Countries, within the broad context of security stabilisation diplomacy.

THE DIPLOMACY OF THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION

It is, in fact, a short step from this general line of the Carter Administration (in which Young-Vance influence had given way to that of Brzezinski) to the Reagan Administration policies - harking back to an earlier period and approach, of concentration on security in the region, differentiating between firm allies and others, and isolation of Cuba. In a sense, the groundwork for the reinforced security oriented policies of the new Administration, had been prepared in the last phase of the Carter regime.

This is welcome, it should be said, to some Governments in the Region, operating with an awareness of weakness and dependence exacerbated by the continuous petroleum price explosion and minimum regional cohesiveness. In such an environment, there have tended to develop policies of seeking to derive resources on the basis of proven allegiance to the dominant power.

We can perceive three cross-currents, or potential countervailing forces, to this attempt at reassertion of American dominance.

(i) First, there has been a certain re-invigoration of interest on the part of Europe, with its doctrines of social and Christian democracy. This re-invigoration derives not simply from ethical considerations about the legitimacy of social change and resistance to dictatorship in Latin America. It derives, also, from as the case of European-Middle Eastern relations demonstrate, a perception of self-interest in an international economic climate of increasing "struggle for the world product" in Helmut Schmidt's phrase. It leads to a concern on the part of European countries, that active, unilateral interventionism propelled by domestic forces and interest groups in the United States, may lead to an American distortion of the general socio-economic environment, and hinder their (the Europeans') attempts to construct an environment in which there is a continuity of access

to crucial commodity requirements, and availability of markets. Such a concern leads, from time to time, to divergences of interests and policies in the Third World, between Europe and the United States. This is the relevant interpretative framework of the spread of European social/Christian democratic trends, and of the competition within Latin America between them. Attention to the Caribbean represents in part a spill-off from this.

(ii) A second countervailing current is the rise of the so-called middle powers in Latin America, and particularly in the Caribbean-Central America area: Venezuela and Mexico. Such countries, as is well perceived by now, have the potential for playing either "proxy" roles, or limited but important "buffer" roles, vis-a-vis American policy. We might simply note here what we can call recent Venezuelan "assertive interventionism", and Mexican "protective diplomacy" in contemporary Caribbean-Central American regional relations. Of course, these countries' still asymmetric relationships with the United States constitute important parameters in the regional role-playing which they can undertake. So too does the fact of structural incoherences in their domestic economic and social systems. But clearly Mexico, for example, now perceives that certain forms of American interventionism in the region not only increase diplomatic instability in the area, but can give rise to internal pressures on her own government - whether from local factions hostile to such interventionism, or from growing numbers of migrant exiles from other countries. Her own domestic political relations could therefore, as a result, become complicated.

(iii) Thirdly, there is the perception that there are still not in existence, new and viable economic strategies capable of dealing with the problems that gave rise to the crises in Caribbean states in the first place, even after

the boom years of the 1960's. Certain questions arise here.

Is more massive capital-intensive investment in the short term likely to make any major impact on the unemployment problem in Jamaica, even if the optimal local climate is provided? Are foreign investors interested in labour-intensive agro-industrial enterprises with longer lead times for recovery of investments than the mineral industries? Is the functioning of the Guyanese economy, in the medium term, dependent perhaps not so much on foreign investment in bauxite or massive hydro-electricity schemes, but rather on the rationalisation of local racial-political relations that will allow incentives to those involved in the major agricultural sectors there - a problem not susceptible to external solution? Can regional planning take place in the Eastern Caribbean without major innovation in the local political institutions, so as to permit predictability in the functioning of regional and supra-national institutions? Is the functioning of such cooperation institutions compatible with an emphasis on bilateralism in economic aid between the United States and the Caribbean countries, which while providing political leverage and visibility for the donor, reinforces the tendency to competition between the Caribbean countries themselves? It is ironic that the current protagonists in the Caribbean, in the private economic and in the political sectors, of the American free enterprise way, do not recognise the historical fact of the major effort at innovation in political institution-making among the separate states in the United States, that set the trend at the end of the 18th century, for a slow but continuous continental harmonisation and centralisation of decision-making structures (private and public) there.

Nonetheless, there is now a dawning realisation in the Caribbean at least, that the problems of the social systems of say, Jamaica and Dominica, have little to do with the presence or absence of Cubans in those territories.

Still, however, the view appears to be prevalent, and emphasised by American emissaries, that it is necessary to reinforce the security systems of these countries, as a prerequisite to their economic development. This harks back, of course, to the philosophy applied in Southeast Asia in the 1960's, and popularised by then Secretary of State Robert McNamara, emphasising what was taken to be the key linkage between national security and economic development. In Latin America, this took the form of the close relationship between the Alliance for Progress economic programmes, and programmes of counter-insurgency; the alleged economic successes of the post-1964 Brazilian regime were seen as justifying this approach.

The fact of the matter is,however, that in small countries, the re-inforcement of the local security systems leads to an upsetting of the balance between the various socio-political sectors in the countries, giving the military, or national security, sector a decisive weight and a tendency to eventual pre-eminence in the political systems. This is, and is likely to be the case for two reasons additional to their mere technological dominance. First, with few exceptions, the political party systems, as conciliating and legitimating structures or mechanisms in the Caribbean countries are still weak. Within the context of their lack of capacity for solving mass economic problems, their 'moral' strength weakens, and becomes incapable of counter-balancing the apparent strength of the modernised security forces.

Secondly, the process of modernisation of the security forces has a strong ideological content, in addition to its technological content. Already, in the Western tradition, set apart from society, the modernisation process suggests to military a sense of their particular status as the only virtuous sector - as the guardians of the system. Since in small countries the unnatural

institutional segregation of the military cannot supersede the traditional social reality of kinship and other such networks, their assumption of political power is likely to be soon tainted by the divisions and social competitiveness of the society. This sets the basis for the coup and counter-coup syndrome.

Thus the emphasis on security is ultimately destructive of the society. It further draws the United States into the local political system, establishing the country and its representatives as the ultimate mediators of the local political system. Such influence can of course even be seen as benigh, as in the case of the assurance of the election of Guzman in the Dominican Republic. But it ultimately de-legitimises the local government and political elite itself.

If then, this model is applied to the newly independent Caribbean, the results can only be similar to those characterising the older Caribbean, and most of Central America. It is therefore important that the Caribbean leadership, many currently crippled by the local economic disorder and social pressure, not succumb to this model.

There is no substitute for the endeavour, however faulty and faulting, of regional cooperation and integration of these relatively small national systems, supported by substantial technical and economic assistance by the major metropoles. And though the point is still not accepted by many of the region's academics and political intelligentsi., there is the possibility that the strengthening of the regional system can have an important, though not determining, influence on national social integration.

Here again, the geographically peripheral countries, Mexico and Venezuela, will play a role in the determination of the mode of cooperation that can develop; as also in the resolution of the question of whether regional cohesion in the West Indies and Central America will develop within parameters that give primacy to unilaterally adduced U.S. notions of Hemispheric interests; or whether, at a minimum, the concerns of national liberation and Third World country economic and political alignments will qualify the influence of those parameters.

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