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HOW DOMINICANS VIEW POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE: NO NATION IS AN ISLAND

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HOW DOMINICANS VIEW POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE:
NO NATION IS AN ISLAND

by

DEBORAH LOUISE HARVEY

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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HOUSTON, TEXAS

MAY, 1981
ABSTRACT

On November 3, 1978, the West Indian island of Dominica became an independent nation. Although international analysts and Dominican citizens alike questioned the economic viability of the new Caribbean mini-states, the approximately 80,000 citizens of this small island had little choice but to seek political independence.

Dependency on former colonial powers in the West Indies is not restricted to economic matters. The colonial experience in the West Indies profoundly affected the societies of the region. As the indigenous Caribbean cultures were largely exterminated during the process of colonization, many Caribbean societies have been dependencies of Europe during their entire existence. The cultivation of sugar cane, which made the West Indies very profitable colonies during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, required a large labor force and large plantations. For the efficient production of sugar, numerous African slaves were imported and only the owners of large estates grew sugar cane. The resulting social structure, a hierarchy based on racial differences, remained virtually intact throughout the history of the region.

A century or more after emancipation, universal suffrage was introduced to the West Indies. Positions in the social structure that were once the exclusive perquisites
of whites are now held by blacks. Although the changes accompanying emancipation have resulted in new ideals such as racial integration, the hierarchical social structure remains. The transition from colonial to self-governing status has been a largely orderly one in the West Indies. Anxious to decolonize, Britain has encouraged her dependencies to become more self-sufficient. After the British West Indies Federation failed to usher the British colonies in the region into independence as a unit, the smaller islands became associated states with Britain as a transitional step to independent status.

The rugged terrain of Dominica made the island unsuitable for large sugar plantations. Geography has also made inter- and intra-island communication difficult. Dominica has therefore been one of the least developed and most self-sufficient islands in the Lesser Antilles. The independent peasants of Dominica, however, are loathe to lose the cash earnings that the recent export trade of bananas has brought to the island. Dominicans want to retain their protected markets. International trading agreements, however, are replacing special bilateral arrangements.

Unable to form a political union with other territories in the region, Dominica sought independence on her own. The way in which individual Dominicans viewed the
island's obtaining independence depended largely on the individual's position in the social structure. The opposition party fought trends that they believed would result in a one-party government for the new island state.

Small nations, like Dominica, whose resources are limited must form regional and international trading and voting blocs. The proliferation of mini-states is changing the nature of sovereignty and the structure of international organizations. The less developed regions of the world hope that a working acknowledgement of the interdependence of all nations will result in a new international economic order.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Without the research fellowship I received from Rice University, I would not have been able to conduct this study. I am also deeply appreciative for the professional guidance and academic freedom I was given by the members of my committee and by the entire anthropology department. The patient encouragement I received from Dr. Stephen A. Tyler, my chairman, helped me to complete this project. Dr. Edward Norbeck rendered invaluable assistance by editing my manuscript. Dr. Trenton W. Wann has been one of my most inspiring teachers. Dr. Edward O. Doughtie proved what a friend he is by reading my dissertation on short notice. Drs. F. C. Gamst and Ronald Provencher, who have since left Rice, contributed greatly to my understanding of anthropology.

The government of Dominica and the villagers of Atkinson, Bataka, and Vielle Case, also made this study possible. I would like to thank all the friends I made in Dominica for sharing their thoughts and time with me.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction: How I Came to Study Dominican Independence

On November 3, 1493, on his second voyage to the New World, Christopher Columbus landed at a green, mountainous island in the center of the island chain we know as the Lesser Antilles. Since it was Sunday, he named the island "Domenica" (Honychurch 1975:16, Cracknell 1973: 12). Nearly five hundred years later on November 3, 1978, the British island of Dominica became an independent nation. The world community was largely unimpressed. During the last few decades the world map has changed many times as former colonies of the European powers gain their independence. This process has become so universally acceptable that it has become unremarkable. Small articles appear on back pages of news magazines about the new nation. Time allotted a half-page to Dominica's obtaining independence, declaring that the new ministrare was a real banana republic (Time 1978:56). Of course, most territories that have gained their independence in the last decade are small. Dominica is no exception, for her 290 square miles are populated by approximately 80,000 people.
Although the western press derided Dominica's small size and financial strength, the "rightness" of the former colony's becoming a sovereign nation was largely unquestioned. This very issue, however, was a contentious one in Dominica during the last few years. And to my surprise, I came to question the viability of Dominican independence. The historical forces and international institutions that made Dominican political independence virtually inevitable also make economic, cultural, and even psychological independence impossible. Before examining the ambiguous nature of Dominican independence, we should first locate Dominica and then explain how and why I came to be there during the independence debates.

The island chain known as the Lesser Antilles forms the eastern boundary of the Caribbean Sea. These islands were once mountains in a chain that stretched from Florida to Trinidad (Cracknell 1973:12). Dominica represents the highest peak in the chain. Since Columbus' time, Dominica has been known for its difficult mountainous terrain, its lush tropical forests, and its population of Carib Indians. Having heard of the fierce, man-eating Caribs from the Arawak Indians whom he befriended on his first voyage to Hispaniola (Cracknell 1973:45), Columbus left Dominica shortly after sighting native men.

Unlike Columbus, I arrived in Dominica to meet the Caribs. As an anthropology graduate student intent upon
studying non-Western cultural patterns by participant-observation, I wanted to reside among the people of a "non-Western" group for my dissertation research. Since the Dominican Caribs are the only sizeable group of indigenous "Indians" in the West Indies from Trinidad to Florida (Taylor 1938:197), I chose the Carib reserve on Dominica as my field site. I was certainly not the first anthropologist to visit the Carib reserve, for the scarcity of surviving "Indians" in the West Indies made the Dominican Caribs of great ethnological interest. Yet, after surveying historical and ethnographic studies of the Caribs, I felt that a phenomenological study of contemporary Carib ethnicity would add to our understanding of the Caribs.

Only a century before Columbus' voyages to the New World, the Caribs, migrating from South America, seized the Lesser Antilles from the more peaceful, culturally advanced Arawak Indians (Rouse 1963). Arriving on an Arawak island in their dugout war canoes, the Caribs killed and ate their male captives and married the captive Arawak women. From the Arawak women the Caribs, who had relied on hunting and gathering for sustenance, learned horticulture. The fierce Caribs prevented the Spanish from settling in the Lesser Antilles during the latter part of the fifteenth century and the whole of the sixteenth century. During the sixteenth century, however,
the Spanish established colonies in the Greater Antilles (Hispaniola, Cuba, Jamaica, and Puerto Rico) which were populated by the Arawak. There they founded the West Indian sugar industry (Williams 1970). After the Indian population of the Greater Antilles had been decimated by forced labor on the Spanish estates, the Spaniards began importing Negro slaves from Africa.

During the seventeenth century the French and English established a few settlements in the Lesser Antilles, many of which were attacked by Caribs. Often the Caribs would become allied with either the French or British against the other. In an effort to stop the Carib raids on European settlements in the Lesser Antilles, the French and English guaranteed the Carib perpetual possession of Dominica and Saint Vincent in a treaty signed at Basse Terre, Guadeloupe on March 31, 1660. This treaty, however, was broken because of warfare among the Europeans. Warfare and disease introduced by the Europeans began to take their tolls on the proud Carib warriors. In 1647 there were an estimated 5,000 Caribs on Dominica; in 1700 there were 2,000; in 1730 there were 400 (Honychurch 1975:24). The sad fate of the Caribs was becoming increasingly evident.

The growing numbers of Negroes in St. Vincent forced the Caribs to give up all but a portion of that island in 1773. The St. Vincent Caribs waged war against the
British in 1795. When the British won in 1796, the St. Vincent Caribs were deported to the island of Roatan in the Bay of Honduras, from where they crossed over to the mainland and spread along the Caribbean coast of Central America. These Caribs along the Central American coast have intermarried with Negroes to the extent that they no longer have distinctive "Indian" racial features. Unlike the remaining Caribs in the Lesser Antilles, these "Black Caribs" retained the Carib language and many Carib cultural traditions. Much that we know about Carib language and culture has been derived from studies of the Black Caribs (Lowenthal 1972:180, Gonzales 1967, Taylor 1951).

After struggling with European settlers, who concentrated on the leeward side of the island, the Dominican Caribs retreated to the northeastern part of the island during the nineteenth century. Dominica's thickly forested mountainous interior, in which even a native islander could lose his way, protected the Dominican Caribs from total extermination by the Europeans, the fate of Caribs on other islands. When Dominica became a British possession in 1763, the island was surveyed so that plots of "Crown" land could be sold to raise money for Queen Charlotte's dowry. According to local folklore, a few acres were set aside on the northeastern side of the island for the surviving Caribs. In 1903 the Dominican
government deeded 3,700 acres of rugged northeastern coastline for a Carib reserve to accommodate the various remnants of Carib settlements (Taylor 1945:507). The reserve is held in common by the Caribs.

The first anthropologist to visit the reserve was Douglas Taylor, who conducted his fieldwork there in the 1930's. Taylor reported that the Carib settlements were clusters of matrilocal extended families whose main subsistence activities were fishing and horticulture rather than hunting. Not only had intermarriage with the Negroes become so widespread that only 100 of the 450 inhabitants of the reserve were "full-blooded" Caribs (Taylor 1945:508), but also most Caribs spoke the creole patois of Dominica rather than the native Carib language.

When Banks visited the reserve in the 1950's, bananas as a cash crop had become an important component of the Carib economy. As their money economy became more important, craft activities were abandoned. The replacement of the traditional Carib thatched hut with the typical Dominican wooden house and the complete disappearance of the Carib language are further examples of the continuing assimilation of the Caribs into the larger Dominican cultural milieu. Yet, the lack of schools, market places, medical facilities, and roads isolated the Caribs (Banks 1956).
The isolation that Banks described had been substantially reduced when Owen visited the reserve in 1970-72 (Owen 1974). A school, clinic, and buying shed for bananas had been built on the reserve, and a new road connected the reserve with the rest of the island. Increased communication with the rest of the island resulted in further assimilation of the Caribs into Dominican society. Traditional matrilocal extended households were being replaced by nuclear families that were more adaptive to the expanded money economy. Caribs were listening to radio shows broadcast in English, and English newspapers were sold in the reserve. One West Indian scholar noted that the only "Indian" trait of the modern Dominican Caribs is basket-making, which was retained because of the urging of social welfare officers (Lowenthal 1972:182). In 1966 the Dominican government instituted a new policy to formalize the final assimilation of the Caribs into Dominican society by dissolving the reserve, issuing land titles to individual Caribs.

Confronted with total assimilation into the larger Dominican society and thereby the loss of the privileged status that entitles them to retain the reserve land, the Caribs began to emphasize their distinctiveness from other Dominicans. Modern Carib ethnicity, Owen
maintains, stems from the formation of an informal political organization whose function is to protect reserve lands (Owen 1974:v).

Although Owen realized that Carib accounts of their distinctiveness play an important role in the maintenance of Carib ethnicity, she focused her study upon land disputes and politics in the Carib community. In fact, Owen contends that modern Carib ethnicity is dependent on their land tenure system; that is, if the reserve were to be dissolved, the Caribs would no longer survive as a distinct ethnic group. I felt that others factors had to be important in Carib ethnicity. I planned to use a phenomenological methodology to describe Carib accounts of their social world, an understanding of which I believed necessary to assess modern Carib ethnicity. I felt a phenomenological methodology to be particularly appropriate for this inquiry, for phenomenology suspends belief in the facticity of the "real world" and examines the processes by which we make social phenomena meaningful and rational. Certainly modern Carib ethnicity must be understood as a social accomplishment, for Carib ethnicity is no longer based upon physical and material differences.

Like most anthropological inquiries, I envisioned my study to be based upon participant-observation, whereby the anthropologist learns by being socialized into a
culture as a result of living with members of that culture for an extended length of time. I proposed, however, to utilize a different type of participant-observation than that traditionally used in anthropological studies. In traditional anthropological inquiry the anthropologist presumes the existence of a concrete "real world" that is observable and that can be described objectively (Pelto 1970:1). In his text on anthropological methodology Pelto admits that objectivity is problematic in participant-observation, for in addition to his personal theories about human behavior and his special theoretical stance within anthropology, the anthropologist possesses generalized "meta-theory," such as assumptions about culture, assumptions about which aspects of human behavior are important enough to be allotted a chapter in an ethnography, and assumptions about values based on our western tradition (Pelto 1970:18-19). That these internalized theories of the participant-observer can result in different descriptions of cultural life is exemplified in the well-known controversy between Oscar Lewis and Robert Redfield about life in Tepoztlan. Rather than question the facticity of the "real world" or the validity of the stance of the objective observer when confronted with the problem of replication in traditional
anthropological studies like Redfield's and Lewis's, Pelto proposes that:

methodological training can provide ways of minimizing the researcher's personal biases by means of systematic, objectionable research tools (1970:44).

Cognitive anthropology or ethnoscience was an attempt within anthropology to compensate for traditional anthropological bias. Rather than fitting particular cultural phenomena into categories or models of anthropological theory, cognitive anthropologists sought to describe cultural phenomena through the use of native cognitive categories. Ethnoscientific methodology, based on formal semantics, was very systematic. Componential analysis elicits linguistic responses that are generally appropriate in the native culture. Research methods and results, therefore, are public and replicable (Tyler 1969:20). Since cognitive anthropologists treated native cognition as a timeless mechanism that is knowable to any trained, careful observer, their attempts did not differ from those of traditional anthropologists in that they assumed the facticity of the intersubjective world.

Phenomenology, on the other hand, questions the facticity of the world and knowledge of that world. Phenomenology is acutely aware of the sensory nature of human knowledge; that is, all that we know must be
perceived through our senses (Merleau-Ponty 1964). Simply stated, phenomenology is a philosophy that maintains that the world is how you see it and the "it" is a product of your perception (Pollner 1970). Phenomenological participant-observation, therefore, concerns itself with how the observer and the members of the studied setting create a socially organized setting through their accounts of that setting. The phenomenologist views the objectivity of intersubjective knowledge as an accomplishment and focuses his attention on how he and members organize, rationalize, and thus objectify social phenomena through their accounts.

Alfred Schutz was one of the first scholars to realize the importance of phenomenology for the social sciences. Schutz pointed out how all the social sciences assume the intersubjectivity of thought and action (1970): 55 and thereby miss understanding how social phenomena are invested with meaning. And meaning is the essential attribute of social phenomena (Winch 1958). In his writings Schutz gives a detailed description of how we live in the vivid present of the life-world, how the conscious life of the "other" is accessible to us, how experiences in inner time are arranged through a sedimentation of meaning. A group of contemporary social scientists who utilize a phenomenological methodology based upon Schutz's writings compose the school of
ethnomethodology within sociology. Ethnomethodologists have developed techniques for explicating the relationship between members' accounts and social settings. These techniques include focusing upon the unavoidable indexicality (social phenomena exist in a context that can never be fully explicated) and reflexivity (accounts explicate the setting that in turn generates accounts) of accounts of social settings and analyzing the interpretive procedures members use in their accounts (Cicourel 1974, Filmer 1973, Garfinkel 1967, Turner 1974, Wieder 1973).

When I arrived in Dominica in August of 1976, I planned to spend approximately eighteen months on the Carib reserve, conducting a phenomenological study of Carib accounts of their ethnicity. Within two weeks of my arrival on the island, I had made arrangements to rent a small wooden cabin that bordered the northern part of the reserve. Also shortly after my arrival I learned that yet another anthropologist had visited the Carib reserve. In fact, surplus housing was at such a premium that the previous anthropologist had also stayed at the very cabin I was renting. A few months later when I obtained a copy of Anthony Layng's dissertation on Carib social structure, I was able to identify some of his key informants from his descriptions of them. The Caribs were so accustomed to being studied that they instructed
me how to do anthropology. Dominican Caribs no longer function as a traditional, isolated ethnic group; they have adopted the dress, language, house style, family structure, agricultural techniques, and consumption habits of other Dominican peasant farmers and have intermarried with the majority Negro population to the extent that the majority of the reserve Caribs' physical features are indistinguishable from those of the larger populace. Modern Dominican Carib ethnicity has been partially formed by Western social science. Clearly, the interest of anthropologists and tourists in the Caribs has influenced the self-concept of the reserve Caribs, who as late as the 1950's shunned strangers. Caribs now realize that they are important in the world's eyes because of their cultural heritage. The Caribs feel that if the reserve was threatened by the Dominican government, they could call upon other nations to protect their special status. The reserve is now a regular stop on some island tours; the Caribs have responded to the interest of visitors by establishing handicraft shops that now display welcoming signs. A familiar red and white Coca Cola sign is in front of the Carib chief's office in Salybia, except that it reads "Carib Chief" instead of "Coca Cola." The chief has placed a copy of the National Geographic map of North American Indians, which includes the Caribs, on his office wall. Not only have the Caribs
come to expect the interest of foreigners, but they have come to welcome it, since it can be used as a political lever to protect their privileged status. The government that in 1966 wanted to assimilate the Caribs by dissolving the reserve now always includes a description of the uniqueness of the reserve population in its travel brochures and public information releases. The Caribs, who were once considered backward by other Dominicans, are now envied by other Dominican peasant farmers who have no access to free cultivable land and whose cultural heritage is not nearly so proud or unique.

Although the Caribs' increasing awareness of their ethnological and historical interest to Western social scientists has caused the nature of Carib ethnicity to change, I concluded that Owen's thesis stating that modern Carib ethnicity results from economic and political concerns, the retention of reserve lands and privileged status, was still basically correct. The interest of Western social science has strengthened the resolve of the Caribs to maintain their reserve and has enhanced their privileged status. The self-identity of the Caribs, like that of all Dominicans, however, was subject to drastic changes because of the prospect of political independence for Dominica in the near future.

During the first week of my stay on the reserve the Premier of Dominica, Patrick R. John, broadcast his
Salisbury speech, in which he outlined his government's proposal to make Dominica totally politically independent by November 3, 1977. With the exception of a few years of French occupation, Dominica had remained a British colony from 1763 to 1967, when she was granted the status of independent statehood in association with Great Britain. The Caribs, like other Dominicans, were worried about their status in a newly independent Dominica. There was speculation that if the government were to adopt socialist policies upon independence as it had frequently proposed, the Caribs, the colored bourgeois, the Lebanese merchants, and the very few whites of Dominica would lose their land, property, and special privileges and be expected to merge with the majority Negro population.

As the months passed, doing yet another anthropological study of the well-documented gradual assimilation of the Caribs into the broader Dominican milieu; of the contemporary social organization of the Caribs; or of the non-traditional basis of modern Carib ethnicity seemed less and less useful. Owen's assertion that the maintenance of the Carib land tenure system (i.e., reserve land held in common by the Caribs) is essential to the survival of the Caribs as a distinct group was given further credence by the Caribs' concern about the future of the reserve upon independence. Carib delegates journeyed
to Roseau, the capital, several times in 1977 to meet with government leaders to ensure that the reserve and Carib council would be recognized by the new nation. Not only did Owen's analysis of Carib ethnicity still seem essentially correct on the advent of Dominican political independence, but I soon discovered that Carib accounts of their social world rarely included discussions of their ethnicity. In contrast, the possible reorganization of social structure imposed by the government of a newly independent Dominica was very much a prevalent topic. It became increasingly apparent that if I were to do a phenomenological study of how Dominicans created their social world by their accounts of that world, political independence would be a suitable focus of study, for I arrived in Dominica when the nature of Dominican independence was being shaped by the interactions of political groups on the island. Even such drastic changes as that of ethnic identity were considered. Recent anthropological theory recognizes the possibility of such abrupt changes in ethnic affiliation. After decades of simulating British culture, not allowing the French patois language (which is the mother tongue of many Dominicans) to be spoken in schools, and banning patois songs from the government-sponsored calypso competition, the Dominican government in 1975 began to emphasize Dominica's French
cultural heritage, required French language instruction in Dominican schools, and began to broadcast some radio programs in patois. During my stay in Dominica, the ruling Labour government made overtures to Guyana and Cuba, encouraging Dominicans to unite behind a common national front. Dominicans wondered if all class and ethnic differences would be dismissed as irrelevant in a socialist system.

Although the larger Dominican society does not have so much ethnological interest as the Caribs, a study of the effect of political independence upon Dominican society seemed a much more viable topic than Carib ethnicity. Dominican politics, however, were not confined to island matters. As most contemporary emerging nations, Dominica has extensive communication with other nations and international organizations. In fact, independence debates often centered around the virtues of socialism vs. the virtues of free enterprise, certainly a contemporary international concern. Moreover, to measure the impact of political independence upon Dominican society, one requires knowledge of the past for comparison and explanatory purposes. The legacy of colonialism in the West Indies has been that the bulk of the population is formed by the descendants of slaves. Since the ancestral past is repugnant to most West Indians and is largely responsible for the negative self-concept of most West Indians, an understanding of this past is necessary to
assess positive impact political independence will have upon the self-image of West Indians in general and Dominicans in particular. Thus, the topic of my study changed from a traditional concern of anthropology, the ethnicity of a traditional, supposedly isolated group, to a topic that not only required the acknowledgement of the international interdependence of contemporary societies but also an historical analysis of that society. I was aware that such a topic was not a traditional one for anthropological study of a culture. Traditional anthropological technique, however, was developed from the study of isolated, "primitive" societies that are swiftly becoming anachronisms. Modern communications have made total isolation of a society virtually impossible. In fact, the knowledge that is now shared by Western social scientists with the peoples of the world has made most peoples, heretofore unschooled in such concerns, aware of their histories. Certainly, such is the case in the West Indies, where the descendants of slaves are now holding their former European masters accountable for the colonial past and neo-colonial present in their negotiations for power and concessions in the modern political arena.

Rather than abandoning the field as traditional, isolated cultures disappear, some anthropologists suggest
that we abandon our preoccupation with purity:

Houses constructed of old Coca-Cola signs, a cuisine littered with canned corned beef and imported Spanish olives, ritual shot through with the cross and the palm leaf, languages seemingly pasted together with "ungrammatical" Indo-European usages, all observed within the reach of radio and television--these are not the things anthropologists' dreams are made of. (Yet)...we have begun to learn that it is the carriers of these cultures, both as victims and aggressors, who are asking today's questions, and providing irresistible answers...The search for an anthropology concerned with the widest issues of modern life has hence paralleled the search of the Westernized for a voice in the modern world (Mintz 1970:14).

In his introduction to Reinventing Anthropology, Dell Hymes notes that an anthropological concern for "distinct others" is anachronistic in the modern world with increasing communication among many areas. A common claim for studying distinct others is the necessity for "culture shock" which produces objectivity as the observer studies a culture very different from one's own. Not only does Hymes question this claim, but he also maintains that anthropological concern with cultural diversification is anachronistic, for "the relationship of culture and communities in the world today is dominantly one of reintegration within complex units" (Hymes 1972:33).

Hymes believes that if anthropology remains confined to its present institutional context, essentially the
graduate department, its intellectual death is a real possibility. If ethnography is to rise above exoticism or sterile empiricism, the specific must be used to address general problems. Bureaucratic general anthropology, "whose latent function is the protection of academic comfort and privilege" must be replaced by a personal general anthropology whose function is the advancement of knowledge. "Given the arbitrariness of institutionalized boundaries in relation to human reality," a personal approach, in which the inquirer is free to follow the paths where his study points, is more adaptive to the pursuit of knowledge (Hymes 1972: 46). The unreflective "perpetuation of present practice will generate subserviance to corrupt ends and sterile obsolescence (Hymes 1974:48)."

Hymes also maintains that our modern concept of culture must be an emergent, shared one. Hymes notes Franz Boas' remark that early observations of other peoples by themselves remained curiosities: "It was only when their relation to our own civilization became the subject of inquiry that the foundations of anthropology were laid (Boas 1904:5)."
We are all in the situation of those in "traditional" societies, whose modernizations" we often consider... we are all challenged and undermined by technological changes instituted by forces outside our control, forces which may take no note of our traditions or aspirations (Hymes 1972: 34).

Given these considerations of the common plight of the observer and observed, a phenomenological approach to the study of the effects of political independence upon Dominican society seemed particularly appropriate. In addition to describing the effects of political independence upon Dominican society, I want to describe how my experiences as a member of Dominican society and as a member of American society shaped my perceptions of Dominican independence. As I became assimilated into Dominican society through my participation-observation, I, like others members of that social world, became concerned with issues raised during the independence debates. My attempts to remain outside the political world failed, for my color and nationality ascribed membership in Dominica's elite class to me. Previous phenomenological studies, particularly those conducted by ethnomethodologists, have focused upon the mechanisms by which observed members create their social world. I wanted to include in my study the topic of how the observer's participation
in the studied social world also contributes to the creation of that world.

After deciding to study Dominican independence, I moved from the Carib reserve, where I lived for six months, to Roseau, the capital. Since the Caribs are now fairly typical of Dominican peasant farmers, I felt that I had a good understanding of Dominican rural life. I then wanted to study life "in town." Roseau, with a population of 20,000, is the only town of size on the island. I also planned to visit other villages on the island during my stay so that I would be familiar with views on independence from several areas of the island.

Other reasons for moving from an isolated cabin "in the bush" to a house in town that I shared with Dominicans were my being robbed twice and physically attacked once. Upon my return to the United States, I learned that some anthropologists are aware that conducting participant-observation in contemporary third-world countries can be problematic. Eric Wolf, for example, recognizes that the nature of "the field" has changed when traditionally pacific or pacified primitives and peasants now have guns and speak a new vocabulary of imperialism, colonialism, and neo-colonialism (Wolf 1972:258). Other anthropological observers have noted that some new colored nationalists view anthropology as irrelevant if not racist (Willis 1972:146) because it developed in the context of white
rule and can be seen as an expression of a "certain period in the discovery, then domination, of the rest of the world by European and North American societies (Hymes 1972:5)."

I, however, was not expecting the natives to "hit back." Part of my unacknowledged meta-theory was that the anthropologist should befriend his or her "people" and act as an advocate for that population. Since anthropologists have traditionally studied the more "primitive" peoples, anthropological studies have focused on the more oppressed and powerless people of the world. Reading ethnographic studies as a graduate student in the 1970's, I identified with those anthropologists whose personal ethnic demanded of them a commitment to their "people," even if it meant a political commitment in those societies where the anthropologist's "people" were subjected to an oppressive system. I would have applauded Hyme's hope for anthropology to be instrumental in the creation of a more moral global culture (Hymes 1972:48).

Imagine how unprepared I was to find myself subject to hostility from those Dominicans who viewed themselves as members of an oppressed group. That my color and nationality automatically ascribed membership in the elite class of Dominica to me was not only frustrating for me but also recognized and resented by some who would probably never obtain membership in that class. After moving to Roseau, where I lived in a large house with three young Dominicans
and one British VSO (Volunteer Service Overseas) representative, I contacted most of the white people on the island.
(Until then I had been avoiding contact with the white expatriates on the island, for I wanted my circle of friends to focus upon Dominicans.) In a total island population of approximately 30,000, there were less than 200 white people, and most of these were expatriates who had been sent by assistance organizations. From this group of predominantly young Americans and Britishers, I learned that a disproportionate number of whites residing on Dominica had been subject to hostile acts. Murder, for example, is an extremely rare act in Dominica; yet, of the dozen or so murders that had occurred in the last five years, three involved white victims. I was told that the Peace Corps was no longer assigning single white women to several of the Eastern Caribbean islands because of the high frequency of attacks on white women there.

Compounding my growing realization that whites are often targets of pent-up hostilities in the West Indies was the fact that many of the Dominicans whom I befriended were considered to be bourgeois. Since Dominicans who enjoy the company of whites are often classified as bourgeois, this outcome was probably inevitable. Despite an initial prejudice against the political views of the Dominican middle class that tend to be conservative, I found myself agreeing more and more with their views, particularly their
stance on political independence. The middle class viewed the Dominican Labour Party government's attempts to obtain political independence for the island as an effort to consolidate the political power of a corrupt government. The Dominican Labour Party, which represents the formerly powerless people of the island, has gradually wrested political power from the Dominican bourgeoisie during the last quarter-century. This class power struggle has been intensified or complicated by its racial overtones, for the lower class in Dominica is considered black and the middle class or bourgeoisie is considered brown. The current government seemed intent on abolishing remaining privileges of the bourgeoisie upon obtaining political independence. This intent seemed less than honorable to the bourgeoisie, who felt that the proposed property confiscation and additional taxation would threaten the island's commerce, making economic independence less of a possibility. Moreover, government members seemed to have no compunctions about soliciting aid upon gaining independence from "imperialist" powers in order to ensure continued support for the special privileges accorded to those in power.

My increasing distrust of West Indians and cynicism about local politics dismayed me. Since as a phenomenologist I had wanted to analyze the way in which my participation in Dominican society shaped my views of that society,
I was acutely aware that my experiences contributed to my generally negative view of the ruling powers in Dominica. I felt responsible for my disillusionment. I felt that I should be able to overcome the disillusionment fostered by a few negative incidents. In addition, I was appalled by my growing tendency to view social situations in racial terms. When I thought of all the kindness shown to me by Dominicans, I was ashamed of my darker thoughts. The longer I stayed on the island, however, the more aware I became of my own ethnicity and sex and the resulting precarious position in Dominican society these two attributes ascribed for me. Realizing that I would feel most comfortable studying the Dominican middle class but also realizing that my remaining funds were too limited to enable me to live among the middle class for any length of time, I decided to return to the United States after only a year's stay in the West Indies. I felt that I had failed in my attempt to learn about Dominican society by participant-observation. In fact, I withdrew from my graduate program for two years.

Only after I had been in the United States for several months was I able to view my negative feelings about being white in the West Indies as less of a personal failure and more as a legitimate response to a societal structure that has discriminated among people on the basis of color for centuries. Several events helped me to rationalize my
West Indian experience. Increasing anti-white sentiments in some third world countries were documented by the explosive events in Zaire and Uganda. A leading West Indian novelist V. S. Naipaul verbalized some of my darkest nightmares in a recent novel Guerillas, the main characters of which are two young Britishers who plan to aid in the development of a West Indian island and fall prey to irrational hostile forces there. Rereading the social science literature on the West Indies made me realize that the relationships among the different races in the region have been fraught with tension for centuries. Finally, reading Dell Hymes' collection of papers dealing with the problems of conducting anthropological research in contemporary times (Hymes 1972) as I researched West Indian history in a Memphis library, made me realize that I was not alone. Eric Wolf's article in that collection struck a remarkably resonant chord in my psyche. Wolf maintained that the "Liberal Reform" anthropology that has dominated the field since anthropology's heyday in the 30's and 40's emphasized the malleability of man and viewed culture as an educational institution for its members. By not addressing constraints on malleability, anthropologists have been left with a legacy of unconcern about the phenomenon of power (Wolf 1972:256-257). Therefore, anthropologists are ill-equipped to understand and analyze the phenomenon of power, the phenomenon which
most concerns contemporary man. Wolfe quotes Stillman and Pfaff, political scientists who describe this as an age in which:

the world practices politics, originated in the Western historical experience, whose essentially optimistic and rationalist assumptions fail utterly to account for the brutality and terror which are the principal public experiences of the twentieth century. ... neither tragedy nor irrationality are to be understood in terms of the political philosophies by which the West, and now the world, conducts its public life (Wolf 1972:258).

Wolf sees a return to Machiavellianism as a characteristic of contemporary politics. Ethics is now divorced from politics and the modern democratic process has been reduced to a constellation of self-seeking pressure groups engaged in a power struggle to determine the allocation of privilege and particular advantage (Wolf 1972:259). Since the major response of anthropology to the return of Machiavellian politics has been one of retreat, Wolf feels that anthropology is no longer furnishing the cutting edge of innovation in the social sciences and may stand in danger of descending into triviality. Anthropology must find ways of educating anthropologists in the realities of power. Thus, Wolf proposes:

to engage ourselves in the systematic writing of a history of the modern world in which we spell out the processes of power which created the present-day cultural systems and linkages between them (Wolf 1972:261).
In this paper I will attempt to write such a history of Dominica in the context of the larger West Indian experience and show how this history influenced, if not formed, Dominican independence. Although historical forces and contemporary international institutions made Dominican political independence virtually inevitable, these same forces make Dominican economic, cultural, and even psychological independence impossible. The ambiguous nature of Dominican independence is mirrored in my ambivalent feelings and thoughts about my experiences in the West Indies. This exercise will be a truly phenomenological one in that through this account of Dominican political independence I will organize, rationalize, and thus objectify my encounter with West Indian social life. Objectifying my "intersubjective knowledge" of West Indian society has been more difficult than I envisioned, but since the conflicts that surfaced with Dominica's vying for independence are not unique to the Dominican situation, a thorough account of these conflicts as they were reflected in my experiences there may give us a better insight into contemporary political life. Increasingly complex and interdependent international relations have changed the nature of political entities such that in today's world "no nation is an island."
CHAPTER TWO

The Past in the Present: An Overview of West Indian History

Traditional anthropological studies were holistic, ahistorical analyses of isolated cultures. It was felt that a thorough analysis of contemporary social structures and their functions was sufficient for understanding the mechanics of a society. Such an approach would give us a shallow understanding of Caribbean society, for perhaps in no other region of the world is the past lived so much in the present.

The West Indies has had the longest period of colonization (extending into the present) of any area in the world. The West Indies was the first area of the world "developed" by European transoceanic capitalism. The islands became colonial very early and have remained so.

One need only contrast Ghana and Barbados, to take two random examples, to get some sense of the distinctiveness of the Caribbean region. Ghana, like most of East and West Africa, became a British colony toward the close of the nineteenth century, and won its political independence in the middle of the twentieth. Barbados, like much of the eastern Caribbean, was colonized by Britain in the early seventeenth century, yet remained colonial a decade later than Ghana. Of course, the Greater Antilles had been colonial for nearly 150 years before Barbados was even settled, so that Caribbean colonialism now has nearly five centuries behind it--and much of the region is still colonial, even in formal political terms. In fact,
it would be fair to argue that, except for certain "ports of trade" or imperial enclaves, . . . most European colonialism from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries was an American phenomenon. By the time that much of Africa and Asia had become truly colonial—in the sense of belonging to the European powers—the Caribbean had been colonial in this very sense for periods of up to 400 years (Mintz 1974:254).

Much of the Caribbean is still colonial, whereas other areas of the world that were once colonized gained their independence as soon as possible. Moreover, the colonial experience has been the only political/social experience for many territories in the region. As noted previously, during the colonization of the West Indies, the indigenous Indian population was decimated by disease, overwork, and warfare. The West Indies was populated by colonials, first the Europeans, then Negro slaves, and later indentured workers from the Mediterranean and Asia. Therefore, there were no indigenous cultural patterns to which to cling during the colonial era and to which to return once the colonizers left.

Most of the European colonizers who came to the West Indies did so with the intent to work a few years, acquire wealth, and then return to Europe. Those European colonists who were successful left the West Indies. The rate of absentee landowners has always been high for the region. Since many Europeans anticipated their return to Europe,
they did little to develop local cultural life or local social services. Schools, hospitals, theaters, libraries, etc., were sadly lacking in the area. Unlike the Europeans, the Negro slaves had little hope of returning to their countries of origin. Forcibly held in the plantations in the West Indies, they felt imprisoned. Often Negroes from the same African tribe were separated upon their arrival in the West Indies so that potential alliances against the planters were prevented from forming. Although slaves born in the West Indies learned to scorn slaves born in Africa, the Negro population was slow to gain local attachments to replace ancestral ones (Lowenthal 1972:39). Parry and Sherlock, noted West Indian historians, hypothesize that the process of forming a way of living that was a characteristically West Indian amalgam (not from any single African group) was slow because plantation life discouraged inventiveness (Parry and Sherlock 1966:72). The indentured workers from Asia, particularly the East Indians, were even more reluctant to consider themselves West Indians because of the large cultural differences between themselves and the other ethnic groups in the West Indies. To this day, they maintain separate communities in the countries where their numbers are large, such as Trinidad and Guyana. Perhaps in no other area of the world has an absence of a real community been such a long-standing fact.
Caribbean traditions are colonial traditions. Many contemporary aspects of West Indian societies may be traced to the plantation system, definitely a colonial phenomenon, that was introduced very early in the West Indies and shaped in a remarkably persistent way Caribbean economic, social, and political institutions. Despite the diverse experiences of the islands caused by different geographies, languages, and histories, there is a similarity in social structure and organization throughout the region.

...it appears that the special character of Caribbean societies flows from a series of imperial impositions which, once set in motion, were maintained with remarkable fidelity. That is, the Caribbean tends to be homogeneous and different from much of the rest of the world because processes begun centuries ago have continued to function with little intervening modification, and it is precisely this long-term "social ossification" that makes the region distinctive (Mintz 1974:225).

Let us then examine how the social structures and organizations which have been virtually homogeneous throughout the region for centuries came into being.

The recorded history of the West Indies begins abruptly with Columbus' arrival in 1492. Within two decades after Columbus' first voyage, Spanish colonists had begun to settle Hispaniola, Cuba, and Puerto Rico.
Since the native population in the West Indies could not adapt to living with the Europeans and there was nowhere for them to retreat, within a century they were virtually extinct. Although Cuba initially produced some gold, the main functions of the Spanish islands in the Caribbean were to produce tropical goods for export to Spain and to supply Spanish vessels enroute to the American mainland. The Spanish lost the race to the East but founded a great empire in the Americas during the sixteenth century; the Caribbean was the gateway to that empire. Since tilling of the soil was degrading to a Spanish gentleman, most of the Spanish colonists raised livestock, producing not only meat with which to provision the ships but also hides and tallow for export to Spain. Tobacco was the only native American crop produced for export. The Spanish introduced to the region the cultivation of bananas, figs, oranges, lemons, and, most importantly, sugar.

The Spanish government paid Canary Islanders to instruct the colonists on Hispaniola in sugar cultivation. The planting and reaping of sugar cane both require intensive labor. Once the cane is cut, it is highly perishable and must be milled within 48 hours. The sugar cane producer must therefore also be the sugar manufacturer. Not only are a crushing mill, the power to turn the mill, boiling coppers and furnaces, and crystallizing pots required for the manufacture of sugar, but carts and beasts
must transport first the cane to the mill and then the packed casks to the dock. The requirements of sugar cultivation thus include a large initial capital outlay and a large labor force. Moreover, in order to protect his investment in the sugar mill and manufacturing equipment, the sugar cultivator often desired a large amount of land to insure a steady supply of sugar cane.

Since a sugar plantation was a good investment at the time, obtaining capital was not a problem for the Spanish planters. Obtaining labor, however, was. Even after extensive raids in the region, the supply of Indians did not meet the needs of the sugar cultivators. For lack of incentive, European indentured workers could not be attracted to work on the sugar plantations, since the large initial capital outlay necessary for a sugar plantation prevented their eventually becoming planters. The grueling labor in the cane fields was also considered unsuitable for Europeans.

During the sixteenth century the chief source of slaves was West Africa, where the Portuguese had established trade with the coastal chiefs. In 1510 Spanish government agents in Seville received orders to send 250 slaves to Hispaniola. Shortly thereafter, licenses were granted to private traders for the import of slaves to the West Indies. By the late 1520's the disciplinary problems of plantation slavery had begun: shortage of
European supervisors, servile mutinies, and bands of runaways hiding in the mountains and emerging at intervals to attack settlements. Because the licenses for trading imposed limits on the number of imported slaves and sugar production was retarded by the difficulty of shipping to distant markets, Negroes never came to outnumber Europeans in the Spanish Indies as they did elsewhere (Parry and Sherlock 1966:17). Once the Negro slaves were seen as providing a suitable, reliable labor supply, Catholic clergymen, such as Fray Antonio de Montesinos and Bartolome de las Casas, were allowed to protect the Indians from the rigors of plantation slavery.

Only Spain had established colonies in the West Indies by the end of the sixteenth century and only Hispaniola produced an exportable surplus of sugar during that century. Spain's economic interest in the Caribbean declined sharply after 1519, when her attention was turned to the American mainland by Cortes' sailing from Cuba to conquer Mexico. Yet, processes initiated by Spain at the outset of her entry in the region, such as the introduction of export crops (particularly sugar) and the plantation system, the importation of slaves, and the establishment of closed economic circuits between colony and metropolis, were to be dominant patterns throughout the region in the next two centuries.
The objective of the North European conquerors of the Antilles was to create wealth for their respective metropolises within a mercantilist framework (Mintz 1974: 255). Whereas the French and English confined their activities in the West Indies to raiding treasure-laden Spanish ships during the sixteenth century, during the seventeenth century the British, French, and Dutch established settlements in the West Indies. After some attempts to settle in the Lesser Antilles were aborted by Carib attacks, the French, English, and Dutch occupied islands in the seventeenth century that had been emptied of their natives early in the sixteenth century by the Spaniards on slaving raids (Lowenthal 1972:31). The West India Company's attacks weakened Spain to the extent that foreigners settling unoccupied islands were not endangered by Spanish interference (Parry and Sherlock 1966:49).

In the seventeenth century the Dutch were the masters of sea-borne commerce and subsequently controlled trade to the islands. The Dutch in the West Indies established a mercantile imperialism that was to influence colonial policy for 200 years. This imperialism was based on 1) the assertion of the sovereignty of the metropolitan (European) government, 2) fostering the production of staple crops for shipment to the metropolitan government ports, 3) directing trade into metropolitan ships bound for metropolitan ports, and 4) concentration of this system on the West Indies (Parry and Sherlock 1966:58).
The first twenty years in the West Indies were more a period of activity than achievement for the British and French settlers, both of whom established their first colony on the island of St. Kitts in 1624. Tobacco prices fell; the West Indies could not compete with Virginia. There was a small demand for anatto and ginger. Some indigo was grown in Barbados, but attempts to grow it in St. Kitts failed. The Lesser Antilles were too small for the efficient production of cotton. The settlers began to realize that sugar was the obvious crop because in addition to its high yield per acre, its high price, and the growing demand for it in Europe, it grows only in the tropics, and it can be grown by unskilled labor for long periods on the same ground. French and English settlers, however, did not have the skill or technical knowledge necessary for producing sugar. The Dutch, who as dealers for the West Indies would profit from the production of any West Indian crop sold in Europe, had acquired the necessary knowledge and experience in Brazil. The Dutch supplied the technical expertise and equipment and lent the capital for sugar production in the French and British West Indies. The first sugar cane planted in Barbados was brought by Pieter Brower in 1637. After 1650 sugar became the only product of importance in the French and English islands. "The growth of this monoculture changed
the whole racial composition and social structure of the islands (Parry and Sherlock 1966:66).

As in the Spanish islands, sugar was a rich man's crop in the Lesser Antilles. Not only was considerable capital needed to establish a sugar factory, but for a plantation to run economically, it must be large enough to keep the factory constantly supplied with sugar cane throughout the crop season. The small land-holders were thus forced out. Over half the proprietors in Barbados left within a generation. Barbados had a few hundred Negroes in 1640; by 1645 there were 6,000 Negroes and 4,000 whites; in 1685 there were 46,000 Negroes and 20,000 whites; by 1705 only 12,000 whites remained on Barbados (Parry and Sherlock 1966:69).

Just as the small land-holders in the West Indies were forced out by the introduction of sugar cultivation in the region, the old colonies, based upon balanced subsistence economies, lost favor as colonies producing export products for Europe became more successful. A plantation system - based upon cheap forced labor and needing food, clothing, and manufactured goods from Europe, slaves from Africa, and metropolitan shipping to conduct trade - made the West Indies more profitable to metropolitan countries. The combination of a closed economic system, consisting of three principle components: a metropolitan (European) country, her trading posts in
Africa, and her colonies in the West Indies became known as the triangular trade. A ship would leave Europe with a cargo of manufactured goods that would be exchanged on the coast of West Africa for slaves, thus completing the first side of the triangle. The second side, known as the Middle Passage, consisted of the voyage from West Africa to the West Indies with the slaves. The triangle was completed by the ship's voyage from the West Indies to the metropolitan country with the final cargo of sugar, rum, and other Caribbean products that had been obtained in exchange for the slaves. Each exchange was profitable for the metropolitan country. The triangular trade not only provided markets in West Africa and the West Indies for metropolitan products and provided freights for metropolitan ships, but the maintenance of slaves in the West Indies also stimulated metropolitan industry and agriculture, such as the British woolen industry that provided blankets and clothing for the slaves. This highly advantageous triangular trade made colonies in the West Indies the most profitable colonies in the eighteenth century. Shipping generated by the triangular trade was extensive enough to transform Liverpool in England and Nantes in France from fishing villages to great centers of international commerce (Williams 1970:149).

The great wealth of the West Indies in the eighteenth century was generated at enormous human expense. Negro
slavery was essential for the sugar plantations. Mortality in the Middle Passage was considered an unfortunate trading loss.

In 1659, a Dutch slaver, the St. Jan, lost 110 slaves out of a cargo of 219 -- for every two slaves purchased, one died in transit to the West Indies. In 1678, the Arthur, one of the ships of the Royal African Company suffered a mortality of 88 out of 417 slaves -- that is, more than 20 per cent. The Martha, another ship, landed 385 in Barbados out of 447 taken on the coast -- the mortality amounted to 62, or a little less than 15 per cent. The Coaster lost 37 out of 150, a mortality of approximately 25 per cent. The Hannibal, in 1694, with a cargo of 700 slaves, buried 320 on the voyage, a mortality of 43 per cent . . . The losses sustained by these five vessels amounted to 617 out of a total cargo of 1,933, that is, 32 per cent. Three out of every ten slaves perished in the Middle Passage (Williams 1970:139).

To the mortality on the slave ships must be added the mortality on the plantations. According to one well-known West Indian historian, one in every three imported Negroes died in the first three years in the colonies (Williams 1970:146). The Negro slaves were literally worked to death on the sugar plantations. It was considered unrealistically humanitarian to allow slaves to breed, for it was more profitable to replace slaves than to absorb the loss of the work time the mother would lose in child-raising. The slave trade was such an integral
part of the triangular trade that planters assumed that their supply of Negro slaves was virtually inexhaustible. In 1764 there were 70,706 slaves in Barbados. Importations from 1764 to 1783, with no figures available for the years 1779 and 1780, totalled 41,480. The total population, allowing for neither deaths nor births, should have been 112,546 in 1783; it was in fact 62,258. Despite an average annual importation for the eighteen years for which statistics are available of 2,324, the population in 1783 was 8,448 less than it was in 1764 (Williams 1970: 145-146).

Almost four million Africans were sold into the British, French, and Dutch Caribbean, but when slavery ended there, only a million and a half West Indians of African descent remained. When the slaves were emancipated, the Caribbean contained scarcely one-third the number of slaves imported into the region. In comparison, in the United States, where slaves were considered valuable property, at the time of emancipation there were eleven times the number of slaves that had been imported. The United States imported less than five per cent of the slaves brought to the Americas but in 1950 had 33 per cent of the Afro-American population. The Caribbean islands imported more than forty per cent of the slaves brought to the Americas but in 1950 had only 20 per cent of the Afro-American population (Lowenthal 1972:43).
The Negro slave trade in the eighteenth century constituted one of the greatest migrations in recorded history. Africans and their descendants have outnumbered all other West Indians since the 1650's. The ratio of Negro slaves to white owners became more extreme during the eighteenth century. The large number of slaves and comparatively small number of whites resulted in the slaves' being viewed as less than human. Conditions of slavery varied throughout the region, according to the nationality and religion of the owner, the nature of the local economy, and the numerical balance between slave and free. But there were more commonalities than differences. Barbarous treatment of slaves occurred in every West Indian territory. The conditions of work, nourishment, confinement and punishment among West Indian slaves are generally agreed to have been the worst in the New World. The scarcity of whites made repression of rebellion more savage than elsewhere. The Caribbean sugar plantations rapidly used up slaves and continuously imported fresh ones. It was not uncommon for Jamaican planters to bring false accusations against their sick and lame slaves, for when slaves were executed as criminals, the government compensated their owners (Lowenthal 1972: 43). The ease of manumission and opportunities for economic advancement, however, were greater in the West
Indies than in North America. The scarcity of whites caused West Indians to tolerate free colored persons in occupational niches that were exclusive prerogatives of whites in the United States.

After the introduction of sugar cultivation in the region, West Indian slavery was more than a way of life; it was the way of life. All non-slaves were connected with slavery or dependent on it. Since slavery was such a pervasive aspect of West Indian culture, it prescribed certain modes of social structures, remnants of which still persist in the region. West Indian prejudices and laws presumed that every black man is, or ought to be, a slave. This presumption has shaped social relations between the "advanced" peoples (British, French, Dutch, Danish, and American) and the "backward" peoples (Amerindian, African, Asian). These two groups have been separately categorized from the start in the West Indies, with European masters over non-European laborers. In fact, racial distinctions have mattered longer in the West Indies than anywhere else in America (Lowenthal 1972:26). Slavery did not play as pervasive a role in colonial Latin America; the West Indies is thus set apart from Latin America in its attitudes and actions toward slaves. A noted West Indian scholar has remarked that the history of the West Indies is a "history of race relations" (Lowenthal 1972:26). Indeed, Lowenthal sketches the history of the
region by focusing upon the changing relationships among the groups in the region, to which membership is ascribed by skin color.

When slavery was first introduced it was clearly understood that all whites were members of the elite and all blacks were slaves. Scarcity of white women in the region, however, resulted in sexual liaisons between the two groups. White planters often manumitted their concubines and mulatto offspring and accorded them special privileges. Between the millions of slaves and thousands of whites in the West Indies, the intermediate group of "free colored" (manumitted slaves and their descendants) occupied an increasingly prominent position. By the time of emancipation, they outnumbered the whites. The greater prominence of colored people in the region caused West Indians to make color distinctions that are meaningless to North Americans.

As Europeans, white West Indians took a socially stratified order for granted and viewed the separate identity and special privileges of the free coloured as a means of consolidating their own hegemony. By contrast, the American egalitarian mystique made free coloured people an embarrassment even to whites who detested slavery; there was no room for colour compromise in a social order where all free white men were equal (Lowenthal 1972:47).
Sometimes prominent colored West Indians could exempt themselves from the usual disabilities of their color. The Jamaican legislature passed hundreds of bills granting individuals the perquisites of whites; birth certificates proving Carib ancestry could be purchased in the French Antilles. Whereas a Negro who sought to pass for white in the United States would move to a remote area where his background was unknown, in small West Indian societies prominent colored persons were accepted as white because of their social position despite what everyone knew of their ancestry. Yet, on the eve of emancipation, law and custom still barred the bulk of the colored population from full participation in West Indian society. In most territories, the colored population was not allowed to vote or participate in government. Although social intercourse was allowed among the different groups, every joint function was hierarchically organized. The freed colored, like the slaves, remained an inferior social order. Moreover, the small white minority continued to exercise absolute power over social institutions that discriminated against all non-whites. Yet, within two generations, between 1791 and 1863, all West Indian slaves were freed and legal disabilities on the grounds of color were terminated (Lowenthal 1972:50).

Although they differed in constitutional habits and administrative methods, the French and English Caribbean
islands resembled one another closely in their social structure. Because white planters were in scarce supply, early West Indian governments welcomed almost any European entrepreneur. During the eighteenth century, however, at the height of the region's prosperity, the mutual tolerance of the French and English islands was replaced by mutual fear and jealousy. The European powers were at war with one another, and the West Indies was a proving ground for European ambition. The importation of European conflicts to the region illustrated the extent of West Indian dependence on Europe. The profitable West Indian colonies changed hands several times during the century. Agricultural activity, however, continued with little reference to naval conquest and diplomatic barter. In fact, Lowenthal maintains that the "imperial interchanges enhanced Caribbean homogeneity" (Lowenthal 1972:28).

The Caribbean sugar islands, whose profits helped to industrialize Europe, became anachronisms in the resulting world economy. An industrialized Europe demanded large consumer markets, which the West Indies were unable to supply. New larger markets were opened by imperial expansion. Imperial expansion also gave Europeans access to larger tropical areas that could produce sugar more efficiently. As the Europeans' powers began to shift their attention from the West Indies at the end of the eighteenth century, West Indians became aware of their precarious
dependency on the metropolitan countries. The rich but vulnerable islands had never been capable of defending themselves because the few free citizens on the islands expended their energies quelling servile revolts. The islands were not only dependent upon the metropolitan countries for defense, but also their very livelihood depended on protected markets for their tropical produce. Moreover, since West Indian agriculture focused upon sugar production, a great deal of the food consumed locally was imported.

In order to protect their privileged position in the European marketplace, the British West Indian planters banded together to form the Society of West Indian Planters and Merchants, which became one of the most powerful parliamentary lobbies. Even the most powerful lobby, however, could not persuade metropolitan governments to support indefinitely colonies whose economic systems came to be viewed as inefficient and whose social systems seemed anachronistic and inhumane. West Indian historians have ironically noted that Europe's increasing receptivity to the arguments of the abolitionists coincided with the decreasing profitability of the sugar islands. While the economists and industrialists attacked the West Indian sugar monopoly, the humanitarians and reformers attacked West Indian slavery.
Against the protests of the West Indian planters, the British parliament banned the further importation of Negro slaves in 1807. The French banned slave trading in 1818 and Spain in 1820, but neither country enforced the law as Britain did. In 1823 Britain passed the Amelioration Acts, which were to protect the welfare of the slaves; however, the acts could only be enforced in Crown-ruled Trinidad. Then on August 1, 1833, the British parliament passed the Emancipation Act.

Freedom for the slaves was not immediate. Neither were the ruin and chaos predicted by the planters. The emancipated slaves were required to serve a period of apprenticeship. On islands such as Barbados, St. Kitts, and Antigua, where all cultivable land was taken up by the sugar plantations, the only available work was on the sugar estates. There the newly freed Negroes had little choice but to continue working as estate laborers. In Jamaica and British Guiana, crown lands were seized or purchased for "free villages" that relied upon subsistence agriculture for sustenance.

The transition to a free society imposed by emancipation was an orderly one. The success of emancipation in the West Indies was measured by whether sugar production rose or fell, by whether Negroes continued to work on the sugar plantations. The metropolitan rulers, like the planters, felt that the survival of the West Indies
depended upon the survival of the plantations. Planters were compensated by the British government for their slave property, and the abolitionists therefore seemed to feel that the slaves should show their gratitude to Britain for the purchase of their freedom by continuing to serve faithfully on the plantations. In most territories emancipation was not accompanied by riots or bloodshed and in most territories the planters still had a readily available labor supply. In those territories where an adequate supply of land allowed the free Negroes to support themselves on small land-holdings, the governments underwrote the importation of indentured workers from Madeira, Java, and East India. The West Indian plantation system, however, was ruined by the introduction of free trade and the removal of the preferential duty on West Indian sugar that occurred between 1846 and 1854. As the West India houses went bankrupt in Europe, the movement of laborers from the estates was accompanied by the departure of capital and white estate-owners from the West Indies. Often estates were parcelled out for share-cropping. Where estates were abandoned, blacks became freeholders by default. Those planters that stayed retained their social prerogatives. Faced with overwhelming demographic odds and arguing that the Negroes were not capable of governing, the white oligarchy chose metropolitan (European) rule rather than allowing the formerly self-governing colonies
to be dominated by the newly enfranchised black majority. Therefore, by the end of the nineteenth century, all of the British islands had reverted to Crown-colony rule.

After emancipation failed to bring instant utopia, racial prejudice actually intensified. Since blacks were no longer legally coerced into inferior social positions, their lack of social skills and prominence was now attributed to racial inferiority. Also, the decline of the West Indian economy that coincided with emancipation was cited as evidence of Negro inferiority and unfitness for self-rule.

In contrast with the United States where emancipation was accompanied by civil war and eventually undermined the plantation system, the transition from legal slavery was orderly in the West Indies and did not alter the shape or aims of the plantation system in spite of the failure or consolidation of some estates. As the whites left the islands, colored and newly freed West Indians gained more of the positions of power and prestige. Their intentions, however, were not to alter the system but to inherit the white positions. Thus, the slavery that produced West Indian social structure was not essential to its continuance (Lowenthal 1972:67). West Indian leaders, who were educated abroad for the most part, were reluctant to throw off European bonds. The imperial connection was viewed as a support rather than a shackle. Independence from Europe
would threaten the West Indian's world view and his position in that world. Until the mid-1950's administrative attitudes remained the same, the same crops were grown, and the same basic plantation system remained.

The century following emancipation bore witness to great changes, to be sure. The West Indian majority exchanged slavery for formal freedom; ex-slaves acquired land and a peasantry emerged; immigrant labourers from Asia profoundly affected many territories; black and coloured numbers increased everywhere, whereas whites diminished; sugar ceased to be the economic touchstone and in some areas vanished entirely; local autonomy gave way to stronger metropolitan control; and middle-class coloured and working-class black began to enter some institutional realms hitherto exclusively white.

Yet these changes fundamentally altered neither the structure of society nor most relationships between ruler and ruled, white and black, landowner and labourer. West Indian ways of life, social circumstances, and prevalent viewpoints remained substantially those of a hundred years before. . . . In other countries travellers look assiduously for traces of the past; in the Caribbean the past is a living presence (Lowenthal 1972:68).
CHAPTER THREE
The Struggle Against Oppression

In counterpoint to the theme emphasized in the preceding chapter, that the social order in the West Indies had long remained unchanged despite emancipation, is the long history of attempts by the oppressed peoples of the West Indies to change the unequal power relationship which prescribed human interaction. The historic response of the West Indian majority population (slaves and their descendants) to the established power structure shows an unusually high incidence of slave revolts and escapes during the era of plantation slavery and widespread emigration of West Indians to lands that seemed to offer more opportunity. Frequent popular uprisings followed during the post-emancipation era. Those who remained in bondage used less direct means of intrigue against plantation slavery, which will later be described. West Indians remaining in the islands after emancipation often chose to eke out a marginal subsistence on small plots of land rather than work on the estates for wages.

The fact that West Indian slaves generally were not docile subordinates is a source of pride among modern West Indians. Cuffy, a leader of early slave revolts in then British Guiana, has been made a folk hero. West Indians are similarly proud that the first black sovereign nation
in the world was created in the Caribbean, after a lengthy power struggle precipitated by a slave revolt. This occurred in 1804, at the time of Dessalines' declaration that the former French colony of Saint-Domingue was to become the independent republic of Haiti.

The refusal of West Indian slaves to accept slavery was paralleled by their descendants' refusal to accept the unequal power relationship persisting after emancipation. The West Indian planting oligarchy perceived Haitian independence under a black ruler and the refusal of former slaves to work on the estates as threats to the established power relationship. They responded to those threats by isolating Haiti, effectively making it impossible for that island to conduct commerce, and importing indentured workers from Asia and India. The resulting impoverishment in Haiti and the non-participation of freeholders (ex-slaves who acquired small plots of land) in their island economies forebode the troubles West Indian nationalists in the twentieth century would have in obtaining a measure of economic independence to accompany the political independence they sought. West Indians filled a disproportionately large number of leadership roles in the international black community in the twentieth century, becoming a large force in "pan-Africanism," a movement that shaped black nationalism not only in the West Indies but also in Africa and North America. Other organized forces have
contributed to the change of the established power structure in the West Indies in this century, organized labor and popular political parties. In fact, such extensive social and political change has occurred in the West Indies since World War II that most positions of power, once the exclusive perquisites of whites, are now held by West Indian blacks. Although the West Indian social hierarchy persists, its altered racial composition has resulted in new values: racial integration has become the general social ideal; nationalism has become the general political ideal.

...the accelerated pace of change has in many ways made the Caribbean a new world... In 1940 whites dominated all Caribbean governments, suffrage (except in the French colonies) was severely restricted, and black and coloured men held few prestigious positions. Today non-whites predominate in all the governments and occupy most places of public eminence (Lowenthal 1972:74-75).

Just as the old West Indian social hierarchy, which once preserved white privilege, became dominated by West Indian blacks in this century, the old representative system of government, which once kept the planting oligarchies firmly entrenched in power in the British West Indies, functioned as the basis for more popular local representative government. Universal suffrage was adopted during the mid-twentieth century, providing the British islands
with a tradition of local representative government strongly independent of the metropolitan or European government. Before examining the social and political changes that have occurred in the West Indies in the last century, resulting in political independence or more favorable political arrangements with metropolitan governments for the territories in the region, let us first examine the historical response of the West Indian majority population to the established power structure. This structure was engendered by the requirements of the sugar industry for a plentiful supply of laborers to perform the physically demanding tasks necessary to plant, harvest, and process sugar cane.

West Indian plantation society could be described as a "series of small groups of homesick and often quarrelsome exiles, surrounded by much larger groups of alien and often resentful slaves—also exiles" (Parry and Sherlock 1966:142). National differences had little impact on West Indian social structure; for instance, Parry and Sherlock observe that both French and English West Indian island societies were composed of quarrelsome planting oligarchies and masses of "recently imported mutinous negro slaves" (Parry and Sherlock 1966:79). West Indian slaves were never assimilated into the planter's culture to the extent that their North American counterparts were.
The much larger ratio of slaves to white owners and the practice of replenishing slaves destroyed by overwork from a seemingly inexhaustible supply of new slaves from Africa were hardly conducive to the development of concern for the slaves' well-being by the West Indian planters. The West Indian situation contrasts with the North American one. Whereas many North American negro slaves, who were considered valuable pieces of property and whose welfare therefore was a concern of their owners, adapted to slavery, slave revolts were such a certainty in the West Indies that planters there apportioned part of their resources for defense against these revolts. In addition, West Indian planters were terrorized by periodic raids made upon their settlements by former slaves who had escaped plantation life and secluded themselves in the thickly forested interiors of British Honduras, British Guiana, and some larger islands. In fact, the steady increase in the number of slaves and the fear of servile mutiny were important factors in preventing the growth of a serious independence movement in Cuba in the early nineteenth century (Parry and Sherlock 1966:225). Slaves did not always express their hostility toward the plantation system directly, for such expressions were severely punished. West Indian slaves often expressed their resentments indirectly by such means as calculated idleness,
willful carelessness, feigned stupidity, and even infanticide and suicide.

Despite the death penalty for servile revolts and the harsh punishment administered to captured runaways, throughout the history of slavery in the West Indies revolts and attempts to escape occurred repeatedly, indicating the depth of the slaves' dissatisfaction. Within twenty years after their arrival in the West Indies in 1510, the first black slaves in the region, imported by Spain from Africa, exhibited behavior, revolt against the plantation system and raiding plantations after running away, that continued for centuries to disturb West Indian planters. The first serious servile mutiny occurred in Barbados in 1649. Hardly a decade passed without a serious slave uprising in the region.

In 1733 all the resident Europeans on the Danish island of St. John except a handful who fled to St. Thomas were murdered by rebellious slaves. After troops from Martinique hunted down and shot the rebels, the island was deserted except for a few fishermen until recently, when it was developed as a resort for North Americans.

Jamaica and Saint-Domingue had bad reputations as scenes of frequent revolts, due partly to the presence of the "maroons," descendants of runaway slaves who secluded themselves in the mountains. The defeat of the maroons
during the two maroon wars in Jamaica of 1734 and 1795 ironically resulted in treaties whereby maroons were to be available as mercenaries to track and capture runaway slaves.

The first concerted slave revolt on a large scale in the history of the West Indies eventually resulted in the establishment of the first black sovereign state. In August of 1791 the slave population of the northern plain of Saint-Domingue rose in revolt, systematically setting fire to canefields and houses and murdering white inhabitants. During the surprise attack slaves conveyed messages by drumbeats and through nocturnal ritual gatherings.

Within a few weeks after the uprising by the slaves the northern plain was a "smoking ruin, given over to bands of prowling savages (Parry and Sherlock 1966:163)." Saint-Domingue itself became a land of "shifting alliances and bloody confusion (Parry and Sherlock 1966:164)." Although there were no slave revolts in the west, whites and mulattos were at war with one another. In the south the white planters armed their slaves against the mulattos.

Saint-Domingue, which had been transformed into a classical plantation society in less than fifty years, was France's richest colony before the revolution. The whites on Saint-Domingue had been so preoccupied with the claims of the affranchis (or gens de couleur) for equal rights as
citizens that they failed to notice the growing dissatisfaction among the slave population. The slave revolution was made possible by the French planters' unwillingness to give up slavery or to meet the demands of the _affranchis_ for civil equality. The dislike and suspicion with which the whites regarded the _affranchis_ was evident in legislation designed to preserve the social differences between the white and the colored. For instance, in the French islands the colored _affranchis_ were forbidden to wear certain clothes, to enter lucrative professions, to bear arms, and to hold office in the courts and militia. The injured pride of the _affranchis_ proved explosive.

The August, 1791 uprising in the northern plain was preceded by the white planters' refusal to obey the decree passed by the National Assembly in Paris in May of 1791, granting the right to vote to colored persons born of free parents who met all other voting qualifications and by the execution on the wheel of the Paris-educated mulatto leader Ogé.

Some historical analysts maintain that the pressures on the plantation system in Saint-Domingue were too rapid and too intense to be absorbed by the system. Instead, the system became vulnerable to internal attacks. The plantation society of Saint-Domingue was not unique in its establishment of a creole population of intermediate
physical character. What was unique about the society established on Saint-Domingue was the rapidity with which the *affranchis* rose to positions of power and wealth within that society.

Comparable processes occurred everywhere in the region, but they were never so massive or so accelerated. In Saint-Domingue these processes sustained powerful contradictory forces, turned free men of color into important slaveholders and defenders of slavery, and completely undercut the original plantation system ideal (Mintz 1974: 262-263).

Thus the *affranchis*, who aspired to full civil equality with the planter class, precipitated the slave revolt that destroyed the planter class and most of the *affranchis*.

Intervention by European powers did little to change the course of events in Saint-Domingue. The Jacobin party in the French National Assembly sent a revolutionary army that allied with revolted slaves in September of 1792 to sack Cap Francis. Both Britain and Spain began to seek control of Saint-Domingue in 1793. The military skill of Toussaint, the first Haitian negro leader, coupled with the outbreak of the second maroon war in Jamaica in 1795 and the outbreak of yellow fever among the troops, thwarted British attempts. In 1798 when the English withdrew, Toussaint signed the resulting commercial treaty as the independent ruler he was. There followed an activity of
Toussaint's that was to mar Haitian independence: after the defeat of the mulatto faction in the west and south approximately 10,000 mulattos were systematically rounded up, mutilated, and murdered.

Although Toussaint stopped his indiscriminate massacres, respected his contracts, ordered mobs of ex-slaves back to work, and even induced some white emigrees to return to their estates after 1800, order and prosperity never returned to Saint-Domingue. In the same year that he drew up a constitution in which he proclaimed his office was for life (1801), Toussaint invaded Spanish Santo Domingo. In 1802 Napoleon sent an army to the Caribbean under the command of his brother-in-law, General le Clerc, to regain control of Saint-Domingue. Toussaint was arrested and shipped to France. Napoleon subsequently resumed the war in Europe, le Clerc died of a fever, the French army suffered extensive losses, and le Clerc's successor surrendered to the British in Jamaica in 1803. Meanwhile, Dessalines, the "ablest, most savage, and most ruthless of Toussaint's former vassals (Parry and Sherlock 1966:168)," began a campaign of literally exterminating the surviving whites. Dessalines was an African-born slave of a free negro "whose name he assumed and whose property he seized as soon as the insurrection gave him the opportunity of murdering his master (Parry and Sherlock 1966:168)." In 1804 he proclaimed himself an independent ruler,
Emperor of Haiti, choosing as the name of the country the Taino Indian word for mountainous to replace the colonial name Saint-Domingue. After his death in 1806 the country was divided between his rival successors, the negro Christophe and the mulatto Pétion. Christophe's regime in the north, employing a military feudalism based on forced labor, kept the great estates functioning there until 1820. In the south Pétion permitted the subdivision of the land into small peasant plots, a practice which was economically disastrous but subsequently became popular all over Haiti. Sugar production almost ceased. These two men "presaged the whole indigent, disorderly history of independent Haiti (Parry and Sherlock 1966:170)."

An event that occurred during the revolution was to prove symbolic of the state of affairs in Haiti after independence. In 1800 rain fell all through autumn. The irrigation dams of the Artibonite and Cul-de-Sac, weakened by years of neglect, broke. The prosperity of the western and southern regions depended on those irrigation works. The works were never repaired and the area they served became the eroded wilderness it is today.

The Haitian revolution was known for the savagery of its fighting. One-fifth of the white population and 10,000 of the over 200,000 slaves perished (Parry and Sherlock 1966:164). In contrast, slave revolts in the British
colonies were free from excesses of cruelty and bloodshed during the first part of the nineteenth century because of the restraining influence of evangelical missionaries. If slaves of any nationality, however, sensed that slavery's unequal power relationship was vulnerable to change, they responded forcibly. British slaves, like the French on Saint-Domingue, were willing to revolt if they sensed that real change was imminent but temporarily thwarted. Slaves throughout the British West Indies grew more restive after free mulattos vied for full citizenship and were rebuffed; there were slave uprisings in the 1820's in Guiana, Barbados, and Jamaica. In 1830 Jamaican slaves, who believed that their freedom had been granted but was being withheld, revolted in the western part of the island. There was also rioting in England in 1831 when the House of Lords threw out the Reform Bill to which emancipation was linked. Finally in 1833 the Emancipation Act became law in Britain. In 1848 the French legislature abolished slavery.

Although the ex-slaves no longer had to consider rebellion to obtain freedom, they shortly began to express their dissatisfaction with the unequal power relationship among races that persisted after emancipation. Many newly freed Negroes preferred to wrest a simple subsistence from small plots of land, working only occasionally for the little necessary cash. Only the ex-slaves who had no access to
land worked regularly for wages on the estates. As a rule, black women and children no longer worked on the estates after emancipation. In British Guiana and Trinidad free slaves pooled their resources and bought land to form "maroon" or free villages. On Montserrat and other small islands, ex-slaves obtained land by squatting. The following statistics show the growing popularity of small freeholdings in Jamaica: in 1838 there were 2,014 negro freeholders; in 1840, there were 7,848; in 1845, there were 19,000. However, some islands did not have enough available cultivable land for even small freeholdings.

The denial of equal political rights to the new negro citizens resulted in rebellion among negro leaders in Jamaica in 1865. This dissatisfaction was probably conveyed to the populace, for on October 11, 1865, a crowd led by a local Baptist preacher marched to Morant Bay in Jamaica where rioting broke out. Property was destroyed and 21 white and colored persons and seven negro rioters were killed. In retaliation, one suspected leader was hung, 580 men and women were killed, 600 were flogged, and 1,000 homes were destroyed.

The economic depression caused by the collapse of the sugar industry in the latter half of the nineteenth century and the general dissatisfaction of the former slaves gave rise to migration, a phenomenon that has remained an
integral part of West Indian life. Aruba, Curacao, and Central America were destinations for the first West Indian negro emigrees. In 1860 many West Indians migrated to Panâma where a railroad was being constructed; in the 1880's West Indians labored on the French canal project; in the early 1900's construction of the American Panama Canal employed many West Indians. The sugar estates of Cuba and the banana and coffee plantations of Costa Rica and Honduras provided West Indians with employment for decades. Later, West Indians migrated farther north to New York and then spread to other cities of the United States and to Canada. As former colonial masters realized their obligations to the new citizens of their former colonies, black West Indians migrated to Europe. Migration has been so extensive that a substantial portion of the countrymen of many West Indian islands live abroad. In fact, more natives of tiny, poor Anquilla live outside the island than reside within. The remittances that are sent home from abroad and the knowledge of lifestyles of more prosperous, developed regions related by returning migrants have had a dramatic impact on contemporary West Indian life. Stories of the good life abroad have caused West Indians to desire products of modern technological societies.

Another phenomenon that introduced the region to the modern world was West Indian participation in World War I.
Black men who had volunteered for military service expecting to fight beside the allies were disillusioned when they encountered the division existing between black enlisted men and white officers and the limited nature of the assignments given to the British West Indian regiment, which the War Office considered unfit for combat duty. Instead, the West Indian Regiment was often assigned clean-up tasks. In December of 1918 black soldiers of the British West Indian regiment, while stationed at Tarento, Italy, revolted in protest again, and the War Office's racist restrictions. In the ensuing proceedings 50 to 60 men were arrested and charged with mutiny. Eight battalions, some 8,000 men, were disarmed (Elkins 1977:5). Related insurrections followed a year later in British Honduras and Trinidad. The racist treatment received by black West Indian soldiers during World War I made them aware of their commonality of experience as West Indians. The uprisings that resulted from this inequitable treatment also stimulated the development of West Indian nationalism.

After the collapse of the West Indian sugar industry in the latter half of the nineteenth century because of the removal of protective duties on non-Empire sugar, temporary prosperity returned to the region only during World War I. World market prices for tropical products, such as
sugar, cocoa, cotton, and copra, skyrocketed. Although the prosperity engendered by the war was fleeting, the "nascent nationalism, constitutional and administrative reform, and renewed economic initiative" generated during the war were to "work startling changes in the next 30 years (Parry and Sherlock 1966:251)."

The new nationalist fervor was not confined to the Caribbean. Many West Indians realized that their interests lay in a larger movement toward political autonomy for colonials, that of black nationalism. West Indians played a prominent role in the establishment of black organizations that acted as advocates for black peoples around the world. From the last months of the World War I until the end of the Peace Conference in 1919, several of the black organizations attempted to influence the Allied governments to return the captured German colonies in Africa to blacks. The most notable of these organizations were the African Colonial Enterprise (the goal of which was the repatriation of West Indian blacks to Africa), the Universal Negro Improvement Association (founded by Marcus Garvey whose aim was to free Africa from all colonial rule and to establish a powerful West African state), the Association of Universal Loyal Negroes, the International Uplift League, the African Progress Union, the Society of Peoples of African Origin, and the Pan-African Congress (Elkins 1977:16), all of which had similar goals. The first
Pan-African Congress was held in London in 1900, organized by the Trinidadian lawyer H. Sylvester Williams. From that time, West Indians were to play prominent roles in the international Pan-African movement. "Pan Africanism" represented not only an emotional appeal to African roots and the attainment of human dignity via a political program for African independence and union but also similar ideals and goals in the West Indies (Stoetzer 1978:29).

The American William Du Bois and the Jamaican Marcus Garvey were the dominant figures of early Pan-Africanism. While Du Bois, who was proud of his own Dutch and French ancestors, cooperated with American liberals in founding the NAACP, Garvey, a black Jamaican, favored a return to Africa and refused to cooperate with lightskinned negroes. After Garvey's death in 1940, the leadership largely remained in the hands of West Indians, such as George Padmore, C. L. R. James, Peter Milliard, and Otto Makkonen, who were joined by the Africans Azikiwe, Chief Akintole, and Jomo Kenyatta. At the last Pan-African conference in Manchester in 1945 a demand was made for black African autonomy, if not independence. This change was to come in less than fifteen years.

A parallel movement among French-speaking blacks developed in the thirties into what later became known as Negritude, the sum total of black cultural values.
These values made more of an impact on French societies than on English-speaking ones. Both the Pan-African movement and Negritude became linked to the Caribbean, exerting significant political pressure in the region for autonomy and federation (Stoetzer 1978:30).

The Pan-African movement preceded and shaped the nationalist movement through which the gifted young colonials who received scholarships to study in their respective metropolitan countries were to learn of their native lands' histories. The opportunity for West Indian blacks to travel to other regions of the world afforded by migration and military service was expanded with the advent of educational opportunities abroad for the most talented young West Indians. In such universities as the Fabian-founded London School of Economics and by exposure to the European intellectual milieus, these students found individuals and groups "which instilled and encouraged nationalist aspirations which gave the impetus to the incipient colonial revolution (Oxaal 1968:65)." The colleges and universities attended by young colonials became academies of national revolution. In 1933 C. L. R. James published in England The Case For West Indian Self-Government. George Padmore, another West Indian scholar, organized African students into nationalist movements in London. In fact, James wrote a letter of introduction to
Padmore for an African foreign student named Kwame Nkrumah who was enroute to London. Padmore later became the political adviser to the founder of the newly independent state of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah (Oxaal 1968:67). Many West Indian leaders received their training and first exposure to radical nationalism abroad; for example, Eric Williams (Oxford), Cheddie Jagan (U.S.), and Forbes Burnham (U.S.).

The world-wide depression and social upheaval of the 1930's were to leave their marks on the West Indies. West Indian industries were in distress because of the world-wide depression exacerbated by a simultaneous rapid increase in population that caused serious rural under-employment. Moreover, West Indian exposure to the affluent lifestyles of more developed countries had increased greatly since the turn of the century. The dissatisfaction caused by these economic problems culminated in mass demonstrations in the late 1930's that led to the formation of a still viable Caribbean political force, organized labor. The strike by the sugar workers in St. Kitts in 1935 for more wages was followed by the formation of the St. Vincent Workingmen's Association. Like the earlier disturbances in St. Kitts and St. Vincent, the strikes among the coal-heavers in Castries, a port in St. Lucia, were non-violent. Arms, however, were required to quell the bloody disturbances in the Trinidadian oilfields in 1937. The
dissatisfactions of the Trinidadian oilfield workers, who were led by Grenadian immigrant Uriah Butler, triggered labor uprisings throughout the British Caribbean. The last disorders of the decade occurred in 1938 in Guiana and Jamaica.

The leaders who emerged from the period of the riots were capable of formulating the demands of labor, and pressed for political reform as well as for increases in wages. Bradshaw in St. Kitts, Bird in Antigua, Grantley Adams in Barbados, Bustamente and Manley in Jamaica, were foremost among those who made labour an organized and powerful political force. The sustained and widespread nature of the agitation which preceded the disorder points to a growth of political consciousness that makes these risings different in kind from earlier disorders, and that expressed itself in a demand for increased political responsibility (Parry and Sherlock 1966:284).

A royal commission, led by Lord Moyne, was appointed to investigate the social conditions of the British islands after the widespread disturbances. The findings of the commission were withheld during World War II because of the "extreme deprivation they depicted (Oxaal 1968:81)." After the war the Moyne Commission Report was a key document in instigating the decision implemented in Montego Bay in 1947: that the British West Indies "should be set on the road toward Dominion status under a federal form of government (Oxaal 1968:81)." The disturbances of
the 1930's seemed to set the stage for West Indian nation-building, for a "tremendous upsurge of political energy" immediately followed their occurrence, accompanied by an acknowledgement of the regional populace of themselves as West Indians (Springer 1961:3).

The British West Indies had a relatively long experience with representative government upon which they could draw as they set about to form a new nation after World War II. The first representative assembly in the Caribbean was held in Barbados in 1639, just twenty years after Virginia's House of Burgesses convened (Anglin 1961:35). The "Old Representative System," founded in Barbados, subsequently spread to most of the British colonies acquired prior to the American Revolution. Its structure consisted of a representative from London (governor), a council approved by the king, and a locally elected House of Assembly. The assemblies whose power to govern stemmed from their control of the purse strings, often opposed the governor, who had the responsibility to govern. This governmental structure paralleled that of England, composed of the King, House of Lords, and House of Commons. In England, however, full power finally was transferred to the House of Commons, whereas the power structure of the West Indian system remained fixed for nearly two centuries (Parry and Sherlock 1966:208). In fact, the "Old
Representative System" ceased to function only after the abolition of preferential sugar duties that had filled the assembly purses: since the power of the assemblies derived from their control of the purse, their power declined once the purse was empty. Moreover, the "Old Representative System," which had operated in the planters' interest, could not withstand the threat of equal political rights for negroes after emancipation. In 1866, a year after a serious revolt among negro leaders in Jamaica, crown colony government replaced the "Old Representative System" at the request of the Jamaican government. All British islands except Barbados and the Bahamas followed Jamaica's lead, so that by the end of the nineteenth century crown colony rule was general throughout the West Indies. Elected assemblies were replaced by legislative councils composed of crown nominees that were often more representative than their elected counterparts (Anglin 1961:37). This constitutional regression was not accepted indefinitely. In 1884 a limited number of elected officials were restored to the Jamaican legislature. Soon thereafter some measure of representative government was introduced to other islands. Yet, crown colony rule remained basically intact until after World War II when the nascent nationalism of the British West Indies culminated in the formation of the British West Indian Federation.
This federation was preceded by the reintroduction of representative government in the form of ministerial island governments and the introduction of adult universal suffrage and was followed by political independence or associated statehood for the British islands upon the dissolution of the federation.

Just as the West Indian Federation was not the first representative government in the region, it was also not the first attempt at federation in the region. It had been clear to the British Colonial Office for centuries that the most efficient administration in the region would be a regional administration in which all islands participated. Island rivalries and the insistence by island governments that what were considered as special individual relationships with Britain be maintained served to prevent increased centralization of government in the British West Indies. When the administration of the Leeward Islands separated from that of Barbados in 1672, one governor was appointed for the islands with a council on each island. The number of independent, factious, and quarrelsome West Indian assemblies multiplied after 1763, when, by treaty with France, the islands of Grenada, Dominica, and St. Vincent were ceded to Britain. The original plan was to model the government of the ceded islands after that of the Leeward Islands, with one governor for the new island
group. Within twelve years each island had a separate
government. The assemblies in the ceded islands thus suc-
cessfully enlarged their power but never had the prestige
of the assemblies in the older islands, for they repre-
sent smaller communities.

Later in 1871 the Leeward Islands were formed into a
formal federal group, against local opposition. Opposi-
tion to federation prevented the formation of a concurrent
federation among the Windward Islands. In 1876 Barbadians
rioted against proposals to include Barbados in a fede-
ration. In 1921 E. F. Wood reported that the populace's
dissatisfaction with proposals for federation pointed to
the unfeasibility of implementing such a form of govern-
ment. Even as late as 1936 a British commission reported
unfavorably upon the possibility of a closer union between
Trinidad and the Leeward and Windward Islands (Parry and
Sherlock 1966:288). Yet, when the Secretary of State for
the Colonies invited the British West Indian governments
to meet him at Montego Bay in 1947, independence was
offered to the British West Indies as soon as they could
establish a constitutional basis for a federal government
(Springer 1962:41). Events of the 1930's had so changed
attitudes that support for the notion of a federal govern-
ment had grown. Albert Marryshow, like The West Indian,
a regional newspaper he founded and edited, supported
regional nationalism. A resolution was passed in Kingston at the first Caribbean Labor Congress, demanding federation and independence.

Acting upon the recommendations published in the Moyne Commission Report that had investigated the disturbances of the 1930's and reported in detail deplorable conditions found in the region, the British government outlined the procedure for the gradual transition to political independence for the British Caribbean. It also established the Development and Welfare Organization and the University of the West Indies. Hugh Springer, a West Indian scholar and registrar of the University of the West Indies, speculates that this benevolent cooperation on the part of Britain in the West Indian quest for political independence contributed to the failure of the West Indies Federation. Springer maintains that nationalist feelings must be fervent in order to become actualized. Since Britain's cooperation and support made the struggle for independence a non-struggle, the citizens of the new nation were not bound to one another as it is speculated they would have been after a long, shared struggle for political autonomy (Springer 1962).

Two conferences followed the initial one in Montego Bay to formulate the structure for the proposed federal government. The mainland territories of British Guiana
and British Honduras decided not to federate, fearing a flood of immigrants from the islands. At the third conference on federation in London in 1956, an agreement to federate was signed by the island territories. Two years were to elapse before the Federal government came into existence. Lord Hailes was appointed Governor-General of the Federation and took office in the new capital at Port-of-Spain, Trinidad on January 3, 1958. He immediately called for elections to the federal legislature, which was convened in the same year. The election and installation of the federal parliament was marred by Jamaican prime minister Manley's refusal to accept the position of prime minister of the federation after his party, the Federal Labour Party, achieved a small majority in the federal elections. Sir Grantley Adams of Barbados was appointed prime minister of the federation. Although Adams did an admirable job, Manley's refusal to participate whole-heartedly in the federation endeavor was to foreshadow Jamaica's eventual withdrawal from the Federation.

Soon after the Federal legislature convened, it became apparent that the federal government had little power or authority to govern. The islands, reluctant to transfer their power to a central authority, had drafted a federal constitution that limited the powers of the
federal government. The federation had no power to raise taxes; the problems of customs, tariffs, and immigration had not been solved; foreign affairs were still to be conducted through London until independence was achieved. Jamaica opposed a customs union; Trinidad was concerned about an open migration policy. The federal government, therefore, confined its activities to the distribution of grants under the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts, the administration of the West Indian Regiment, and the support of the University College of the West Indies. Such a weak political structure could not overcome the obstacles of making a federation workable. The free movement of goods and peoples was a necessity for the unification of the diverse islands, which were widely separated geographically. Writing on the perspectives of the new nation shortly after the Federation was inaugurated, Springer outlines the physical separation of the territories that must be overcome if the Federation were to function:

The ten federating territories together comprise an area of eight thousand (8000) square miles with an estimated population of three and a quarter million people. But Jamaica in the western Caribbean has more than half the area and half the population. The other nine units are in a long chain a thousand miles to the east. Trinidad dominates this eastern group (Springer 1961:1).
In fact, Jamaica and Trinidad combined had 80 percent of the total land area and 78 percent of the total population of the Federation. In addition, the ten separate economics of the federating territories were at "widely varying stages of development (Springer 1961:2)." Trinidad's oil and asphalt and Jamaica's bauxite are the only valuable minerals known to exist in the Federation. The smaller island economies relied heavily on agricultural production for export. The recent prosperity prior to the Federation was partially due to the maintenance of stable prices for these export crops by commonwealth preference and currency restriction. Protection against non-sterling sources could not be assured after independence. Springer predicted that the tendency for the differences to grow greater between the larger, richer units and the smaller, poorer units would continue until real economic unification was achieved and that the longer such practical measures of unification as a customs union and improved shipping were delayed, the more difficult they would be to achieve (Springer 1961:9).

The problems of separation among the federating territories outlined above were never overcome, partially because of the limited authority given to the federal government. During the Federal negotiations Jamaicans, who had attempted to limit the power of the federal government
to intervene in Jamaican affairs (particularly in the areas of industrial development and all forms of taxation) and to base representation in the federal legislature upon population, now began to perceive that they could achieve political independence on their own. The Jamaican people, who considered themselves Jamaicans before they considered themselves West Indians, were easily convinced by Manley's political opponents that Jamaica was overly burdened by responsibility for the poor smaller islands in the Federation. At the Montego Bay Conference Norman Manley had made the following strong statement for federation:

It is impossible to suppose that every single one of these territories, or perhaps even the largest of us can achieve alone the basic services which it is the whole aim of politics to create and make possible for the common man... (we must) give up any local root of power... so that this larger objective opens our horizons and gives a wider opportunity for all (quoted in Springer 1962:8).

He now succumbed to the more isolationist political forces at home and allowed a referendum to be put before the Jamaican people to decide whether Jamaica would remain in the Federation. On September 19, 1961, a majority of Jamaicans (54 percent) voted that Jamaica should withdraw from the Federation of the West Indies. Four months later the ruling party of Trinidad, in spite of its earlier strong support for the Federation, whose leader Eric
Williams considered separate island governments an eighteenth century anachronism (Springer 1962:10), passed a resolution that Trinidad would not take part in a federation of the Eastern Caribbean. There was a short-lived attempt at federation among the smaller islands in the Eastern Caribbean, but the eventual outcome was that after the Federation of the West Indies came to the end of its legal existence on May 31, 1962 (almost exactly four years after the inauguration of the Federal Parliament), the larger, more economically viable territories of the British Caribbean obtained independence individually and responsibility for the smaller, poorer islands returned to Britain. Jamaica was formally declared an independent state within the British Commonwealth in August 1962. Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, and Guyana also achieved independence in the 1960's. (British Guiana, which became Guyana upon independence, chose not to become a member of the Commonwealth, preferring to establish a "cooperative republic" under the leadership of Forbes Burnham.) The remaining territories of the now defunct West Indies Federation became associated states with Great Britain in 1966. Under this arrangement, the islands are self-governing but Britain is responsible for foreign affairs and defense and provides budgetary support for the islands. As part of the agreement, the associated states
may ask for and be granted unilaterally full independence, following a referendum and six months' notice.

Reflecting on the failure of the Federation of the West Indies, Springer concludes that competing nationalisms and the benevolent cooperation of Britain in the formation of an independent nation contributed to the failure to establish a strong West Indian nation. Because West Indian nationalism gradually emerged with little opposition from Britain, it was rarely pursued with passion.

...(the) nationalist spirit began to show itself in the 20's soon after the return of the West Indian troops from World War I. It had its origins in the reactions of West Indians abroad, whether as students, soldiers, or emigrants, to their common experiences as an unprivileged minority--both the need they felt for having and belonging to some nation of their own and also their recognition of the family likeness they saw in West Indians from islands other than their own (Springer 1962:39).

After several years of regular intercourse among the Commonwealth territories in the Eastern Caribbean, by the 1930's "the idea that the nation was the West Indies had come to be so completely accepted as to be taken for granted (Springer 1962:39)." Springer observes that this West Indian nationalism preceded the formation of the Federation and was never of the "rabid" sort that can create a nation-state. West Indian grievances against
Britain in the twentieth century were not the sort to engender passionate feelings against Britain. Rather, the Crown had come to be regarded as the protector of the weak. This lack of passionate West Indian nationalism was coupled with the unfortunate timing of competing nationalisms in the region.

Jamaican nationalism, which found organized expression in Jamaica at about the time that West Indian nationalism became a force in the Eastern Caribbean, was for a time eclipsed by West Indian nationalism. But it survived and reasserted itself strongly enough to seize the opportunity, fortuitously given to it in the referendum, of defeating its rival...Trinidadian nationalism, on the other hand, was late in developing and came to maturity just in time to beckon Trinidad and Tobago to follow in the footsteps of Jamaica to independence as a separate state (Springer 1962:37).

The constitutional developments in the Commonwealth Caribbean during the last century were accompanied by similar developments among former French, Dutch, and Spanish territories. The revolution of 1848 in France was followed by a grant to the French colonies of direct representation in the National Assembly in Paris with a greatly enlarged franchise. In 1871 local representative government was restored to the French Caribbean. In 1946 the former colonies of Martinique and Guadeloupe became departments of metropolitan France. While the inhabitants of the
French Caribbean have thus enjoyed the rights of full French citizenship and full participation in the metropolitan government for decades, the resulting economic, cultural, and political dependence on France has suppressed the development of autonomy for the French Caribbean so that the local elected general councils do not function as truly representative governments.

Greater political autonomy has developed in the Dutch Caribbean. In 1954 the constitutions of Dutch territories were changed significantly when Surinam and the Netherland Antilles became part of the Tripartite Kingdom of the Netherlands. Under this agreement both Surinam and the Netherland Antilles became fully autonomous in internal affairs. Until the 1969 riots in Willemstad, it was thought that this arrangement could have lasted indefinitely. After 1969 the Tripartite Kingdom adopted the goal of eventual independence for the Dutch Caribbean; in 1976 Surinam obtained independence.

Spain has long ceased to be an important political power in the Caribbean. Two of her former colonies, Santo Domingo (the Dominican Republic) and Cuba, achieved independence in the 19th century; other territories (e.g. Puerto Rico) were transferred to the United States in the aftermath of the Spanish-American War.

The demise of the European powers in the Caribbean after the collapse of the West Indian sugar industry was
accompanied by the growing influence of the United States in the region. In fact, American entry into the war between Spain and her colonies interrupted independence movements in Cuba and Puerto Rico.

After a false start when Cespedes, supported by a junta of Cuban exiles in New York, declared Cuban independence at Yara in 1868 and was shortly crushed by Spain, Jose Marti a journalist-philosopher and one-time member of a Cuban junta in New York, raised the standard of revolt at the right time, 1895. The widespread poverty and hunger in Cuba at that time resulting from the imposition of a duty on raw sugar imported into the U.S.A. made conditions ripe for revolt. Marti was slain, but his followers Gomez and Maceo sought to render Cuba valueless to Spain by the deliberate destruction on crops and property. After the United States entered the war with the sinking of the battleship Maine that was on a courtesy call to Havana in 1897, American military victory was swift and complete. The United States honored her promise not to annex Cuba; Puerto Rico was annexed, but the administration of Cuba was handed to the first elected president Estrada Palma in 1902.

The United States, however, had little respect for the sovereignty of islands in the Caribbean during the first part of the twentieth century, as is evident from
her periodic invasions and occupations of Cuba, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic. Congress passed the Platt Amendment in 1902, authorizing such intervention. In 1904 Theodore Roosevelt enunciated his "corollary" to the Monroe Doctrine, his intention to exercise "where necessary" a degree of supervision over the internal affairs of independent states. In 1905 when Cuban President Palma and his vice-president resigned, the United States filled the power vacuum by ruling Cuba until 1909. When revolt threatened in 1912 and in 1917, the United States landed marines in Cuba. The U.S. military occupations in Haiti from 1915 (when the Haitian president was slain) until 1934 and in the Dominican Republic from 1916 (when President Jiminez resigned rather than agree to greater American control) until 1924 brought a measure of order and financial stability to the region but seriously damaged America's reputation as a respecter of the sovereignty of independent states.

During and after World War II, the United States was careful to respect the sovereignty of Caribbean states until Cuba's defection to the Soviet camp. As long as American economic and military strength were the only forces worthy of mention in the hemisphere, she was content to honor Latin American and Caribbean sovereignty, but "through the internal disorders of a small Caribbean state
(Parry and Sherlock 1966:269)," the Cold War entered the American hemisphere. The United States responded to the Soviet threat in 1961 with the Bay of Pigs invasion and subsequently landed marines in the Dominican Republic when revolt threatened.

In 1933 Batista engineered an uprising against the brutal, repressive dictator Machado and returned elected government to Cuba. He personally ruled from 1934-1944 and then selected respectable presidents. In 1952, when he decided to run as the constitutional candidate for president, however, the election seemed likely to be decided against him. Batista then engineered a military coup, becoming a personal dictator with all the usual trappings--brutal police, corrupt government, and lack of services to the populace. Dr. Fidel Castro attracted followers to his irregular army in the mountains and drove Batista out in 1958. Although Castro called for liberal reform, restoration of the constitution and electoral code, and land reform, once he seized power he governed by propaganda and the police, shooting and imprisoning political opponents. To fuel his revolution, Castro became vehement in his anti-Americanism. The economic consequences of American displeasure--the cessation of sugar exports to the United States, the disappearance of the tourist trade, the shortage of imports--caused the Cuban government to turn to Russia for aid.
Besides bringing the Cold War to the hemisphere, with its competition of suspect favors from the West and Moscow, the Cuban Revolution also introduced modern fervent anti-American nationalism to the Caribbean political scene. Noted West Indian historians Parry and Sherlock observe that the "most striking single factor in the political life of the West Indies in recent times has been the growth of local nationalisms (Parry and Sherlock 1966:270)." Moreover, the nationalism of the 60's and 70's in the West Indies had not only been imbued with an anti-foreign, particularly anti-American, bias but had also come to have racial overtones. The retention of substantial economic power by the white minority in the region (Hawkins 1976:40-41) caused continued civil unrest. Although political independence in and of itself will not solve this "mal-distribution of profits between the haves and the have-nots (Hawkins 1976:56)," the demands of West Indian intellectuals for the ousting of foreign economic control are interwoven with demands for cultural and social independence from outside powers. Since local institutions that will be established with independence are largely visualized as black ones, nationalism has "taken on the mantle of racialism (Hawkins 1976:57)."

Unfortunately this fervent, irrational nationalism that dwells on what West Indians are not has resulted in
trends that West Indian leaders had hoped to avoid. Stating that eight separate, independent governments among the small islands of the defunct West Indies Federation, with a total population of 700,000, would "clearly be absurd," Parry and Sherlock hoped that West Indian leaders could utilize the "emotional and political advantages of nationalism" without "suffering the economic disadvantages and assuming the administrative burdens of national independence (Parry and Sherlock 1966:270)."

However, the psychological benefits of local nationalism should not be overlooked. As long as the social system engendered by the unequal power relationship among races in the Caribbean is allowed to exist, the talents of black West Indians, who comprise the majority population, will be buried beneath the accumulation of generations of prejudice and oppression. Yet, in order for there to be a viable and effective Caribbean political entity, some measure of autonomy, particularly economic autonomy, must be achieved. The small Windward and Leeward Islands have no reasonable hope of asserting their economic demands individually, yet by 1980 all the islands of the defunct Federation achieved or were expected to achieve political independence shortly.

Six years elapsed after the failure of the British West Indies Federation before another attempt of any kind
of union or federation was made by the Commonwealth Caribbean territories. In 1968 the twelve Commonwealth countries established the Caribbean Free Trade Area (CARIFTA), meant to be a step toward a Caribbean Common Market (Stoetzer 1978:32). A little later in the same year Antigua, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, and Montserrat formed the Eastern Caribbean Common Market. After the removal of trade barriers among CARIFTA members, the larger islands were flooding the markets of smaller islands with industrial goods. Since that time the less developed countries (LDC's) have won preferential agreements, allowing them to protect their infant industries (Hawkins 1976:229). In August, 1973 the four then independent CARIFTA members decided to transform CARIFTA into more of a common market and to include non-economic cooperation in the new umbrella institution, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). All CARIFTA members joined CARICOM within a year and were joined by some non-Commonwealth territories in the region. Although enthusiasm for CARICOM has waned since 1976, according to some reports (e.g., Glassner 1978:15), CARICOM and similar regional organizations offer the brightest hope for economic autonomy for the region (Hawkins 1976; Stoetzer 1978:32). Close economic cooperation benefits the region by 1) assuring producers of a large regular
market, protected by common external tariffs, 2) encouraging regional pooling of raw materials, finance, and know-how, and 3) affording governments the opportunity to pool their bargaining powers (Hawkins 1976:224). Furthermore, CARICOM has proven to be an effective bloc in international negotiations at the Lomé Convention in 1974-75, where Commonwealth countries formulated a new relationship with the European Community and in the Inter-American Development Bank when the admittance of Guyana and the Bahamas were being considered (Hawkins 1976:228).

As the developing nations realize that their strength lies in concerted actions, international politics may change significantly, altering the role sovereign states play individually. The mini-states of the Lesser Antilles have been attracted to political independence by its promise of membership in the UN, IMF, OAS, World Bank, and Inter-American Development Bank and of opportunities to negotiate directly for bilateral aid. However, the view expressed by Hawkins (1976:56) seems accurate:

But in reality independence changes practically nothing in their day-to-day relations with the outside world, because their continuing economic ties with their former mother countries and North America severely limit their scope in using their newly acquired political freedom.
The "New International Economic Order" drafted at the UN's sixth special session in April 1974 effectively voices the joint demands of the world's less developed countries: price stability for commodity exports, freer trade with the developed nations, easy credit from international institutions, access to advanced technology, conservation and control of resources, control over multi-national corporations, and better terms on which capital and labor may migrate internationally (Tata 1978:1). The achievement of such extensive goals would necessitate a unified, international effort by the LDC's. Whether such an effort can be mounted and sustained and whether such an effort could significantly change world trading and monetary practices remains to be seen, as does the effect of the success of unified, international efforts upon modern sovereignty. How LDC's, particularly the mini-states of the Caribbean, will respond to international economic and political pressures and how these responses alter the nature of sovereignty are questions that will be discussed in subsequent chapters.
CHAPTER FOUR
Dominica As A Microcosm of the West Indies

Dominica may be seen as a microcosm of the Caribbean area:

Dominica's history is a fascinating history of the Caribbean as a whole; the bitter struggle between the warring European nations, the dark days of slavery, the rise and fall of the sugar industry, the search for substitutes such as citrus crops and bananas, and in recent years the slow climb towards increasing self-respect and a rising standard of living (Cracknell 1973:11).

Like almost all the islands in the Caribbean, Dominica had an extensive colonial experience. As we have seen, the colonial experience in the Caribbean with its almost exclusive production of one crop, sugar cane, that required plantation slavery for its efficient production, resulted in societies based upon an unequal power relationship among the races. Although the Caribbean is not a homogeneous cultural area because of the diverse origins, histories, and languages of its peoples, the Caribbean can be viewed as a "societal area," for the forms of social structure and social organization, engendered by plantation slavery, are similar throughout the region (Mintz 1971:19). Despite the almost total absence of native whites in contemporary times, Dominican society has been a class society based
upon racial differences. Because of the lack of whites on Dominica, mulattos or brown Dominicans have held more prestigious and powerful positions than non-whites on other islands. As noted previously, positions that were once reserved for whites (or browns in the case of Dominica) are now being occupied by persons with darker skins. Another significant social change that Dominica has shared with the Caribbean is the gradual increase of political autonomy from the colonial powers, resulting in the creation of new nation-states.

Yet for all its similarities with other Caribbean islands, Dominica is in many ways unique. It has mountains higher than anywhere in Britain, a rainfall in the interior among the highest in the world, volcanic scenery with a unique Boiling Lake and the finest expanse of virgin rain forest anywhere in the Caribbean . . . (Cracknell 1973:11).

Dominica's ecology certainly differs from that of most of the islands in the Lesser Antilles. It is the most mountainous of all the islands in the region. Geography has had more influence on Dominica's history than it has on other islands. The rugged mountainous interior makes building and maintaining roads through the interior very difficult. Only within the last two decades have the majority of the roads through the interior been completed. Since the interior has been largely inaccessible, the great majority of Dominica's population resides on the
coast. Added to the difficulty of communicating between points in Dominica was the difficulty of communicating between Dominica and other islands in the West Indies. The only good natural harbor in Dominica (Portsmouth) is located a considerable distance from the principal town and capital (Roseau). Dominica was therefore relatively more isolated than other isles in the Caribbean. The mountainous interior also provided refuge for the Caribs and runaway slaves. Raids by these two groups on the coastal population considerably delayed the settling of Dominica by European colonizers.

Dominica's ecology caused her historical development to differ from that of other islands in the region in another significant way: Dominica's rugged terrain was unsuitable for large sugar estates. Therefore, Dominica was not as dependent on this monocrop and its accompanying slavery as other islands. With the early bankruptcy of Dominican coffee and sugar estates, the ex-slaves often became freeholders or tenants of the land. Thus on Dominica a free peasantry was created at a relatively early date.

In his introduction to a short history of Dominica, Lennox Honychurch outlines the effect of Dominica's geography on the history of the island:
The steep mountains, rising above many of the other peaks which make up the chain of the Antilles, brought rain and with it thickly forested slopes and well watered valleys. This environment gave the early Caribs a natural fortress against the European settlers and kept Dominica uncolonised for a longer period than other islands. It prevented the development of very large estates and cut down on the profits of sugar and coffee. The forests gave the Maroons protection from slavery and later provided the freed slaves with land to begin a peasant society. Well into the twentieth century, the terrain made communications difficult and hindered development. Dominica's story is not only of battles between men, but even more so, the battle between man and the island itself. (Honychurch 1975:5).

After the failure of the West Indian sugar industry, regional agriculturalists looked to the development of other sources of income, such as new tropical export crops, manufacturing concerns, or marketing (e.g., tourism) schemes. The history of unsuccessful business ventures in Dominica makes native and foreigner alike reluctant to invest capital there and has resulted in underdevelopment of the island. Although underdevelopment has obviously been accompanied by economic difficulties, it has been accompanied by certain benefits that are less readily visible. The Dominican economy is more self-sufficient than many others in the Caribbean. Until bananas were introduced, Dominica had no real money-making crop to generate funds from which to purchase imports. The independent
peasants produce much of what they need from Dominica's fertile and well-watered valleys. Villages that are not serviced by roads are even more self-sufficient than those enjoying communication with the capital. Moreover, since only the coastal areas were developed until this century, there is an abundance of arable land in Dominica. Dominica has one of the most favorable ratios of people to land among the islands in the Caribbean, which as a whole suffers greatly from over-population.

After the fall of the coffee, sugar, and lime industries, a large proportion of white estate owners left the island. Although this migration left Dominica with a shortage of skilled managers, it also created opportunities for members of other racial groups on the island.

In the British Caribbean white rule was successfully challenged only in Dominica where a group of coloured families known as the "Mulatto Ascendancy" controlled the legislature for two generations... (Lowenthal 1972:63).

Unlike other island societies, Dominican society has had a dual elite--one of whites and one of mulattos--for generations. Perhaps because of the relatively early development of a free peasantry and of economic opportunities for non-whites in Dominica, the island populace has historically been one of the most independent in spirit in the Caribbean.
Dominica's recorded history, like that of the West Indies, begins with European exploration and colonization. As the trade winds directed ships from Europe to Dominica's coast, the isle became a collection point for water and wood. The Spanish soon despaired of occupying Dominica, for the Carib Indians periodically attacked ships and settlements. An estimated 5,000 Caribs resided on Dominica in the first half of the 17th century (Honychurch 1975:24). Only a few hardy French and English settlers made Dominica their home during the 17th century; however, their influence on the Caribs was great enough so that the leeward and windward Caribs often aligned against one another with either the French or the British. Indian Warner, the half-breed son of the English governor of St. Kitts and a Carib slave woman, became chief of the Dominican Caribs. In 1664 he led a group of 600 Caribs with 17 canoes to assist the British in their attack against the French settlement on St. Lucia (Honychurch 1975:21-22). In addition, several raids by the Caribs on French and English settlements in Antigua, Barbados, and Montserrat were launched from Dominica during the 17th century. In 1674 after the Caribs had raided Antigua, Sir William Stapleton, then governor of the Leeward Islands, wanted the Indians driven from the region and requested Colonel Phillip Warner to arrange a
counterattack. Through use of his half-brother, Indian Warner, Colonel Warner tricked the Caribs into allowing his men into their camp where they then slaughtered the Indians. Other encounters with the British and French were costly in Carib lives. By 1700 only 2,000 Caribs were estimated to remain in Dominica (Honychurch 1975:24).

Attempts were made by the British and French to keep Dominica neutral and the Caribs the sole possessors of the island. Treaties were signed with the above provisions by the British and French in 1659, 1686, and 1731. All treaties were broken, however, for Dominica occupied such a strategic position that neither side wanted to relinquish its claim (Cracknell 1973:52, Honychurch 1975:23).

After the Carib population began to dwindle, French lumbermen made fairly permanent settlements on the island, the first of which were initiated in the 1690's (Honychurch 1975:24). The French settlers on Dominica were hardy small holders who grew produce for slaves in the larger French islands. Coffee, cotton, cocoa, and tobacco were the chief crops because the French authorities discouraged the cultivation of sugar on Dominica. Since there were no big sugar plantations there, the number of slaves on Dominica was relatively small.

Large sugar estates were established on Dominica by British settlers only after the island was ceded to the
British by the Treaty of Paris in 1763. The French were allowed to remain on their coffee plantations if they paid rent and took an oath of allegiance to England. Although sugar cultivation was introduced relatively late to Dominica, its development was rapid. Slavery was necessary for efficient sugar production, and the number of Negro slaves imported to Dominica rose accordingly. In 1763 the ratio of whites to slaves was approximately 1:3 (1,713 whites and 5,872 slaves); by 1811 the ratio had increased to 1:16 (1,325 whites and 21,728 slaves) (Cracknell 1973:60, 68).

The period from 1763, the year the island was ceded to the British, to 1815, the year that marked the decline of French military power, was one of economic development. A period of relative prosperity followed until 1865 when Dominica reverted to Crown Colony rule. The Dominican towns of Roseau and Portsmouth were made free ports by the Free Port Act of 1766. Roseau flourished and grew in the century following the passage of the Act. Coffee and sugar were the principal export crops during this time. In 1829 a blight struck the coffee trees on the island. Many French planters switched from cultivating coffee to sugar after the blight. By 1860 the coffee industry was virtually extinct on Dominica. By the time that the West Indian sugar industry lost its monopoly in the British market during the 1840's, sugar had become all-important to the Dominican economy.
The cultivation of sugar was never as profitable on Dominica as it was on other islands in the West Indies. Not only is the rugged mountainous terrain not suitable for the establishment of large estates, but it also makes maintaining and building roads or tracks difficult. Sugar cane is bulky and was transported in heavy carts to the mills where it was packed in large hogsheads and transported from there to the docks. Only a small portion of the island had cart tracks suitable for the transport of sugar cane. Moreover, the development of the sugar industry on Dominica was retarded by external wars and internal strife.

During Dominica's period of economic development, the French and English were engaged in a series of conflicts which directly affected the island. The American War of Independence temporarily halted the profitable trade with the United States. Then in 1778 the French declared war against the British. Before Dominicans had heard of the conflict, on September 7, 1778, Marquis de Boeulle sailed from Martinique to capture Dominica with a fleet of four frigates, ten armed sloops and schooners, and 20 transports, carrying almost 3,000 men (Honychurch 1975:48). During the five years that the French occupied Dominica, restraints were imposed on the British planters and over half the cattle on the island were slaughtered to feed
the French troops. Some of the sugar plantations never recovered from the loss of their draught animals and were later abandoned. Also during the French occupation, two hurricanes struck Dominica and Roseau was destroyed by fire. In February, 1782, the French fleet, enroute to Jamaica, was stopped off the coast of Dominica by the British fleet under the command of Admiral Rodney. The French were defeated in the resulting naval conflict known as the Battle of the Saints. Britain became ruler of the seas. The following year Dominica was restored to Britain by the Treaty of Versailles. The French, wanting to retain the island, offered Tobago, but the British knew

that although Dominica tended to be an economic liability, the island stood between two French strongholds and would be a strategic post for British forces (Honychurch 1975:51).

Although the French never occupied Dominica again, Dominica continued to be affected by external strife. In 1789 revolution broke out in Paris and by 1793 Britain and France were again at war. The new French West Indian commissioner Victor Hughes made several unsuccessful attempts to capture Dominica. After the rise of Napoleon, the French fleet attacked Dominica in 1805. The French burned Roseau and extracted a ransom from the town's
residents, but the British defended the rest of the island. In February, 1810 the British sailed from Prince Rupert Bay in Portsmouth to capture French Guadeloupe.

The profitable trade with the United States was once again terminated by war during 1812. The refusal by the British to remove this restriction on trade caused island bitterness against the British. The conflict between Britain and France finally ended in 1815 with the eclipse of French military power after Waterloo.

The "Maroon Wars" ended on Dominica at approximately the same time the external wars between Britain and France ceased. Runaway slaves or "maroons" built shelters in the mountainous interior of Dominica, growing what food they needed and even raising some cattle. The first maroons were relatively peaceful. After British expansion on the island, however, the maroons became violent, attacking settlements and even "travelers on roads at midday (Honychurch 1975:53)." From 1763 to 1815 Dominican settlers lived in fear of the maroons. During the French occupation of Dominica from 1778 to 1783, the French not only incited the negro slaves to revolt against the British but also armed the maroons while they disarmed the British (Cracknell 1973:67). In 1785 a force of 500 runaway slaves organized an attack; 150 of their number were killed or captured in the raid. When Victor Hughes was appointed French West Indian commissioner, he ordered
French troops to aid the maroons. This policy resulted in violent clashes in 1808 and 1810. In July of 1812 more than 75 slaves from Castle Bruce fled this estate to join the maroons. By 1814 the situation had deteriorated so that residents of Roseau felt threatened. The plantation owners formed a rangers' unit to deal with the maroons. On February 25, 1814, the governor proclaimed that the rangers were not to take any maroon prisoners. The rangers succeeded in capturing the leader of the maroons, who had lived in the woods for over 40 years, and in capturing approximately 500 of his followers. As all the captured were either killed or returned to their owners, 1815 marked the demise of the maroons on Dominica.

After internal and external strife ceased, a period of prosperity followed. This prosperity was short-lived, since it was based on the crumbling institutions of plantation slavery and the West Indian sugar monopoly. Plantation life at this time was fairly rigid. Sharp distinctions were made between owner and slave, black and white. The small number of European settlers lived in fear of revolt of the Negro slaves and therefore punished any servile disobedience severely. Most of the British owners of sugar plantations had managers or attorneys oversee their estates, as the owners preferred to reside in Britain or a more prosperous colony. The owner's manager
or overseer was usually a poor white and, though aloof from the negro slaves, did not reside in a "grand" house. A larger proportion of the French estate owners resided on Dominica and thus most of the few "grand" houses on the island were built by Frenchmen.

Some social mobility accompanied the rigid hierarchical social system. The slaves were allowed to sell at the Sunday market in Roseau surplus produce that they had grown in their home gardens. By carefully saving profits so earned, a slave could eventually buy his own freedom. Since the beginning of Dominica's colonization "people of colour" or mulattos had constituted an important group in Dominican society. As noted earlier, two elite groups had existed, the mainly French mulattos and the British white attorneys and government officials. Before emancipation mulattos could own estates, businesses, and slaves. They could also belong to the local militia but were barred from government service. Then in 1832, one year after the passage of the "Brown Privilege" Bill, three mulattos were elected to the House of Assembly. By 1838 the browns or mulattos constituted a majority. For two generations the "mulatto ascendancy" controlled the Dominican legislature (Honychurch 1975:69).

There was great rejoicing in Dominica upon emancipation in 1833. The transition from slavery to freedom for the bulk of the population was quiet and orderly. Land
was abundant in Dominica, and most of the freed slaves preferred to wrest a livelihood at subsistence level from small-holdings rather than to work on the estates for wages. After the coffee blight destroyed the coffee industry, many of the French planters lacking the capital to change to the cultivation of sugar parcellled their estates into small-holdings. These small-holdings were rented under the metayer system, whereby the landowner provides some fixed capital and the land while the tenant is responsible for the cultivation of the crop. The produce is equally divided. Newly freed slaves also squatted on crown lands in the interior and on the "Queen's Three Chains" around the coast. When much of Dominica's land was being auctioned in 1764, no one was allowed to purchase land three chains (65 yards) inland from the high-water mark. New villages sprang up at these squatters' settlements. These villages were so successful that one of them, Pottersville, on the coast just north of Roseau, is now densely populated. After the collapse of the West Indian sugar industry, owners abandoned some estates, making the ex-slaves on those estates free holders by default. The transition from a plantation economy to a peasant economy that thus began in the early 19th century continued through the 20th century and today Dominica is "predominantly farmed by small peasant farmers (Cracknell 1973:77)."
During the 1850's Dominicans tried to find a replacement for sugar. Dr. J. Imray, a Dominican sugar planter, studied methods of citric acid extraction and successfully introduced Dominican lime products at the International Exhibition in 1862. By 1875 lime estates were yielding higher profits than sugar estates. During the first quarter century of the 20th century Dominica became the largest exporter of limes in the world. During this relatively prosperous period, coconut palms were introduced to the island and the trade of cocoa and tropical fruits increased. Tropical products were in high demand during the period before World War I, and prices soared during the war. In 1922 wither-tip disease and in 1926 redroot disease struck Dominica's lime trees. When Dominica's lime exports fell, cheaper sources for citric acid were found. In addition to falling prices for tropical products during the interwar years, hurricanes struck Dominica in 1926, 1928, and 1930. Plantations went bankrupt. The peasantry resigned itself to subsistence agriculture.

Although emancipation led to no dire consequences, in the following decades one after another of Dominica's stable crops collapsed so that "slavery was replaced by economic servitude (Cracknell 1973:76)." The development that occurred elsewhere in the region during World War II
bypassed Dominica because of the lack of an airstrip on the island. Moreover, Dominica was forced to admit and feed several thousand French refugees during the war. The resulting slaughter of most of the cattle on the island had serious consequences for agriculture and animal husbandry. By the end of World War II Dominica was the poorest and least developed of all the British possessions in the Caribbean. Malnutrition was a problem on the island after World War II. The United States distributed food aid to Dominica during the 1950's.

The Moyne Commission Report, initiated to examine the conditions in the depressed Caribbean region in 1938-39, did not release its damning summation of the "shocking social and economic conditions in the colonies" until after the war. Following is an excerpt about Dominica from the report:

Of all the British West Indian islands, Dominica presents the most striking contrast between the great poverty of a large proportion of the population, particularly in Roseau, the capital, and the beauty and fertility of the land (Honychurch 1975:98).

The report recommended that peasants acquire a larger proportion of the land, improved agricultural methods be taught to farmers, better communication systems (particularly a road across the island) be built, the many rivers
be used for hydroelectricity, and that a program against malaria be developed and implemented.

The fact that Dominica has not been so prosperous as other islands in the West Indies has not kept her people from being proud and independent, particularly in their dealings with the colonial powers. Dominica was the first to disassociate itself from the government of Grenada, founded in 1763, when several islands were ceded to Britain. By 1770 Dominica had become a separate colony with a complete colonial representative system. With the growth of free villages after emancipation came an increasing sense of independence:

In this new society, the feeling of independence was strong; their land provided them with what they needed and they were responsible to no one; perhaps this is part of the reason for our fiery independence. . . (Ronychurch 1975:68).

Shortly after emancipation Dominica's assembly was controlled by the "mulatto ascendancy." Then in 1856 a bill to make Dominica a crown colony was passed; in 1871 Dominica was made a federal colony under the Leeward Island Federation Act. As we shall see, the independent Dominicans were not to be content with either situation.

The freed slaves on Dominica were so strong-willed in their independence that they did not hesitate to fight for
their freedom. In the 1840's, the decade following emancipation, Dominican officials attempted to conduct a census. Suspicious of officials, the newly freed slaves, especially those residing on Crown land, apparently feared that the census takers wanted a thorough account of the population so that newly won privileges could be revoked. The census takers were threatened in several villages and rioting broke out in others. Martial law was proclaimed to quell the rebellion.

Another incident that caused the populace to rebel against those in authority because they felt their independence threatened occurred in the isolated village of La Plaine in 1893. Because this poor village on the windward coast was inaccessible from the capital, little commerce was conducted and a communal system of work had replaced a money economy. When the authorities came to the village to evict from his home a man who was unable to pay taxes, the villagers displayed a show of force. Later the governor arrived at La Plaine in a Royal Navy frigate, carrying nine policemen and 25 armed sailors. When the crowd threw stones as the policemen and sailors advanced to the home of the man who could not pay his taxes, the troops opened fire, killing four men and wounding two women. Islanders were outraged, and the elected members of the Assembly requested an inquiry.
The repeated reports of dissatisfaction and political unrest from Dominica prompted the colonial office to appoint an investigative royal commission. Recommendations of this commission included raising the status of the head of the island government to that of an administrator who could communicate directly with the Secretary of State and making significant changes in taxation policies.

Since the colonial office was willing to give Dominica aid only on the condition that the island were ruled by crown colony government, Dominica had little choice but to follow the recommendations of the colonial office. In 1898 the Crown Colony Bill for Dominica created a legislative council with no elected members. In 1899 an energetic administrator, Hesketh Bell, arrived on the island. In his six years of service the treasury showed a surplus, Portsmouth was connected to Roseau by telephone, a library was built, a coastal steamer for mail service was acquired, and work on constructing roads through the interior was begun. The construction of the Imperial Road from Roseau to the center of the island opened up thousands of acres of Crown lands for cultivation.

Although Bell was a conscientious administrator, most Dominicans continued to be dissatisfied with crown
colony rule. During the first decades of the 20th century, one of the island's leading citizens, a barrister named C. E. A. Rawle, was outspoken in his criticism of the unresponsiveness of crown colony rule and was instrumental in the formation of a movement for constitutional reform. In March, 1919 the Representative Government Association was formed. The association's goal was an elected assembly, responsible to islanders' needs. In 1921 a private citizen named McIntyre obtained 2,300 signatures for a petition urging the restitution of representative elections and the withdrawal of Dominica from the Leeward Islands Federation (Cracknell 1973:170). The British government promised to make constitutional changes and appointed Major Wood, later Lord Halifax, to investigate West Indian political demands. He noted a stronger feeling against the Leeward Islands Federation in Dominica than anywhere else. Dominica alone among the Leeward group was granted a small measure of representative government in 1924, when the six nominated members of the Assembly were replaced with four elected and two nominated members. (The elected members were in the minority, however, for there were six additional official members of the Assembly.)

The worldwide economic instability and accompanying political unrest of the 1930's also affected Dominica.
Reformist groups were formed in the late 1920's and early 1930's on the islands. A legislative strike caused by the walkout of the unofficial members of the Assembly was admired by citizens of other islands for its clarity of will and action. Shortly after Norman Lockhard, owner of the Geneva Estate, was nominated to take the place of one of the walkouts the Geneva House burned.

The thirties were years of political unrest and transformation in the West Indies. The world-wide Depression had hit the sugar estates and factories in the islands. Between 1934 and 1938 workers went on strike in Trinidad, St. Kitts, St. Lucia, British Guiana, and Jamaica. In 1937 blood was shed in Trinidad's oil belt and in Barbados fourteen rioters were killed. Because Dominica lacked factories and was a peasant based society, the colony was spared such disturbance. But in action for constitutional change, Dominica was a leader in the region (Honychurch 1975:91).

Some of the most progressive leaders in the West Indies met in Roseau in October of 1932 for the Dominica Conference in order to consider West Indian federation and self-government. The smooth functioning of the conference, chaired by C. E. A. Rawle, illustrated that West Indians were capable of managing their own affairs. Although historically seeking to disassociate herself from small island groupings, Dominica consistently supported a wider West Indian federation throughout the 20th century. In
1932 Britain formed the Closer Union Committee that advocated a loose grouping of Leeward and Windward island colonies overseen by a governor. In 1936 a new constitution was granted to Dominica, establishing a Legislative Council composed of the administrator, two official members, three nominated members, and five elected members. On January 1, 1940, Dominica separated from the Leeward Islands Federation and joined the more loosely organized Windward group. There was no Windward federal administration; each island managed its own affairs.

Other byproducts of the social and political upheaval of the 1930's were the Colonial Development and Welfare Act passed in 1940 and the formation of workers' unions on Dominica. The Colonial Development and Welfare office, headquartered in Barbados, gave much money and technical assistance for the building of schools, roads, clinics, and an airstrip in Dominica. After the office was dissolved upon federation by the islands, Dominica continued to receive British aid, first through the federation and then through direct budgetary aid. In 1945 the Dominica Trade Union and the Dominica Workers' Association were founded. Later other unions were established on the island; by mid-century unions were a powerful political force on the island.

In 1951 Dominica was granted yet another constitution, clearly establishing universal adult suffrage and
representative government. The new Legislative Council was composed of an administrator, two official members, three nominated members, and eight elected members. In May, 1955 the Dominican Labour Party was founded by socialist Phyllis S. Allfrey and pioneer trade unionist E. C. Loblack. Like other Labour parties in the British West Indies, the Dominica Labour Party appealed to the mass of newly enfranchised voters. Dominica's constitution was altered in 1956 to include a ministerial system of government. Three of the elected members of the House of Assembly were to serve as government ministers. Moreover, property and income qualifications for candidates were removed.

Dominica supported the West Indies Federation. When federal elections were held in 1958 Dominicans elected two Labour Party candidates, Allfrey and E. O. LeBlanc, as their representatives in the new government. Mrs. Allfrey was given the post of Federal Minister of Labour and Social Affairs.

On January 1, 1960, the Windward Island group ceased to exist as an administrative unit. Dominica became administratively independent from other Caribbean islands. At this time the number of elected members in the House of Assembly increased from eight to eleven, the administrator gave up his position as president and member of the
Assembly, and the joint post of Chief Minister and Minister of Finance was created. The non-Labour candidates had banded together to form the Dominican United People's Party and commanded a majority in the House of Assembly in 1960. Therefore, the first Chief Minister was F. A. Baron, leader of the Dominican United People's Party. Anticipating the imminent demise of the federal government, Edward O. LeBlanc returned to Dominica to lead his party to victory in 1961 in local elections and LeBlanc became the second Chief Minister. The new style of government, the success of the banana industry, and increased foreign aid for social projects and road construction made LeBlanc such a popular figure that the Labour Party remained in power through the time that Dominica obtained independence. In 1968 barrister Eugenia Charles formed an opposition party, the Dominican Freedom Party, which first gained a large following in Roseau, the capital. For several years the Labour Party controlled the rural areas while the Freedom Party controlled the town. A feud broke out between the Roseau town council and the Labour government in 1971 when the town council proposed to change the name of St. Mary's Street to Freedom Street. The Labour government attempted to dissolve the Roseau Town Council, but when 3,000 town inhabitants marched to the Court House and seized the speaker's chair, the
the government was forced to abandon this effort. This large group action is indicative of the extent to which Dominican politics has become "a preoccupation of people at large rather than the preserve of a select few (Cracknell 1973:174)." By 1971 there were 23 village councils, each of which had five elected and three nominated members. Grass roots democracy was thus firmly established on the island.

Several factors contributed to the development of politics as an important component of the lives of ordinary people in Dominica. In the 19th century political life was confined to a privileged group; only the educated town dwellers and estate owners participated in politics. Increases in foreign aid resulted in improved education and communications for the general populace. Levels of literacy made political debates more accessible to new readers in rural areas and rising incomes from the banana industry made transitor radios available to almost all farmers in Dominica. All successful contemporary politicians on the island have realized the importance of communicating with this new audience.

The banana industry put money into the hands of peasants in Dominica as never before. Not only did the 1930's bring great social change to the region, they also marked the beginning of the banana industry in Dominica. In 1931 A. C. Shillingford began to ship Dominican bananas
to Liverpool. In 1934 the United Fruit Company agreed to buy all bananas of the Gros Michele variety grown on Dominica if a producers' association that would ensure quality control were established. Thus the Dominica Banana Growers Association, the first in the Windward Islands, was created in the mid-1930's. By 1937 banana exports had risen to 20 percent of total Dominican exports, but World War II halted trade. In 1949 Antilles Products Limited contracted for all the bananas grown on Dominica. That company sold out to Geest Industries Limited in 1954. Geest offered to contract with banana producers' associations of all the Windward Islands. Later the Windward Island Banana Growers Association (WINBAN) developed from this arrangement. The British government protected the new endeavor by preventing bananas from cheaper sources of supply from flooding the British market. Britain levies a substantial tariff on imports of bananas from non-Commonwealth sources and WINBAN now supplies Britain with approximately half of the bananas she consumes. After Geest made long-term contracts with the bananas associations, the four British Windward Islands (Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and Grenada) geared their economies and activities to the greenboats' sailing schedules. By 1960 bananas constituted 68 percent of Dominica's total exports; by 1969 the percentage of total exports had risen to 75 percent (Cracknell 1973:114).
Banana cultivation is suitable for peasant-scale industry. The time required to raise a crop is small, necessary equipment is minimal, and the growing season is year-round. Thus, only a small initial capital expenditure is necessary for a crop that provides year-round income. The Dominica Banana Growers' Association acts as a marketing agent, advisory officer, banker and merchant. The association has also caused minor social revolution by investing small growers with responsibility for marketing and policy decisions. In addition to providing the Dominican peasant with his first steady income, the banana industry fosters internal stability since the majority of the population now has a vital interest in their "stake of the land."

Dominicans have learned that relying on any single crop is dangerous, no matter how profitable or socially beneficial it may be. Recent efforts have been made to increase copra and citrus fruit. Dominicans have also diversified the island's economy by establishing several manufacturing concerns. This course of action proved prudent, for a drought in 1971 and hurricanes in 1970 and 1979 destroyed much of the banana crop. The most catastrophic blow to the Dominican banana industry, however, has been the rise in fuel and fertilizer costs since the oil embargo of 1973. The cut stalks must be transported
to boxing plants and then to the harbor fairly quickly. Flatbed trucks are used for this purpose. The rise in banana prices has not matched the rise in transport and fertilizer costs. If production costs continue to spiral, one wonders how long the Dominican banana industry, which is still the island's leading export earner, can remain viable. The British announcement that she would join the European Economic Community (EEC) caused some worry, but Britain has continued to protect Windward Island trade in bananas. Whether or not there is a limit to what the British housewife will pay for bananas remains to be seen.

The banana industry could not have been successful in Dominica without the completion of a network of roads. Main roads through the interior were necessary for the transport of bananas to Roseau Harbor and also many feeder roads were needed so that more land could be used for cultivation. Under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act, £54,360 was allocated in the 1940's to extend diagonally across the island the Imperial Road. Each time a stretch of road was completed, a flood or landslide impeded progress. Inhabitants noted that such a chain of events was "typical Dominica." In 1958 there came into being the economic imperative for the completion of the trans-insular road: a new temporary airstrip was completed at Melville Hall, in the northeastern part of the
island. Without the trans-insular road, arriving passengers would have to make an intolerable journey to Portsmouth and then proceed via boat to Roseau. Finally, after two centuries of British rule Dominica was spanned by the trans-insular road. During the 1960's and early 1970's funds continued to be available for road construction. Most of the island's road system was completed or improved at that time.

Having experienced a small measure of Western-style prosperity and development, much of Dominica's population hungers for a larger measure. Dominicans that have experienced the world outside their island realize that Dominicans cannot be economically viable in today's world in isolation. Dominica has supported wide-based Caribbean political federations or economic cooperative units. Dominicans, like residents of other small islands in the region, hope that larger regional affiliation will relieve them of their present economic stagnation. Dominica, for example, continues to support the Caribbean Free Trade Area (CARIFTA) although the island loses needed income from customs revenue. Dominica hopes to compensate for this loss by a beneficial affiliation with a related regional institution, the Caribbean Development Bank. Currently Dominica still depends on Britain for budgetary aid and capital aid for new investments. Although some
Dominicans realized that no country can be truly independent if it relies upon budgetary assistance from elsewhere, Dominica has had no choice but to become more politically independent. After the dissolution of the West Indies Federation, four years of conferences, councils, and other similar action, by the "Little Eight" (the British islands in the Eastern Caribbean with the exceptions of Trinidad and Jamaica) failed to reach their goal of forming a federation of their own. The British islands had no choice but to seek further constitutional changes, advancing them toward full internal self-government. Plans for associated statehood for the islands in the British Caribbean were drawn up at the Windward Island Constitutional Conference in London in April, 1966. On March 1, 1967, the new constitutional order went into operation, granting Dominica independence in all matters except defense and external affairs. The executive authority of Dominica lies with the governor, who acts on the advice of the Cabinet composed of the Premier and ministers of government elected by the people. The new constitutional order also contained provisions for Dominica to terminate her association with Britain. The island was free to seek independence at any time with a two-thirds majority of elected members in the House of Assembly and two-thirds majority of votes cast at a
general referendum. When and how Dominica came to end her association with Britain will be discussed in the next chapter.
CHAPTER FIVE

The New Island State: Dependent Upon Independence

As we have seen, the course of economic and political developments in the British West Indies in the twentieth century left Dominica little choice but to prepare for political independence. Economic self-sufficiency would long elude her. Political independence would come to Dominica as the modern United Kingdom, embarrassed by the remnants of her colonial empire, encouraged her dependents to stand on their own. The withdrawal of Britain from the region was accompanied by the failure of regional political federations, doomed by the narrow interests of individual West Indian islands. These trends continued despite the questionable viability of some islands as independent units. Dominica was left to shape her future.

In contrast with the long, often bloody resistance to struggles for independence of other ex-British colonies in previous decades, the British Foreign Office ushered, if not hurried, Dominica into independence in the 1970s. No blood was shed for Dominica's independence. No overwhelming groundswell of public support launched the independence efforts. Indeed, the continuing refusal of the ruling Labour government in Dominica to allow the Dominican voters to decide whether or not the island should seek independence in 1977 suggests that there was
significant opposition to this proposal among islanders. Rather, political independence, like many other aspects of Dominican life, was largely imported. Many of the details of the transition to independence, such as the actual date independence would be granted and whether or not a referendum would be necessary, were decided by the British government. The foreign office of the U. K. had final word about the adequacy of the proposed constitution for the new nation.

Within the guidelines prescribed by previous constitutions, the British West Indies Act, and the foreign office of the U. K. government, the then ruling Dominican Labour Party had wide latitude in choosing what course Dominica would follow upon independence. Much of the conflict associated with the advent of independence stemmed from this fact. Dominicans were concerned over whether their new country would be predominantly socialist or capitalist, whether the new state would align with the developed West, the communist bloc (through ties with Cuba), or the non-aligned third world, and whether newly independent citizens would be expected to abdicate the ownership of private property or to forego ethnic and class differences. Ideology and social class largely determined the concerns of the individual.

Political parties and organizations in Dominica were identified with certain ideologies and social classes.
The Labour Party represented the "little man," the historically disadvantaged Dominican. The leaders of the Labour Party were black and from the lower class. E. O. LeBlanc, the first premier of Dominica, was said to have boasted that although he had not received a secondary education, he had attained the highest position on the island. Premier Patrick R. John, who led the island to independence, emphasized his poor childhood and his former job as a union organizer. Under LeBlanc and John, the Dominican government adopted socialist ideals and policies and became friendly with the Manleys of Jamaica, who pioneered social reform on that island; with Burnham of Guyana, who instituted cooperatives throughout Guyana; and indirectly with Castro of Cuba, who with the help of Soviet aid transformed his island into a classless, socialist society. The policy of the Dominica Labour Party was not consistent, however; John approached French leaders, who were benefactors of the islands directly to the north and south of Dominica (Guadeloupe and Martinique), and the United States government, from whom John hoped to obtain aid for industrial development. Moreover, the socialist ideals did little to disturb the traditional economic organization of Dominica: small, independent farmers continued to conduct the bulk of agricultural activity, and industry, retail businesses, and banking were controlled by capitalists. In contrast to the Labour
Party and its appeal to the common man, was the Freedom Party, the official opposition. Ms. Eugenia Charles, daughter of one of the wealthiest men on the island, led the Freedom Party. Ms. Charles, a practicing barrister who had studied law in England, and many of her followers were perceived by islanders as members of Dominica's mulatto elite. The embracing of capitalist economic policy by the Freedom Party and its support of measures that would favor the island's businessmen further identified it with the "bourgeoisie" in the eyes of Dominicans. Another group contributing significantly to independence debates was composed primarily of students and other young Dominicans in various independence study groups that took form after Premier John announced that Dominica would seek independence in 1977. The independence study groups sought to educate themselves and others in part by means of several new newspapers that began publication in 1977. This group of young people was identified with leftist international student organizations. Although supporting the Labour Party's attempts to secure independence for the island, members of this group feared that the Labour Party leaders, in their attempts to consolidate their power and its accompanying wealth, had become too bourgeois themselves. They demanded that the government be more
consistently socialist in its policies and less friendly to capitalist investors:

...while we extend critical support to the Government in the struggle to win political independence and to beat down colonial puppets, ... we oppose ... undemocratic laws in our new constitution; we oppose the pursuing of all manner of shady foreign investment deals with "mafia types"; we oppose giving policemen extraordinary and arbitrary powers; we oppose political victimization of members of the patriotic strata; and we publicaly criticize the functioning of the Labour Party itself as a opportunistic clique, dangerously lacking in democratic structure and national policy direction (Liberation 1977:5).

Sympathy of the Popular Independence Committee with international leftist concerns was strong enough to convince the young people that the C.I.A. (the Central Intelligence Agency of the United States of America), in its worldwide attempts to destabilize socialist regimes, was influencing local politics.

Another significant achievement of our work was its decisive opposition to covert C.I.A. control over seemingly democratic institutions like some trade union leadership. ... Similar covert influence over verbal leftists whose main means of organisation lies upon dishing out large amounts of CIA funds to corrupt the cooperative movement and further divide the working class.
Events of 1976 indicated that as had occurred in Guyana with Jagan, those elements were conspiring to form an unholy alliance with the party of the big bourgeoisie (with CIA blood money) to stall the winning of independence in November of this year and to put power into the hands of the reactionary Freedom Party (Liberation 1977:2).

The differing ideologies and classes of people served by these political organizations resulted in their having different concerns upon the advent of independence. Borrowing rhetoric from independence struggles of other nations, Premier Patrick John, the leader of the Labour Party, determinedly tried to lead Dominica to political independence as soon as possible. John identified himself with movements that benefited the oppressed and disadvantaged, particularly the poor and black. This posture was advantageous in gaining international support for Dominican independence. This stance, however, alienated the professional and business communities in Dominica, who feared that a ruling government, intent on immediately reforming Dominican society, would destroy what little economic structure existed on the island. This professionally skilled segment of the Dominican populace felt that the leaders of the Labour Party, whom they viewed as largely uneducated and therefore unfit to serve in the highest positions on the island, were all too quick to
confiscate what little wealth existed on the island. Some even felt that the Labour Party was intent on redistributing wealth so that members of the party themselves would benefit. The increased autonomy conferred upon the island government by independence would allow the Labour Party to adopt extraordinary measures whereby they could consolidate their power. Conceivably their power would be sufficient to create a new privileged class, such as Gairy's supporters had created in Grenada when that island obtained independence. Many of the concerns of the professional and business class were also those of the Freedom Party. Convinced that individual liberty must be preserved, the Freedom Party kept a watchful eye on the Labour Party. The Freedom Party did not intend that Patrick John should establish a dictatorship in the name of revolutionary progress as Eric Gairy had done on Grenada. During the independence debates the Freedom Party sought to ensure that democratic safeguards were included in the constitution and that procedures prescribed by law were followed. While the Freedom Party, with its appeal to individual liberty and its ties to the developed West, hoped that the island's basic economic structure would be preserved after independence, the young people in many of the independence study groups, such as the Popular Independence Committee, hoped that independence would help
restructure Dominican society. These young leftists hoped for a more complete "revolution," including the abolition of private ownership of businesses and industries and thereby the abolition of the middle-class, the very thing Freedom Party members feared. Independence was achieved despite the disparate interests of these political groups. A discussion follows, of the events, and the responses of different groups to these events, that led to Dominican political independence.

On Sunday, August 29, 1976, Dominica's premier, Patrick R. John, delivered his "Salisbury Declaration" on the occasion of the twenty-first annual convention of the Dominica Labour Party at Salisbury. In this address the Premier declared that his Labour government would strive to obtain full political independence for Dominica by November 3, 1977. Although the Labour Party had made political independence part of its "Manifesto" during the 1975 general elections and the Premier had hinted at his plans for independence to journalists in Guyana in March, 1976, the Salisbury Declaration was the first statement on independence to the Dominican citizenry that contained specific plans and a timetable for achieving full political independence. After stating how detrimental the effects of hundreds of years of colonial rule have been to Dominica, John declared at Salisbury that the time had
come for the "final emergence of our state from foreign rule (John 1976:3)." Before detailing his plans for independence, the Premier reviewed for his countrymen the then current status of their relationship with the United Kingdom:

Comrades, on 27th February, 1967, and thereafter, in the case of some other islands, the island of Dominica with the islands of Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Antigua and St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla assumed the status of association with the United Kingdom in accordance with provisions of West Indies Act 1967 (C.4.).

The status of association with the United Kingdom was a new concept and was never expected to be the final solution in the constitutional development of Dominica and the other States. In fact the new status was meant to last a very short time, three to four years at most. It was merely one other step--the last one before the attainment of full independence (John 1976:4).

Following his argument that associated statehood was meant to be a temporary arrangement, Premier John outlined the three ways in which the British West Indies could obtain independence, as stipulated in this same West Indies Act of 1967:

1. By a Bill introduced in the House of Assembly under Section 10 of the West Indies Act, 1967 to terminate the Association with Britain but subject to a referendum with a two-thirds majority in the House on passage of the Bill; or
2. The said Bill without a referendum provided that before the introduction of the Bill, arrangements have been made between the Government of the State and the government of one independent Caribbean Commonwealth country to enter into a "federation or union or some other form of association with that territory and that the resulting Government will be responsible for defence and external affairs," or

3. Her Majesty's Government by Section 10(2) of the West Indies Act, 1967 terminate the status of Association of the State with the U.K. by Order in Council thereby making the State "independent" (John 1976:45).

Placing the main responsibility of leading her former colonies to full independence squarely on the shoulders of the U.K., John looked to the international and regional communities of nations for support of prompt decolonization. After citing the December 14, 1960, declaration adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, which proclaimed the "necessity of bringing to a speedy and unconditional end to colonialism in all its forms and manifestation," (John 1976:5) the Premier then explained at length the proceedings of the second meeting in December, 1975, of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community. At this meeting the desire of the associated states of the West Indies to terminate their status of association with the U.K. received strong
support. The government representatives attending the conference urged:

Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to give effect to these wishes and grant, within the shortest possible time, independence to those Associated States in accordance with Section 10(2) of the West Indies Act, 1967 and subject only to the right of the respective Governments to fix the date for the independence in accordance with their own programme (John 1976:7)."

Only after this careful preamble did John present his party's proposal to ask the United Kingdom to grant Dominica independence by a unilateral declaration. John did not volunteer to put the issue before the people in the form of a referendum. Rather, the Premier declared that he had the authority to initiate such a request because the Labour Party won the majority of the seats in the House of Assembly in the 1975 general elections when its "manifesto" included statements about independence. John, however, confuses the issue by quoting Section 25 of his part's "Manifesto" which, although it does seem to advocate Dominica's obtaining independence, makes no reference to Dominica's seeking independence on her own. The Labour Party promised to

Work to secure through the people national independence through unity with the Associated States and/or
other dependent or independent coun-
tries of the Caribbean. . . .(and to)
maintain the policy that it sees Carib-
bean Unity not as an end but as a means
to independent development (John 1976: 8-9).

Hoping to gain popular support for his proposal that
Britain grant Dominica independence by a unilateral
declaration the following year, John stated emphatically
that colonization has no place in the modern world and
Dominica's potential for development would be enhanced by
independence. An important by-product of independence
would be Dominica's gaining access to international aid
programs that could foster development.

Throughout the world today, the move-
ment for independence is on. The
modern thrust started with the freeing
of the Indian sub-continent in 1947,
two years after the Second World War;
the pace quickened in Africa and the
Caribbean in the 60's, for since the
breaking up of the West Indies Federa-
tion, the urge for independence for
Caribbean territories has been of vital
significance--Jamaica, Trinidad and
Tobago, Barbados, Guyana, Bahamas, and
most recently Grenada have all become
independent.

Secondly, we seek independence not only
to keep step with history in general,
but with our own history. Since in the
1930's we have embarked on a road of
political and constitutional advance-
ment; and at present the only object
which stands in our way of our legal
independence, is the fact, that the
British Government is responsible for
defence and external affairs. . . .
Thirdly, as an independent Dominica, we shall have a direct voice and representation in matters of negotiating prices, protection, incentives, etc. for our bananas, citrus, etc., in the European Community, GATT and other world trading institutions. We shall have access to the World Bank, IMF and other world monetary institutions. We shall now have the final decision on the type of projects suitable for the development of the State.

Fourthly, we should move to independence because we have NO OPTION. Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom has made it abundantly clear that it is their policy to free themselves of their colonies and the embarrassment that goes with them (John 1976:7-8).

Observing that 200 years of British rule have resulted in an unbalanced economy and widespread unemployment, John maintained that Dominicans had nothing to lose with independence. Yet, John realized that the island was still heavily dependent on Britain for financial support. Part of the Salisbury Declaration, therefore, outlined Britain's pledge to continue development aid to Dominica and Dominica's access to other forms of bilateral aid if the island becomes independent. In his final economic argument for independence, John announced that his government would ask reparation from Britain for the historic exploitation of the island by the British.

Anticipating John's proposal to obtain unilateral independence for Dominica, the opposition Freedom Party
prepared a statement about the party's stand on independence that was circulated as early as June, 1976:

Independence is a fact of life in the Caribbean today. Unfortunately a Caribbean Union is still decades away and therefore we must face the fact of some other status in the very near future.

But independence is not a matter only for Cabinet, nor is it a matter for the Labour Party alone. It is a matter for the PEOPLE of the country as a whole. All must be involved in the decision. Before such a decision can be made it is necessary to have a full and detailed statement on the advantages and disadvantages to Dominica of independence or regional integration or affiliation of other metropolitan countries.

After there is a full disclosure of all the facts and figures, a referendum should be held so that the people can choose for their future. Dominicans do not know where they stand or where they are going because government refuses to inform them or give weight to the opinion of the majority of Dominicans who rejected them at the polls (Dominica Freedom Party 1977 A:1).

Throughout the course of the independence debates the opposition Freedom Party did not waver in their criticism of what they considered to be the Labour Party's railroading in independence for Dominica. The Freedom Party demanded repeatedly that a referendum on independence be placed before the people. The Freedom Party felt that only passage by a two-thirds majority of such a referendum would indicate a clear mandate for independence. Perhaps many
citizens of the island shared the Freedom Party's concern that Dominica was not prepared for independence and could not afford the trappings of sovereignty, such as representation abroad. One cannot help but wonder if the opposition was correct in discerning a fairly high level of opposition to Dominica's obtaining independence in a short period of time, for the ruling Labour government was steadfast in its refusal to place the issue before the people in the form of a referendum.

The opposition also feared that a political party that ushered the island into independence without the clear consent of the people would deny the people a real voice in determining how and under what terms independence would be achieved. The Premier had his party draft a constitution and then distribute copies to villagers and town dwellers. The Premier asked citizens to read the draft and send suggestions and comments to his office by February, 1977. Since the draft was available for distribution only in December of 1976 and was not widely distributed throughout the island, most citizens felt that they did not have adequate time to prepare their comments. In fact, the leader of the opposition complained that she had received the draft of the constitution only four days before the Labour government presented it in the House of Assembly on Thursday, December 16. The leader of the
opposition felt that she had insufficient time to review such an important document before she was compelled to comment upon it. As the government began to revise the draft, the situation became more confused. Study groups wondered whether the version of the draft in their possession was the most current. In the village where I lived near the Carib reserve, the head of the village council received one copy of the draft in December. Village meetings were then held for several evenings where portions of the constitutional draft were read and discussed.

The Freedom Party organized a systematic review of the proposed constitution. Delegates representing the 21 electoral districts met on February 6, 1977. The fact that the Freedom Party had to exert some effort to see that 21 copies of the draft constitution were distributed three weeks before the conference indicates that circulation of the draft was not widespread. By suggesting relatively minor changes in the draft, the Freedom Party gave credence to the Labour government's claim that the proposed constitution differed little from Dominica's constitution of 1967. The changes advocated by the Freedom Party representatives at the meeting of February 6, 1977, were: provisions for dual citizenship, abolition of the governor-general, creation of the office of a non-partisan
president, reduction in the number of electoral constituencies, lowering of the qualifying age for service in Parliament, rejection of the establishment of a Senate, curtailment of executive powers, creation of a Director of Public Prosecutions, and change in the membership of the public service and police commissions.

While the Freedom Party seemed to indicate that it would also use the existing constitution (1967) as the basis for a new government, the opposition had serious quarrels with the independence proposals of the Labour government. These focused on the timing of independence, the manner in which it was to be obtained (i.e., without a referendum), the lack of consultation with the opposition and other concerned groups on the island in the drafting of the constitution. In addition, the review of the draft of the constitution by the public seemed only a formality, for not only was the time allowed to citizens to submit their suggestions short, but the time in which the government would have to incorporate these suggestions into their proposals if they were to meet the deadlines given them by the British government was also short. Most important, however, were the concerns the Freedom Party had about the protection that a democratic constitution could give the citizenry if the ruling government did not respect that document. Charging that the Labour government had repeatedly transgressed the existing constitution
of 1967, the Freedom Party demanded that rights of citizens must be protected in the new constitution by making the government apply to the courts for approval for action that would infringe on citizen rights, such as the action the Labour government took in banning all "subversive" literature in 1968. The Freedom Party also demanded that the constitution include a guarantee for the right to dissent, as the current government did not understand that such was included in the freedom of expression.

Proceedings of the Freedom Party conference were published in a pamphlet entitled "The Freedom Report: We the people. . ." that was circulated on the island. The more sensational aspects of the proceedings caught the attention of the regional press, resulting in such headlines as "Britain accused on conniving on Dominica freedom (Trinidad Guardian, Wednesday February 9, 1977)," and "U. K. accused of conniving with Dominica Gov't (The Advocate News, Bridgetown, Barbados, February 9, 1977)."

The Labour government evidently felt that the widespread response to the Freedom Party's convention on the draft constitution merited a public reply, for the premier delivered an address on the "Constitutional Proposals for Independence In Reply to Statements by the Honourable M. E. Charles" in the same month. In this address the
Premier reiterated his position that independence must be obtained because colonialism has no place in the modern world and because independence will economically benefit Dominica. The Premier also announced in this address that since the independence discussions in London had been postponed, he was extending the deadline for criticisms and suggestions for the draft of the constitution until March 14. The Premier also proposed to hold a constitutional convention during the middle of March to consult with all concerned parties before his delegation would depart for London.

Regional newspapers were certainly not the only ones to report on Dominican independence. The largest and most widely-read Dominican paper expressed the following sentiments about independence in an oft-quoted editorial:

What is particularly disturbing is the fight developing between the Government and the opposition on this matter, and which needs national consensus for it to have validity. We do not subscribe to the idea of a referendum. In blunt terms, the people of Dominica cannot be asked at this time in their history, whether they want to take full charge of their affairs or not, however ill-prepared they may be for it. It is a responsibility they cannot escape. But that having been said the people for whom the Constitution is being prepared who will be subject to and governed by it must be fully satisfied as to the terms and conditions under which they wish to become independent. Put another way, no
Papers with smaller circulations were more partisan. Although _The Star_ was not the official organ of the Freedom Party, it supported Freedom Party policies. _The Educator_ was the official organ of the Labour Party and as such promulgated Labour policy. As we have already noted, the publications of the popular independence study groups, such as _Liberation_ and _Dread_, espousing revolutionary ideology, did not appear until the spring of 1977.

When Premier John first proposed that Dominica obtain political independence, many of the small peasant farmers, who are by far the largest occupational group on the island, thought this goal foolish. Assuming that the advent of independence would bring a severing of ties with their revered "mother country," Dominican peasants wondered how Dominica alone would be able to fulfill her people's needs. The fertile soil and abundant water in Dominica make growing foodstuffs relatively easy. The heavily forested interior of the island provides wood for the simple wooden houses that are standard in the villages. Self-sufficiency is a real possibility for Dominican villages. Indeed, during the times when Dominica's economy has foundered,
Dominican peasants have been virtually self-sufficient. When the last of the steamers discontinued circumnavigating the island, the villages in the southeastern part of the island, who to this day do not have adequate overland communications with Roseau, became more isolated and self-sufficient. As commerce with the capital decreased, however, so did the relative prosperity of the villages in the southeast.

Now that the banana trade has brought more cash than ever before to the Dominican countryside, imported household goods that were once considered luxuries have become necessities. The villagers realize that the rise in their standard of living depends on access to export markets. Rural Dominicans, while they may not realize that the U. K. is supporting the Windward Islands banana industry by providing a protected market, believe that they are economically dependent on the "mother country." Loath to surrender their new prosperity, rural Dominicans wondered if an independent Dominica could maintain vital economic links with the outside world. Equating independence with self-sufficiency, Dominican peasants questioned the wisdom of Dominica's striving for political independence. Life to them seemed better with close ties to the "mother country." Skeptical of Dominica's ability to produce many of the manufactured goods now used in most Dominican
households, many felt that Dominica could not become independent until she had factories of her own.

Rural Dominicans were not alone in their reservations about coming independence. In an editorial published January 8, 1977, the New Chronicle stated:

... even the bravest among us believe we are in for trying times and no less than a major national effort is required to meet the challenges ahead. If this country is going to have a better than average chance of meeting its commitments there must be nothing short of a radical transformation of values and thinking at all levels. Unless this radical thinking becomes acceptable Independence will be a national nightmare at worst; at best it can only mean a new flag, and a new anthem (p. 4).

Many Dominicans were also concerned about the manner in which the new constitution for an independent Dominica was being drafted. Having learned that in a democratic society citizens participate in constitutional processes, educated Dominicans were puzzled by the Labour Party's anxiousness to adopt a constitution that had been drafted by a few party members. This action was made more puzzling because the Labour Party's avowed anti-colonial stance was compromised by the party's acquiescence to a timetable imposed by the colonial power.

... The very introduction to the Constitution says, "We the People..." A
question Government will have to ask itself is whether what is happening is truly representative of the feelings of We the People if a pre-arranged timetable makes it expedient for Government to have all comments in by the end of February so that Government can go to London (New Chronicle February 5, 1977:4).

In spite of the protests of the opposition, the Labour government brought the issue of obtaining political independence before the House of Assembly on March 11, 1977, without first referring the matter to the populace by means of a general referendum. With Labour Party representatives maintaining that if Dominica cannot support independence, independence will support Dominica, the measure passed overwhelmingly (18-3; 2 absent). Opposition members were clearly uncomfortable about voting against independence. Their main quarrel had been with the time and manner in which independence was to be obtained. In fact, two opposition members voted for independence.

With this mandate to seek independence from the House of Assembly, the Dominican delegation journeyed to London to meet with representatives from the British foreign and commonwealth office at Marlborough House. The British delegation stated that the British government did not intend to place any obstacles in the path of the West
Indian islands in their attempts to obtain independence and rejected the Dominican Freedom Party's proposal that the matter be put before the people in a referendum. The plea for granting independence in 1977, however, was denied. The U. K. delegation insisted that the Dominican government and opposition come to an agreement on the basic constitutional forms for an independent Dominican government. Whereas the opposition proposed that Dominica become a republic with an elected, non-partisan president who would work closely with the House of Assembly, the Labour government proposed that the basic form of government remain a monarchy with a governor-general.

Returning in May from the independence talk in London, the premier and his party addressed the crowd greeting them in the Botanical Gardens. The premier surprised his constituents and even his fellow Labour Party members by announcing his party's acceptance of the Freedom Party proposal of a republican form of government. Premier John announced that Dominica would be a republic in the Commonwealth with the queen of England as its sovereign head. If the government and opposition could not jointly nominate a President for the new republic, then the House of Assembly would elect a President by a simple majority.

The Labour government submitted to the people for review a redraft of the proposed constitution reflecting
the above changes. Distribution of the original draft of the constitution had been slow and spotty and distribution of the redraft was even less efficient and thorough. Within a few months there were later redrafts and distribution of them became more problematic.

In a series of public meetings, Freedom Party representatives informed concerned citizens that the U. K. government was not obligated to accept any particular constitution drafted by the Dominican government. Moreover, constitutional guarantees for citizen rights would be inconsequential, Freedom Party spokesmen maintained, if upon gaining independence the Labour government, which controlled a clear majority in the House of Assembly, amended the Constitution through legislation. Ms. Charles, leader of the opposition, advocated new elections before independence and a moratorium on constitutional amendments after independence. In her opening speech to the British delegation at Marlborough House in London on May 16, 1977, Ms. Charles noted that a sound constitution in and of itself is no guarantee for adequate government:

A new constitution will not bring change unless the hearts of the leaders undergo a change, and the enmity they carry for certain sections of the population, without whom they cannot hope to reach any real level of development, is eradicated (Dominica Freedom Party 1977B:1).
The New Chronicle, the leading island newspaper that had supported the Premier in his attempts to achieve political independence, expressed disapproval of his priorities as stated upon his party's return from the first round of independence talks in London. Describing in a front-page editorial how the government had directed all the schools in Roseau to assemble in the Botanical Gardens to greet the Premier, the New Chronicle editorial writer believed that this emphasis on public ceremony indicated the government's preference for "show rather than concrete development." Concerned with the high-handed tone of government pronouncements, the writer further observed:

Many of the so-called third world countries which have gained their independence in the past two decades have done so at some great cost in terms of human suffering...Internal dissensions and hostilities, and on occasion outright civil war, external interference and aggression, suspension of fundamental rights—all of these seem to be the common denominators of the "struggle" for Independence (New Chronicle May 21, 1977:1).

In another editorial in this same edition of the New Chronicle a second widespread concern about the men leading the island into independence was expressed:
... . There appears to be a whole culture of corruption developing in this country and this cannot be a proper atmosphere in which to proceed to Independence. The Premier has a responsibility to straighten out the crooked paths. He must restore confidence in the future of the country. There are many who doubt his ability to do this but so long as he is at the helm he must recognize it as his principal duty to provide moral leadership especially as we approach the threshold to Independence (New Chronicle May 21, 1977:4).

This disillusionment with the ruling Labour Party in Dominica grew over the summer of 1977 when it was revealed that one of the Premier's top advisors, Attorney General Leo Austin, had not properly registered a land transfer deal to avoid paying taxes. This disillusionment, coupled with the government's failure to pay civil servants back pay, resulted in the call by the Civil Servants Association (CSA) for a general strike on the night of August 31, 1977. The 47-day strike crippled the island's commerce. Citizens felt that a more sympathetic government might have prevented the strike or ended it earlier. The perceived mismanagement by the government of the CSA strike prompted the New Chronicle editorial writers to join the Freedom Party in calling for new elections before independence.
The experience of this country during the 47 days of the Civil Service strike suggests strongly that all is not well with our leadership and that some serious decisions must be faced before the country embarks upon the course to Independence.

... The strike proved that the people's desire for democratic government is still strong. ... Notwithstanding our commitment to proceed with Independence, government owes it to the public to allow us to decide whether we want THEM, our present leadership, to take the country into this new experience (New Chronicle October 22, 1977:4).

Despite the growing dissension, the Premier introduced a resolution in the House of Assembly in October of 1977 dealing with constitutional arrangements for an independent Dominica. The resolution proposed that the Independence Constitution should provide for a President and that its provisions should be capable of amendment by a simple majority of the House of Assembly. In the ensuing debate the Labour Party proposed that the president be nominated and that the House of Assembly be composed of 21 elected members and nine nominated members to be called Senators. The opposition proposed that the president be elected by the general electorate and that the House of Assembly be composed of 13 elected members, selected by proportional representation.

In November, 1977 the leader of the opposition moved a vote of no confidence in the ruling government.
Although the motion eventually failed, the ensuing lengthy debate revealed a growing disenchantment with the Labour government among the members of the House of Assembly. In early December, 1977 the finance minister declared that the government did not have enough money on hand to honor its obligations. Postal money orders and government payroll checks were not honored. However, emergency funds were obtained so that the government could again cash checks and drafts by December 23, 1977.

Dismissing two of his ablest ministers in January of 1978, John cited international concern about the "communist threat" within his government. Many citizens, worried about the road the government's avowed socialist ideals would lead them to take after independence, welcomed a clear-cut denunciation of ties with the Communist block. Many others felt that the Premier had contributed more to the fears of a communist takeover than his ministers had. It had been the Premier who, after his trip to Guyana, had become attached to the Guyanese model of socialism and who had adopted the Guyanese uniform and the Guyanese custom of addressing countrymen as "comrades." It had been the Premier who had sent his wife with a friendship delegation to Cuba. It was the Premier's spokesmen who had spoken of possible benefits of a future alliance with Cuba. The New Chronicle speculated that
the Premier's new concern about a "communist threat" was a convenient excuse to rid himself of two ministers, Parillon and Douglas, who "displayed a greater level of competence and savoir faire than any of the other ministers, including John (New Chronicle January 28, 1978:1)."
Ferdinand Parillon, who was dismissed from his post of Minister of Home Affairs, had initiated the police investigation of the land transfer by Attorney General Austin and had openly defied the Premier during the CSA strike. Mike Douglas, who was dismissed from the post of Minister of Communications, Works, and Hydraulics, had succeeded in obtaining several million dollars for road construction from foreign aid offices.

In light of these new developments, there was an even stronger call for new elections before independence.

Dominicans from all walks of life have now come to accept the fact that this country will and must be independent in the near future. . . . one can safely conclude that the majority of Dominicans, including the opposition, are in favour with breaking the last vestiges of colonial rule.

. . . . there is a need for a general election before Independence so that the people in this country can in a democratic way decide to place their confidence in a body of men who have the necessary expertise, dedication and respect of the masses to manage this country in a decisive manner during the early days of independence.
The fact is that even Labour Party supporters, while conceding the inevitability of Independence, voice some very serious reservations with respect to the leadership and direction of the ruling Labour Party and its capacity to discharge the enormous responsibility which is expected of a government in the challenging early years of independence. Dominicans, party loyalty aside, still remember government's bad management of the October crisis involving a 47 day old strike. Government's record of financial management is poor—some might even say scandalous....It will be recalled that though the election manifesto of the Labour Party contained the issue of Independence,--as the last item--that issue was not sufficiently emphasized in the course of the campaign to give rise to the notion that the present party has the mandate of the people to move into independence. The dismissal of two ministers--Mike Douglas and Ferdinand Parillon--has seriously depleted the man-power of the Labour Party. . . .On these grounds the people need to exercise their democratic right of choosing their proper leaders as we are about to enter the important threshold to independence (New Chronicle February 18, 1978:4).

During the spring of 1978 the beleaguered Labour Party proposed few new policies. Citizens wondered if any progress was being made toward independence. Premier John made a trip abroad in May, seeking foreign assistance for the proposed new state. In July, 1978 the Premier introduced the final resolution for independence in the House of Assembly. This resolution, formally
requesting the U. K. government to grant independence to Dominica on November 3, 1978, was adopted by a vote of 16 to 8. The premier also announced that his government had received a cable from the Under Secretary of State in the London Foreign and Commonwealth Office, informing Dominica that the British government would "place an Order of Council seeking to grant independence to Dominica under section 10(2) of the West Indies Act by the third of November (New Chronicle July 15, 1978:1)." Speculation held that the two governments orchestrated events in order to issue simultaneous resolutions from their respective parliaments.

Although the Labour Party encountered no real difficulty in passing this final resolution through the House of Assembly, the opposition during this debate differed from previous independence debates by including two former Labour Party ministers. Both Parillon and Douglas continued their support for independence, but they expressed concern about the draft of the constitution that was also adopted during this session of the House of Assembly. Parillon's request that the constitution be read article by article was denied. Douglas declared that the final draft of the constitution presented before the House differed from the one presented at the constitutional conference in London. According to Douglas, one provision
included in the draft of the constitution presented to the House would make the possibility of free elections improbable since it gave the Prime Minister virtual control of the Electoral Commission.

Alerted by Douglas' charge that future free elections would be in jeopardy, concerned citizens mobilized to oppose Section 56 of the final draft of the constitution. All the political leaders in Roseau except the staunchest Labour Party supporters formed an ad hoc alliance with a first objective of deleting or amending Section 56. Alliance members rallied in large numbers in Roseau a few days after the passage of the final independence resolution and sent messages voicing their concern to friends and officials in the U. K. These citizens opposed to Section 56 charged that it would allow the Labour Party to establish a virtual one-party government, since it established the Electoral Commission as consisting of a chairman, appointed by the President, and two members, appointed by the President after consultation with the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition.

Lacking a ready answer to the accusations that they were trying to control future elections, Labour Party leaders quickly acquiesced to the recommendation of the U. K. government that Section 56 of the Dominican Independence Constitution be amended. By the end of July the
proposed constitution had been amended so that the Electoral Commission would have five members: one appointed by the President at his own discretion, two appointed by the President after consulting with the Prime Minister, and two appointed by the President after consulting with the Leader of the Opposition.

Although the major obstacles to Dominica's obtaining political independence had been removed by the end of the summer of 1978, Labour Party leaders seemed unable to refrain from making divisive, undiplomatic comments. Premier John delivered an "undiplomatic and embarrassing tirade against the much abused private sector" at the opening of the National Trade Show in August of 1978 (New Chronicle August 19, 1978:4). John's Deputy Chief of Police followed suit by ordering his senior officers not to investigate a government department until first obtaining the permission of the responsible Minister for that department (New Chronicle September 9, 1978:1). In response to Premier John's verbal attacks, the New Chronicle observed "...the Premier himself is not someone who has much credibility anywhere (August 5, 1978:4)."

In spite of John's faltering public image, public opinion had progressed from surprise and worry at Premier John's declaration in Salisbury that his government would seek independence for Dominica the next year to general
support for independence. Although the enmity between the Labour government and the business community, largely identified with the Freedom Party, was not eradicated before the obtaining of independence, a change of heart occurred among the rural villagers of Dominica during the course of the independence debates. Many Dominicans who had scoffed a few months earlier at the notion of their small island's becoming independent now accepted what they considered to be the inevitable outcome of their government's actions. As Independence Day grew nearer, many of the former scoffers acquired a quiet pride in their new nation.

This new pride also manifested itself in a desire for the newly independent Dominica to be a just nation. Dominicans made it clear that they would not be satisfied with a totalitarian regime. As Moskos has observed in *The Sociology of Political Independence* (1967), the developed West assumes that the new third world nations are not "ready" for full-fledged democracy. Often Western analysts appear to think dictatorship is the price new nations must pay for independence. The desire of Dominicans for "a democratic nation under God" should cause us to question such widespread assumptions. Dominicans defined a nation under God as one founded upon principles that acknowledge the supremacy of God and "one
in which we all act fearlessly to remove all forms of corruption and victimisation. . . No one must be above the law in a nation of God (New Chronicle November 4, 1978:1)."

In the months immediately preceding independence, the New Chronicle published a series of editorials that called for the government to bring an end to corruption in its ranks and to busy itself less with the outward trappings of independence and more with providing moral leadership for the country during this important transition. If there were to be "more to sustain this new nation than just a new multi-colour flag and a new name (October 21, 1978:4)," the Prime Minister designate should make an appeal for national unity and attempt to heal the wounds among the divided groups in the country.

In the final weeks before independence was granted, the opposition displayed a symbolic olive branch. Ms. Charles, Leader of the Opposition, stated that the Freedom Party was "willing and ready to take part and co-operate in the development of the country (New Chronicle November 4:1)." Patrick John did not answer the call to end the bitter hatred among the political groups on the island but did conclude the final negotiations for independence. In October, 1978 the U. K. government announced that Dominica would receive $53.4 million E. C. (Eastern Caribbean) currency as an independence gift from Great Britain. Most
of this aid would be funneled into technical development programs. In addition, Dominica would receive $5.5 million E. C. for special budgetary aid. $2.5 million would be spent in the last half of 1979, $2 million in 1979/80, and $1 million in 1980/81. Premier John's response was that Dominica was one of the least developed islands in the Caribbean and that the bill for past exploitation by Britain was $200 million E. C. After further jawboning, John's Labour Party government accepted Britain's independence gift of the originally proposed amounts. After these final negotiations were concluded, the British and Dominican governments coordinated planning for the transfer of sovereignty from the U. K. to Dominica on November 3, 1978. Within the first few minutes of November 3, 1978, the flag of the new nation, the Commonwealth of Dominica, was raised in a public ceremony at Windsor Park. As the flag fluttered in the starlit night, Her Royal Highness Princess Margaret, representing the British crown, handed the instrument of government, the Independence Constitution for the Commonwealth of Dominica, to the first prime minister, Patrick Roland John. In an editorial published on the eve of independence, the hopes and concerns of the newly independent citizenry were expressed:
It is a good thing for a people to be in charge of their affairs, and to chart the course that will lead them to their ultimate goal. This is as good a time as any to reflect on, "What kind of Dominica do we look forward to?" Everybody is now chanting "after independence..." this and that. For all of us, it should be a signal to come together, and place our resources and talents towards building a solid framework for nationhood. There are, of course, misgivings. There are some who feel that independence will provide the scope for them to obtain those things that they long for, but could not have. There are others who believe that, come independence, rights which they had felt were secure would be taken away arbitrarily... Some of the concern which any citizen must have at the time of independence will, of course, be based on the record of government:

Will we demonstrate in the way we govern, and in our attitudes toward one another, that we respect the principles so well enshrined in our constitution, viz. the supremacy of God, the dignity of the human person and faith in fundamental human rights and freedom?

...Will effective action be taken to wipe out corruption, or will action be suppressed when allegations are made, particularly against persons holding high public office?

...Will a serious and honest effort be made, to reconcile the deep division that now exists in the society, which often manifests itself in the feeling that if you are not for the Labour Party, you can play no effective part in the affairs of the country?
Will it be power to the people, or power to . . .?


Only time will tell which political group in Dominica will control the nation. Although the opposition was not successful in its request for general elections before independence, the ad hoc alliance formed to amend Section 52 of the draft of the constitution won some safeguards for the democratic processes of the new state. Although we do not know which group will obtain and retain power for an extended length of time in an independent Dominica, we do know that independence will mean that the bulk of the political power in the new state will reside with a Dominican group. This transfer of power and the pride of the new citizenry marks a change in the unequal power relationship among social classes that has for centuries dominated social and political interaction in the West Indies. The descendants of slaves have become their own masters. While we might question the viability of the new mini-state and wonder if the small island nations can be adequately protected from the tyranny of one-party rule, we cannot help but applaud the positive self-images that independence brings to former slave and master alike.
CHAPTER SIX

My Assimilation: Anthropologist as Baccarat

As we have seen, the independence debates in Dominica may be viewed not only as dialogues between socialists and capitalists, radicals and conservatives, and haves and have-nots, but also as a part of the lengthy response to slavery, whereby blacks in the West Indies have been changing their status vis-a-vis whites. In this chapter I shall offer a phenomenological account of this gradual change of status among different racial groups in the West Indies. My personal role in this gradual process, a matter which I shall explain in some detail, influenced my attitudes about political independence. As I became immersed in Dominican culture, I learned that I had an assigned role in the social drama described above and that this assignment affected my perceptions of social, particularly political, events in Dominica.

As an anthropologist in the field, I expected to learn how to live as a member of Dominican society, since anthropologists are expected via participant-observation to immerse themselves in the culture they study. Anthropologists have traditionally studied "primitive" groups that are likely to be disadvantaged members of large, modern states, and they have often acted as advocates for "their people," who usually face pressures that threaten
the continuance of their very existence. I was surprised to find that my place in Dominica was among the elite. I made repeated attempts to be treated as a peasant in the countryside but learned that asking West Indians not to notice what they consider the most significant attribute of a person, skin color, was unrealistic. West Indians know that as a rule whites are not peasants. Historically whites have occupied positions of power and authority. As we have seen in the analyses of West Indian history and social structure in previous chapters, black West Indians have defined themselves in relation to whites for centuries and continue to do so. Whites thus play an important symbolic role in the West Indies. In the Dominican countryside, where over 99 percent of the residents are black or mulatto, the few whites residing in rural areas are accorded the important though largely vacant position of privileged white. As I became more assimilated into Dominican society, I learned that my white skin necessarily ascribed me this privileged position. Although I felt that I was psychologically inclined to identify myself as a member and champion of the disadvantaged group, I found that history had prepared a place for me among the privileged. All my protests about the remarks that my elderly neighbors in Atkinson Village made, such as, "We need 'baccrats' (white men) to raise
up the place," and "Only white men know how to make
machines," did not prevent their reiteration.

Troubled by the role that I felt Dominican society
had thrust upon me, I discussed my "plight" with one of
the young, prominent native whites whom I met early in
my stay. I told him how uncomfortable I felt when de-
ference was made to me; for example, when poor farmers
hospitably insisted on opening their only bottle of wine
for me, when my neighbors offered a lift to town in the
most comfortable vehicle available upon learning that I
planned to go there, and when the principal of the one-
room village school instructed all the children to stand
in my presence. I thought that such courtesies would
become relaxed as I became a more familiar member of the
village and as I visited various households again and
again. I came to discover, however, that special court-
esies were always extended to whites by some households.
After finishing my description of some of the special
treatment I had received in the village, I asked my new
friend for advice. He responded that one should first
refuse such special treatment and then accept graciously
if the host insisted. Noting that I was certainly not
the first visitor to comment to him about the special
treatment whites receive in Dominica, he said that he
was accustomed to such behavior and that extending
courtesies to whites seemed to please many folk in the countryside. Indeed, this young Dominican nonchalantly ended our conversation with the observation, "Now you know how royalty feels."

Well, I doubt that I will ever know exactly how royalty feels. Being a member of the large middle-class of a society that emphasizes egalitarian ideals, I was not prepared to be a recipient of such consideration. Neither was I prepared for the obligations that accompany privileges. Perceiving me as a person of power and authority, Dominicans expected me to act in a philanthropic manner and began to petition me for favors, expecting me to have the means to grant their requests. Having supported myself through much of college and graduate school on part-time earnings, school loans, and small stipends, I did not think of myself as wealthy. The details of my personal experience in the United States were not important to my rural Dominican neighbors. They think that white people, like royalty, are wealthy. Not all the villagers asked me for favors, but I was surprised to find that the majority did. The most common request was for assistance for a family member in finding employment in the United States. Other requests were for particular items I had brought from the United States. Although I wanted to be perceived as generous (as I had in my own
culture in the United States), I found the new demands on my generosity taxing. When I first saw the dearth of materials available to village teachers in their work, I had my parents ship to the village school all the children's books I owned, maps, and boxes of crayons. When these items arrived months later, I had become so tired of requests that I distributed the supplies with less than a freely generous spirit.

An early event during my stay in the village taught me much about the role I was expected to play. The sailing prowess of the pre-Colombian Caribs is legendary. Their settling of the Lesser Antilles depended on their sailing ability. On clear evenings I could see from my cabin in Atkinson Village the sparkling lights of the villages on the small neighboring French island of Marie-Galante, a dependency of Guadeloupe. I decided to hire a canoe to transport me there, choosing a dugout built in the traditional Carib way. Today's Caribs do not feel they can master the ocean as their forefathers did. (One friend confided, "Those old-time Caribs were bad because they did not teach us to sail.") They have come to rely on such modern technological innovations as small outboard motors, but I still looked forward to this outing as something of an adventure. After a tiring three-hour journey on the rolling high seas in the small, narrow
canoe, my romantic notions of the trip had become revised. Upon arriving in Marie-Galante, I was surprised to learn that I was not free to explore the island on my own. Rather, as organizer of the trip, I was expected to serve as host for the captain and crew of these people on a round of merrymaking. Not having the stamina or financial resources to play such a role, I begged off some of my responsibilities as organizer. I was able to give part of my time to Christmas shopping for friends on Dominica. When we returned to Atkinson, I also failed to live up to others' expectations. The many villagers waiting on the shore expected us to share stories of our adventures and special treats on the French island. Bone-tired, I instead trudged home with the Christmas presents I had purchased for my friends in the village. Later I realized that my actions, though inspired by generosity, had been inappropriate. Surprise Christmas presents were not expected. Some of my friends looked puzzled when I gave them wrapped packages from Roseau and Marie-Galante on Christmas Day. However, the Dominicans on shore when I returned from Marie-Galante knew that I had come from an island that offered local goods for sale and expected me to share my purchases with them. A little boy made something of a pest of himself, following me and imploring, "Give me what you have."
Just as royalty has its attackers and defenders, so do baccrats have their supporters and detractors among Dominican villagers. Just as the nobility are resented as well as admired, baccrats in the West Indies are intensely disliked by some persons and warmly liked by others. As I have earlier noted, one of my first impressions in the Dominican countryside was the unusual courtesy extended to me as a white visitor. As I gradually became aware of the obligations accompanying this privilege, I also became aware of the hostility directed toward me because of my privileged status. I began to sense that many of the young people resented the courtesy shown to me by their elders. One of the most vivid images from my stay in the village is of a young villager with Dread-locks (a very long Afro hairstyle) who followed me while I walked from one friend's house to another delivering Christmas presents. He told me that he couldn't enjoy Christmas as long as people of my "kind" were in the village. His manner was threatening. Two of his companions subdued him, as he seemed ready for attack. I knew that I was not at home that Christmas.

In addition to verbal hostility, I was subject to robberies and a physical attack. Pinpointing causes for such social phenomena is difficult. There can be many motivations for hostility. Yet, in Dominica whites are
certainly more at risk of being victims of robberies and assaults than are blacks. After a few months on the island I began to explain to myself the good and bad things that happened as responses to my being white. I began to spend more time "in town" (Roseau, the capital) where Dominicans were more accustomed to white people and were more likely to be well-traveled. I also began to seek the company of other whites after months of deliberately avoiding them so that I might become more intimate with Dominicans. Perhaps I learned my lessons of assimilation too well. I was aware for the first time in my life that I was white. This simple fact was so overwhelming that it began to color all I experienced. Growing up in a segregated neighborhood in Tennessee, I nevertheless thought that all people were basically like myself and that racism could be eliminated by good-will. Living in the West Indies made me regard the absence of racism as an idealistic notion. I came to wonder, given the historical relationship between Europe and Africa, how "color-unconsciousness" could be possible.

The realization that living in the West Indies had altered the way I perceived racial differences troubled me. Only after I returned from the field and readjusted to American society did I achieve what I regarded as an acceptable perspective on my new knowledge. While doing
research on the history of the West Indies two years after I returned from the field, I began to discern a pattern in the historical relationship between blacks and whites. Following are some observations that I recorded while working in the library at that time:

I find myself underscoring all these passages that speak of the atrocities committed by blacks against whites, of the shortcomings of black governments, of the mismanagement of foreign aid by black leaders. It's as if I need to reassure myself that not all the darkness and despair in the West Indies was created by whites. Yet, I know that the dominant theme running through the West Indies story is one of the institutionalization of cruelty to blacks by whites via plantation slavery, the psychological scarring of which the West Indies has inherited if not the living institution. This is the story that must be told over and over again. Then why do I flinch at the telling? Why am I affronted when I read of the slave revolt in the north plains of Saint Domingue in 1788 or of the Morant Bay uprising in Jamaica in 1865?

Perhaps I flinch because I know I could have been one of the whites who were killed. Before I lived in the West Indies for a year, I never identified myself with the white colonials of whom I read in books and newspapers. After living in a culture where I was defined as a member of the privileged white class for almost a year, I will never be the same. In the total Dominican population of approximately 80,000 were approximately 200 whites. Most of these people were expatriates who had volunteered to aid in the
development of Dominica, such as members of the Peace Corps and British VSO (Volunteer Service Overseas) personnel. When I lived in Atkinson Village, I was the only white person in a 10-mile radius. Over a period of time I learned that Dominicans related primarily to me on the basis of color.

Despite my protests, I was treated as "Bwana," or in the West Indian vernacular, baccarat. My journal is full of comments of my anxieties at being perceived in this light, of my unwillingness to play the role, etc. Efforts to avoid the role were doomed, for in such a small West Indian island where the concept of "whiteness" is so important, the few whites that are on the island will, of course, fill the role of baccarat. There is nothing one can do to alter this fact except avoid those islanders who have a working cognitive concept of baccarat. This course of action would exclude one from social interaction with the majority of islanders.

More startling were the changes I could sense in myself. After a few months of receiving special treatment I began to expect deference. I began to expect vehicles to stop and all the passengers to make room for me, even if they had to crowd together in uncomfortable positions. I began to expect lavish hospitality. I began to expect favorable comments about my appearance. And I noticed that I was skeptical of Dominicans' claims that they had distant relatives who looked like me. (How could they? I was white.) I began to wish that I didn't tan so easily and that I was blonde so that my whiteness would be even more indisputable. In the West Indies I learned whiteness is a matter of degree rather than kind, and all claims to whiteness are subject to question. Dominicans who value
"whiteness" emphasize their physical attributes that match their ideal of whiteness. As I watched my skin darken readily in the tropical sun, I wondered if I were totally white. This concern had never occurred to me before my stay in Dominica.

Gradually I came to know West Indian concerns. And I came to know heretofore unrevealed aspects of myself. Gradually I knew...knew that I could have been born of planter parents, knew that I could have been raised in South Africa. I would expect myself under any circumstances to recognize the injustices of racism, of slavery, of apartheid. But I would not expect revolting blacks to distinguish between "good" and "bad" whites. To them, all that are benefiting from the inequitable system are enemies. It matters not that the white man on the veranda is a spokesman for the relaxing of apartheid or that his three-year-old daughter playing in the garden has no deep understanding of racial prejudice or that his wife preparing dinner in the kitchen is from England where she met her husband five years ago. She didn't dream she would be so affected by a profoundly racist society when she agreed to move with him to South Africa. This family, however, must be killed if the inequitable system is to be corrected, radicals contend.

The few, relatively minor negative incidents I experienced on Dominica taught me something of racial vengeance. When I read of atrocities that blacks have committed to whites, my stomach turns. I can imagine myself there, for in a small way I have been there.

On the other hand, I cannot envision myself as a slave or as a poor black farmer. Nothing in my experience
enables me to grasp the horrible everyday reality of slavery. I look at the sketches of the cramped quarters on the slaving ships; I read accounts of the punishments and tortures that were heartlessly inflicted upon the slaves that did not follow orders; I compare the number of slaves imported to the West Indies to the number of slaves remaining in the West Indies at the time of emancipation (the relatively few survivors making me realize once again what an inhumane and murderous institution West Indian slavery was); I read accounts of the enforced labor and of the cruel suppression of any striving for freedom; I read that the masters decided the loss of the mother's labor made childbearing un-economical and therefore forebade it. I am moved by these accounts, yet somehow all seems unreal. I cannot imagine myself in the galleys of a slaver or in the cane fields with an overseer at my back. I cannot imagine being forbidden to learn to read and write or being forbidden to marry and have children. I don't even know if I can imagine what apartheid is like for blacks.

If one of the underlying reasons for my becoming an anthropologist was that I could envision myself as an advocate for the less developed peoples of the world, imagine my distress when I learned that I had come to identify myself with a privileged elite. I sought the company of people who occupied social positions on the island similar to my own and came to see independence through their eyes. These people were known as the "bourgeoisie" in Dominica. Largely composed of educated and
propertied persons, the bourgeoisie were perceived as being colored or brown, as opposed to black. Of course, it's an old West Indian saying that success lightens one's skin. Physical attributes, usually identified with race, are not uniform among the bourgeoisie. According to another bit of Dominican folk wisdom, the bourgeoisie tend to associate with the white elite. It could be that persons who associated with me would necessarily be identified as bourgeois.

One of my good friends in Roseau was a large middle-aged woman who had graduated from secondary school and then left the island in her late teens to find employment. She got a job in the garment industry in New York City, sewing on buttons. She lived in New York for twenty years, gradually working her way up to head a roomful of garment workers. She said that she worked hard for her Jewish boss, who also worked hard and who promoted her, in spite of the fact she was a West Indian. She and her husband saved their money and moved back to Dominica. Unfortunately, her husband died shortly after the move. A widow for several years at the time I met her, my friend now owns and operates a dress shop and a small guest house. Her living quarters and three guest rooms with a common living room are above the shop. My friend tells of the hard time her mother had raising several small children after
her father had died. Her mother got up early every morning to launder the children's school uniforms so that the family's servants would not see how few clothes the children actually had. Her mother also fashioned new suits for her brothers from draperies for her brother's graduation from secondary school because there was no money for cloth. Her brother won the island scholarship, awarded to Dominica's top graduating secondary student, that year and has since become a successful physician. My friend and her brothers have remained devout Catholics, lovingly care for their mother now, and are active in many civic affairs. To Americans like myself the modest success that this family has won because of education and hard work is not remarkable in our own century, but I think many Americans would admire this family's pride. Dominicans, however, will never forget that this family is part of the colored elite and many resent their relative wealth.

My bourgeois friends were impassioned observers of the political scene in Dominica. At first I discounted their opposition to the ruling Labour government's plan for political independence. The bourgeoisie seemed to fear loss of their property in a socialist regime and seemed to resent the fact that the first prime minister would be a relatively uneducated black man from the lower
class. As the year of my stay progressed, I began to listen to some of their arguments more carefully. The development of Dominica, the bourgeoisie maintained, depended on the health of local business. Efforts of the Labour government to nationalize industry could strangle what little commerce existed on the island. These concerns with economic viability seemed admirable in comparison with Premier John's resorting to foreign assistance to underwrite the new state. Moreover, the black politicians' stranglehold on the wealth that accompanies political power seemed no less strong than the businessmen's hold on the wealth that accompanies economic power. Educated Dominicans, like most of us Americans, learned that democracy was the ideal political system. When members of the bourgeoisie became alarmed because the Labour Party seemed to ignore established parliamentary procedures and to disregard the wishes of the citizens in the party's quest for political independence, I sympathized with their demands for greater citizen participation. I could also certainly understand their fear of a tyrannical regime.

As I had intended to conduct a phenomenological study, I was not surprised that my involvement with certain groups on the island prevented my viewing political phenomena "objectively." I expected my experience to
color my perceptions. My surprise, as I have previously stated, resulted from my personal identification with a group perceived as privileged elite. And as a white, liberal social scientist, I felt guilty about any negative feelings I might harbor toward a disadvantaged, black man in the role of leading the island to independence. My realization, as a phenomenologist, that my observations of Dominican political events resulted from my own perceptions increased my feelings of guilt. As I felt personally responsible for my negative attitudes, my views at the time placed unexpected burdens on my psyche. The observation of West Indian historians that slavery "subjugated colonial masters no less than slaves (Lowenthal 196:37-38)" deepened in meaning for me. My feelings of guilt were allayed only when I reflected that there is no escaping the dark side of human nature in the Caribbean--past, present, or future--for there is nothing pretty about slavery, poverty, or racism, all of which have been dominant aspects of Caribbean societies. The social structure of the West Indies, based as it is upon an unequal power relationship among the races, is inhumane and irrational. It's comforting to think that it is the structure that's crazy, not yourself.

Perhaps the very irrationality of the unequal power relationship among the races in the West Indies prevents
any person who has lived there from viewing the social and political phenomena rationally. Perhaps, where irrationality is the order of the day, it assumes the guise of reason. Previous chapters have offered an interpretation of how a Dominican's particular subjective circumstances, particularly social class, influence his or her attitudes about social and political events. Co-existing with the objective desire to retain or gain social and economic advantage are strong subjective emotions, often voiced by the spokesmen of West Indian political groups. Premier John, for example, has been emphatic in his denunciation of the British, from whom his country receives crucial budgetary aid and economic concessions. Although the exploitation of Dominica by the British is an event of the past, the Premier's emotional reaction to past exploitation remains current and vivid. Likewise, the protests of the Dominican middle-class against proposals for socialist reform have been impassioned. Perhaps a sensitive participant-observer of the West Indian scene could not fail to become attuned to the strong irrational forces that sweep the political landscape. Islands whose societies were formed with one of the cruelest institutions in the history of man, slavery, are fertile sites for the growth and retention of strong emotions that make for human drama.
CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusion: Inching Toward Interdependence

Rather than political independence, the first desire of the new small West Indian nations has been to change inequitable relationships between the mother country and the colony, between developed and undeveloped states, and between black and white. Many new Caribbean countries have no desire to sever ties completely with their former colonial rulers, realizing that their emerging states will continue to depend on the developed world. If continued foreign influence is inevitable for the Caribbean mini-states, then their citizens hope to help determine what forms that influence will take by gaining more power in the international arena with their newly-won sovereignty. Sovereignty has bestowed membership in international organizations, such as the United Nations and the Organization of American States, and in multinational producers' cartels. By concerted action with other underdeveloped states, West Indian leaders hope to wrest from the larger and developed nations a working acknowledgement of the interdependence of all nations.

The smallness and isolation of most West Indian nations contributes to their remaining economically dependent upon "inherited patterns of production and marketing" and "strategically dependent on former imperial overlords"
(Lowenthal and Comitas 1973:xv)." West Indians have increasingly come to reject these realities because of a "felt need for self-assertion commensurate with political independence (Lowenthal and Comitas 1973:xv)." In pressing for reorientation of societies as a whole, reformers repudiate the present political leadership as unable, if not unwilling, to transform West Indian states into self-respecting autonomous entities. Nationalist impulse focuses on redressing past social and racial imbalances, which are seen as both causes and consequences of imperialism (Lowenthal and Comitas 1973:xv).

What citizens of the Caribbean attribute to the unwillingness or inability of their leaders, i.e., the continuing dependence of Caribbean sovereign states upon the developed world, outside observers attribute to the fractionalism in the Caribbean that has resulted in "subdivision into non-viable mini-states or micro-states (Gordon 1973:171)." These states are necessarily dependent on other states and usually seek association with some larger, non-Caribbean nation or grouping. As Europe has withdrawn from the Caribbean, the strategic and economic dependence on the United States by Caribbean nations has grown so that the American presence is the "essential common feature of the larger Caribbean (Gordon 1973:171)." Gaining any real economic autonomy is unlikely for Caribbean states, for most of the island economies rely almost
exclusively on one major commodity, such as sugar, coffee, oil, bauxite, or bananas. This reliance on one commodity makes the island economies vulnerable to world market demand and to fluctuations in world market prices. In order to compete in the world market, however, it seems necessary to continue this colonial pattern of dependence on a few export commodities. If the domestic market is small, the only way small countries can benefit from economies of scale is to specialize in a few products for export to a larger, i.e., regional or world market (Sandstrom 1979:75-76). As we have seen, West Indian nations have attempted to establish regional markets through CARIFTA and CARICOM, but several important West Indian export commodities are produced in such quantity that they require a larger market. Thus, the "mini-states, or even micro-states (DeKadt 1972:2)," of the Caribbean continue to be:

...more susceptible to various forms of influence from abroad than nations whose territory or population are larger, who can strive for greater economic independence, meet more of their own resources of all kinds when faced by pressures from abroad or alien dominance within. The dependence of such small states on the economically and politically more powerful nations of the world is an almost inevitable fact (DeKadt 1972:2).

Moreover, a low degree of social and political integration among an underdeveloped society's various groups can make
boundaries separating external and internal influence difficult to establish. An underdeveloped country is "likely to be influenced in most spheres of life by the dominant presence of an economically more developed country (Roberts 1972:148)." This pervasive presence of a dominant foreign economy can strengthen and weaken groups within the underdeveloped nation, thus making internal affairs subject to the play of foreign interests.

While there is no "obvious reason" to suggest foreign influence is inherently bad, most people would be "at least mildly disapproving" of the observation that their country was being "subjected to foreign influence (DeKadt 1972:5)." This observation would violate our assumptions about the nature of sovereignty. A sovereign nation should order her own internal affairs and defend her own interests. Yet, many small Caribbean nations are unable to deal as equals with the multinational corporations upon which their economies are so dependent. The main factor in the Caribbean's geo-political relationships is the economic domination by the United States (Odell 1972:21). In the early part of this century American domination even manifested itself in open political intervention in "sovereign" states to secure acceptable types of Caribbean governments; during the second half of the century American foreign policy in
the Caribbean has been obsessed with preventing a second Cuba. Unless Cuba receives additional massive external support, however, she will probably fail in becoming a revolutionary center for the region and in reducing U. S. hegemony in the region.

The very real limits of sovereignty for the Caribbean mini-states described above:

... dispelled illusions that self-determination, by whatever name called, provides a magic key to a better life for our people. Side by side with the psychological lift that the new status has given and the practical change it has provided, comes the acknowledgement, however reluctant, that decolonization is not enough; that the reality of independence derives not from constitutions but from strength; that while it is good to possess the right of choice it profits us little when we are faced with barren options--when both our freedom of choice and our range of choice are conditioned by external forces which we are powerless individually to influence, much less to control, and which we would be foolhardy to ignore (Ramphal 1973:242).

The dominant sovereign power in the Caribbean, the United States, won her independence under much different circumstances than those of the mini-states of the Caribbean. Unlike the British West Indian colonies, which in the course of modern decolonialization had no choice but
to become more politically autonomous, the United States chose to become independent from Britain during the height of the Empire when such action was revolutionary. As the North American colonies contributed income for the Empire's coffers, Britain was reluctant to lose her colonies there and waged war to keep them. The attitude of Britain to the West Indian colonies since the Second World War has been vastly different. Although Britain is eager to decolonize, her concern was:

How could viable independence be possible for 15 colonies, each with its own legislature and government, spread over 1.75 million square miles of sea, when 10 had populations of under 100,000 people and seven required annual grants from Britain to enable them to meet their day-to-day expenditures (Blackburne 1979:204)?

In contrast with the economic dependency of the new West Indian mini-states, the colonies of North America formed a confederation upon gaining independence. Because of varied and plentiful natural resources, abundance of fertile land, and a sizeable population, self-sufficiency was a real possibility for the new North American republic. The different courses that the struggle for independence took in North America and the West Indies relates to the difference in form that sovereignty was to take in the United States and the mini-states of the West Indies.
Some West Indian analysts have expressed the hope that the increasing evidence of political impotence of individual Caribbean islands will lend impetus to the movement for regional integration. These analysts hypothesize that the winning of independence was a necessary prerequisite for regional unity, for it engendered a "new spirit of self-reliance (Ramphal 1973:241)."

This "new confidence and self-respect" is undercut by fractionalism of the region:

> Our flags, our anthems testify to our independence. Our votes in the United Nations, our separate embassies abroad, proclaim our sovereignty, as they do our separateness (Ramphal 1973:241).

Although the psychological satisfaction that political independence has fostered has been substantial, the West Indies must become economically integrated if they are to exercise their sovereignty effectively. Efforts to forge "regional linkages," however, "continually founder on the shoals of insular rivalries (Lowenthal and Comitas 1973:xiv)."

The irony analysts see in the "new spirit of self-reliance" engendered by individual island sovereignty is paralleled by the irony some observers see in the Black Power movement in the Caribbean. Political power in the Caribbean is in the hands of the blacks. Yet, the
rhetoric of this social movement was imported from the United States, where the movement represents the "protest of a disadvantaged minority which has at last begun to feel that some of the rich things of America are accessible (Naipaul 1973:365)" to the Caribbean without regard to the social and political realities in the region.

... the jargon of the movement... transcended the bread-and-butter protests of local politics... perhaps this excitement is the only liberation that is possible. Black power in these black islands is protest. But there is no enemy. The enemy is the past, of slavery and colonial neglect and a society uneducated from top to bottom; the enemy is the smallness of the islands and the absence of racial minorities, "elites," "white niggers." But at the end the problems will be the same, of dignity and identity... Identity depends in the end on achievement; and achievement here cannot but be small (Naipaul 1973:367).

As long as the nations of the West Indies continue their insular rivalries, sovereignty in the region will be constrained by the current reality of extensive foreign intervention. Seeking some measure of control over foreign influence, the Caribbean mini-states "tend to look to the multilateral agencies and the United Nations (UN) as a counterweight to dependency on bilateral arrangements (Will 1979:25)." The influx of former colonies
into the UN after the Second World War has transformed that organization. Membership in the UN has increased threefold since its establishment in 1945. The majority of the approximately 160 present sovereign states of the UN secured their independence during the last 35 years and belong to the bloc of non-aligned nations (Will 1979:24). The recent strength in numbers among the non-aligned nations has advanced their interests to the forefront of concerns addressed by the entire UN.

Joining the UN was a priority for the newly independent Commonwealth Caribbean (former British West Indies colonies) because of the organization's prestige. In addition to gaining prestige, membership in the UN affords member states access to the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (BANK) and the International Monetary Fund. A more ambivalent attitude applied toward Commonwealth Caribbean membership in the Organization of American States (OAS). Latin American members of the OAS were less than enthusiastic about admitting the new nations of the Caribbean, for they feared that the new states would provide a bloc of support for United States policy. Another concern of the Latin American countries was that the close ties of the Caribbean with Europe would give these new states an economic advantage (Odell 1972:29). The Commonwealth Caribbean nations
themselves place more emphasis on their special status as members of the Commonwealth (Wilson 1979:281). The Commonwealth Caribbean joined the OAS after careful consideration because membership in the OAS was required for membership in the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB). With the withdrawal of Britain from the Commonwealth and her entry into the European Economic Community, the Commonwealth Caribbean felt compelled to strengthen economic relations with North America and Latin America (Wilson 1979:276). As the number of Commonwealth Caribbean countries has grown with the continued granting of independence to former dependencies, their influence in the OAS has increased. The Commonwealth Caribbean now constitutes an important voting subbloc in the OAS. Although this subbloc has not acted as "lobby-fodder" for the United States, the Latin American members are concerned about the future of the hemispheric organization (Wilson 1979:282). Yet, the desirability of the integration of the Caribbean into the Latin American system is becoming "increasingly accepted by all parties concerned (Odell 1972:29)." Dominica, like many Caribbean states, is strengthening ties with oil-rich Venezuela. The centrifugal forces in the region, however, may keep this relationship from being fully effective. Several analysts contend that "this miscellaneous assortment of
mini- and micro-states is unlikely ever to fit into a general Latin American policy framework (Gordon 1972: 173)."

Latin American concern about the new Caribbean states gaining undue influence in the OAS in proportion to their small size and population typifies problems in many international organizations. The proliferation of independent states since the Second World War and the "relatively weak status" of the majorities formed by these new states has "contributed to global irresolution (Will 1979:25)." Another factor contributing to international instability has been global modernization forces and increased exposure to the Western media, which have led to widespread discontent because of a "rising sense of relative deprivation (Will 1979:26)." In April, 1974 at the sixth special session of the United Nations, the world's less developed countries gave form to their rising discontent by demanding a new international economic order (Hawkins 1976:52, Tata 1978, Sandstrom 1979). The concerted request for a revision of world trading and monetary patterns became a priority for the less developed countries that received a depth of support from their citizenry. It is unlikely that the poor nations of the world will abandon their demand for a redistribution of resources, income and political power from the north,
where the developed countries are clustered, to the
south, where less developed countries are prevalent. That
the UN has become more of a forum for the numerous but
weak less developed countries of the world has contri-
buted to a "dimunition of support for international
organizations and of international law itself (Will 1979:
25)."

One wonders if the aggressive use of recently pro-
liferated sovereignty among the less developed countries
to win concessions from the developed countries contains
the seeds of doom for the numerous mini-states. As we
become increasingly aware of finite resources and as the
economies of the developed West remain troubled after
the OPEC oil embargo of 1973, demands by the lesser de-
veloped countries for the redistribution of resources and
wealth may seem increasingly strident. The Rio Treaty,
which established the OAS, was amended in late 1976 to
incorporate the new concept of collective economic se-
curity despite the strong opposition of the United States
(Wilson 1979:280).

Another example of economic resources being trans-
ferred from the "north" to the "south" is Britain's con-
tinuance of financial aid to both her past and present
colonies. During the years between 1962 and 1976 the
Ministry of Overseas Development made available 187
million pounds in grants and loans to the former and existing British Caribbean territories, of which 124 million pounds were provided as outright grants, mainly to meet budget deficits. In addition, during the same period the Commonwealth Development Corporation invested 58 million pounds for development programs in the Caribbean (Blackburne 1979:214-215). Furthermore, British aid to the Caribbean increased during this period, despite Britain's own economic and financial problems. One wonders if the combined assistance from northern developed countries to the south would continue at the present level, let alone increase, if the world economy were to suffer prolonged problems. Certainly, without the support of international organizations, ad hoc or formal, the mini-states of the Caribbean would project "impotence behind the facade of an autonomy which can never be realized (Naipaul 1973:362)." One might ask if the acquisition of individual sovereignty were merely a fashionable thing to do in the second half of the twentieth century.

If the developed world decides that the south has become too strident in its demands for a new economic order and divests international organizations of the little power they now have to encourage the transfer of resources from one group of nations to another, then the
proliferation of mini-states since the Second World War could be seen as having negative ramifications for the less developed regions of the world. That this grim scenario will come to pass, however, is no foregone conclusion. Indeed, the new forthright dialogues between the north and south may be instrumental in the less developed regions' winning important concessions, such as a greater decision-making role in structuring the world economy. If the southern countries are successful in forging a collective self-reliance, their success will be partially attributed to their having won political independence. Certainly, this scenario is the one that the Dominican populace, as it approached independence, hoped would come to pass.

National dignity is assessed by a people's ability to control its own fate. In his analysis of the impact of the "New International Economic Order," Harald Sandstrom (1979:72) states that the "true index of development" is the "capacity to command dignity." If he is correct, then the winning of political independence has done much to advance development in the Caribbean and other poor regions in the southern hemisphere. As a short chapter in the history of the Caribbean and the larger Third World, we may soon come to see this striving for collective dignity by winning individual island
independence. The proliferation of sovereignty and the increasing economic vulnerability of the overdeveloped West may indicate a change in the nature of sovereignty. Heretofore we have thought of sovereign nations as largely self-sufficient entities that are free to advance their own interests. It may be that this definition is no longer operable in today's world. After the oil embargo of 1973 one wonders if any nation is powerful enough to escape the "cultural shame" of its people "forced to change regardless of their own will (Sandstrom 1979:72)." Any country, rich or poor, that conducts commerce in the world market jeopardizes its ability to control the fate of its people. Gordon's description of the extensive degree to which foreign forces control local events in the Caribbean is becoming descriptive of all modern states:

...nations are not isolated sovereign compartments with clearly defined loci of internal sovereignty; they are rather arenas in which international political movements and external influences play their parts alongside of purely domestic ones (Gordon 1972:177).

As sovereign states lose their ability to protect the interests of their own peoples, increasing emphasis may be placed on the interdependence of modern states. There is some evidence that less developed nations are
already advancing this view and seeking to win acknowledgment of it from the developed nations. For instance, the Caribbean mini-states considered the Lomé Convention of February, 1975, a success. Access to the European market and financial and technical assistance were won at the price of privileged bilateral trading agreements. Although some price stability was won for products of the African, Caribbean, and Pacific states, the new general price minimums were lower than some previously guaranteed buying prices that the Caribbean had won in special bilateral agreements with former colonial powers in the region. Despite the fact that the Caribbean gained little in the way of significant economic development from the Lomé agreements, leaders of the region felt the political, organizational, and psychological impact of the convention was sufficiently beneficial to declare the convention a success. Not only did the Africa, Pacific, and Caribbean nations display remarkable unity in negotiating (Sandstrom 1979: 74-75), but also the emphasis on interdependence that was prevalent at the convention was representative of the viewpoint of sovereignty that the lesser developed regions of the world hope that all international endeavors will incorporate.
Since anthropology was created when the former definition of sovereignty was operative, anthropology must also change to accommodate new political realities. What is the role of the anthropologist in an increasingly interdependent world where, as representatives of privileged nations, they are at best suspect observers in poorly developed countries? Some third world governments believe that anthropology has no role in their countries. Remembering that anthropological studies were welcome during the colonial era, the Third World is not anxious to continue serving as objects of study for the students of the developed West. The Western media has also become suspect because of the decades of negative reports about underdeveloped countries that came from Western observers. Eric Williams (1966), a noted West Indian scholar and statesman, has documented the biased scholarship of British historians writing about the West Indies. Seeking to alter this situation, the less developed countries may attempt to muzzle the Western press. Some of the more outspoken nations in the non-aligned bloc have proposed that all news stories and reports be approved by their governments before they are printed or broadcast. This misguided attempt to gain dignity in the world community could jeopardize the continuance of the forthright dialogues between the north and
south, which are necessary for a restructuring of the world economy that would be a working acknowledgement of the increasing interdependence of all nations.

Important questions must be resolved by these dialogues. What concessions might the north owe the south because of past colonialism and imperialism? Who controls the world's resources? Is reverse racism the price that must be paid for past racism? What is a correct international approach to racial issues? The importance of these questions demands that all viewpoints be heard. I believe that we are sophisticated enough to recognize that all analyses are biased. We must try to identify the bias inherent in an analysis and assess the analysis accordingly. An outsider's bias can act as a tool for gaining additional insight. Perhaps only a Muslim can understand some aspects of the Muslim religion. However, non-Muslim students of the religion can make a "foreign" religion more understandable to members of his own culture. Moreover, Muslims could learn some information about their own religion from a non-Muslim observer.

Anthropological studies in the West Indies have contributed much to our understanding of the region. Detailed ethnographies enabled anthropologists to trace what elements of African cultures have been incorporated into contemporary Caribbean cultures. Descriptions of
each island's primary ethnic groups are available. Ethnographies have also explicated what was considered the abnormal family structure of the region. Anthropological studies documented how African cultural patterns and the institution of slavery shaped the West Indian extended, matrifocal family unit, as well as the functioning and stability of this basic West Indian family unit. Anthropological migration studies analyzed the effects of migration on West Indian family structure and on West Indian perceptions of the region and the developed West.

In an increasingly interdependent world, the role of social science is changing. As communication among regions grows, anthropological and all social scientific knowledge becomes accessible to all peoples. This proliferation of information has contributed to the formation of new political groups in the Third World. As we have seen, the ethnological interest in the Dominican Caribs has altered the way Caribs view themselves. This study has also described how the introduction of gifted West Indian and African students to Western scholarship was instrumental to the formation of nationalist movements in the West Indies and Africa. That Patrick John used imported rhetoric in his independence speeches is no coincidence; neither is the fact that the hopes and
dreams of the Dominican people on the eve of independence mirrored those of all peoples who have been taught that the pursuit of liberty and justice is desirable.

Today Third World scholars conduct their own studies. West Indian social scientists from the University of the West Indies, for example, try to further the understanding of regional migration and other problems that were initially formulated by Western social scientists. The evidence suggests that social scientific studies may have profound effects on those studied. Social scientists of the Third World may prefer that only their own scholars exert such influence in their regions. Yet, if a new international economic order is to be established, then information collected by representatives of all regions of the world would be necessary. If the redistribution of resources from the north to the south were to become more of an immediate possibility, we would need accounts of Third World nations written by Western observers to supplement those written by Third World scholars. As all peoples become subject to the pressures of modernization and decreasing resources, the continued existence of numerous societies becomes questionable. How can there be unbiased observers in an evershrinking world? Contemporary scholarship, however, must help us understand the new regional forces in the world. We must
strive to understand new political and social realities as we become increasingly aware that no nation, even our own, is an island.
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