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THE DYNAMICS OF TWO-PARTY POLITICS
IN JAMAICA: IMPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

by

JOAN TAFTE, B.A.

A thesis submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
Norman Paterson School of International Affairs

Carleton University

Ottawa, Ontario

25 September 1986

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The undersigned hereby recommend to the Faculty of
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Brian Tomlin, Director
The Norman Paterson School of International Affairs

L. McLaren
Supervisor

Carleton University

ABSTRACT

There is a tendency on the part of political development analysts to regard the establishment of a well-institutionalized system of competitive democratic politics, as a pre-condition for national development in the Third World. Using Jamaica as one example of a developing country which has possessed a stable system of parliamentary democracy for more than four decades, it is possible to demonstrate that the existence of such institutions is not necessarily conducive to national development. Furthermore, it can be argued that in a developing country such as Jamaica, competitive politics could actually retard development, because of certain characteristics inherent in multi-party politics. This study attempts to establish the relationship between political parties and national development in Jamaica, in order to discover the contradictions which arise between a well-functioning two-party system and the actualization of national development.

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INTRODUCTION

For many Third World countries, the period following independence from colonial rule has been the most critical in charting the future courses of national development. The transfer of political sovereignty from colonial to independent status has in most cases meant the transfer of costs and responsibilities for rebuilding an effective social system. Inherited political institutions are often put to the test of coping with increasing domestic and external power contentions and conflicts of interest. In addition, stress arising from unfulfilled expectations often fuel even greater political opposition. "The balance of power in domestic politics often shifts in response to a variety of internal and external pressures, while political leaders try to consolidate power in circumstances of poor economies, limited policy capabilities and unstable alliances."¹

In view of the crucial role which politics plays in developing societies, it is understandable why much of the literature on political development has sought to analyse the relationship between social, economic and political institutions from the standpoint of weak or unstable political structures.² This approach is often justified by the fact that government usually represent the largest organization in most developing countries, and is based on the premise that its capacity to maintain and control large organizations is the basis on which any "modern" society is built.³ Hence, the view that "effective political organization is the most important task facing Third World countries today."⁴

The problem with this tendency to focus analysis on the

development of institutional structures of government is that it ignores the small number of developing countries where parliamentary and competitive party politics continue to flourish under social environments not qualitatively different from those where governmental institutions have either collapsed or been modified beyond recognition.⁵

In depicting the relationship between democratic institutions and economic development, Lucian Pye has stated,⁶

the goal of economic development can be better realized if the functional requirements of the political system are met by participation in competitive politics.

In Jamaica, the "functional requirements" of the political system are indeed being met by an extremely active mass participation in competitive democratic politics since 1944, and has continued to do so since independence in 1962. However, political development analysis fails to explain why this system has so far been unable to produce the projected results of economic and social development.

The purpose of this thesis, therefore, is to examine the role of politics in Jamaica and its implications for national development, in an effort to gain some insight into this contradictory assumption.

Analytical Approach

One must admit that any attempt to analyse the impact of politics on national development in the broadest terms is a rather ambitious undertaking. It is necessary, therefore, to limit the scope of the analysis to, a) the most relevant context within which the politics of parliamentary democracy can be viewed, and b) the variable in national development which affects political parties and their policies most.

I have therefore identified political parties as the central focus from which to view their approach to national development. As in most countries the state of the economy is generally the most important policy issue facing governments, an examination of government policies will tend to reflect the political implications for the general economy.

Events in Jamaica since 1972 have made the study of political parties a particularly interesting one in which to view their impact on national development. There are two reasons for this. First, since the early part of the 1970's, Jamaica has experienced the growth of strong party identification with two divergent ideological approaches to development by the two leading party contenders for government - the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) and the Peoples National Party (PNP). The term "ideology" is taken in its broadest sense to reflect "a system of ideas that seeks to explain, justify and motivate leaders in a particular policy."⁷

Secondly, the Jamaican economy has steadily declined during this same period. Between 1972 and 1980, the PNP developed what it called a "democratic-socialist" approach to development under the leadership of the then Prime Minister Michael Manley. Since 1980, The JLP, led by Prime Minister Edward Seaga, has assumed the reins of government with a decided leaning toward a more "capitalist" approach to development.⁸ Although ideological labels attributed to either party can be somewhat misleading, the parties have pursued divergent domestic and foreign economic policies, which indicated certain tendencies that may be conceptualized within these general ideological modes. A comparison of these two approaches and their policy implic-

ations, will produce some insight into the relationship between politics and development in Jamaica in recent years.

Theoretical Approach

Although one might not subscribe completely to J. Schumpeter's definition of democracy as "an institutional arrangement in which alternative governments, competing elites, offer themselves for selection by an electorate whose sole political function is to choose, lock, stock and barrel, one of these teams every few years,"⁹ one must acknowledge that to talk about democracy today, is to talk about a system of competing political parties. According to Carl Stone,¹⁰

One of the basic principles of democratic theory is the notion that competitive political parties offer alternate approaches and emphases in the formulation and execution of public policy. The precise nature of policy differences between party governments in two-party or multi-party systems is therefore an important area of enquiry in establishing the relationship between democratic theory and the actual practices of party government, under conditions of electoral competition such as have been shown to exist in the Jamaican political system.

As the nature of policy differences between the two major parties is reflected in their respective ideological approaches to development, it is therefore useful to first examine the nature of these ideological differences, which, Christopher Chapham observes, "reflect the way in which politicians seek to make sense of the position they are in, as the options they face provide at least one guide to what they actually do."¹¹

The thesis will seek to meet its theoretical objectives through a general analysis of the characteristics and functions of competitive political parties with particular relevance to the Jamaican two-party

system. This theoretical framework will provide the scope for a closer examination of party approaches to development from an ideological and policy perspective. It will also reflect the constraints two-party systems impose on long term development initiatives, as well as provide a basis from which to judge the success or failure of party policies.

Finally, in a thesis of this scope, it seems necessary to indicate not only what will be included, but also what will not. As the study takes a rather comprehensive approach to political parties in relation to their ideological and policy influence on national development, it would be beyond its capacity to discuss in great detail the Jamaican economy, which though central to the goals of national development, would be more appropriate to a study of political economy. The role of the economy will, however, be treated within the theoretical confines of the political parties' approach to governing.

In addition, the term "development" will be put to frequent usage in this study. But what exactly does one mean by this term? As any scholar of Development is aware, the bounds of definition are virtually unlimited. It takes into account both normative and pragmatic (ideological and material) goals which a nation sets for itself, and has led some scholars to devote a substantial amount of effort to discerning "new developments in the prolific usage of the term development."¹² Although no definitive explanation can sufficiently cover its meaning, some attempt will be made to limit the usage of the term to the contextual framework within which it is being discussed. The Jamaican political system is based on democratic principles, which imply that government should be conducted according to what it believes to be in the "best interest" of the majority of its citizens. In this context, therefore,

we are concerned with development from the point of view of what each party perceives to be in the best interest of the majority, and how they convey these perceptions in the types of policies they pursue.

Finally, a thesis of this nature produces a natural tendency to question the viability of parliamentary democracy in a developing country such as Jamaica. This question is indeed valid, but again, does not conform to the functions of this study. Of course, the problems inherent in this system, and their implications for the country's welfare will be analysed. However, the primary intent is to look at the politics of one country characterized by this system, and to examine the results.

Introduction

1. Carl Stone, Democracy and Clientelism in Jamaica, London: Transaction Books, 1980, p. 71.

2. see Lucian Pye, Aspects of Political Development, Boston: Little Brown, 1966, or Samuel Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies, New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 1968, or G.A. Almond and G.B. Powell, Comparative Politics: A Developmental Approach, Boston: Little Brown, 1966.

3. Christopher Clapham, Third World Politics, London: Croom Helm, 1985, p. 5.

4. David E. Schmitt, Dynamics of the Third World, Cambridge, Mass: Winthrop, 1974, p. 18.

5. Carl Stone, "Class and the Institutionalization of Two-party Politics in Jamaica," Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics,

6. Pye, 1966, p. 73.

7. Schmitt, 1974, p. 18.

8. the ideological tendencies of both parties will be elaborated upon in the following chapters.

9. J. Schumpeter, Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy, New York: Harper and Row, 1950, cited in David Robertson's A Theory of Party Competition, London: John Wiley & Sons, 1976, p. 1.

10. Stone, 1980, p. 225.

11. Clapham, 1985, p. 44.

12. C.A.O. Van Nieuwehuije, Development Begins at Home, Toronto: Pergamon Press, 1982, pp. 1-64.

CHAPTER I

CHARACTERISTICS OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR JAMAICAN POLITICS

This study is primarily concerned with how competitive political parties approach the role of government and the problems they encounter within a democratic parliamentary system in seeking to put into effect divergent views on public policy. According to Avery Leiserson¹, the essential reason for engaging in politics is to try to put particular views on public policy into effect by "controlling the administration." While it is true that a party virtually controls both the Legislative and Executive bodies while in office,² its ability to function effectively, and indeed to maintain control long enough for its policies to be effective, is often limited by the political principles which brought the party to office in the first place. According to David Robertson,³ "A party which is committed to, and organized for competitive electoral politics must accept the following two basic principles:"

- 1) that the office is to won or lost, inside a system, as a result of its electoral attraction, over and over again, and
- 2) that to win an election is only to have the right to govern for a limited period, with the high probability, and not just the distant probability, of losing the subsequent election.

Hence, electoral party systems hinge on the expectation of an alternation of government.⁴ This characteristic of competitive democratic politics profoundly influences the approaches political parties take to governing.

Party Approaches to Governing

Political analysts generally identify two separate approaches to governing that a party might take. Although these are conceptualized in different ways, there is a basic similarity of views centered on the ideological and pragmatic paths. In reviewing the various assumptions made by analysts, it is possible to discern some relevance to party approaches to governing in Jamaica.

In Robertson's view,⁵ governing can be seen as either an "architectonic" activity, which involves the building of an entire new social reality, or as a "pragmatic" activity, which involves problem solving within the status quo on a gradual and incremental basis along non-contentious grounds. He argues that a competitive party has to accept the latter, because two roughly balanced parties, each committed to a radically different approach, cannot survive, because once an architectonic party has won office and started to implement its design, democracy can only be assured if the opponents are prepared to accept the new version. If they are not, and win the subsequent election, and repeal major legislation, the stresses are too high to sustain alternating governments. Indeed, the government can hardly accept the legitimacy of its own defeat if it is to be replaced by one that will dismantle all it has done. He therefore concludes, that even if revolution does not follow, alternating erection and repeal of major social institutions is not a process that can be regarded as an effective way of making social decisions.

This has a great many implications for Jamaica's two-party system, and will be more closely examined in later chapters. At this point, however, it might be worth noting that Jamaica does indeed

possess two well balanced parties, which are committed to radically different policy perspectives. Whether or not one can argue in absolute terms about the nature of either party as "architectonic" or "pragmatic" in their approaches to governing is another matter. In the case of the PNP, which held office for two consecutive terms from 1972 to 1980, the characteristics of the architectonic approach to governing are fairly evident in its ideological tendencies and policy commitments to a new form of egalitarian society, envisioned through its ideology of democratic socialism. The JLP, which was elected to govern in 1980 and again in 1983, bears some characteristics of the architectonic model, evidenced by its extreme commitment to a Western capitalist model of development. In several other respects, however, the party can be regarded as pragmatic, not only by its conservative "market driven" policies, but also by its technocratic approach to the business of governing.

Perhaps from a liberal Western perspective, the PNP might be more readily identified as having a democratic-socialist tendency, with, for example, a more centralized and redistributive policy approach. The JLP might be regarded as having a more liberal capitalist approach, with a free enterprise "market" orientation, for example, combined with individualistic tendencies as opposed to socialist co-operative tendencies. One must be extremely careful to qualify such ideological labels, however, as the context within which these are viewed externally cannot be reliably substituted in the Jamaican context. It is worth noting that both parties also subscribe to the ideological notions of nationalism and democracy. There are a great many factors which influence party tendencies, that cannot be explained by theories which develop out of

vastly different European or Anglo-American historical experiences.

One assumption that can be agreed upon, is that the two parties do take radically different approaches to governing which produce disruptive results in the development process when governments alternate. Indeed, since 1972, the alternation of governments has produced the dismantling of several important social and economic policies when one or the other party came to power. From 1972, the PNP moved toward centralized control of many industries and introduced several new social reforms, but by 1980 when the JLP took office, it reversed almost all of these policies. Such policy inconsistency has served to confuse and disrupt the planning and implementation of long-term development goals, which are fundamental to national development. This inconsistency does not necessarily reflect the worth of the policies as their results are often affected by other unpredictable internal and external factors. However, it is the oft utilized option to change governments if long-term policies do not produce short-term results, that has taken the toll on national development. In brief, Jamaican politics over the past fifteen years reflect a "start-all-over" syndrome, in which policies are dismantled and new ones begun (or old ones reinstituted) as parties alternate governments.

Robertson does offer some hope for the survival of competitive democracies in cases where entire programs are implemented after the election of a party (for example, the creation of the British welfare state between 1945 and 1954, or the "New Deal" during the Roosevelt years.) However, these occur successfully only when the new initiatives are fairly well accepted by all major parties, or after an electoral result so decisive that opponents of the government realize they cannot

win again unless they accept the new paradigms.⁶

Somehow, competitive democracy has managed not only to survive in Jamaica, but flourish, in spite of its inability to meet these two conditions. This will be explained later on in the chapter when policy determination is analysed in relation to issues of political expediency.

The problems faced by most developing countries - massive unemployment, illiteracy, rapid urbanization, etc. - intensify demands for immediate results. Hence the notion that only drastic transformation of the domestic socio-economic structure can create the conditions for successful development has become increasingly prominent in political thinking. However, the difficulty of overcoming powerful constraints, such as massive foreign debts in a small economy, limits the results that can reasonably be expected from the policy-making systems.⁷ Although most developing countries have attempted to adopt complex and far-reaching forms of planning designed to reach a set of pre-determined goals, plans are often impeded by all sorts of unpredictable events. For example, unplanned decisions, unanticipated events such as hurricanes, and others that cannot be controlled, such as the oil crisis, global inflation, or lack of skills to implement the plans itself.

The alternative offered by some analysts of political development⁸ is the "incremental" approach to decision-making. Their notions of gradual and limited decisions, slowly building on previous successes seem to be a sensible and pragmatic response to uncertainty, imperfect knowledge and limited resources. However, this approach to governing demands a high level of rationality on the part of the political parties and the electorate. Unfortunately, where conditions demand immediate

response and the life of a government is determined by results obtained within a limited number of years, rationality is often the most difficult target to achieve.

In his analysis of political parties, Joseph La Palombara⁹ takes into account the implication of frequently changing governments in respect to party approach to governing. He offers a fourfold classification of competitive politics based in part on internal characteristics of the party and in part on the way political power is held. The latter refers to the political system, and the terms used to describe them are "turnover" and "hegemonic." A hegemonic system is one in which over an extended period of time the same party holds government power. Turnover situations are those which, even when there may have been hegemonic periods, there is relatively frequent change in the party that governs.

The second dimension along which he classifies competitive systems is "ideological, pragmatic". These characteristics refer to the parties themselves, and are useful in judging them in terms of where they fall in this continuum. From these two characteristics four subcategories are conceivable: a) hegemonic-ideological; b) hegemonic-pragmatic; c) turnover-ideological, and d) turnover-pragmatic. The configurations of turnover-ideological and turnover-pragmatic are most useful in the context of Jamaican party politics.

According to La Palombara's analysis, where the central characteristic of the parties is ideological and there is frequent turnover, one may expect a great deal of turmoil. Such situations suggest that the society is so evenly divided along two or more ideological lines that frequent turnover on the one hand makes it

impossible for any one group to implement its policies, and, on the other hand, assures that the succeeding group in power will seek to undo whatever may have gone before. Pragmatic parties will tend to move more slowly when they are hegemonic and more rapidly when exposed to frequent turnover.

Since 1944, both Jamaican parties have alternated government control every two terms, hence they can be viewed as turnover in character. From 1944, up until 1967 (five years after independence), both parties tended to follow a more pragmatic approach to governing, during which time the economy reflected a slow but gradual improvement. However, it must be remembered that external forces coupled with a consensual drive for national independence made the period prior to 1972 more conducive to this approach. After 1967, however, issues pertaining to social equity and the distribution of wealth and resources, precipitated a change from the more pragmatic approach to a more polarized approach to ideology and policy-making. The PNP's introduction of democratic-socialism as a new strategy for national development after 1972, was met with an extremely hostile reaction from the pro-capitalist JLP opposition. Hence, two conflicting development strategies emerged which created the radical difference in both parties' approach to governing. It is the extreme differences in ideological and policy approaches which enable one to attribute the characteristic of turnover-ideological to both parties over the past fifteen years.

Politics as the Balancer

According to Robert Rothstein, "apart from the external influences, the factor most likely to affect the success or failure

of development initiatives is the vision and commitment of the political elites."¹⁰ Political leaders must realize that they are responsible for more than their own survival. They must also refrain from deluding themselves into believing that there are magical methods by which the problems of the present can be quickly overcome. This means they must have a proper sense of what needs to be done and attempt to "balance" the costs and benefits. Solving problems, Robertson adds,¹¹

inhabits an illusive terrain somewhere between illusion and objective reality. They must be defined in terms of human values and expectations and equally they owe their existence to both real conditions and human perceptions A problem exists where some aspect of reality is not fitting our values or desires and where we either expect there to be a fit or believe that it is both possible and proper to change the world and make it accord with our desires. Objective reality must be there!

These two views express the need for a balance between normative desires and objective realities. This, according to A.H. Somjee,¹² is where the political process plays its most important role as balancer. He says, "what is needed is a continually readjusted balance between ever renewing normative commitments and ever exploring practical ways of translating them into political reality."

One of the instances where competitive politics can go wrong is when a problem exists where conditions do not fit desires, and where governing is seen as satisfying demands. Politics then becomes a distributive activity in which questions are raised about whose demands get satisfied and how the national pie or the "stream of utility flowing from the government is distributed."¹³ Mistaken beliefs about how to solve problems on the part of politicians could lead to a

party suggesting to the electorate that it could remove some inconvenience of life when it could not. This is relative to the Jamaican condition, particularly throughout the Manley administration, when normative desires for social equality resulted in several redistributive policies which the objective realities were unable to meet. Such situations indicate the essential difference between what is plausible and what is possible.¹⁵ Creating a better appreciation in the minds of the electorate of what is realistically possible is one of the major problems inherent in a highly competitive political system.

The Electorate and Rational Choice

Some analysts view the electorate as being too ignorant of policies and too pre-disposed to party loyalties to enable them to discern rational objectives and make rational choices from the varied "solutions to problems" offered them by competing parties.¹⁶ Parties usually attempt to conceptualize goals for the future and prescribe programs for achieving them through vague ideological formulas. Anthony Downs¹⁷ sees a justification for this strategy in the "cost to voters of having precise information on policy stands." Whereas detailed information on policy is difficult to come by and unreliable, a rough picture of what the party stands for, and a long-term attachment to the party on the basis of the similarity between the voters' own ideology and the party's serves instead.¹⁸

One important point which Butler and Stokes¹⁹ raise, however, concerns how electorate attitudes towards issues are formed in the first place. As most electors have partisan dispositions, and the parties themselves offer a lead on most issues, it is likely that the party will

assume a special status in giving structure to voter attitudes. When they do, the flow of cause and effect is not from issue to party preference, but the other way around, from party preference to belief in the issue.

In a political system such as Jamaica's, with a strong inclination towards partisan political loyalties, the electorate does tend to embrace ideological labels or symbols on the strength of their identification with a party. This does not, however, prevent the development of ideological tendencies based on concrete issues which have been debated in the public arena. "Real issues, such as the role of the private sector in the society or government acquisition of private economic interests and how they should be acquired, are all central to the ideological contentions between parties and the policies they imply."²⁰

Party Politics and the Public Interest

One of the assumptions of democracy is that the government ought to work in the public interest. Certainly "the goals of any healthy democracy are to find ways to provide the general population with freedom from hunger, ignorance, disease and so on, as well as offering them a sense of place and purpose through actual participation in political decision-making."²¹ However, in a society factionalized by class, as in Jamaica, it can be extremely difficult to put together a set of policies which appeal to a majority of interests and do not contradict each other.

The social basis of parties and party loyalty pose one of the greatest dilemmas to the democratic process. A political party

represents particular sections of society, but a government represents the whole population. In a mixed economy, such as Jamaica's, where resources are both publicly and privately owned and quite limited in quantity, the balancing of group interests may involve conflict between two equally legitimate interests. This problem arises in government policies which concern distributive matters, where only some people identified by personal characteristics, such as class or economic status, may benefit. Robertson suggests that this affects the problem solving mode of governing in two ways.²² First, the problems that affect some, (for example, unemployment, education, housing for the poor) become political problems, but the "cost" involved in solving them has to be distributed in some manner throughout the entire society.

Secondly, party competition cannot serve to distance the public interest if the goal of competitive democracy of governing in the public interest, for the "public good" is to prevail. However, party competition often tends to distance the public interest goal by inadequately identifying or solving problems related to the interest of all sectors of the society. These dilemmas have important implications for the way in which public policy is determined within a competitive political system.

Policy Determination and Electoral Expediency

There is a body of opinion which holds that parties ought to modify their policies until they have an electorally successful package.²³ However, to hold on to a policy that is unpopular with voters and likely to lose the party votes, is not only foolhardy, but devoid of value, because, as Robertson has observed, "a properly functioning

democracy is one in which the government automatically puts into operation those policies that please a majority of the electorate."²⁴

This suggests that parties must determine policies entirely on the basis of electoral expediency. Such an approach to policy determination could have grave consequences for developing countries where the success of development policies requires long-term planning, personal sacrifice and far-sightedness on the part of its citizens. It is of course desirable for parties to encourage a more subtle and flexible relationship between electoral popularity and policy, but this is exceedingly difficult to stipulate in circumstances where success at the polls depend on the party's response to policies which demand almost immediate results.

In more developed countries, electoral expediency may sometimes be sacrificed for sound policies, because they may actually work in favour of the party. This usually depends on the party's past record in office if former policies proved successful despite initial opposition.²⁵ In developing countries like Jamaica, however, party identification with sound policy records are highly improbable. This is partially because of the short-term electoral mandate and the problem of long-term planning, when demands are immediate, and partially because of unpredictable external or internal pressures which often foil even the best of policy intentions.

On the other hand, partly because of the popularity of some of its policies, and partly because of the appalling record of its opponents a party might be a tremendously strong candidate to win an election. In this instance, the minority interests of some groups of loyal party supporters may be served, despite their general unpopularity, because

the voters feel they cannot risk the opponent, and are forced to accept the minority interest policies as part of the bargain. Robertson refers to this type of party strategy as a form of "policy blackmail."²⁶

In 1972, the PNP came to office with what was then called "the most massive landslide victory in the history of the country." In 1980, this massive victory was superseded by the JLP's victory at the polls, even though the JLP had been soundly defeated in 1972 because of what the electorate perceived to be a corrupt government which served only the interests of the wealthier classes. By 1980, however, the PNP government had failed to achieve its policy goals and the country, for a variety of reasons, suffered tremendous economic and social setbacks. In 1980, the JLP was returned to office, with virtually the same policy goals it had prior to 1972, mainly because the electorate could not "risk" another PNP government. Although the normative commitment of the PNP to social justice and equitable distribution of wealth is still a popular ideology of the masses, they perceived the JLP to have better prospects for achieving short-term economic growth, partly because of the benefits voters expected from its close alliance with the United States policies; and partly because some economic growth had occurred during the more prosperous decade of the 1960's when that party held office. The element of "policy blackmail" seems evident as the underlying problems of social equity and a redistribution of wealth, which concern the majority of the voting public, have been neglected, while the massive economic problems faced by the poorer majority persist.

Economic Development and Party Strategy

According to Gabriel Almond,²⁷ "the relationship between economic development and political competitiveness is an essential attribute of democracy." A number of studies have shown that there is a positive correlation between economic conditions and voter preferences.²⁸

V.O. Key's study of political pressure groups indicated that "one of the most popular causes associated with massive shifts in party support; group sentiments and opinions, and widespread convictions and beliefs, is attributed to changes in general business conditions, employment or prosperity."²⁹ It is important, therefore, to investigate the relationship between measures of economic success and policy position. Which parties react how, to what sort of economic conditions is a question of very general interest, and the answer provides vital knowledge in seeking insights into competitive party strategy.

The major accepted proposition is that voters tend to support the party or incumbent candidate in prosperous times, and to vote against them in periods of declining business.³⁰ Whenever something goes wrong with the economy, the government in power is liable to be held responsible, and may lose votes. According to Robertson,³¹ "an economic disaster has one objective nature to any individual - bad. But for competing political parties, an economic disaster has two different strategic natures. For the incumbent it is both objectively and strategically bad, for the opposition it can be strategically beneficial."

Inflation in the 1970's was 'bad' for the PNP government, but good for the JLP opposition platform in 1980. But what of the fact that the JLP incumbent lost the 1972 elections by a wide margin, when the economy was still relatively strong? And how is it that the PNP was

returned to office in 1976 with an overwhelming victory, during one of the worst periods of economic decline in the nation's history? These questions will be answered when the actual events leading up to the elections are examined in later chapters. For the moment however, it may be observed that theoretical assumptions may provide a useful contrast to the voter response to economic conditions, but they cannot be taken as absolute. As Leiserson stated, "such generalizations are subject to an /all things being equal qualification".³² Factors such as a leader's personality, strong ideological loyalty or foreign policy - particularly in crisis situations, sometimes produce realignments.

Once elected, the management of the economy becomes one of the greatest problems facing a Third World government. This problem is often stated in terms of "strategies for economic development," and these strategies often imply either a "socialist" (distribution oriented), or a "capitalist" (production oriented), path to development. The option a government chooses has a significant impact on the well-being of all citizens. However, these choices have had to be made, not only within the context of an international economic system, which imposes constraints of a broadly familiar kind, but equally within the context of the state structure itself.

Central to the analysis of political parties are the strategies which competitive parties employ, not only to obtain the power to govern, but to keep it. Analysis indicates that the ideological perspective of the party, and the policies they inform, have a great deal to do with how they govern and the result they are likely to achieve. These characteristics of the political parties should facilitate a closer analysis of their implications for party politics in Jamaica.

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CHAPTER TWO

POLITICAL PARTIES IN JAMAICA: BACKGROUND TO THE 1970'S

Jamaica is one of the four major islands in the Northern Caribbean forming the Greater Antilles. It is the largest island of the former British West Indies at 4,411 square miles, and has a current population of 2.3 million.¹ Approximately 30 percent of the population live in the capital city of Kingston and the adjoining parish, St. Andrew, which together form the major urban center.

Socio-economic Class Structure

Over 90 percent of the Jamaican population are of African and African-European descent. The remainder consists of Europeans, Chinese, Lebanese, Jews, East Indians and other mixtures.² Jamaican society can be roughly divided between seven classes on the basis of their economic status. (See Table 1).³ The various class groupings have a particular significance to parties seeking success in election for public office. The first two groups total about 40,000 individuals, and in addition to their financial contributions to political parties, they effectively control the information disseminated to the middle and lower classes.⁴ It is the members of the upper-classes who control the most widely read newspaper - the Daily Gleaner which began in 1834. This paper has long been recognized as the voice of the "national bourgeoisie"⁵ and of the "capitalist enterprise alliance with the West and a conservative sensibility."⁶

The third and fourth categories account for approximately 400,000 individuals. While the upper-classes control the top levels of

TABLE 1. Jamaica: Class Groupings
According to Economic Status

Class groupings	Classes
1. Upper and Upper-middle	Capitalists (0.5 percent) (Owners and managers of large and medium-scale privately owned enterprises and farms that employ wage labour in significant quantities and regularly)
2. Upper-middle	Administrative class (0.5 percent) (Public sector senior bureaucrats and technocrats, independent service professions, politicians, clergymen, etc., who administer and control the key public institutions and public services)
3. Lower-middle	Independent property owners or middle-level capitalists (5 percent) (shopkeepers, small businessmen, middle farmers, and landlords who live from rental that accrues from property owning)
4. Lower-middle	Labour aristocracy (15 percent) (Semi-professionals, technicians, white-collar workers, and high-wage and skilled workers)
5. Lower	Own-account workers or petty capitalists (34 percent) (Small farmers, vendors, petty-traders, small contractors, etc.)
6. Lower	Working class (25 percent) (Low wage manual workers)
7. Lower	The long-term or indefinitely unemployed (20 percent)

Source: Stone, 1976: 129

private media institutions, it is the lower-middle classes which are the greatest consumers of media information.⁷ Members of these classes also participate directly in elections by running for office, stuffing campaigns, and supporting parties financially with small individual contributions. The "labour aristocracy" is also the mainstay of the two major trade unions - the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union (BITU) and affiliated with the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP), and the National Worker's Union (NWU), affiliated with the People's National Party (PNP).

The remaining 79 percent of the population form the lower classes. Because the middle and upper classes are concentrated in the main urban center, the lower classes are the most important in terms of sheer numbers of votes in most constituencies. In 1980, the electorate was composed of 990,417 voters,⁸ therefore, all parties must appeal to this vast group to achieve electoral success.⁹

Another role which some members of the chronically unemployed class play during the election campaigns is participation in political gang "warfare . . . when politicians provide ghetto youths with weapons and sometimes salaries and other privileges in return for their services as 'soldiers' for political street battles."¹⁰

In the Jamaican social and political structure, ethnicity and class are inextricably linked. This is a legacy of the Colonial plantation society and especially of the racial hierarchy which prevailed. Carl Stone,¹¹ estimates that most of the "capitalist" class - the top 0.5 percent of the population - are Europeans, Jews, Lebanese, Chinese and persons of mixed race. The administrative class - another 0.5 percent, is mostly brown-skinned. Although a number of dark-skinned persons have acquired power and wealth, whites, ethnic minorities and lighter

colored people dominate the upper classes. David Lowenthal¹² estimates that in the late 1960's, the median wage for whites was almost twice that for browns and thirteen times that for blacks.

Economic and Social Conditions

Throughout the 1950's and early 1960's rapid economic growth took place in Jamaica which led to significant transformations in the island's economy.¹³ Whereas in 1948 the traditional exports, (sugar, bananas and other agricultural products), accounted for 96 percent of receipts, twenty years later their share in the value of exports had shrunkened to 22 percent. The displacement of these agricultural exports was achieved by three main new commodity and enterprise groups. These were bauxite-alumina, tourism and manufacturing.¹⁴ Their respective contributions to the island's economy in 1968 were as follows:

TABLE 2. Jamaica: Contribution of Major Sectors to the Value of Export Receipts (1968)

	Percent
Bauxite-alumina	29
Agricultural products	22
Tourism	19
Manufacturing	8

Source: Girvan 1971: 244

During this same period, foreign trade increased eightfold, nominal GDP grew sevenfold, and per capita income also grew by 700 percent. In real terms, GDP growth averaged 5 to 6 percent per annum

overall, and 3 to 4 percent per capita. This impressive economic performance was based upon massive inflows of foreign capital and a prodigious growth in imports for the island's productive system. Between 1953 and 1972, foreign investment financed 32 percent of total investment. Imports of raw materials, fuels and intermediate capital goods grew far more quickly than total imports, from 26 percent to 36 percent.¹⁵ Thus, local production activity became increasingly dependent on a regular, uninterrupted supply of imports, at the same time as imports became increasingly dependent on external financing.¹⁶

From 1950 to 1966, Jamaica received foreign investments of US\$ 406.6 million, 58 percent of which went into the mining sector.¹⁷ By the late 1960's more than half of all economic activity on the island was foreign owned.¹⁸ Foreign ownership of the main economic sectors of the economy was as follows:

TABLE 3. Jamaica: Foreign Ownership of Main Sectors of the Economy (Late 1960's)

	Percentage
Mining	100
Manufacturing	75
Financial institutions	66
Transportation	66
Communications	>50
Storage	>50
Tourism	>50
Sugar industry	40

Source: EPICA Task Force 1979: 52

By the early 1970's, a series of internal and external political and economic crises led to a sharp decline in the economic growth of the country. Between 1974 and 1980, economic growth declined by a total of 26 percent. This decline was accompanied by a serious rise in economic and social problems for the majority of Jamaicans. Health services and education badly deteriorated. Unemployment, already chronic for decades, had reached 24 percent by 1972 (the highest since 1943 when it stood at 25.1 percent),¹⁹ and continued to rise. The principal productive sectors of the economy - mining, manufacturing, agriculture and tourism - were performing far below their capacities; political violence became commonplace; income distribution and land ownership were badly skewed, and a massive flight of capital throughout the 1970's drained the economy.

Although there had been moderate improvements in public health and education in the decades before and after independence, the distribution of wealth accruing from extensive economic growth was extremely unequal. By the mid-1960's, Jamaica held the distinction of having the world's highest level of inequality, with the wealthiest 5 percent of the population receiving 30 percent of the national income, and the poorest 20 percent receiving only 2 percent.²¹ By the end of the 1960's, these conditions led to heightened demands by the most disadvantaged sectors of the society for greater equity in the social and economic policies of the government.

The Structure of Government

According to Trevor Munroe, "in Jamaica, as in most colonies facing independence, the emulation of the colonizing power remains a

striking paradox of the process of decolonization."²² The two political parties chose not only to maintain the economic policies of the status quo, but also to adopt a constitutional form of government similar to that of Great Britain.

The formal structure of government²³ was established with the full consensus of both parties, by the Jamaica (Constitution) Order in Council, and was approved by the British Government on July 23, 1962. Hence, Jamaica has been a constitutional monarchy and a fully self-governing member of the Commonwealth since August 6, 1962.

The British Monarch is the titular sovereign, and the Governor General, the formal head of state. All significant executive power and all effective legislative powers are concentrated in the hands of the Prime Minister and his Cabinet, which must consist of at least eleven members. The Cabinet is the center of government, initiating all government policies and programs and sharing a collective responsibility to Parliament.

The Senate consists of 21 appointed members, 13 upon the recommendation of the Prime Minister, and 8 on that of the Leader of the Opposition. The House of Representatives is chosen by popular vote from constituencies. The House must consist of at least 45 members, but no more than 60 members.

The Opposition is recognized as a fundamental part of the political process. The Leader is a member of the House of Representatives, and is supported by a majority of members not in the ruling party.

An Attorney General is the principal legal advisor to the government. The Judicial system is based on English Common Law, but some accommodation to local needs has been made through statute and

custom.

Jamaica has also adopted from Britain the idea of a neutral and professional civil service. The top civil servant in each Ministry is the Permanent Secretary who serves directly under the Minister. However, despite the endorsement of neutrality and professionalism, the civil service is thought to suffer severely from the "spoils system."

Finally, local government is not mentioned in the Constitution, and its structure and powers are subject to determination by Parliament. Jamaica is divided into fourteen parishes and each parish provides local community services, for example, homes for the poor, sanitation, parochial road maintenance, water, fire protection, etc. Its funds come from special rates and taxes collected by the central government and from grants from the central government.

Voting Patterns

Under the Constitution, Parliament is elected for a maximum of five years, but may be prorogued or dissolved at any time. Since Jamaica was granted universal suffrage in 1944, each party has won two terms in office followed by two terms in opposition. This pattern has remained unbroken over ten general elections.²⁴ (See Table 4.) The tenth general election, held in December 1983, was unprecedented in Jamaica's political history, in that it was the first to be uncontested by the opposition PNP. As a result of this election, all sixty seats in parliament are held by the JLP government at the present time.

Since the first election under universal suffrage, no third party has threatened the dominance of the two main parties - the JLP and the PNP. Although independent candidates and third parties

received 35.1 percent of the vote in 1944, their votes dwindled to 13.8 percent in 1949, and 10.5 percent in 1955. Since that time, none has gained as much as 2 percent of the vote.²⁵

TABLE 4. Jamaica: Analysis of Popular Vote, 1944-1980

Year	Registered Voters	Votes Cast	JLP	PNP	Other
1944	663,069	349,127	144,661 41.44%	82,029 23.50%	122,437
1949	732,217	467,921	199,538 42.64%	203,790 43.55%	64,593
1955	761,238	486,644	189,929 39.03%	245,750 50.50%	50,965
1959	853,539	557,794	251,744 45.17%	305,642 54.84%	408
1962	796,340	575,779	288,130 50.74%	279,771 49.26%	7,878
1967	541,300	437,117	220,130 50.36%	215,783 49.37%	1,204
1972	605,662	477,771	205,587 43.40%	266,927 56.36%	1,137
1976	870,972	742,149	318,180 43.23%	417,768 56.77%	-
1980	990,367	860,746	502,115 58.34%	350,064 40.67%	-

Source: Chief Electoral Officer Reports, Kingston, Jamaica

Origins of the Political Parties

The present political system in Jamaica emerged in the wake of labour unrests that swept the island in 1938.²⁶ The founding leaders of modern Jamaican political parties emerged as leaders from these disturbances.

The first was Alexander Bustamante, the son of an Irish farmer and a creole mother. With little formal education, he rose to champion the worker's cause and was jailed between 1940 and 1942 as a result of his activities. Emerging as a hero, he took the lead in organizing the labour union (the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union) and appointed himself its president-for-life.

The second political leader, and founder of the first political party, the People's National Party, was Bustamante's cousin and early ally, Norman Washington Manley. Manley was a Rhodes scholar and a brilliant lawyer, whose interests lay more in the causes of self-government and universal suffrage than in the labour movement.

While Bustamante was detained by the British authorities, Manley and the PNP hierarchy continued to oversee the trade union. Between 1940 and 1942 they succeeded in raising the membership from 8,000 to 20,000.²⁷ Soon, however, the sharp differences in style and outlook between the autocratic, self-educated Bustamante, and the intellectual statesman Manley, broke the delicate alliance between the two leaders.

The PNP continued to press for constitutional change and universal suffrage, and by 1944, these were granted. In preparation for the first general election that year, Bustamante hastily formed the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP), which was "little more than a transformed BITU designed for election purposes."²⁸

Before the 1944 general elections, suffrage was based on ownership of land and largely restricted to the island's elites. In the seven elections of the Legislative Assembly held between 1901 and 1935, only 6 percent of the population was eligible to vote and no more than 3 percent voted in any one election.²⁹ By 1944, however, the size of the electorate increased tenfold. The JLP won 22 seats, with 41.4 percent of the vote and the PNP won 5 seats with 23.5 percent of the votes.

By 1959, Jamaica had become self-governing in all aspects except foreign policy. In 1958, it had become part of the Federation of the West Indies,³⁰ under the prompting of Britain. Britain sought to unify Jamaica and other Colonial territories in the region in an attempt to consolidate a trading bloc between Britain and the West Indian colonies before granting them independence. However, in the 1958 Federal elections, Jamaica failed to gain a majority in the Federal parliament and the ruling PNP called a referendum in 1961 to determine Jamaica's continued membership. Although both party leaders had supported the Federation, Bustamante seized the opportunity to campaign against it during the referendum claiming that membership would mean Jamaica's subjugation to Trinidad and Tobago. Manley's PNP government voiced strong support of Jamaica's continued membership in the Federation, while Bustamante called for "freedom" from Trinidad's domination. With a vote of 54.1 percent against and 45.9 percent for, Jamaica withdrew. The JLP, on the winning side of the Federation issue, was returned to power in 1962 and led the country to full independence on August 6th, 1962.

Origins of Party Ideologies

Up until the early 1970's, both parties adopted a pragmatic approach to governing. From the early 1950's they converged on a gradual, incremental policy approach, which served to reinforce the status quo while offering the Jamaican electorate no dramatic choice in economic and social policies. There were, however, marked differences in their ideological perspectives, but ideologies played only a minor role in election strategies and in influencing government policies.

The PNP was both pro-British and anti-imperialist in perspective.³¹ The party was modeled after the British Labour Party and its nationalism was moderate in character. The party's chief aims were to achieve universal suffrage and to establish an indigenous civil service before seeking full internal self-government within the Commonwealth.³²

The ideology of the PNP was fashioned after the Fabian socialist ideology of the British Labour Party, but it also accommodated some Marxian socialists. However, by the early 1950's, anti-communist sentiments were at a peak in the United States and the McCarthyite campaign fervor spilled over into the Jamaican propaganda machinery. Thus, given the PNP loss at the polls in 1944, and again in 1949, the party reassessed the political feasibility of retaining the more radical socialist components, which were constantly under attack from the ruling JLP. In 1952, the PNP leader gave in to the demands of its more right-wing members, and expelled the more radical Marxist elements.³³

In the first general election held under universal suffrage, in 1944, the JLP was swept to victory, this indicated that the JLP was

seen the masses as representing their militant interests, in the tradition of the 1930's struggle.³⁴ Yet, the JLP had a conservative pro-capitalist ideology, which sought, in the words of its leader, to provide only "a little more bread and a little more butter" for the working classes and the peasantry.³⁵ According to Carl Stone,³⁶ the JLP was more "incrementalist," oriented to short-term adjustments in its reform ideas.

It's incrementalist view of change was rooted in the low level of class consciousness of its mass base, which articulated angry militancy towards the capitalist classes but had no aspirations for state power, ownership and control of the means of production, or a strong sense of class solidarity.

Hence, the JLP and its union, the BITU, provided the political expression for this anti-capitalist class; while firmly supporting the British Empire as "a God-given instrument of democratic rule, and attacking communism and even the PNP's socialism."³⁷

The PNP's version of nationalism reflected it's "consequent cosmopolitan, regional, outward-looking and internationalist perspective, while the JLP has been basically parochial and localist in its view of nationalism."³⁸

Ironically, the PNP's blending of moderate nationalism and elements of Fabianism were viewed by the island's ruling oligarchy as a greater threat to their interests, than the JLP's support of the radical working classes. Some of the PNP's socialist policies included the advocacy of a marketing and industrial board to provide easy credit to small capitalists and middle peasants; the curtailment of large-scale capitalist agriculture, and the formation of rural co-operatives.³⁹

When the oligarchy's own political party - the short lived Jamaica

Democratic Party - was badly defeated in the first election, it turned towards "the volatile and co-optible Bustamante" as the political instrument of its interests . . . In office between 1944 and 1955, and 1962 to 1965, Bustamante became a slavish defender of the interests of British and American imperialism."⁴⁰ In fact, during the 1949-1950 period when the Attlee Labour Government in Britain proposed the nationalization of Tate and Lyle - the giant sugar monopoly which dominated Jamaican agriculture - Bustamante threatened to call island-wide strikes in opposition.⁴¹

While both parties have had differing ideologies from their inception, the JLP's capitalist, pro-Western orientation has been consistently articulated and adopted in its governing policies. The PNP's "socialism," however, remained up until 1974, a guiding principle rather than a platform appeal of policy. As such, the country did not experience the effects of "ideological-turnover" (discussed in chapter one), which might have resulted if policies were consistently reversed by alternating governments. Nor did the country experience the destabilizing consequences of competing parties, as did many developing countries in their post-independence political struggles. While the two Jamaican political parties offered little in the way of innovative political choice and scarcely encouraged active mass participation in political decision-making, their convergent policies did allow for the growth of a stable and well institutionalized political system.

Interest Groups and the Development of Party Power Base

Economic and material objectives provide the major rationale and the highest priority in individual and collective political action.⁴²

The system of wealth distribution defines the objectives of the various interest groups (listed on Table 1), who have a common stake in the system based on the sources and quantity of wealth that accrue to them.⁴³

Each class seeks to maximize its economic interests within the limits of its perception of power and bargaining position . . . Political behaviour at every institutional level represents convergent and conflicting attempts to maximize the defined group interest . . . Access to and the distribution of wealth are the central issues determining alignments, coalitions, and the antagonisms in the political arena.⁴⁴

The various class groupings, which reflect the strata of wealth distribution, was well represented in the broad class bases developed by both parties over the years. Neither party could be viewed, in the classical sense, as being more associated with one class or ethnic group or another. There was, however, the tendency for both parties to attract more support from certain groups than others. The PNP, for example, was, up to the late 1960's perceived as "middle class" because it attracted the middle and upper-class intelligentsia, and the urban working classes. Whereas the JLP had been perceived as the party of the upper capitalist classes, as well as the poorer rural and urban classes. These perceptions were rooted in their earliest class associations.

Bustamante was a populist leader in the sense that he presented himself as a representative of the "common" people, without a rigorous ideology.⁴⁵ But he also gained the support of the capitalist upper classes, who, according to Paul Blanchard,⁴⁶

were gratified by his political views. He supported the British Empire as a God-given instrument of democratic rule, and attacked communism and socialism . . . Many conservatives supported him privately because they thought that his crude dictatorship was less dangerous to their property rights

than the opposition labour movement led by Norman Manley.

In contrast, the PNP reflected the interests of the "petty bourgeoisie, middle peasants and small traders against the encroachments of the big landholding class and comprador bourgeoisie."⁴⁷ Its earliest leadership was formed from the middle class professionals, civil servants and intelligentsia. Thus the PNP developed its early support from those sectors between the upper capitalist classes and the poorer sectors of the society. After the first election, however, the PNP discovered that these groups alone could not sustain the party when the electorate was overwhelmingly lower class. Like the JLP before it, the PNP soon found that union leadership was the most expeditious route to permanent political importance. "The only way to achieve mass appeal, because of universal suffrage was to organize a labour union and identify the party with it."⁴⁸

In spite of their broad mass base, neither party could depend on financial support from their rank and file members. Therefore, each party courted the support of the wealthier classes (i.e. merchants, and big industrialists), who were interested in the "good will" of the party leaders. According to Morley Aycarst,⁴⁹ both parties were alleged to enjoy secret gifts of considerable amounts from these groups.

After the JLP victory in the 1967 elections, a random sample of polling districts in the urban center was taken, and the results showed that the JLP had gained its traditional support in the upper classes and the poorer sector of the lower classes, while the PNP base of support continued to come from those in between - the uppermost sector of the lower class, and the lower middle class.⁵⁰

Although some 80 percent of Jamaicans are very poor, and a small group of individuals control most of the wealth, conflict among class groups was not a factor in election campaigns prior to the 1972 elections. The JLP, which had traditionally been considered the representative of the poor, spoke only of class in euphemistic terms, maintaining that a government could function in the interests of all classes simultaneously. A small proportion of PNP members strove, at this time, to present the party program as being in the interest of the lower class, but inimical to the interests of the wealthy. Some programs, such as a minimum wage and the abolition of the Master-Servant Law, were promised,⁵¹ but no serious attempt to make far-reaching changes in the social structure was promised. Thus,

between 1952 and 1974, socialism remained a guiding principle within the PNP, rather than a platform appeal to the electorate.⁵²

Electioneering and the "Rational" Electorate

In chapter one, the methods used by parties to appeal to the electorate were discussed, and certain assumptions made which suggested that political parties tended to use ideological arguments to appeal to the desires of voters, rather than attempt to explain concrete policies to an uncritical and largely illiterate and partisan electorate. These assumptions will be examined against the electoral strategies of Jamaican political parties. An indication of the degree to which the majority of the electorate are actually involved in the effective formation of party policies will be given.

As this study has already indicated, the only parties that could win an overall majority, based on universal suffrage, were those which

appealed to the aspirations of the low-income voters. Before the 1970's, Jamaica was conspicuously lacking in community-wide organizations that identified with their needs and aspirations. Therefore, the unions became the most important means of mass organization, at least for the working poor. Both parties provided the mass representation through their union affiliates, "which was essentially political." Thus, "the successful political party was a labour one, in many cases paying lip-service to socialism, and always stressing the 'Nationalist' ideal."⁵³ Prior to independence, the national ideal meant more self-government for the colony and a rapid advance of political independence. Thus, both parties pledged to satisfy the two most urgent - yet vaguely defined desires of the voters - "to improve their economic status and to become full members of their society."⁵⁴

These demands were largely based upon desires, values and expectations, and "emotional needs, rather than on any important economic analysis."⁵⁵ This rendered the effective political argument an emotion-charged, ideological one. However, the perceptions of "objective reality" by both parties prior to the 1970's, produced an adherence to the more pragmatic approach of compromise and moderation in their actual policies.

Parties continued to be elected by voicing the ideological demands of their followers, and appearing to be the people's champion against colonialism, and other perceived forms of exploitation.

In terms of effective mass involvement in political decision-making, J. Schumpeter's statement⁵⁶ that the sole function of the electorate is to choose "lock, stock and barrel" one party or another every few years, had largely held true in Jamaica, prior to the 1970's.

Local party groups were generally few in number and inactive except immediately before elections. As Ayearst observed,⁵⁷

The accepted party leadership decides candidates, and the party structure is hierarchical, with the rank and file voter playing very little part other than voting at elections. The party structure is demagogic rather than democratic . . . There is no close and working organization for the re-assessment of leaders and the deciding of issues on a broad party basis.

A final point which may be noted is that both parties tended to converge in organization, policies and class content, as they became more established. The ultimate result of this increasing convergence was the effective exclusion of the masses from real political participation and social rewards.

By examining the policies which informed the two parties' approach to governing, the "convergence" of policies, and their subsequent implications for national development become more evident.

Party Policies

Perhaps the most outstanding feature of party politics in Jamaica, since the early 1950's, was the growth of consensus between the JLP and the PNP. A decade after independence, these tendencies continued in relation to socio-economic policies. Both administrations followed conservative policies, providing modest public programs and seeking to attract foreign investment. Louis Lindsay⁵⁸ argues that independence was "mythical" in the sense that Britain granted independence only after it was assured of the loyalty to the West by both leaders of the two parties. Indeed, neither party challenged the Western democratic form of government or the power of foreign investments.

Owen Jefferson⁵⁹ found that successive Jamaican governments took a three pronged approach to national planning, "the enunciation of certain broad policy goals; the provision of incentives, and the reliance on private enterprise to get on with the job." The role of the government was therefore limited to "the provision of education, health services, agricultural extension services, and other similar forms of basic investments, together with the manipulation of monetary and fiscal policy to provide what it regarded as a desirable economic climate."

One factor which seems to have influenced the governments against a greater degree of regulation and control of the economy, appears to have been the desire to attract foreign capital. "In all three post-war independence plans, there was the implicit assumption that foreign investment was the variable to be maximized."⁶⁰

The economic policies of the governments of both parties, up to the 1970's was a policy of "economic growth" dependent upon international capital and the creation of a "welcoming society" for foreign capital, under the general rubric of "industrialization by invitation."⁶¹

The most important factor which influenced official policy was the Fomento Program in Puerto Rico, which gained the nickname, "Operation Bootstrap." Basically this meant the government's provision of incentives (for example, tax holidays; cheap labour for manufacturing, and infra-structural facilities - roads, electricity, etc. for the mining and tourism industries), to attract foreign investments in these industries.⁶²

By 1950, the great North American aluminum monopolies - Alcoa, Alcan, Kaiser and Reynolds were investing millions of dollars in the exploitation of Jamaican bauxite reserves, which were estimated to be the

largest in the world at that time.

Thus, official policies encouraged and welcomed foreign capital, which provided the technology for a tremendous diversification of the economy. Despite the diversification, the post-war developments reinforced the basic import-export orientation of the economy. Virtually all the imports, (raw materials, services and even skilled manpower) were imported by the mining, manufacturing and tourist industries, while all the bauxite and aluminum, and much of the manufacturing, (which chiefly involved the importation of components to be assembled), was exported.⁶³ Large-scale agricultural production, though considerably reduced, also contributed to the export market.

Although the new sectors were primarily foreign-owned, their investments created profitable opportunities for the capitalist classes. "Members of the old oligarchy began diversifying their economic activities into construction and related supplier industries, forming the nucleus of the new industrial bourgeoisie."⁶⁴ Merchants traded larger volumes of consumer goods and raw materials for industries. Some became manufacturers in import substitution industries, (for example, consumer goods and clothing). Speculators got rich through real estate dealings, and new entrepreneurs emerged in the service industries. In short,

a close relationship developed between the foreign capitalists and the local capitalists, who depended on them for finance, technology, supplies and marketing . . . which justified calling them a comprador bourgeoisie . . . This relationship made the local capitalists hardly more than agents in the foreign exploitation of Jamaica.⁶⁵

In addition, the state bureaucracy grew, creating new jobs as decolonization proceeded, and middle level economic management, administration and technical expertise were passed on to Jamaicans in the

administrative upper classes.

Policy Implications for National Development

In examining the policy implications for development, "economic growth" and "economic development" are terms which require certain qualifications. To begin with, neither growth nor development can be defined in "value-free" technical terms. Economic growth, (in the conventional sense of increases in the per capita production of goods and services), can be measured only if certain assumptions are made about income distribution.⁶⁶

The weights to be attached to the different goods and services making up the national product, or income, depend on relative prices and these relative prices are linked to the distribution of income.⁶⁷

When economic growth is wedded to the concept of development, other elements, such as a satisfactory level of employment; a fairly equal distribution of income, and the greatest possible participation by the people in the nation's economy, must be taken into account.

The impact of the Jamaican governments' economic policies had far reaching implications:

By 1962, the result of the economic policies of both governments was a disarticulated economy, which produced a disjointed society and a comprador polity.⁶⁸

Foreign capital stimulated rapid growth and change in some sectors of the economy, while stifling them in others. "It strengthened the hold of foreign capital over the resources of the country, and deepened the economic ties between Jamaica and the advanced economies of North America."⁶⁹

By 1962, 39 percent of trade was with the United States, and the vast majority of post-war capital inflows were from the United States in the form of investments. By 1965, manufacturing had grown from its infancy twenty years earlier, to 15 percent of the GDP. The Bauxite-alumina industry contributed 10 percent to the GDP in 1965, and Tourism, which completed the triad of economic diversification, showed a quadrupling of the number of visitors to the island between 1950 and 1965.⁷⁰

These impressive results were directly attributed to the highly growth-oriented economic policies and plans of the governments. But the benefits of growth were unequally distributed. Foreign investors got the lion's share of profits. The bulk of the remainder was shared between the local capitalist classes and a high salaried managerial elite. For the majority of people, unemployment was high, wages were low and the difference in the standard of living between the ruling classes and the masses grew wider.

The motion of the economy produced contradictory results, increasing wealth on the one hand, while increasing relative poverty on the other, and producing sharp conflict between groups and increasing instability.⁷¹

Between 1962 and 1972, unemployment increased from 13 percent to 24 percent, while the share of the poorest 40 percent of the population in personal income declined from 7.2 percent in 1958 to 5.4 percent in 1968.⁷² In spite of the economic growth of the 1950's and 1960's, the unequal distribution of wealth contributed to growing social discontent, which was manifested in unprecedented urban violence. The general response to urban social and economic unrest by both political parties was to use police and military forces to maintain "law and

order," and to call for increases in the country's security establishment, rather than to address the real source of discontent - material deprivation. For example, the government allocated more money to Defence, Justice and police, than to the deteriorating health or agricultural sectors. In 1969-1970, an additional 16 percent increase was allocated to the former category, which was greater than estimated health expenditures.⁷³ Between 1967 and 1969, the majority of new housing was provided for middle-income groups by private enterprise, while, under the Slum Clearance and Urban Rehousing Program during the same period, only 232 structures were built.⁷⁴

These are just a few examples of the issues raised in the 1972 election campaign. Although the full impact of external forces, (i.e. rising oil prices, protectionism, global inflation, etc.) had not yet been felt by the society, the results of the government's highly growth-oriented policies; its heavy dependence on foreign capital, and its reliance on "trickle down" solutions to distributional problems, produced the forces to be reckoned with by the late 1960's, as demands for greater equity and social justice grew. William Demas adequately summarized the situation as follows:⁷⁵

Economic policy and planning have been highly growth oriented in the belief that once growth takes place, through expansion of the activities of international corporations operating in the country, and through the attraction of new branch plants in industry and tourism, the problems of the economy - unemployment, income distribution and local participation, would automatically be solved by some kind of 'invisible hand.'

Universal suffrage and the growing strength of unions and political parties gave the masses at least a greater feeling of influence over

domestic affairs, however, these brought little fundamental change in the society and no attempts at substantive economic and social reforms which could be deemed in the "best interests" of the majority.

Chapter II

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CHAPTER III

THE PNP YEARS: 1972-1980

In the late 1960's both political parties underwent leadership transitions after almost three decades under the tutelage of Alexander Bustamante and Norman Manley. In 1969, Norman Manley's son, Michael Manley was elected to succeed his late father as PNP president, in addition to his role as Island Supervisor of the National Worker's Union. He had been educated at the London School of Economics and was deeply influenced by Harold Laski's socialist political and economic prescriptions for the emerging colonial nations.¹

The leader of the governing JLP administration was Hugh Shearer. Shearer had been a career trade unionist and politician who became president of the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union after Bustamante's death. Edward Seaga, a Harvard educated Jamaican of Lebanese immigrant parentage, replaced Shearer as leader of the JLP in 1974.

Under the JLP administration, from 1967 to 1972, economic growth continued, but positive economic growth was insufficient to win the JLP unprecedented third term in office. Issues relating to the unequal distribution of wealth and corruption in government caused the exception to the major accepted proposition that voters support the incumbent party in prosperous times, and vote against it in periods of economic decline.

(i) The 1972 Elections

Problems relating to income distribution and low levels of welfare among the mass of the population were inherent when the JLP

came to power in 1962. However, these problems increased in scale over the party's ten years in office and no policies had been forthcoming to reduce them. Between 1962 and 1972, for example, unemployment was at its highest level at approximately 25 percent, and in the urban area it had risen to approximately 30 percent of the available labour force. Of those who were employed, 80 percent earned less than J\$20 weekly.²

A primary consequence of high unemployment, was a drastic rise in violent crime against property owners. The government's attempts to resolve the problem of crime through tough "law and order" prescriptions served only to "increase the magnitude of social oppression within the poorer layers of the urban social structure."³

In stark contrast to the overcrowded, insanitary, poor and deteriorating physical environment in which the mass of the population eked out an existence, was the growing affluence of the middle and upper strata of the society. This affluence was overtly expressed in the display of conspicuous consumption; the impressive growth of modern buildings; of middle income housing and suburban shopping centres and of luxury motor car ownership, by the privileged minority. Such obvious displays of affluence served to promote rising expectations by the poor for better material conditions, through appropriate government initiatives. The government, however, produced only meagre resource allocations for social programs. Scarce funding, waste and inefficiency in the implementation of programs served only to create bottlenecks within the major public services, such as health, education and housing. These problems were further exacerbated by uncontrolled and rapid population concentration in the urban areas, which inevitably added to the

social frustration of the poorer classes.

Although the overall income and productivity rates seemed impressive, the sectors of the economy, such as export and domestic agriculture, which employed the largest sectors of the labour force, were in a state of relative stagnation.

One index of the degree of social discontent was the overwhelming desire of the population to emigrate to the United States, Canada or Great Britain. In a 1970 survey conducted by Carl Stone,⁴ popular response indicated that, "were such channels of emigration to be opened up, not more than 20 percent of Jamaica's population would remain within the society."

The single characteristic about the JLP government most often mentioned by survey respondents⁵ during the 1972 election campaign, was corruption at its higher levels. The JLP had sought to maintain its support by maximizing the distribution of welfare, employment and income through the state along strict lines of patronage and exclusive partisan preferences. The inevitable result was the erosion of normal bureaucratic procedures and control over corruption, and an increase in inefficiency and waste.⁶

Rumours of corruption and mismanagement at all levels of the JLP administration greatly intensified by the end of the 1960's, creating one of the major problem issues in the JLP's bid for re-election.

The assumption that each interest group seeks to maximize its economic interests within the limits of its perception of power and bargaining position, held true in the 1972 campaign. However, access to and the distribution of wealth - although a major factor - was not the only issue determining alignments, coalitions and antagonisms. Previous

to the election, the various class and related interest groups were well represented in the broad class bases of both parties. However, by 1972, a combination of economic and moral issues produced a notable realignment of class group support.

The manufacturing and commercial sectors, which traditionally supported the JLP, were resentful of its "Jamaicanization" policy, which was an attempt by the government to play a more influential role in monitoring and regulating the economy. The policy sought to nationalize areas of the financial sector of the economy and public utilities, which were privately owned.⁷ This business elite, which had traditionally supported the JLP were resentful of its nationalization and taxation policies, which were viewed as threatening to their interests. As a result they generously financed the PNP's campaign.⁸

The JLP also managed to alienate the Church (a strong moral influence in Jamaican politics), by resisting their protests against the introduction of a state-run national lottery. The churches subsequently joined forces with the anti-JLP movement and secured a victory on this issue.

The government was also on the receiving end of pressure group protest against its refusal to re-open enumeration of voters to enfranchise 60,000 young voters who were not registered by 1972, because of the time that elapsed between the 1969 enumeration and the 1972 election. The opposition PNP identified with this issue and related it to broader questions of the inefficiency of the voter registration system, and accused the JLP of fraud in the compilation of the voters' lists, and the gerrymandering of constituency boundaries.⁹

Finally, an overwhelming proportion of the lower classes did

not see themselves as better off in relation to the growing prosperity of the upper and middle classes. They enthusiastically responded to Manley's election slogan "Better Must Come!"

The social conditions, mood for change, conflicts and issues, set the stage for the campaign strategies and tactics of both parties. The PNP focussed its campaign on the social and economic problems of the lower strata of society. It emphasized the JLP's failure to adequately deal with unemployment; housing for the poor; low incomes for wage earners and farmers; increasing crimes of violence; need for roads, water and other infrastructure (especially in the rural areas); and the level of poverty amidst plenty. However, while condemning the JLP for its ineffectiveness in addressing these problems, the PNP "made no attempt to suggest[at this time] exactly how these problems were to be tackled programatically."¹⁰

The JLP's response was to justify its ten years in office by quoting details of improvements in welfare services, and the economic and social progress achieved in this period. On this basis the JLP sought support for a renewed term of office.

The PNP also attempted to cultivate a new political image around the themes of participatory democracy, youth involvement in political life, and civil liberties and social justice. According to Stone, "The image was characterized by a strong sense of 'populist' sentiments that played on the feelings of alienation, powerlessness and mass apathy within the electorate."¹¹ Stone described "populism as,"¹²

a political tendency which seeks to elevate and raise the status, power, and interests of those social groups that are located at the bottom end of a social hierarchy and to assault and attack interests and groups that are highly placed at

the upper end of the social hierarchy. The populist political tendency is therefore 'redistributive' in its focus, seeking to resolve social conflicts, cleavages and tensions by policies, programs, ideologies and symbols geared to elevate the power and interests of the lower strata at the expense of the privileged strata.

In this election, however, Manley refrained from identifying the upper classes as the "class enemy" within a consistent ideology of class struggle. Rather, when he spoke of the unity of the suffering masses which was needed to "break the bonds of oppression," the oppressors to whom he referred were the corrupt bureaucrats and politicians, not the indigenous upper class, nor foreign capitalists.¹³

Both parties supported increasing the power of Jamaicans over economic enterprises, yet foreign capitalists were not the target of political campaign propaganda. The PNP supported a policy of "Economic Nationalization" which was not radically different from the JLP's "Jamaicanization" policy. Although economic nationalization received very little attention during the campaign, to the upper and middle capitalists classes it suggested a chance to control the economy, with fewer foreign interests.¹⁴

Manley's overtly populist appeal; which deployed such catch phrases as "Better Must Come!" and "Power to the People!" struck certain emotional and ideological chords in the popular consciousness of the Jamaican voters. No attempts were made to explain concrete policies to the largely illiterate voters. Instead Manley appealed to the normative desires, values and expectations of the electorate, rather than explaining the actual implications of these promises or their basis in sound economic analysis. Many were convinced by this rhetoric that his leadership could achieve both greater social justice

and continued economic growth. Thus the effective political argument in 1972 was an ideological one.

Although populist politics was pioneered by the JLP under Bustamante, Michael Manley was the first leader to make Jamaicans feel that they could control their country's destiny and significantly, restructure the economy and social system that they had inherited from colonial rule. His campaign promises and his skillful public relations, once in office, led to widespread expectations of great improvements.

The 1972 election was a major landmark in Jamaican history. The PNP, under Manley's charismatic leadership, was swept to power with a thirteen-point margin over the incumbents in the election returns, with the PNP gaining thirty-seven of the fifty parliamentary seats.

The early years of the PNP government brought about a number of reforms which marked important changes in Jamaica's domestic policy.¹⁵ New social programs included an adult literacy program (JAMAL) and free secondary education. The antiquated Master and Servant Law was abolished, and new legislation involving a minimum wage law and two months paid maternity leave was introduced, along with more generous bargaining rights for workers. In land reform, forty-five thousand acres of land were leased to 23,000 small farmers under Project Land Lease, and sugar cooperatives were established. A Special Employment Program (SEP) was also set up to provide work for the chronically unemployed. The government also nationalized - with compensation, the foreign owned electricity, telephone and bus companies.

As a result of these programs, the public sector grew steadily, both in expenditure and in direct employment, and in order to finance them, the government reformed the taxation system by increasing rates

on certain luxury items, and by changing the basis of the property tax.¹⁶

It was not ~~1973~~ however, before the inflationary spiral of 1973, and the generalized world recession in the industrialized economies, severely dislocated the PNP's reform programs. Drastic price increases in raw materials and machinery; the erratic fluctuations in supplies, and the sharp rise in the interest rates charged by foreign banks, all combined to curtail investments and the expansion of employment. The import bill for oil alone, which provided 99 percent of Jamaica's commercial energy, rocketed from J\$50 million in 1973 to J\$180 million one year later.¹⁷

(ii) The Ideology of Democratic Socialism

The social reforms of the PNP government galvanized the poorer sectors of the society and heightened their expectations of greater social and economic benefits. This, according to Beckford and Witter, "set the stage that forced the party to articulate a 'Democratic socialist' ideology in 1974."¹⁸ External events, relating to liberation struggles elsewhere also provided further stimulus to the growing anti-imperialist sentiment of the party. Democratic socialism became the ideology through which the PNP's populist reform and anti-imperialist sentiments could be articulated.

In early 1974, Michael Manley's book, The Politics of Change¹⁹ was published, providing a blueprint for the social democratic transformation of Jamaica. In the introduction, Manley identified the category of political leaders to which he belonged as the "idealists who seek to arrange fundamental change in society." He wrote,

The idealists begin by rejecting existing social relationships and proceed to construct a model of how they think society should be ordered. They are concerned with the basic changes that are necessary to effect the transformation from one state to the other . . . Like all political leaders who belong to the idealistic stream, I have found myself constantly in the presence of a personal, moral imperative: How to isolate a single, central thesis of belief from the welter of conflicting moral categories. Of course one must be concerned with equitable distribution of wealth, with social stability and order, with individual liberty. But always the suggestion has lurked that these categories are in conflict and that the political idealist must make a choice. I reject this notion . . . There has emerged for me a single touchstone : . . . the notion of equality.

Central themes of his work were equality, social justice and the politics of participation. Manley also put forward a critique of capitalism and imperialism, and the question of national self-reliance as a basic alternative.

This ideological stance clearly indicated that the PNP's approach to governing would involve the building of an entire new social reality - described in chapter one as architectonic. The problem inherent in this approach is often evident in the type of goals the government sets for the country and the means sought to obtain them. However, if the government is to perform its proper role, its goals must not only reflect a proper sense of what needs to be done, but also what can realistically be accomplished. This requires a reliable sense of balance between what is normatively desired and what is objectively possible. The goals set by the PNP government for the achievement of democratic socialism, provides the first indication of its prospects for striking this crucial balance.

Throughout its political mandate, the PNP sought to define

itself as a vanguard party, "charged with a mandate to advance and accelerate socialist-democratization by extending greater popular control over all the domains of power in the society."²⁰ The party defined its goals in the following central areas:²¹

1. Broadening the base of ownership of capital and promoting greater worker participation and influence over the production process.
2. Establishing greater internal democracy in its internal party machinery.
3. Deepening and broadening political awareness through programs of mass political education and politicization, using the ideology of democratic socialism as the basis for this mobilization.
4. Democratizing the political process at the local level by expanding local government autonomy and creating new institutional forms, such as grassroots community councils, as the vehicles through which to articulate local democracy.
5. Democratizing the educational system by bringing students and workers into the joint management of these institutions.
6. Bringing citizens into the machinery of law enforcement through Home Guards that would work alongside the police in fighting crime on the local community level.
7. Promoting popular participation in the processes of planning and economic decision-making.
8. Promoting forms of community and popular ownership of land and agricultural production.
9. Promoting social legislation designed to raise the level of equality realized by disadvantaged groups.
10. Establishing popular control over the mass media, using state ownership as a mechanism through which to move to more broadly based ownership.
11. Removing the restrictions on literature of a political character imposed by the earlier JLP government.
12. Engineering basic constitutional changes designed to make the fundamental laws of the land more in tune with popular control of the political system.

13. Isolating the privileged bourgeois interests as enemies of the people and harassing these classes and minority racial interests as obstacles to progress and exploiters of the masses.
14. Extending government control over the economy and especially its commanding heights to further the cause of the people's interests.
15. Bringing the party machinery and party activists into direct involvement with the implementation of sensitive areas of public policy.

It is apparent from this extensive list that the government was seeking to undertake an extremely comprehensive program of democratic socialist reforms. Given the basic principles which govern parties in a democratic society - that the right to govern is only for a limited period of time, and the probability of losing the next election is always high - the PNP's far-reaching goals for the creation of a new social reality could only be described as overly ambitious.

However, with the 1974 legitimization of democratic socialism in the political process, a watershed in the history of Jamaican politics had been reached. For the first time, a clear ideological distinction could be made between the two competing parties. This, according to Beckford and Witter, marked the breaking away of what was up to then, "nothing more than the politics of tweedle-dee and tweedle-dum."²²

(iii) Policy Implications

On the basis of its ideology, the PNP administration attempted to chart a course based on a non-aligned, pro-Third World foreign policy, and democratic socialism in its domestic economic and social policies. These policies included the following:

1. A Bauxite levy to increase government revenues and the country's foreign exchange receipts from the

bauxite/alumina industry;

2. formation of the International Bauxite Association (in which Manley was instrumental);
3. numerous social welfare measures, and
4. raising the level of socialist political consciousness in order to support its policies.
5. On the level of international relations, the government strengthened relations with neighbouring Cuba;
6. supported the liberation struggles in Southern Africa (including the support for Cuban troops in Angola) and,
7. helped to fortify the Non-aligned Movement in the struggle for a New International Economic Order.

By 1976 the problems of a preponderantly ideological approach to governing began to be manifested in extremely negative reactions to the government's foreign and domestic policies. This proved particularly damaging to the government as the adverse response emanated from those areas of interest which had the greatest influence on the outcome of its policies.

The PNP's foreign policy initiatives invoked a harsh reaction, not only from foreign investors, but also from the State Department of the United States. The Bauxite levy resulted in a tax rate increase of 480 percent between 1973 and 1975, which helped to offset the overwhelming increase in the country's imported oil bill. However, the aluminium companies soon responded to the 7.5 percent tax levy, by gradually transferring bauxite and alumina production from Jamaica to other countries. Thus, by 1978, bauxite exports were reduced to 30 percent.²⁴

In tandem with the aluminum companies, other multinationals also

curtailed their investments and activities on the island. Foreign capital inflows shrank from US\$254 million in 1973 to US\$ 115 million in 1975, and in 1976, a net outflow was recorded.²⁵

In addition, the government's close relationship with Cuba, and the support of the MPLA in Angola drew harsh response from the United States State Department. In 1975, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), turned down Jamaica's request for a US\$25 million food grant, refusing to lend additional funds until Jamaica changed its stance. By 1976, the American Import-Export Bank dropped Jamaica's credit rating from a top to a bottom category.²⁶ The United States press also discouraged tourists from coming to the island, thereby undercutting the tourist industry. Between 1974 and 1975, tourism declined by 13 percent, and dropped by an additional 10 percent in 1976.²⁷

On the domestic scene, the Jamaican capitalist classes joined their foreign allies in the anti-government policy offensive. As a result, the Jamaican private sector carried out a general go-slow in production, and refused to undertake new investments. Throughout the remainder of the Manley administration, the capitalist classes also carried out "what amounted to a sustained campaign of slander against the PNP, through its chief voice, the Daily Gleaner."²⁸

Manley's well-known response to his critics, that there were "five flights to Miami every day" for those who didn't like his policies, was apparently taken more seriously than intended. Many took him up on his suggestion and Jamaica suffered the largest exodus of upper and middle class businessmen and professional people in its history.²⁹ Along with them went a substantial amount of badly-needed capital.

The retaliation of foreign and domestic capitalist interests to

the initiatives taken by the government on behalf of the poorer classes, incensed the masses, and the PNP launched a national anti-imperialist campaign that fired the spirit of resistance throughout 1976.³⁰

(iv) The 1976 Elections

Anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism became the central topics of the 1976 elections. Underlying the diverse issues of the campaign was the common theme of foreign ownership and control of economic enterprises. In a pre-election speech of September 1976, at the National Stadium, Manley reflected the mood of the majority of Jamaicans when he articulated the view "WE ARE NOT FOR SALE!"

The JLP opposition was forced to adopt "Nationalism" as its contending ideology,³¹ and concentrated much of its campaign on domestic issues, while courting financial support from the upper classes.³²

The 1976 election was the first in Jamaica in which ideological concerns were prominent in the campaign, and constituted readily perceived differences between the two political parties. In contrast to the 1967 election, when references to class, anticolonialism and imperialism were rare and peripheral to the campaign, by 1976, these issues were overtly addressed by politicians.

In the PNP campaign, under the democratic socialism banner, Manley made direct references to class when he declared "we are committed to raising the standard of living for the most needy in our society."³³ It was the first time in any election that an ideological concept really generated mass support.

While the PNP campaigned on its record of social programs and called upon the electorate for a mandate for democratic socialism, the

JLP campaigned on the economic mismanagement of the government, which had increased the cost of living and brought untold hardship to the Jamaican people.³⁴

Repeatedly the JLP presented socialism as a system in which everyone was uniformly poor. Accordingly, the party pronounced that the path to lower unemployment and lower cost of living was "No More Socialism!"³⁵ The JLP therefore promised the reinstitution of "economic freedom."³⁶ The PNP condemned the JLP's formula of free enterprise, and during its campaign, capitalism as a guiding principle was equated with slavery.³⁷

Manley's relationship with Cuba, and his democratic socialism stance combined to make the "Communist Threat" seem a fruitful issue for the opposition to exploit. Manley was sensitive to this issue and repeatedly sought to assure the electorate that Jamaica would not "go Communist."³⁸

The election witnessed the turnabout in support coalitions of the parties that had begun in 1972. The stereotype of the PNP as a "middle class" party was completely undermined. The JLP was no longer the "poor man's" party, championing their cause against undefined enemies. The PNP emerged as the party, not only representing the poorest classes, but representing them as the victims of exploitation and uncontrolled capitalism both nationally and globally.

Manley's programs had been designed to help not only the lower working class, but the chronically unemployed, the landless peasants and the domestic workers. Hence democratic socialism came to be identified with improvements in the lives of the poor, while making the lives of the upper classes more difficult with higher taxes.³⁹

Thus, the government's promotion of a rigid class bias in favouring the poor over the interests of the wealthier classes, blurred the distinction between the role of a political party, as opposed to the role of government. Whereas a political party may represent particular sections of society, the government, in a truly democratic system must endeavour to represent the interest of the population on a whole. Policies which promote rigid class polarization, such as those of the PNP government, heightened conflicts between two equally legitimate interests. This has particularly damaging consequences in a society such as Jamaica's where major resources are both publicly and privately owned and government policies - based largely on distributive matters, require a skillful balancing of group interests. While the poor expected to be the major beneficiaries of the redistribution policy, much of the resources and means to effectively implement this policy rested with the wealthier classes. A sound government policy would have endeavoured to find rational means of distributing the 'cost' involved in the redistribution process throughout the entire society. By alienating the wealthy upper classes from positive involvement in the process, the PNP government deprived the country of one of the most important sources of effective policy implementation.

Data from polls taken in the Kingston area⁴⁰ showed that the upper and upper middle classes had, for the first time virtually abandoned the PNP. In 1967, 40 percent of the upper class had voted PNP; in 1972 this class gave the party 75 percent of its votes. By 1976, however, only 27 percent voted PNP. The trends for the middle class were similar. Its support dropped from 81.4 percent in 1972, to 40.2 percent 1976. On the other hand, the poorer strata of the lower class all but abandoned

the JLP. Only 28.4 percent of this class voted JLP in 1976, compared with 57.6 percent in 1967.

Stone's research⁴¹ on the electorate response to the PNP's ideology of democratic socialism indicates the degree of rationale which guided the electorate to renew the PNP's mandate for a second term. His 1976 findings indicated that,

PNP supporters attached to Democratic Socialism varying meanings, including a commitment to help the small people against the rich, social justice, and a desire to change society in ways that would benefit the poorer classes . . . In short, it was interpreted in ways very close to the populist support for Bustamante's 'labourism' of the 1930's and 1940's, except that it was informed by a greater sense of class enemies against the poor and a deeper feeling that social justice required some drastic changes in the society.

Essentially, therefore, democratic socialism was taken on its broadest ideological level to mean overall improvements for the poor, and on that basis, in December 1976, the electorate gave the PNP another resounding mandate for another term in office. The PNP swept to victory winning 47 of the 60 seats and 56.8 percent of the popular vote. The leader of the opposition, Edward Seaga called the results, "a very clear and decisive victory," and the selection of "one ideology over the other."⁴²

The years following the 1976 elections came to be known as the "IMF Years," as the government's involvement with the International Monetary Fund greatly influenced, not only the direction of future policies, but also the future of the ideology of democratic socialism in Jamaican politics.

Riding the wave of an overwhelming election mandate, the PNP rejected a proposed loan package from the IMF in January 1977, because

it felt there were too many strings attached which would jeopardize the social programs and undermine the credibility of the party's ideological stance. Instead, in order to meet the worsening economic crisis, the PNP announced a second reform program, the Emergency Production Plan, which strongly emphasized the principle of self-reliance. In addition, higher taxes were imposed on the rich, foreign banks were nationalized (with compensation), restrictions were placed on foreign exchange, and a State Trading Corporation was set up to regulate foreign trade.⁴³

The choice between an unpopular (though rational) policy, and another extremely popular (but irrational) policy, is a basic problem in competitive democratic politics, insofar as it relates to policy determination and electoral expediency. Faced with the choice between an IMF loan with its attendant adjustment policies, and the popular social programs, the government predictably chose the option which pleased the electorate. To choose the unpopular IMF loan package would have been the more rational economic decision. However, its adjustment policies demand harsh short-term sacrifices in order to achieve long-term results. The alternative decision, in favour of the more popular social programs, was consequently determined by political expediency, rather than sound economic judgement. Although it is desirable for a government to strike a reasonable balance between electoral popularity and sound policies, this would require a major effort on its part to create a better appreciation in the minds of the electorate of what is realistically possible. However, in a highly competitive political system, such as exists in Jamaica, this is exceedingly difficult, particularly in circumstances where popular policies, founded on strong ideological promises, raise expectations for immediate results.

Hence, a party is often forced to determine policies almost entirely on the grounds of electoral expediency, if it is to remain a viable force in the contention for power. In the case of the PNP government's decision in 1977, however, the economic results overwhelmed the political means of problem-solving.

The capitalist classes responded to the new policy initiatives with more production cutbacks and layoffs, while the economic situation reached crisis proportions. The government eventually backed down and accepted the terms of an IMF standby loan of US\$74 million to ease the worsening balance of payments situation. The loan agreement included a devaluation of 40 percent of the Jamaican currency, with a two-tier exchange rate that maintained the old rate for certain basic goods. By December 1977, however, the government failed to meet the loan conditions and the agreement was suspended. New negotiations were prolonged until May 1978, by which time the country was on the brink of defaulting on its foreign debts. The new agreement for US\$240 million over three years, under the Extended Fund Facility,⁴⁴ entailed another massive series of devaluations; wage restraints, and tight budget management, to restrict expenditures and greater participation of government in the economy, along with a projected \$180 million in new taxes.⁴⁵

The harsh IMF conditions initiated a process that generated one of the most severe periods of economic hardships Jamaica had ever experienced. It also cost the PNP a dramatic decline in popular support, as the IMF agreement with its subsequent impact on the welfare of the poor was perceived by many as a demoralizing retreat from the democratic socialist stance of anti-imperialism and self-reliance. According to Fitaroy Ambursley,⁴⁶

The contradiction in the PNP regime became increasingly apparent as Manley continued to make 'anti-imperialist' speeches at international forums, while at home he presided over a massive reduction in working class living standards.

In the first year of the IMF agreement alone, there was a 40 percent increase in the cost of living, and a 25 percent cut in the real wages of the employed.⁴⁷

(v) Implications for Development

The PNP's eight years of democratic socialism demonstrated the basic difference between the plausible and possible. Its attempts to create a new social reality resulted in drastic changes in the economic, social, political and ideological foundations of the society, producing adverse results. Given the powerful constraints imposed on the government, such as limited resources, structural maladjustment, uncontrollable external influences and unpredictable events, the policies of the PNP government unreasonably attempted to accomplish too much, too soon. The implications for Jamaica's economic and social development were most severe.

After eight years, democratic socialism had resulted in a fall in real income of 25 percent, while the cost of living rose 320 percent over the period. In 1980, net foreign exchange revenues stood at minus J\$900 million, (J\$1 = US\$1.77 in 1980), representing a fall of 1,014 percent since 1972. Real investment fell by 65 percent. Unemployment rose to 31 percent in October 1979.⁴⁸ The foreign debt was J\$3,147 million - a 47 percent increase since 1972.⁴⁹ Between 1973 and 1980, the GDP plummeted by 18.3 percent⁵⁰ and factories ran at only 30 percent of capacity.⁵¹

The bauxite levy did result in a substantial increase in government revenues, rising from J\$24.51 million in 1973 to J\$185 million in 1977. However, the counter-offensive mounted by the aluminum companies resulted in Jamaica's declining share in world production by 30 percent.⁵²

The PNP's agrarian policies were also far from successful. The ten Food Farms set up to reduce imports and provide employment, yielded poorly. For every \$1 of food crops produced, \$3 was expended in costs.⁵³ Poor results were attributed to labour indiscipline, political intimidation of technocratic controls, the overmanning of projects through party patronage favours, and theft of crops.⁵⁴ By 1976, the program had lost nearly \$3.3 million and had to be abandoned. Plagued by similar problems, the worker-run sugar cooperatives suffered a drop in production to 242,000 tonnes in 1980 - the worst in thirty-five years, and the industry had an accumulated debt of US\$67 million.⁵⁵

At a cost of millions of dollars, the land reform program, Project Land Lease, hardly made a dent in the island's agrarian structure. Big landowners were able to circumvent the program through a clause which allowed them to submit "development plans" if they did not wish idle lands on their estates to be taken over by government. As a result, only 28,700 acres of the 128,731 acres adjudged to be idle by the Land Development and Utilization Commission report of 1978, was available for government acquisition.⁵⁶

As the mood of the country shifted from majority support for the PNP to majority support for the JLP opposition party, a number of programs became casualties - were abandoned, or scaled down due to lack of strong public support. These included, worker participation, constitutional change, local government reform, democratization of educational

institutions, and broadening the base of ownership in the economy generally.

After the promising beginning of the PNP's democratic socialist policies, the increasing crisis in the economy shifted popular concerns from ideological demands for change to a pragmatic pre-occupation with mundane issues of economic survival.

By 1979, unemployment had mounted to approximately 250,000 out of a labour force of about 700,000,⁵⁷ but the government seemed less and less capable of coping with the deteriorating economic condition (made even more difficult by the IMF controls over wage increases and fiscal spending.) Shortages of basic commodities were common; foreign exchange was very scarce; small businesses were closing for lack of merchandise, as were factories for lack of raw materials and spare parts, and the real estate market had collapsed. A further increase in gasoline prices in April 1979 sparked widespread demonstrations in Kingston.⁵⁸

Between 1972 and 1978, the economies of other small middle-income countries in the region, (such as Costa Rica, the Bahamas, Barbados and the Dominican Republic) had expanded, and living standards had improved despite the world economic recession.⁵⁹ In Jamaica, however, the economy had declined over the same period, and the cost of living along with it, thus tarnishing with an image of failure, the government's program of democratic socialism.

After 1977, the International Monetary Fund had become the focus of a critical ideological issue with the PNP. Debate centered on whether to follow a "dependent" economic model, or break with the IMF and seek an alternative economic path of "self-reliance", and help from other friendly socialist countries.⁶⁰ A break with the IMF would once again

have meant avoidance of further adjustments requested by the IMF - of considerable importance in a difficult election year. However, it also meant denying the country of essential foreign exchange. In a final bid to rescue popular support for democratic socialism on the election platform, the PNP National Executive Committee unanimously approved abandoning the IMF (at least in principle). However, efforts to obtain substitute funds from other sources met with poor results, and by mid-1980, Jamaica was facing bankruptcy, desperately trying to get through the months until the October elections.

(vi) General Observations

The politics of democratic socialism introduced a new dimension to Jamaican politics, which produced several conflicting and unanticipated results. The ideology had tapped a deep popular aspiration for an end to the old order and the creation of a new and just society. However, the conceptualization of the ideology and the implementation of the policies it implied proved to be its nemesis.

Major problems in the areas of limited technocratic skills and intellectual resources; lack of discipline among party cadres; rampant political corruption; patronage excesses, and weaknesses in the areas of planning,⁶¹ all contributed to the problems encountered in the implementation of policies. However, it was in the area of conceptualization that the PNP made its most fundamental error. The government had taken it for granted that democratic socialism, as a way of life, had sufficiently entrenched itself as a high priority issue with the electorate - over and above the traditional expectations of material welfare benefits. Public opinion polls taken in 1979, indicated that the PNP had wrongly assumed

that a basic shift had taken place in political values, whereby ideological principles per se would elicit strong public support, independent of its perceived benefits to the economy.

According to Stone's research,⁶² the policies for which the electorate gave the PNP the most credit were the protection of tenants, equal rights for women, and the minimum wage, which are all social legislative areas with anticipated material benefits. "There was a conspicuous lack of credit given to any of the democratization initiatives" listed earlier.

Another unanticipated result of the PNP's populist ideology, was the way in which the principle of "equality" was perceived. There emerged a general association by the poorer classes of all forms of authority with oppressive manipulation. This led to a general weakening of authority systems in schools, productive enterprises, public institutions, and political life. As a result, there was an increasing resort to violence and intimidation as the ultimate means of resolving conflicts. Hence, "democratization efforts encouraged anarchic tendencies where weak authority systems prevailed."⁶³

The PNP was unable to find a way to synthesize populist politics with strong authority elements, and social instability was added to the growing list of government problems. Stone observed⁶⁴ that by 1980,

High levels of crime, countered by militarized police vigilance, that spilled over into the abuse of power and police harassment of poor communities, projected the government in the same role as the former JLP government in its reaction to political radicalism in circumstances of increasing crime in 1972.

Finally, one important political aspect of the PNP's social democratic program was its promotion of popular political participation.

This had a positive impact on the mobilization of public opinion and the erosion of partisan loyalties. During the 1970's, Jamaicans became more sensitive to public opinion issues, and less inclined to vote according to blind partisan loyalties. "More than at any time in the country's history, citizens talked politics, assessed issues, read political commentaries in the newspapers, and took positions on controversial issues."⁶⁵

This trend worked against the PNP in the 1980 elections, when vocal anti-government groups and interests were able to use liberal principles of free speech; freedom of association and freedom of arbitrary State power to mount damaging criticisms against the PNP government.

By October 1980, the PNP was voted out of office by the same sectors of the "exploited" lower class whose plight it had promised to change forever. The massive decline in the material living standards of the poorer classes had set the stage for the mass disaffection from the party. By early 1979, it had become quite apparent that the social base of the PNP's December 1976 electoral victory had eroded, as public concerns had shifted from ideology to economic survival. The October 1980 electoral victory of the JLP brought to an abrupt end the PNP's eight year experiment in democratic socialism.

Chapter III

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CHAPTER IV

THE JLP YEARS: 1980-1983

The proposition that voters tend to support a party in prosperous times, and to vote against it in periods of economic decline held true in the 1980 elections. Throughout the campaign, economic conditions proved to be the dominant concern of Jamaicans. Although ideology played a large role in the electioneering strategy of both parties, in the public ranking of important issues it placed a poor third below the economy, and social and political violence.¹

The economic and social problems facing the country prior to the 1980 elections were severe. By October of 1980, the country was virtually bankrupt, with only enough foreign exchange for two day's imports.² Traditional agricultural exports were at their lowest ebb in decades; bauxite production had fallen drastically, and manufacturing stood at 40 percent of installed capacity. The tourist industry was also badly hurt by reports of political violence on the island.³ Publicly owned enterprises were losing massive amounts of money. In addition to these problems, the illegal marijuana trade, which had become one of the island's most valuable source of hard currency, was spreading corruption and violence into many sectors of the society.

The heavy reduction in public spending towards the end of the 1970's had proved costly for the society in several ways. It created a massive increase in the cost of consumer goods, which were both scarce and in high demand, while causing the elimination of food subsidies which might have helped to ease the burden for the poorer consumers. Roads, schools, hospitals and other public services deteriorated badly,

and public utilities often broke down for lack of spare parts and proper maintenance.

The government's social reform programs had all but disappeared. Illiteracy was rising, and according to reports in the Jamaican press, more than 50 percent of those leaving elementary school by mid-1980 could neither read nor write. At the same time, the emigration of essential professional and managerial skills left the country in short supply, while 30 percent of the labour force remained unemployed. Virtually every area of the economy and society was beset with problems which the next elected government would inherit.

(i) The 1980 Elections

Apart from the massive deterioration of the economy, fear of communism proved to be the second highest topic on the campaign agenda. Towards the end of the 1970's, the PNP was divided between a majority of moderate "left-of-center" members, who respected the democratic rules of two-party parliamentary politics, and a small but visible and very vocal minority of Marxist-Leninist supporters. This group was led by the PNP's General Secretary, D.K. Duncan, who favoured a one-party system. Combined with the open support of the Jamaican communist party, (The Workers Party of Jamaica), and the PNP's avowed support of Cuba and other socialist countries, the increasingly radical rhetoric emanating from the party by late 1979 began to alarm the extremely anti-communist Jamaican electorate. The issue of communism, which had proven to be unproductive for the opposition JLP's campaign in 1976, worked against the PNP in 1980 and was again pursued by the JLP with even greater vigor. Thus, the campaign strategies of both parties became

focused on ideology and economic policies. The JLP accused the PNP of pro-communist leanings, and the PNP accused the JLP of pro-imperialist tendencies. The virtues of a free enterprise economy over a redistributive socialist economy were widely debated. Thus the PNP urged the electorate to "Stand Firm" behind democratic socialism, and the JLP promised "Deliverance" from it.⁴

As in the previous election campaign, the PNP defended its record of efforts to improve the lot of the majority, on the basis of its various social programs and legislation. The party also blamed its economic problems on the world economy and the machinations of OPEC and the International Monetary Fund. In addition, it accused the CIA and the local capitalist cliques of being agents of imperialism who were bent on political and economic sabotage.⁵ This provided the basis around which to build its militant anti-imperialist posture.

The JLP campaign also centered on the same basic issues raised in 1976. It accused the PNP of reckless mismanagement of the economy, and equated democratic socialism with poverty and suffering. The PNP was accused of flirting with communism; of selling out Jamaica's interests to Cuba and other communist allies, and of paying too much attention to foreign policies while neglecting the poor at home.⁶

In response to the PNP's posture of anti-imperialism, the JLP advocated closer ties with the United States and other Western capitalist interests. It expressed a commitment to "free enterprise," which would encourage foreign investment. This, according to the opposition leader, Edward Seaga, "would increase opportunities for the poor by creating employment."⁷

Throughout the campaign the JLP projected itself as a party fully

capable of the kind of public management needed to restore business confidence and bring about economic recovery. It portrayed socialism as leading to communism and the loss of political freedom, which it claimed was likely to happen if the PNP was re-elected. Michael Manley was also portrayed as a leader who had lost control of his party to Cubans and local communist radicals.

The JLP and its leader, Edward Seaga, were portrayed by the PNP as lackeys of Western imperialists, capitalists, and reactionaries, who threatened to turn back progressive people-oriented policies if elected to office. According to Anita Waters,⁸ the PNP attempted to "internationalize the ideological issue, by presenting Jamaica as part of a bloc of poor nations, victimized by the vagaries of world capitalism." However, the PNP overestimated the electorate's grasp of dependency theory. Its posture on anti-imperialism did not penetrate the consciousness of most Jamaicans, who had many friends and relatives in the United States, Britain and Canada who were doing well financially. An overwhelming number of Jamaicans also aspired to similar opportunities for migration.

The 1980 campaign culminated in the shift in class interest support which had become quite noticeable by 1976. The PNP's shift to democratic socialism and populist politics in 1974, had started realignment from a reasonably balanced multi-class support towards an increasingly class-based party system. By 1980, however, with the exception of die-hard adherents, the PNP lost most of its upper and middle class supporters to the JLP. These classes were both fearful of communism and the prospect of further economic deterioration under the PNP. The PNP also lost much ground with the better-off strata of the lower working classes, which it had always counted on. Waters⁹

attributes this decline to the escalating prices of luxury items which this class either aspired to or had obtained, (such as cars and modern household appliances), but were not able to purchase or maintain because of high taxes on luxury items, and such items as spare parts, or on gasoline and electricity to run them. The loss of support of the better-off working class groups, combined with that of the middle and upper classes, made a tremendous difference to the PNP at the polls.

The poorest strata of the society also defected from the PNP. They were demoralized by persistent economic hardships and listened attentively to the JLP's campaign promise of economic recovery in only three years. As in previous elections, the JLP promised to foster the interests of all classes. It promised to help farmers attain a "better standard of living" by bringing the "long neglected rural areas into the mainstream of national development."¹⁰ It also promised the lower classes that "money would jingle in your pockets."¹¹ While this offered the poor little more hope than Bustamante's "a little more bread and a little more butter" promise decades earlier, the smallest hope of economic improvement was sufficient to lure the support of the poor majority away from the PNP and towards the JLP by 1980.

Although ideology played a strong role in the election campaign, public opinion polls indicated that the overwhelming majority of the Jamaican electorate were disturbed by the country's economic plight. The PNP's economic management was blamed for the crisis, and the majority of the electorate believed that a JLP government could turn the country around and fulfil its promise of an early economic recovery.

In a nationwide poll conducted by Carl Stone¹² one month prior to the 1980 elections, voters were asked to indicate what they felt were the

most important issues in the election. The response indicated that 59.1 percent identified economic issues as the most important, and thought that it would be the central question around which party choices would be made. Political and social disorder were rated the second highest with 15.7 percent, superseding ideological issues which were considered to be the most important issue by only 10 percent.

Ironically, the polls also indicated that the PNP leader, Michael Manley was the leader most liked by 32 percent of respondents, while former JLP leader Hugh Shearer was second with 19 percent and the current leader of the JLP, Edward Seaga, 18 percent. However, the majority of respondents felt that Seaga was the leader who understood the economic problems of the country and how best to solve them. This belief stemmed in part from a more positive association of former JLP administrations with economic growth, prior to 1972. It also stemmed from the JLP's pro-United States policy, which voters perceived to have the better potential for economic recovery in the shortest possible time. In spite of these two considerations however, the overriding sentiment of the electorate was that they could not "risk" the economic consequences of another PNP government.

The electorate's response to these polls provides a good indication of the degree to which voters had grown to rely on their individual knowledge and perceptions of issues, enabling them to separate ideological from real concerns. As the election results were to indicate, the tendency to vote blindly according to partisan loyalties had somewhat declined as voters developed more informed, pragmatic and individual bases for choice. The economic crisis, which was uppermost in the voter's mind, favoured the opposition JLP, and gave a clear indication of what the

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incumbent was likely to face at the polls.

On October 30th, 1980, Jamaican voters turned out in record numbers. Eighty-six percent of the registered voters went to the polls. The JLP won 58.34 percent of the popular vote, and gained fifty-one of the sixty seats in parliament.¹³ This was the most lopsided government-to-opposition ratio in any of Jamaica's parliamentary elections. It was also the only election in which a political party had won the majority of votes in all fourteen parishes. Thus, the economic crisis confronting Jamaica during the 1980 elections proved to be both objectively and strategically bad for the incumbent PNP, but for the opposition JLP's campaign it was strategically very beneficial.

(ii) The JLP's Ideological Tendencies

The following reactions to the electoral results provided a useful insight into ways in which the ideological tendencies of both parties have been perceived and interpreted by many Jamaicans:¹⁴

- a) The JLP, buoyed to victory by the economic depression and anti-communist rhetoric, stepped into power determined to place Jamaica squarely in the camp of free enterprise and pro-Americanism:
- b) What upset Jamaicans was the PNP's promise that Jamaica was on the way to socialism—a promise made plausible by the arrival of a considerable number of Cubans [on the island.]

In examining the JLP's ideological tendencies, it is important to clarify from the outset that at no time has the party officially attached itself to any ideological label. It is also worth adding that in spite of campaign accusations branding the JLP "capitalist" and "pro-imperialist," and its own counter-accusations of the PNP as "pro-commun-

ist," neither party has ever come out in favour of either of these ideologies. In fact, both parties have consistently attacked these ideologies and have sought instead to package their ideological positions in more moderate terms - "democratic socialism" by the PNP, and "free enterprise" or "pro-Western" by the JLP. It is therefore interesting to note the degree to which the stronger ideological labels of capitalism and communism, attached to the JLP and PNP, respectively, throughout the 1980 election campaign, were perceived by the electorate.

The JLP's anti-communist rhetoric, leveled against the PNP, produced adverse reaction to communism based on its association with the absence of freedom; revolutionary violence, and extreme and arbitrary state power.¹⁵ The positive reaction to communism, during the PNP's administration, was based on an identification of communism as favouring the masses. More specifically, this assumption was linked to positive images of Cuba. The PNP's projection of Cuba as a successful Third World neighbour state, committed to equal opportunity and the redistribution of wealth, contributed much to the decline of anti-communist hostility in the society in the mid-1970's.

By 1980, however, the favourable aspects of communism gave way to the more negative aspects, which associated communism with the loss of democratic political freedoms. This perception was aroused by the radical leftists within the PNP, who began to voice a preference for a single-party system, while openly embracing the support of the Communist Workers Party of Jamaica. In spite of Prime Minister Michael Manley's continued popularity, the public lost confidence in his ability to control the radical pro-communist elements in the PNP. In addition, Manley himself was unable to persuade the public of his anti-communist position.

as he continued to voice support for communist Cuba. By this time, however, Manley's endorsement of Cuba's socialist structure had lost credence with the Jamaican public as his own attempts at social reforms had failed miserably, thereby projecting its unsuitability for the island. Thus, the JLP's anti-communist stance was viewed as a liberating force, both politically and economically.

Prior to 1980, the JLP had been associated with capitalism and imperialism in the negative sense, in that they perpetuated a class system in which wealth was concentrated in the hands of the upper-classes who exploited the poor. Imperialism - couched in the rhetoric of "free enterprise" and "pro-Americanism" - was viewed as the external means by which the capitalist system was maintained in the society. By 1980, however, the positive aspects of capitalism came to be associated with economic growth through a system of free enterprise, which opens up opportunities for all. This also implied a broadening of the base for private ownership and the individual's right to freely determine his own interests and potential. According to Stone,¹⁶

The grasp of ideology in the Jamaican society is only partially informed by any real understanding of the wider universal meaning.

In spite of this, however, the electorate's perceptions of capitalism and imperialism are fairly indicative of the JLP's free enterprise and pro-Western ideological tendencies. Although unlike the PNP, the JLP had no hardcover blueprint of its ideological approach to governing, its ideological directions were made reasonably clear by the party's actions and policies once in office.

(iii) Policy Implications

One of the first political actions taken by the new JLP administration in October of 1980, was the expulsion of the Cuban Ambassador, Ulises Estrada. This act eventually led to the complete severing of diplomatic ties with Cuba in October 1981. Much of the JLP's anti-communist campaign had been centered around the Cuban Ambassador's public criticism of the JLP, and its pledge to remove him if elected. Once elected, the JLP continued a strong anti-communist campaign, accusing the Cubans and Russians of communist subversion on the island. This prolonged anti-communist attack, after the complete defeat of the PNP at the polls and its subsequent disassociation from the Jamaican Communist party, began to be viewed as actions designed by the government to court United States favours.¹⁷ This impression of the JLP's anti-communist motive appears feasible, in view of the economic policies of the new government and the means by which it sought to implement them.

Coming to office with a strong anti-communist and pro-American thrust, the JLP immediately set about changing the direction of Jamaica's foreign and domestic policies. This departure from the PNP's anti-imperialist and democratic socialist policies, marked a drastic transition from the JLP's former "pragmatic incrementalist" mode of governing to an "architectonic" approach which would bring about a radical restructuring of the social and economic policies of the country.

The former government's pro-Third World, non-aligned foreign policy was abruptly replaced by the new administration's strong pro-Western "open-door" policy. The domestic policy initiatives of the PNP government, for national ownership of the economy and self-reliance

through import-substitution, quickly gave way to a free enterprise, export driven economic policy which was heavily dependent on foreign aid and investments. Thus, began the second overhaul of the Jamaican economy in eight years, along completely different policy lines.

According to Prime Minister Seaga, foreign policy was closely tied to the government's economic recovery goals in order "to achieve a rational integration of foreign policy objectives and national interests."¹⁸ The main thrust of this policy was to restore and maintain good relations with the United States. Thus, Seaga, who had been elected just five days before the Reagan administration came to office, was the first foreign leader to be received in the White House in 1981. President Reagan's visit to Jamaica one year later was a good indication of Seaga's foreign policy success. Reagan was the first United States President in office to visit the English-speaking Caribbean, since 1934, and despite his speech at a public welcome, in which he called Seaga's election, "A new direction for the Mediterranean,"¹⁹ it was quite clear that the Caribbean was of high interest to the new U.S. administration.

Jamaican-United States foreign policies soon converged on almost every international issue. Regionally, these included Grenada-Cuba relations and support of U.S. Central American policies in Nicaragua and El Salvador.²⁰ According to Stone,²¹ Jamaica became a "surrogate" of the United States in the Caribbean, "promoting and supporting Reagan's militant anti-communist foreign policy, in return for United States economic favours." Indeed, by April 1981, the government had concluded a three-year Extended Fund Facility agreement with the IMF for US\$698 million,²² and large amounts of additional assistance were received in

1981 and subsequent years from other multilateral sources, private banks and friendly Western governments, led by the United States.

From 1981 to 1983, official United States assistance to Jamaica averaged about US\$200 million annually, consisting each year of approximately \$50 million in balance of payments support; \$90 million in credits for U.S. foodstuff; \$30 million in aid and \$40 million in reserve to purchase bauxite from Jamaica for stockpiling. Between 1981 and 1983, the United States bilateral assistance to Jamaica was the second highest per capita after Israel.²³

The JLP government also waged an aggressive campaign to attract foreign investment. A new agency, the Jamaica National Investment Promotion Agency, was established to match foreign investors' interests with potential new projects. In the United States, David Rockefeller, the former Chairman of the Chase Manhattan Bank, presided over a task force of prominent U.S. businessmen to attract new investments to Jamaica. Similar groups were organized in Britain and Canada.

A major outcome of the JLP administration's close ties with the United States, was the momentum generated in support of the Caribbean Basin Initiative, which became operational following Congressional approval in January 1984. This law allows Jamaica and most other countries in the region to benefit from a twelve-year free trade access to the United States market for most of their products. It also provided for economic support funds and tax credits to U.S. corporations to encourage investment in the region.²⁴

In the area of domestic policy, the Seaga government drastically revised a number of important policies established under the PNP government. In place of the previous emphasis on national ownership with a strong

emphasis on state ownership, the JLP sought to promote foreign investment as the major impetus to economic growth. The government also committed itself to a policy of rapid divestment of state-owned enterprises, especially those that had become a burden on the national budget. A Divestment Commission was set up to sell various public enterprises which included a dry dock company, a dairy processing plant, a paper factory, two agricultural enterprises, an airline catering service and the island's second daily newspaper, the Daily News. The National Hotels and Properties Company, which managed a large number of hotels taken over by the previous government, was also instructed to offer the hotels for lease or possible sale.²⁵

Exports became a major priority, replacing the PNP's emphasis on self-reliance and import substitution. The government lifted nearly all of the restrictions placed on the granting of import licences by the former government, in order to facilitate the acquisition of raw materials, supplies and equipment needed for the export trade. In addition, the State Trading Corporation was scrapped and replaced by a new body, the Commodity Trading Company.

The government's ability to secure foreign capital gave a certain stimulus to domestic economic activity. Reports from the Central Bank of Jamaica and the IMF in mid-1981, indicated a significant growth in the construction industry, non-government services, the distributive trades, manufacturing, agriculture and fisheries. Total exports increased by 1 percent in 1981 - the first increase since 1973.²⁶

During 1981 the local investment climate greatly improved, and 244 investment proposals were made by local and foreign interests. Sixty of these, representing a total investment of J\$676 million, came from

foreign investors, and the remainder from local investors totalled J\$433 million.²⁷

(iv) Implications for Development

During the first year of the JLP government, a mood of optimism swept the country. Inflation had declined from 29 percent in 1980 to 6 percent one year later.²⁸ Businessmen expected a quick return to economic prosperity, and the increased flows of capital, credit, loans and imported goods, fed this optimism. The unemployed waited for jobs to be created. Workers looked forward to greater purchasing power, and demanded more pay from employers and the business sectors. Every sector of business (large, medium and small-scale), geared itself for a boom in the Jamaican marketplace.²⁹ Thus wide-ranging expectations were heightened for the immediate fulfilment of the government's election promise of an early economic recovery.

Indeed, throughout the first year of the JLP administration, the economic and social picture seemed bright. Imported food items returned to the store shelves in large quantities, eliminating the acute shortages of the later PNP years. The crime rate fell dramatically; families who had migrated began to return; the emigration of middle class professionals and upper and middle class businessmen virtually stopped, and tourists began to return in large numbers.³⁰ It appeared as if policies for an early economic recovery were working, and all expectations would be fulfilled.

By the end of 1981, however, the JLP's political fortunes began to decline as negative economic trends began to set in. The large inflows of consumer imports created an oversupply, while purchasing power had

increased only slightly. As a result, the rate of sales for many products became sluggish. In addition, the renewed recession in North America and Europe, substantially reduced the anticipated inflow of investments, and only a few thousand jobs were created from the new investment projects which actually started. These could not compensate for the fact that more jobs were being lost than new jobs being created.³¹ High unemployment levels, estimated in the region of 30 to 35 percent in most areas,³² remained virtually unchanged.

Efforts to reduce the increasingly huge budget deficit led to increased taxation and a more efficient tax collection system, and even tighter controls on government spending, particularly in the area of social programs. For example, the public sector relief employment was dropped.

Domestic agriculture was also affected by oversupply, due to excessive production and lower export earnings. Rural consumers were unable to purchase products because of a shortage of cash.³³

Local manufacturers, accustomed to a protected domestic market, were shaken by the prospect of competition from imported goods. According to Stone,³⁴ the shift in emphasis from domestic manufacturing to export production was beyond the depth of most private sector manufacturers, who "built up opposition to the open-economy policy and caused a rapid decline in private sector support of the government." The middle and upper class consumption of imported luxury items grew tremendously. As a result, merchants were outbidding manufacturers for the scarce supply of U.S. dollars. With falling sales, expensive and inadequate foreign exchange and intense competition from imports, "manufacturers felt that their survival was being threatened by JLP policies, and became increasingly

critical of the government."³⁵

While the middle and upper classes displayed new patterns of conspicuous consumption (for example, luxury cars, video sets, color televisions, etc.), the problems of the majority lower classes increased. Many were beset by layoffs in the manufacturing industries; inadequate employment creation for young school leavers, and lack of money. This resulted in the declining sales of small vendors and poor farmers.

The interests of every strata of the society were in some significant way adversely affected by the JLP's domestic policies. Policies which had contained inflation in the housing market and controlled rents under the PNP government, were abandoned under the JLP. The result was a dramatic increase of between 50 and 100 percent in the middle and lower middle class rentals, and complaints of landlord exploitation became widespread.³⁶ By early 1982, optimism about the JLP's success in leading the country to economic recovery began to dissipate, but there was still a cautious hope that things might get better.

By mid-1982, however, the effects of the recession in North America and Europe began to be more harshly felt in the Jamaican economy, as dwindling inflows of capital were insufficient to fulfil the promise of economic recovery. The value of total exports fell by 10 percent in 1982, and remained the same in 1983. The bauxite/alumina industry, which contributes 70 percent to the total value of exports, suffered a fall in production from 12 million tonnes in 1980 to 8.6 million tonnes in 1982, producing a loss in revenue of US\$90 million. By 1983, production had once again fallen to 7.3 million tonnes in spite of a US\$32 million sale to the United States for its strategic stockpile.³⁷

Production in the sugar and banana industry continued to be low.

In 1981 alone, the sugar industry had lost US\$112 million.³⁸ Manufacturing had also failed to grow due to the shortage of foreign exchange to buy raw materials, and the inefficient system of competitive bidding for import licences.³⁹ In addition, foreign exchange earnings were drained away by the high cost of imported oil, which took more than 65 percent of foreign earnings. In 1980 alone, Jamaica paid US\$418 million for oil imports, leaving only US\$274.6 million from its total overseas earnings.⁴⁰

By mid-1983 it became evident that the economic momentum which began in 1981, could not be kept up. In one year, bauxite exports had decreased by 30 percent; net foreign exchange reserves had declined by over 20 percent and the gross external debt had increased by more than 30 percent. The GDP, which had grown by 12 percent in the 1981-82 period, had slowed to 2 percent in the 1982-83 period.⁴¹

The social effects could be seen in increasing crime as a large number of youths entered the ranks of the unemployed. In spite of the government's campaign to impress upon the Jamaican workers the need to make sacrifices in the national interest, islandwide workers strikes swept the country. Strikes began by bauxite workers in 1982, precipitated further strikes by dockworkers, railway workers, water industry workers and electricity and public transport workers.⁴² Inevitably the government was blamed for all of the country's problems.

By early 1983 the majority of people had become impatient with the JLP government, and were beginning to lose hope that any real improvements in the quality of life would be achieved under a JLP administration. The fact that the inflation rate, which had fallen to 4.7 percent in 1981, had grown to 18.5 percent by 1983, did not encourage further hopes.⁴³ In

a sudden attempt to rescue its political future, the JLP exercised its constitutional prerogative under the Westminster system, and called a national election after only three years in office.

(v) The 1983 Elections

The two major issues which dominated public debate between 1982 and 1983 were the state of the economy and party ideologies.⁴⁴ By mid-1982, the faltering economy had rapidly eroded JLP support, and as faith in its promised economic recovery declined, memories of the Manley period became more positive. In particular, there was a growing tendency to associate the PNP's policies with the more positive aspects of government, such as favouring the interests of the poor and promoting high levels of public spending. In addition, the anti-communist issue had long lost its appeal, as economic issues grew more and more dominant in the public mind. By October 1982, Stone's polls⁴⁵ indicated that the JLP's popular support was significantly reduced to 38 percent, a margin of 5 percent below the PNP. This trend continued except for one period between October and early November 1983.

During this period, the events surrounding the invasion of Grenada temporarily restored the salience of the anti-communist issue by re-opening fears about PNP-Cuba ties. Developments in Grenada brought back into focus doubts about Michael Manley, which had been formed in the late 1970's when many voters felt he had lost control of the party to radical pro-Marxists. In view of the Grenadian situation, many felt that had the PNP won the 1980 election, what happened in Grenada might have taken place in Jamaica. Stone's research⁴⁶ revealed that the popularly held view was that Manley might have been similarly encircled by the leftist radical

elements (with foreign communist support) and could have become a "casualty" of a far-left communist power-play in much the same manner that the Grenadian leader, Maurice Bishop had fallen victim. Bishop had been isolated within his party, the New Jewel Movement, by a faction led by Deputy Party Leader Bernard Coard, which attacked Bishop for being too middle class and not sufficiently Leninist.

In an effort to reflect a more moderate image, by 1983 the PNP had succeeded in eliminating the more radical members of the party. In addition, the party's General Secretary, D.K. Duncan, who had led the more radical faction, had resigned in March 1983.⁴⁷ In spite of the projection of a more moderate PNP image, however, Michael Manley continued to support Cuba throughout the Grenadian crisis, while strongly criticizing the Jamaican government's role in the joint military action as pro-imperialist and interventionist. The consequence was a substantial 5 percent increase in JLP popular support above the PNP during this period.⁴⁸ With the first favourable change in public support since mid-1982, the JLP began to reassess its political options.

The economic problems facing the country were soon to be compounded by the government's failure of the IMF test in September of 1983. By November, a new IMF agreement was announced⁴⁹ which would take effect in April 1984. The new agreement involved a massive 43 percent devaluation of the Jamaican dollar, and a significant increase in the cost of living over and above the 18.5 percent increase in 1983 alone. In view of the impending economic consequences, and the party's current popularity over the Grenadian issue, Seaga opted to call a "snap" election.⁵⁰

Ironically, it was the PNP which provided the government with the golden opportunity to call an early election. After the new devaluation

was announced in November, the PNP called for Seaga's resignation from his portfolio as Finance Minister. Seaga then seized the opportunity to interpret this as a question of confidence, and immediately called the election to settle the issue.⁵¹

The JLP's reasoning was fairly clear. If returned to office, the government would be given more time for its economic policies to bear fruit. This hope largely rested on prospects for an early upturn in the United States economy. Hence, the election was announced on Friday, 25 November; nomination day for Tuesday, 29 November, and election day for 15 December, 1983.⁵²

The PNP did not expect an election, and was not prepared for one. Both parties had agreed not to hold an election until a new voters' list was prepared. It was expected to be ready by Spring, 1984 and would have added more than 100,000 new voters who had reached eighteen years of age between 1980 and 1983. These were likely to favour the PNP.⁵³

The PNP, still divided at the time, was not sufficiently prepared to fight an election. Like the JLP, it also weighed its options, and decided to boycott the 1983 elections. In the PNP's reasoning, a boycott over the voter registration issue was likely to create a political controversy, which, along with the further anticipated economic hardships, might once again swing public opinion against the government, thus forcing it to call elections at a later date.

The PNP's thinking was only partially correct. Popular opinion did swing in its favour. However, the JLP carried out the elections as planned and stubbornly refused to call another until the new term expired.

According to polls taken just prior to the elections,⁵⁴ 59 percent of the public disagreed with the JLP's decision to call snap elections on

the old voters' list, and 70 percent favoured the PNP's view that a new election should be called in 1984, when the new voters list was ready.

The outcome of the elections was unprecedented in Jamaican history. Neither party had ever refused to contest general elections, and no Jamaican parliament had ever been without an official opposition. All sixty seats of the new parliament - fifty-four of which were uncontested - went to the JLP, with the remaining six easily won from independent candidates. Not surprisingly, the turnout at the polls was extremely low.

Both parties are sensitive to the extreme importance Jamaicans place on the maintenance of a strong two-party democratic system; therefore both took immediate measures to assure the public of their own faith in the system. The day after nomination day, the PNP announced a "People's Forum," which would serve as a forum for the expression of opposition opinion on government policies and major pieces of legislation. The party also announced the formation of a "Shadow Cabinet," consisting of spokespersons in fifteen areas of government. Sixty constituency representatives were also named shortly after the elections.⁵⁵

The JLP also planned a number of steps to help compensate for the lack of parliamentary opposition, and announced at a mass meeting that "people-based" organizations would be established to provide popular representation. Public Utilities Minister, Pearnol Charles, must have intended much the same thing when he announced at a public gathering that "under the new government, the people will be the opposition."⁵⁶

Ironically, the Jamaican public learned only after the election of the one-party government, that the new voters' list would have been extremely favourable to the PNP. Stone's survey⁵⁷ conducted after nomination day, indicated that with the inclusion of the new voters, only

45 percent of the popular vote would have gone to the JLP, while 55 percent would have voted PNP. This led to his conclusion that,

As a result of the election boycott, the country is faced with a potential situation where the majority party is not represented in parliament, and the minority party represents the entire country.

With a renewed term of office, the JLP government continued its policy goals for economic recovery, but its prospects for achieving success within the mandated five year term of office appeared bleak in 1984. The massive inflows of foreign capital into the economy had done little to improve the standard of living for the majority of Jamaicans. Unemployment maintained the same high levels of the previous three years, and between 1982-1984, real per capita income remained essentially the same at approximately US\$1,200.⁵⁸ Inflation, which had been reduced to 4.7 percent in 1981, climbed to 20 percent in the first six months of 1984, and by 1985 the Jamaican dollar had devalued to US\$0.25 from US\$0.56 in 1980.⁵⁹ The GDP, had appreciated by 2 percent in the 1982-1983 period, but by that time the per capita foreign debt had already exceeded US\$1,000.⁶⁰

Supporters of the PNP's policies have suggested that the JLP's policies failed because of the neo-colonial and capitalist policy direction.⁶¹ Others have criticized the PNP for its democratic socialist policies, which they feel had retarded the capacity of the Jamaican economy for sustained recovery in the 1970's.⁶² The evidence, however, leads to the conclusion that neither of the two governments have excelled in the implementation of their policies and the achievement of their goals.

(vi) General Observations

After eight years of the PNP's democratic socialism and three years of the JLP's "free enterprise" capitalism, the Jamaican economy failed to respond to either ideological prescriptions.

The PNP's ideological direction led to a foreign policy which reflected a genuine search for a way to break with United States neocolonialism. The result was an extremely damaging response by the United States, which viewed that policy as anti-American and hostile to United States economic and political interests.

The PNP's domestic policy was also consistent with its ideological direction. It sought to develop a more just society in which equal opportunity for all could be realized through popular political participation and a redistribution of wealth. The result was a highly polarized society in which the wealthier classes fought to protect their interests, while the poor looked to the government to fulfil its promise of wealth redistribution. The PNP government did make several bold attempts to carry out its domestic reforms, but to little avail. Though strong on ideological pronouncements, the government proved weak in the area of policy implementation.

The redistributive projects paid out millions of dollars for essentially non-productive work. In addition, there were few complete plans or strategies guiding the government's policy initiatives for productive enterprises, other than the take-over of bankrupt private enterprises to maintain employment. These in turn required large subsidies and supplies of foreign exchange to stay afloat. In consequence, no resources were left to plan or develop new public enterprises, which might have promoted the goal of national self-reliance through the

production of basic needs. Of the efforts made, for example, in housing, state farms and community services, most failed because of poor management and labour indiscipline, resulting in cost inefficiency and waste of public resources.

Finally, the available finance, technical assistance and management capability were not sufficient to render the PNP's social reform policies a viable engine of growth and economic recovery.⁶³

The JLP's ideology was based on a capitalist mode of development, which was reflected in its foreign and domestic policies. Unlike the PNP's non-aligned foreign policy, the JLP's pro-American policy was heartily received by the United States and its Western allies. This was attested to by the large inflows of aid and investment capital which Jamaica received immediately after the JLP government took office in 1980. Failure of the JLP's foreign policy must, however, be linked in large measure to its heavy dependence on external aid and trade, both of which are sensitive to the inherent uncertainty of external forces, which are beyond the government's control. Invariably, a small economy such as Jamaica's, which relies heavily on the ebb and flow of the international monetary system, is certain to bear the greater burden of world inflation and economic recession. This was evident in mid-1982, when the global recession reduced anticipated foreign investments to a trickle, while increasing the necessity to borrow more money from institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF, resulting in increased domestic hardships and even greater foreign capital debt dependency.

The main thrust of the JLP's domestic policy was to encourage private sector initiatives in order to develop a competitive, export oriented economy. This policy failed to achieve the anticipated

result, as incentives to both private business and local labour were noticeably lacking. One of the major disincentives for the private sector was excessive taxation levels. For example, a single person earning US\$20,000 in 1983, paid US\$9,400 in taxes.⁶⁴ Thus,

Caught in the grip of a domestic market depressed by massive devaluations, high interest rates, tight monetary policies and scarce foreign exchange, the private sector was burdened with over J\$100 million in new taxes in 1984 alone, at a time when many businesses were uncertain of how long they could continue to operate.⁶⁵

Hence, the JLP government's credibility as a promoter of private investment expansion was very badly damaged. It would be unfair to claim, however, that the government was solely responsible for the private sector's unwillingness to participate wholeheartedly in its economic strategy. The policy approaches of both governments assumed there was a dynamic private sector in place, eager to grasp opportunities to expand the productive base of the economy. Unfortunately, the political risk and uncertainty combined with high consumption and low investing tendencies of the Jamaican business classes, weakened the entrepreneurial dynamism necessary to turn the private sector into a force able to pull the economy out of the crisis of the 1970's and 1980's.⁶⁶ Business profits tended to be consumed in expensive and imported luxury goods, therefore, the economy has had to depend more heavily on foreign rather than domestic savings. Also, incomes, profits and hard currency are often exported as a hedge against political uncertainty. As a consequence, the large inflows of financial aid and loans, into the Jamaican economy, has had the effect of increasing the consumption of luxury goods, rather than promoting private investment and employment.

The implications are that neither the JLP's free enterprise, nor

the PNP's democratic socialist policies are likely to create any real progress towards economic recovery, unless they can fashion the Jamaican private sector into a force strong enough to meet the challenge. This would require not only massive incentives, but also a high level of confidence in the policy-making and policy implementation capabilities of the political leaders.

On a broader level, political leaders need to promote a sense of national unity. If the country is to progress towards positive development, leaders must establish a broadly based consensus on economic and social policy. Only this will provide the kind of stability and policy continuity essential to the unavoidably slow and difficult path to national development. Sweeping ideological solutions from either of the two parties are unlikely to have any relevance in circumstances that require economic rather than political solutions. Unfortunately, the diverse ideological and consequent policy differences between the two contending parties offer little hope of consensus and national unity at the present time.

From all indications, the present government is likely to be put out of office if substantial economic and social benefits are not forthcoming before the next election. The effects of the prolonged period of high unemployment; the steady decline in living standards since early 1970, and the failure of the political leadership to deal with basic economic and social problems, have caused a growing lack of faith in the leadership of both parties. As the JLP-PNP two-party tradition is so entrenched in Jamaica, it is unrealistic to hope that in the foreseeable future, a third party will emerge with the kind of leadership needed. It is equally unlikely that either Michael Manley or Edward Seaga will

resign from their party leadership before the next elections. Hence, the electorate is faced with the grim prospect of having to choose between two extreme policy directions, both of which have provided little in the way of national development, and more specifically, material and social improvement for the majority.

It is also unlikely that either party will change its policy direction. Just as Seaga has repeated the scenario of the late 1960's by holding to the original JLP policies of the 1950's and 1960's, if the PNP is returned to office, it is possible that its policies and their consequences will be equally predictable. Whether or not a more moderate PNP image will survive the initial "vote winning" stage, and result in more positive strategies for national development, can only be determined if or when the party is re-elected.

One positive aspect arising out of the past decade and a half of political extremism, has been a more informed electorate who are less likely to vote according to party loyalties and more according to basic issues. The past fifteen years has been an education for the Jamaican electorate, politically. They have heard the ideological rhetoric and have experienced the policy results. Both parties are now fully aware that they can no longer rely on a solid bloc of traditional party loyalists to get them elected. In future, parties must perform well in government if they are to remain in power.

Chapter IV

References

- 1 See Carl Stone's The Political Opinions of the Jamaican People: 1976-81, Kingston, Jamaica: Blackett Publishers, 1982, p. 12. Carl Stone is a Professor of Political Sociology at the University of the West Indies, and a highly respected author and journalist. He is also Jamaica's leading public opinion analyst. Stone introduced the system of public opinion polling to Jamaica in 1974, and was extremely accurate in his prediction of the actual vote results in the 1976 and 1980 elections. His polls are well referenced throughout this thesis as they provide valuable information on the mood of the country and the public reactions to both parties' ideologies and policies. The polls also help to explain the level of rationale which governs voting behavior. His research methodology is described in detail in the introduction to his book, Democracy and Clientelism in Jamaica, New Jersey: Transaction Books, 1980.
- 2 John D. Forbes, Jamaica: Managing Political and Economic Change, Washington: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1985, pp. 30-35.
- 3 Anita M. Waters, Race, Class and Political Symbols, New Brunswick: USA: Transaction Books, 1985, p. 199. Over 750 persons were reported killed, including one electoral candidate between the February announcement of the election and the October election itself.
- 4 See Andrew Kopkind's "Trouble in Paradise," Columbia Journalism Review, March 1980, pp. 41-50. This is an excellent article on the propaganda machinery at work during the 1980 elections.
- 5 The statements referred to in this passage were taken from numerous reports in Jamaican newspapers of speeches and party propaganda literature, between the election period of 1979-1980. The paper most referenced was the Daily Gleaner and the Weekly Gleaner, then the Daily News. The Daily and Weekly Gleaners has a JLP bias, but provided more extensive coverage of both party campaigns, while the Daily News, (now defunct), projected a uniformly PNP bias and was not as widely circulated.
- 6 Prime Minister Michael Manely had gained a considerable reputation abroad for leadership in international organizations such as the NIEO, and the Non-aligned Movement and the International Bauxite Association. However, these successful foreign ventures had lost their meaning in the face of the domestic economic crisis.
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- 9 Ibid. p. 223.
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Chapter IV

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- 17 Trevor Munroe, "Jamaica in Turmoil," Marxism Today, Vol. 25, No. 5, 1981, pp. 23-26.
- 18 Edward Seaga, "Report to the Parliament on the Administration's Third Year in Office," Jamaica Information Service, November 29, 1983, p. 3.
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CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The findings of this study contradict the popular notion that a stable, well-institutionalized democratic system of competitive politics is a pre-condition for national development in the Third World. Using Jamaica as one example of a developing country which is generally recognized as possessing a well functioning system of democratic politics, it was possible to demonstrate that the establishment of such a system is not, in itself, a sure path for national development. It further showed that the system could, to a large extent, contribute to the growth of negative development patterns. The analysis in Chapter one, of certain characteristics of political parties in a democratic political system provided some extremely useful insights into the nature of this contradiction. They therefore provide a good basis for a final assessment of the Jamaican political parties with implications for national development.

It is evident from the characteristics of the Jamaican political system, that a great deal depends on the two main principles which govern competitive electoral politics - that parties will alternate in government, and that governing is only for a limited period of time. In a developing society such as Jamaica, the demand for essential material needs greatly exceeds the resource capabilities of the country. Ideologies and policies which inform a party's approach to governing therefore have considerable influence on the results achieved during the limited term of a government,

as well as on the party's future in government.

The two approaches to governing - "architectonic" and "pragmatic," have been adopted by both Jamaican political parties at one time or another. Between 1950 and 1972, the policies of both parties converged on the pragmatic approach to national development. Remaining within the status quo, they sought to apply policies on a "gradual, incremental basis, on non-contentious grounds." This approach proved most valuable, politically, in that it provided a unifying force at a critical stage of post-independence political development, by allowing the country to gradually institutionalize a stable political system. In an economic sense, however, the results were both positive and negative. Thus, the economy grew and diversified and social programs were gradually introduced. However, the kinds of economic policies which the governments adopted produced an imbalance between massive economic growth and economic and social development.

Economic growth produced high expectations from all classes for more immediate social and material reward than a gradual incrementalist approach could accommodate. The result was an extreme imbalance in the distribution of wealth between the vast majority of poor and the small affluent minority. The difficulties inherent in the "pragmatic" incrementalist approach to government in a developing country such as Jamaica, became evident in the widespread social and political unrest which pervaded the society by the late 1960's. This in turn resulted in the adoption of a new "architectonic" approach to governing by the People's National Party, which sought to build a new social reality based on strong ideological notions of social equality. The Jamaica Labour Party's reactionary response to this approach precipitated

its own transition from a pragmatic to a more radically ideological approach to its former policies. Since 1972, this change produced two dramatically opposing party policies on "highly contentious grounds."

The alternations of governments since that time has resulted in the dismantling and restructuring of social and economic policies when each party took office. Consequently, serious disruption in the planning and implementation of long-term policies, necessary to the achievement of lasting development goals have resulted.

The ideological tendencies of both parties have also created a negative balance between "normative desires" and "objective reality." Both promised to create better conditions for the Jamaican people in the shortest possible time. Michael Manley's PNP heightened popular expectations for greater social justice and equality and sought to bring these about through greater popular political participation, wider public control of the national resources, and a redistribution of wealth. Edward Seaga's JLP pledged economic recovery in three years, with increased benefits for all members of the society through a policy of free enterprise economics which was heavily dependent on external resources. Both policies, designed to fit the desires of the voting majority, were burdened with a preponderance of ideological goals which obscured the objective realities of limited material and human resources, and unreliable internal and external factors. These crucial factors ultimately determined the outcome of policy initiatives.

Neither party made any serious attempts to "create a better appreciation in the minds of the electorate of what was realistically possible." In order to be elected, parties generally appeal to the popular desires of voters, rather than articulate the real difficulties

that the country face and the sacrifices which have to be made to address them. This has proven to be "one of the major problems inherent in a highly competitive political system."

Since the mid-1970's, the Jamaican electorate has tended to discard blind partisan loyalties and the blanket acceptance of policies and ideological packaging offered by their favoured party. Increasingly they have sought to base judgements of party policies and ideologies on concrete issues. A heightened awareness of political, social and economic issues have resulted in the tendency to base political choice on their individual evaluations of issues. Thus, the traditional reliance of parties on partisan loyalties for a substantial number of votes have been eroded. Now more than ever before, governments are being pressured to perform well and produce tangible results if they hope to be re-elected.

The point raised in the analysis regarding political parties and "governing in the public interest in a society factionalized by class" is especially relevant to the Jamaican condition. As this study has shown, a rigid class bias emerged out of the PNP's policies of democratic socialism, which pitted the poorer majority against the wealthier classes. The JLP, in its policies, found common cause with the more affluent classes as a result of its emphasis on the expansion of business enterprises as the major instrument for domestic economic recovery. However, neither party was able to reconcile the "distribution problems" created by class divisions.

The PNP alienated the wealthier classes, which would have been a primary source of economic expansion, as well as managerial, professional and technical skills needed to effectively meet its goals for

wealth redistribution and social readjustment. Likewise, the JLP was unable to sustain its business-oriented domestic policy goals, because of its failure to successfully implement the structural changes in the society necessary for their achievement. In addition, the party managed to distance the poorer majority by concentrating on economic policies which demanded unbearable short-term sacrifices. Hence, both parties managed to "distance the public interest goals" by inadequately identifying and/or solving problems affecting all levels of the society. Yet, while the policies of the two parties tended to create class polarization in the society, all classes eventually found common cause in their mutual dissatisfaction with both party governments.

The points made regarding policy determination and electoral expediency have been demonstrated in this study. While it was desirable for parties to encourage a "flexible and subtle relationship between electoral popularity and policy," balancing these proved extremely difficult in circumstances where success at the polls depends on the party's response to popular policies which demanded almost immediate results. A major pre-condition for the attainment of balanced policies is the development of a broadly-based consensus on national goals, which in turn requires long-term adjustments, personal sacrifices and far-sightedness on the part of the electorate (and of course the political leaders.) However, the creation of a national consensus on long-term development goals is virtually unattainable in a society with a highly polarized two-party system such as exists in Jamaica today. In these circumstances, the electorate is caught up in a cycle of extreme policy divisiveness, where ridding the country of a government that is performing poorly - rather than electing a party which offers more rational choices -

becomes the primary objective of voting.

While it is true that strong competition between the two parties and their alternation in power constitute one of Jamaica's principal political strengths, these factors are also a major source of weakness. The primary rationale for the existence of a strong political system should be to promote national unity, confidence, consensus on national goals and other essential building blocks for national development. Where these are sacrificed to extreme political polarization, frequent ideological and policy swings, class divisions and excessive distrust among leaders, the strength of the system becomes a major stumbling block to development.

Although the ideologies and policies of both parties have retarded the development process in a number of aspects, it would be unfair to suggest that the political parties were primarily motivated by a zealous quest for self-indulgent power. Both took ideological and policy approaches which they assumed to be in the best interest of the nation. Weaknesses arose from the inability to implement policies in a reasonable and rational manner. Therefore, while it is possible to blame structural domestic problems and external forces for the lack of success in policy implementation, the parties must take the bulk of responsibility for creating an extreme imbalance between what is normatively desirable and what is rationally obtainable. Both have overlooked the fact that in a system of competitive parliamentary democracy, the engineering of basic changes involves a prolonged process of interest bargaining, accommodation and the reconciliation of conflicting interests.

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