

# Leadership in the Caribbean Working Papers

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# Executive Summary

*Joyce Hoebing*

The Caribbean faces unprecedented challenges from the emerging global trends toward free market economics and democratic political governance. Foreign aid to the region is decreasing at the same time that global competition is intensifying. Narcotics trafficking, accompanied by violence and corruption, is straining democratic institutions and offering an already disaffected youth a deceptively easy road to prosperity. Issues such as voter apathy, migration, the environment, and emigration—the “brain drain”—will be critical to the region in the coming decades. The Caribbean clearly needs visionary leadership to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

The Commonwealth Caribbean has a long history of democratic governance. But a closer look at the rest of the Caribbean reveals some troubling signs.<sup>1</sup> Cuba and Haiti stand out as countries largely outside the democratic tradition. The region as a whole, however, has a tradition of politics where one or a few people dominate the political scene for decades. Elder statesmen have at times reinvented themselves to meet new challenges, been voted out of office, or have passed the reins of power to a new generation.

Leadership will not come only from government, however. It is increasingly clear that the solutions to the complex problems facing the region will require a multidisciplinary approach. In order for solutions to work, they must be accepted by all affected sectors and agreed to by the general population. This is especially true because some sectors may be asked to make significant sacrifices or to suffer through a transition period. Some answers may be politically unpopular: for example, the ceding of some sovereignty in the effort to combat narcotics trafficking. This implies forging coalitions among the various sectors in each country, as well as among the countries of the region. One thing is increasingly clear: the coming decades will require a new breed of leaders, both within and outside the political system.

Who are these future leaders of the Caribbean? What frames their thinking? And what signals can this provide for U.S. policymaking over the next decade?

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<sup>1</sup> See Howard Wiarda, *U.S. Policy and Democracy in the Caribbean and Latin America*, (CSIS, 1995) and Douglas Payne, *Democracy in the Caribbean: A Cause for Concern*, (CSIS, 1995), for assessments of the overall state of democracy in the Caribbean.

The CSIS Americas Program is examining these issues through its Caribbean Leadership Initiative. The initiative was designed to identify the character and sources of the new generation of leaders, and has two components (1) an assessment of the state of leadership in individual countries, and (2) the formation of a group of emerging young leaders who will be engaged in a broad range of issues, from gender politics to regional unity, and will be involved in a number of research and outreach efforts and visiting fellowships at CSIS.

The concept for this CSIS report grew from the first component. Experts on the Caribbean, from the region and from the United States, were asked to consider the state of leadership in the Caribbean. Many of the pieces were written originally in late 1995 and early 1996: in those cases, the authors have updated their assessments or attached postscripts.

All agreed that the Caribbean faces daunting challenges, not least the disaffection of youth, calls for more accountable governance, an increase in narcotics trafficking and related violence, and the need to restructure economies in line with the global trend toward open markets. But there was a great deal of hope, as well: a young and dynamic movement is being experienced in many political parties, a vibrant civil society is emerging in areas where it had previously been suppressed, and there have been strong efforts to liberalize economies.

Douglas Payne, who focussed on political party structures in Barbados, Belize, the Bahamas, and the OECS, views the prospects for a younger generation of leaders as mixed. Barbados, with its historically strong democracy, strong institutions, and a free and sophisticated media, has fostered the growth of new leaders. Many of the smaller islands of the OECS, however, continue their traditions of strongman style of government, complete with cronyism and corruption, which could be blocking the ascent of a new generation of leaders. Narcotics trafficking and money laundering are serious threats in many of the islands, as well as in Belize. In Belize, even though politics have been dominated by two politicians since independence in 1981, a younger generation of leaders does appear to be emerging in one of the parties. It also has a number of civic and nongovernmental organizations in the social economic and environmental fields that play an important role in society. The Bahamas must make inroads against the politicized government bureaucracy and the patronage system if it is to produce new leaders capable of tackling the country's problems.

In the Dominican Republic, Howard Wiarda notes that the election of Leonel Fernández as president has finally unblocked a political system that had been dominated by old-style *caudillos* for three decades. He cautions, however, that it is not only the individual politicians that need to change, but the *style* of leadership as well, which has traditionally been personalistic, patrimonialist, centralized, and clientelistic. The election results may lead to a revitalization of government as a source of new, young leaders.

Stephen Horblitt sees diverse leadership, working as a team, as the only way for Haiti to emerge from its troubled history. Sectors

such as the churches, grassroots organizations, labor, the private sector, parliament, and political parties all serve as viable sources of leadership: the challenge is for these diverse groups to work together to bridge the divides of Haitian society.

Ambassador Donald Mills argues that Jamaica's unique history has contributed to the rich sources of leadership. Churches, schools, and the public service have all served as breeding grounds for new leaders.

Neither Suriname nor Guyana have consolidated democratic structures and practices. Because the political parties are mired in ethnic distrust and suspicion, Gary Brana-Shute argues that leadership could emerge increasingly from the private sector. Lloyd Searwar agrees that Guyana, like the rest of the region, is facing unprecedented changes. In addition, he notes that Guyana has problems unique from those of the rest of the Caribbean. Authoritarian rule over the last three decades has eliminated sources of leadership, such as the private sector, trade unions, and the media, that other countries have the benefit of tapping; deep ethnic suspicions affect all sectors of society; and the environment is at risk because of the increasing role of foreign-based industries in Guyana's rain forest.

Anthony Bryan notes that Trinidad and Tobago has done well in the economic and political spheres, with a vibrant economy and a strong tradition of democratic governance. He points out, however, that leadership must devise strategies that will not only support a liberalized economy but will "show distributive justice, encourage the rule of law, protect fundamental human rights, and foster the continued growth of democratic institutions."

Turning his attention to the region as a whole, David Lewis writes that language and transportation are the main barriers to the forging of a Caribbean studies that is truly multiregional. The diaspora is the only area where these constraints have been overcome, he argues, and the diaspora is a largely unutilized resource that could be used to forge a regional identity.

Finally, Eugenia Charles also addresses the region as a whole when she calls to the new generation of leaders to take responsibility for the future of the region and for the welfare of the citizens. Each country must make an effort to know and understand the other countries in the region. Ultimately, any problems the Caribbean faces must be solved by the Caribbean. Leaders need to be honest, forthright, nonpartisan, and policy.

These issues are important for U.S. foreign policy. Events in the region do resonate in the United States, even if U.S. foreign policy is often single-issue driven, for example by refugee flows, which are impossible to ignore, or narcotics trafficking, which is viewed as a threat to U.S. security. But there is also a desire on the part of the United States for a stable and prosperous neighbor. It is in the U.S. interest that the leadership that guides the Caribbean into the next century be strong and effective.

The challenges facing the members of the CSIS Caribbean Leadership Group are indeed daunting. But the energy and spirit of hope that is found in the next generation bodes well for the future.





## Barbados and the OECS

*Douglas W. Payne*

The last 12 months brought an unusual number of shifts in power in this region, as opposition parties won elections in Barbados and in three of the countries of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)—Dominica, St. Kitts-Nevis, and Grenada. The transitions in Dominica and St. Kitts-Nevis marked the departure of two long-term leaders, Eugenia Charles and Kennedy Simmonds.

John Compton remains prime minister of St. Lucia, however, having headed governments there for 25 out of the last 31 years. James Mitchell continues to lead St. Vincent and the Grenadines after winning a third straight term in 1994. And in Antigua and Barbuda the Bird dynasty remains intact after more than four decades, with Lester Bird having replaced his father, Vere Bird, as prime minister in 1994.

The shifts in some countries indicate that populations in the Eastern Caribbean are looking for new direction amid mounting social and economic problems and anxiety over how these small island states are to survive in the global economy. At the same time, the permanence of older leaders in other countries indicates that “big man” politics and the authoritarian impulse remain a drag on the prospects for the new leadership needed to confront challenges in the region.

### **Barbados**

Perhaps the most promising electoral transition took place in Barbados, where Owen Arthur led the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) to victory in the September 1994 vote. The election followed a period of unprecedented political and social upheaval that culminated in a no-confidence vote against the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) government of Erskine Sandiford.

Since independence in 1966, power has alternated between the two basically centrist parties. But until the late 1980s, the BLP and DLP were dominated by the personalities of Tom Adams and Errol “Skipper” Barrow. Sandiford, Barrow’s deputy, became prime minister in 1987 following Barrow’s death, but lacked the instincts and political skills to navigate the country through an economic restructuring necessary to keep it competitive. Amid prolonged recession the aging Sandiford simply adhered to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) austerity formula. As his popularity plunged amid strikes and mass demonstrations and as dissent mounted within

the DLP, he resorted to an increasingly aloof and authoritarian style. A mutiny within the DLP led to the no-confidence vote and elections in 1994.

Sandiford conceded the DLP leadership to David Thompson, the 32-year-old finance minister who tried to capitalize on his youth and technocratic skills in the 1994 campaign. But the Sandiford baggage proved too heavy for the DLP. Moreover, the BLP had finally transformed itself nearly a decade after the death of Tom Adams: Owen Arthur, an economist in his early 40s, had been elected party leader in 1993 and his team included many new, promising people.

In his first year in office Arthur stood out among his predecessors and peers in the region with his apparent ability to combine savvy politics with a technocratic approach to complex problems. He has also shown a willingness to delegate more responsibility to promising new cabinet ministers, and he looks to be an important player regionally as the Caribbean continues to seek the best path toward greater economic and possibly political integration.

Meanwhile, the DLP is now undergoing its own transformation under Thompson. A new shadow cabinet has been developed and Barbadian analysts say that DLP candidates in the next election will be mostly in their 20s, 30s, and 40s.

Barbados seems to have emerged stronger following a rocky period in which old-style leadership withered in the face of new economic and social challenges. Its status as one of the world's strongest democracies remains intact, as its strong institutions and its free and sophisticated media helped it to forge a new generation of leaders that seem better equipped to deal with a daunting array of problems.

It remains to be seen whether the same can be said for St. Kitts-Nevis, Dominica, and Grenada, but the prospects in these countries are less promising.

### ***St. Kitts-Nevis***

One year ago St. Kitts-Nevis appeared headed for disaster. In the 1993 elections the People's Action Movement (PAM) of Prime Minister Kennedy Simmonds, in power since 1980, lost the popular vote to the St. Kitts Labour Party (SKLP), but managed to barely cling to power thanks to the first-past-the-post system. Denzil Douglas, the fiery 40-year-old SKLP leader, refused to recognize the PAM victory and called for a shutdown of the country. A state of emergency was called amid violent disturbances. The SKLP boycotted parliament in 1994.

In the fall of 1994, the Simmonds government was rocked to its foundations by a drugs-and-murder scandal. The 1993 campaign had been marked by mutual accusations by the PAM and the SKLP of influence by drug traffickers. In 1995 Simmonds, under pressure from business, church, and civic groups, agreed to new elections. In July the SKLP overwhelmed the PAM, taking seven of eight seats in parliament and defeating Simmonds in his own constituency.

The PAM is now in complete disarray. In recent years Simmonds had weakened the party by muzzling younger voices and expelling a

deputy prime minister. There does not appear to be anyone to pick up the pieces, which means there will be little counterweight to now Prime Minister Douglas.

Douglas, like Simmonds, is a medical doctor. The SKLP is nominally a social democratic party, but while in opposition it was long on anti-Simmonds rhetoric and vague on policy proposals. The SKLP, like labor parties in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Dominica, and to a lesser extent St. Lucia, was a powerful player in the period of the 1970s leading up to independence, then declined amid infighting and the general rightward trend in the region in the 1980s.

The SKLP is the first of the OECS labor parties to regain power. But now it confronts the same problems that led to the erosion of the Simmonds government—powerful, corrupting drug traffickers, rising crime and unemployment, particularly among disaffected youth, and burgeoning jails, all of which threaten the crucial tourist trade. One of Douglas's first acts, renaming the international airport after Robert Bradshaw, the SKLP leader in the 1960s and 1970s and one of the original, domineering Caribbean "big men," was not reassuring. Douglas now confronts an even more immediate test; repairing the severe damage inflicted by Hurricane Luis.

### ***Dominica***

Dominica's 75-year-old Eugenia Charles stepped down in 1995 after holding the country together following major hurricanes in 1979, 1980, and 1989. First elected in 1980, her blunt, no-nonsense style and conservative politics brought a degree of political and economic stability following the initial upheaval brought about by the then radicalized Dominican Labour Party (DLP) after independence in 1978.

In recent years, however, the popularity of the "Iron Lady of the Caribbean" began to wear down as younger voters demanded new answers to economic problems. Meanwhile, the DLP was supplanted as the principal opposition by the centrist United Worker's Party (UWP), founded in 1988 by Edison James, former director of the Dominica Banana Marketing Corporation, and a group of "Young Turk" businessmen.

James, now 51, led the UWP to a clear victory in June 1995, with a more moderate DLP edging out the incumbent Dominica Freedom Party to become the official opposition. James took office promising to divest some state enterprises and invest in social infrastructure, encourage small- and medium-sized enterprises, and construct a new international airport to increase tourism. It remains to be seen, however, whether the business acumen of James and his cabinet will translate into political leadership. The first test for James, as for Douglas in St. Kitts-Nevis, will be the rebuilding after the heavy hit from Hurricane Luis.

### ***Grenada***

Grenada, since the restoration of democratic rule in 1983-1984, has

stagnated under weak governments, the result of weak democratic traditions and a fragmented political landscape littered with a dozen political parties, mostly one-man operations. In June 1995, Keith Mitchell became prime minister after his New National Party (NNP) won a bare majority over the incumbent National Democratic Congress now led by George Brizan.

Mitchell has been around for a long time and, like his peers among Grenada's political elite, exhibits few of the skills necessary to lead a country with urgent social and economic problems and where confidence in politicians, particularly among youth, is evaporating.

Mitchell's reputation for opportunism was enhanced when he quickly opened negotiations with Eric Gairy and the Grenada United Labour Party (GULP), which won two seats in the election, in hopes of strengthening the NNP's ruling majority. Gairy, now aged and blind, paved the way for Maurice Bishop's Marxist takeover in 1979 with his eccentric and authoritarian tenure as prime minister in the 1970s. By September Brizan and other opposition figures were accusing Mitchell of censoring information on the state-run radio and television systems.

Because most of Grenada's political parties are essentially stale, one-man shows it is difficult to see where a new generation of leaders is going to come from. Many of the young and talented have opted to leave the country in a debilitating "brain drain," an alarming trend throughout the OECS. One Grenadian analyst says, only half-jokingly, that the recent return to Grenada from the United States of the 20-something Nadia Bishop might liven things up (Bishop arrived with forensic anthropologist Clyde Snow with the intention of finding her late father's buried remains).

### ***St. Lucia***

In St. Lucia, 70-year-old John Compton has been buffeted by corruption scandals, violent clashes in the crucial banana industry, rising crime and disaffection among youth, and the penetration of St. Lucian society by the drug trade. But his generally conservative United Workers Party (UWP) easily won the 1992 elections because St. Lucians generally do not trust the alternative, the St. Lucia Labour Party (SLP). The SLP is led by Julian Hunte, an increasingly unpredictable, authoritarian businessman with a violent temper.

Hunte, now nearing 60, accuses Compton of clientelism, corruption, and abuse of the constitution, allegations that have merit. But Hunte, meanwhile, has expelled SLP members for questioning his leadership, including the deputy leader in 1993, and has been involved in public fisticuffs. Compton may be way past his prime, but conditions in St. Lucia will have to deteriorate quite a bit further before voters will risk going with Hunte. Meanwhile, the presence of the two of them continues to keep a lid on prospects for the emergence of a new generation of leaders in either party.

### ***St. Vincent and the Grenadines***

In St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Prime Minister James Mitchell has presided over a relatively successful market reform and economic development program. That helped his New Democratic Party (NDP) win reelection in a clean sweep in 1989, and again in 1994 when it won 12 of 15 parliamentary seats. Mitchell has for the most part resisted the temptation to abuse his overwhelming mandate, but his rule has been very much a one-man show. His younger cabinet ministers have been reluctant to challenge him or risk offering new ideas, an arrangement Mitchell continues to cultivate.

After the 1994 election Mitchell, now 63, began grooming Parnel Campbell, his 40-ish deputy, as successor. But Campbell recently was forced to resign after being embroiled in a loan scandal. Mitchell then indicated he would probably seek another term. The question is whether younger NDPers will begin to chafe under the tight rein he has kept on the party or, more likely, continue to go along for the ride and the perks.

What has worked to Mitchell's advantage is an opposition that until 1994 was in disarray. The St. Vincent Labour Party (SVLP), stricken with infighting after losing power in 1984, staggered through the next decade. The most prominent opposition voice was Ralph Gonsalves, a smart, fiery, former Marxist who founded the Movement for National Unity (MNU) and began espousing social democracy. After much haggling the SVLP and the MNU teamed up in an electoral alliance in 1994. The SVLP, charging Mitchell with running a "parliamentary dictatorship," managed to reestablish an opposition presence in parliament by taking three seats there.

SVLP leader Vincent Beache is in his 60s and is not seen by Vincentians as prime minister material. There are some new, younger (40s) faces in the party, such as Louis Stryker who won a seat in 1994, but the SVLP has yet to convince many Vincentians that it is capable of governing. Gonsalves is still in his 40s and may be the most talented opposition figure. But his MNU remains a basically one-man operation and he is still distrusted by many because of his Marxist past.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines confronts the same problems as its neighbors to one degree or another—crime, unemployment, youth disaffection, weak civil society, drug trade penetration, and the need to find a way toward greater regional cooperation in the face of an unforgiving global economy. During his tenure Mitchell has kept a generally steady hand on the wheel and proven to be a relatively effective regional leader as well. His one-man-style of rule, however, always a troubling tendency in the Caribbean's small-island democracies, has been such that his passing from the scene could result in political turbulence.

### ***Antigua and Barbuda***

In Antigua and Barbuda Lester Bird became prime minister in March 1994 elections that were neither free or fair. Under his father, the country had become engulfed in corruption, cronyism, and patronage. Lester promised "modernization," but the indications thus far are business as usual, even though the corruption and abuse of authority

have become a bit more subtle.

Despite myriad obstacles, a united opposition did make inroads in the 1994 vote. The United National Democratic Party (UNDP), led by labor leader Baldwin Spencer, merged with the leftist Antigua Caribbean Liberation Movement (ACLM), led by journalist-gadfly Tim Hector, to form the United Progressive Party (UPP). The UPP managed to win five seats against eleven for Bird's Antigua Labour Party (ALP) machine.

Baldwin Spencer is intelligent and well-meaning, but it is doubtful he has the political skills to lift the UPP up another notch by appealing to the country's disgruntled youth. Hector, now in his 50s, seems more inclined to remain a constant thorn in Bird's side rather than an effective politician, as evidenced by his recent provocation of Bird in the halls outside parliament that nearly led to fisticuffs. In the long term, there does appear to be a nascent youth movement within the UPP. But for the time being citizens of this tiny twin-island nation will be concerned mostly with the Bird government's performance in the wake of Hurricane Luis's devastation.

## Postscript

From mid-1995 to mid-1996 there were a number of significant developments in this small-island region.

In **St. Lucia**, John Compton orchestrated the succession of his hand-picked successor in spring 1996. Compton resigned as UWP party leader in January and arranged to be replaced by Vaughan Lewis, former director general of the OECS. Compton then appointed a UWP member of parliament to the senate, paving the way for a by-election which was won by Lewis, who was then made minister without portfolio. Compton resigned as prime minister on March 31 and was replaced by Lewis.

At the same time, there was a shake-up in the St. Lucia Labour Party. SLP leader Julian Hunte, under pressure from the party rank and file, resigned after 12 years and was replaced by Kenny Anthony, former general counsel in the Caricom secretariat, who reorganized the top levels of the party leadership. The next elections are due by April 1997, although the SLP has demanded that they be moved up. By late summer the country was on a campaign footing. The battle heated up when Lewis accused brothers George and John Odlum of being behind bomb threats to public utilities. The Odlums, former outspoken SLP militants, had only recently been brought back into the SLP by Anthony after nearly a decade and a half of separation.

In **St. Kitts and Nevis** the Douglas government, after just a year in office, faced a secession crisis following the announced intention of Nevis Premier Vance Armory to secede from the federation. Efforts to mediate were led by Sir Shridath Ramphal, the former Commonwealth secretary general, and Prime Minister Lester Bird of Antigua and Barbuda in his capacity as current Caricom chairman.

In **Dominica**, the year-old UWP government of Edison James appeared to gain a renewed vote of confidence when it won a by-

election in the Mahaut constituency on August 12, 1996. The seat was previously held by Brian Alleyne, former leader of the DFP, who was appointed a judge in Grenada. The DFP's defeat reduced its strength in parliament to four seats, compared to the DLP's five, making the latter the official opposition party.

In **Grenada** the Keith Mitchell government appeared to stumble as it entered its second year. The appointment of Danny Williams as governor general prompted opposition parties to walk out of the swearing in ceremony because of Williams's connections with the governing NNP. Moreover, in mid-1996 there were mounting allegations of abuse of power and corruption by a number of cabinet ministers.

Corruption also eroded the image of the James Mitchell government in **St. Vincent and the Grenadines**. In August 1996, and for the second time in less than 12 months, the attorney general was forced to resign under a cloud. Carlyle Dougan resigned after it was revealed he had accepted payment for a land purchase from a businessman from the Dominican Republic who had somehow managed to cash a large, fraudulent check at a state-owned bank. The government promised a full investigation.

**Antigua and Barbuda** was tainted by scandal yet again when it was revealed in spring 1996 that Melvin Ford, an American known to U.S. banking and legal authorities as a career scam artist, had set up shop in Antigua and was evidently running a pyramid scheme to bilk U.S. investors. Meanwhile, the 1996 U.S. State Department annual drug report stated that Antigua and Barbuda "has long been a drug transit country and is increasingly a money-laundering center."

# Belize and the Bahamas

*Douglas W. Payne*

## Belize

Since independence in 1981, Belizean politics has revolved around the rivalry between George Price and Manuel A. Esquivel. The 76-year-old Price, leader of the center-left People's United Party (PUP), headed Belizean governments for all but seven of the last 40 years. The 55-year-old Esquivel, the current prime minister, heads the center-right United Democratic Party (UDP), which won elections in 1984 and 1993. Both parties remain dominated by these two figures, although a succession battle appears under way in the PUP amid suggestions of the aging Price's possible retirement.

Much has changed in Belize since the Price-Esquivel rivalry began, and new leaders struggling to emerge within Belize's traditionally democratic but now somewhat sclerotic political system must confront a complex array of difficult challenges.

One is Guatemala, Belize's Central American neighbor which, despite recent diplomatic agreements, reaffirmed in 1994 its 130-year-old territorial claim to Belize. The UDP's 1993 election victory, in fact, turned on the Guatemalan security threat in the wake of the attempted, military-backed self-coup by former Guatemalan president Jorge Serrano. Tensions continue to flare along the border, nationalism still runs strong within the Guatemalan military, the dominant institution in that country, and Belizean fears have heightened since Great Britain's withdrawal of its 1,600-troop garrison in 1994.

The loss of the British security blanket is only one of the changes roiling Belize. The economy, which relies on commodity exports—sugar, bananas, and citrus—and tourism, has seen steady growth from the late 1980s until recently. But the market reforms initiated by Esquivel in the mid-1980s and generally adhered to by Price in his last term have been jarring and have done little to alleviate unemployment, which approached 15 percent in 1994, and which was even higher among youth.

Moreover, the withdrawal of the British garrison meant a loss of about \$35 million to the economy, about a fifth of the country's GDP. An IMF mission in mid-1995 reported sluggish economic activity, a widening government deficit, scarcity of local savings to finance investment, falling private sector confidence, and rising unemployment.

The result has been mounting disaffection, crime, drug



trafficking (Belize is now a major transshipment point), gang and drug-related violence, erosion of family structures, and continued migration to Belizean communities in Los Angeles and Brooklyn—tens of thousands over the last decade, including many professionals and potential young leaders.

At the same time, Belize is swelling with immigrants from neighboring Central American and as far away as Asia who are rapidly changing the face of this nation of about a quarter million. Most of Belize's 40,000-plus Spanish speakers have arrived since the mid-1980s, and a majority remain illegal. Resentment has mounted among Creoles, whose percentage of the population fell from 40 percent in 1980 to less than 30 percent in 1990, while Spanish speakers rose from 33 to 43 percent.

Belize is also suffering from an increase in official and private sector corruption that is testing the country's independent judiciary. Both parties have been susceptible to wrong-doing when in power. Following the 1993 elections, PUP chairman Said Musa, a contender to take over for Price at the party helm, was charged with attempting to bribe a UDP cabinet official to cross the aisle. Musa was eventually cleared by the courts, but the incident added to the increasing disillusionment with the performance of the political elites.

The disillusionment is evident in the fact that *Amandala*, the hard-charging weekly that does not hesitate to skewer either party, has a circulation nearly seven times greater than any of its competitors, mostly party-aligned weeklies. Literacy in Belize is almost 90 percent. Popular disenchantment is increasingly channeled through an array of civic and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that have emerged over the last decade in the social, economic, and environmental fields. Despite its problems, Belize remains one of the freest societies in the Caribbean.

Belizean civic society is sending a message to the political class that ordinary people are increasingly displeased with it, particularly on domestic issues, no matter how difficult the challenges any Belizean government must face. Belizean analysts note, however, that the two traditional parties seem to be receptive to mounting civic voices and internal change only when out of power. Those Belizean analysts contacted for this project had difficulty thinking of anyone in the UDP or conservative orbits that might fit the young, potential leader profile. As one analyst said, only when the UDP gets knocked out will new blood get a chance.

Within the PUP orbit, though, a younger generation does appear to be emerging. It does not seem sanguine about expectations that Price's successor will come from among his close aides, including Said Musa, even though Musa has cultivated youth support in his Belize City constituency. And the younger generation seems more receptive to women's participation in Belize's traditionally males-only political game. The younger generation blames the PUP's recent election losses on "anachronistical" leadership and a failure to address concerns of younger voters and civic groups. Some are raising questions about the market economic model but it is unclear what alternatives or adjustments they might have in mind. Price

moved the PUP, originally a left-leaning party with a Christian democratic bent, toward the center on economic policy during his last term.

What is certain is that Belize is evolving rapidly and anxiety and tension is mounting within a society once considered among the most tranquil in the Caribbean. The question is whether and how its politics will catch up.

### **Postscript**

The next elections are due by spring of 1998. The question of new leadership in the major parties remains in the background. Concern continues to mount about the drug trade's penetration of Belize. In 1996, the U.S. State Department again listed Belize as one (out of 31) of the world's major drug-producing and drug-transit countries. In June, outgoing deputy U.S. chief of mission Gerard Gallucci described Belize as "uncontrolled territory" as regards drug trafficking and money laundering. His comments prompted the UDP government to send a protest note to the U.S. State Department.

## The Bahamas

In the Bahamas the 25-year reign of Sir Lynden O. Pindling finally ended with the sweeping electoral victory of Hubert Ingraham and the Free National Movement (FNM) in August 1992. Sir Lynden had been in office longer than any leader in the Western Hemisphere except for Fidel Castro. The 48-year-old Ingraham, Pindling's nemesis since the mid-1980s, held out the promise of honesty, efficiency, and accountability in government. But the going has been slow as the Pindling legacy, a political culture based on nepotism, corruption, and patronage, remains deeply rooted and Pindling himself remains active as opposition leader with continued influence within the government bureaucracy.

In some ways the FNM and the 65-year-old Pindling's Progressive Liberal Party (PLP) are similar. Both are basically centrist with the FNM more oriented to free enterprise and a "less government is better" philosophy. But the FNM, founded in 1972, remains an amalgam of the various tendencies and groups that have merged into it over the years, united principally by anti-Pindling sentiment. It was not until Ingraham, a former PLPer, was given the FNM party leadership in 1990 that the FNM found any real direction.

The PLP, in turn, was and to a significant extent remains Sir Lynden's vehicle. For years he capitalized on his image as father of the nation's independence in 1973, the man who wrested the Bahamas loose from the white-minority "Bay Street Boys." He constructed his dynasty on black nationalism flavored with anti-U.S. sentiment, a buoyant tourism- and banking-based economy, a vast patronage machine, and huge payoffs from Latin American drug traffickers. Pindling tolerated little dissent. Ingraham, a one-time protégé of Pindling, was expelled from the PLP in 1986 for his criticism of drug-connected corruption in the government.

Ingraham's public hammering of Pindling led to Ingraham's election to parliament as an independent in 1987. He used his seat as a platform to equate the country's economic slide with official corruption. He was essentially a one-man band, but his message resonated, particularly among youth, who cared little about a long-ago fight for independence and among whom unemployment was surpassing 20 percent. Ingraham, the son of a stevedore and a maid, also capitalized on his humble background. With no formal education beyond high school in Nassau, he apprenticed at a local firm and passed the bar in 1972.

The FNM, lacking a leader with any real dynamism, turned to Ingraham, who led a victorious campaign in 1992 fueled by a large youth turnout that turned on the issues of corruption and recession. After the vote, Ingraham said that relations with the United States, often prickly under Pindling, would improve.

Ingraham has taken steps toward transforming the political culture of the Bahamas. Five of his first cabinet appointments were women. The formerly state-controlled broadcast media has been opened significantly. And a wide-ranging probe of corruption in the former Pindling government was initiated.

But where he has run into a wall is the politicized government bureaucracy, much of which appears to be still in the clutches of Pindling and his cronies. In response to mounting criticism from within the FNM, Ingraham promised yet again in 1994 to put an end to "blatant political victimization" and to "dismantle the previous government's harsh and dehumanizing patronage system."

That must be accomplished if the Bahamas is to produce new leaders capable of tackling the country's problems. The economic picture has brightened somewhat after years of decline, but the state-run airline and hotel and telecommunications corporations are a continuing drag, and unemployment, particularly among youth, remains high.

Increasing violent crime and one of the highest levels of drug addiction in the region continue to erode social institutions. Allegations of police brutality are up. Prisons are overcrowded and conditions deplorable. Responding to popular outcry, the government reinstituted the rather barbaric practice of flogging. Drug-related corruption continues to compromise the judicial system and the Bahamian Defense Force, although to a far lesser extent than under Pindling. Social tensions have been exacerbated and government services strained by the influx of between 30,000 and 50,000 Haitian immigrants. The population of the Bahamas is a little more than a quarter million.

Ingraham has broken the ice but the Pindling years continue to weigh heavily. According to some Bahamian observers, however, what is noteworthy is the emergence of a younger generation within the PLP. This nascent group seems intent on overturning the Pindling way of doing business and reforming the party, although exactly how and in what direction remains unclear. Pindling and his crew remain occupied in defending themselves against corruption charges in drawn-out court proceedings and that may provide a window of opportunity for new voices.

***Postscript***

In 1996 Lynden Pindling's battle against cancer, in addition to the ongoing official inquiry into wrongdoing during his administration, prompted speculation about a possible succession battle for the PLP leadership and raised questions about the party's ability to prepare for elections scheduled to take place by September 1997. Ingraham continued to maintain his reputation for integrity and he and the FNM seemed fairly well-positioned for the 1997 vote. Ingraham, although now just 49 years old, stated in mid-1996 that it would be his last election.

Ingraham also said that he would move ahead on a pledge made during the 1992 campaign to reduce the number of seats in parliament from 49 to 40. That would be to the FNM's advantage because many of the smaller seats were won by the PLP in 1992. Ingraham argued that 49 seats is too many for a country as small as the Bahamas, and that the PLP had gerrymandered the boundaries to its advantage when adding new seats under Pindling. Ingraham's proposed boundary changes appeared likely to elicit similar charges from the PLP.

# The Leadership Dilemma in the Dominican Republic

Howard J. Wiarda

Over the last 36 years, politics in the Dominican Republic has been largely dominated by two charismatic figures, Juan Bosch and, even more importantly, Joaquín Balaguer.<sup>1</sup> They have vied for the intellectual and political leadership of the country in much the same way that the mid-19th century *caudillos* (men-on-horseback) Pedro Santana and Buenaventura Báez galloped in and out of the national palace with frequent regularity and alternated in the presidency over a 30-year period. Although Bosch and Balaguer are civilian *caudillos*, not military men, their personalistic, patrimonialist, centralized, clientelistic style of politics is very much in keeping with the *caudillo* tradition. Now, with the election in 1996 of Leonel Fernández, a new, young, and dynamic leadership is coming to the fore; moreover, the style and content of the political system may be about to change as well.<sup>2</sup>

Bosch's capacities have recently diminished to the point where he has taken himself out of politics. Balaguer, however, although aged 88, blind, and increasingly infirm, is still politically active. Between 1960 and 1996 he occupied the presidency for 24 years, longer than any previous president in Dominican history, including his one-time mentor, dictator Rafael Trujillo, who was often content to allow others (including Balaguer) to serve as puppet presidents. Many Dominicans cannot conceive of their country being led by someone other than Balaguer; less emotionally, others fear the chaos and disorder that, in a still weakly institutionalized polity, may set in now that the venerable

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<sup>1</sup> The context is detailed in Howard J. Wiarda and Michael J. Kryzanek, *The Dominican Republic: Caribbean Crucible*, 2nd ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992).

<sup>2</sup> Howard J. Wiarda, *The 1996 Dominican Republic Elections: Post-Election Report*, CSIS Western Hemisphere Election Study Series (Washington, D.C.: CSIS, 1996).

president has left the scene.

The third leg in this triumvirate of aging leaders has been José Francisco Peña Gómez, leader of the Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD). At 59, Peña Gómez is a full generation younger than Bosch or Balaguer, but as a national-level politician he has been around almost as long (since 1962) and his ideas, to many Dominicans, seem just as tired. Peña Gómez has been fighting many of the ideological and political wars of the 1960s at a time when most of his countrymen are ready to move on to other, newer issues; as with Bosch and Balaguer, many in his own party wish that he would step aside in favor of newer leaders, but because Peña Gómez—again like these others—is considered an elder statesman they are reluctant to push him too hard. Peña Gómez's defeats in both the 1992 and 1996 elections likely spell the end of his leadership of the PRD.

The result is that, until Fernández's victory in the 1996 election, a severe leadership crisis had developed—in the government, within the three main political parties (Bosch's old Dominican Liberation Party, Balaguer's Christian Social Reformist Party, and Peña Gómez's PRD), and throughout the country.<sup>3</sup> The crisis consisted, at one level, of an aging, debilitated, increasingly irrelevant political leadership. For example, by the end of his last term in office, Balaguer—although an exceedingly shrewd, clever, skillful, and manipulative leader—was confining his interests to fewer and fewer policy issues, many important problems were not being adequately addressed, and in some policy areas his own advisers were taking advantage of his incapacities to serve their own, often corrupt private interests rather than broader public policy concerns.

At a second level, the Dominican leadership crisis consisted of the fact that since Bosch, Balaguer, and a necessarily dwindling number of their age and generational cohorts were nearing or already at 90, there were at least two and maybe three increasingly frustrated generations of future leaders lined up and waiting to take their places. This means, first of all, a generation in their 60s and 70s who had been waiting perhaps for some 30 to 40 years to inherit the mantle of leadership. For example, there were countless Dominican leaders who believed and perhaps were led to believe that they would be designated as Balaguer's heir-apparent and tapped as his successor, only to be disappointed by the wily president who never designated a successor and, like Trujillo, purposely kept his henchmen hopeful, tied to the regime, and at the same time vulnerable by hinting they would be his successor without ever saying so publicly or signing on the dotted line. Many of these would-be leaders were themselves aging, some had retired, and others became so frustrated that they joined other parties—only to run

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<sup>3</sup> For a useful overview see Stephen Horblitt, "Future Leadership in the Caribbean: A Conceptual Paradigm," papers prepared for the CSIS Caribbean Leadership Project, May, 1995.

into the same aging *caudillo* problem there.

A second, middle-aged generation in their 40s and 50s was also frustrated, both because of the *continuismo* of the leadership but also because it was often blocked from cabinet and high administrative positions (the main source of money, patronage, and opportunities for upward mobility in the Dominican Republic) by the generation immediately ahead of it, who long held sway over many such positions. Such "government service," in a patrimonialist system, is important not so much for its opportunities to serve public policy goals as to serve private goals; Dominicans frequently refer to such government jobs as a "one-generation," "two-generation," or "three-generation" opportunities—meaning that, depending on the level and longevity of the position, the job and the spoils that go with it can "take care of" oneself and one's family for as long as one, two, or three generations.

By this time, there is yet another generation of persons in their 20s and 30s who have long been waiting in the wings for the political system to remove its blockage and start flowing again. On the one hand, the blockage on the lower end adds to the un- and underemployment of younger persons and increases their sense of despair, hopelessness, and desire to emigrate (the "brain drain"). On the other hand, the continued perpetuation in leadership positions of a generation that was clearly past its prime but unwilling to give up its privileges and controls blocked the entire sociopolitical system and prevented three generations of new leaders from moving into and up in the system. By the mid-1990s, it was clear that paralysis, immobility, and even sclerosis had set in with severe, mainly negative social, political, and economic consequences for the Dominican Republic.

But the problem was not just a blocked and sclerotic sociopolitical system; it also had to do with the style of leadership and the need for new programs, initiatives, and a political system that responds to popular demands.<sup>4</sup> President Balaguer was a shrewd and wily politician—one of the cleverest and shrewdest in the hemisphere. But he was of an older school that would have to include such long-time but, unlike Balaguer, now deceased politicians as Velasco Ibarra in Ecuador, Arnolfo Arias in Panama, or perhaps Getulio Vargas in Brazil. These were all patronage politicians, masters at their craft, and personalistic leaders adept at both juggling the political forces in their countries and manipulating, through cooptation and sometimes coercion, the distinct social groups. Their systems are based in large part on patronage, a favor for a favor, complex reciprocal relations, elaborate family and *compadrazco* networks, programs, contracts, jobs, and sometimes whole government agencies doled in return for loyalty and support—including now, in this age of "democracy," electoral support.

But in this more modern, mobilized, and participatory era, such techniques are no longer enough. They are the techniques of an

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<sup>4</sup> An excellent discussion is Michael J. Kryzanek, *Leaders, Leadership, and U.S. Policy in Latin America* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992).

older, sleepier, more traditional, semi-feudal society. Balaguer personified that older society, although he too had made his adaptations to change.<sup>5</sup> Dominicans, however, are now demanding more—real goods and services such as education, health care, reliable electricity, and housing, and no longer just classic patronage, spoils, and clientelism. Balaguer had recognized these rising demands and adeptly made adjustments in public programs, but he continued to operate within an almost classic patronage/clientelistic pattern.

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<sup>5</sup> A recent assessment is Howard J. Wiarda, "Benign Despotism in the Dominican Republic," *Freedom Review*, 26 (July-August, 1995) 19-22.



In addition to having to satisfy rising popular demands, the Dominican Republic—like other nations in the area—is being caught up in new webs of international interdependence. The Dominican Republic has become, in the title of one recent book, a “transnational community.”<sup>6</sup> It is tied into, dependent on, and interdependent with a host of other nations in the Caribbean and globally, with international organizations, international markets, international cultural currents, and a variety of transnational agencies—churches, business groups, human rights lobbies, political party internationales, and the like. All these activities call for a new style of leadership as distinct from the classic patronage politicians: bankers, engineers, technocrats, economists, systems analysts, and persons with experience in international trade and organizations, at home in Washington, New York, London, Paris, Bonn, Madrid, and Geneva as well as Santo Domingo. Chile, Argentina, Mexico, and perhaps Brazil are making this transition to a new form of leadership, but in the Dominican Republic the changes have just begun and are still mainly in private or quite low public sector levels.

There had developed, in fact, an emerging disjuncture between the political system and its blockage and other areas of national life, where change was going forward. For while the political system during Balaguer’s last years in office may be characterized as constipated, in other areas of national life change and generational shifts are taking place normally. In the economy, business, journalism, the professions, the universities, and public administration, new persons and new generations are moving into positions of leadership. Other institutions such as the armed forces and the judiciary have been slower to change, but transformations are occurring there too. Many of the newer leaders are better educated, more cosmopolitan, and have broader international experiences than the older ones. Now, with a new president in the National Palace, changes in the political system may finally begin to catch up with the changes in other areas of the society.

The blockages in the political system were, to an extent, holding up change in some of these other areas. For example, local mayors and councilmen, and at the national level congressmen and civil servants, might serve for a time and then simply retire from public service. Entering public responsibility with enthusiasm, they often came to see further advancement blocked and leave government to pursue other pursuits. This trend was reinforced by the rising sense in the Dominican Republic and elsewhere that the private sector offers more opportunities than does public service. So there is a growing leadership disparity here as well, in that the better educated and more able Dominicans are gravitating toward private pursuits where the opportunities and career possibilities are better, and away from the public and political domains.

More and more Dominicans were becoming convinced that, with

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<sup>6</sup> Eugenia Georges, *The Making of a Transnational Community: Migration, Development, and Culture Change in the Dominican Republic* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990).

presidential elections scheduled for 1996 and Balaguer having agreed not to be a candidate, the logjam in politics was about to break. Many were optimistic about the prospect, thinking that not only would Balaguer, finally, be gone, but that his style and system of personalistic and patrimonialist leadership would also give way to a newer system of skilled, entrepreneurial, rationalistic leadership. But during the campaign this peaceful transformation was still not clear and there are many pitfalls ahead. It must also be remembered that while a cycle of Dominican history appeared to be coming to an end, the often difficult transition from one generation to the next is also occurring during a time of immense transformations at the international and global levels. So while at one level the Dominican Republic needs to accomplish the generational turnover without disturbances and breakdown, the country also needs to prepare itself for a new era of integration, privatization, and globalization. Both tasks are likely to prove more difficult than is often thought.

Most educated Dominicans now recognize the need for new, more dynamic political leadership that is not only younger but also public policy-oriented rather than patronage-oriented and transnational rather than strictly local. These new ways, however, are also uncharted and uncertain, and open up not only new possibilities and opportunities for the country but also new dangers.

While many Dominicans recognize intellectually that they need to shift course, to move on to new generations and new leadership, they are also somewhat frightened by the prospect and uncertain of the new direction. It was, after all, not just Balaguer's exceedingly astute political skills that kept him in power all these decades but also, on the part of the electorate, fear of the unknown, of uncertainty, and of the possibility that a change of leadership might well lead them back to the chaos, disorganization, and lack of progress which had characterized so much of their history.

With the victory by Leonel Fernández over both Jacinto Peynado of the PRSC and Peña Gómez of the PRD in the 1996 elections, the Dominican Republic elected a new, more dynamic leadership. Fernández is only 43; he has brought with him into the cabinet and other high positions an entirely new generation of political leaders, replacing the aging *caudillos* of the past. But Balaguer is still pulling political strings and his party holds the balance of power in the congress. Moreover, Fernández lacks governmental and administrative experience; whether he can manipulate and hold in check the military and other powerful interest groups the way Balaguer did for so long is still unknown. Balaguer also knew how to pull the strings to get things done in the complex Dominican political system, while Fernández's political skills in operating the machinery of government remain untested. Finally, while Balaguer was a master patronage politician, Fernández will have to both master that style and take his country in new and uncharted directions that emphasize the need for real public policy programs and in an international context that is much more complex and interconnected than before.

# The Challenges to New Leaders: Guyana

*Lloyd Searwar*

The next generation of leaders in Guyana must above all else be capable of dealing creatively and proactively with the effects of fundamental change, especially in the economic structure and external economic relations of Guyana. There is a need to define a new role for the state, both within Guyana and in its place in the world.

Most of the concepts that shaped thinking, policy, and action in the previous generation will have lost their relevance or will have been redefined in radical ways. Those general ideas include in particular *independence/sovereignty*, *regional integration*, and *right of access to preferential markets*. The new leaders will have to find new methods of safeguarding the vital interests that were protected in the traditional or negotiated arrangements, political (constitutional) and economic, that flowed from these general concepts. Their search for new methods must be characterized by a responsiveness to new ideas. While the Guyanese (and Caribbean) intellectuals have hitherto tended to stand aside from the mainstream of the country's life, they will now be called upon to play a central role in devising new strategies for survival. Hence, the University of Guyana will need to be reorganized away from the traditional British pattern to make its teaching and research more directly relevant to Guyana's societal problems.

In general, Guyana's new leaders will face challenges similar to those encountered by their counterparts elsewhere in the English-speaking Caribbean. In addition, however, the new Guyanese leaders will face challenges unique to Guyana, especially with regard to the following problems:

- (i) The narrowing over the past 30 years (the span of a generation) of the field of leadership to party politics. The three-decades-long period of authoritarian rule was characterized by the systematic destruction of leadership, except within the so-called paramount party. The elimination of leadership occurred in all fields, including: the private sector as a result of nationalization; the trade unions through the incorporation of union executives into the party structure; the media through control and state ownership; to some extent the religious bodies; and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) through their whole-sale elimination.

- (ii) The deep ethnic divide between Guyanese of Indian descent and those of African descent and the consequent wide spill-over effects on key institutions, including the parliamentary system and even the university.
- (iii) The preservation of the environment in view of the escalating role of foreign-based industries (forestry and mining) in the Guyana rain forest.

## Role of the State

While the economic context will have far more long-term and pervasive effects on people's lives and hence on their leadership expectations, it is the role of the state which will be perceived as the main theater of challenge. The previous generation had centered their aspirations on independence. The achievement of sovereign statehood was seen as the essential first step and instrument toward the achievement of "development" and higher standards of living through state control of the economy, and consequent enhancement of personal dignity. In keeping with such belief there had been massive intervention into and consequent ownership and control of the economy (in Guyana, 80 percent). Under the guise of constitutional reform, the constitution had been transformed into an authoritarian instrument while retaining the facade of the inherited Westminster model. There was a sustained effort to turn back the "Westernization" in values and life styles (characteristic of Guyanese and West Indians) and to put in its place a new cultural amalgam derived from African and Asian roots.

Socialism and nationalization, however, have failed. The closure of the economy led to a collapse in production and to widespread depravation. Despite efforts to denude them of it, citizens retained their Guyanese and West Indian identity.

In a rebound from this disastrous past, Guyana is in economic terms now considered to be the most open society in the region (one can buy matches from Luxembourg or Malaysia and ice cream from Puerto Rico or Belgium), with private enterprise recognized as the main engine of growth.

The new dominance of the private sector in policy—if not always in actuality—has, however, left the state structure stumbling to find a new role for itself in the redistribution of wealth, the provision of health and education, and the repair and expansion of essential infrastructure, while ensuring that its actions are not perceived as creeping socialism.

Moreover, the state is in large part immobilized by party politics organized along ethnic lines which, in terms of the traditional adversarial politics of the Westminster system, destroys the minimum consensus necessary for effective government.

There is in addition mounting external pressure on state structures. While with the ending of the cold war the geostrategic significance of the Caribbean states has greatly diminished, there are problems of internal instability deriving from marginalization,

illegal

migration to the United States, and the transit of narcotics, problems which induce the United States to make inroads (Clinton's so-called moralistic imperialism) into the sovereignty of these small states.

Such external vulnerability is compounded by the structural adjustment regime enforced by the Washington-based international financial institutions and donor countries and agencies.

## The Economic Dimension

Turning to the economic dimension, three factors steadily threaten and erode the traditional economy of Guyana:

- (i) The preferential markets for the traditional export commodities (sugar in particular) are disappearing under pressure of the growing demand for reciprocity from the new global trading groups, including the European Union, where the conscience for colonial responsibility has been diluted by new membership and preoccupation with internal problems.
- (ii) The inward-looking integration arrangements based on market protection are becoming increasingly porous to imports as tariffs are steadily reduced in response to external pressure.
- (iii) The possible subsuming of the Caricom states into wider trading arrangements—such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) or the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA)—is likely to place unbearable strains on Caricom. In terms of new industrialization for the production of components, the private sector in each state will deal increasingly with the private sector in the wider grouping, rather than with the Caricom partners.

## Environment

Finally, consideration must be given to the implications for leadership of the environmental challenges posed by massive foreign investment in the forestry and mining sectors. On the one hand there is the temptation to attract and facilitate foreign investment that will provide jobs, higher standards of living, etc. On the other hand, there are the environmental risks that will attract the pressures of donor governments, aid agencies, and NGOs, both local and foreign. It will be no simple task for leadership of a small state to balance these challenges so as to ensure sustainable development.

## The Specific Challenges

Against this background of profound social, political, and economic change, what will be the specific challenges to leadership in Guyana and elsewhere in the Caribbean? These challenges are identified as follows:

- (i) Leadership which has hitherto been conceived exclusively in political/governmental terms will now have to be widened to include private sector/entrepreneurial leadership and leadership within the increasingly important NGOs. It will be the task of leaders to ensure that the distribution of values is reordered to promote the emergence of such wider leadership.
- (ii) In order to maintain an essential role for the state within an increasingly hostile or indifferent international context, in which there is little regard for small states and former colonies, and in view of internal divisions, the new generation of leadership must have skills in promoting cohesive societies. Such cohesive societies are the only possible basis from which a role for the state can be maintained internally and effective action taken externally to promote its vital interests. Indeed, the promotion of cohesion through participation and consultation is identified as the major challenge for Guyanese leadership as
  - (a) by diminishing vulnerability, it enhances the security of the state; and
  - (b) it enables it to have the capacity for internal change and maneuver which is imperative for the pursuit of the strategy of export-led growth.

The creation of a cohesive society will require that special attention be given to the full involvement in the development processes of groups that are presently marginalized, including in particular women and youth. The full participation of women and youth is absolutely essential for, at least, the following reasons:

- (c) without the full participation of women, these societies will neglect, at a time of difficult transition, the special skills that women in Guyana and throughout the Caribbean have historically demonstrated for devising strategies for survival;
- (d) without the full participation of youth (over 60 percent of the population), discontent will continue to be expressed in massive migration of young people and the accelerated growth of separatist subcultures such as rastafarianism, or provide a catalyst for rebellion; and
- (e) the small societies of the region cannot afford not to utilize to the fullest extent possible all the

creative and innovative capacities of the human resource available to them.

- (iii) All sections of leadership will need to work together for constitutional reform. The present adversarial parliamentary politics is unsuitable for small societies, especially where party politics are organized along ethnic lines. A reformed constitution, perhaps along the lines of the U.S. model, should aim to promote consensus on legislation and government.
- (iv) Special attention will have to be given to the preservation of the Guyanese/West Indian identity, now being rapidly eroded through the bombardment of 24 hour electronic media. Much thought will have to be given to mechanisms for preserving and enhancing the Guyanese culture as the roots of a common identity. A common identity remains the only possible basis for securing consensus and solidarity.
- (v) As the common market becomes increasingly unworkable and as preferential markets come to an end, the conduct of external economic relations will require not only trade and economic skills but skills in diplomacy and political coordination in order to find joint positions in dealing with larger and more powerful groupings. Integration will have to be reconceived not mainly as an economic entity but primarily as arrangements for the projection of political solidarity, to ensure the safety and viability of the grouping of small states.
- (vi) There must be an awareness (not necessarily technical) of the role of new technology, how it may be utilized, how one searches for new niches for components (the new form of industrialization) produced for use elsewhere, and for possibilities in the services sector. There will be challenges to explore new uses for the old commodities; for example, the production in cooperation with international corporations of sucro-chemicals from cane sugar.

## Conclusion

With few fixed points the next generation of Guyanese leadership will have the task of not only meeting the challenges of the context but of remaking the context itself. In short, their task will be to remake their societies so that they can remain viable in the face of internal division and an unsupportive international environment.



# The State of Leadership: Haiti

*Stephen Horblitt*

## The Challenges

Haiti is struggling to emerge from a history of tyranny and strongman governance, a historical legacy ill-suited to the demands of the present and the future. Haiti must identify and support diverse leadership to meet the challenge of moving beyond crippling dictatorship, elitism, extraction, exploitation, bureaucracy, control, and repression. These leaders will have to model characteristics associated with successful leadership in modern society and exhibit the leadership qualities key to successful democratic change. It must have populace-based political legitimacy. The central issue will be the degree to which Haitian citizens perceive Haitian leadership and institutions as accountable and responsive to them. Leadership will have to inspire trust, offer hope to the people of Haiti, and represent the class, color, regional, and ideological diversity that defines Haiti's all too polarized society. The ability to use systems thinking and to see the interrelatedness of all societal sectors in the context of a globalized economy is critical. Leadership across society will have to engage in teamwork; unity of effort to carry out democratic consolidation and economic recovery is essential. Competent leadership will have to perform and deliver. Because of the fragility of the transition process in Haiti, leadership will require sustained and adequate external support.

### ***Democratship***

If Haiti is to progress toward democratic consolidation, its emerging leadership will have to practice "democratship," a management concept that involves democracy in decision-making and dictatorship in carrying out decisions once made. This implies that Haitian leadership must be open minded, democratic, and tolerant of different opinions in the decision-making process; it also means, however, a commitment to a decision once taken and a strong will to carry it through. Change is a given both within Haiti and in the global economy in which it will have to compete and find a niche, and Haitian leadership will have to manage that change. This requires democratic governance and accountability, which are intrinsic to the development process that is the crucial challenge facing Haiti. Democratic governance and accountability are important to the wise management of Haiti's scarce resource base.

***Populace-Based Legitimacy***

The Haitian people have shown a determined commitment to populace-based political legitimacy. Haitians now have a solid pattern and practice of refusing to cooperate with leadership engaged in undemocratic practices. Haitians removed the Duvalier dictatorship and refused to cooperate with the series of military dictators that sought to rule Haiti following his removal. To be effective, Haitian leaders will have to be democratic, accountable, and responsive in the eyes of the Haitian people. Haiti, like other societies undergoing change and competing for survival in a tough world economy, will have to adopt and act on democratic practices.

***Tolerance and Pluralism***

Totalitarianism, dogma, mechanization, and blind obedience are simply inappropriate for a society that must function in a world of technological innovation. The challenge of the global economy will require Haiti to be proficient in problem solving and conflict prevention and resolution, which requires tolerance, pluralism, and space for the development of a pervasive spirit of inquiry and reflection. Haitian leadership will need to adjust rapidly to changing conditions, and will need to be comfortable with social change, democratization, and economic opportunity. The challenge for Haitian leadership will be to manage change so that it yields more progress than disruption. This will require the willingness to question existing models—leaders will have to re-examine deeply held assumptions, generalizations, and world views.

***Depolarization and Integration***

Haitian leadership must lead in depolarizing Haiti. It will have to integrate all Haitians into the democratic institutions specified in the 1987 Haitian constitution and build a shared vision. It will have to make progress on economic recovery. Equity, inclusion, and opportunity for all Haitians must be promoted in order to effect change. The critical issues facing new leadership include areas such as health, nutrition, and education. Perhaps most important, however, is the need to engage the private sector, which is essential for democratic development and economic recovery. Sustainable development and employment will come, if at all, through a vibrant, open, and competitive private sector. This will require increased access to credit, training, markets, and a climate hospitable to entrepreneurship.

A strong private sector will ensure that the government does not remain the “only game in town;” if government remains the prime source of advancement, dictatorship—no matter the facade—will continue. The task for Haitian leadership is to end the practice of government by franchise and domination of the market by monopolies, “private” or state-owned. If dictatorship is to end, politics must be secondary to a market economy. This means that the identification and support of leadership will have to be diverse. Diverse

leadership does exist in several sectors that define Haiti—there are leaders in private business, labor, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), religious groups, women's organizations, and civil and human rights organizations, in addition to political parties and the government. New leadership also must come from the newly-created Haitian police force.

### **Teamwork**

Leadership's challenge will be to reach across the wide divides of Haitian society to understand and appreciate all sectors. It will have to break down the walls of social distance, fear, and hate, and begin to coordinate actions and work in complementary teams. Haitian leaders coming from diverse places will have to work as a team in the here and now. Leadership will have to put its diverse heads together to provide sufficient visible improvements in the quality of life. This is necessary to keep the hope and faith of the Haitian people in democratic change, and is critical in achieving and maintaining populace-based legitimacy. Leadership will have to perform more efficiently with administrative capacity to meet needs repetitively and with minimum use of scarce resources and energy. Haitian leadership will have to be entrepreneurial, and must anticipate long-term and emerging needs and devise strategies to meet these needs. Team work is essential to vision and effective strategic planning.

The strongman form of leadership cannot successfully enact change because no one person or narrow grouping has the wisdom, knowledge, skills, and competencies required to master change in post-crisis Haiti. Only a Haitian leadership working with a unity of effort can integrate the Haitian nation, and only a diverse leadership can fully appreciate the interrelationships and interdependencies that exist within and outside Haiti. New leadership must represent all Haitians and must integrate the populace into Haiti's civic and economic life. Haiti's new leadership can make significant contributions to the regional and global quest for peace and reconciliation.

## **The State of Haitian Leadership**

### **Religious Leadership**

Religious leadership is a potentially potent force in Haiti, although, fragmented and torn by political and doctrinal conflict, it is in a weakened position. Its fragmentation reflects the divisions of Haitian society, class, color, ideology, and region. While advocates of liberation theology have dominated the political scene, religious pluralism does exist—Catholicism and *Vodun* remain dominant, but Protestantism has significant numbers of adherents in its several denominations.

Whether religious leadership responds to the challenge of mastering change will depend upon whether the leadership can bridge

its political and doctrinal divisions. Religious leadership, having played a key role in the removal of the Duvalier regime, now faces the challenge of internal reconciliation. It can provide an instructive example for all Haitians by modeling tolerance, communion, and reconciliation.

### ***Grassroots Leadership***

In the last 20 years, Haiti has developed strong grassroots organization and a cadre of leadership in that sector. Grassroots leadership typically comes from the ranks of small farmers, small business owners, micro-entrepreneurs, and small-scale producers. Many grassroots organizations are religiously oriented. Much of this leadership comes from the rural areas of Haiti, which represent over 70 percent of the population. One of the major goals of this leadership is the decentralization of political and economic power and resources. During the 1991 coup and its repressive aftermath, this sector suffered destabilization and went underground, but can now continue in its tradition of development work in health, education, economic empowerment, and the development of entrepreneurship. Grassroots leadership will have to play a key and creative role for democratic development to take hold. Its challenge is to help integrate the disenfranchised into Haiti's political and economic processes, and to hold government accountable through constitutional and democratic processes.

### ***Labor Leadership***

The Haitian free labor movement has a core of dedicated leaders focused on restructuring and rebuilding the union movement and strengthening communication with membership. The free labor movement showed its commitment to democratic change by organizing a civic action campaign to educate voters on electoral politics. Over 200 labor leaders successfully formed a labor coalition and led unions in a national drive for civic education and voter participation. Haitian unions registered 862,000 voters, fully one-third of all registered voters in the country. Trade union leaders have begun a dialogue with representatives of the private sector to address employment creation and the promotion and protection of workers rights.

### ***Political Parties***

As a group, leaders from Haiti's major political parties compare favorably to party leadership in the developed world. They are intellectually well prepared and gained valuable experience as a result of having led the resistance movement against the Duvalier dictatorship. Many have lived in exile and have had the opportunity to observe and study a wide range of political systems and practices. These leaders have survived the difficult transition period and aftermath of the Duvalier dictatorship, and have managed mostly to maintain their political organizations under extremely difficult circumstances. Recently, they provided an instructive

example of principle-centered leadership when they took a stand against electoral irregularities associated with the 1995 local and legislative elections.

Nonetheless, they face major challenges. They must address fragmentation and personalization to build winning coalitions. Just as important, however, they must develop the capacity to attract members who heretofore have not had the opportunity to participate in Haiti's political processes.

### ***Parliament***

The new Haitian parliament and its leadership will be a key factor in determining Haiti's success or failure. The legitimacy of the new parliament is also at issue because of widespread irregularities in the electoral process that brought its members to office. Most Haitians eligible to vote did not participate in the make-up or second round of elections that followed the foul ups of the June 25, 1995 elections. Only three members of the former Chamber of Deputies were returned to office after the elections; approximately one-third of the senators have prior legislative experience.

The tests for the new parliamentary leadership will be severe. It will have to establish itself as an independent branch of government that can serve as a check and balance to the traditionally supreme executive branch. It will also have to take many decisions on complex issues crucial to Haiti's ability to compete in a highly competitive global economy.

### ***Security Forces***

The creation of a new Haitian security force, the Haitian National Police (HNP), congruent with democratic development is a major challenge facing Haiti. Central to meeting this challenge is the identification, training, and placement of appropriate senior-level personnel. This leadership must have the moral rectitude, professionalism, and loyalty to democratic principles required to support democracy. The process of selecting leadership for the HNP is receiving mixed reviews. Some experts see the process yielding results more positive than not, while others consider the process flawed. Leadership defined as the Commissar (precinct level) and higher have received very high evaluations, but other appointments have raised concerns about the politicization of the HNP. The Haitian government has surrounded the selection process with a politicized cabinet, an action that could undermine the standing of the HNP. It threatens to continue the tradition of a politicized security force operating in the service of a strongman-dictator. One hopeful sign is that the police themselves have brought many allegations of police abuse, indicating that the police are policing themselves.

A key issue is the government's inadequate cooperation on senior level appointments with the tripartite Haitian-U.S.-UN Commission. Cooperation with the commission is crucial because it is a sign of the government's commitment to non-partisan and

professional leadership for the HNP. Transparency and accountability in senior appointments are essential to insuring non-partisan, professional, and humane leadership of the HNP.

### ***Private Sector***

Haiti's private sector is diverse and pluralist, consisting of large, medium, small, and micro-enterprises. The state, however, aligned with dominant elements of the private sector and restricted access to capital, markets, and training. Traditionally, private sector leadership has been reluctant to take the steps needed to help Haiti master change. At crucial times in the period following the removal of the Duvalier dictatorship, it did not lead. Now, however, a significant minority has assumed leadership, speaking out and taking steps that support democratic change and economic reform, and has developed concrete plans for economic reform. This forward-looking minority has made efforts to promote democracy and has reached out to set up linkages across class and color lines. There is also considerable potential for decentralized development through regionally-based business in the provinces.

# Leadership in Jamaica: Some Reflections

*Donald O. Mills*

## Background and History

Jamaica's unusual history has had a powerful influence on the emergence and performance of its leadership. First, there was a complete break with the experience that preceded the Western presence, which began with the "discovery" and colonization of the island by the Spanish. This period lasted for a period of 163 years (1492-1655), and resulted in the total elimination of the "Indian" peoples who had inhabited the island, as well as their traditions and systems. The British conquest and colonization followed, and lasted 307 years, from 1655 until the achievement of independence in 1962. Jamaica therefore experienced an exceptionally long colonial period of 470 years. The introduction of a large number of slaves from Africa and a variety of settlers from England and other parts of the British Isles further influenced the structure of the new community.

Leadership in the early period was expressed in areas such as the government, through the colonial administration in civil and political affairs, the management of estates, and the control of the slave population. Positions of authority, leadership, and supervision were held by British officials and white plantation owners and employees.

Slave revolts formed a major element in Jamaican affairs, had a significant influence on the movement for abolition, and demonstrated the determination on the part of many of the enslaved to fight the system and to seek freedom. A number of the leaders of these movements and later protests are counted among the heroes of Jamaica, three of them formally designated National Heroes and celebrated regularly.

The protests against aspects of the colonial system in the early post-slavery years ended with rebellion in one part of the island in 1865. This rebellion was crushed severely, and the leaders and followers were hanged.

At the end of the slavery period there was a great movement away from the plantation to the hills of Jamaica, setting the foundations for the development of a large small-farming population which became the very foundation of Jamaican life, and from which most of today's Jamaicans sprang. Organizations such as the Jamaica

Agricultural Society brought these people together in their various communities.

But others came to Jamaica with different cultures and endowments. These included the indentured workers from India and China, as well as migrants from Jewish, Lebanese, and German origin. These have all contributed significantly to Jamaica's development, and have provided leadership in different spheres. The Indians first worked on farms, but many later moved into other sectors. The Chinese also moved from the land, at first mainly into retail trade but increasingly into other areas such as the professions and the public service.

If immigration changed the face of Jamaica, emigration also has been a major feature in Jamaica's history, starting in the post-slavery period and developing in the late 19th century with the first (French) attempt to build the Panama Canal. Large numbers of Jamaicans were in Panama when the United States took over that project, and later went to other countries in the Caribbean region, including Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Cuba, where their descendants still reside. Jamaicans have emigrated to the United States, and in the post-World War II years to the United Kingdom and Canada. Many of these Jamaicans have done very well and retain strong ties with the island, which has benefitted in some ways.

But the loss of skilled manpower, or "brain drain," has had serious implications for Jamaica, including the loss of potential leaders. Many Jamaicans have occupied leadership positions—in politics, civil rights movements, and other sectors—in their adopted countries. Some emigrants have returned to Jamaica to work or establish businesses, or have remitted money for investment. Special efforts are now being made to persuade some emigrants to return home to the Public Service or to other spheres of work.

## Sources of Leadership

As the country has developed, a wide variety of institutions and activities have been established, including those which are essential to the conducting of the affairs of a modern state. Leaders have emerged both as driving forces of change and as a response to developments. In the past 40 years, the economy, traditionally based on agriculture, has been considerably diversified. The bauxite and alumina industry, manufacturing and processing, tourism, and the airline and shipping industries have emerged as important sectors. The social sector, the professions, the trade union movement, voluntary organizations, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and educational and training institutions have become major sources of leadership.

In the **private sector**, a particularly interesting development has been the transformation of the financial, banking, and insurance sector. Originally based on branches of British, Canadian, and U.S. corporations, this sector was the subject in the 1960s of a program of "Jamaicanization," and has grown considerably in the past two



decades.

The role of the **churches** has been a major factor in leadership development, in part because they were the first to provide some education to the former slaves and their children. The churches also provided an opportunity for leadership and for participation in social and welfare activities.

**Education**, including the establishment of the Mico Teachers Training College, had an enormous effect on leadership. The training college provided what might well have been the first opportunities for professional development for the descendants of the slaves. The primary school teachers emerging from that institution for a long time were the island's main community leaders. Their dedicated work gave large numbers of young Jamaicans the opportunity to advance their positions. Many of the teachers' own children went on to occupy prominent positions in Jamaican life, and many teachers have served in a variety of spheres, including political. Two have held the position of governor general of Jamaica. Educational institutions today continue to play an important role in leadership development, from basic schools to tertiary institutions, including two universities.

The rebellions of the past were echoed in the 1930s, which saw upheavals against economic and social conditions. This period gave birth to **political party organizations** and **trade unions**, which provided the main vehicles for the movement toward self-government and eventually independence. (Political parties are discussed in the following section.)

The **art** movement also was born in the 1930s. This movement, developed over the years, transformed society and today has many expressions—painters, sculptors, ceramists, galleries, the theater, and Jamaican music and dance. These sprang from traditional forms to their current expressions, which have spread throughout the world and maintain a large following.

The **police force** in early years also provided career opportunities for young Jamaicans. The **public service** which, like the police force, was originally led by British officials, saw the rapid emergence of a cadre of intelligent and dedicated Jamaicans, notably from the 1940s to the 1960s. These quickly occupied top leadership positions, and were therefore prepared for independence in 1962. Many of these leaders received their university education in the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada before the University of the West Indies was established. Today, however, many believe that the service has not maintained the quality of those earlier years. Efforts are being made to remedy this, in particular by way of special recruitment and training programs and by narrowing the gap between public and private sector emoluments.

With independence, the British regiments gave way to the country's own **defense force**. With its emphasis on discipline and leadership, the defense force added a new dimension to the community. Today, a number of officers from the force occupy important positions in the public service.

The **women** of Jamaica have historically carried particularly heavy responsibilities and burdens, beginning in the slave period and continuing with respect to family, farming, and other spheres. Women still face major impediments to full participation in

development, but have developed great strength, capability, and leadership qualities. They represent a valuable resource and are gradually taking more leadership positions in the public service, the professions, and other sectors.

Recent years have witnessed a spectacular development of the **media** and the number of opportunities for news reporting, comment, analysis, and criticism. These areas have a great demand for leadership. In addition to providing opportunities for leadership development, the media subjects leaders in other sectors—government and otherwise—to scrutiny and criticism.

**Outreach**, or Jamaica's impact outside the country, is an important dimension of Jamaican leadership. Outreach has been particularly notable in areas such as sports (track, boxing, and cricket) and music. Also, many Jamaicans, notably the Right Hon. Marcus Garvey, have had a significant impact on communities such as African countries and the black community in the United States.

In the field of **international affairs**, in particular the United Nations, Jamaican leadership has also been significant, particularly in light of the size of the island's population.

## The Role of Political Parties

Political leadership is an especially important source of leaders and has occupied an unusually large share of attention in Jamaica. There are a number of reasons for this. First perhaps is the fact that Jamaica's society, coming out of a particularly harsh historical experience, needed transformation. Rex Nettleford, in his book *Political Leadership in the Commonwealth Caribbean*, notes:

"Just about everything that has been achieved in Jamaica and the wider Caribbean—from the abolition of slavery to the attainment of Independence and the successes and failures experienced since 1962—has been forged in the crucible of political action."

The upheavals of the 1930s resulted in the emergence of two major political leaders, each establishing a political party. These charismatic leaders, their successors, and their two parties have totally dominated the political scene for over 50 years, leaving little or no room for any other parties.

But changes are now taking place. Many Jamaicans, like people in many countries, have become disenchanted with political leaders and the political process. Moreover, a new political party was formed recently, and could bring major changes to the political scene and in the types and styles of leadership.

The continuing public debate on constitutional reform contains a particular element that is centered around reducing what is seen by some as the overwhelming power that the present Westminster-type system places in the hands of the prime minister. All this is accompanied by strong demands for accountability from politicians

and public officials and probity in the matter of the benefits from government expenditures and in the electoral process.

The demand evident in Jamaica and elsewhere for greater participation in governance is resulting in movements for the reform and revival of the system of local government, the widening of opportunities for nongovernmental interests to interact with government, and the decentralization of the activities of such ministries as those dealing with health and education.

Far-reaching steps have been taken to downsize the public sector and to remove restraints on free market operations in the hope that the private sector will act as an engine of economic growth. But it is becoming increasingly accepted that there must be a constructive and effective partnership among the state, the private sector, and trade unions. To achieve this, given the current lack of understanding and concern about the state of the economy, will require real leadership skills. Moreover, the private sector will have to show a greater degree of managerial and leadership capability, especially in matters concerning development policy and dealings with the wider world.

This will be particularly crucial as Jamaica emerges from the strict regime imposed by the International Monetary Fund. Economic and financial discipline must now be developed and imposed internally through cooperation between various parts of society—including consumers.

## Challenges to Leadership

Jamaica has passed through a critical stage over the past 40 to 50 years, as it effected the transition from a colony with a long period of slavery to an independent state. The tasks have included many elements—building a nation, restoring pride and dignity, and designing and establishing the apparatus required by a modern state in a variety of fields. In addition, Jamaica has had to manage its relations with countries and groups of countries across the world—with other Caricom states, Latin America, bilateral trading partners, and in the international arena through participation in the UN system. All of this is relatively new for Jamaica.

Today, and for the future, the country faces a broadening agenda in national and international affairs, including:

- the implications of globalization;
- the opportunities and demands presented by new technologies in communication and information;
- the gradual disappearance of support systems such as trade preferences and development aid;
- the new dimension in development, trade, and other areas that arise out of environmental and sustainable development issues;
- the widening impact of narcotics trade and crime throughout the world; and
- the continuing management of relations with the

superpower next door, the United States.

A factor that must be considered is Jamaica's size and population. One of the important characteristics of the leadership situation has been the versatility and flexibility that comes as a result of small size and limited human resources. But as the world becomes more complex, the need for increasing specialization will grow, and this could put a greater strain on small communities.

Jamaicans have manifested effective leadership in a variety of fields, and in this have drawn strength from previous generations. But there are problems as well, some of them quite similar to those being experienced in many countries, both large and small.

Probably the most troubling of these is disaffected youth and the absence of adequate opportunities and positive influences in their lives. The emergence of violence is to some extent associated with this, as well as the widening influence of drugs. The deterioration of the educational system and social infrastructure, partly as a result of the rigorous structural adjustment programs prescribed by the major lending agencies, has been an important contributor to this problem.

Many different programs have been introduced over the years to address this issue. These include leadership and skills training programs in addition to management training initiatives conducted by the private sector, universities, and government institutions. The University of the West Indies has instituted a special program designed to encourage the development of its students' leadership skills. This program seeks, among other things, to develop in students an understanding of the meaning of leadership and to enhance their communication skills.

But probably most important is the need to establish a more equitable society, remove the disadvantages faced by large numbers of persons, and correct the unusual degree of inequality in the distribution of income. Inevitably, in the light of the country's history, race and class remain important factors in the life of the country, although Jamaica is seen as being in a more favorable situation in this matter than many other communities.

The Poverty Programme recently instituted by the government in association with a wide range of national interests and organizations and with some support from bilateral and multilateral donor agencies is expected to make a significant impact on these conditions. It calls for a considerable degree of community involvement and leadership.

The issue of the need for effective moral leadership in the country is a major concern. Inevitably, the churches have been criticized for failing in their duties in this matter—and some of this criticism comes from within church circles. It is clear, though, that the responsibility does not rest entirely with them. There has been a deterioration in discipline and public behavior, and the government has joined with others to institute a program on values and attitudes in hopes of addressing these issues.

It is, in truth, sometimes difficult to tell whether Jamaica has too many leaders (or too much leadership) or too few. The creativity and energy are there, and in some spheres there are clear

indications of special leadership qualities. But there are contradictions and inadequacies and some serious failures which seem to derive from lack of effective leadership.

    This, it seems, is Jamaica's challenge.

# Reflections on Suriname and Guyana

*Gary Brana-Shute*

## Introduction

Suriname and Guyana are both multiethnic societies, the former comprising populations of AfroSurinamers (Creoles), East Indians, Indonesians, Maroons, AmerIndians, and several smaller groups, while the latter is generally split between two huge ethnic blocs—the AfroGuyanese and the IndoGuyanese (East Indians). Called plural societies, virtually all options, choices, and decisions—political or otherwise—are couched in terms of ethnic identification. Both countries are large by Caribbean standards, about the size of the state of Georgia. Suriname's population is about 400,000 and Guyana's 750,000. Both countries are largely covered by rainforest with the bulk of the populations residing along the slender coastal plain and in the capital cities of Paramaribo and Georgetown.

Democracy, expressed through the parliamentary system, has been derailed violently in both countries and, despite recent fair elections, is not yet reconsolidated. From about 1964 until 1992, AfroGuyanese ruled through rigged elections and control of the state security apparatus. A military coup overthrew Suriname's moribund and corrupt system in 1980, and a largely Creole military and their civilian supporters manned an authoritarian government until elections in 1987, another coup in 1990, and elections again in 1991. Neither country has consolidated its democratic structures and practices, and great danger exists, particularly in Suriname, for a return to what Gordon Lewis called "constitutional dictatorship" based on a strongman's control of state resources. This will be tested in Suriname in the wake of the 1996 elections which witnessed the victory of the National Democratic Party (NDP), the party associated with former military commander, Desi Bouterse.

It is within this context that the nature of leadership, the choices leaders must make, and the participation of voters (through the ballot box and their political organizations) will be examined.

## Suriname

Until the late 1970s Suriname appeared to be a stable plural

society, preserving a functioning democratic system and achieving respectable economic development without serious ethnic rivalries or breakdown. The credit for this accomplishment was given to the political practice of consociationalism, an arrangement Arend Lijphart defines as government by a multi-party, multiethnic, elite cartel who, although rancorous and "outbidding" one another in public, arranged backstage deals to pass patronage around to their political constituents and between political parties.

Though ethnically divided, the population was so small and heterogeneous that leaders developed a complex balance of power that necessitated power sharing and which in turn produced a more manageable decision-making burden spread across ethnic groups. Yet, in the years leading to independence (1975) and through the decade of the 1980s, consociationalism collapsed, yielding a degree of ethnic polarization not unlike that in Guyana. An attempt to renew consociationalism in 1987 failed and the multiethnic coalition government was routed again by the military. The 1991 elections saw a return once again of the "old" parties and their same leaders. With the 1996 elections swiftly approaching, the run-up is witnessing the collapse of multi-party coalitions, fragmentation along ethnic and age lines, and an opportunity for the emergence of a strongman in the person of former military dictator Bouterse. The consociational model in Suriname has proven itself unable to function under stress and new structures and leaders are emerging—not all democratic in the conventional sense.

A serious question thus arises: if the present government is unable to create a more stable, law-abiding society and prevent its 51-member National Assembly from fragmenting into polarized camps, what is to prevent the constitutional government from once again losing popular support and furthering public alienation to the extent that an authoritarian regime, posing in the clothing of national renewal and ethnic equality, would be legitimized? The NDP, led by Bouterse, seems perched to forge a strong, popular-based movement supported by frustrated younger voters cut across ethnic lines. The old parties (East Indian VHP, Creole NPS, and Indonesian KTPI who confederated in 1987 and again in 1991 into the slowly disintegrating New Front) seem helpless to generate a response. In Suriname today, political vision survives only in the opposition party, and even this too might become corrupted and readily exchanged for clienthood under the obliging patron, Bouterse, and his circle of former military officers.

Thus, Suriname faces a period of political and economic redefinition. The old leadership—Lachmon of the VHP, Venitiaan of the NPS, and Soemita of the KTPI—are unable to develop anything more than fragile alliances among their parties, alliances which cannot function under the demands the country faces. Nor can the leaders control their young constituents who are abandoning them for two other political parties promising what are essentially class-based membership incentives rather than purely ethnic ones.

The two new alternatives are different in design; one is an ethnic federation of younger ethnic elites, the other is a truly multiethnic party. The new ethnic federation, Democratic Alternative '91, a coalition forged from the middle class from four ethnic blocks (Creoles, East Indians, Indonesians, and Maroons) has



virtually fallen apart, it too

victim of contentious outbidding, rivalry, and promises of patronage to the members' constituents.<sup>1</sup>

The other competitor, Bouterse's NDP, is in fact a multiethnic unitary party, scrupulously addressing the frustrations and ambitions of younger voters. Bouterse's instincts and experiences during his tenure as military ruler sensitized him to issues of class over ethnicity and youth over aged elites. He presents himself as a man of the people, with the rhetoric of reconciliation and prosperity for all. Voters are so dismayed with the old politics that they may very well forgive him for his unconstitutional rule and breaches of law and order in the 1980s and vote him into power or, at least, anoint him as kingmaker. Bouterse and his NDP will reconsolidate a national superstructure which will override fragmentation and ethnicity.<sup>2</sup> The last time such a national superstructure was present was during Dutch colonial rule. Should the NDP be victorious, a degree of authoritarianism will be required to prohibit ethnic splintering and dissent, but it will be authoritarianism tempered by prosperity and fairly equal distribution of goods and services not unlike Singapore.

### ***Postscript***

Surinamers went to the polls on May 25, 1996 and gave a slim majority of seats to the "old parties" (the so-called New Front coalition with 24 seats), 16 seats to the NDP, and a total of 11 seats to three smaller parties. By late August two factions of the New Front bolted—five members of the East Indian VHP, calling themselves VHP 2000, and the entire cadre of the Javanese KTPI—and joined the NDP. Two members of the smaller Alliance Party crossed over as well. The NDP block now controls the National Assembly with 28 of the 51 seats. On September 5, the Peoples' Committees (composed of elected members of the National Assembly, district representatives, and local representatives) convened and elected Jules Wijdenbosch of the NDP as president of Suriname. The old New Front is dead and along with it the machine ethnic politics that has characterized Suriname's recent political history.

## Guyana

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<sup>1</sup> Before fragmenting, DA '91 had a decidedly middle class draw. The party promoted privatization, application of the IMF's monetary reform program, and a closer relationship with the Netherlands in the form of a Commonwealth.

<sup>2</sup> Bouterse's political heroes are Maurice Bishop of Grenada and Jerry Rawlings of Ghana. In many ways the highly nationalist NDP continues the Caribbean political traditions of Jamaica and Grenada in the 1970s.

The political polarization of the two ethnic groups by the late 1950s into a Marxist-led East Indian faction and a socialist-led black and colored faction left more conservative Portuguese, Chinese, and white populations without ideological or ethnic representation. By the late 1980s, several years after the death of strongman Forbes Burnham, his successor, the more moderate Desmond Hoyte, loosened state controls on the bankrupt economy and permitted a degree of private investment and enterprise, particularly in the gold sector. Change was unleashed and East Indians and AfroGuyanese alike sought political alternatives to exploit the new environment.

Nevertheless, these choices were still forged in the primordial context of ethnic political parties. *Apanjhit*, or "vote your own," still defines political rules in Guyana despite the victory of Cheddi Jagan's PPP (People's Progressive Party) aligned with a small AfroGuyanese party, Civic. PPP/Civic is a coalition dominated by Jagan's East Indians. The coalition is, however, a quantum advance over the draconian rule of Burnham's and later Hoyte's Afro-PNC (People's National Congress). Nationalist mobilization in Guyana will have to come from class coalitions who see their new opportunities better served by development-oriented leadership than ethnic-patronage leadership in a state-dominated socialist system.

Political power in Guyana is slowly being redefined. Formerly, power came to rest almost exclusively on an institutionalized system of political control rooted in regime domination of the state apparatus. These conditions were inherited from the colonial past, which also favored the urban black and colored elites. East Indians were not much more than "coolies" with little education, money, or access to professions. The demographics have changed in a dramatic fashion over the past 30 years, however, with East Indians now urban, educated, and prosperous, particularly in the private sector (farming and export-import primarily). Many AfroGuyanese have seen their fortunes demolished as their once lucrative civil servant positions (and the consequent access to state perks and patronage) sharply diminished with the shrinkage of the state and the election in the first free elections in almost 30 years of President Cheddi Jagan—a former Marxist who is not entirely reformed but is open to change. The state oligarchy is finished, replaced by enterprising private sector elites. Guyana is an open society in every sense and the once powerful black-dominated labor unions and civil service are drastically weakened.

With the conditions for sustaining state power now eliminated, political choices have the opportunity to advance beyond racial-ethnic options. The emergence of the PPP/Civic coalition is an advance over the polarization of the old PNC and PPP. Reacting negatively to this is a recalcitrant group of black nationalists who have broken off from the PNC and aligned around the black mayor of Georgetown, Hamilton Greene—not surprising since the former powerful black civil servants all reside in Georgetown.

Guyana thus has the ambiguous opportunity to embark on the consociationalist path chosen by Suriname and which has shown serious flaws in that country. It is premature to say that Guyana

could develop a true multiethnic party such as the NDP in Suriname (and hopefully a more lawful one) because Guyana has had no experience with Suriname's failure of consociationalism and thus the attendant historical frustrations characterizing that model. Emerging from 30 years of unconstitutional PNC one-party rule, it is probable that Guyana will prefer to experiment first with multiethnic coalitions such as PPP/Civic rather than a unitary multiethnic party. In a sense Guyana is proceeding on a political path selected by Suriname in the late 1950s. Although class is never absent from any political analysis, leadership in Guyana will continue to appeal to ethnic blocs. As the economy prospers and private investment increasingly enters the country, however, this will change and leadership will come increasingly from the private sector.

## Conclusion

Leadership in Suriname and Guyana falls squarely in the "transactional" category. Transformational or moral leadership cannot survive in the current climate of ethnic distrust, suspicion, and "you win, I lose" thinking.

In sum, ethnic rivalry built around communal blocs—ethnic constituencies—destroys productive national life and is a prescription for disaster. The many attempts to design appropriate strategies for development (aid, loans, and private sector development) all add up to nought in an environment of illegitimacy and repression in bi- or multi-polar states. New leaders may succeed old ones, but they learn very little. In Suriname and Guyana, new regimes made all the old mistakes, still putting the cart before the horse. Both countries must seek the political kingdom of cross-communal unity before they can expect prosperity and development. Both countries remain far from that goal, although the leadership of Guyana seems better prepared than Suriname to advance the interests of parliamentary democracy along lines not strictly ethnic—and thus more organic, stable, and equitable.

In any event, leaders will emerge increasingly from the private sector rather than be drawn from the ranks of party hacks.

# Review and Outlook on Contemporary Leadership: Trinidad and Tobago

*Anthony Bryan*

## Executive Summary

This brief review takes as its point of departure the issues raised in the terms of reference of the Caribbean Leadership project. The range of challenges and the criteria outlined in the conceptual paradigm (Horblitt, 1995) when applied to Trinidad and Tobago (T&T) reveal that the country has been very successful in meeting some of those challenges.

In the **economic** sphere, T&T is having enviable success in facing competition in the global economy and in attracting foreign investment, but it is realizing less success in developing and implementing proactive strategies to ensure sustainable development.

In the **political** arena, the tradition of democratic governance is strong. But democracy is also under challenge *inter alia* from the inability of the overextended state to meet growing social demands, public corruption, the culture of the drug trade, the rearing of ethnic politics, some disenchantment with traditional politics under the “Westminster” system, and the increasing public concerns about government responsiveness and accountability.

In the **social** realm, there is an increase in the poverty index, an intensification of drug-related activity, growing alienation among youth, and government attempts to curb press freedom. Also, standards of civil conduct are deteriorating and there is need for the (regional) adoption and adherence to an effective Charter of Civil Society and for international agencies to assist nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and state institutions in empowering civil society.

In general, leadership is being challenged to promote policies that, while they enhance economic development, also show distributive justice, encourage the rule of law, protect fundamental human rights, and foster the continued growth of democratic institutions.

## The Economy

In the past decade, Trinidad and Tobago has moved from being one of the region’s most centralized state-owned economies to become the most open, competitive, diversified, and industrialized economy in the island Caribbean. All of T&T’s governments since 1986, including

the present coalition government (elected in November 1995), have pursued similar strategies of economic reform in which policies conform to prevailing free-market principles. These include a comprehensive program of privatization and divestment of state enterprises, trade liberalization, an open market-driven economy, rationalization of the public sector, promotion of private enterprise and a strong export sector, the attraction of foreign investment, and the strengthening of the services sector. These ingredients, coupled with the proper management of T&T's energy-based economy, have been effective tools for promoting investment, generating new jobs, and creating wealth.

The process of economic liberalization has the full support of the majority of the private sector. Some small businesses have been hurt by import liberalization, but large- and medium-sized enterprises have responded well to the open economy and have seen greater profits. A series of local mergers have also produced T&T-based regional conglomerates in manufacturing, food processing, merchandise trade, and finance which have expanded their operations into North America, Europe, and Latin America. As one measure of success, in mid-1996, manufacturers in Barbados and Jamaica complained bitterly about the threats to their own manufacturing sectors because of the very efficient and competitive export nature of the T&T manufacturing sector.

Over the medium term, the country will earn substantial revenue from its petroleum and energy sectors, as well as from significant amounts of foreign direct investment (FDI). From 1992 to 1995, FDI from all sources amounted to almost U.S.\$3 billion. Current estimates are that energy-related FDI will amount to a further U.S.\$4 billion between 1996 and 1999. In 1995, T&T was the largest single recipient per capita of U.S. investment in the Western Hemisphere.

In sum, Trinidad and Tobago's economic policies are directed toward making the country's economy competitive regionally, as well as more fully integrated into the global economy. Short of a major decline in world oil prices (or in prices for energy-related products) or long-term labor unrest in the industrial or public service sector that could damage long-term business confidence, the economic future for T&T is very bright (Bryan 1996).

### ***The Challenges (Economic)***

- T&T's good economic fortune in being a petroleum- and hydrocarbon-based economy also has a serious downside: while the economy may sustain the country economically, it is also slowly killing it. Environmental concerns and the issue of sustainable development are assuming an importance critical to the economic survival of the country. Between the years 1990 and 2000, the number of industrial and manufacturing establishments is expected to increase from 1,220 to 3,100. The major sources of air pollution in T&T are the industries that produce sugar, cement, iron and steel, ammonia, urea, methanol, ammonium sulphate, sulfuric acid, petroleum and limestone, bagasse, and bauxite transfer. Water pollution is caused by rum

distilleries, oil seeps from non-functioning oil wells, and wastes from land-based industrial activities (Farabi and Charles, 1996). Concern for the environment and the health of the population are urgent matters that dictate consensus and collaboration at the national, regional, and international levels. An Environmental Management Authority (EMA) is not yet fully operational in T&T. The ambivalence on environmental concerns must give way to mechanisms that incorporate environmental NGOs as advocates in developing national and regional strategies.

- Economic liberalization and the evolving trade and financial markets are welcome and legitimate developments, but there is an enormous underside to this process. Many persons have fallen through the cracks of the market economy, and increased crime and cuts in subsidies and expenditures in health, education, and welfare have come to characterize the vaguely Darwinian character of this process. More inventive strategies will have to be found to compensate the losers.
- The opening of markets and financial liberalization provide opportunities for legitimate investors and businessmen—as well as criminals! The spectacle of business monopolies controlled by criminal elements can constrain investment and competitiveness in the country, while massive infusions of illegal funds into the economy can have an adverse effect through the artificial inflation of prices. In some cases, the launderers simply buy banks or non-bank financial institutions or gain corrupt influence over officials of local financial institutions in order to move their proceeds into the main financial streams. Without effective controls and safeguards the economies of small states such as T&T are susceptible to a range of new vulnerabilities. The elimination of corruption at all levels is a major national priority.
- Leadership in Trinidad and Tobago will also have to turn its attention to forging economic development strategies that go well beyond the current global euphoria with liberalization and privatization. In undertaking this task, T&T (and some of its Caricom neighbors) will have an advantage with respect to human capital. High literacy rates and excellent records of primary and secondary school enrollment must now be bolstered by proper policies to raise educational quality in technologies, management, and finance, which are crucial ingredients for competition in the emerging global economy. Investment in human resource development should be a fundamental objective of leadership. New sources of financing and technical assistance may be needed to establish such efforts.
- There will have to be consistent strategies for T&T to take advantage of the transitions in the global economy. The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the General Agreement

on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) provide new scope for improvement of trade and growth prospects. A comparative advantage could be established in the services sector: primarily health care, biotechnology, tourism, education, finance, retirement, and information processing. Services are increasing more rapidly as a component of international trade than is the export of manufactured goods (World Bank, 1994). This repositioning does not mean that traditional sectors of the economy, such as manufacturing or agriculture, should be abandoned; rather, these sectors should, if possible, be reformed and strengthened to improve global competitiveness. (Bryan, 1995, 247).

## Politics

Following hotly contested national elections in Trinidad and Tobago in November 1995, the two main political parties, the People's National Movement (PNM) and the United National Congress (UNC) each won 17 seats. The National Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR), which retained its two seats (both in Tobago) in the House of Representatives, became the tie-breaker and gained broker status after the elections. The NAR, led by the former prime minister, Arthur N. Robinson (1986-1991), eventually agreed to cooperate with the leader of the UNC, Basdeo Panday, in a government of "national unity." Panday was named prime minister on November 9, but a week went by before the new cabinet was sworn in and took office on November 16. Despite concerns that the political and constitutional impasse could lead to a national crisis, there was no disruption in the normal functioning of the country. The currency remained stable, the financial markets performed in a non-crisis mode, and there were no incidents of civil unrest.

The UNC-NAR coalition constitutes a fragile majority with a potential for quick erosion. In local elections held in June 1996 (the first test of electoral power since the general elections), the UNC appeared to strengthen its position in the coalition (the NAR did not win a single seat in Trinidad). Similarly, although the UNC was victorious in 61 of the local government electoral districts, compared to the 63 won by the PNM, the UNC did so with more of the numerical vote. Although the NAR still controls only two seats in Tobago, its coalition arrangement with the UNC appears to have reached a comfortable level of accommodation, with both parties agreeing on key policy issues and presenting a united front. The factor of UNC ascendance and PNM stasis may be characteristic of national and local politics for some time, and the very nature of this governance (the small majority and the tenuous nature of the coalition) may yet prove to be a positive element for democracy, because a powerful opposition can demand increased accountability from the government which, in turn, is also likely to be more responsive to the demands of diverse constituencies.

### ***The Challenges (Political)***



- The Caricom region has been exceptional in the consistency of free and fair elections, political rights, civil liberties, competitive party systems, and the rule of law. The institutions, behavior, and cultural values have a deep tradition in the Commonwealth Caribbean. Freedom House surveys over the past 20 years have characterized that part of the Caribbean as one of the most developed zones of democracy in the developed world (Freedom House, annual). Trinidad and Tobago, like other countries of the Commonwealth Caribbean, maintains one of the hemisphere's strongest democratic traditions. But the sustainability of good governance is under challenge. Parliamentary democracy is vulnerable to terrorists, the corruption of law enforcement officials, and domestic insurrection. Even the much-heralded Westminster model of parliamentary government is susceptible to authoritarian dispensation in the absence of traditional safeguards and rules.
- Ethnic politics are now being exploited to advantage. Members of the opposition PNM have accused the ruling UNC-NAR coalition (which is East Indian dominated) of replacing skilled black CEOs and board chairmen of public sector enterprises with personnel who were less representative of the country's ethnic profile. Prime Minister Panday, the leader of the UNC-NAR government, has responded that appeals to race should not be used to cover up mediocrity (*Trinidad Guardian*, March 25, 1996 and June 21, 1996). The taming of ethnic politics in such a small country, and the striving for national unity at all levels of society, should be a priority for leadership.
- Several of the pillars that support democratic regimes are slowly eroding. As in other Commonwealth Caribbean countries, recent research in T&T reveals some troubling trends: namely, declining voter turnout, particularly among the youth, and sharp declines in public interest in parliamentary proceedings. Such voter alienation could eventually strengthen the emergence of single-party rule and perpetuate the financial and organizational advantages of dominant parties. Similarly, failure to invest constantly (because of budgetary constraints or lack of foreign assistance) in institutions such as the legal systems and mechanisms for public security is placing severe strains on democratic governance.
- A concurrent trend is the inability of the "overextended state" (during circumstances of considerable downsizing and economic liberalization) to deliver levels of welfare and social services similar to those of the last three decades. This can be viewed as being partially responsible for the erosion of the state's effectiveness and the questioning of its legitimacy. The great dilemma of the overextended state and the pressure upon governments to provide economic support and to deliver social services more rapidly and efficiently, even

while their capacity to do so is severely diminished, is one of the most critical demands being made on leadership.

- The managerial capacity of the state also needs to be rebuilt in some sectors in order to deliver public services and to confront the challenges created by the competitive market economy. On the **political** side, in their attempts to meet these demands and because of the technical stress of adjustment, stabilization, and liberalization measures, governments have resorted to strong and unpopular action (and little public relations) to carry out reforms. As a consequence, they have created some doubt about their loyalty to the democratic process. (The perception that there was an inability to gain redress of grievance through the parliamentary system has been identified as one of the reasons for the attempted *coup d'état* by the Muslimeen in 1990.) Declining access to scarce economic largesse, spectacles of corruption in government, abuses of political power, and the use of declining public funds to reward the ruling party faithful have severely weakened public faith in traditional political parties in T&T (as in other Commonwealth Caribbean countries). The political parties have also lost their historical and ideological differences. As one Caribbean political observer has noted, the "[typical Caribbean] political party, whatever the label, is now a multi-class coalition, funded largely by big business interests, led by the middle class and seeking to sustain popular electoral support with declining resources" (Munroe, 1995).

On the **economic** side, public tolerance for further sacrifice is also diminishing as the tasks of dismantling or restructuring state enterprises and financial systems continue. Obviously, anti-reformist coalitions spanning the political spectrum have great opportunities to manipulate public cynicism and fear. Some of the strongest anti-reform sentiments emanate from those who are not prepared to deal with a competitive market environment. Future economic growth will in turn generate renewed debate over the role of the state. While in T&T the inflation rate is low (5 percent in 1995), fiscal deficits are being contained, and the GDP growth rate (3.5 percent in 1995) is respectable, the economic foundations still have to be strengthened. Revenues generated by privatization sales and reductions in basic government services are not formulas for sustainable growth.

- There is also the possibility that some aspects of national sovereignty will need to be ceded in order to properly address matters of regional security. Eastern Caribbean countries on the northern tier of South America have now become key transshipment routes for South American cocaine into U.S. and European markets. Most Caribbean countries cooperate with the United States in counternarcotics efforts, but their ability to have any impact varies widely. More than U.S.\$100 million worth of illegal drugs pass through T&T every month.

During the visit of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher to T&T in March 1996, both countries signed a far-reaching cooperative agreement (including use of T&T's sea and airspace by the United States) to combat the international drug trade. While some of its Caricom partners have characterized the agreement as a significant concession by T&T, there seems to be little other political recourse if governments are intent on curtailing the illegal narcotics business, which has become the most profitable sector of the Caribbean's informal economy. Legislation on money laundering, witness protection programs, and extradition treaties for traffickers has already been enacted. In any event, such concessions of national sovereignty are difficult political choices.

In sum, the democratic tradition is being affected by dramatic shifts in social and class structure; declining political participation; frustration with the parliamentary system of politics; changes in leadership; a resurgence of ethnic politics; conversion to neoliberal economic policies by political parties that have traditionally represented labor; changing relationships between labor, business, and government; and some ceding of national sovereignty. These are some of the strongest political challenges that will be faced by new leadership.

## Society

Despite its economic largesse, Trinidad and Tobago faces major societal problems which demand attention. These can be noted briefly.

- *An increase in the poverty index.* While T&T's poverty estimates may compare favorably with Jamaica's, Haiti's, or Guyana's (World Bank, 1996), they are unacceptable for a resource-rich island in which there is little physical or psychological space between the rich and the poor. The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) has provided a U.S.\$40 million, 25-year loan for a community development fund which will provide social services to the poor and other vulnerable populations. In reality, the strong implementation of poverty reduction strategies in T&T (and across the region) by leadership is critical.
- *The decline of community and the family and the growing alienation among youth.* Given the relatively high unemployment figure (17.8 percent in 1995), youth have become cynical of politicians and political parties and less tolerant of acceptable standards of social conduct. The gang leaders and the drug dons have usurped the traditional family as the sources of authority. The attempted coup in T&T in 1990 exemplified the potential of alienated youth to follow a charismatic rebel and to loot and destroy business premises (Ryan, 1991).

- *Coercive power is no longer the monopoly of the state.* Increasingly, the major contributors to criminal violence in the country are the drug traffickers. The present attorney general has revealed that 80 percent of the crimes committed in the country are drug related (*Trinidad Guardian*, June 18, 1996). Given the declining ability of the state to distribute its economic proceeds evenly, the police and military powers are locked in an ongoing armed struggle with better equipped criminal elements. Similarly, the challenge to state power posed by more radical fundamentalist movements will have to be addressed (Pérez, 1996).
- *Government restrictions on freedom of the press.* In February 1996, government action in trying to have the editor in chief of the *Trinidad Guardian* newspaper dismissed and in declaring war on the newspaper was viewed as ominous throughout the international media world. Prime Minister Panday accused the editor of being racist, and the impasse led to the mass resignation of senior editors and writers from the paper and the formulation of legislation by the government for a "responsible" press. Any infringements or restrictions on the press from any quarter (including the judiciary) are being strongly opposed by the Media Association of Trinidad and Tobago (MATT) and its international counterparts.

## Conclusion

This brief and subjective review of the challenges faced by leadership in T&T is not intended to be prescriptive. The underlying conclusion is that, despite T&T's remarkable economic success, poverty is on the rise, there is an increase in crime and violence, workers are still being retrenched, and there is a drop in the real value of both social assistance and the quality of social services. Leadership in T&T, like in other Caribbean countries, will have to move toward the formulation of coping mechanisms that can facilitate some of the challenges outlined in this brief. The role of churches, the private sector, intellectuals, the security forces, labor, education, and culture in this process all require analysis. So also do the issues of gender politics, youth, technology, and ideology. The capacity of current or future leadership (cast in the broadest sense of the definition) to deal with these issues is a matter of intense speculation. But some general considerations (in a regional context) may be instructive.

- First, given the continuity of economic policy which relies upon a fragile balance of conservative fiscal and monetary policies and on investor confidence, T&T's small population, enviable economic resource factors, regional prominence, and vibrant democracy augur well for its future. Because of the

uniqueness of the T&T economy (in regional terms), it is enjoying more hemispheric and global economic success, and becoming less reliant on the Caricom market. Eventually, the continued commitment of T&T to its Caricom partners may be placed in jeopardy if they continue to move only as fast as their weakest members will permit.

Similarly, the selection of T&T as the headquarters for the recently formed Association of Caribbean States (ACS) adds credence to the country's leadership role in regional integration negotiations and international relations. The ACS is a grouping of Caribbean island states and countries on the American continent, including Mexico, Venezuela, and Colombia. With a current membership of 25 states (and expected to reach 37) the ACS has the potential to be the fourth-largest economic grouping in the world. One leadership challenge is to formulate and adopt strategies which would maintain the Caricom regional integrity while at the same time provide policy space for T&T's dynamic economic growth and anticipated regional prominence.

- Second, the idea of engaging social partners in the exercise of political power to manage national affairs is gaining currency worldwide. Government, the private sector, and community organizations comprise the partners in this modality of development. In this context the role of Caribbean NGOs in taking a proactive role in advancing the objectives of national civil society or advancing the regional integration process at the nongovernmental level should not be underestimated (Girvan, 1995; Wedderburn, 1996). Lending agencies such as the World Bank and the IDB now appreciate the effectiveness of NGOs in implementing programs that can benefit society's most vulnerable groups. In this context, T&T and its Caribbean partners should make full use of the prevailing opportunities. Clear roles for government should include establishing the parameters for fuller participation of the citizen as a stakeholder in the process of governance, as well as ensuring a more equitable share of the national economic pie.
- Third, the idea of a Charter of Civil Society, in which certain national and regional principles could be elevated and enshrined, is gaining currency. Such a charter would include conventional freedoms of the press, free and fair elections, and freedom of association. Additional concerns such as safeguarding the rights of workers, children, women, the family, and the indigenous peoples of the region; protection of the environment; elimination of corruption; respect for religious and cultural diversity; government accountability; and human rights guarantees would also form part of this regional ethos. The charter, originally proposed by the West India Commission in 1992, moved toward the draft stage at the end of May 1996 at the first meeting of the Assembly of Caribbean Community Parliamentarians in Barbados. While the charter will not be enforceable on member governments of the countries which subscribe to it, the principles and precepts of the charter would engender respect from regional governments.

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# The Multidisciplinary Entanglement of Caribbean Studies

*David E. Lewis*

*Taken from a paper presented at the 21st Annual Caribbean Studies Association Conference, May 1996.*

The important issue facing us as Caribbeanists is not how diverse we are in a disciplinary manner, but how this new, apparent multidisciplinary nature of the Caribbean studies world is related to the challenges facing Caribbean development. My main proposition is that, in essence, this new multidisciplinary growth is only of relevance to the degree that it is able to assist us in overcoming our traditional barriers to greater regionalism, collaboration, and integration; that is:

- Language and communication (reading, writing, speaking, media, flow of information, and new information technologies)
- Transportation and movement (peoples, goods, and services)

These two generic areas are the most critical challenges facing Caribbean regionalism and development. Yes, we must always focus on many other issues: economic development (manufacturing, services, tourism, etc.); political status and development (especially in terms of participatory politics); the environment; external relations and transnational issues; health, education, and welfare and the growing disparity gaps between the populations (in countries and between countries); migration and the ever-growing informal sector; security in the generic safety sense of the word (covering economic, political, personal, social, etc.); culture and identity (race, ethnicity, and class remain crucial); science and technology; narcotics and drug trafficking and the question of sovereignty of micro-states, as well as the whole culture of corruption which it encourages; and many other areas. But, when you really focus on the issues of language and communications and transportation and movement, between ourselves in the region and in relation to the extra-region, you will find that these two are the critical points of departure.

**Language**

Despite the increasing multidisciplinary of Caribbean studies, I find that we continue to face the problem that most of us do not study, know, or live in the Caribbean as a region, but rather as individual countries or territories or as the sum of individual countries or territories. The four basic linguistic groups (Spanish, English, French, and Dutch), for example, are still to a great degree immersed in a unilingual world. Except for the multilingualism of the Netherlands Antilles, the rest of us are monolingual, or bilingual at best. This is without even considering claims for Jamaican *patois* as legitimate language, Haitian Creole, *papiamentu*, or many other linguistic variations and languages in the region, including indigenous languages in Guyana, Belize, Dominica, Suriname, and others. If anything, one of our major weaknesses in the promotion and development of academic work on the Caribbean is that we never really emphasized the need for language requirements in the way that other area studies have.

This language limitation spreads over immediately to communications and the flow of information, with the same negative implications. Thus, unless we begin to emphasize the multilingual nature of being Caribbean, living in the Caribbean, and studying the Caribbean, we are then condemned to many of the restricted visions of the region. One would expect that in this revolutionary era of information technologies and advanced telecommunications systems we would be able to overcome the language barriers. But we must remember that these new technologies are tools, advanced and fast, but still only tools to be used within the framework of a body of existing and developing knowledge. To the degree that such a body of knowledge is able to overcome the linguistic limitations within the region, then to that degree these new information technologies will be useful. Most publications in the region—newspapers, journals, magazines, and others—still focus narrowly on domestic markets and have very little interest in exporting to “other” Caribbean countries. They can be found, however, in the diaspora, something I will address later. And, of course, it is the extra-regional publications that do manage to penetrate the region throughout, in part I suspect because they originate outside of our compartmentalized region.

Then, of course, there is the multilateral donor community, which for the wrong reasons and with the wrong analysis has now focused on the right approach: that all these islands, territories, countries, etc., in this in-between area called the Caribbean are pretty much the same—very small, open economies, developing but not doing that badly (except for Haiti, Honduras, and Nicaragua, the “wider Caribbean” region encompassing the insular and continental Caribbean, Central America, and northern South America is doing very well compared to other developing areas), mixed in ethnic, racial, and cultural terms, and all with very little internal cross-linkages and with many external multilateral linkages. Given this reality, the donor community (led by the European Union) argue: let us rationalize our diverse and repetitive assistance efforts, such as



Lomé-ACP CARIFORUM aid, San Jose Accords for Central America, Cuba's special assistance program, among others, into one general multilateral assistance program for the "Caribbean region as a whole." From the North American perspective the scenario isn't quite as appealing, as both USAID (U.S. Agency for International Development) and CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency) are reducing their presence and resources in the region. Except for Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Jamaica, and Central America, the region is en route to "graduating" from official development assistance efforts. This discussion simply points to another example of a multidisciplinary approach to the region—only in this case it is not from within the region and, while it may be a somewhat "correct" approach, it is so for all the wrong reasons.

### **Transportation**

The transportation and movement issue is as complex as the language and communications one, and is no better prepared to deal with the multidisciplinary issues we are discussing. It is still much easier to travel to the region from without than from within. Because most of our governments continue to live in the state-centered development models of the 1960s, we have been unable to use the free market to attract transportation providers into one of the most profitable and captive transportation regions in the world (both sea and air). As such, Trinidad and Tobago mourns the fact that BWIA is no longer really "the national airline" because majority ownership is not Trinidadian. Likewise, a pro-statehood government in Puerto Rico is seeking more flexible U.S. air transportation regulations in order to allow Puerto Rico to be serviced by non-U.S. airlines while still using U.S. air routes. Isn't that *lo mejor de dos mundos*? In the interim, we are all increasingly restricted to monopolistic transportation markets throughout the region.

### **The Diaspora**

I would argue that the only arena where these two challenges converge and have been overcome are in the diaspora. Whether it is in Miami, London, Amsterdam, Toronto, New York, or Paris, it is in that "other" Caribbean region of our migrants where language, communications, transportation, and the flow of information are overcome and converge nationally and regionally. If within the Caribbean we are to overcome these barriers I suggest that we need to focus our attention on the Caribbean diaspora for insights into their experience of how to do so. Whether we like it or not, all these extra-regional places and spaces are now integral parts of the Caribbean, and in many instances are part of the regional and extra-regional multidisciplinary effort to overcome the challenges facing the region.

The diaspora include not only the hordes of labor who were "exiled" since the 1950s by the Caribbean's industrialization development models, but also the new hordes of professionals and

skilled peoples who move around the region, within the region, and in and out of the region, and who in so doing are able to overcome the parochial and provincial nature of most of the individual Caribbean societies. Our Caribbean scholars, artists, and professionals in the United States, Canada, England, France, and elsewhere; our commuter professional class if you will. There are technocrats in international development agencies and multilateral institutions; a colleague from the English-speaking Caribbean learned more and was able to bridge more his gap with the Spanish-speaking Caribbean as a result of his tenure in the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). He was also able to bridge the gap with the English-speaking Caribbean for his Latin American colleagues at the IDB.

Examples abound. The key issue is that these are the resources of the Caribbean that are at the cutting edge of bridging these gaps and of overcoming these provincial and parochial visions. I personally do not really know if they are a "multidisciplinary answer." I do know that in my personal and professional experience in multidisciplinary regionalization efforts, these resources have proven to be critical in overcoming the challenges of *insuralismo* which face the Caribbean.

## Challenges for the Next Generation of Caribbean Leaders

*Eugenia Charles*

*An address given at the Center for Strategic and International Studies on May 14, 1996*

The challenges to Caribbean leaders will not change. The duty of leaders is to make life better for the citizens who have elected them to office. That means all the electorate, not only those who actually voted in support of them.

It must be the vision of every Caribbean leader to improve the well-being of the citizens. The smallest islands need to find effective ways to have a voice. The statement that "no man is an island" has to be stretched to say that "no island exists on its own or advances on its own, and no island is completely in control of its own destiny." Other factors impinge.

Therefore, the new leaders have to find more effective and successful ways of ensuring that such interaction is found, devised, and invented to allow for the advancement of their people. These new leaders face difficulties which circumstances give rise to daily.

First, the aid donors are finding it more difficult to give aid because of their own circumstances and their preoccupation with other parts of the world that appear more in need of their assistance, in part because the pernicious ratings by GDP make the Caribbean islands seem comparatively well off. The hard facts show that this is erroneous thinking, because the small islands are not well off.

Most important, new leaders must deal with the many changes of leadership taking place so close to each other, which means that the amity and close partnership of the past ten years will have to be redesigned. This will take many years. The new leaders will have to learn about each other and come to understand each other's ideals, strengths, and weaknesses.

Another matter is efficiency. It has always been the task of the leadership in the Caribbean to find less expensive ways of delivering adequate service to their people. One of the ways that this can be done is by pooling resources. The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) has come closer to this than has the Caribbean Community and Common Market (Caricom), but the maximum use of this pooling of resources has not yet been achieved. Much closer attention must be paid to achieving this in the very near future.

Another challenge is making sure that partisanship does not get in the way of governing. The Caribbean is not overburdened with well-honed experts, and the new leadership will have to ensure that greater use is made of the talent that does exist. This will mean that Caribbean leaders must be much less partisan in their choice of advisers and implementers. The question should be “will we be likely to get results if we obtain the services of so-and-so,” and not “so-and-so advised the government before mine and therefore must be thrust into the dust bin.” We waste our assets and curtail our potential when we do this. Above all we lose continuity. I took office after almost 20 years of rule by the predecessor party. All their advisers were kept on and served the country well.

The new Caribbean leaders must:

- Have faith in themselves to plan and organize.
- Have faith in their counterpart leaders to cooperate successfully in that effort.
- Have the knowledge that Caribbean people want to get ahead and will accept the lead from their leaders to do so—this although facing the difficulty of extinction of preference markets.
- Realize that no one of them can do it alone, and that a method of uniting their efforts must be found to serve more efficiently at less cost to all the taxpayers.
- Cease to be insular. Learn to talk to each other and not at each other.
- Be independent from U.S. ideas, because the attitude of U.S. foreign policy toward the Caribbean has always been one of reaction to a crisis and, even worse, of lumping the Caribbean with South and Central America.
- Be willing to tell the citizens the truth rather than raise false hopes that make it impossible to fulfill promises. The leaders must tell the people that the region is on its own and that no one is owed a living. There is a need to be blunt—even if a candidate promised an easy life to the citizens.

### ***The Economy***

The economy is a top priority for new Caribbean leaders. The Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) has been talked about for years—if nothing else, at least it provided a vehicle for dialogue. New leaders must learn to be more innovative and aggressive in seeking their share of the market. Empty bellies make a lot of noise.

Leaders must make inroads in the programs designed to improve trade. For example, CBI parity with the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and working toward the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA), which should be entered into and expanded. Caribbean countries should enter into NAFTA individually as ready, not as a bloc. They must prepare for the changes that will take place in European Union trade policy, and build strong relationships

with Holland and France through their neighboring islands.

### ***Foreign Aid***

Regarding foreign aid, donors should give the islands more choice with what to do with available aid. They should tell the islands how much money is available, and let the islands decide how best to spend it. Of course, the donors would have to approve the projects, and would monitor them to ensure that the money is not wasted, but it should be the islands who decide the priorities.

### ***Political Union***

It is important that the OECS achieve some sort of political union. It has not succeeded because the idea has come from the top down: the people of the island have never been convinced it is in their best interest. It is critical that the leaders make the citizens see the benefit to a union.

### ***The Association of Caribbean States***

My remarks up to now have been confined to the islands of the English-speaking Caribbean. But since the formation of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), it is obvious that we have realized that there is an advantage to take seriously plans for the future in matters which the Caribbean as a whole has in common (although we object to being lumped with South and Central America). The ACS may perhaps be only a talk shop—but it is an exchange of views that is perhaps now of paramount importance.

### ***Security***

The ACS can perhaps be helpful in security matters, especially against narcotics trafficking, money laundering, and even international crime and corruption. We must work on the basis that if we do not have the opportunity to talk, we will never understand each other. Had we had the ACS earlier, it is unlikely that we would have had to plan and carry out a rescue mission for Grenada.

One key security issue is the drug trade. Dominica may be used as a transshipment point, but some drugs always stay behind. The worst thing about narcotics is that they are a disincentive to young people. There is so much money to be made through drugs that many young people question why they should go to school and get an education.

### ***The United States***

The United States has never appreciated that the Caribbean is separate and different from the Latin countries. And the Caribbean is not the same as those regions—its language, history, and culture are all different. But the United States lumps them all together, with the result that the Caribbean gets swamped, forgotten, and, even worse, ignored. There is a lack of knowledge of the Caribbean

on the part of the United States. One gets the impression that there is an unwillingness on the U.S. part to learn about us and to understand us. Is it because we are small, poor, black, or peaceful?

The authorities in Washington obviously don't listen to their representatives stationed in our islands, who quickly understand us and what we are getting at—even though they do not always agree with us!

We in the Caribbean have to deal with island states as well as with European countries and the United States. Our relationship with Holland and France impacts on our plans for our own islands. We must learn to live with the people in our areas, and we demand respect for our point of view. That Haiti, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic are our neighbors, whom we must learn to understand and hopefully they us, merely adds to the variety of considerations and arrangements in which we must participate—always according most importance to our own affairs, needs, and relationships. It merely means that there is never a dull moment!

The United States must understand this and accept that our own business must take priority. The United States must understand that we have to act in the manner which is best suited to our own needs and though we wish to be on very friendly terms, we cannot depend on the United States, because its attitude to us in the Caribbean has always been formulated on a crisis basis. We refuse to live on the edge of crisis always.

### **Conclusion**

We have learned from experience that plans must be formulated and alternatives reserved in the wings if we are to survive. We must learn to plan for the future and for the welfare of our citizens.

## About the Contributors

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