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Ethnic Diversity and State Response in the Caribbean

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# ETHNIC DIVERSITY AND STATE RESPONSE IN THE CARIBBEAN

Regional Background Paper for the UNDP's  
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## Abstract

Compared with much of Latin America and Africa, most Caribbean countries have maintained stable democratic arrangements, despite racial, ethnic and social divisions. These divisions and the resulting tensions and conflicts are rooted in the region's colonial history, the existing institutions and in political structures and processes. Governments, in the name of nation building, have used various strategies to deal with differences and tensions; they have also exploited conflicts and aggravated inequalities. This paper uses country studies of Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, Cuba and the French Caribbean to study the politics of race and ethnicity in the region, the conditions for accommodation, and the challenges of reform.

## 1 Introduction

Arguably, the Caribbean region does not evoke the same level of anxiety as, for example, countries within sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. There are perhaps two principal reasons for this. First, most countries have the well-earned reputation of being relatively stable democracies. In the English-speaking Caribbean, British legacies of constitutionalism, belief in civilian supremacy versus military control, respect for the electoral procedure and for bureaucratic and police neutrality sustain a certain democratic culture<sup>1</sup>, even where these fundamental principles are contravened and where the inherited institutions are inadequate and ineffective. A few countries, such as Guyana, the Dominican Republic and neighbouring Haiti, have had much more turbulent political histories. The Dominican Republic, like much of Latin America, has had its share of charismatic, autocratic and patron-clientelist political leaders, bolstered by fraudulent elections and corrupt institutions. Dictator Rafael Trujillo assumed government by coup in 1930 and was assassinated thirty-one years later. (His was a particularly bloody rule.) Trujillo's successor, Juan Bosch, was democratically elected but overthrown only a year thereafter. Balaguer, who had served as Trujillo's advisor, was elected to replace Bosch and remained in power until 1978, when United States President Carter pressured

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<sup>1</sup>See A. Payne, 'Westminster Adapted: The Political Order of the Commonwealth Caribbean in *Democracy in the Caribbean: Political, Economic and Social Perspectives*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993 and P. Sutton, 'Constancy, Change and Accommodation: The Distinct Tradition of the Commonwealth Caribbean in *The Fallacies of Hope: The Post-Colonial Record of the Commonwealth Third World*, Manchester University Press, 1991.

him to accept that he had indeed lost the election. However, Balaguer won again in 1986 and held on to power until 1996. Even away from office, Balaguer had substantial influence on election outcomes, throwing his support behind favoured candidates and using all sorts of wily strategies to exclude the opposition, particularly Jose Francisco Peña Gomez, the despised black Haitian immigrant. Reputedly, all the elections since 1966 were rigged. In 1994, critics documented cases of opposition intimidation and electoral fraud<sup>2</sup>. Balauger, it is claimed, was ‘ a different kind of caudillo from Trujillo: he used more guile than brute force, though his regime was still tainted by authoritarianism and repression.’<sup>3</sup> Though there is hope that Balauger’s death will finally lead to democratic consolidation, most commentators recognize that this autocratic and patron-clientelist legacy is likely to have long-term effects.

While the Dominican Republic is thought to have fairly favourable economic prospects, Haiti has been experiencing protracted economic and political crises, arguably since its Independence in 1804s. In Haiti, too, there has been a very uneasy transition from dictatorship to democracy. Jean Bertrand Aristide, who was ousted from government in 1991, returned to power in 1994—with United States support—and was ousted again in 2004. Democracy did not bring political stability. Guyana has had an especially fractious history, albeit under the guise of democracy. Indian-African conflicts have helped to retard democratic and economic progress. Cuba remains firmly non-democratic, repressing freedoms in some areas and extending a range of social benefits that exceed those in many other Caribbean countries. Nevertheless, these four countries are largely seen as outliers in what is generally regarded as a placid, predictable and agreeable region.

Second, at least in public circles, many Caribbean governments accept the inevitability and profitability of the free market and globalization. Some of these countries have stellar records in human development, which rival the more developed democracies; others are benefiting from oil, tourism and off shore investments. Therefore, the common perception is that the Caribbean largely speaks the ‘correct’ language, has adequate pockets of wealth and well-being and is not likely to present ‘uncontrollable’ threats. In reality, performance records across the region and within countries vary. Low growth and stagnation, widening inequalities and deepening poverty, domestic and international threats to major industries, emerging problems of insecurity, and the

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<sup>2</sup>J. Hartlyn ‘Crisis Ridden Elections (Again) in the Dominican Republic: Neopatrimonialism, Presidentialism, and Weak Electoral Oversight’ *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* Winter, 1994, Vol. 36, Issue 4.

<sup>3</sup>Castro,M. ‘Beyond Balauger: The Dominican Republic in 2002’ *North-South Center Update* 9/5/2002

growing crisis with HIV/AIDS are among the risks to economic, political and social stability. Those well acquainted with the region are keeping a watchful eye on the persistence of old tensions, while attempting to diagnose the new and evolving rifts. Many predict that without deliberate actions, social and political explosions are possible, particularly in the more fragile countries such as Jamaica, Guyana and Haiti.

## 1.1 Objectives and Outline

This paper uses select case studies from the Caribbean to (a) describe some of the root causes of racial and ethnic tensions; (b) highlight differing state responses to diversity, (c) outline the sorts of political and social responses that are critical for ethnic and racial accommodation and equity and (d) identify the challenges of reform. The paper emphasizes the legacies of colonial penetration. Post-colonial Caribbean governments were revolutionary in many respects but most were quite loyal to their frame of reference. In some contexts, this continuity has had political value; in others, it has upheld preferential politics and policy-making, social and economic divisions, cultural discrimination and inadequate representation of the countries' diverse interests. Even where governments have attempted to break with the past, strategies for nation building have taken various forms and had differing consequences. We review some of the strategies, including the approaches to diversity and to conflict resolution, the choice of constitutional mechanisms and solutions and the adopted management methods and processes.

Section Two provides a background on race and ethnicity in the Caribbean. Section Three focuses on Guyana, which remains among the more divisive Caribbean countries. The Guyana case study provides a vivid account of colonialism, post-colonialism and the cultivation of race and ethnic divisions. We compare developments in Guyana with those in Trinidad and Tobago and account for the differences and similarities. Section Four uses case studies of Jamaica, Cuba, and the French Caribbean to highlight select political responses to race and ethnic diversity and to discuss their advantages and limitations. Section Five reviews reform efforts and identifies some of the constraints to change.

## 2 Race and Ethnicity in the Caribbean: an overview

The Caribbean has multiple cultures, languages and religions, different—and increasingly mixed—races. Distinct class divisions run across these. Using the Linz, Stepan and Yadav definition,<sup>4</sup> very few countries would qualify as having multi-national features, though Guyana did seriously consider partitioning the state in order to better accommodate its Indian and African populations and Suriname<sup>5</sup> was forced to use consociational arrangements to placate and accommodate contending groups. However, in many countries, the ‘socio-cultural’ divisions that exist *are* given political expression. Importantly, politics has been used to frame how these divisions are interpreted and to influence the nature of the response. In some circumstances, politics has instigated new forms of discontent. Therefore, the Caribbean comprises a range of societies, in which it is possible to compare political responses to diversity and the politics of nation building.

Belize is among the more plural of the Caribbean countries. Its population comprises Mestizos (48.7%), Creoles (24.9%), Maya (10.6%), Garifuna (6.1%) Syrian-Lebanese, Chinese, East Indian and Mennonites (9.7%). Suriname is equally diverse, with Hindustanis/‘East Indians (37%), Creoles, Africans and persons of Mixed European descent (31%), Javanese (15%), Maroons (10%), Amerindians<sup>6</sup> (2%), Chinese (2%), Whites (1%) and Lebanese, Guyanese, immigrants from Madeira and the Netherlands (2%). Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago have significant populations of persons of Indian and African descent but also growing proportions of mixed races and smaller numbers of Whites, Chinese and Amerindians. Apart from the Dominican Republic and Cuba, where there are large proportions of Mulattoes and Whites, the populations of most of the other countries are of predominantly African and mixed descent, with smaller groups of Whites, Chinese and Indians. The variety of religions - among them Christian, Muslim, Hindu and varieties of traditional African and Amerindian—reflect the mix of the populations, though there are many cases of cross-group religious acceptance and practice; there are, for example,

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<sup>4</sup>J. Linz, A. Stepan, Y. Yadav, ‘Nation State of State Nation? Conceptual Reflections and Spanish, Belgian and Indian Data’ UNDP/HDR 2004 Draft, p. 5. The authors define multinational societies as those in which ‘social divisions have a geographical concentration and are articulated in more than one ‘nationalist’ vocabulary throughout the state’.

<sup>5</sup>See Edward Dew, ‘Suriname: Transcending Ethnic Politics the Hard Way’ and Brand-Shute, ‘Old Shoes and Elephants: Electoral Resistance in Suriname’ in *Studies in Third World Societies*, Number 43, 1990.

<sup>6</sup>Amerindians are descendants of Indigenous peoples

Indians who are Christians and Africans who are Muslims. (See Table 5)

## 2.1 Race and Ethnicity

We are careful to distinguish between race and ethnicity. Conventionally, race is defined by phenotypical traits. Within the Caribbean, this may easily mask the true nature of ancestry, as many—despite their physical appearance—are racially mixed. A person of fair complexion, who is categorised as white in the Caribbean is often regarded as ‘black’ in the United States, where ‘one drop of black blood makes one black’.<sup>7</sup> Conversely, Caribbean ‘blacks’, particularly those who are intent on repatriation to the African motherland, are often surprised to discover that there are Africans who perceive them as ‘mixed’, ‘not authentic Africans’; some even dare to say ‘impure’. Similarly, despite the ‘black consciousness’ within the Caribbean region, not all who are classified as Afro-Caribbeans enjoy this association with Africa and prefer not to be regarded as ‘black’, particularly where ‘blackness’ suggests links with ‘backward’ nations. Therefore, race is also socially constructed.<sup>8</sup> Persons may be lumped in differing ‘racial’ categories depending on the country and region; people ascribe meanings and stereotypes to groups that differ physically and may seek to pose racial distinctions in order to explain social and cultural differences. Some of these ascriptions are localised; others become part of a wider dictum. All such characterizations can be used to justify discrimination.

Ethnicity refers to shared norms, religion, language, historic leadership structures and processes, and other ties that may bind sets of people, beyond their race; it connotes a form of ‘community’. The common tendency is to portray ethnic ties as superior to all the other bonds that groups may form and, conversely, to understate intra ethnic group dissent. This, too, politicizes ethnicity and imposes social constructs. Ethnicity is widely equated with tribalism, and depicted as the prime cause of conflict. Critics suggest that this ‘tribalization’ of ethnicity reflects Western naïveté. This argument has some merit but should not to be used to mask the culpability of those political actors who have corrupted ‘ethnicity’ to suit their own ends. In both cases, the naturalness of ethnic associations and the spaces available for inter-group ties become blurred. Moreover, the fluidity of culture and identity is ignored; instead, these

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<sup>7</sup>Quoted in Zavitz, A. and Allahar, A., ‘Racial Politics and Cultural Identity in Trinidad’s Carnival’ in *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research*, Vol. 2, 2, 125-145, 2002

<sup>8</sup>See G. Oostinde, ‘Introduction: Ethnicity, as Ever?’ in ed. G. Oostinde, *Ethnicity in the Caribbean*, London: Macmillan, 1996

are portrayed as fixed, organic, primordial.

### 2.1.1 Exclusion, Adverse Incorporation, and State Response

The Caribbean's history of colonialism, slavery and indentureship makes it a particularly complex region. Effectively, Caribbean countries are reconstructed societies in which indigenous populations were largely exterminated and groups of immigrants (forced and enticed) were required to co-exist in order to produce for European markets and for profit. These artificial arrangements were sustained through heinous forms of subjugation, themselves justified by ideologies of white racial superiority. Despite their limitations<sup>9</sup>, we can use concepts of social exclusion to explain some of the processes and outcomes in the Caribbean. Appropriately, we move beyond original interpretations, which focused on inequality of access to goods, services and basic needs, and utilize broader concepts of 'exclusion from security, justice, representation and citizenship'<sup>10</sup> and different forms of injustice, from economic to cultural. We recognize too—as the Caribbean experience clearly demonstrates—that left unchecked, global systems of production can compound matters; they can include people and countries in economic arrangements that perpetuate their social exclusion.<sup>11</sup>

Historically, people of colour within the Caribbean have been subject to multiple forms of injustice, not to the same degree or in the same forms, for a diversity of approaches was important to maintain stratified systems. (In this sense, stratification occurred even within the white groups. There was no

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<sup>9</sup>The most frequently cited limitations of the social exclusion approach are: (a) the specific priorities that the approach identifies may be more applicable to developed rather than developing country contexts; (b) social exclusion models tend to polarize exclusion and inclusion, depicting relations between the powerless (the excluded) and the powerful (the included); however, this overlooks one significant feature of the performance of power: adverse terms of incorporation; (c) the approach integrates various forms of exclusion and does not attend sufficiently to the distinctiveness of different axes of exclusion, such as is represented in social identities of race, gender and disability; (d) social exclusion offers the remedy of integration/inclusion but inclusion is not necessarily advantageous and can have problematic consequences; social exclusion can support the status quo by encouraging inclusion into the existing social system, without implementing the radical reforms that may be necessary to address long-standing inequalities.

<sup>10</sup>Gerry Rodgers, 'What is special about a social exclusion approach?' in eds. Gerry Rodgers, Charles Gore, Jose B. Figueiredo, *Social Exclusion: Rhetoric, Reality, Responses*, ILO, 1995

<sup>11</sup>Martin Wolfe, 'Globalization and Social Exclusion: Some Paradoxes' in Gerry Rodgers, Charles Gore, Jose B. Figueiredo, *Social Exclusion: Rhetoric, Reality, Responses*, ILO, 1995, pp. 83.



homogeneity there. Poor whites, the unskilled and those considered socially inferior were still excluded from the circles of the nobility)<sup>12</sup>. Among the workers, mixed groups received more favours. Their colour alone disqualified them from the more strenuous occupations. Mixed groups, in turn, considered themselves superior to Indians and ‘Negroes’.<sup>13</sup> Indians, who were allowed to retain their cultural practices were thought to be socially and culturally superior to the ‘Negroes’. In most countries ‘Negroes’ were at the base of the societies but this was not the case in all countries. Indigenous peoples, ‘most of whom expired because they could not endure the rigors of plantation life’ were displaced from their lands, marginalized to reservations and excluded from political participation. It is difficult gauge the depth of poverty and despair that still persists within these communities, as statistical records are normally outdated and inadequate, and policy-makers seem to misunderstand and/or simply ignore the cultural norms and health and education needs within and across these groups.

This long history of exploitation and racial subjugation produces certain unique features. Thus, Robotham compares the effects of transnationalism in Central and Eastern Europe and the Caribbean and suggests that the Caribbean differs in marked ways. First, in the emerging market oriented Central European democracies, global capitalism must effectively *rupture* conventional relations of power and property. The task in the Caribbean is somewhat simpler. Here, in the majority of countries, the project is to *realign* structures and processes, for the Caribbean has ‘experienced some of the deepest capitalist penetration for over 500 years’.<sup>14</sup> Second, in the Caribbean ‘the white and Anglo-American/European identities have established self-definitions much more deeply driven by the historical experience of plantation slavery and the slave trade. These experiences have shaped the definition of whiteness and white hegemonies in deep contrast and contradistinction to blackness and black subordination, as an entire hegemonic complex and structure’. Consequently, the prejudice that is still directed to persons of African descent is of a different nature to the condescension to which persons of Eastern and Central Europe may be subjected.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Edward Long’s description of the lower class whites is that ‘they have commonly more vices, and much fewer good qualities, than the slaves over whom they are set in authority...’ Cited in Gibbons, ‘Ethnicity and the Democratic Challenge’ p. 4.

<sup>13</sup>The text uses the term ‘Negro’ to accurately reflect its historical, even though pejorative, use in the pre-colonial and colonial period. Subsequently, it uses African and Black interchangeably, as these terms became more acceptable in the late 1960s.

<sup>14</sup>D. Robotham, ‘Transnationalism in the Caribbean: formal and informal’, 1996 AES distinguished lecture series, *American Ethnologist*, 25 (2): 307-321

<sup>15</sup>Ibid. p. 307

Colonialism provoked white-black conflicts and but it also inflamed ethnic dissent. The British, in particular, were the grand masters of ‘divide and rule’; in all parts, they provoked and manipulated existing tensions. The ‘colonised’ were not entirely unwise to this and many of the personalities that dominated Caribbean politics in the 1940s and 1950s built their campaigns for Independence on their countries’ right to self-government and promised that this would lead to better political and social conditions, including inclusion and tolerance. Gibbons<sup>16</sup> makes the interesting point that during this period, ‘ethnicity with its cultural underpinnings...did not inhibit the direction of the democratic movement’, even within a context where ‘no more than 5 percent of the total electorate had the right to vote, and property qualifications stood in the way of the masses’.<sup>17</sup>

The problem for the Caribbean is that in most parts these original dreams never materialized. It is true that global and domestic factors and forces played a role in ‘redefining the course’ but some political leaders have been irresponsible; charisma has too often been misused, with costly consequences. In countries such as Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago, for example, ethnic affiliation—which John Lonsdale<sup>18</sup> reminds us ‘is what makes us all human’—has been used as one of the pawns for political mobilization and leaders have, to varying degrees, reinforced forms and methods of colonial racial segregation. White-black racial tensions persist in other countries. In Bermuda, where racial segregation was enforced up to the 1959, the Human Rights Commission records high levels of racial complaints.<sup>19</sup> In Barbados, where discussions of racial tensions remained muted for some time, the National Committee on Reconciliation (2001) reported that all communities feel aggrieved: whites feel that they are constantly attacked for their ancestors’ role in the country’s history; blacks complain that they are still denied equal access to employment; Indians maintain that their culture is not recognized and accommodated.<sup>20</sup> There have also been complaints of ‘reverted racism’. In October 2002, the Africa Descendants World Conference Against Racism was held in Barbados. Under pressure from British delegates, whites and mixed race groups were expelled from the meeting. As far as one delegate was concerned: ‘This is an African family affair and *they* should not be allowed to talk with us.’ There

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<sup>16</sup>A. Gibbons, ‘Ethnicity and the Democratic Challenge in the Caribbean’ The Sixth Walter Rodney Memorial Lecture, University of Warwick

<sup>17</sup>Ibid. p. 11.

<sup>18</sup>J. Lonsdale, ‘Globalisation, Ethnicity, and Democracy: A View from the Hopeless Continent’ in ed. A. Hopkins, *Globalization in World History*, Pimlico, 2002

<sup>19</sup>K. Dill, ‘The Role of the Human Rights Commission: The Bermuda Experience’ A Paper for the Cayman Islands Human Rights Conference, 10-14 September, 2001

<sup>20</sup>K.C.Babb, ‘Overcoming Race Division to Maximize Our Agency: The Caribbean Women’s Movement’ Report for the World Conference Against Racism, August 2002

was popular approval for this stance though notable African and Caribbean delegates forcefully objected.<sup>21</sup> There have also been occasions of Chinese-black conflicts, such as in Jamaica in the 1960s. The history of party separation and political violence in Jamaica is yet another form and manifestation of ‘ethnic’ (though, perhaps in this case, tribal) conflict.

However, racial and ethnic exclusion have not resulted in the widespread violence that it could have. Governments have found various means of containing or reframing dissent. In Jamaica, political leaders have been able to create new alliances and build party identities that mask and, to some extent, contain colour and ethnic biases. In Cuba, the revolutionary government implemented vast structural reforms that privileged the lower segments of the society and subsequently declared that ‘ethnic differences no longer play a role in public or private decision-making’<sup>22</sup>. However, legal prohibition of all forms of discrimination and official silence on matters of race and ethnicity did not eliminate the expression of private biases. Particularly since the economic downturn of the 1990s and, with it, the reduction in Cuba’s welfare programs, commentators have begun to highlight the growing social polarization, widening income disparities and re-emergence of purportedly resolved issues such as prostitution, criminality and race. Some contend that racial inequalities have always existed and that the ‘ultimate irony is that the same government that did the most to eliminate racism also did the most to silence debates about its persistence’.<sup>23</sup>

### 2.1.2 Regional ‘Ethnicization’: Haiti

Governments have also found various means to promote regional collaboration and some are attempting to combat the economic and social polarization within the region. Jamaicans are regarded with some apprehension, even within the Caribbean, and Haiti and Haitians have long evoked fear, initially among colonialists and, subsequently, regional post-colonial and developed country governments.<sup>24</sup> Once regarded with pride among would be revolu-

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<sup>21</sup>B. Wilkinson, ‘Barbados Racism Conference Expels Non-Blacks’ *Associated Press*, October 2002

<sup>22</sup>F. McKnight, ‘Ethnicity and Social Structure in Contemporary Cuba’ in ed. G. Oostinde, *Ethnicity in the Caribbean*, London: Macmillan, 1996, p. 106

<sup>23</sup>A. De la Fuente, ‘The Resurgence of Racism in Cuba, *NACLA Report on the Americas*, Vol XXXIV, No 6, May-June 2001

<sup>24</sup>See, for example, A. Maignot’s ‘Haiti and the terrified consciousness of the Caribbean’ in ed. G. Oostindie, *Ethnicity in the Caribbean*, Macmillan, 1996 and Brodwin, P. ‘Marginality and Subjectivity in the Haitian Diaspora’ in *Anthropological Quarterly* Summer 2003, Vol.

tionaries, Haitians have been subjected to discrimination and abuse within a number of Caribbean countries and there is evidence of prejudice from countries external to the region. The Minority Rights Group and Anti-Slavery International have documented the gross treatment of Haitians—including children—who labour on estates in the Dominican Republic. These conditions, they explain, are tantamount to a modern-day form of slavery. Without proper documentation, Haitians have few rights and are subject to rapid deportation.<sup>25</sup> Haitian migrants to Guadeloupe are treated as second-class citizens. Haitians are often denied French citizenship and legal status. They are relegated to the worst accommodation, are mistreated in the workplace and frequently forcibly deported. There is little avenue for protest, even within their own country, where Haitians also suffer human rights abuses.<sup>26</sup>

Persistent economic misfortunes and social upheavals lead many to conclude that there is no escape from the Haitian condition; some blame ‘voodoo’ for the country’s bad fortune. Paul’s<sup>27</sup> comparative thesis of development in Haiti and Bermuda attributes the beginning of Haiti’s underdevelopment to the inappropriate land tenure system that Pétion adopted. Compared with Saint Domingue in the north (under Henri Christophe), where land was used for the benefit of the whole state, Pétion parcelled out the land in Haiti, largely to the mulatto elite, a process that produced vast inequalities and exacerbated racism. Haiti still suffers from that legacy. Vast inequalities remain between the minority Creole and whites and the majority black populations. These are reflected in unequal access to quality education, health and other social provisions. According to recent UNICEF statistics (October 2003), only 46% of the population have access to improved water sources; 50% of urban and 16% of rural areas use adequate sanitation facilities; and approximately half the population is illiterate.

## 2.2 The Role of Religion

Arguably, though religion causes some tensions within the Caribbean, it has not been as divisive as race or ethnicity. In Trinidad and Tobago, and Guyana, where there are significant numbers of Christians, Hindus and Muslims, there

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<sup>25</sup>Ferguson, J., *Migration in the Caribbean: Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Beyond*, Minority Rights Group International, August 2003

<sup>26</sup>Note, for example, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions reports that there are threats, violence and even murder of workers who try to organize and advocate for rights. Source: ICF TU Online 4/11/2003.

<sup>27</sup>Max Paul, ‘Racial Ideology and Political Development: The Cases of Haiti and Bermuda’

is mutual cross group disparagement: Christians classify Islam and Hindu as heathen religions; Hindus and Moslems, in turn, label Christians as cowards for forsaking their roots and accepting the white man's religion. It was not until 1995 that a Hindu assumed political leadership in Trinidad and Tobago; until then, power remained with the black and Christian governments. Some commentators suggest that this had more to do with racial rather than religious divisions.

There is friction, too, between Hindus and Moslems but these have never materialised into the divisions and conflicts that are renown in India. In Suriname, Van der Burg and Van der Veer<sup>28</sup> note that despite the potential for inter-ethnic conflict, both Moslems and Hindus collaborated in their competition for scarce resources; they formed strategic political, social and cultural alliances against perceived Creole domination. Brinkerhoff and Jacob's study<sup>29</sup> corroborates these findings. Hindus and Moslems do 'accommodate' each other, which suggests that inter religious group conflict is not endemic.

In Jamaica and other parts of the Caribbean, Christians regard the Rastafarian religion as illegitimate, unconventional and heathen. Though there have been notable improvements, Rastafarians (particularly up the 1970s) have been denied employment and access to social services. In Jamaica in the 1970s, then Prime Minister Michael Manley's 'association' with Rastafarians, including his use of reggae music to promote black awareness, resulted in greater tolerance for the group. However, discrimination persists. In private circles, Rastafarians are still labelled as 'ganga-toting laggards'. (Interestingly, without accepting the religion, Rastafarian style 'dreadlocks' is now popularly adopted (wholesale or in its derivatives, twist or braids) to exhibit adulation for the naturalness of African roots. There is now more limited demand for 'hair processing', which is designed to produce straight, more manageable, European looking hair. Outside of the Caribbean, Jamaicans are often forced to counter the view that the entire nation is made up Rastafarians, with many of the ascribed negative stereotypes.)

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<sup>28</sup>Cited in M.R. Brinkerhoff and J.C. Jacob, 'Racial, Ethnic and Religious Social Distance in Surinam: an exploration of the 'strategic alliance hypothesis' in a Caribbean Community, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Volume 17, Number 4, October 1994.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

### 3 The Cultivation of Divisions in Guyana

The Dutch, who were the first European settlers in Guyana, established plantation production of coffee, cotton and sugar. The British, who replaced the Dutch in 1803, continued to import cheap African labour for the estates and, when the slave trade was abolished, East Indian, Portuguese, poor whites and Chinese indentured labourers. Official statistics (1993) identify several clusters of settlers: Africans (35.6%), East Indians (49.5%), Amerindians (6.8%), Portuguese (0.6%), Chinese (0.3%) and Europeans and a significant mixed category (7.0%). The majority of the population is concentrated on a small coastal strip, which borders the Atlantic Ocean to the north.

Long before Independence in 1966, the dominant African and Indian populations were separated on the basis of religion, race, culture, residence and occupation. In the post-slavery period, most Africans migrated from the estates and sought employment in the urban areas. By 1950, Africans dominated the civil service and by 1964, constituted 73% of the security forces, 53% of civil service positions, 62.29% of government agencies and 58.8% of the teaching positions. East Indian immigration began in 1838 and continued to 1917. During this period, 238,960 labourers arrived in Guyana. The majority chose to remain in Guyana when their contracts ended and engaged in peasant farming close to the estates. Initially, East Indians refused to be acculturated and, accordingly, rejected official education opportunities. However, by 1964, social conditions among East Indians had improved dramatically. East Indians, who owned 85% of land development schemes, had invested their fortunes and educated their children. They now began to compete for government positions. Among the other clusters, some Portuguese immigrants returned home with their savings while others entered retail trading, pawn broking and big business. Similarly, most Chinese entered petty retail businesses rather than remain on the estates. Amerindians, in contrast, were located in the difficult to reach hinterlands, though some now live on the coast and are occupied in lower status occupations. It was mainly the Africans and East Indians who competed for the scarce spoils that non-white segments were allowed. Cross group rivalries resulted in polarization in almost every sphere, and was starkly represented in politics.

#### 3.0.1 Political Parties

In 1946, Cheddi Jagan formed the Political Affairs Committee (PAC). The PAC committed itself to 'assist the growth and development of labour and

progressive movements of British Guiana to the end of establishing a strong, disciplined and enlightened party equipped with the theory of scientific socialism'.<sup>30</sup> As with other independence movements, it was the middle class professionals and intellectuals who led the PAC. There was broad appeal to the lower segments of the society and the party attracted both African and Indian farmers. However, even from this early period, there was evidence of distrust between African and Indian labourers. Jagan recognized that different cultural values and occupational preferences, compounded by racially separated settlements, would compromise political unification. Voting patterns in 1947 confirmed that despite its non-racial ideology, the PAC's support was likely to come from East Indian voters, in support of its East Indian leader. It was, therefore, important to reinforce the party's multiracial image through joint African and Indian leadership. In 1950, Forbes Burnham, an Afro-Guyanese lawyer, was recruited and he, with Cheddi Jagan, formed the People's Progressive Party (PPP). Burnham was to serve as party chairman and Jagan as party leader. The PPP purposed to end exploitation, secure independence and build a 'just socialist society'. This new multiracial image was highly popular and the PPP won the 1953 elections convincingly, with 18 of the 24 seats.<sup>31</sup> Six months later, when the PPP attempted to nationalize key foreign industries, the Colonial Office in Britain suspended the constitution, imprisoned Cheddi Jagan and placed Forbes Burnham under house arrest. This precipitated a leadership crisis within the PPP. Britain clearly favoured the more moderate Burnham. Its Commission of Inquiry concluded that intervention could have been avoided if moderates had been in charge of the government. Burnham and Jagan eventually split (Burnham to form the People's National Congress) and, with this, the party divided into ideological and, ultimately, racial factions.

Hintzen and Premdas describe how Burnham then used ideology for political ends. Significant sections of the black middle class had rejected PPP extremism. In order to gain support from this group, Burnham began to disassociate himself from the PPP's more radical ideologies, first advocating a mixed economy and later (1964-1968) supporting capitalist policies. Conversely, the Jagan faction had now lost urban middle-class support and was forced to rely on the rural East Indian plantation labourers. This group favoured the PPP's radical ideology and were attracted to the prospect of nationalizing key foreign industries. Jagan, therefore, maintained his ideological stance but surrendered his biracial strategy. Prior to the 1957 elections, both political factions in-

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<sup>30</sup>Quoted in P.C. Hintzen and R. R. Premdas, 'Race, Ideology and Power in Guyana', *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, p. 177. Source: 'The Aims of the Political Affairs Committee, *The PAC Bulletin*, 6 November 1946.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid. p. 178

creased their racial appeals, which effectively shattered any cross-communal tolerance that existed. Jagan won the 1957 elections, and not only with East Indian support; he had secured approximately 25 percent of the African wage labourer vote. Recognizing that he needed a strategy to secure black lower class support and his own political future, Burnham made increasing appeals to race. As Hintzen and Premdas observe:

Race mitigated the importance of ideology, thus predisposing the black middle class to accept a leader who was more leftist than they would normally support while negating the objections of the black lower classes to entering into alliance with those representing the moderate interests of the middle classes.<sup>32</sup>

Premdas<sup>33</sup> discusses the vast differences between official party pronouncements and party practice. From his investigation of party documents, both the PPP and PNC proclaimed the importance of racial unity and insisted that racism would not be tolerated. In practice, both made appeals to race and fomented racial divisions. Between 1957 and 1964, there were intense struggles between Indians and Africans, to the extent that various commentators deliberated on partitioning the state. Premdas<sup>34</sup> argues that neither party ‘adopted the electoral method unequivocally as the sole means by which it would seek control over government’; instead, both used violence to threaten the incumbent. In 1962 and 1963, for example, the PNC and the United Front (UF) instigated violent demonstrations in order to upset the PPP. According to Ernst Halperin’s account of the riots, in 1962 there were protest demonstrations against the government’s budget, which culminated in whole sections of Georgetown being burnt down. In 1963, the PPP passed a Labour Relations Bill, which the PNC refused to accept. The PNC called a general strike, which lasted for eighty days, and included racial riots. The government finally capitulated. Halperin concludes that ‘there can be little doubt that both the 1962 riots and the 1963 general strikes were deliberate attempts to bring down the PPP government’.<sup>35</sup> The Creole dominated public sector was also politicized and mobilized against the PPP. Premdas<sup>36</sup> notes that the Civil Service Association and the Federation of Unions of Government Employees

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid. ‘Race, Ideology and Power in Guyana’

<sup>33</sup>R. Premdas, ‘Competitive Organizations and Political Integration in a Racially Fragmented State’, p. 17.

<sup>34</sup>R. Premdas, ‘Competitive Party Organizations and Political Organization in a Racially Fragmented State: The Case of Guyana,’ *Caribbean Studies*, Vol, 12, No, 4, 1973, p. 14

<sup>35</sup>See E. Halperin, ‘Racism and Communism in British Guiana’, *Journal of Inter-American Studies*, January 1965, pp. 126-127.

<sup>36</sup>R. Premdas, ‘Race and Ethnic Relations in Burnhamite Guyana’ in eds. D. Dabydeen



instigated demonstrations and strikes: a purportedly neutral civil service had been converted to 'a politicized instrument of power in ethnically motivated partisan politics'. The Burnham regime that succeeded the PPP in 1964 also became a victim of politically-motivated strikes, this time led by the Jagan faction. In 1964, the PPP also used force in its attempt to prevent the holding of elections. Again, in 1968, the PPP threatened that 'guerilla warfare may yet be adopted to attain control [of] the Guyana government'.<sup>37</sup> This precedence of resorting to violence and disruption (instead of constitutional remedies) in order to resolve disagreements has resulted in enormous political, social and economic costs in Guyana.

The early political leaders were to leave other unfortunate legacies. In 1958, Burnham joined with the moderate United Democratic Party, which was led by black professionals. The PNC's ideology was now distinctly more moderate, espousing a mixed economy of private investors and public interests. It was on this platform that the PNC contested the 1961 elections, which the PPP won in almost 60% of the constituencies. There is agreement that the division of electoral boundaries favoured the East Indian populations. This was the prime argument used (by both national and international opposition groups) to challenge the legitimacy of the elections and to pressure the British government to change the electoral system. The British government, given its objections to the Jagan administration, agreed to new elections under proportional representation. British Colonial Secretary Duncan Sandys maintained that the majoritarian system in a racially bifurcated state such as British Guiana would spark animosity. Only proportional representation would ensure proper representation of minority interests.<sup>38</sup> The American government supported this new turn of events. They had advised Britain that 'an independent British Guiana under Burnham (if Burnham can commit himself to a multiracial policy) would cause us many fewer problems than an independent British Guiana under Jagan...An obvious solution was to establish a system of proportional representation...because Jagan's parliamentary strength was larger than his popular strength'.<sup>39</sup> However, this means of wresting power from the PPP only sparked more intense divisions. In response, the PPP vowed that 'the Sandys Plan must be stopped, whatever the effort and whatever the sacrifices' and subsequently encouraged its East-Indian sugar workers to strike,

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and B. Samaroo, *Across the Dark Waters: Ethnicity and Indian Identity on the Caribbean* Macmillan, 1996.

<sup>37</sup>R.Premdas, 'Competitive Party Organizations and Political Organization in a Racially Fragmented State, p. 14.

<sup>38</sup>E. Halperin, 'Racism and Communism in British Guiana', p.128

<sup>39</sup>Cited in P. Hintzen and R. Premdas, 'Race, Ideology and Power in Guyana' p. 183. Source: A. Schlesinger, Jr., *A Thousand Days*, New York, 1965, p. 779

thus demonstrating opposition to the African led Trade Union Council.<sup>40</sup> The strike was not entirely successful and, according to reports, party members began to victimize those Indians who refused to participate, and later diverted their attention to black sugar-workers and farmers. Observers during the period report various references to Africans as ‘murderers and rapists’<sup>41</sup> Africans later retaliated with acts of terror against Indian shopkeepers in Mackenzie. Both groups were now highly polarized and those living in mixed areas began to migrate to majority black or Indian locations for community protection.

Meanwhile, the new electoral provision allowed the PNC to form a coalition government with the United Front party, and to win the 1964 elections. (The UF, led by a Portuguese businessman, Peter D’Aguiar, was committed to free enterprise and to preventing communism and socialism.), The 1964 election results show distinct racial cleavages: The PPP won 45.8% of the votes, while Burnham won 40.5% and the UF, 17%. Of these, the PPP won almost total Indian support; the PNC won the total black vote plus support from the ‘coloured’ population.

Post 1964, Burnham declared his intent to ‘win the next elections; win not in the way we won the last occasion, forming a Government with another party (the UF). We must gain an overall majority. This is not a matter of mere pride. It is a matter of necessity, a matter of survival’.<sup>42</sup> This was a difficult objective in a country with a majority Indian population. Recognizing this, Burnham’s quest for power took a sinister turn. Reports indicate that approximately six months prior to the 1968 elections, Burnham encouraged a number of parliamentary defections from the PPP, thus gaining a majority in the Assembly and control of the government. He subsequently rigged the elections, with ‘tens of thousands of fictitious votes’, even while the process was supervised by a Creole dominated police force and military.<sup>43</sup> In order to protect his position, Burnham began to systematically purge the police, military and bureaucracy of non-Africans and non-supporters. (See Tables 1 and 2) The security and armed forces were then expanded with Afro (pro-PNC) Guyanese so that:

[Whereas] ‘in 1964, the police and auxiliary armed forces num-

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<sup>40</sup>Halperin, p. 129

<sup>41</sup>Ibid, p. 130

<sup>42</sup>Quoted in R. Premdas, ‘Competitive Organizations and Political Integration in a Racially Fragmented State’, p. 16. Source: Address by the Honourable L.F.S. Burnham to the 11th Congress of the People’s National Congress, Sunday, April 14, 1968. Georgetown: The Daily Chronicle Press, p. 18

<sup>43</sup>Premdas, ‘Race and Ethnic Relations in Burnhamite Guyana’ p. 56

bered about 3770; by 1977, it was estimated to be 21751. In 1964, there was one military person to 284 civilians; in 1976, it was one for every 37 citizens. The budgetary allocation for the military rose from 0.21% in 1965 to 8% in 1973 to 14.2% in 1976. That is, an increase of over 4000%...More than any other public service department, the police and coercive forces were overwhelmed by Afro-Guyanese. Burnham named himself Chairman of the Defence Board, where he took personal control over promotions and appointments.<sup>44</sup>

Burnham now resorted to his radical ideological stance. In 1970, he declared Guyana a 'Cooperative Republic', nationalized over 80% of the industries and filled the public sector with party appointees. Premdas quotes Professor Mandle's observation of the new state of affairs:

The older colonial ruling class and its business firms have been banished and decision-making power now rests with a local elite of state and cooperative-based managers. In the Guyanese context, this assumes the form of the emergence of an urban Afro-Guyanese leadership under the auspices of the People's National Congress.<sup>45</sup>

There was mass migration from Guyana, especially of Europeans, Chinese and Portuguese. The United States withdrew its support and the economy was 'besieged by high unemployment (20-30%, double digit inflation, prohibitive fuel costs, demonstrations, boycotts and strikes'.<sup>46</sup>

Burnham's regime lasted for 21 years, until his death in 1985. He secured his regime through various forms of repression. Clive Thomas described the period as the 'fascistisation' of the state:

In this stage political assassination, direct repression of all popular manifestations, and a rapid growth of the security apparatuses of the state take place. These developments are 'propagandised' with the familiar claims of 'law and order', 'the necessities of development of a poor country', and 'we cannot afford the luxuries

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid. p. 57

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 57. Source: J. Mandle, 'Continuity and Change in Guyanese Undevelopment' *Monthly Review* Vol. 21, no. 2, September 1976.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 56

of democracy'. The fascistisation of the state is now very much on the way and from here on, the government through state manipulation, propaganda and force, make it unmistakably clear that it cannot be changed by legal or constitutional means'<sup>47</sup>

These types of legacies do not simply disappear. Patterns of strikes and counter-strikes followed into subsequent administrations. Perry Mars<sup>48</sup> shows that though there have been modest attempts at reconciliation, many of these were rejected by the Opposition. In other cases, promises of reconciliation made during pre-election campaigns have not been honoured. (See Tables 3 and 4)

The current PPP government, under Bharrat Jagdeo's leadership, has offered opportunities for reconciliation and collaboration across the parties. In 1999, he invited the PNC leadership to 'sit with us and iron out differences so that we can have a common cause to serve'.<sup>49</sup> Subsequently, a number of bipartisan committees were formed to address local government reform, border and national security, distribution of land and houselots, resuscitation of the bauxite industry, depressed communities needs, radio-monopoly and non-partisan boards.' PNC representatives were also appointed to serve on state boards. However in March 2002, the PNC suspended dialogue, alleging that agreements had been breached.

### 3.0.2 A Note on Trinidad and Tobago

Trinidad and Tobago, despite its racial divisions and conflicts, still does not have the record of extreme polarization and frequent social and political explosion that Guyana does. Arguably, Trinidad and Tobago has had a somewhat more conciliatory political history and its more favourable economic position has, in part, helped to temper racial mobilization. Nevertheless, there is the lurking fear that without careful management, 'Guyana-style politics' could become the norm in Trinidad and Tobago. Some contend that the new lev-

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<sup>47</sup>C.Y.Thomas, 'State Capitalism in Guyana: An Assessment of Burnham's Cooperative Republic' in ed. F. Ambursely and R. Cohen, *Crisis in the Caribbean* New York: Monthly Review Press, 1983

<sup>48</sup>P.Mars, 'State Intervention and Conflict Resolution: Guyana and the Caribbean Experience', *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 27, No. 2, Jan. 1995, pp. 167-186 and P. Mars, 'Ethnic Conflicts in Guyana', *Journal of Peace Research*, Volume 38, 3, May 2001, pp. 352-371

<sup>49</sup>PPP/C Government, 'Towards Greater Inclusive Governance in Guyana' State House, February 8, 2003.

els of racial discord in contemporary political debates are swiftly leading the country in that unfortunate direction.

Malcolm Cross<sup>50</sup> explains that the differences in East-Indian-Creole relations in both countries started from Indentureship. Arguably, Trinidadian planters were no less disposed to stirring racial animosities. Indeed, in Trinidad too, planters capitalized on existing stereotypes, including the view that Indians were the more adept at industry. Yet, there were definite differences in policy administration that raised the level of conflict and competition in Guyana. For example, Cross argues that though the government in British Guiana did not favour land settlement schemes, the schemes that existed were ‘for the sole benefit of Indians’ and may have been ‘a policy which aggravated the sense of frustration and bitterness felt by the dispossessed Creoles’. In Trinidad and Tobago by contrast, land was not distributed along racial lines. Most squatters were granted legal rights, and land was much less costly (and less cumbersome) to acquire. This allowed both Africans and Indians to establish an economic base. Though Indians seemed to favour farming and blacks, more urban based occupations, the group of independent smallholders that emerged after 1898 comprised both Indians and Africans. In addition, Trinidad’s economy was more diverse and offered opportunities in both sugar and cocoa. In Guiana by contrast, Africans considered themselves ‘a race in decline’, rendered landless and without acceptable social provision.

Various scholars argue that Trinidad and Tobago’s more favourable economic position has allowed both Africans and Indians to profit in ways that groups in Guyana have not. Petroleum was discovered early in the twentieth century and became the dominant export earner, replacing sugar, coffee and cocoa. In many respects, oil production became associated with Africans, and though they did not remain on the estates, sugar production was considered the Indians’ domain. French Creoles managed the multinational businesses.<sup>51</sup> While both Africans and Indians have protested about the ways in which economic gains were/are managed, there is little doubt that Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana have long had starkly different levels of cross-group economic welfare, with different consequences for the levels of ethnic conflict. Arguably, with higher levels of poverty in Guyana, the electorate is more easily incited; in Trinidad, there is marked voter apathy, which is reflected in consistently low

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<sup>50</sup>M. Cross, ‘East Indian-Creole relations in Trinidad and Guiana in the late nineteenth century’ in eds. D. Dabydeen and B. Samaroo, *Across the Dark Waters: Ethnicity and Indian Identity on the Caribbean* Macmillan, 1996.

<sup>51</sup>R. Premdas and B. Ragoonath, ‘Ethnicity, Elections and Democracy in Trinidad and Tobago: Analysing the 1995 and 1996 elections’ in *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, Vol. 36, No. 3, (November 1998), pp. 30-53

voter turnouts.

However, there were also notable differences in political management. Captain Cipriani, one of the country's most influential nationalist leaders, was actually a white commander of the British West India Regiment who believed that West Indians were fully capable of self-government. Cipriani became a dominant force in West Indian politics, declaring himself a 'champion of the common people...[of] the barefooted man...[He] was acknowledged as leader by hundreds and thousands of black people and East Indians'.<sup>52</sup> As Selwyn Ryan saw it, Cipriani's whiteness proved an asset. At the time, Indians and Blacks distrusted each other and he was able to bridge the gap between the communities. Cipriani was attractive to the colonialists as well, who preferred to deal with their own kind, even if he had 'betrayed the race'. However, Cipriani did not succeed in including the majority of Indians in the nationalist movement, though they held him in high regard. Fearing assimilation, Indians preferred to remain distinct and distant. Uriah Butler and Adrian Cola Rienzi (Rienzi was an Indian agitator who the black oil-workers asked to lead their union after the 1937 labour riots) succeeded Cipriani and also tried to encourage cross-group alliances. Yet, even from the earliest elections, race became a major factor in voting. After the 1946 election, Albert Gomes commented on the clear cleavages in the society and warned that 'unless we can produce in the next five years a fusion of the disparate and extraneous loyalties that now bedevil us, then the progress of Trinidad as a cohesive organism is a mere fantastic notion of the idealists in our midsts'.<sup>53</sup>

The People's National Movement (PNM) and the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) were formed in the 1950s. Both parties got majority support from the African/Creole and Indian communities respectively.

Racial conflicts escalated during the People's National Movement's (PNM) first term of leadership. Ryan suggests that the PNM (which described itself as multiracial but was perceived as a black party) had simply misunderstood the Indian society; party leaders assumed that by gaining the alliance of urban Hindus, they would then be able to garner wider Indian support. This was not the case; Indians felt obliged to vote for the Hindu leader, despite any affiliation they had to the PNM representative. Eric Williams' criticisms of the Hindi Linguistic movement, the Maha Sabha and the Hindu school-building

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<sup>52</sup>CLR James, *The Black Jacobins*, New York, 1963, p. 403. Quoted in S. Ryan, *Race and Nationalism in Trinidad and Tobago*, University of Toronto Press, 1972, p. 50

<sup>53</sup>Quoted in S. Ryan, *Race and Nationalism in Trinidad and Tobago*, University of Toronto Press, 1972, p. 77

programme further fuelled Indian dissent.<sup>54</sup> Independence did not heal the rifts. In 1955, Williams proposed constitutional reforms that would accommodate the ethnic and religious groups in government. However, on gaining office he recanted and opted to follow the majoritarian system of government unreservedly: ‘any ethnic group which did not rally behind the PNM was either recalcitrant, treasonable or obscurantist’.<sup>55</sup> Therefore, rather than facilitating multiracialism, Williams attempted to build homogeneity. After Independence in 1962, Williams attempted to improve relations with the Indian populations through cooperation with the Democratic Labour Party (DLP)—considered the Indian party—and through recruiting Indians into the civil service. Responding to criticisms that Indians were not represented in prominent positions, he appointed a Christian Indian to the post of High Commissioner. He also acceded to requests for Hindu secondary schools and for official recognition of Indian religious festivals. Nevertheless, Williams’s long period of leadership was frequently dogged by claims of discrimination against Indians and of denial of Indian contributions to society and culture. Conversely, the majority of blacks maintained that the PNM failed to advance the race, and that the party prioritised the middle and upper classes. Black discontent exploded in the 1970 uprising.

When Ryan wrote his text on *Race and Nationalism in Trinidad and Tobago*, he concluded that younger generations of blacks and Indians were hopeful that the race factor would subside in subsequent elections. Ryan, himself, was doubtful. He warned that the majority of people tended to vote on the basis of emotion rather than reason and that up to 1966, race was still a critical factor in politics. La Guerre’s<sup>56</sup> analysis of the 1981 elections suggests that race had declined in importance and that conventional intra and inter-party divisions had prevented a successful opposition challenge to the PNM. However, Premdas and Ragoonath’s study of the 1995 and 1996 elections in Trinidad and Tobago<sup>57</sup> reinforces the weight of race and ethnicity in elections. The PNM remained in power until 1986, when the National Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR) won, on what party advocates claimed was a truly multiracial ballot. The NAR, which comprised disaffected Indians and Creoles, later split into Indian and Creole factions and was defeated by the PNM in 1991. The United National Congress (UNC)—the reformed ‘Indian’ DLP party—won the 1995 general and 1996 local elections. This was the very first occasion in which

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid. Ryan, p. 374

<sup>55</sup>Ibid. Ryan, p. 375

<sup>56</sup>J. Gaffar LaGuerre, ‘The General Elections of 1981 in Trinidad and Tobago’ in *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 1983 pp. 133-156

<sup>57</sup>R. Premdas and B. Ragoonath, ‘Ethnicity, Elections and Democracy in Trinidad and Tobago: Analysing the 1995 and 1996 Elections’ in *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, Vol. 36, No. 3, November 1998, pp. 30-53

an Indian-based and non-Christian government assumed leadership. Premdas and Ragoonath describe the consternation that this virtual revolution caused, particularly among the African population, who feared that Indians would now remain in power, since they outnumbered Africans, and that Africans would lose access to the opportunities they had secured over the decades. The authors description of electioneering during the 1995 and 1996 elections is noteworthy because it shows another important difference in political management methods in Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago:

The parties in Trinidad generally do not make open public appeals for communal support. Overtly and publicly, they project an image of inter-ethnic tolerance and multi-ethnic following. They have woven a delicate strategy that reconciles tolerance with intolerance, bigotry with enlightenment and love with hate. In contradiction to their carefully crafted 'clean' public image, they make racist and communalist appeals at the grassroots levels.<sup>58</sup>

(The consequences may be the same for race-based voting but Trinidad's 'public deception' has perhaps helped to reduce open conflict.)

The 1995 general election was a clear demonstration of race-based voting. The UNC and the PNM won 17 seats each. Of these, the PNM had 15 secure seats in areas of high African concentration while the UNC had 14 secure seats, within Indian majority areas. Many non-committed voters, among them previous NAR supporters, also voted for the UNC, whose platform of 'one love' and unity was consistent with NAR principles. Meanwhile, the PNM lost votes, particularly among some middle class groups, when it rejected the UNC/NAR's call for a government of national unity; the PNM declared that unified government was 'a recipe for chaos'.<sup>59</sup> The UNC/NAR coalition allowed Basdeo Panday and A.N.R. Robinson an additional two seats and they were installed as Prime Minister and *Minister Extraordinaire* (later President) respectively.

The UNC/NAR coalition had to contend with competing claims and expectations: that is, for special attention to the Indian community, who considered themselves effectively 'locked out' of public appointments under the PNM's rule. They had to manage this 'affirmative action' programme in a way that did not marginalize and inflame the black population.

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<sup>58</sup>Ibid. Premdas and Ragoonath, p. 36

<sup>59</sup>Ibid. Premdas and Ragoonath, pp. 42-43



Table 1: Trinidad and Tobago: Predominantly African Constituencies- PNM %Votes. (Source:Premdas, 1996; LaGuerre, 1983 and Trinidad and Tobago Electoral Commission Reports)

Constituency	1976	1981	1991	1995	2002
Diego Martin East	78.1	62.4	65	70.34	74.0
Diego Martin West	77.8	66.7	60.99	74.88	75.2
Diego Martin Central	70.1	54.7	57.81	76.56	76.9
Port of Spain North	70.9	54.7	–	–	–
Port of Spain North-St. Ann’s West	–	–	63.04	77.83	81.6
Laventille	80.5	82.2	–	–	–
Laventille E./Morvant	–	–	73.05	80.32	87.2
Laventille West	–	–	81.35	84.87	94
St Anne’s East	85.6	77.3	74.90	72.62	78.8
Arouca	64.3	64.8	–	–	–
Arouca North	–	–	61.06	65.63	73.4
Arouca South	–	–	68.99	71.87	81.4
Arima	62	66.7	60.39	61.08	72.4
Toco/Manzanella	67.7	70	52	57.35	61.25
San Fernando East	66.5	65	67.59	65.35	65.4
Point Fortin	60.3	65.9	56.94	62.20	65.2
La Brea	62.2	67.1	59.66	60.77	61.03
Port of Spain South	85.5	62.4	73.44	69.78	78.5

Panday won the 2000 elections amidst allegations of corruption and what the UNC government depicted as persistent persecution from the PNM-loyal media. The PNM disputed the election results on the basis that two of the UNC’s candidates had not satisfied Trinidad and Tobago’s citizenship criteria for election. Opposition leader Manning then called for demonstrations against the illegal UNC government. This was a frantic period: Panday warned that various groups were planning to seize power; ethnic tensions escalated; and three government ministers left the UNC, charging dissatisfactory internal politics and corruption. New elections were called in 2001, and this resulted in a split of 18 seats each in Parliament. President A.N.R. Robinson broke the tie when he appointed Patrick Manning and the PNM to government; however, this move resulted in 10 months of deadlock. Indians, who had long felt excluded from government and the bureaucracy, saw Manning’s appointment as yet another case of discrimination. Over the years then, the political atmosphere has become increasingly acrimonious. Manning was forced to dissolve Parliament and call for fresh elections. The October 7, 2002 election broke the deadlock,

Table 2: Trinidad and Tobago: Predominantly Indian Constituencies- % UNC Votes. (Source: Premdas, 1996 and Trinidad and Tobago Electoral Commission Reports)

Constituency	1991	1995	2002
Oropouche	59.26	81.23	83.2
Naparima	56.81	77.43	80.9
Caroni East	57.93	68.37	71.6
Caroni Central	51.84	65.57	64.3
Siparia	65.92	79.61	83.3
Tabaquite	41.40	72.22	71.5
Couva North	72.90	75.90	75.6
Couva South	55.31	66.51	67.3
Chauguanas	46.20	71.81	78.6

though with highly charged political and ethnic confrontations: the PNM won 20 seats and the UNC16.<sup>60</sup>

## 4 The Limits of Structural Reforms: Jamaica, Cuba and the French Caribbean

These country reviews emphasize the significance of prudent political management, particularly in contexts of real or perceived horizontal inequalities, long and harsh histories of subjugation and discrimination and complex (and often conflicting) manifestations of accountability to subgroups rather than to the state. Guyana presents one of the more extreme cases of the perversion of ethnicity and race in the Caribbean, for there—despite the promises at Independence—political leaders have manipulated cross group animosities, with costly consequences for communal relations, economic growth, political stability and development. By comparison with these two countries, Belize, though it has an even more diverse population, does not have similar levels of political and ethnic conflict. Tensions exist and racism pervades private circles but dominant and opposing groups tend to be ‘broadly flexible in their partisan loyalties and choices’.<sup>61</sup> In many respects, the threat of Guatemalan occupa-

<sup>60</sup>*Frontline*, Volume 19, Issue 23, November 9-22, 2002

<sup>61</sup>T. Thorndike, ‘Belizean Political Parties: the Independence Crisis and After’, in *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* Vol.21 No. 2, p. 197

tion is a unifying factor, as are some common cultural practices. Premdas observes that though Creoles continue to claim cultural superiority, the Mayas feel historically disadvantaged and there is higher poverty incidence in some ethnic groups than others; people generally believe that they can improve their circumstances through education and training. As Premdas sees it, ‘there is no overt system of closure that creates rigid ethno-economic compartments; there is more ‘classism than ‘ethnicism at some levels of life in Belize; there is little consistent correlative coincidence between colour and economic well being in Belize’.<sup>62</sup> Consequently, ethnic identities do not assume the salience that it does in Guyana; there are other issues that influence political choice. This is not to minimize the significant challenges in Belize and the reforms required to contain racial tensions and class divisions. Rather, experiences in Belize confirm that tensions may be more manageable where they are not politicised, and where the governing structures offer fair chances to all segments of the society.

Frances Stewart’s<sup>63</sup> study of horizontal inequalities arrives at similar conclusions: ethnic tensions are more likely to escalate in conditions of low material security; high levels of inter-group inequality; political exclusion of (or preferential access to) select groups; where there are low levels of political and national consensus, and where, according to O’Donnell, societies have weak liberal and republican values.<sup>64</sup> Therefore, Stewart recommends inclusive political, social and economic policies, with the following governing principles:

- All major groups in society [should] participate in political power, the administration, the army and police;
- Horizontal inequality in economic aspects (assets, employment and income) should be moderate;
- Horizontal inequality in social participation and achieved well-being [should] also be moderate.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>62</sup>R. Premdas, ‘Belize: Identity and Ethnicity in a Multi-Ethnic State’ <http://www.uwichill.edu.bb/bnccde/belize/conference/papers/premdas.html>

<sup>63</sup>F. Stewart, ‘The Root Causes of Conflict: Some Conclusions’ QEH Working Paper Series, Number 16

<sup>64</sup>O’Donnell (1999) defines the liberal principle as ‘the idea that there are some rights that should not be encroached upon by an power. The republican principle emphasizes that the ‘discharge of public duties is an ennobling activity that demands careful subjection to the law and devoted service to the public interest, even at the expense of sacrificing the private interests of the officials’.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid.,p. 30

The objective, Stewart maintains, should be equality rather than moderation in all these aspects. Political inclusivity is the prime (though more difficult) goal since monopolization of power normally produces other forms of inequality. Yet, as Stewart admits, these are formidable objectives, which is hardly the priority within many developing countries. Even where governments are inclined to promote fairness and equity, donor agencies and governments, which can themselves (overtly or covertly) provoke conflict, may resist or prevent positive state actions.

One of the limits to Stewart's arguments is that it does not account sufficiently for the ways in which policies that promote group equality trigger class divisions. For example, there are reports that South Africa's affirmative action policies have created a widening gulf between an upwardly mobile black middle class and a significant black lower class. These new inequalities also present serious problems. In addition, Eyben notes<sup>66</sup> that the horizontal inequality approach prioritizes a categorical (as opposed to relational) understanding of inequality and poverty. The categorical interpretation concentrates, for example, on the proportion of Moslems, Hindus and Christians who have political positions or access to employment. The relational interpretation attends to the deeper underlying power relations that sustain discrimination and inequalities, recognising that structural reforms may not resolve these.

Both Jamaica and Cuba have used structural reforms to address racial inequalities and political ideology to transform racial disquiet into class antagonisms. Welfare measures in both countries have been stalled by both internal and external factors. Both country experiences demonstrate some of the principal constraints to structural reforms. The case study of Jamaica raises questions about the wisdom of a political strategy that redefines understandings of inequality without substantially transforming the conditions for repression.

## 4.1 Jamaica: Politics, Race and Class

In the 1930s, Jamaica's racial composition was quite similar to the rest of the Caribbean: there was a majority black population; a growing group of coloured persons, including immigrant Indentured labourers, and a white minority (approximately 1%), who owned the vast portion of the resources. Subsequently, Afro-Europeans, Lebanese and Chinese joined the capitalist class and began

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<sup>66</sup>Personal communication

to challenge white hegemony.<sup>67</sup> From the 1950s to 1960s, the economic base also expanded to include manufacturing and tourism; these industries eventually overtook sugar and became major export earners. Jamaica's economy grew rapidly in this period, averaging about 6% annually. However, much of the gains from growth were still concentrated among an upper class of 21 families, the business sectors and the middle class. In 1958, by comparison, the lowest income groups had only a 2.2% share of total income ('whereas the wealthiest 5% had a 30.2% share').<sup>68</sup> Stratification was justified and supported by a white, 'racist, social ideology and the dependence of the society on a European imperial power, Great Britain. The dominant class ideology assumed that landowners, the wealthy, and the highly educated had a natural claim to national leadership, pre-eminent political influence, and social wisdom.'<sup>69</sup> Many among the lower class had come to accept their inferiority.

As Lewis describes: 'The grim reality of Jamaican life in the mid 1960s was of racial separatism, undeclared yet virulent, that affected every nook and cranny of interpersonal and inter-class relationships, based on a social system characterized by strongly entrenched class-colour correlations.'<sup>70</sup>

The Rastafarian movement, which began in the 1930s, and the Black Power movement of the late 1960s raised issues of race and class. Both Marcus Garvey and Guyanese lecturer Walter Rodney were important in this regard and Payne<sup>71</sup> notes that 'Rodney brought together class and racial issues in precisely the way that the structure of the Jamaican political system sought to prevent and to which it was most vulnerable'. The Jamaican government considered Rodney and his Black Power pronouncements, a threat to security, particularly because Rodney had extended his 'groundings' to Rastafarians and the dispossessed. Consequently, Rodney was expelled from Jamaica. The ensuing riots proved that he had been successful in establishing the connections between race and class exploitation. Norman Manley, first leader for the People's National Party, acknowledged that 'whereas the mission of his generation had been to achieve the goal of political independence, the task of the

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<sup>67</sup>Trevor Munroe, *The Politics of Constitutional Decolonization*, Kingston: Institute for Social and Economic Research, 1972. See also L. Broom, 'Social Differentiation of Jamaica', *American Sociological Review*, Volume 19, No. 2, (1954), pp. 115-125.

<sup>68</sup>C. Stone, in S. Wellisz and R. Findlay, *The Political Economy of Poverty, Equity and Growth: Five Small Open Economies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993, p. 172.

<sup>69</sup>C. Stone, *Democracy and Clientelism in Jamaica*, New Jersey: Transaction Books, 1985, p.15.

<sup>70</sup>G. Lewis, *The Growth of the Modern West Indies*, London: Mac Gibbon and Kee, 1967, p.191

<sup>71</sup>A. Payne, 'The Rodney Riots in Jamaica: The Background and Significance of the Events of October 1968', *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* Vol.21, July 1983

next was to proceed to social and economic renewal'. His son, Michael Manley, attempted to make these tangible social changes. From 1972 to 1979, in particular, his People's National Party (PNP) introduced a distinctly socialist agenda, which featured an expansionary fiscal policy for social improvement and increased production. Like Fidel Castro, Manley also attempted to deal with racial divisions. He espoused the value of blackness, embraced Rastafarians and reggae music and, arguably, succeeded in paving the way for blacks to be included in the more visible and higher status occupations.<sup>72</sup> Currently, black people are well represented in the middle/upper middle classes of society, which Robotham<sup>73</sup> underscores, is no small achievement.

Yet, Jamaica's middle class leaders have had a 'contradictory and problematic role'.<sup>74</sup> One of the more lively debates in contemporary Jamaican politics concerns the extent to which successive leaders have delivered on the promises they made to the lower classes at Independence. Henke<sup>75</sup> is convinced that political leaders have reneged on their obligations and denied Jamaican people the substantive freedoms expected from democracy. These include equal access to justice, 'meaningful participation in political processes and access to economic resources'. He provides evidence of undue use of force against the poor in Jamaica; symbol manipulation in order to maintain a certain view of history and entrench middle class positions (which includes quashing race-based forms of protest); rule by *dictat*; and efforts to stifle opposing opinions and public accountability. Robotham contends that Henke does not provide a complete picture of the middle classes' role in development, for these groups have also extended social provisions to a black majority who, up to the 1960s, had very limited access to health, education and lucrative occupations. However, he does not deny that the middle class has failed in a number of important respects.

Certainly, Jamaica's garrison constituencies are disturbing examples of how politicians have stifled protest from the black underclass by appeasing them with scarce benefits and spoils, equipping them with arms and building secure blocks of political support. The 1997 National Committee on Political Tribalism concluded:

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<sup>72</sup>A. M. Waters, *Race, Class and Political Symbols: Rastafari and Reggae in Jamaican Politics*, New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1985.

<sup>73</sup>D. Robotham, 'Freedom Ossified or Economic Crisis: A Comment on Holger Henke' in *Identities* Vol. 8, 3, pp. 451-466

<sup>74</sup>P. Antrobus and N. Peacocke, 'Yabba Still Empty: Comments on Holger Henke's 'Freedom Ossified: Political Culture and the Public Use of History in Jamaica' and Don Robotham's Response to Henke' in *Identities* Vol, 8, 3, pp. 441-450

<sup>75</sup>Henke, 'Freedom Ossified: Political Culture and the Public Use of History', *Identities*, Vol. 8, 3, 2001, pp.413-440

It is beyond debate that party politics was the cradle for factional politics, that the political clashes of the late 1960s particularly in the election period of 1967 ushered in the era of firearm offences against the person, and that party politics remain a major cause... Many politicians have benefited from the unrest and displacement, which are features of communities with high levels of unemployment; a proliferation of unskilled and virtually unemployable youth, pervasive poverty of purse and spirit...Poverty facilitates the development of political tribalism

These areas consistently record 100% support for their political leaders. They cannot do otherwise. Party emissaries, normally gang leaders who maintain a close relationship with the constituency's Member of Parliament, assure the vote.

This politicization affects access to services. Not surprisingly, private companies will not invest in these areas; the quality of available services is poor; children attend school irregularly (much depends on whether or not there is inter-community conflict); hospitals located in one garrison constituency cannot provide services to persons from opposition areas.<sup>76</sup> One will likely discover similar political behaviour in communities that are in close proximity to garrison constituencies,. Figueroa<sup>77</sup> explains that this is because close and adjoining communities are often subject to the outreach activities of members of the garrison constituencies.

However, with reduced access to spoils, communities are switching their allegiances. In 1997, voters in one community (Rema) opted to vote *en masse* for the PNP, since the JLP had failed to deliver on promises. This meant that community members no longer had access to nearby health facilities (since the local hospital was located in a JLP constituency). Residents now had to travel to the father PNP constructed Comprehensive Clinic. Additionally, drug barons are now assuming prominence in these areas; the situation has spiralled and politicians are losing control.

The enclaves are not representative of the wider Jamaica, where citizens

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<sup>76</sup>J. Moncrieffe, 'Problems of Parliamentary Accountability in Jamaica: Consequences for Health Administration' in *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, Vol. 39, 2, 2001 and 'Accountability: Idea, Ideals, Constraints in *Democratization* Vol. 8, 3, 2001.

<sup>77</sup>M. Figueroa, 'Garrison Communities in Jamaica: 1962-1993: Their Growth and Impact on Political Culture'. Paper presented to the symposium on Democracy and Democratization in Jamaica: Fifty Years of Adult Suffrage, December 6-7, 1994, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of the West Indies, Mona

still defend their freedom to express opinions, particularly through a vigilant media. However, they do provide an extreme example of how Jamaica's politicians have influenced new social and cultural identities by promoting political factions that divert attention from the problems of race and class. In the meantime, social dislocation remains.

Jamaica must now find ways of including two distinct political 'tribal' groups, which are both supported by a majority black underclass. In recent political campaigns, references to race have escalated. Prime Minister Percival Patterson assumed office after Michael Manley's retirement, amidst widespread glee that 'it is black man's time now'. Racial animosities persist. Robotham observes that since Patterson's election, sections of the brown upper middle and white upper class have become extremely critical of government policies, while sections of the black middle classes are equally sensitive to criticisms from these groups.<sup>78</sup>

Paradoxically, in the midst of this celebration of blackness (especially prevalent among the middle class), beauty is still defined in terms of lighter shades and finely textured hair. Recently, there were reports of black women in the ghettos of Kingston who were finding 'alternative'—potentially self-harming—means to lighten their complexions. It is not uncharacteristic to hear 'black' parents lament the depth of 'blackness' of their children's complexion. Similarly, reggae music—formerly one of the prime avenues of black protest—has in its modern form been used to promote the greater desirability of the 'browning' (lighter mixed race).

One of the crucial areas of disagreement in the Henke-Robotham-Antrobus/Peacocke debate is the extent to which Jamaica's political leaders have adequate scope to address long-standing inequalities. Do globalization and the country's (almost mandatory) commitment to neoliberal policies prevent effective social action? Manley's social reform policies (1970s) had limited results, not only because of the government's economic mismanagement but because the United States objected to the socialist ideology and to the direction of the economy. The Jamaica Labour Party's (JLP) structural adjustment policies were designed to create a stable macroeconomic environment but entailed significant social sacrifices that did little to bridge the polarised class structure. Therefore, Robotham contends that external obligations confine government to set courses of action; there are no alternatives to the market. However, Antrobus and Peacocke maintain that there are spaces for action in areas that would 'address fundamental questions of social equality and personal and collective realization'. Only these tangible responses will move understandings of

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<sup>78</sup>D. Robotham, 'Freedom Ossified or Economic Crisis: A Comment on Holger Henke'



‘freedom’ from mere symbolism to practical relevance.

The debates, which are set to continue, raise very important issues about the ways in which efforts to stem horizontal disparities can produce new, vertical, forms of inequalities; about the potentially harmful consequences of the politicization of race and class; the substantive structural and social reforms that may be required to address inequalities and the internal and external constraints to change. (We return to these issues in Section 5.)

#### 4.1.1 Cuba and the French Departments

Until, the 19th century, *Cuba* was described as the ‘ever faithful isle’. Revolution seemed highly unlikely in a country that remained a loyalist stronghold long after colonies in North and South America had begun to achieve their independence. Colonialism was maintained in Cuba and the slave trade used (illegally) to replenish supplies of slaves, even up to 1864.<sup>79</sup> Like other Caribbean countries, slaves (about 36% of the population in 1846) were forced to labour in brutal conditions. Fearing the type of collaboration and revolt that obtained in Haiti, slaves were kept apart from the Creoles (approximately 17 percent of the population), who themselves had certain constraints on their freedom. Whites were intent that ‘Cuba would be either Spanish or African; it would be Spanish or it would be another Haiti’.<sup>80</sup>

The 1868 Revolution came from an unlikely source: a group of prosperous white anti-colonialists who were bent on securing Cuba’s independence. This group fashioned a multiracial army, comprised largely of mixed groups (termed Creoles) and freed slaves. Black soldiers acquired positions of authority, as colonels and captains in the army. Significantly, a distinct and powerful anti-racial ideology was used to support the revolution, which influenced the foundation of the nation. Ferrer contends that ‘the very struggle against Spain had transformed Cuba into a land where there were no whites or blacks, only Cubans’.<sup>81</sup> Despite the contradictions inherent in the nationalist movement, it is important that this new ideology became popular at a time when European and North American scientists had begun to offer biological explanations for racial inferiority and superiority. It was in this context that José Martí and other nationalist leaders argued that ‘race was merely a tool used locally to divide the anti-colonial effort and globally by men who invented textbook

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<sup>79</sup>Ferrer, A. ‘Cuba 1898: Rethinking Race, Nation and Empire’ *Radical History Review* 73: 22-46, 1999.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., p. 24

<sup>81</sup>Ibid., p. 25

racism in order to justify expansion and empire'. Therefore, while racial stratification was intensifying in the United States, Cuba's nationalist leaders were encouraging racial harmony. Undoubtedly, not all within the white population accepted these changes and even prominent nationalist leaders occasionally resorted to popular stereotypes about the black race. However, these ideologies provided the space for the black population to challenge persistent discrimination, even within 'open' occupations, such as the military.

The American intervention stalled this movement towards 'a raceless society'. Americans attempted—and was to some extent successful—to re-segregate Cuba. Plans to restrict Creole and black access to education, civil and property rights were tempered, given objections from the nationalists but the threat to withhold independence unless the nationalists ensured good behaviour among their ranks and 'promote the right sort of men' resulted in new forms of segregation. White officers were selected and blacks refused as uneducated; consequently, new forms of segregation began.<sup>82</sup>

Fidel Castro's revolutionary government adopted the founding ideologies of the 19th century nationalist movement and made considerable efforts to dismantle all forms of discrimination. In 1959, Castro called for public debates on racism, in which he promoted unity among the races.<sup>83</sup> The government proposed that there were four substantial national objectives: to provide employment, lower the cost of living, raise the salaries of lowest paid workers and end discrimination in the workplace.<sup>84</sup> Racial discrimination, he maintained, was rooted in economics; therefore race relations would change if the economic base were transformed. Fernandez states that political unity was paramount for the government and that 'the racial problem was subsumed within the general battle against social injustice in all of its manifestations'. The government eliminated the structural and legal provisions that had prevented social mobility. Its policy of integration dismantled overt forms of racism such as segregated clubs; free health care and education resulted in noteworthy improvements in basic indicators such as life expectancy and child mortality. As Fernandez shows, the standard of living among black Cubans increased markedly in the first decades after the revolution. These changes did not eliminate private expressions of racism and the preponderance of blacks among the poor but they did convince the Castro regime that the race problem had been solved. By 1962, racism had become a muted issue in Cuba, and the govern-

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<sup>82</sup>Ibid.

<sup>83</sup>A. De la Fuente, 'The Resurgence of Racism in Cuba', *NACLA Report on the Americas*, Vol XXXIV, No 6, May-June 2001

<sup>84</sup>N. Fernandez, 'The Changing Discourse on Race in Contemporary Cuba' *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 2001, Vol. 14, No. 2, 117-132

ment's control of the media ensured that that the policy of silence remained intact.

Since the economic downturn of the 1990s, Castro's welfare programme is becoming dislodged. The proportion of poor blacks has been increasing and social problems are resurfacing, including higher crime rates among the black population. Observers note that over the last decade, there are more overt manifestations of discrimination against blacks. The media continues to publicize popular stereotypes, which portray the undesirability of the black skin and the attractiveness of lighter complexions. The 'policy of silence' has begun to crumble. Various groups are questioning the wisdom of a strategy that refuses to confront persistent racial prejudice. Some argue that such a stance means that the depth and prevalence of racism is not understood or dealt with. Structural reforms are insufficient; inclusion depends on consistent attacks on racist ideologies.

The new 'rainbow nation' of South Africa is presently contending with the very issue. Given that country's history of intense ethnic divisions (manipulated with great success by the English and apartheid regime), the ANC government has opted to 'redirect' the nation's focus from its history of stark ethnic divisions to the project of nation building. The government is encouraging a new ideology of 'oneness', which, some may well argue, simply masks underlying hostilities. However, the government fears—perhaps credibly—that open discussions of inter-group rivalries will foment tensions in an environment that needs to conduct fundamental social and economic reconstruction, with minimal disruption. Is this approach to 'inclusion' tenable?

De la Fuente<sup>85</sup> contradicts critics of the 'myths of racial/ethnic democracy' who argue that that these philosophies not only mask underlying tensions but also 'demobilize subordinate groups'. De la Fuente's counter-argument is persuasive: First, 'mobilization is not the only means to social progression' and, second, such ideologies can be used to 'legitimize inclusion'. In the case of Cuba, he maintains, pronouncements of raceless equality 'provided blacks with rhetorical tools to claim full membership in the nation; this discourse opened opportunities for legitimate mobilization and demands'.

Notably, however, assimilation and ideologies of 'raceless' equality have had mixed results in the French Departments of Guadeloupe and Martinique. In 1946, both countries graduated from colonial to *département* status and the inhabitants became French citizens. This allows French Caribbean peoples to

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<sup>85</sup>De la Fuente, Alejandro, 'Myths of Racial Democracy: Cuba, 1900-1912', *Latin American Research Review*, Vol. 34, No. 3, 1999

claim rights, as any other within the French metropole, including full social benefits. However, *départementalisation* also entailed a denial of cultural difference and, concurrently, respect for the ‘indivisibility of the nation’. Ducoulombier acknowledges that while this has raised the profile of issues such as gender equality, they deny the particular circumstances of black women, many of whom feel no sense of community with the white women who, purportedly, advocate on their behalf. Despite official provisions, the French Caribbean is defined in terms of race, and its inhabitants are regarded as outsiders to the metropole. Ducoulombier reports claims of racial discrimination in areas such as employment. French Caribbean women, who are often advised to change their names for job applications, are convinced that being white is the prime criterion for promotion.<sup>86</sup>

Départementalisation has reinforced and extended French cultural hegemony. Whereas Creole languages and norms were still facilitated in the colonial period, Martinique and Guadeloupe have been bombarded with French housing styles, language, patterns of consumption, history and education. Frenchness meant progress, including vastly improved living standards. Thus, French Caribbean people were encouraged to migrate to France in order to secure better education and life chances. According to Ducoulombier, first generation emigrants to France claim that they were routinely exploited and that their subjugation was largely ignored because of the governing policy of indivisibility. Racial and ethnic relations are reputedly better in the islands. According to some reports, there is genuine social mixing in Guadeloupe; all the ethnic communities (descendants of African slaves, French planters, mulattoes, French indentured labourers, East Indians, Middle Eastern traders) are regarded as ‘equally Guadeloupean’. Notably, this ethnic accommodation does not apply to Haitian immigrants; neither does it preclude a feeling of loss of identity among Guadeloupeans. Many, especially among the middle classes, are concerned that their ‘culture’ is being devalued and that Guadeloupeans have been cut off from their past. Brodwin’s<sup>87</sup> surveys within the region reveal common sentiments: ‘Assimilation is still going forward, and we in Guadeloupe don’t have any grounding. We are facing something that is moving very fast, but we are not in control at all...‘We Guadeloupeans don’t know who we are;’ ‘We don’t know whether we are French or ourselves.’

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<sup>86</sup>A. Ducoulombier, ‘Parity is about ‘race’: French republican citizenship and the French Caribbean’ in *Modern and Contemporary France* Vol. 10, No. 1, 2002, pp. 75-87

<sup>87</sup>P. Brodwin, ‘Marginality and Subjectivity in the Haitian Diaspora’ in *Anthropological Quarterly*, Summer 2003, Vol. 76 Issue 3

## 5 From Nation-State to State-Nation: Conclusions

Linz, Stepan and Yadav challenge the common assumptions that ‘every state should be a nation and every nation should be a state’. The first assumption has its roots in the French tradition of cultural and political homogeneity. As in Martinique and Guadeloupe, this forced ‘oneness’ requires acceptance of the superiority of French mores, language and scholarship, in exchange for broad social provisions and generally acceptable living standards. The approach may not be problematic in culturally homogenous societies, where citizens share common historical bonds; however, it is patently prejudicial and increasingly untenable in countries with ‘politically salient cultural and/or linguistic diversity’.<sup>88</sup> In such diverse contexts, governments may use various political tactics to construct nation states. The country examples describe a range of these: supplying incentives for assimilation; coercion and manipulation; exclusion and/or adverse incorporation; reframing identities around select national symbols. Additionally, political leaders may use the guise of nation building for personal gain. They can actively foment tensions and propel their countries from conditions of multiculturalism to multinationalism. All these strategies, altruistic or perverse, influence the extent to which and pace at which it is possible to subsequently build ‘state-nations’ out of these forced ‘nation-states’.

‘State-nations’, as Linz, Stepan and Yadav describe, ‘respect the legitimate political expression of active socio-cultural cleavages; try to accommodate these without privileging any one claim; and seek to build a sense of political community by emphasizing multiple identities’. The premise for this stance is that identities are not fixed or primordial; that even seemingly disparate groups may share common interests and objectives; that emphasizing these common bonds is critical for building tolerant societies; and that the more restrictive nation-state mindset may no longer be feasible in divided societies, where the issue of identity is being increasingly politicized. However, there is ample evidence that structural reforms may fail to bridge divisions, particularly in highly unequal societies. In ideal circumstances, governments would opt for constitutional arrangements that accommodate and respect diversity and, importantly, aim for socially just policies that preclude individual and group discrimination and deprivations.

Frances Stewart emphasizes that ‘perceptions’—which may not be factually

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<sup>88</sup>Linz, Stepan and Yadav, Draft, p. 3

based—can both precipitate and prevent conflict. In highly unequal conditions, people are susceptible to manipulation by the most charismatic and powerful. As our country examples attest, political leaders also rely on image, political language and persuasion. These tools, though tenuous, can have tremendous utility and power, particularly in the short term. Image and language lose their credibility when they are not supported by tangible actions or are proven to rest upon false premises. Eventually, it becomes difficult to convince the electorate of noble intent. Arguably, Caribbean politics has fallen into this state of disrepair. People are sceptical and disillusioned; they are wary of promises of structural and social change. However, the public must share culpability. Constituents, who have become accustomed to special favours, often pressure their representatives for particularistic policy-making; not all are interested in fairness and tolerance. Similarly, political leaders are likely to resist constitutional reforms if they profit from divisions and privileged relationships. Even where leaders are amenable, traditions of inter and intra-party distrust can impede collaboration, redistribution and inclusion. These are among the factors that have constrained recent reform efforts in the Caribbean.

## 5.1 Constitutional Reform - Guyana

Following the January 1998 Herdmanston Accord<sup>89</sup>, Guyana's National Assembly resolved to establish a special committee to determine the Terms of Reference and composition of the constitutional review commission. The Commission, with representation from various segments of the society, conducted consultations over six months and made 171 recommendations. The Parliamentary Select Committee reviewed and refined these recommendations for inclusion in the constitution. The new constitution enshrined seven new commissions, with responsibility for ethnic relations, women and gender equality, human rights, the Indigenous people, the rights of the child, public procurement and local government. Commissions are required to monitor and review pertinent legislation, conduct research, educate the public and investigate complaints. To ensure impartiality, commissions are funded through the consolidated fund rather than through a ministry.

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<sup>89</sup>This was an agreement between CARICOM, the PPP/C and the PNC, which aimed to resolve matters arising from the disputed 1997 elections. Parties agreed to a shortened period of government for the PPP/C and to constitutional reform. Note that the PPP/C is the new name for the People's Progressive Party. In principle, it demonstrates the party's alliance with civic groups. Commentators suggest that in practice there is no real alliance.

There are other important provisions, including the establishment of term limits on the presidency and the increase in parliamentary powers. Sectoral standing committees should provide close oversight of government actions; the standing committee for appointments should appoint commission members, thereby reducing the influence of the executive; the Auditor General must now report directly to Parliament instead of through the Minister of Finance.

However, there already are complaints that the government has breached the constitution in certain areas and has been laggard about instituting the commissions. The PPP blames the PNC's intransigence for the lack of progress in areas where both parties were meant to cooperate. The PNC ascribes its non-cooperation to its profound disappointment with government performance. However, perhaps the more important issues are that the constitution does provide the basis on which the government can be held accountable and that various civil groups are urging observance of its provisions.

The Amerindians, though not entirely satisfied with their allowances under the constitution, believe that the new provisions can, nevertheless, allow them to gain in those areas that the Commission rejected. Specifically, there was some disagreement with the proposal that Amerindians should be allowed special privileges, including land rights and bilingual education. However, the Commission consented to include a reference to Indigenous Peoples in the Preamble to the Constitution; to include the rights of Indigenous Peoples under the section that addresses Fundamental Rights; to establish an Indigenous People's Commission, which would investigate issues such as land rights; and to state that Amerindians have the right to self-determination, particularly through local government institutions. *Hinterland Highlights*, a publication that exhibits developments in Amerindian communities, notes that communities are receiving land titles (though the government has been somewhat resistant to grant individual as opposed to community titles)<sup>90</sup> and that some schools have been introducing local dialects into their curriculum. In South Rupununi, where most villagers speak Wapisiana, funding has been secured to provide Wapisiana textbooks. Furthermore, local newspapers are publishing Amerindian dialects. Invariably, much of these gains are the result of improved organization and representation across Amerindian societies.

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<sup>90</sup>Amerindian Land Demarcation-Some Communities present request for extensions, titles in *Hinterland Highlights*, Vol. 1, No 1, May 2003

## 5.2 Power Sharing: Guyana and Trinidad

Currently, there are debates in both Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana on the need for power sharing at different levels of government. The proposals are not new. Traditionally, they come for opposition parties, which perceive less need for reform when they enter office. For example, Trinidad's opposition leader, Baseo Panday, recommended an electoral system in which the President and Prime Minister are appointed from the parties that win the largest and second largest proportion of votes. Only this system would prevent the clear race-based voting that allowed the People's National Congress and the United National Congress to win equal numbers of seats (18) in the 2001 elections.<sup>91</sup> The PNC in Guyana have proposed new forms of inclusive governance, while admitting it had refused similar PPP gestures. Other commentators are persuaded that a more inclusive form of government is indispensable for democracy and development and broach various possible models, patterned on South Africa, Northern Ireland and Suriname. However, there are many sceptics. Ryan<sup>92</sup>, for example, does not anticipate that this sort of collaboration is likely in Trinidad and Tobago and considers it especially difficult to achieve in Guyana, where each political party is seen as a threat to the other.

At present, governments in Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana are not acceding to requests for cross party inclusion in government. Guyana's President Bharrat Jagdeo considers power-sharing a sure route to gridlock. In one interview, he charged that the PNC has not 'lived up' to its responsibilities under the new constitution, which formally includes the Opposition in standing committees. Power sharing would not work in the absence of mutual trust.

Let's build trust. Let's get a period of building trust. Let's work on the crime issue; let's see how that goes and then at sometime in the future ... let's put to the people of the country if they want us to move to another stage, that is executive power-sharing.<sup>93</sup>

The PPP/C has now been charged with 'grandstanding' in a context where there is evidence of resurging political/race motivated violence.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>91</sup>Power Sharing Answer to Racial Insecurity in Guyana, Trinidad *Starbroek News*, June 11, 2002.

<sup>92</sup>S. Ryan, 'Why Power Sharing Won't Work, Posted August 25th 2002, Trinidad Express

<sup>93</sup>Patrick Denny, Try power sharing in parliament first - Jagdeo, Posted January 30th 2003. [guyanacaribbeanpolitics.com](http://guyanacaribbeanpolitics.com). Source: Interview with Starbroek News

<sup>94</sup>D. Hinds, 'Power Sharing: Towards a New Political Culture', Posted February 18, 2003 on [GuyanaCaribbeanPolitics.com](http://GuyanaCaribbeanPolitics.com)



There are few examples of executive or legislative power sharing in the Caribbean and sound reasons to question whether and how such starkly divided political parties can, in the absence of strong appeals from the electorate, govern smoothly. Will collaboration, in these contexts, pose even more risks to political stability? What forms of cooperation are most likely to temper ethnic tensions and maintain stability? Perhaps the most pertinent example comes from outside of the region. South Africa has managed to contain a potentially explosive situation. It has formulated an innovative and inclusive constitution and has, to a significant extent, managed to follow its spirit and stipulations. However, the successes in South Africa have much to do with Nelson Mandela's conciliatory leadership and lasting influence, the continuing consensus on the greater significance of national development within the ANC, the ways in which the party has re-educated the population and garnered popular support. Constitutional effectiveness, such as it exists, results from the willingness and direction that the leaders exhibit. Similar efforts are required in the Caribbean.

### **5.3 Building Representative Public Bureaucracies: Guyana and Trinidad**

In both Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana, there have been claims and counter-claims of discrimination within the public sector. Results from the Centre for Ethnic Studies' survey of 'Employment Practices in the Public Sector' in Trinidad confirmed that there were ethnic preferences in employment. The findings indicated low proportions of Indians in the highest levels of government, though they were well represented at the clerical levels and in the judicial and professional sectors. The Public Service Commission, with responsibility for recruitment, discipline and promotions, was also regarded suspiciously and the researchers discovered valid cause for questioning certain appointments. Though the report found little to substantiate claims of discrimination, it recognized that such perceptions existed and were affecting productivity. Consequently, the report recommended the establishment of clear merit criteria, racial balance on interview panels and consideration of ethnic balance in making appointments.<sup>95</sup>

However, while proponents of affirmative action consider it essential for rectifying balances in the public sector, various commentators warn that any appearance of favouritism will provoke conflict. According to these critics, affirmative action runs counter to valued principles of merit. Interestingly,

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<sup>95</sup>Centre for Ethnic Studies, *Employment Practices in the Public Sector*, 1994, vii-ix.

Boyd<sup>96</sup> argues that strategies that seek balanced representation in government may be insensitive to culture. He corroborates this with evidence that Indians are not especially attracted to public sector employment. However, the current PPP government in Guyana sees the ethnic imbalance in the public sector as a legacy of a colonial policy, which was designed to separate black and Indian workers and, particularly, to keep Indians working on the estates. Additionally, it claims that the PNC made deliberate efforts to keep the balance intact. The PPP General Secretary recently charged that the PNC's policies of exclusion were reflected in the rejection of Hindu and Muslim religious practices in the Forces (Christian chaplains are still appointed to every security force), inadequate consideration for Indian's dietary needs, the requirement that all members must swear allegiance to the PNC and 'a rigid anti-Indian testing mechanism'. All these made the forces unattractive to Indians. Consequently, the PPP proposes a policy of active recruitment and re-education of Indians.<sup>97</sup>

There is tremendous conflict over the appropriate strategy for promoting inclusion without provoking conflict or creating new forms of exclusion. Should governments adopt a gradual approach? Is more aggressive and immediate recruitment of previously denied groups required? How can one ensure that affirmative action is not used solely for political gain? Reputedly, Belize, despite the acknowledged ethnic tensions, has managed to build a system where groups do not perceive substantial blocks to recruitment; generally, people seem to trust that the employment process is fair. Though valuable lessons may be gleaned from Belize's experiences, Guyana and Trinidad's more fractious history suggests that the path to reform may be unpredictable and perilous.

## 5.4 Social Reform: Jamaica

Conditions within Jamaica's garrison constituencies are proof of the ways in which deprivation can cause and sustain divisions. They reinforce, too, that special and targeted group responses are important for reversing inequalities. As Albert Hirschman<sup>98</sup> argues, societies normally tolerate inequalities for a

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<sup>96</sup>D.Boyd, 'Ethnic Politics in Trinidad and Guyana, *Public Administration and Development*, Vol. 19, pp. 367-379, 1999

<sup>97</sup>M. Gordon, 'More inclusivity, yet maintaining standards proposed by PPP to DFC. Forces must reflect demographics of Guyana' Guyana Information Agency, September 17, 2003.

<sup>98</sup>A.Hirschman, 'The Changing Tolerance for Income Inequality in the Course of Economic Development' in *Essays in Trespassing: Economics to Politics and Beyond* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, p. 40

period, however, ‘this tolerance is like a credit that falls due at a certain stage. It is extended in the expectation that eventually the disparities will narrow again’. What governments do within this intervening period is critical for long-term cross group relations.

As the evidence from Jamaica confirms, effective social action can be denied where there is huge debt and conflicting obligations to donor agencies and governments. Externally mandated market-oriented priorities can undermine redistribution and social inclusion. However, governments, even in the absence of globalization and donor obligations, may deny fundamental rights and privileges to select groups. They may build their political empires by entrenching divisions. Accordingly, the National Committee on Political Tribalism in Jamaica found that political leaders engineered and profited from the tribalism in some of the poorest urban areas.

## **5.5 Contradictions and Challenges: Summary**

It is not unreasonable to argue that the ‘state-nation’ approach can raise awareness of differences and, thereby, incite rather than contain tensions. Notably, the Cuban government was careful to avoid this and, after initial debate, refused to engage in protracted discussions of race. Instead, the government maintained that structural reforms were sufficient to uproot institutionalized discrimination. It is difficult to prescribe when certain political messages are or are not required. However, the Cuban example does show that structural and social reforms may not be enough to prevent discrimination and deprivations; at some point, further political intervention may be needed.

There are challenges, too, with addressing disparities. For example, reforms may be impractical in the short term, particularly where these entail imposing losses on powerful interests. Invariably, how policies are combined and staged depends in large part on the political and social context. Furthermore, policies that aim to address cross-group differences can produce vertical inequalities. (Affirmative action programmes can be captured by middle class groups and exacerbate class divisions.) Much research is needed on optimal policy combinations.

These country summaries describe various challenges to implementing the structural and social reforms envisioned for ‘state-nations’. The challenges are not insurmountable but they do demand prudent and responsible politics, particularly in small countries where issues tend to appear more pressing and

magnified. The onus is on political leaders to use politics constructively in order to transform perceptions and build trust; implement the constitutional and public sector reforms that both endorse respect for diversity and promote equity, regardless of race or ethnicity; promote the social and economic policies that offer the best prospects for individual security and advancement, and that rectify group disparities. The onus is on the electorate to support and hold governments accountable for these.

# Appendix

Table 3: Racial composition of staff employed in all Ministries and Departments in British Guiana. Source: R. Premdas, 'Race and Ethnic Relations in Burnhamite Guyana,' in eds D. Dabydeen and B. Samaroo *Across the Dark Waters* p. 53.

	Negro	Indian	European	Portuguese	Mixed	Chinese	Amerindians
Senior staff, i.e.	335	227	37	20	255	68	1
senior clerk level up							
Clerical service	697	543	1	17	222	23	5
below senior clerk level							
Others below	6327	3830	2	69	843	68	282
senior clerk							
Total	7359	4600	40	106	1320	159	288
% of Total	53.05	33.16	0.29	0.76	9.52	1.15	2.08

Table 4: Distribution of security forces by rank and race in British Guiana, 1965 (percentages) Source: R. Premdas, 'Race and Ethnic Relations in Burnhamite Guyana,' in eds D. Dabydeen and B. Samaroo *Across the Dark Waters*, p. 54

	Negro	Indian	European	Portuguese	Mixed	Others
Police force						
Officers	80.3	9.1	1.2	1.0	7.9	0.5
Constables	72.8	21.9	-	0.1	4.3	0.9
Volunteer force						
Officers	83.9	5.8	4.4	1.5	2.9	1.5
Lance Corporals & Privates	89.5	9.8	-	0.5	0.2	-
Special service unit						
Officers	50.0	50.0	-	-	-	-
Constables	51.3	47.0	-	-	1.7	-
Special Constabulary						
Officers	55.2	13.8	-	13.8	17.2	-
Constables	74.2	21.9	0.2	0.2	3.4	-
Prisons						
Officers	81.8	-	-	-	18.8	-
Prison officers	83.9	16.1	-	-	-	-
Fire Brigade						
Officers	85.2	3.7	-	1.8	9.2	-
Firemen	61.1	21.4	-	1.6	15.9	-
Total						
Officers	79.4	9.4	1.6	1.6	7.5	0.6
Others	75.1	20.6	-	0.2	3.5	0.5

Table 5: Major political conflict events in Guyana: 1948–1999. Source: P. Mars, ‘Ethnic Conflicts in Guyana’, *Journal of Peace Research* Vol. 38, No. 3, p. 360

Year	Event	Causal/prominent features	Outcome
1948	Enmore riots and massacre	East Indian sugar workers strike: better wages/working conditions	Police repression; 5 killed; Commission of Inquiry
1953	Suspension of Constitution	Marxist PPP electoral victory Colonial fears of communism	Military Repression; PPP leader jailed; Commission of Inquiry
1955	PPP split	Colonial instigation; leadership ambitions; ideological divisions	Ethnic polarization
1956	PPP purge	Resignation of prominent black leadership cadres	Further ethnic polarization
1962	Political violence	Capital gains tax; right-wing agitation; false rumor	Chaotic violence; several killed; Commission of Inquiry
1963/ 1964	Ethnic violence	Opposition to labor relations Bill; power struggle; foreign instigation; general strike	Chaotic ethnic violence; hundreds killed; arson/prop-property destruction
1969	Rupununi uprising	Ranchers/Amerindians demands secession	Military repression; hundreds killed/migrated
1973	Electoral violence	PPP protest against rigging of elections	Military reprisals; 2 killed; judicial inquiry
1977	General strike	GAWU demand profit share from GUYSUCO	State intransigence; Military/thug violence against strikers
1980	Assassination	Walter Rodney bomb blasted; military agent implicated	State silence; inquest denied; Prat Inquest whitewash
1981	Police beatings	WPA protest rally broken up; police/thug violence	1 killed; several injured
1984	TUC split	Protest by progressive unions over state control of TUC	Creation of splinter union FITUG
1989	General strike	Mass protest over IMF deal signed by PNC government	State repressive tactics; striking workers dismissed
1992	Election violence	Opposition party dissatisfied with election results	Ethnic targeting/violence; several killed by police
1997	Electoral violence	Opposition protest over election irregularities	Caricom mediation
1999	Public service strike	Demand for better pay/working conditions	Ethnic/political violence; NGO mediation; arbitration



Table 6: Efforts Towards Conflict Mediation/Resolution. Source: P. Mars, 'Ethnic Conflicts in Guyana', *Journal of Peace Research* Vol. 38, No. 3, p. 363

Year	Conflict Mediation/resolution efforts	Outcome
1962	Jagan's attempt to compromise over unpopular budget proposals	Rejected by opposition; unilateral; withdrawal of budget
1963	Jagan's several attempts at compromise over Labor Relations Bill; also requested mediation by Commonwealth team	Compromises rejected by opposition; British refused Commonwealth mediation; LRB withdrawn
1964	Jagan's offer of equal power-sharing and mediation by Kwame Nkrumah	Power-sharing rejected by opposition; refused Nkrumah mediation
1977	Offer by church bodies to mediate in GAWU/GUYSUCO strike; PPP proposed National Front Government (NFG)	Church mediation rejected by state; NFG rejected by PNC; approved by WPA
1985	Hoyte administration accepted monitoring of 1985 elections by international team; initiated dialogue with opposition forces dismissed as insincere by opposition	Monitors concluded elections rigged; rejected by Hoyte; Hoyte declared elections 'above board' dialogue
1992	International mediations in elections; Carter Center; Commonwealth Secretariat; PPP proposed Race Relations Commission	Elections declared 'fair'; new PPP government installed; Race Relations Commission shelved
1997	NGOs call for Caricom mediation in elections violence; dialogue frequently stalled	Recommended peace dialogue between PPP and PNC (Herdsmanston Accord)
1998	Caricom initiation of renewed dialogue (St. Lucia Statement)	PPP/PNC talks resumed; stalled again; facilitator appointed
1999	Commonwealth Secretariat initiative for another resumption of talks; arbitrator appointed in PSU general strike	Talks resume but haltingly; arbitrator report contentious; government inquiry into arbitration deliberations

Table 7: Ethnic, Religious and Language groups in select Caribbean countries. Source: Library of Congress

Country	Ethnic Composition (%)	Religion (%)	Language
Suriname	Hindustanis/East Indians (37); Creoles—African or mixed; European decent (31); Javanese (15); Maroons (10); Amerindians (2); Chinese (2) Whites (1); Others (2)	Hindu (27); Muslim (19.6) Christianity: Roman Catholic (22.8); Protestant (25.2); Indigenous beliefs (5)	Dutch*; English; Sarnami; Sranang; Hindustani Javanese; American Indian
Belize	Mestizo (48.7); Creole (24.9); Maya (10.6); Garifuna (6.1); Others (9.7)	Christianity: Roman Catholic (49.6) Protestant (36.4) Others (14)	English*; Creole Spanish; Mayan; Carib; Creole
Antigua/Barbuda	Majority Black, Others: British; Portuguese Lebanese; Syrian	Christianity predominant	English*, local dialects
Bahamas	Black (85); White (12); Asian/Hispanic (3)	Christianity, predominantly Protestant	English*, Creole
Barbados	Black (90); White (4); Asians/Mixed (6)	Christianity: Protestant (67); Roman Catholic (4); Other (12); None (17)	English
Cuba	Mulatto (51); White (37); Black (11); Chinese (1)	Christianity: Roman Catholic—pre 1959 (85)	Spanish
Haiti	Black (95); Mulattos/Whites (5)	Christianity: Roman Catholic (80) Protestant (16) Others (3) None (1)	French/Creole

Table 7 continued

Country	Ethnic Composition (%)	Religion (%)	Language
Jamaica	Black (90.9); East Indian (1.3); White (0.2); Chinese (0.2); Mixed (7.3); Other (0.1)	Christianity: Protestant (61.3); Roman Catholic (4); Other (34.7)	English*; Creole
Martinique	Black/Black-White-Indian (90); White (5); East Indian, Chinese (5)	Christianity: Roman Catholic (85); Protestant (10.5); Muslim (0.5); Hindu (0.5); Other (3.5)	French*, Creole, Patois
Montserrat	Black, White	Predominantly Protestant	English
Guadeloupe	Black/Mulatto (90); White (5) East Indian, Chinese, Lebanese (5)	Christianity: Roman Catholic (95); Protestant (1); Hindu and pagan African (4)	French*; Creole; Patois
St. Kitts & Nevis	Predominantly Black; some British Portugese and Lebanese	Predominantly Protestant	English
Trinidad & Tobago	Black (39.5); East Indian (40.3) Mixed (18.4); White (0.6); Chinese/Others (1.2)	Christianity: Roman Catholic (29.4); Protestant (14.3); Muslim (5.8) Hindu (23.8) Others (26.7)	English*; Hindi; French; Spanish; Chinese
St Lucia	Black (90); Mixed (6); East Indian (3); White (1)	Christianity: Roman Catholic; Protestant (10)	English*; French; Patois
St. Vincent & The Grenadines	Black (66); Mixed (19) East Indian (6); Amerindian (2) Other (7)	Christianity: Roman Catholic (13); Protestant (75); Other (12)	English*; French; Patois