TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND THE WEST INDIES FEDERATION: CONTRADICTORY ATTITUDES EXAMINED

by

EDRICK LAMBERT WEEKS-SEALY
B.A., The University of British Columbia

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We accept this thesis as conforming to the required standard

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Department of History

The University of British Columbia, Vancouver 8, Canada

Date April, 1964.
ABSTRACT

The federation of the British West Indian colonies, which was long considered desirable by colonial officials for reasons of economical and efficient administration, was accomplished by an agreement reached on February 23, 1956. The West Indies Federation thus established, consisted of the islands of Antigua, Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts (Christopher)-Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, and Trinidad and Tobago, and had a total area of eight thousand square miles scattered in a wide expanse of ocean. In this federation, Trinidad and Tobago by virtue of its economic development was expected to play an important part. The purpose of this study is to examine the attitude of Trinidad and Tobago to the idea of federation, and its relationship to the federation itself.

In the course of preparation for this study, the writer spent three months in Trinidad collecting information at the Library of the Legislative Council, a library operated primarily for the benefit of legislators; the West Indies Reference Library, operated by the Information Service of the federal government; The West Indies Regional Library, a branch of the Trinidad Public Library; and the offices of the Trinidad Guardian. Valuable information was also acquired from the
Office of the Premier and from the Trinidad Chamber of Commerce.
The writer's visit to Trinidad coincided with a period of intense activity among members of the federal and Trinidad governments as a result of the collapse of the federation. This situation rendered it extremely difficult to secure interviews from persons serving in either of these governments. However, Mr. Albert Gomes, a member of the federal parliament, who while serving as a Trinidad legislator had played an important part in the establishment of the federation, provided the writer with very valuable information in the course of two interviews he very kindly gave.

For over three centuries the project of unifying Britain's West Indian possessions defied the best efforts of colonial administrators who believed that such an arrangement would make the government of the colonies more efficient. The success achieved in the establishment of the West Indies Federation was due to a great degree to the activity of certain West Indians who, early in the twentieth century, envisaged federation as a means by which West Indian nationhood could be achieved. In 1910, Meikle, a Jamaican, advocated a unification of the British West Indian possessions as a means of forestalling American imperialistic ambitions in the area, and at the close of the First World War, Marryshow, of Grenada, and Cipriani of Trinidad, advocated federation as a means by which the West Indian territories could aspire to the position achieved by
the older dominions. Marryshow and Cipriani became the leaders of a movement whose aim was expressed by the slogan, "No federation without self-government and no self-government without dominion status."

Those West Indians who were interested in federation viewed it primarily as a basis for demanding self government for the Colonial Office. The inadequacies of such a concept were amply demonstrated at the close of the Second World War, when the Colonial Office, aware of the growing interest in federation in the West Indies, decided to capitalize on it to implement its programme for constitutional changes in the area. This decision deprived the West Indies federal movement of its raison d'être. The movement succeeded in disseminating the idea of federation, but it accomplished very little else, and the first constitutional changes in the region were introduced independently of federation.

In the changed circumstances of the postwar world, there was need to re-define the goals of federation. The founder of the West Indies Federation failed to do this clearly and proceeded on the basis that federation was indispensable to the achievement of West Indian nationhood, but their efforts were largely self-defeating for they spent almost ten years in discussions before finally agreeing to establish the federation, and the proposals they formulated for a federal constitution were so conservative that during the time it survived the
federation made no contribution to the constitutional development of such territories as Barbados, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago. What is even more unfortunate, the existence of the federation appeared to restrict certain territories in the exercise of the constitutional rights they had acquired independently of it.

The defects of the federal constitution were influenced to some extent by the political situation in Trinidad and Tobago, where until the rise of the People's National Movement to power in September, 1956, the government of the country was not directly associated with any political party. In this situation the country was controlled by a conservative coalition consisting of a minority of elected members, nominated members, and government officials who were members of the Legislative Council. The rise of the People's National Movement terminated the influence of the conservative element in Trinidad's politics, and gave the cause of federation the support of a well organized political party. Moreover, Dr. Williams, the Chief Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, won increased support for federation throughout the West Indies by advancing the view that the chief goal of West Indies Federation should be to promote the economic development of the region.

In Trinidad and Tobago, enthusiasm for federation was greatly stimulated by the decision by West Indian leaders in January 1957, to place the federal capital in Trinidad. This enthusiasm, which reached its zenith at the inauguration of the federal parliament, on April 22, 1958, began to diminish
shortly after the federal government began to function. The constitutional restrictions under which the federal government functioned prevented it from playing any important role in West Indian affairs. Meantime, the federation had been conducting negotiations with the British and American governments to secure the release of a site which the American government occupied as a naval base under the terms of a wartime lease, but which the federation required as a site for its capital. In June, 1958, there arose sharp differences of opinion between the federal and Trinidad governments on the methods to be employed in negotiations with the United States. The tensions generated in this situation became increasingly acute before the matter was finally settled in February 1961.

The strained relations between the federal and Trinidad governments developed at a time when plans were being made to revise the Federal Constitution. The Trinidad government, in harmony with the view that the federation should play an important role in the economic development of the region, proposed a form of federation in which the authority of the federal government would be greatly increased. This concept of federation conflicted sharply with that proposed by Jamaica, where anti-federation sentiment was increasing, and where the alarm created by the federal Prime Minister's reference to retroactive taxation created the belief that Jamaica's interests could only be adequately protected by a reduction in the power enjoyed by the federal government. At an intergovernmental
conference which met in Port-of-Spain in September 1959, the Jamaican delegation adopted so inflexible a position that no progress was made, and the conference was only rescued from complete collapse by a decision to refer disputed matters to select committees pending a resumption of the conference. An understanding reached between the premiers of Jamaica and Trinidad facilitated the acceptance of the Jamaican position by the intergovernmental conference when it resumed in May, 1961. The Jamaican demands which meantime had become more intense, were embodied in a new federal constitution drawn up in London in June, 1961.

The success achieved by the Jamaica government in its proposals for the federal constitution did not make federation more acceptable to the people of Jamaica. In a referendum held on September 16, 1961, a majority of them voted that Jamaica should be taken out of the federation. On January 16, 1962, after a few months of suspense, the General Council of the People's National Movement which had been victorious in general elections held on December 4, 1961, recommended that Trinidad take no part in a truncated federation of the East Caribbean. The doom of the federation was sealed.

A study of the factors leading up to the establishment of the West Indies Federation, and later to the experiences of the federation itself, leads to the conclusion that in Trinidad interest in federation was influenced by her internal political situation, the conduct of the federal government, and the
attitude of the Jamaicans. The emergence of the People's National Movement in Trinidad greatly stimulated interest in federation. This enthusiasm continued until sharp differences of opinion developed between the federal and Trinidad governments, and never improved thereafter. The inflexible attitude adopted by Jamaica prevented the acceptance of the Trinidad proposal to increase the authority of the federal government, and give the federation an important role in West Indian affairs. This made the federation an unnecessary burden on the West Indies which was removed first by the adverse vote in the Jamaica referendum, and later by Trinidad's decision to withdraw also. At the same time, Trinidad was experiencing unprecedented prosperity, and independence outside of the federation seemed quite attractive. A few months after the dissolution of the federation, Trinidad achieved independence.
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>Trinidad and Tobago on the Eve of Federation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>The Background of the West Indies Federation</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Progress Towards Federation</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Launching Into a New Era</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>The Federal Government and Its Problems</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Difficulties with Trinidad over External Affairs</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>The Failure of the Federal Experiment</td>
<td>288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td></td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>Primary Sources, Bibliographies, and Secondary Sources (periodical articles and newspapers)</td>
<td>357</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO ON THE EVE OF FEDERATION

The union of Trinidad and Tobago into a single administrative unit was effected in 1889, and is remarkable among the West Indian territories for the success it has achieved. The history of the two islands prior to unification was a study in the most striking contrasts, as evidenced by the extent to which Tobago was involved in the contests between the maritime powers during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, while Trinidad, a much larger island lying only twenty miles away, remained almost completely neglected.

It is generally believed that Columbus discovered Tobago in 1498 at the same time that he discovered Trinidad, but one writer has recently doubted that Columbus ever saw Tobago. However, although Europeans occasionally visited the island during the sixteenth century, no colonization was attempted until the Dutch established a settlement there in 1626. Thereafter, the British, French, Dutch and Spanish began a keen contest for Tobago which was to continue for two centuries. In the latter stages the chief contestants were the British and the French. Around the middle of the eighteenth century Tobago experienced fewer changes in government than before, and after the British acquired possession in 1763, the economic development of the island proceeded rapidly under
the stability which resulted. The sugar cane had been introduced to Tobago in 1627 and figured prominently in the economic development which followed. The acreage under cultivation increased from 4,000 acres in 1763 to 29,000 in 1767, when 5,000 tons of sugar was produced. Cotton also formed an important crop. The French recaptured Tobago in 1781 and there was a slight dislocation of the economy while trade was being re-routed toward France. Tobago became a British possession again in 1793, returned to French possession from 1801 to 1803, and its cession to Britain was finally confirmed in 1814.

Unfortunately, the period of political stability which followed did not lead to an era of uninterrupted prosperity. First came the abolition of slavery in 1833, and the inevitable dislocation of an economy based on slave labour. In 1846, just as Tobago showed signs of economic recovery, she was handicapped by the end of preferential treatment for sugar in the British market. The following year a severe hurricane destroyed the crop and caused widespread disaster. These successive reverses precipitated the decline which led to the incorporation of the island with Trinidad in 1889.

Union with Trinidad was the last in a number of constitutional changes which Tobago experienced during British rule. Unquestionably, the zenith of Tobago's constitutional development was reached during the period from 1793 to 1833, when, with the exception of the French interlude (1801-1803), the island had a constitution providing for a Governor-General and a
bicameral legislature. Thereafter, economic decline was accompanied by a corresponding loss of constitutional status, culminating in the establishment of Crown colony rule in 1876, and final incorporation as a ward of Trinidad.

While Tobago passed rapidly back and forth from the control of one maritime power to the other, Trinidad — a very much larger island — lay neglected and virtually undisturbed in Spanish possession from its discovery in 1498 until 1797. From time to time English seamen made a few sporadic raids such as the visit made by Sir Walter Raleigh in 1592, when he attacked and destroyed the capital at St. Joseph and, sailing southward, patched his ships with asphalt from the pitch lake at La Brea. But by and large, for almost three hundred years, Trinidad lay neglected and unmolested under Spanish rule. In 1770 it had a population of 2000, of whom less than two hundred were Spaniards, the others being aborigines.

In 1777 an event took place which marked the beginning of economic development for Trinidad. Philip Roume de St. Laurent, a Frenchman from the neighbouring island of Grenada, visited Trinidad and was so impressed by the fertility of the soil and the opportunities for development that he decided to establish there a home for Frenchmen from the other West Indian islands. In 1783 he obtained liberal incentives in land and trading privileges for persons professing the Catholic faith to settle in Trinidad. Immediately, Frenchmen accompanied by their slaves began leaving the neighbouring islands in large numbers, fleeing from many hardships including hurricanes and poor crops caused by pests and soil exhaustion. One very
important cause of their flight was the fact that in 1763 their former homelands, Grenada, St. Vincent, and St. Lucia, had fallen under British control. As a result of this large influx of population, it was said that as early as 1786, Trinidad was a French colony in all but name. In 1789 there was a further influx of French settlers from Martinique and Guadeloupe and especially from far off Santo Domingo, where slave uprisings accompanied the unsettled conditions which followed the outbreak of the French Revolution. This rapid increase in population gave tremendous impetus to economic development and by 1797 there were a large number of estates producing sugar, besides others producing large quantities of cocoa, coffee and cotton.

The economic development of Trinidad which had begun under the impact of French immigration from the neighbouring islands continued without interruption after the British acquired possession of the island from Spain in 1797 during the war of the French Revolution. In February of that year, a British expedition under Sir Ralph Abercromby was sent to Trinidad. The Spanish admiral, finding his small fleet of four ships hopelessly outnumbered, set fire to them. Abercromby landed his forces without opposition and Jose Maria Chacon, the Spanish Governor, surrendered without a fight. Britain acquired control of her richest West Indian possession without incident and without bloodshed, and was confirmed in possession of it by the Treaty of Amiens in 1802.
As a result of centuries of neglect under Spanish rule, Trinidad offered considerable opportunity for acquiring wealth at a time when the soil of the other islands was approaching exhaustion and required considerable labour to be made productive. Therefore, when British possession of Trinidad was confirmed in 1802, there followed the immigration of a large number of English settlers from the older islands. These settlers promptly submitted to the King a petition praying that the island be accorded "the blessings of a British Constitution." This request was refused. Instead, the British government declared that the complex nature of the white population in which the French and Spanish outnumbered the English, and the presence of an even larger number of people of mixed race, rendered it expedient to establish Crown Colony government in the island. Another reason for the decision to make Trinidad a Crown Colony was the British government's desire to introduce ameliorative legislation for the regulation of slavery. The abolition of slavery in 1833 made the introduction of the elective system still more difficult. In the first place it involved the enfranchisement of the ex-slaves. In the second place it was followed by the introduction of large numbers of Chinese, East Indians and Portuguese, in the form of indentured labour for the sugar cane estates. With the passing of time the population tended to become more complex and heterogeneous, and although an influential section of the community agitated for constitutional change from time to time, Crown Colony rule remained firmly established in Trinidad. It might be mentioned also that the difficulties which the older West Indian colonies
with representative institutions were having in dealing with the social and economic problems created by the abolition of slavery, further confirmed the British government in its decision to keep Trinidad a Crown Colony.

During more than one hundred years of pure Crown Colony government in Trinidad there was a single change when in 1831 a Legislative Council comprising government officials and prominent citizens nominated by the Governor was appointed to act in an advisory capacity. It will be remembered that in 1889 Tobago became a ward of Trinidad, thus forming the colony of Trinidad and Tobago. The first change in the constitutional status of the colony was achieved in 1925 as a result of a working class movement led by Captain A. A. Cipriani, a local white of Corsican descent who had served overseas with the British West Indies Regiment during the First World War. In the service he acquired a reputation for his interest in the men who served with him, and when he returned to Trinidad he was offered the leadership of the Trinidad Workingman's Association which had been organized some time before. He later organized the Legislative Reform Association through which he conducted campaigns throughout Trinidad, demanding constitutional reforms and advocating the establishment of a federation of the West Indian territories.

As a result of the campaign conducted by Cipriani, the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Honourable E. F. L. Wood (later Lord Halifax) was commissioned to visit the West Indies and British Guiana to investigate political
and other problems of the area. In Trinidad, Wood found that
the principal advocates of reform were people of the middle
and lower classes led by Cipriani. The Chamber of Commerce
and the Agricultural Society, organizations representing the
leaders of business and industry, opposed any change. They
contended that no constitutional reform was necessary because
the colony had been prospering under the existing system, and
suggested further that the demand for a new constitution had
been inspired by agencies outside of Trinidad. This was an
interesting development, for these groups led the movement for
representative government during the nineteenth century.10
Opposition to change was also expressed by the East Indians,
although they were divided on the issue. A deputation of East
Indians claiming to be representative of the East Indian com-
menity, advocated the retention of the existing system, since
under it East Indian interests had been represented by nomina-
tion. However, the East Indian National Congress favoured
constitutional change but advocated communal representation.11
Thus, in 1921 the Wood Commission encountered a situation which
was to become characteristic of politics in Trinidad and
Tobago: a conservative upper class generally opposed to consti-
tutional change, and East Indians and Negroes separated along
racial lines.

The situation convinced Wood that responsible government
for Trinidad and Tobago could not be rightly considered "within
measurable distance of time," and he accordingly recommended a
constitution which was quite conservative in nature. This con-
stitution provided for an increase in the membership of the
Legislative Council from twenty-two to twenty-six and the inclusion of seven members elected on a franchise so restricted that only 6.6 per cent of the population was entitled to vote. The membership of the Legislature now comprised the Governor who, as president, had both an original and a casting vote; twelve government officials, six nominated and seven elected unofficials.12

The only progressive feature of the new constitution was the introduction of elected representation. Otherwise it was a reactionary document totally irrelevant to the contemporary situation in the colony. It apparently envisioned an alliance of the thirteen unofficial men against the Governor and his officials, and therefore gave the Governor through his casting vote a permanent majority. In practice, such fear of an opposition to the government was unjustified. Even among the elected men there was no attempt at concerted action. Of the seven elected in 1925, Cipriani alone had any popular following, and he alone evinced any intention to criticize the government's action. In April, 1925, within two months after the Legislative Council convened, one elected member disclaimed any intention to be associated with an opposition.13 The elected men, and to a greater extent the nominated men, were drawn from a class socially and economically removed from direct contact with the masses of the people whose lot was becoming increasingly difficult. As for the government officials, they were generally members of the Colonial Civil Service and quite often were never in the country long enough to acquire a
working knowledge of the community and its problems. As a result, such a Legislative Council was hardly qualified either by experience or by interest to cope effectively with the social and economic problems which threatened the country in the late 'twenties and the 'thirties.

The inability of the Legislative Council to deal in an enlightened manner with the problems of the day can be illustrated by two measures it passed in the early 'thirties: A Trade Union Act, and a Minimum Wage Bill. The Trade Union Act, which the Legislature passed in 1932, denied unions the right to peaceful picketing, and to other practices permitted in Trade Union legislation in the United Kingdom. It was the failure to secure Trade Union legislation similar to that of the United Kingdom that led Cipriani to convert the Trinidad Workingman's Association into a political party, the Trinidad Labour Party, which was later affiliated with the British Labour Party. Minimum Wage legislation adopted in April, 1935, provided for the appointment of a Wages Advisory Board to bring up to date the report of a similar body that had been appointed sixteen years before. Two years later, a commission investigating the cause of unrest in Trinidad found that this Board had made no recommendation and that no action had been taken on the 1935 measure.

For elected members interested in tackling the social and economic problems of the country, the 1925 Constitution inaugurated an era of frustration and obstruction. Accordingly, Cipriani embarked on a campaign of political education in which he emphasized the necessity of self-government as the only
means by which the problems of the country would receive adequate attention. Although his following throughout the country increased greatly, he was only able to submit petitions to the Colonial Office where he earned the reputation of being a trouble maker. Some Members of Parliament considered him a reasonable man devoted to the interests of his country, but his efforts never led to any official action.Locally, his greatest achievement was to record the protest of the masses against government neglect to find relief for their hardships, which were increasing under the impact of world wide depression, and local crop failures.

While Cipriani was unswervingly devoted to the use of orthodox and constitutional methods for the achievement of his objectives, it was left to someone less scrupulous to adopt certain measures which, however undesirable, effectively convinced both the local and the United Kingdom governments that the situation in Trinidad and Tobago required immediate attention. Such a person was Tubal Uriah Buz Butler, a native of Grenada who had emigrated to Trinidad in 1922. For many years Butler had been a follower of Cipriani and a member of the Trinidad Labour Party. However, he gradually lost patience with Cipriani's methods in face of the worsening plight of the masses and the apparent indifference of both government and employers. In 1935 he left the Labour Party and led a hunger march from Fyzabad in South Trinidad to Port-of-Spain. The following year he had an interview with the Governor, who found him sincere in his purpose but quite extravagant in his views.
After his separation from the Labour Party, Butler organized the British Empire Workers' and Citizens' Home Rule Party, through which he agitated for immediate improvement in working conditions, and Home Rule for Trinidad and Tobago. His methods were quite unorthodox, and his public meetings presented a curious blend of Bible reading, hymn singing, and inflammatory language openly advocating violence. However, his following was small and largely confined to places in South Trinidad. The disturbances which broke out in June 1937 and spread rapidly across the country were due less to Butler's activities than to the fact that an explosive situation had developed. Nevertheless, Butler's activities were directly related to the outbreak of violence. On June 19, 1937, oil-field workers quietly went on strike. That afternoon, Butler was addressing a crowd when some police officers approached with a warrant and made a rather clumsy attempt to arrest him for the agitation he had been conducting. He hesitated. The crowd intervened, and in the rioting which broke out, two police officers were killed. In the days following there were spontaneous outbreaks of disorder and several acts of violence throughout the country. However, with the aid of marines from the Royal Navy summoned especially to deal with the emergency, the disorders were put down within a few days, and the situation gradually returned to normal.

These disturbances constituted the most serious incidence of disorder in the history of Trinidad. However, unfortunate as they were, they had the effect of directing the attention of the United Kingdom government to the problems of Trinidad and
Tobago, and indeed to all the West Indian colonies. A Commission of Inquiry sent out by the Colonial Office to investigate the cause of the unrest, rejected the Labour Party's submission that the demand for self-government had been a contributing factor. It reported that the causes of the unrest were largely social and economic, particularly the deplorable housing conditions, unemployment, and inadequate wages in the face of rising living costs. However, the Labour Party's submission was vindicated by the report of the West India Royal Commission sent out in September 1938, under the chairmanship of Lord Moyne, to investigate social, economic, and other conditions in the British territories in the region. The Commission recommended the preparation of a general scheme for social reconstruction throughout the area and also far-reaching constitutional changes for all the colonies.

The Commission's recommendations applying to Trinidad and Tobago constituted an indictment of the 1925 constitution. It recommended a reduction in the number of government officials in the Legislature from twelve to three, the three remaining officials being the Colonial Secretary, the Attorney-General, and the Financial Secretary; an increase in the number of elected members from seven to nine; and the use of the nominated system to give representation to specific interests or community services. There were corresponding changes in the membership of the Executive Council which functioned in an advisory capacity to the Governor. The Colonial Secretary, Attorney-General, and the Financial Secretary were ex-officio members. By gradual changes, the Executive Council in 1944
consisted of the Governor as Chairman, the three senior officials, and four elected and one nominated member of the Legislative Council.

The changes in the Legislative Council were implemented in 1941. The Legislative Council then consisted of the Governor as president, the three ex-officio members, six nominated officials, and nine elected members who then formed one-half the Council's membership. The Governor as president retained only a casting vote. However, to ensure his ultimate control in case of emergency, he was accorded the power of certification by which he could give the force of law to any measure rejected by the Legislature, which he considered necessary in the interests of order and good government. These measures were envisioned as the prelude to more far-reaching changes. Accordingly, in 1941 the Legislative Council appointed a committee to give detailed study to the question of extension of the franchise. When the report of this committee was referred to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, he rejected as discriminatory a majority recommendation urging the extension of the franchise to all persons able to speak or understand English, and advised the introduction of universal adult suffrage. However, the Second World War was then in progress, and as it had previously been decided that no general elections would be conducted during the war, the introduction of further reforms was deferred. Meantime, the subject of a federation of the West Indies was beginning to receive some attention. This led to a situation in which Trinidad and Tobago in common
with the other West Indian territories, simultaneously pursued the twin objectives of regional unity and individual self-government.

The reconstitution of the Legislative Council in 1941 demonstrated the extent to which constitutional changes in Trinidad and Tobago, and indeed throughout the West Indies, involved the transfer of the control of government from one ethnic group to another. Of the twelve government officials in the Legislative Council up to 1941, only one, Errol Dos Santos (later Sir Errol), was a Trinidadian. Dos Santos had the distinction of working his way up through the Civil Service to the position of Financial Secretary, and later to that of Colonial Secretary, the office next to that of Governor. His successors in both offices were members of the Colonial Civil Service. With the exception of Dos Santos, the government officials in the Legislative Council in 1941 were all Colonial Civil Servants, and while the reduction of their number did not materially weaken Colonial Office control of the government, it deprived the white upper class of the majority they had enjoyed in the Legislative Council. The opposition of this class to any change had already been shown when the Wood Commission visited Trinidad. Again, in 1939, some of them giving evidence before the West India Royal Commission, advocated the abolition of the limited representation that then existed. The request was denied, but it fully identified the upper class as a conservative element resolutely opposed to any form of constitutional reform.
Some of this conservatism was due to a very real but unjustified fear of the effect of political radicalism on the economy of the country. Much of it was due to resentment at the loss of political power and the end of social monopoly. It has been said that West Indian society presents an accurate portrayal of the outstanding facts in West Indian history, and presents the following broad horizontal divisions: a white upper class, a coloured middle class, and a black lower class. However, in Trinidad and Tobago the middle class does not reveal the same homogeneity as in most other West Indian islands, but displays instead an interesting complex of the following ethnic groups: Chinese, East Indians, Jews, Portuguese, Negroes, Syrians, and a few others in insignificant numbers. However, in general, the structure of society in the different islands has been quite similar, and before the introduction of constitutional changes every government department was a microcosm of society and consisted of local workers in the lower and middle positions supervised by white officials generally belonging to the British Colonial Service. In Trinidad, a similar situation existed in the larger industrial concerns, so that one student of Trinidad society declared that the large proportion of the Trinidad upper class was not Trinidad born and did not have its roots in Trinidad.

In so far as the government service was concerned, the distinction between the respective positions of white and coloured was most easily recognizable in the police force. Coloured men enlisted in the ranks and found in the rank of sergeant-major a boundary beyond which they could not progress.
The inspectors, superintendents, and senior administrative officers were white. In other branches of government service, which attracted a greater variety of talent than the police force, the line was less rigidly drawn, but it existed just the same, and in such a way that the system appeared to discriminate against all Trinidadians. By the close of the Second World War there was a general awareness of the inequity of the system and a growing demand, in which legislators were quite vocal, that all positions in the public service be made accessible to local men having the necessary experience and qualifications. Therefore, as positions became vacant, more and more local men were appointed as heads of government departments, so that at times the assumption of administrative responsibility by nationals tended to be ahead of the transfer of political power. The transfer of administrative responsibility from overseas workers to indigenous personnel was auspicious for the success of constitutional changes. It was significant also for its sociological implications, for as local men assumed the responsibilities of the new offices, they acquired the status and prestige which accompanied them, and in the process exerted pressure on the existing social structure.

As has been said, the social and economic implications of constitutional changes determined the upper class on a conservative course which manifested itself in a determination to hinder and even to entirely obstruct, the introduction of progressive changes. The attitude of the East Indian community, which one writer has described as the only racial community to
display a tendency to behave communally in Trinidad politics, also requires some attention. As has been seen, there was evidence of this when the Wood Commission visited Trinidad in 1921. Again in 1943, when the Franchise Committee appointed by the Legislative Council was carrying on its investigations, an influential East Indian journal is alleged to have stated that the masses of East Indians in the colony were definitely opposed to adult suffrage for another fifty years because adult suffrage would endanger the aims and aspirations of the East Indian masses. One writer commenting on this statement has suggested that East Indians were willing to delay the introduction of adult suffrage until their high birth rate gave them a majority of the population.

It should be explained that the East Indians in Trinidad are descendants of immigrants brought there as indentured labour between the years 1845 and 1917. They have preserved the customs and institutions of their ancestral home to such a degree that a recent study of an East Indian community in rural Trinidad concluded that it was quite like a community in North India, and was not West Indian in any other sense but geographic. This opinion probably requires some qualification, but it is significant just the same, for the establishment of separate settlements is one means by which East Indians have remained a distinct and separate community. Another means by which they have resisted assimilation is by attending separate schools. The education of East Indians was undertaken in 1868 by a Canadian mission of the Presbyterian church, and was
facilitated by a system under which education is a joint
effort of the government and the religious denominations.
Two observations can be made as a result of the activities
of the Canadian mission: the majority of East Indian Chris-
tians are Presbyterians, and the membership of the Presbyterian
Church in rural districts is predominantly East Indian.

The caste system has also been a powerful factor
enabling East Indians to maintain their cultural heritage,
for any social institution which affects the behaviour of the
individual within the society must quite conceivable limit his
contacts with an alien society. Therefore, although East
Indians refused to attend the existing schools ostensibly be­
cause of fear of injustice from the teacher and ill usage from
the pupils, it is quite likely that there were additional
reasons.

In a survey of the relationship between East Indians
and the rest of the community, three periods may be discerned:
an early period of mutual suspicion and aloofness; an inter­
mediate period of developing harmony and understanding; and a
third period marked by increasing separation. A visitor to
Trinidad during the 1880s commented on the aloofness of the
East Indians and Negroes, and suggested that the former assumed
an air of superiority. At the same time the Negroes regarded
the East Indians as inferior because of their strange language
and customs, and also because they had come from a distant
country to work for wages and under conditions which the former
had refused.
It is difficult to suggest even approximate dates that would delimit the periods to which reference has been made. That there was a period when a substantial degree of harmony characterized all relationships is quite evident from the tendency of people of all races to lament the friction and tension that developed in contrast to the situation that once prevailed. In 1960, Mr. Kamaludden Mohammed, Minister of Agriculture, suggested that tension began in connection with the political campaign in 1950. However, in so far as existing tensions have been due to a consolidation of East Indian nationalism, it is possible to trace its beginning to almost two decades before. In 1957 a Canadian missionary commented on the fact that East Indian conversions to Christianity began to decline in the 1930s, and explained it as follows: "Before 1937, a man became a Christian because it paid him to do so. Now he thinks he can get along without it." The changed attitude towards conversion was accompanied by a resurgence of interest in the ancestral faiths, and has been described as follows: "As the social position of Indians improved, due for the most part to their steadily improving economic status, they became more active in organizing their traditional faiths." This organizing activity proceeded under the direction of missionaries from India during the 1930s and was equivalent to a religious revival. It was paralleled by a cultural re-awakening stimulated by frequent showing of Indian films for which East Indians flocked to the cinemas. The increased interest in their cultural and
religious heritage which marked the activities of East Indians during the thirties was due to their improved social and economic position which inspired a desire to identify themselves more with their social origin than with their environment.

This recrudescence of East Indian nationalism based on cultural revival was considerably stimulated by the attainment of independence by India and Pakistan in the years immediately after the war. The subsequent appointment of an Indian High Commissioner to the West Indies and British Guiana also influenced the situation. The first of these, Mr. Satya Charan Shastri, apparently assumed that he was appointed as leader of the local East Indian community. He volunteered advice on a number of subjects of purely local concern, suggested a reduction in the qualifying age for old age pensions, and advocated increased employment of East Indians in the civil service. So persistent and diverse were his activities that Mr. Albert Gomes, a member of the Trinidad Legislature, regretted that a representative of the government of India should seek to encourage communalism and confusion by direct interference in the affairs of the community. As a result of his ventures in matters of purely local interest, he was recalled at the request of the Trinidad government. His successor, S. B. Nanda, was charged with interference in the internal politics of the Trinidad Legislature while discussions on the federation were taking place, and he was recalled after serving only eight months. The interference of these gentlemen in matters
completely outside their jurisdiction was not only unwarranted, but absolutely unnecessary, for as has been seen, communal sentiment among East Indians had shown considerable vigour long before they appeared on the scene. It thrived in a situation in which the principle of separation in housing and school facilities was observed, and it was later intensified by the improved economic position achieved by East Indians as a result of their thrift and industry. In the account here presented, the details most certainly have been overdrawn, for East Indian children have attended other schools and there have been villages where East Indians and Negroes lived together, but on the whole these situations have been exceptional, for the majority of East Indian children have attended separate schools, and even today the majority of East Indians live in separate communities.

It can be charged that in this attempt to explain the racial tensions which are evident in Trinidad society, and which have been connected with its politics to an increasing degree, attention has been focussed entirely on the consolidation of communal sentiment among East Indians, and no attention has been paid to other groups. While the conduct of Negroes has at times been reprehensible, there is ample evidence to show that East Indians have been the only community liable to act communally in politics. One study of the East Indian community, to which reference has previously been made, has drawn attention to the absence of community cohesion among plantation villages populated by Negroes. Actual studies of
such plantation communities (of which there are none in Trinidad) have contributed to the picture of "loose integration and an absence of any significant degree of continuous mutual cooperation and interdependence." In general, the Negroes have never shown the same capacity for concerted action as the East Indians.

In discussing the relationship between East Indians and the rest of the community, reference was made to the dual system of education which facilitated their being educated separately. This system of dual control which has been in operation since the nineteenth century provides for the churches to share the responsibilities for education. Under it, the churches own the majority of the school buildings which they build with government assistance, and control the appointment and transfer of teachers in the schools they manage. This arrangement permits them to give religious instruction in their own faith. The government determines the qualification of teachers, supervises their work and pays their salaries. There are, of course, a number of schools controlled entirely by the government, but these are a small minority, and in 1946 numbered 46 out of a total of 291 primary schools. It might be mentioned that some teachers have expressed dissatisfaction with a system whereby their status in the profession is determined by their religious orthodoxy as well as by professional competence, and which frequently confuses their service to the church with their duties in the classroom, but the churches have resisted any attempt to change it. In 1950 the government adopted the
retrograde step of increasing the number of organizations authorized to operate schools. Among the bodies so authorized were Hindu and Muslim organizations. Within three years, one Hindu organization had constructed twenty-three schools.\textsuperscript{41} This arrangement provided further scope for the intensification of racial cleavage in the community, and was later exploited for political advantage.

The dual system of education fostered racial and religious separation and as a result militated against the emergence of any coherent sentiment of nationhood. The text books used in the schools produced an equally negative result. For a long time these were the same as those used in the United Kingdom. However, as a result of a recommendation by the Wood Commission urging the use of local material for giving instruction in various subjects, a series of West Indian text books was prepared for arithmetic, reading and geography. These texts, which appeared in the late 1920s were the work of J. O. Cutteridge, an Englishman who was then Assistant Director of Education, and were more remarkable for what was attempted than for what was accomplished. For example, material for the readers was drawn to a very great extent from United Kingdom sources, so that students not only remained ignorant of the persons and influences which had moulded their environment, but tended to develop attitudes that were not consonant with the country in which they lived. The schools of Trinidad and Tobago greatly contributed to the growth of sentiment for the
Empire, but they failed to impart a consciousness of the privileges and responsibilities of citizenship to the generation which attained maturity as the territory approached federation.

The defects of the educational system were even more marked in the field of secondary education. The government established a secondary school for boys in 1859, and did not establish another school of its own until the close of the Second World War. Other schools were operated by the religious denominations, but facilities were woefully inadequate, for until the Second World War there were only four secondary schools for boys and a similar number for girls. In the circumstances, secondary education remained the privilege of the upper and middle classes, although there was an intellectual commitment to the principle of equal opportunity for all. In harmony with this principle, a system of competitive examinations was implemented by which free secondary education was made available to an intellectual elite, the number increasing progressively from three in 1930 to fifty-six in 1946. It is worthy of note that the first legislature formed after the introduction of universal adult suffrage, although in theory committed to the principle of free secondary education for all, could do no better than increase the number of free places to one hundred. As late as 1955 the government announced with some satisfaction that it had progressively increased the number of free places to 225, and that it had planned further increases until a total of 325 was reached. By this time two additional schools had been built and further steps had been taken to provide additional facilities.
One factor which unquestionably stimulated the efforts to remedy the existing deficiencies, was the emergence of a number of proprietary schools during the Second World War. These schools, which were deficient both in qualified staff and in equipment, offered much of the curriculum available in the recognized secondary schools and had impressive successes in the annual examinations. They performed a valuable service in providing secondary education for hundreds who could not have gained admission to the recognized schools, and at the same time their success served to focus attention on the need for government action to provide more facilities.

In the secondary schools to an even greater extent than in the primary schools, the curriculum has been quite similar to that of schools in England, and designed to prepare students for examinations set by English universities — Cambridge and London. While the preparation for examinations set by these universities has contributed to the maintenance of high academic standards, it has resulted in an extension of the inverse pattern of learning begun in the primary schools, by which students learned a great deal more of other countries than they did of their own. As a result, students acquired attitudes that were not consonant with the realities of the society of which they formed a part. This has been evidenced by the fact that for generations the most talented products of the system invariably entered the legal and medical professions, thus leaving technical and other fields largely dependent on overseas talent.
In its educational system, its social structure, and its political institutions, Trinidad and Tobago has been quite similar to most other West Indian territories. However, it differed quite significantly in its economic development. Until the mining of bauxite began in Jamaica in 1952, Trinidad was the only West Indian territory producing minerals in commercial quantities. The first source of mineral wealth to be exploited was the pitch lake from which asphalt has been mined and exported for over a century, but when the mining of petroleum began in 1910, the mining of asphalt was quickly relegated to second place behind the oil industry, both as a source of employment and of government revenue. In 1955, oil production averaged 68,000 barrels daily, in comparison with the total annual production of 57,000 barrels in 1910, and at the same time the oil industry made a direct contribution of 36.1 per cent. to the national revenue.

Aside from its direct benefits to the country, the oil industry also contributed to the economic development of Trinidad and Tobago by making available supplies of fuel and other materials necessary for the establishment of secondary industries. In the years before the Second World War a small start was made in processing the juices of citrus fruits, and products from the oil of the coconut palm. A start was also made in the production of building materials. The production of these items was stimulated by wartime demands and a shortage of supply from other overseas sources. At the close of the war the country, faced with the problem of unemployment which had been temporarily alleviated by the construction of military
bases during the war, enacted legislation to provide incentives for new industries, and by 1955 pioneer factories were producing a number of items including cement, paints, cotton textiles and other products which increased the value of the country's exports by over four million dollars ($W.I.4,000,000). The output of these industries constituted six per cent of the total output for the year.42

The establishment of secondary industries did not diminish the importance of agriculture. In Trinidad and Tobago, as in most other West Indian islands, the most important agricultural product was sugar. The first sugar mill was established in Trinidad in 1787, and the production of sugar has continued to expand ever since. Although the industry was somewhat affected by a labour shortage during the war, it very quickly recovered. Since that time production has been increasing rapidly, the most important gains being made between the years 1950 and 1955, when output increased from 146,500 tons to 198,700 tons. After sugar, Trinidad's most important agricultural product is cocoa. The plant was introduced to Trinidad early in the nineteenth century, and thereafter has occupied a prominent place in the agricultural life of the country. The failure of the cocoa industry due to widespread disease of plants, and also the decrease of prices on the world market, were among the immediate causes of distress in the 1930s. However, the industry recovered completely as a result of the introduction of new plant varieties, and of vastly improved world prices. Besides sugar and cocoa, citrus fruits and
bananas are cultivated for export. Coconut is cultivated in commercial quantities, but the crop, which varies from 14,000 to 20,000 tons annually, is processed locally into a variety of products including edible oil, soap and margarine. A number of food crops, including rice, ground provisions, and vegetables, have also been produced, but not in quantities large enough to supply local needs.

The growing lumber industry of Trinidad and Tobago is also important to her economy. Forests occupy about five hundred square miles of Trinidad, and about one-half the entire area of both islands. Prior to the Second World War, the low cost of imported lumber made the exploitation of local forests unattractive except as a source of wood for the manufacture of furniture, but under the stimulus of lumber shortages experienced during the war, a profitable lumber industry developed and made tremendous strides in later years, so that by 1950 over five million cubic feet of timber was being cut from the forests annually. At the same time, the government undertook an ambitious plan aimed at improving the forests and cultivating enough soft wood to replace imported lumber completely.

The economic development achieved by Trinidad and Tobago through its diversified agriculture, and especially through its oil industry, has made it the most prosperous of the West Indian territories. At the same time, the programme of industrial expansion undertaken in the postwar period was likely to make the country the commercial and industrial centre of the Eastern Caribbean. These factors were certain to be of
the utmost importance in any discussion of a federation of the West Indies. Trinidad's contribution to the federation was certain to be determined by its prosperity. At the same time, these factors made Trinidad a certain goal for emigrants from the neighbouring islands. This was nothing new, as it had been so since the first French settlers and their slaves arrived from Grenada in 1783. In the early decades of the present century, they provided for the establishment of the oil industry and to a lesser extent for the expansion of the sugar industry. During the Second World War large numbers of people from the adjacent islands flocked to Trinidad to work on the military bases established by the United States. Although most of them returned home when the work was done, many stayed on, and in 1951 the government legalized the status of almost 10,000 persons who had been in Trinidad for a certain number of years. However, by that time Trinidad was having unemployment problems of her own and could not afford to be as generous as before.

The economic development of Trinidad and Tobago which made her an important member of West Indies federation also developed a confidence which made the pursuit of complete autonomy quite attractive. As a result of over a century and a quarter of pure Crown Colony rule, and the reactionary constitution of 1925, Trinidad and Tobago had at the close of the Second World War, one of the most backward constitutions in the West Indies. It will be seen in the course of this study that
one of the factors which greatly influenced the attitude of Trinidad and Tobago to the federation was progressive constitutional change, culminating in independence.

For its prosperity, Trinidad and Tobago was outstanding among the West Indian territories. Although its educational system and social institutions displayed some peculiarities, they were nevertheless quite similar to those in the other territories. Its society had been remarkable for the various influences which moulded its past, and the heterogeneity which characterizes its present, but the most outstanding difference from the society of other territories which entered federation, was the existence of a large community which for over a century has resisted assimilation, and which persists as a separate society.45
Footnotes


2 Ibid.


5 Eric Williams, History of the People of Trinidad and Tobago, Port-of-Spain, PNM Publishing Company, 1962, p. 48.


7 T. Southey, Chronological History of the West Indies, London, Longmans, Orme; and Green, 1827, pp. 510, 511.

8 The term Trinidad is frequently used for "Trinidad and Tobago." For example, the Trinidad government, and the Trinidad legislature are regularly used instead of the government of Trinidad and Tobago and the Legislative Council of Trinidad and Tobago. In the course of this study "Trinidad" will frequently be employed in the wider sense.


10 There were a number of such movements in the nineteenth century. The most important took place in 1883 when a Commission was sent out by the Colonial Office, who accepted a minority report advising against any change. Eric Williams, Constitution Reform in Trinidad and Tobago, Public Affairs Pamphlet No. 3, Port-of-Spain, Teachers' Economic and Cultural Association, 1955, pp. 14, 15.

11 Cmd. 1679, pp. 22, 23.


13 Hewan Craig, History of the Legislative Council of Trinidad and Tobago, London, Faber and Faber, 1952, p. 181. Craig cites Debates of the Legislative Council of Trinidad and Tobago, in which T. M. Kelshall, Member for Victoria, stated:
"The idea seems to be gaining ground that some of us on this side of the House are de facto in opposition. ... I am not a member of the Opposition. I am proud to be a member of the government on the unofficial side of the House."


15 Ibid., p. 80.


17 324, H. C. Deb. 5s. Cols. 1003-4, June 2, 1937.

18 Cmd. 5641, p. 118.

19 Ibid., p. 79.


22 See above, note No. 9.

23 Cmd. 6174, p. 25.


25 Ibid., pp. 224, 225.


27 See above, note No. 11.


29 Loc. cit.

31 Williams, *History of the People of Trinidad and Tobago*, p. 213.
In this work, Williams has devoted a great deal of attention to the early history of education and has quoted extensively from available sources on the subject.


33 Williams, *History of the People of Trinidad and Tobago*, p. 213.

At the time of this address, Mr. Mohammed was Minister of Agriculture in the People's National Movement government. In the course of his address he stated, "Since I know myself as a little boy until 1950, I had never heard or found the problem of racialism in any part of Trinidad and Tobago. . . . Let me venture to say tonight very emphatically, that it is quite evident that racialism entered the life of our community very viciously because of the politics of 1950."


36 *Loc. cit.*

37 Albert Gomes, "Tolerance in the Face of Intolerance is not the Best Policy," *Trinidad Guardian*, February 5, 1950.

38 Ayearst, *op. cit.* , p. 66.


41 Ayearst, *op. cit.*, p. 57.


43 Trinidad and Tobago, *Stability and Progress*, pp. 59-61.


Chapter I

THE BACKGROUND OF THE WEST INDIES FEDERATION

The history of British rule in the West Indies was marked by the desire to provide a centralized administration for the colonies, and the persistent failure of any attempt at unification. In 1625, two years after the island of St. Christopher (generally known as St. Kitts) was jointly colonized by British and French settlers, King Charles I appointed a royal lieutenant for the islands of St. Kitts, Nevis and Barbados, authorizing him to govern them as he saw fit. Two years later, the Earl of Carlisle was appointed Lord Protector of all the Caribbee Islands between ten and twenty degrees north latitude. These islands included Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Kitts, St. Lucia and St. Vincent.¹

It is possible that the wide authority encompassed by this royal commission was more indicative of territorial ambitions than of administrative policy, but in so far as existing conditions permitted, some centralization was attempted by the administration of the government of the Leeward Islands² through a Governor-in-Chief with headquarters at Barbados. In 1671 the Barbadian planters, jealous of their rivals in the Leeward Islands, and disturbed at the necessity of providing them with armed assistance in their conflicts with foreign powers, secured the separation of their island from the administration of the Leeward Islands where separate administrations
were also set up in the islands of St. Kitts, Nevis, Antigua, and Montserrat.

Under the initiative of Governor Sir William Stapleton, appointed in 1672, a loose federal system was established in the Leeward Islands. In a few years he persuaded the island legislatures to appoint representatives for a General Assembly which passed laws on subjects of interest to all the islands. This arrangement was unofficial and was followed fitfully until it was discontinued in 1798. However, it did serve as a basis for official action which was taken when the end of European rivalry in the Caribbean permitted the adoption of a set policy for the area.

Until the early years of the nineteenth century, the wars of the European maritime powers were duplicated in the West Indies with the colonists acting as principals or providing assistance to forces sent out by the metropolitan powers. Every peace treaty concluded among the colonial powers found one or more of the islands changing hands according to two broad patterns, the Leeward Islands generally remaining British, and the Windward Islands in varying degrees, French. The extreme example was St. Lucia, which changed loyalties a total of fourteen times before becoming a British territory in 1814.

With the end of colonial rivalry the British government made an attempt to unify the colonies. Barbados, Grenada, St. Vincent and Tobago were united under a common Governor at Barbados; St. Lucia was included in 1838. At the same time, a Governor-in-Chief was appointed for the Leeward Islands.
which now included Dominica. In 1869, a Governor (Sir Benjamin Pine) was sent to the Leewards with instructions to form a single colony with one council, one court, and one corps of police for all the islands under a single governor. After eighteen months of negotiation and intrigue, he was only able to secure the agreement of the territorial legislatures to an extremely loose federation in which the federal government had no independent revenue, extremely limited legislative authority, and no civil service of its own. This federation which Parliament established by the Leeward Islands Act of 1871 was later described as a costly impediment to good government.  

With this limited accomplishment to its credit, the Colonial Office embarked on the second step of its project, the formation of a Windward Islands Federation embracing Barbados, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and Tobago. The ultimate objective was a West Indies Federation comprising the Leeward Islands, the Windward Islands and Trinidad. The immediate proposals for the Windward Islands Federation were extremely conservative. They consisted of a single police force for the Windward Islands; a common Judicial Service centralized in Barbados, a common auditor-general, a federal penal system, and federalization of certain parts of the medical services. The plan encountered several difficulties inherent in the historical background of the different islands. Barbados, proud of its unbroken connection with the British Crown, was averse to being drawn into closer association with islands that had fallen from time to time under foreign domination, and strongly resisted any suggestion that the representative form
of government— which the colony had enjoyed for over two centuries— should be replaced by Crown Colony rule in the name of efficiency and economy. At the same time, the Barbados planters were opposed to any scheme which would have facilitated the emigration of surplus labour from Barbados to the other colonies which were short of labour. On November 23, 1875, John Pope Hennessy arrived in Barbados as Governor of the Windward Islands. Pope Hennessy was a man of liberal views, and his concern for the working classes and his interest in social reform brought him into conflict with the upper classes who controlled the Barbados Legislature. In their opposition to federation, the upper classes created dismay among the workers by informing them that federation would mean a return to slavery. At the same time, Pope Hennessy's interest in the poorer classes gave them exaggerated notions of the immediate benefits to be derived from federation. As a result of the hostility of the upper classes to federation, on the one hand, and the exaggerated expectations of the masses, on the other, a state of tension developed, and in April, 1876, rioting broke out in the country districts and threatened to spread throughout the island. Following the suppression of the disorder, the Governor was recalled, and the plan for a federation of the Windward Islands was abandoned. The larger project for West Indian unity was also dropped. It is interesting to note that shortly after the Barbados ruling class rejected federation with other West Indian islands they began making indirect proposals for inclusion in the Canadian Federation.
In spite of failure, the desire to provide a centralized administration for the West Indies remained. For the British government its chief attraction lay in the economy and efficiency that would result. British officials never seemed to have seriously considered its importance in the colonies. However, up to the close of the nineteenth century their interest never went beyond the point of inquiry, and as the century closed, British effort to unify the colonies had produced extremely limited results in the ramshackle Leeward Islands Federation, the common governorship of the Windward Islands, and the unification of Trinidad and Tobago. In 1900 one writer surveyed the possibilities of a federation for the area, and dismissed the idea, concluding that nature itself opposed such a project.9

The finality with which the prospects of West Indian federation were dismissed in 1900 was in no way indicative of the interest and enthusiasm to be shown for the subject in the twentieth century. The earliest advocates of federation in the new century were persons with official contact with the area, and those who had commercial and other business interests in the West Indies. The campaign conducted by these men aimed at securing official action on the matter. Accordingly, much of their effort was expended in England where they hoped to secure action by public addresses, by articles in the press, and also by raising the subject in parliament. The great misfortune was that very little of their effort was directed towards enlisting support among the people most likely to be affected by any change in the status of the colonies.
One of the foremost advocates of West Indian federation in the early twentieth century was Norman Lamont (later Sir Norman) who owned property in South Trinidad. In 1902, in a public address in England, he called for the unification of the West Indian territories into one great colony under a Cromer or a Curzon assisted by a Council consisting of the best men who could be sent out. In 1905 Lamont entered parliament as Liberal member for Buteshire in Scotland, and on May 17, 1905, he raised the question of the administration of the West Indian colonies. He charged the government with a desire to perpetuate the existing system because of the facility it provided to dispensing political patronage, and demanded that positive steps be taken to create a federation of all the British Caribbean dependencies. He was quite critical of the multiplicity of administrative units in the area, and of oligarchical rule, and he suggested the appointment of a benevolent despot who could provide honest and efficient administration. Opinion on the subject he raised was by no means unanimous, but there were some members who felt that the British government should proceed with a plan for unifying the colonies. The Secretary of State for the Colonies, Alfred Lyttleton, affirmed that federation was an attractive proposal and might be regarded as the ultimate aim of British policy. However, he suggested, federation should come as a natural desire from the colonies, and should not be imposed on them from above. Lyttleton's statement was tantamount to an abdication by Britain of her position of leadership, and was indicative of a complete lack of initiative.
While Britain pursued her avowed policy of waiting for the emergence of pro-federation sentiment from below, Lamont continued his campaign. In 1912 he urged the government to summon a conference in the West Indies to consider plans for a federal government. In the same year Gideon Murray joined the campaign. Murray had had official connection with the West Indies, having served as administrator of St. Vincent, Acting-Governor of the Windward Islands, and in other capacities. He proposed the establishment of a federation embracing Barbados, British Guiana, the Leewards, Trinidad and Tobago, and the Windwards, with membership open to other colonies desiring to enter. His plan called for the establishment of a Federal Council, with legislative authority over trade, communication, defence, and currency, among other subjects; the appointment in London of a High Commissioner for the British West Indies, and a Secretary for West Indian Affairs. In the course of this study, further reference will be made to Murray's work as a member of the House of Commons and later of the House of Lords as Viscount Elibank.

Another advocate of West Indian unity was Sir Edward Dawson. Dawson's ideas for regional cooperation were derived from his connection with the Associated Chamber of Commerce of the British West Indies which he helped to organize in 1917 and of which he was the first president. He advanced the idea of cooperation through conferences, and submitted to the Secretary of State a plan calling for the creation of a Central Conference consisting of officials and unofficials to meet at fixed intervals to consider matters of general interest.
Though less ambitious than the plans submitted by Lamont and Murray, Dawson's proposal had the advantage of being more practicable, in that it rendered possible the immediate attainment of limited objectives. The Associated Chambers of Commerce was proof that among people having an identity of interest, cooperation on a regional scale was possible. Moreover, some progress in that direction had been made in 1904 when a medical conference held in Barbados prepared plans for the adoption of uniform quarantine laws and practices for the region. Another success was achieved in 1916 when a meeting of lawyers and government law officers prepared machinery for the organization of the West Indian Court of Appeal which was set up in 1919. In the same year a conference on Intercolonial Customs and Trade was held in Trinidad, and one year later representatives from the different colonies met together at Ottawa to negotiate a Canada - West Indies Trade Agreement. However, at the end of the conference separate trade agreements had to be drawn up between Canada and individual territories.

The scheme of bringing interested groups together for consultation or joint action was of limited value unless it provided a basis for the dissemination of the federal idea. Fortunately, some effort had been made in this direction, and it is a fair assumption that West Indian federation as an indigenous movement, though influenced by men such as Lamont, Murray, and Dawson, was largely due to the literary efforts of West Indians. Prominent among such West Indians were Louis L. Meckle, a Jamaican who in 1912 published a book in which he
advocated the federation of all the British possessions in the area,\textsuperscript{18} and W. Galway Donovan, a Grenadian journalist who, from 1905 to 1915, published and edited a newspaper in Grenada which was called \textit{The Federalist}.\textsuperscript{19}

The writings of Meckle, Donovan and others gave inspiration to the activities of T. A. Marryshow of Grenada, and A.C. Cipriani of Trinidad. Marryshow acquired possession of Donovan's newspaper and renamed it \textit{The West Indian}, and later united with Cipriani to create popular interest in federation and to make it an intercolonial movement. Cipriani first manifested his West Indian outlook during the First World War when he advocated the formation of a British West India regiment for service overseas. He contended that the West Indies should actively identify themselves with those who were fighting in defence of the Empire. When he returned home at the end of the war, he organized the West India Confederation Committee and conducted meetings in the leading districts of Trinidad. As a result of these meetings a memorial was prepared and sent to members of parliament urging that the governors of the several West Indian territories be authorized to appoint delegates from the various legislatures and city councils for a conference in London to discuss the extension of representative government.\textsuperscript{20}

The emergence of Cipriani's movement in Trinidad coincided with a period of renewed interest in the future of the West Indian colonies in England. At the close of the war, Lloyd George, the British Prime Minister, suggested that Canada be given control of the colonies, but Sir Robert Borden, the
Canadian Prime Minister, gave no encouragement to the proposal. In February 1919 Murray published an article discussing the possibilities of making the West Indies a province of Canada and advocated certain constitutional changes in the colonies so as to make the proposal more acceptable to Canada. In the British House of Commons he later directed the attention of the Secretary of State to the movement on foot in the West Indies to promote the federation of the colonies. At the same time, Sir Samuel Hoard (later Foreign Secretary) joined in and suggested that it was time to deal with the matter of closer association of the colonies without waiting for a further crystallization of public opinion in the area. As a result of the activities of the West India Confederation Committee, and the interest which certain members of parliament showed in the West Indian colonies, the Hon. E. F. L. Wood (later Lord Halifax), the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, was sent out to the West Indies and British Guiana to investigate the demands for self-government, and the extent of interest in federation.

Before discussing the findings of the one-man Commission which Wood formed, it is important at this juncture to point out a very important characteristic in which the proposals for federation advocated by West Indians differed from those formulated by men such as Dawson, Lamont and Murray. These men devoted much attention to the bases of cooperation, and the forms which federal organizations might take, but they were remarkably silent on the subject of self-government. In fact,
it will be remembered that Lamont, in his address in the House of Commons on May 17, 1905, advocated the establishment of a benevolent despotism. On the other hand, West Indians clearly linked their interest in federation with the achievement of self-government. Accordingly, it was these two subjects—federation and constitutional change—which the Wood Commission was appointed to investigate.

The Commission visited the West Indies and British Guiana from December 1921 to February 1922, conducted investigations at several places in the region, and received evidence from persons of differing interests and outlook. The report prepared was a very conservative document which largely ignored the growing demands being made by West Indians for a larger share in the direction of their own affairs and the emerging interest in a closer association of the colonies. The only concession made to the demand for self-government was in the case of Trinidad and Tobago where the introduction of elected representation was recommended. Even here, the changes introduced were encumbered by such restrictions that the frustration they produced was an underlying cause of the disturbances which erupted in 1937. On the subject of federation the Report was equally unfavourable. It stated that there were practical and political difficulties which made it impossible to secure machinery for greater unity and cooperation. The first difficulty was physical—the great distance separating the islands. The second difficulty was that sentiment and development did not flow naturally over the sea from one island to another.
So long as public opinion stood where it did, the Report concluded, it would be both inopportune and impracticable to attempt amalgamation of existing units of government into anything approaching a general federal system.25

The report presented an accurate appraisal of the obstacles to West Indian unity. At the same time it tended to endorse the policy of waiting for the emergence of sentiment from below. This policy was tantamount to an admission of inability to provide initiative and leadership which was really the responsibility of the metropolitan government. However, in spite of disappointment with the Report of the Commission, the protagonists of federation proceeded with their campaign to win increased popular support for federation. Cipriani, besides his efforts with the West Indies Confederation, was also leader of the emergent labour movement in Trinidad. By this means he was able to enlist increasing support for the cause of federation in other territories. In 1926 he participated in the organization of a regional labour movement and won its support to the cause of West Indian unity. On an invitation from the British Guiana Labour Union, leaders of the labour movement for several West Indian territories met in British Guiana in January 1926 and organized the British Guiana and West Indies Labour Congress. At that session the Congress unanimously adopted a resolution proposed by Cipriani:

In the best interests of the people of British Guiana and the West Indies, these colonies should be federated and granted some form of self-government which would enable them to conduct their own affairs under a Colonial Parliament with Dominion status.26
This resolution was further evidence of the extent to which the idea of self-government was closely linked with the West Indian movement towards closer union.

While this nationalist movement was slowly gaining strength, official action was taken to establish a Standing Regional Conference as an agency of West Indian cooperation. The movement derived its inspiration to some extent from the success of earlier conferences, such as the Quarantine Convention of 1904, Canada-West Indies Trade Conferences, and Conferences of the Associated West Indian Chambers of Commerce, of which four had been held prior to 1926. It derived support also from the Jamaica Imperial Association and the Jamaica Legislature. Eventually, the conference assembled in London in June 1926, designating itself "The Standing Conference of British Guiana, British Honduras, the Bahama Islands and the British West Indian Islands." It made a list of the subjects falling within its scope, decided the representation from each colony, and planned the times of the meetings. Barbados, as the oldest colony, was chosen as host for the first meeting.\(^{27}\)

Accordingly, the next conference was held in Barbados in January 1929. It was an historic occasion, for it was the first time the delegates from the various colonies had met together as representatives of governments to discuss subjects of general interest to the region. The agenda comprised such matters as agriculture, shipping publicity, aviation, the future workers in the sugar industry, the establishment of a West Indian university, and other matters vital to the area as a whole.\(^{28}\) Though the decisions taken were not binding on the
governments represented, the Conference did achieve some results. Above all, it demonstrated the benefits that could be derived from regional consultation, and must have influenced opinion in favour of closer association. However, because of the economic crisis which developed from the world-wide depression, the financial expense involved (about £6000 per annum) appeared unjustified by the limited objectives achieved, and the experiment was not repeated.

Three years after the official conference in Barbados, there took place another conference which, though on a much smaller scale, was really more indicative of the progress of the popular movement towards federation. That was the unofficial conference held in Dominica in October 1932. At this conference, politicians drawn from the legislatures of Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, the Leeward Islands, Trinidad and Tobago, met and discussed the problems of federation. They drafted a federal constitution, prepared plans for a federation of the territories represented, and made provision for the admission of other territories desirous of entering. The conference was evidence that the will to federation had been rapidly growing. Delegates at the conference also prepared a memorandum for submission to the Closer Union Commission which was due to visit the West Indies one month later.

The Closer Union Commission, consisting of Sir Charles Fergusson and Sir Charles Orr, was appointed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies and sent out "to examine on the spot the possibilities of closer union between Trinidad and the
Windward Islands and Leeward Islands or some of them. As its terms of reference did not include discussions on self-government, Cipriani and the other leaders who had taken part in the unofficial conference at Dominica, decided that they would not appear before it to give evidence. Consequently, the Commission was somewhat restricted in its investigation. Nevertheless, it took evidence in the different islands from November 1932 to February 1933, and submitted a most uninspiring document devoid of a single positive feature. It pointed out that Trinidad had found Tobago a financial burden ever since their amalgamation, and consequently was averse to embarking on more experiments in the direction of closer union with other islands. It noted that prominent citizens of Trinidad had expressed willingness to extend reasonable assistance to the smaller islands provided it did not entail serious financial responsibility. It was unable to recommend union between the Leeward and Windward Islands, but proposed that the existing Leeward Islands Federation should be dissolved, and the islands united with the Windwards in a loose association of autonomous units under a common Governor. This arrangement was recommended as a first step towards wider unity.

One criticism of the report of the Commission is that it showed a noticeable susceptibility to the influence of "corporations" and "prominent citizens." Another is that it made no reference to the increasing popular interest in regional unity which was indicated by the Dominica conference. This attitude was indicative of the unwillingness or inability
of Colonial Office authorities to understand the changes taking place in the West Indies, and in a general sense throughout the Colonial empire. For one thing, "prominent citizens" were decreasing in importance as representatives of the people. And on the special subject of federation, metropolitan opinion ever focussed on the ancient objective of administrative economy, but never tried to grasp the significance of West Indian federalism, whose ultimate goal was independence.

These divergent aims need not have been mutually incompatible. The fact is, that no serious attempts were made to reconcile them. While the Colonial Office waited for interest in federation to emerge from below, they quietly shelved proposals for the extension of self-government.

It has been suggested before that the official policy on federation - that it should come as the natural desire from the colonists - announced in 1905, though apparently correct was tantamount to an abdication by the Colonial Office of its responsibility to provide leadership. Almost twenty years later that policy was unchanged. The Wood Commission reported: "If any advance in the direction of Federation is to be achieved, it can only be as the result of a deliberate demand of local opinion." This disposition to surrender the initiative for action need not have been reprehensible if it were applied only to the question of federation, but in time official policy on Colonial affairs in general and West Indian affairs in particular was marked by complacency, neglect, indifference and a willingness to wait for things to happen.
While this policy was being followed, conditions in the territories deteriorated to the extent that between 1938 and 1939 a series of labour disturbances broke out in the West Indies, in St. Kitts, Trinidad, Barbados, and Jamaica. What is particularly remarkable is that West Indian unrest was not an isolated development in Britain's colonial empire. In Cyprus in 1931 violence broke out and the Government House was burnt down over the head of the Governor. Nor were these the only examples. Throughout the nineteen-thirties in West Africa, in Kenya, in Northern Rhodesia, in Mauritius and in Palestine, disturbances accompanied by violence in varying degrees indicated the failure of Britain's colonial policy.

In the case of the West Indies the full extent of that failure was revealed in the report of a Royal Commission sent out in 1938 "to investigate social and economic conditions in Barbados, British Guiana, Jamaica, the Leeward Islands, and Trinidad and Tobago and matters connected therewith and to make recommendations." The Commission under the chairmanship of Lord Moyne, conducted investigations in the West Indies from September 1938 to April 1939, and prepared a very elaborate report covering several phases of the conditions existing in the West Indies. Before the report could be published, war broke out and, fearing that conditions described in the report might be exploited by the enemy for propaganda purposes, the government decided that publication of the full report should be delayed until after the war. It was decided, however, to publish the recommendations, and implement them without delay.
The Commission and its report are relevant at this point because of the observations made on the subject of federation, and also because of the extent to which a revised colonial policy, the need for which was indicated in the report, influenced the movement towards federation. On the subject of federation, the Commission reported a growing and lively interest, but added that although most witnesses appearing before it in a political capacity favoured the idea of closer union of West Indian colonies, few of them were able or prepared to define the degree or nature of federation they considered desirable. The Commission doubted, therefore, whether the time was yet ripe for the introduction of any large scheme of federation. It suggested further that although political federation was not in itself an appropriate means of meeting the pressing problems of the West Indies, it was the end to which policy should be directed.  

The growing interest in federation reported by the Commission was indicative of the progress made by the movement since the unofficial conference in Dominica in 1932. The most significant advance had been made in Barbados where support for federation had previously been lukewarm. Foremost among the supporters in Barbados was Grantley Adams (now Sir Grantley), an Oxford graduate, a lawyer, and leader of the Barbados Progressive Party. In September 1937 he journeyed to England (as he himself expressed it) to knock at the doors of the Colonial Office asking for federation. In November 1938 at a meeting of the British Guiana and West Indies Labour Congress convened
at Port-of-Spain to prepare a brief for submission to the Royal Commission, Adams submitted a draft of a constitution for a federation embracing all the British Caribbean territories. The constitution provided for a Governor-General, an Executive Council, and a unicameral legislature fully elected on the basis of universal adult suffrage.\textsuperscript{39}

A comparison of two constitutions drawn up before the outbreak of war in 1939, shows the scope and spirit of the federal movement. At the unofficial conference at Dominica in 1932 at which the first attempt was made to describe a political framework for the movement, there were representatives from Barbados, Grenada, St. Vincent, St. Lucia, the Leeward Islands and Trinidad and Tobago. In 1938 the federal movement also included British Guiana, British Honduras, and Jamaica. The 1932 constitution provided for a single chamber legislature styled the Federal House of Assembly, composed of twenty-seven elective and six official members. The elected members were to be elected annually by the elected members of the Island Legislatures from their own membership. The keynote of the constitution was conservatism. It revealed a willingness to retain existing institutions and evinced a great reluctance to indulge in innovations. The attitude of those framing that constitution was by no means unanimous. Cipriani, an ardent advocate of self-government, expressed his disappointment in the following terms: "During the short time that I have been here I have found myself in the unusual position of putting my hand on the brake instead of my foot on the accelerator."\textsuperscript{40}
But there was some difference of opinion. Majority opinion favoured the retention of existing institutions with only slight modification.

By 1938 the situation had changed considerably. There was among other things a clearer definition of objectives. Universal adult suffrage not mentioned in the 1932 Constitution figures prominently in that of 1938, while the most revolutionary feature was the idea of a fully elected unicameral legislature where the representatives of the people would exercise full sovereignty immune from the influence or interference of any Upper House. If this feature of the constitution was merely the embodiment of brilliant theorizing, it was nevertheless indicative of the emergence of advanced nationalistic philosophy which was quite prepared to reject time-honoured machinery of government and engage in constitutional innovations. But it was not all theorizing. There were indeed some men who contended that there was no need to create an Upper House where none existed before. As late as 1949, Adams, for example, was affirming his faith in a unicameral legislature and suggesting that an Upper Chamber was an anachronism. 41

The Constitutions which West Indian leaders drafted from time to time were indicative of a growing interest in federation, as well as of an increasing demand for a greater part in the government of their respective territories. Unfortunately, official opinion in England remained indifferent to changing conditions in the colonies, although certain individuals who were aware of conditions in the colonies did not fail to express their concern. For example, in the House of Commons
on June 2, 1937, Mr. Alfred Lunn, a Labour Member, described the conditions existing in the West Indies and urged that the islands be grouped together and given self-government. On June 14, 1938, Mr. Morgan Jones, commenting on the disturbances which had broken out, declared that the causes were both economic and political. He criticized the maintenance of so many governments in the area and suggested that plans be prepared for amalgamating them. However, the suggestions made by men such as Lunn and Morgan Jones and the demands emanating from the colonies evoked little response from the Colonial Office until widespread disaffection throughout the British Colonial Empire made it painfully obvious that the problems of the colonial peoples needed immediate consideration.

Attention has already been directed to incidents which resulted from the grievances of subject peoples of the Empire. In a few instances this discontent was demonstrated during the war in ways which undermined the British military effort. This was the case in Malaya and Singapore in 1942 during the Japanese invasion. Reports from Malaya described how the local native populations remained impassive and indifferent spectators to the struggle between the British and Japanese. In Singapore both the military effort and the task of evacuation were impeded because native labour had deserted in the emergency. Great as was the effect of the military catastrophe, the blow to British prestige was greater, for it was clear that the impression was deepened by criticism of British imperialism, emanating from the United States. In May 1942, Henry
Wallace, then Vice-President of the United States, declared that the peace should mean a better standard of living for the common man. No nation would have the God-given right to exploit other nations. Older nations would have the privilege of helping younger nations to get started on the path to industrialization but there must be neither military nor economic imperialism. A few months later, Wendell Wilkie, who in 1940 was Republican candidate for the presidency of the United States, summing up his impressions of a visit to thirteen Asian countries, declared that the colonial peoples wanted to live in liberty and independence, and he suggested that time-tables should be set up under which they could work and train for the governments of their choice. President Roosevelt also was openly critical of the British Empire, and stated in a press conference that those provisions of the Atlantic Charter affirming to all people the right to choose their form of government were intended to apply to the subject peoples of colonial empires no less than to the citizens of countries recently over-run by invading armies.

It is quite possible that the persistent and outspoken criticism by Britain's powerful wartime ally influenced a change in her attitude to the colonies. In the House of Lords, on December 3, 1942, Lord Listowel, commenting on the necessity for a change in Britain's attitude to Empire, declared: "Our American allies detest the colonial status just as we do slavery." More important than the criticism expressed by Americans was the influence of socialist philosophy exerted in
England itself by the British Labour Party. But undoubtedly the most important factor was the evidence that among colonial peoples the sentiment for Empire had greatly diminished, and that a pressing need existed for a new interpretation of intra-imperial relationships. It is significant that the first attempt to redefine the relationship between Britain and her colonies was made shortly after the blows administered to British arms and esteem in Malaya, Singapore and Burma. In the House of Lords on May 20, 1942, Lord Hailey, a recognized authority on colonial affairs, suggested that the idea of trusteeship which had been employed to explain Britain's relationship to the dependent territories of the Empire had certain patronizing implications of which the people of those territories were becoming increasingly resentful. He suggested that the relationship should be re-interpreted in terms of a partnership in which the dependent territories as junior partners would receive an increasing share of the undertaking. In the House of Commons a few days later, Mr. Harold MacMillan, Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, spoke in similar terms. In an obvious reference to the failure of colonial cooperation for the British war effort in South-east Asia, Macmillan declared: "The War has shown us some inescapable facts of which we will learn the lesson... The governing principle of the Colonial empire should be the principle of partnership between the various elements comprising it. Out of partnership come understanding and friendship."
The new British attitude to the colonies was further elaborated in a statement to the House of Commons by Colonel Oliver Stanley, Secretary of State for the Colonies, on July 13, 1943. He affirmed that the British government accepted the responsibility to ensure that colonial peoples were trained as quickly as possible for eventual self-government. Announcing the new course of action, Colonel Stanley declared: "We are pledged to guide colonial peoples along the road to self-government within the framework of the empire. We are pledged to build up their social and economic institutions, and we are pledged to develop their resources."

The change of emphasis here expressed remained the central feature of the new colonial policy which at a later date was officially set out in a government White Paper as follows: "The central purpose of British colonial policy is simple. It is to guide the colonial territories to responsible self-government within the Commonwealth in conditions that assure to the people concerned both a fair standard of living and freedom from oppression from any quarter."

It should be pointed out that although external influences did accelerate the rate at which the new colonial policy was evolved, the original motivation was entirely British. For example, explicit in the Recommendations of the West India Royal Commission was the advocacy of greater participation by colonial people in the work of government as a real prerequisite for lasting social advancement. Both this recommendation and the principles of the new colonial policy influenced constitutional developments in the West Indies in two distinctly
different ways. On the one hand, they apparently gave federation a *raison d'être* as the most appropriate means by which the West Indian colonies could advance toward self-government. On the other hand, with self-government for all the colonies the avowed objective of British colonial policy, the insular impulse to self-government was greatly stimulated. Thus, it developed that as the movement towards a closer association of the West Indian colonies received official British recognition and encouragement, there emerged a dichotomy of insular and regional loyalties.

The Colonial Office adopted a policy of federation for the West Indies as a result of a movement which originated in the House of Lords where there generally was a greater body of informed opinion on colonial affairs than in the House of Commons. This informed opinion was supplied by men with experience of the colonies gained as administrators, travellers, or business-men. The plan for a federation in the West Indies was part of a larger scheme proposed by Viscount Trenchard for regional grouping of the colonies to facilitate administration in the postwar era. On May 6, 1942, he suggested that the degree of planning that would be required by any ordered post-war system could only be effected if political and economic Balkanization were replaced by the formation of large groups such as the East Indies, the West Indies, East Africa and West Africa. Such an arrangement he contended would reduce the amount of correspondence and day-to-day routine, and relieve the Colonial Office of the necessity of dealing with over fifty
dependencies. Supporting these proposals was Lord Hailey, who declared that with the Colonial Office becoming increasingly involved in social and economic matters, some amalgamation of the units would be a definite advantage. Moreover, it was by combination and amalgamation that all the Dominions themselves had arrived at their present position. However, these views found little support from such informed and knowledgeable individuals as Lord Moyne, who one year before had been Secretary of State for the Colonies and who had also been chairman of the West India Royal Commission, 1938-39, and Viscount Elibank who, as Mr. Gideon Murray, had been an ardent protagonist of West Indian federation. The latter stated that years before in the West Indies he had tried repeatedly to unify the colonies, but without result.

Proposals for organizing the Empire were also made by General Smuts in a speech before the Empire Parliamentary Association on November 25, 1943. The proposals put forth were quite comprehensive in that an attempt was made to deal with all colonies of contemporary colonial powers. As far as British colonies were concerned, Smuts advocated increasing transfers of control from the Colonial Office to larger territorial units. The development of such units could be facilitated by the creation of regional councils on which not only the British government but also neighbouring Dominions of the Commonwealth would be represented. In the general arrangement the United States would also have a voice in the determination of general policies. Attractive as such proposals were,
they were subject to criticism for a number of reasons. Such a policy if implemented without considerable changes would have resulted in the extension of South African influence in Africa – something to which few Africans would agree. In addition, official opinion in England was unfavourable to any division of the administration of the colony with any country in the postwar era.

The plan for a regional reorganization of the Empire was again put forward by Viscount Trenchard in the House of Lords on February 9, 1943, and on August 1, 1944. On the latter date, during a debate on West Africa, he repeated his arguments on the necessity of reorganizing the colonies into larger groups if any scheme for political and economic development in the postwar world was to succeed. The trend noticeable throughout the world for smaller units to be gradually merged into larger ones was being facilitated by the development of communications. The airplane was making the world a small place.\(^{58}\) In his reply, the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Duke of Devonshire, referred to the appointment of a Resident Minister for West Africa, and the plan for a conference of Governors of East African territories to discuss the establishment of the East African High Commission. These developments showed that consideration was being given to a policy of amalgamation.\(^{59}\)

Meanwhile, persons interested in the specific project of a unification of the West Indian colonies had been urging the necessity of immediate action in establishing a federation
of the Caribbean territories as a preliminary to granting them self-government. On January 23, 1943, Lord Faringdon declared in the House of Lords that the failure to undertake an all-embracing scheme for the West Indies had produced disappointment both in the West Indies and in England. He suggested that the colonies should be put on an even footing as a preliminary step towards federation. On March 16 the case for West Indian federation was advanced in the House of Commons by Dr. Morgan, a Labour member, who claimed a special concern for the West Indies as the place of his birth. He attacked Colonial Office policy as being calculated to keep the West Indies back at all costs and not let them have the right to do things for themselves. With the exception of Jamaica, he suggested, the islands should be amalgamated into a single unit. From the point of view of the general public of the West Indies, federation would be a means of integrating the agricultural, medical and other services throughout the area.

Dr. Morgan's effort was quite a spirited one and was indicative of the ardour with which some of the protagonists of West Indian federation advanced their views. Some proposals tended to be confused, referring at one and the same time to a single unit government and a federal state as if the same thing were meant. Dr. Morgan, for example, remarked at one time "It is a crazy thing nowadays to have separate governments in different islands and then impose upon them a federal government for certain purposes." Aside from these moments of confusion, the prevailing idea was that the unification of the
colonies was indispensable to progress. In his reply, the Colonial Secretary contended that the only successful examples are those where the desire to federate came from the bottom.63

A few weeks later, in April 15, the policy of waiting for the spontaneous development of a demand for federation was criticized by Captain Gammans in the House of Commons. He contended that the Colonial Office should accept its responsibilities and use its power to influence some form of union, for there could be no hope of materially improving the economic conditions unless a greater measure of regional integration had been effected. The necessity of dealing with so many small administrative units was a permanent handicap to the economic prosperity of the West Indies.64 These remarks were made in the course of a debate on the Report for the period 1940 to 1942, presented by the Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies.65 The Development and Welfare Organization in the West Indies had been set up as a result of the Colonial Development and Welfare Act passed by parliament in February 1940. The measure proceeded from a recommendation by the West India Royal Commission that a West Indian Welfare Fund be financed by an annual grant from the Imperial Exchequer to finance schemes for the general improvement of education, the health services, slum clearance, and related subjects.66 By providing for a regional approach to the subjects within its terms of reference this organization demonstrated the advantages to be derived from a centralized administration. During the debate on the report, Captain Gammans remarked that though
it dealt primarily with economics, the fundamental question of federation peeped out from time to time. Most significant of all was the observation he made with regard to the need for haste: "If we wait until there is a greater measure of self-government in these islands as we hope there will be before long," he suggested, "it is inevitable that vested interests and jealousies will start to develop in each island, and you will have no federation at all."67

The support for West Indian federation manifested in England was paralleled by an increasing interest in regional unity in the territories. On February 28, 1944, the British Guiana and West Indies Labour Conference, which was attended by delegates from Barbados, British Guiana, Grenada, and Trinidad, provided the setting for the discussion of a number of subjects such as civil liberties, an inter-territorial shipping service, Anglo-American Caribbean Commission, self-government, and other matters vital to the area. The conference unanimously accepted a resolution moved by T. A. Marryshow, an early campaigner in the West Indian federation movement. This resolution demanded the establishment of a political federation of the West Indies (including British Guiana and British Honduras) with self-government with a view to ultimate Dominion status "based on the recommendations made by each colony to the Royal Commission and that such establishment shall provide for adult suffrage."68

While the conference was in session there was taking place in Kingston, Jamaica, a West Indian Civil Service
Conference which organized a federation of civil service associations. This was a purely professional association with limited objectives such as achieving uniform conditions of employment throughout the region, and making the senior appointments in the civil service accessible to West Indians. But in spite of the limited objectives it did indicate the development of a regional, in contrast to a purely insular, outlook. It was the second group of public servants to establish a regional organization. The first was the Caribbean Union of Teachers formed in 1935.

An event from which West Indian federation received some stimulus was a West Indian conference held under the auspices of the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission from March 21 to 20, 1944. This conference brought together representatives of government from the different territories in the area and thus provided considerable stimulus for the federal idea. The cause of federation again received support from the Seventh Congress of the Associated West Indian Chambers of Commerce held in Barbados in June, 1944. The Congress debated the subject of federation at length and passed a resolution in favour of the "ultimate economic federation" of the West Indian colonies or those colonies to which federation could reasonably apply.69

Further evidence of the growing interest in federation was a motion adopted by the Jamaica Legislative Council on June 7, 1944, directing the government to approach other British Caribbean territories and get their support for a joint request
to His Majesty's Government for federation. At its annual conference a few months later, the People's National Party, one of Jamaica's leading political parties, pledged full support to the idea of federation. Meanwhile, in Barbados, prior to the general election of 1944 the Barbados Progressive League reaffirmed its support for federation.

Encouraged by these developments in the West Indies, the advocates in England of West Indian federation increased their pressure on the government to act quickly. Early in the year 1944 a parliamentary delegation spent two months visiting the Caribbean and returned to England impressed with the necessity for federation. On May 31, 1944, Captain Gammans, who was a member of the delegation, reported in an address to the Royal Empire Society that in the West Indies he had found an overwhelming case for federation. It was his opinion that there were a number of questions to which federation was the only satisfactory answer. Captain Gammans again suggested that rather than wait for federation "to come about naturally by the efflux of time," the Colonial Office should provide a strong lead and make all classes of the population realize the obvious political and economic advantages that would result from federation.

As a result of the continued effort put forth both in parliament and in the press, the Colonial Office, although still quite hesitant, seemed ready to take action. On July 24, the Secretary of State for the Colonies expressed his desire to see the greatest integration possible in colonies in the
various regions, but remarked that nothing was more fatal than to force upon people federation for which they were unready or which ignored practical difficulties. With reference to the West Indies specifically, he affirmed:

It is our declared policy to get the greatest integration that the people of those islands want. A good deal of progress has been made in recent years in getting discussions, conferences, and decisions upon an all-island or all-Caribbean basis which is the beginning of any scheme for closer political union. . . . The one thing that might delay or even in the end entirely destroy that prospect would be to force a decision too early.73

The official policy of avoiding any hurried action in West Indian federation betrayed a lack of awareness of events in the area. As has been stated, there had been a great increase in regional conferences, and discussion on subjects vital to the area. At the same time insular impulse to constitutional changes was quite marked. In the circumstances, immediate action was necessary if the ambitions of the several territories for self-government were to be achieved within the framework of federation. Some of the protagonists of West Indian federation certainly realized this, and it must have been their insistence, together with the interest shown in some quarters in the regional reorganization of the colonial empire, that led to official action. On August 1, 1944, while Viscount Trenchard in the House of Lords was dilating on the advantages of a regional grouping of the colonial territories, the Duke of Devonshire, the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, announced that official opinion was moving in that direction.74
A few months later a conference of West Indian governors was held in London. It has been suggested that the conference discussed the subject of federation and went over a draft of a despatch which was sent out to the colonies on March 14, 1945, and which finally committed the Colonial Office to the policy of a federation for the West Indies.75

The despatch of March 14, 1945, set forth the project of a federation for the Caribbean area in relation to the declared aim of British policy — to quicken the progress of the Colonial peoples towards the ultimate goal of self-government. It declared that in view of the greater economy of large units, and the difficulty of small units ever being able to maintain full and complete independence, the aim of British policy should be the development of federation in the Caribbean area at such time as the balance of opinion was in favour of the change. It further stated that with the aim of federation in view, political developments in each colony should be definitely related to the wider policy and should follow similar lines. In considering the question of federation, attention should be focussed on the scope for the development of unified action in administrative and economic fields.76 One remarkable feature of the despatch was the suggestion that two federations, an East and a West Caribbean federation, might be preferable to a single federation.77 Otherwise there was little about it indicative of the ability or willingness of the metropolitan power to give positive direction on the subject.

In the Legislative Council of Trinidad and Tobago the despatch was the subject of a debate on July 13, 1945. The
debate took place on the resolution, moved by Sir Errol Dos Santos, the Colonial Secretary: "That the Council is in favour of the aim of federation in the British West Indies as outlined in the despatch dated 14th March, 1945, of the Secretary of State for the Colonies." The resolution was greeted with a mixture of caution, enthusiasm and objective reserve. Most enthusiastic was T. M. Kelshall, a senior member of the Council, having sat since 1925, first as elected member for Victoria and from 1938 as a nominated unofficial. He referred to the mass meetings that had been held almost twenty-five years before in Port-of-Spain and San Fernando when the subjects of federation and constitutional change for all the colonies in the area were discussed. He rejoiced that after so many years the subject was at last receiving consideration, and ventured to suggest that "the relative adverb was not when but how."  

Cipriani, the originator of the movement, had not lived to see the extent to which his efforts had succeeded. He had died a few months before, and the new member for Port-of-Spain was Albert M. Gomes, Cipriani's rival in labour politics. Gomes had made an impressive debut in municipal politics by defeating Cipriani in a contest for a seat on the Port-of-Spain City Council. On July 13, 1945, he entered the Legislative Council, having won the seat made vacant by the death of his rival. In what was really his maiden speech in the Legislative Council he championed the cause of federation and from that time on remained one of its foremost advocates. Federation, he proffered, already had an existence – a soul awaiting the
creation of a body for its habitation. Consequently, it should no longer remain an abstract principle in the minds and hearts of persons. He urged that steps should be taken to stimulate movement toward federation as soon as possible. He then proposed amendments urging: the appointment of a committee to stimulate the movement of West Indian affairs in the direction of federation; and the summoning of a conference of West Indian delegates at an early date to consider fully the question of federation. Also speaking in favour of federation was Roy Joseph, senior member for Victoria, who suggested that to accept the amendment proposed by Gomes would be to express the points of view of the masses of the people who long believed in and fervently hoped for federation with self-government.

Considerably less enthusiasm was shown by Sir Lennox O'Reilly, a lawyer who had been nominated member of the Council since 1938. He asserted that the prerequisite of any federation was a firm cultural and economic foundation, therefore any question of a complete federation of the islands in their present political development was impracticable and should be preceded by a systematic attempt to raise cultural and educational standards and improve their economic conditions. Sir Lennox obviously did not realize that one of the objects of federation was to enable the colonies to work together for the solution of their social and economic problems.

The resolution was unanimously adopted and a few days later a committee comprising all the elected members of the council was appointed "to consider what immediate steps should be taken to stimulate the movement of West Indian affairs in
the direction of federation."\(^2\) When the Legislature was dissolved in June 1946, the Committee was also dissolved without having made any real contribution to the progress of federation.

It is scarcely necessary to follow in detail the debate on the despatch of March 14, 1945, through all the Legislatures in the region. It should be enough to state that with the exception of the Bahamas all the British colonies in the Caribbean declared in favour of federation and for the very first time there was agreement between the British government and the West Indian colonies on the subject. It was almost twenty-five years since Trinidad's Cipriani had led out in organizing a West Indian federal movement and enlisting support for the cause of West Indian unity, and the ultimate objective of West Indian self-government. As time passed, West Indian federalism increased in scope and gained strength from the interest in regional cooperation which developed among business, professional and other groups. Accordingly, the British government's adoption of a policy of federation for the West Indies was an apparent recognition of the demand for federation among the peoples of the area. Unfortunately, this was not entirely the case. The British government's agreement to the establishment of a federation in the West Indies was due more to the extent to which such a federation would facilitate the implementation of Britain's new colonial policy than to the extent to which it satisfied the aspirations of West Indians. The indifference with which the British government treated the
moderate demands for self-government and for federation during the period between the two world wars led eventually to the rise of radical leaders who had little sympathy with the patient methods of their predecessors. Accordingly, at the very time when the British government accepted federation as the most appropriate means by which constitutional changes in the West Indies could be effected, there emerged remarkably strong insular movements towards self-government. These latter movements derived much strength from Britain's avowed policy of self-government as the ultimate goal of all her colonial territories. As a result of these developments the later stages of the West Indian movement towards federation was marked by a dichotomy of insular and regional interests with the former tending to predominate.
Footnotes


2 The terms "Leeward" and "Windward" were first used by the Spaniards and had strictly geographical denotations. The islands exposed to the north-easterly winds (i.e. those east of the Caribbean Sea) were generally referred to as the Windward Islands, and the islands in the western part of that sea (i.e. Cuba, Jamaica, Puerto Rico and Santo Domingo) were called the Leeward Islands. It is still quite common to see on a map of the Caribbean all the islands classified as the Greater Antilles or Leeward Islands, and the Lesser Antilles or Windward Islands. However, in current usage the names apply to political units in the East Caribbean. The Windward Islands are Grenada, Dominica, St. Lucia and St. Vincent, and the Leeward Islands are Antigua, St. Kitts (St. Christopher), Nevis, Montserrat and the Virgin Islands. Algernon E. Aspinall, United Empire, vol. X (New Series), 1919, p. 59n.

3 During the period of colonial rivalry Barbados remained immune from attack by foreign powers and maintained unbroken connection with Great Britain from the time of its settlement in 1626.


6 Hamilton, Barbados and the Confederation Question, 1871-1885, p. 59.

7 At one time all the British colonies in the West Indies enjoyed a form of representative government. However, with the passing of time and particularly after the abolition of slavery the operation of the constitutions was encumbered by a number of abuses, and the British government decided to suspend them. Though it was not explicitly stated, the proposals for the Windward Islands Federation definitely involved the suspension of the Barbados constitution. Hamilton, ibid, p. 25.

8 Alice A. Steward, "Documents on Canada - West Indies Relationship, 1883-85," Caribbean Historical Review, Historical Society of Trinidad and Tobago, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad
Publishing Company, 1951, pp. 102-106. The article here cited reproduces much of the correspondence sent from Barbados to Canada to Sir Francis Hincks, a former governor of Barbados, who later became adviser on West Indian affairs to Sir John Macdonald, Prime Minister of Canada.


10 Norman Lamont, Problem of the Antilles, A Collection of Speeches and Writings on West Indian Questions, London, Sampson and Low, 1912.

11 146 H.C. Deb. 4s, cols. 694-698, May 17, 1905.

12 Ibid., cols, 719-21.

13 Norman Lamont, "The West Indian Recovery," Contemporary Review, vol. 101, February 1912, pp. 232-241. On that occasion Lamont wrote as follows: "In 1894 Sir Robert Hamilton reported: 'The time has not yet arrived for the establishment of such a federation.' The situation now is different in 1911. There are thoughtful men in each colony who think the time has now arrived." See also Lamont, "The West India Problem: A Reply to Imperialist." Contemporary Review, vol. 92, pp. 672-678, Nov. 1907.

14 Hon. C. Gideon Murray, A Scheme for the Federation of the West Indian Colonies, London, West India Committee, 1912. Also Charles Gideon Murray, A United West Indies, London, West Strand Publishing Company. In later years Murray became quite pessimistic of the prospects of West Indian unity. In the House of Lords as Viscount Elibank he declared: During the eight or nine years I was in the West Indies, I with others took part in movements to bring the islands together. We tried all sorts of different ways, but it was never successful." 122 H.L. Debs. 5s, c. 923, May 6, 1943.

15 Report of the Second Triennial Meeting of the Associated West Indian Chambers of Commerce, Bridgetown, Barbados, 1920. Dawson was an Englishman sent out to the West Indies by the West Indian Committee. At a West Indian Agricultural Conference in 1912, he found that the Conference discussed matters which were rightly the concern of commercial bodies. He therefore devised the idea of bringing representatives of the business communities from the different colonies together in the Associated Chambers of Commerce, which in time led to the idea of conferences of government officials. Great Britain, Report of the West Indian Conference, Parliamentary Papers, 1926, IX (cmd. 2672), pp. 3-4.

17 Yearbook of the British West Indies, 1926-27, London Canadian Gazette Ltd., 1927, pp. 11, 12. See also Cmd. 1679, pp. 34, 35.

18 Louis L. Meckle, Confederation of the West Indies vs. Annexation to the United States of America, London, Sampson


20 146 H.C. Deb. 5s, cols. 1162, 1163, August 16, 1921.


23 142 H.C. Deb. 5s, 1669-70, July 6, 1921.

24 The extent to which the aim of self-government figured prominently in the West Indian federalism was indicated by the slogan originated by Cipriani: "No Federation without Self-Government, and No Self-Government without Dominion Status."

25 Cmd. 1679, pp. 31, 32.


30 Colonial Office, Report of the Closer Union Commission (Leeward Islands, Windward Islands, Trinidad and Tobago), April 1933, Parliamentary Papers, 1932-33, XV, Cmd. 4383, iv.

31 Ibid., pp. 6-22.

32 Cmd. 1679, p. 33.

33 Rita V. Hinden, Empire and After, a Study of British Imperial Attitude, London, Essential Books Limited, 1949, p. 137.
34 Hinden, *Empire and After*, p. 138.


37 Ibid., p. 18.


41 Colonial Office, Conference on the Closer Association of the British West Indian Colonies, Montego Bay, Jamaica, September 11-19, 1947, Part II, Proceedings. Colonial No. 218, p. 73. Over two years later when the first proposals for federation were being debated in the Barbados House of Assembly, Adams was still insisting that the federal legislature should be unicameral.

42 324 H.C. Deb. 5s, cols. 1046, June 2, 1937.

43 337 H. C. Deb. 5s, cols. 103-107, June 14, 1938.

44 Hinden, *Empire and After*, pp. 143, 144.


46 Hinden, *op. cit.*, quotes the *Manchester Guardian*, October 22, 1942.


48 The remarks made by Roosevelt relative to the provisions of the Atlantic Charter were intended to refute a statement given to parliament by Churchill. He told the House of Commons that the Joint Declaration made in the Atlantic Charter did not qualify the statements of policy made from time to time about the development of constitutional developments in India, Burma or other parts of the British Empire, 374, H.C. Deb. 5s, cols. 67, 68.

49 125 H. L. Deb. 5s, col. 376, December 3, 1942.

50 122 H. L. Deb. 5s, cols. 1095-96, May 14, 1942.

51 380 H. C. Deb. 5s, cols. 2014-15, June 24, 1942.
52 391 H. C. Deb. 5s, cols. 48, 49, July 13, 1943.


54 Cmd. 6607, p. 373.

55 122, H. L. Deb. 5s, cols. 887, 888, May 6, 1942.

56 Ibid., cols. 916, 923.


58 133, H. L. Deb. 5s, cols. 48, 49, August 1, 1944.

59 Ibid., col. 66.

60 125 H. L. Deb. 5s, cols. 777-84, January 23, 1943.

61 387 H. C. Deb. 5s, cols. 1123-25, March 16, 1943.

62 Ibid., col. 1126.

63 Ibid., col. 1141.

64 388 H. C. Deb. 5s, col. 1437, April 15, 1943.


67 388 H. C. Deb. 5s, col. 1437, April 15, 1943.


69 Report of the Seventh Congress of the Associated Chambers of Commerce of the British West Indies, Bridgetown, Barbados, 1944.

70 Jamaica, Legislative Council Proceedings, 1944, cited by Proctor, op. cit., p. 25.

71 Proctor, op. cit.


73 402, H. C. Deb. 5s, cols. 465-466, July 24, 1944.
74 125 H. L. Deb. 5s, col. 789, August 1, 1944.

75 Proctor, op. cit., p. 27.


77 Mansergh, op. cit., p. 1225.

78 Trinidad and Tobago, Debates of the Legislative Council, pp. 256-258, July 13, 1945.

79 Ibid., pp. 261, 262.

80 Ibid., pp. 265, 266.

81 Ibid., p. 267.

82 Ibid., p. 272.
Chapter II

PROGRESS TOWARDS FEDERATION

Throughout the West Indies, the years immediately following the Second World War were marked by a considerable degree of political activity. Some effort was devoted to the protracted negotiations leading to the establishment of the West Indies Federation. But in most of the territories interest in regional unity was subordinated to the insular demands for self-government. In some islands, notably Barbados and Jamaica, these developments had begun even before the war, and had proceeded directly from the labour unrest of the pre-war period.

In Jamaica, for example, shortly after the labour unrest of May, 1938, Mr. Norman Washington Manley, a prominent lawyer, and Mr. Alexander (now Sir Alexander) Bustamente organized the People's National Party, a political party with a Socialist philosophy. Owing to differences with Manley, Bustamente later broke away and organized the Jamaica Labour Party. However, Manley was foremost in advocating the introduction of a new constitution providing for a bicameral legislature with a fully elected Lower House elected on the basis of universal adult suffrage. In 1943 his efforts were rewarded. Jamaica was granted for a trial period of five years, a new constitution providing for the following: universal adult suffrage; a fully elected House of Representatives; an Upper House
(the Legislative Council) with a majority of unofficial members; and an Executive Council, selected from both Houses, as the principal instrument of policy with full responsibility for finances. The Governor presided over the Executive Council and with its permission had power to refuse assent to Bills. The new constitution became effective in 1944.¹

In Jamaica the new constitution provided for the introduction of a representative form of government in place of the existing Crown Colony system. But the situation was quite different in Barbados where there were representative institutions but no responsible government. The constitution, which was over three hundred years old, provided for a Legislature consisting of a Governor, a Legislative Council (Upper House) with ten of its members appointed by the Sovereign, and four appointed by the Governor from the House of Assembly which was the fully elected Lower House of the Legislature. The House of Assembly was elected on a franchise so restricted that in 1939 the electorate was only 3.3 per cent of the population.² The problem was to extend the franchise to a greater number of the population, and transfer the control of the government from a white elite comprising the planter and merchant classes to people more representative of the general public. This task was undertaken by the Barbados Progressive League which was organized in 1938, and which found an able leader in Grantley (later Sir Grantley) Adams, an Oxford-educated lawyer. In 1944 there was a gradual extension of the franchise. The voting qualification was reduced and women were given the right
to vote and to stand for election. As a result of the changes, in 1945 there were 15,846 registered voters as compared with 7,394 in 1943. Barbados was remarkable for the moderation with which changes were introduced.

In the elections in 1944, Adams' Barbados Labour Party (the successor to the Progressive League) won fifteen out of the twenty-four seats. But Adams attempted no revolutionary changes. The first really significant change was made two years later on the initiative of the Governor, Sir Gratton Bushe, who announced on October 1, 1946, that when the House of Assembly reconvened he would send for the person most likely to command a majority in the House and ask him to submit names for membership on the Executive Committee which was then the principal instrument of policy. The aim was to identify the Executive Committee more clearly with representation from the House of Assembly and thus make it an executive organ of government accepting collective responsibility for government. With the implementation of this measure, Barbados was launched on the way to responsible government. In 1950, universal adult suffrage was introduced.

The developments in Barbados and Jamaica were the most outstanding examples of changes that had been transforming the political system throughout the region. In Trinidad, however, developments had been somewhat retarded by a decision not to hold elections for the Legislative Council during the war. As a result, the general elections which should have been conducted in 1942 were postponed until one year after the war. There was in addition one very significant way in which the emerging
political situation in Trinidad in the postwar period differed from that in the other islands. That was in the way in which the labour unrest of the pre-war years influenced the structure of political parties. Whereas in the other islands the organization of political parties proceeded from labour unrest, in Trinidad the disturbances of 1937 considerably diminished the influence of Cipriani as a political leader and virtually destroyed the Labour Party as a force in the political life of the country. Consequently, the political scene in Trinidad was marked by the emergence of a number of individuals of outstanding ability, but by the absence of any cohesive party structures.

The absence of a well-defined party system, and the persistent failure of all efforts to organize political parties, were dominant characteristics of the time. Two examples of these organizing efforts are remarkable not for any success they achieved, but rather for the evidence they provide of the existence in Trinidad of sentiment favourable to a closer association of the West Indian territories, and the willingness to provide the initiative for the attainment of regional unity. These were the West Indian National Party, and the Caribbean Socialist Party. The West Indian National Party, organized in 1946, was an attempt to create an organization that was truly West Indian in scope. Its chairman was Dr. David Pitt, a Grenadian resident in Trinidad. Among its leaders were Dr. Patrick Solomon, a physician of liberal views, and Albert Gomes whose strength in politics derived from his association with the Trade Union movement. Before the Party had had enough time
to consolidate its position among the masses in Trinidad, it ran into difficulty through a branch that had been established in Grenada. The Grenada branch had chosen a candidate to run against the veteran Albert Marryshow in Grenada elections. It is quite possible that the Party leaders in Trinidad were sympathetic towards Marryshow, for he was well known in Trinidad, having been associated with Cipriani for over twenty-five years. But they could not overrule the local constituency in its choice of a candidate. This precipitated a crisis in the Party, for Gomes insisted on supporting Marryshow and was expelled. From that time, interest in the Party declined rapidly and soon it was dissolved.

The second attempt, the Caribbean Socialist Party, was inspired by Dr. Solomon and, like the West Indian National Party, was intended to be regional in scope. At one of its conferences, the Party discussed federation and declared that the first step to federation was the grant of self-government which should come before any federation could be formed. The Caribbean Socialist Party survived for even less time than the West Indian National Party. Its failure was due to the intense individualism which characterized the political situation in Trinidad in the decade after the war as well as to the wide gap existing between the professional middle class and the masses they essayed to lead.

Both the West Indian National Party and the Caribbean Socialist Party were examples of parties that were well planned and devoted to the pursuit of clearly defined objectives. In
this respect they were unique, for a common feature of Trinidad's politics of the postwar period was the emergence of a large number of party groupings which had neither programme nor policy. The majority of them were extremely transient arrangements which mushroomed at election times and disappeared as soon as the election was over.

While parties and quasi-parties were appearing and disappearing with bewildering rapidity, one party revealed a marked ability to survive. That was the Butler Party, named after its leader, Tubal Uriah Buz Butler, who instigated the labour unrest of June, 1937. It was the successor of the British Empire Workers and Citizens Home Rule Party organized in 1936 by Butler, who chose for himself the title of Chief Servant, and who advocated the introduction of self-government and improved working conditions for the labouring class. However, he lacked the ability to clearly define the goals of his movement or to give it direction. His great strength lay in his understanding of the problems of the working class. His chief significance in the history of Trinidad lay in his success in arousing the people to register an effective protest against their disabilities when all other means had failed. But he lacked the ability to provide constructive leadership either to a labour union or to a political party. For example, in 1938 he was elected president of the recently organized Oilfield Workers Trade Union. But he proved inadequate to the task and was expelled. His internment during the war greatly increased his popularity and the sympathy which was generally
felt for him. But such were his limitations that he was never really accepted as a popular leader. The numerical strength which his party showed in the Legislature at various times was mainly due to the success of certain astute politicians in exploiting pro-Butler sympathy as a means of increasing their personal following.

In the absence of a well-defined two-party system, some interesting devices were employed to provide an organized opposition in the Legislative Council. The most important of these was tried as early as 1946. The general elections held in June 1946 excited considerable interest. In the first place these were the first elections to be held since 1938. In the second place the elections were the first to be held under universal adult suffrage which greatly increased the electorate from 6.6 per cent of the population under the old franchise to forty-six per cent. As the elections were being planned, nine candidates formed a coalition called the United Front. The aim of the United Front (which included some of the best known politicians in the island, such as Gomes, Solomon, Pitt, and others) was to campaign as a team so as to secure the election of the entire Front. If elected, they intended to form an organized opposition to the nine government members (six of whom were nominated unofficials, and three government officials) and to agitate for an advanced constitution. However, the newly enfranchised electorate were in no mood to bestow their recently acquired vote on unknown men and unknown causes. They chose to vote for persons of their acquaintance who had done things
for the community, and of the nine United Front candidates only three were elected. The parochial outlook of the public on political issues was one of the factors which delayed the development of party politics in Trinidad.

The absence of a well-developed party system was one of the factors which influenced the attitude of Trinidad and Tobago on the subject of federation, and the participation of the territory in the pre-federal negotiations. For example, federation was never an issue in any of the general elections which took place during the years of negotiation, even though there were elections in 1950 and again in 1956. As a result, the subject was never really impressed on public thinking to the same extent as it would have been if it had been made a campaign issue. That does not mean that any secrecy surrounded the subject, for the press gave full coverage to the various conferences on federation. But, by and large, it was felt that the public were not as fully aware of the implications of federation as they should have been. For example, as late as May 15, 1953, Butler, who had been elected to the Legislature in 1950, presented a motion as follows:

Resolved that in the opinion of this House it is a matter of the highest importance that the inhabitants of Trinidad and the West Indies including Br. Guiana and Br. Honduras be apprised of the plain meaning of Federation of the British Caribbean territories, and that the House recommend to Government . . . the appointment of a committee comprising Elected Members of the House . . . to lead the territories concerned to a full and proper understanding of the said subject.
Three years later the idea still prevailed that the subject had not been discussed as widely as it should have been. That opinion was expressed by the Trinidad Guardian in an editorial as follows:

One of the weakest chinks in the armour of the Federation movement is that the man in the street knows so little about the subject. . . . Federation so far as he is concerned might be a word used by such persons as Mr. Gomes, Mr. Manley, and Mr. Adams. Whatever their merits the recent lectures by Dr. Williams began a new interest. Mr. Gomes the chief protagonist in this country of closer union is now to add his contribution to the cause of popularizing and explaining.7

One other consequence of the absence of a party system was that there was no collective responsibility either in the Legislature or before the general public for the policy pursued on federation. Of course, delegates to the various conferences on the subject were chosen by the Legislature, and they invariably had the support of a majority of the Council, but the proposals they formulated could never be identified with a consistent party policy. Moreover, in the absence of collective responsibility for their actions, delegates frequently followed policies that were politically safe for them as individuals in preference to others aimed at the ultimate benefit of the federation. For example, on one occasion when revenues for the federation were being discussed, Gomes is reported to have opposed certain proposals on the grounds that he had to face an election within a few months.8

The absence of a well defined party system in Trinidad influenced the pre-federal negotiations in a third and very
important way. Since there was no anti-federation party there was no objective presentation of the case against federation. Federation was opposed on three main grounds: the financial cost it would involve; the objection to unrestricted immigration from the other islands; and fear lest federation delay the progress towards self-government. These objections were consistently advanced by East Indian members on the Legislative Council, and in time opposition to federation assumed a racial bias.

Open opposition to federation was expressed in the Trinidad Legislative Council during a debate on January 3, 1947. This debate was further evidence of the existence of pro-federation sentiment in Trinidad. It will be remembered that when the Colonial Office despatch of March 13, 1945, was debated on July 13, 1945, it was decided to form a committee to accelerate action towards federation. However, it happened that before that committee could get down to work, the Legislative Council was dissolved and new elections held on July 1, 1946. As a result of these elections, the membership of the council was changed to such an extent that it was decided to reintroduce the subject. Accordingly, on January 3, 1947, Albert Gomes again introduced the subject on the following resolution: That this Council is in favour of the aim of a federation of the British West Indies as outlined in the Despatch dated March 13, 1945, of the Secretary of State for the Colonies. One of the members opposing the resolution was Ranjit Kumar who had been elected for the County of Victoria.
in 1946. Mr. Kumar was a native of India who had taken up residence in Trinidad. During his years in the Legislature he consistently opposed federation, though he always managed to base his objections on very reasonable grounds. On this occasion he submitted that members did not want a federated West Indies which would be a glorified Crown Colony. Moreover, he continued, with nominated Members sitting on the Council and discussing a resolution for federation of the British West Indies, that resolution if passed could never be said to express the wishes of the majority of the people of the colony to join a federation. It was only when the Legislative Council was fully elected that a resolution passed therein could be said to represent the wishes of the people as a whole. He submitted further that the sole purpose of the federation proposals was to involve Trinidad in the financial burden of which the British taxpayer sought to rid himself. Furthermore, he asked, why just a British West Indian federation? Why not a federation of all the colonial territories in the area, British, French, Dutch, etc.10

Kumar had presented some arguments which could not be refuted. But he was also guilty of some inconsistencies. For example, he thought that a federation might embrace all the colonial territories, yet he suggested that if the nine elected members of the Trinidad Legislature could not agree on a common course of action, then no agreement would be possible in a legislature comprising representatives of all the British Caribbean territories. If he had hoped that discussions on
federation could probably be delayed until there was an Indian majority in a fully elected House, his hopes were not quite groundless, for of the nine members elected in 1946, there were four East Indians, three Negroes, one Portuguese, and one Syrian, and it was quite probable that an increase in elected representation would result in a proportionate increase in East Indian membership. However, whatever might have been Kumar's motives, he had raised some questions which demanded consideration.

Ranjit Kumar's objections to federation were shared by Mr. G. G. Abidh, another East Indian who had been elected for the County of Caroni. Abidh objected to federation because of the financial obligations and also because immigration from the other islands would threaten the welfare of East Indians. Federation, he submitted, would involve a certain amount of responsibility to the other members of the federation, and the obligation to go to their assistance and pull them out of the billows of their financial difficulties. Turning to the question of freedom of movement, he remarked that Barbados and St. Lucia were teeming with a population that was crying to go somewhere because of their economic conditions. Then, he continued, there was the cultural question. Under the law by which immigrants had been brought from India, the Indians were to be absorbed into the population. But the various mosques and temples throughout the island indicated that Indians in Trinidad were never going to be absorbed. They owed it to their motherland, from which they drew their inspiration, to
preserve their identity and their culture and their customs. He was strongly of the opinion that at such time as it could be shown that the different races living in the country were going to be merged into one and have common aspirations, then and only then would it be time for Trinidad to federate with the other islands. Abidh's speech was remarkable as being one of the few occasions when it was openly admitted that East Indians were opposed to federation. If indeed they were, then East Indian legislators generally did not air their opposition openly in the Legislature but tended to discuss, often at great length, the constitutional, demographic and economic factors which tended to make federation difficult if not wholly impossible. One or two examples of this method will be cited in due course. At the present time further attention will be directed to the debate of January 3, 1947.

Another member participating in that debate was Dr. Solomon, who had been elected for South Port-of-Spain in 1946. He touched on the constitutional and financial factors to which objections to federation could be raised. Self-government, he submitted, was a prerequisite of any federation that was to function satisfactorily. However, he argued that approving federation in principle involved nothing more than the expression of a desire to have federation. If it was decided to have federation, certain conditions would have to be determined. On the question of cost, he declared that if the strength and security that came from unity were required, then there should be a willingness to pay for it. Trinidad, being richer than
some of the other colonies should, in the interests of the whole, as well as in its own interests, indicate its willingness to make a bigger contribution than those less able to do so.12

Among those who spoke in favour of the resolution was Mr. L. C. (now Sir Courtenay) Hanneys, a lawyer who had been nominated to the Legislature in 1943. The time had come, he thought, when the "West Indies" should cease to be a geographical expression. He therefore proposed an amendment providing for the appointment of a committee to consider what steps should be taken to stimulate the movement of West Indian affairs in the direction of federation. Concluding the debate, Albert Gomes suggested that the smaller territories should not be despised, because they contained a wealth of political experience, knowledge and intelligence from which the larger territories could well profit. Eventually, with two dissenting votes, the Council accepted the resolution and two amendments. By accepting the second amendment, the Council expressed the opinion that a conference of West Indian delegates should be called at an early date to consider the question of federation.13

The debate which took place in the Trinidad Legislature indicated quite clearly that among certain sections of the community there was a lively interest in federation. It is possible that it influenced the next step taken towards regional unity. But the initiative lay with Mr. Arthur Creech Jones, the Secretary of State for the Colonies in the Labour government which was formed in the United Kingdom as a result of the
general elections of July 5, 1945. Since the Labour Party was in principle committed to granting self-government to the colonies, federation seemed a desirable means of attaining this objective in the West Indies. Accordingly, on February 14, 1947, Creech Jones sent out a memorandum inviting delegates from the colonies to a conference at Montego Bay, Jamaica, to discuss the subject of federation. The memorandum was a well-prepared document discussing the advantages of regional cooperation as well as the difficulties any scheme for cooperation was likely to encounter. As possible media of cooperation it suggested a Regional Council, a federation, or a unitary state, and summarized arguments for and against each. In the light of experiences in other places, the limitations of a regional council were many. The memorandum also suggested a plan for financing a federal government and mentioned a number of services which could be centralized. Its purpose was to indicate some of the elements of closer association and to focus attention upon considerations to be included in any scheme for closer association. It was an admirable piece of work and must have helped considerably in giving direction to the proceedings of the conference, which met at Montego Bay from September 11 to 19, 1947. The Trinidad delegates were Albert Gomes, L. C. Hannays, and Timothy Roodal, an East Indian proprietor who was the senior member of the Legislative Council, having served continually since he was first elected for the County of St. Patrick in 1928. A few days before the Montego Bay Conference, a meeting of the
Caribbean Labour Congress was held in Jamaica. This body was the successor of the British Guiana and West Indies Labour Congress. It had been organized in 1944, and since it included the leaders of the trade union movement in the region, and some of the leading legislators from all the territories, it can fairly be considered as representative of a large body of opinion in the British Caribbean. At its meeting, the Congress prepared a draft federal constitution containing very advanced proposals. The constitution provided for a Governor-General with Lieutenant-Governors in each unit territory, and a unicameral legislature fully elected. The substance of power was to rest with the Cabinet, consisting of the Prime Minister and other ministers recommended by him. In all matters, including the exercise of the veto, the Governor-General was to act on the advice of the Prime Minister. The Congress declared that the establishment of a federation should involve two essential goals: each of the territories should, simultaneously upon the creation of a federal structure, be granted full self-government and the federal government should be given responsible government equal to Dominion status. The Congress further defined the goal of federation as "the development of West Indian Nationhood, the evolution of our social and cultural standards, the expansion and stability of our economy, . . . life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." The constitution prepared by Congress was included in a memorandum they submitted to the Conference on Closer Association.

The Conference on Closer Association assembled at Montego Bay on September 11, and was attended by delegates
from all the British Caribbean territories, including the mainland territories of British Guiana and British Honduras. In his speech at the opening of the conference, Mr. Creech Jones emphasized that the most important reason for the view that some form of association of the colonies was necessary, lay in the fact that it was clearly impossible in the modern world for the separate communities in the West Indies, small and isolated as they were, to achieve and maintain self-government on their own. He declared that it was essential to the progress of the West Indies that progress along the road to federation should be attempted as rapidly as possible.

The delegations representing the various colonies reacted in different ways to the whole idea of federation, and to the speech of Mr. Creech Jones. Some were extremely cautious. The British Guiana delegation, for example, declared that to assent to any resolutions accepting the principle of federation was beyond the mandate they had received from their legislature. Other delegations, such as those from Antigua, Barbados, and Trinidad, declared themselves in favour of immediate federation with Dominion status. Among those speaking in favour of federation was Gomes. In the course of his remarks Gomes stated that the strongest argument in favour of a political federation as a cure for the economic ills of the West Indies lay in the fact that although industrialization was the one and only hope of the territories, no industry could hope to survive and develop to the extent where it could be modern, and compete with the standards of industrialization in other places if it had to restrict itself to a purely insular scope.
and did not have the various services, tariff conditions, customs duties, markets and all the rest rationalized within a federal structure.\textsuperscript{18}

In spite of Gomes' effort to describe some of the advantages to be derived from regional cooperation, some of the delegates failed to show any enthusiasm, while others manifested varying degrees of opposition. In the light of subsequent developments some attention should be given to the attitude of Jamaican delegates at the conference. Among them was Mr. A. Pixley of the Jamaica Legislative Council and Mr. Alexander Bustamente, the Chief Minister. Bustamente raised questions on the cost of federation, as well as the great gaps in the constitutional developments in the different islands. He described the situation as follows:

Jamaica can walk; Trinidad is creeping; Barbados and Demerara are right behind Trinidad or almost the same. Antigua is creeping, and of all the small islands some can barely creep. . . . All of us have a different constitution. So if all of us were to join in a federation, instead of Jamaica who is walking, and Trinidad who is really creeping . . . continuing to progress, we would have to make a retrograde step and try to help those countries who cannot creep.\textsuperscript{19}

On the question of finances he referred to the percentage of Jamaica's revenue that was derived from imports and income tax, and then added: "While some people say we of the West Indies are all the same . . . to me Jamaica and Jamaica's interest comes first."\textsuperscript{20} A similar stand was taken by Mr. A. Pixley, who said that he would be interested in federation, but at some future date. He said he had heard no one explain how federation was going to remove the yoke from West Indian
shouders. Moreover, he continued, Jamaica had plans for
development and should test them before joining hands in
federation. His final argument was that the Jamaican masses
desired no political federation.21

Manley was also at the conference, but not as a represen­
tative of Jamaica. He was a delegate from the British
section of the Caribbean Commission. To the assertion that
the masses in Jamaica desired no political federation, Manley
replied that the House of Representatives had debated the
issue of federation and had unanimously gone on record not
only of favouring the conference, but of accepting in principle
the goal of federation for the West Indies. "There is a large
and growing sentiment in favour of federation in Jamaica," he affirmed.

Manley's opinion of the extent of Jamaican interest
in federation was not shared by Bustamente. As late as 1950,
Bustamente had developed no enthusiasm for federation. On
April 7, while the Jamaica House of Representatives was debat­
ing the Report of the Standing Closer Association Committee to
which attention will be directed later, Bustamente remarked:
"If I can find out where the money is to come from I may be
interested in federation at the earliest possible moment."23

This reference to the attitude of the Jamaica dele­
gates is vital to a correct evaluation of the Montego Bay
conference as a step towards the formation of the West Indies
Federation. The question whether negotiations would have con­
tinued had Jamaica withdrawn outright is interesting, but it
need not arise. The important thing is that in the early stages, Jamaica was an indifferent participant, a fact with which both Adams and Gomes agreed. In April 1957, Gomes, "filled with wonder at the miracle that prevented the federation talks from being disrupted," admitted that for a long time Jamaica was unwilling. As early as September 30, 1947, Adams confessed that he was not particularly optimistic about the future of federation, for persons who had heard Mr. Bustamente both inside and outside of the conference realized that he was not interested in federation. Bustamente's aim was a free and independent Jamaica with himself as Governor. In the light of what has been said about Jamaican unwillingness, the Montego Bay Conference was only a limited success. Nevertheless, it did provide a basis for further negotiation, and in spite of its limitations the achievement of federation was still a possibility.

The conference accepted the principle of federation and embodied its decision in fourteen resolutions which advocated the establishment of federation on the Australian model, with specific subjects assigned to the federal government and residual powers remaining with the unit governments. The interest in federation, to which all the territories were ostensibly committed, should not limit the progress of individual territories to self-government. Among the resolutions was one providing for the establishment of a British Caribbean Shipping Committee. Another recommended the establishment of a British Caribbean Trade Commissioner Service in the United
Kingdom. Most important was Resolution 6, recommending the immediate constitution of a Standing Closer Association Committee.  

The members of this committee were appointed by the Legislatures of the participating territories in October, 1948, the Trinidad delegates being Gomes and Hannays. Meantime, a committee on currency had been set up and commissions appointed on customs and on unification of the public services. Consequently, the Standing Closer Association Committee, generally referred to as SCAC, was relieved of the responsibility of dealing with these matters. Its main responsibility therefore was to work out a plan for the federal structure, and the outline for a federal constitution.

It is difficult to tell exactly what principles guided the members of the Standing Closer Association Committee in their deliberations. Two things seem certain: they ignored contemporary developments in the region, and they failed to appreciate correctly the conditions providing a raison d'être for federation in the West Indies. Throughout the region there were a number of services which could have been operated with increased efficiency by the establishment of a centralized administration; but by far the most real justification for a federation of the British Caribbean territories lay in the need for a scheme of economic development on a regional basis, and the provision of a political entity through which the constitutional aspirations of the people of the area could be speedily realized. To achieve these goals required considerable boldness
of outlook in planning. It was precisely in this respect that the shortcomings of the committee were most obvious. The dominant mood throughout the region indicated that in order to satisfy the ambitions of the people on the different territories, the proposals formulated for federation had to be quite progressive in spirit. The constitutional changes made in Barbados and Jamaica, and the radical proposals contained in the brief submitted by the Caribbean Labour Congress to the Montego Bay Conference were indicative of the advanced thinking spreading throughout the region.

There was further evidence of this progressive thinking in Trinidad, where a Constitution Reform Committee appointed by the Governor in February 1947, was preparing a draft constitution for Trinidad and Tobago. A significant development from that committee was a minority report submitted by Dr. Solomon, who recommended a system of representative government based on adult suffrage. His report provided for a Governor and a fully elected unicameral legislature. In the exercise of his power, the Governor was to act on the advice of the Executive Council which was to be elected from among the members of the Legislature, and was to be the principal instrument of policy. As Solomon outlined the proposals in his report, he suggested that the constitution he had drawn up was the type of constitution at which all West Indian territories should aim if federation of the West Indies was to become a workable, practical reality and not a tragic farce. The fact that Solomon's proposals were embodied in a minority report and
were rejected by the Trinidad Legislature is only partly relevant at this point. The important thing is that they further demonstrated the progressive views becoming increasingly prevalent as the Standing Closer Association Committee approached its task of formulating proposals for federation.

There were other developments from which the Standing Closer Association Committee might have gained an understanding of the trend of popular opinion, and which should have influenced its findings. One of these was a debate that took place in the Trinidad Legislature a few months after the committee had begun its deliberations. On April 8, 1949, Ranjit Kumar introduced in the Legislative Council a resolution opposing any step toward federation being taken by the existing Legislative Council which was not fully representative of the people. He contended that the achievement of responsible government should be the first goal pursued, because the people of Trinidad and Tobago were not desirous of being federated into a super Crown Colony. Kumar's aim, most likely, was to obstruct discussion on federation. Nevertheless, he was basing his objections on perfectly reasonable grounds. People in Trinidad as well as in the other territories expected federation to bring responsible government, if not immediate independence, and the architects of federation meeting in committee might have given that fact more consideration. On two occasions Kumar had debate on his resolution deferred, then he presented it again on May 13, and stated that a number of leakages from SCAC were creating a great deal of apprehension. What was
being done in that committee, he affirmed, was to draft a constitution for the federation of British Caribbean colonies which would convert them into a super Crown Colony with very little self-government for the people.\(^30\)

In the course of the debate which followed, Gomes, who was a member of SCAC, made no attempt to point out that Kumar had been misinformed. He declared that Kumar was opposed to federation on racial grounds. He further stated that both Kumar and Chanka Maharaj, another member of the Legislative Council, who had been elected for the County of St. George in 1946, had dispatched to the Secretary of State for the Colonies a petition worded somewhat as follows: "We as representatives of the East Indian Community in Trinidad protest against federation being granted to the people of the West Indies, because it would mean that the negroes will have the upper hand over the East Indians, the persons who have laboured to build up the island."\(^31\) Gomes went on to say that the same two gentlemen travelled around the island opposing federation with a display of concern for the religion of the Indians, and as they curiously refer to it, 'the religion of the Africans.'\(^32\)

By referring to the correspondence which Kumar and Chanka Maharaj had dispatched to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and to the campaign they had conducted throughout the island, Gomes contended that Kumar's opposition to federation derived from his communal chauvinism rather than from any rational objection to the constitutional proposals being formulated for the new federation. He was probably
right, but he left unanswered the perfectly reasonable grounds on which Kumar's objection had been based. He thus manifested the same disregard for public opinion which was so characteristic of the attitude of the Standing Closer Association Committee.

Kumar's motion, like the Solomon Minority Report, and the demands being made throughout the region for responsible government, ought to have influenced the deliberations of the Standing Closer Association Committee, and inspired the formulation of proposals more nearly consonant with the political aspirations of the West Indian peoples. Unfortunately, these matters were generally ignored and the Report of the Standing Closer Association Committee, when published on October 21, 1949, turned out to be uninspiring and reactionary. It was more remarkable as a deliberate attempt to frustrate the ambitions of West Indians by nullifying the constitutional gains being made by individual territories than as an effort "to seek the shortest possible path to a real political independence for the British peoples of the region," which the committee contended was its avowed objective. According to the committee, "a real political independence" was based on financial stability and should be clearly differentiated from that nominal independence enjoyed by countries supported by grants, and others supported by banks and firms and other agencies. Economic stability could be provided through suitable administrative and political arrangements. It was their considered and emphatic view that federation, and federation only, afforded
a reasonable prospect of achieving economic stability and through it the ultimate goal of political independence. The nice distinction which the Committee drew between real and nominal independence was quite enlightening in view of the fact that at that very time the postwar recovery of Europe was being furthered considerably by billions of dollars of American aid. Moreover, one of the failures of international relations in the postwar era was the liberal aid being made available to emerging nations. The great misfortune of West Indian federation was that its founders ignored or rejected so much that was taking place both in their immediate surroundings and in the world at large. This contempt for contemporary opinion was noticeable whether the committee considered proposals for financing the federation, or for the machinery of government. They discussed, for example, a suggestion which had been widely made that a substantial grant from Great Britain was necessary to start the federation, and although agreeing that such a grant might serve to guarantee the solvency of the region until the federation was able to develop its own resources, they rejected the suggestion on the grounds that such a grant would not engender the spirit of self-reliance which was essential in order to attain full political independence.

The committee apparently aimed at founding a nation that would aspire to real political independence at some future time rather than satisfying existing demands for immediate self-government. Meantime, they formulated proposals for a constitution which justified the fear of those who had contended
that federation was a device conceived by the Colonial Office to perpetuate the Crown Colony rule from which the territories were seeking to free themselves. The proposals called for a constitution providing for a Legislature consisting of a Governor-General, a Senate whose members were nominated by the territorial Governors, and a House of Assembly elected on the basis of universal adult suffrage. The really conservative proposals were those describing the function of the Council of State and the discretionary powers of the Governor-General.

The Council of State was to be the policy-forming instrument of the constitution, and constitutionally advisory to the Governor-General who would preside over it. It was to consist of a Prime Minister elected from the House of Assembly by its members; seven members of the House of Assembly nominated by the Prime Minister; three officials appointed by the Governor-General, and three other members appointed by the Governor-General at his discretion. The Governor-General was to have power to withhold assent to Bills, while there were legislative powers reserved to the Sovereign in defense, international relations, financial stability of federation in external relationships, in the maintenance of public order, and in constitutional amendments.35

On the basis of the constitutional proposals it advocated, and the wide discretionary powers reserved to the Sovereign, the SCAC Report was a most reactionary document which severely compromised the future of federation. Instead of representing the aspirations of West Indians it became
associated with certain institutions from which they had been trying to rid themselves. Far from fulfilling its promise to provide the shortest path to real political independence, federation tended to appear as an impediment to the attainment of that goal to which individual territories were aspiring. By their failure to formulate proposals advanced enough to accommodate progressive opinion in the unit territories, the SCAC provided a basis for the dichotomy between the unit and regional movement towards independence, and greatly prejudiced the prospects of federation.

The failure of the committee derived from their unwillingness or inability to grasp the significance of contemporary developments. Consequently, they betrayed a bewildering disposition to make the wrong decision. They were aware of a demand for full independence, or for self-government, either in advance of or simultaneously with federation. Yet they proceeded to dilate on the merits of a real political independence as distinct from a nominal political independence, and their satisfaction "that the sheer force of circumstances in the modern world makes independence on a unit basis a mirage," apparently created the illusion that they could delay constitutional changes in the unit territories until federation had gained strength. Reference has previously been made to their rejection of the idea of an ad hoc grant to facilitate the establishment of federation. Yet, in spite of their contempt for financial assistance, they planned a federation that would be dependent on the United Kingdom government, and as a result
formulated proposals for a constitution which frustrated the hopes of all West Indians. Much of the SCAC Report reads like a comedy of errors. One very comical suggestion was that for the first few years the recurrent cost of federation would be only £183,000.37

Some of the most ardent advocates of federation found the proposals of the SCAC Report disappointing. Jamaica's Manley declared that the proposals were unsatisfactory, but that they could be used as a basis for modifications which would be compatible with the aspirations of the peoples of the region. Adams of Barbados, who was a member of the committee and a signatory of the Report, admitted in an interview that he also could not be uncritical of the Report, but felt that a reasonable compromise could be reached after discussions in the various legislatures. In Trinidad there was a sharp division of opinion on the merits of the Report. On May 12, 1950, Dr. Solomon presented a resolution in the Legislative Council calling for the rejection of the Report on the grounds that its proposals did not collectively provide a satisfactory basis for a federation of the British Caribbean territories. Solomon contended that it was not enough for a real political independence to become practicable through federation. He insisted that independence and with it the prestige and responsibility of Dominion status should be immediately realized on the establishment of federation, or that there was no excuse for accepting the burden.38 Debate on Solomon's motion was
adjourned, and when it was resumed on July 28, Victor Bryan, Member for the Eastern Counties, proposed that the Report be referred to a select committee of the unofficial members of the Legislative Council. Acceptance of either the motion or Bryan's amendment was viewed as a defeat for the cause of federation. Gomes therefore proposed another amendment urging the Council to accept the Report of the British Caribbean Standing Closer Association Committee, and requesting that a verbatim report of the debate be sent to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. This amendment was accepted mainly through the votes of the official and nominated bloc.

Before proceeding to a discussion of the next stage in pre-federal negotiations, it is important to consider changes in the political situation in Trinidad. Reference has already been made to a Constitution Reform Committee appointed in February, 1947. On the basis of a report submitted by a majority of that committee, Trinidad was granted a new constitution on September 15, 1949. The constitution provided for a Legislative Council consisting of three ex-officio, five nominated, and eighteen elected members presided over by a Speaker appointed by the Governor from outside the Council; an Executive Council of three ex-officio members, five elected members elected by the Legislative Council, and one nominated member appointed by the King on the advice of the Governor. The Executive Council was to be presided over by the Governor and was to be the principal instrument of policy. The Governor's reserve legislative powers were to be used only in the interest of public order.
or good government, and with the concurrence of the Secretary of State for the Colonies should the Executive Council refuse to authorize such use by resolution. The elected members of the Executive Council were to be given charge of government departments with ministerial status.  

The first general election under the new constitution was held on September 18, 1950, and produced some very interesting results. The Butler Party secured the largest representation in the Legislature, electing six members, including Butler himself. Three other parties elected two members each. There were six independents. Seven East Indians were elected and comprised the largest racial bloc on the Council. The election of members to the Executive Council created some uneasiness. Of the five elected, three were independents, while no member of the Butler Party secured election. That meant that the party with the largest membership on the Legislative Council was denied any voice in the government — a fact which provoked some dissatisfaction and much adverse criticism.

With the election of the five Ministers, the Legislature was virtually divided into two equal blocks of thirteen members each. On one side there were the three ex-officio members, five nominated unofficial members, who were generally considered as part of the government, and the five Ministers. The situation was quite an uncomfortable one for the government, for the thirteen elected non-government men by voting together could have greatly embarrassed the government. Such an attempt was indeed made while two government delegates were in London
attending a conference on federation, but A. P. T. James, the Member for Tobago, saved the government from embarrassment by changing his allegiance and voting with them at the critical moment.42

The first measure dealt with by the new Legislature on the subject of federation was passed on May 5, 1952, when the Council approved a resolution calling for the establishment of a sound and workable federation and appointed Gomes and Hannays as delegates to a conference in London to deal with the subject. Proposals for this conference were first made in the Jamaica Legislature on August 10, 1951, when the SCAC Report was debated and Bustamente expressed doubts as to whether Jamaica was capable of bearing the expense involved. However, the Report was accepted and it was recommended that a conference of representatives of the British government and of the Caribbean territories be held in London at an early date to decide future action.43 Mr. James Griffiths, Secretary of State for the Colonies, welcomed this suggestion and on September 27, 1951, suggested in a message to the Governor of Jamaica that a conference would be held during 1952. However, shortly after Griffiths made this announcement the Labour government in which he served was defeated in the general elections held on October 27, 1951. This change in government in the United Kingdom did not seriously affect the plans for the conference. On February 27, 1953, Mr. Oliver Lyttleton, the Secretary of State for the Colonies in the Conservative government informed the House of Commons that he had decided to call a conference
during the summer. He suggested, however, that the West Indian
governments should study the financial and other implications
set out in the SCAC Report, as well as the proposals for the
establishment of customs union which had been published pre-
viously. He announced further that if the conference were
held, it would be necessary to proceed on the supposition that
the federal arrangement would not include British Guiana. On
January 16, 1952, the British Guiana Legislative Council had
rejected the federation proposals, though it later expressed
willingness to participate in a customs union. On June 2,
1952, the British Honduras Legislature expressed the view that
federation would result in the domination of their country by
the other territories which were economically stronger, and
therefore voted to defer indefinitely the question of partici-
pating in the proposed federation. The withdrawal of British
Guiana and British Honduras reduced to ten the number of terri-
tories directly interested in federation. These were: Antigua,
Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Christo-
pher (Kitts)-Nevis and Anguilla, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, and
Trinidad and Tobago.

It turned out to be impracticable to hold the confer-
ence in the summer of 1952 as planned, and on November 14, 1952,
Lyttleton invited the West Indian governments to a conference
in London in April, 1953. The conference duly convened in
London on April 13, under the chairmanship of Mr. Oliver
Lyttleton. Discussions centered around the proposals set out
in the SCAC Report, but sharp disagreement developed on two
subjects of vital importance to Trinidad and Tobago. These
were freedom of movement, and the location of the federal capital. The difficulty over freedom of movement lay principally in the increasing restrictions being imposed by Trinidad on immigration from the other islands, where freedom of movement was viewed as one of the benefits of federation, whereas Trinidad viewed it as a threat to her social and economic development. Gomes, the leader of the Trinidad delegation, was in the difficult position of advocating federation while opposed to the principle of freedom of movement which was indispensable to federation. Eventually he had to give way and freedom of movement was placed on the exclusive list for federal legislation. There was also disagreement on the choice of an island for the federal capital. According to the SCAG Report the capital was to be in Trinidad. The question was re-opened at the conference, with Barbados making a very serious claim. Eventually, as a compromise decision, Grenada was accepted as the island to host the federal capital. Aside from these areas of disagreement, the conference achieved a substantial degree of unanimity in its deliberations, and accepted the federal scheme as set out in the SCAC Report with certain modifications. The essence of the proposals was for a British Caribbean federation with the capital in Grenada. The Governor-General would normally act as a constitutional figure, but with certain reserve powers in the fields of finance and defence. He would also preside over the Council of State, some of whose members would be appointed by him. The amount of customs revenues to be transferred from the unit territories to the federal government was
reduced from twenty-five per cent as recommended by the SCAC Report to fifteen per cent. The federal constitution would be capable of alteration by federal law, subject to certain safeguards protecting the rights of the territorial units, and a conference would be convened within five years of the establishment of federation to consider revision.  

During the discussions at the London conference the British government informed the delegates that as the proposed federation would need some financial assistance at the outset, the region would continue to share in such grants as the United Kingdom would make available to colonial territories, and that for the first ten years of federation the British government would make available to the federation grants intended to cover the budget deficiencies of the grant-aided territories in the area. Moreover, parliament would be invited to make a grant of half a million pounds (£500,000) towards the capital cost of establishing the federal headquarters.  

Aside from L. C. Hannays of Trinidad, who signed the Report with reservations on the choice of Grenada for the federal capital and on the subject of freedom of movement being made subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the federal government, the recommendations of the conference were unanimous, and the official report was published in June, 1953.

Although the report was published in June, 1953, the debate on it in the Trinidad legislature did not take place until over a year later. On account of the precarious balance existing in the Legislative Council, where the number of seats were equally the supporters of the government and the members
of the opposition, it was considered advisable to wait until the report had been accepted in the other territories before submitting it to the hostility that was anticipated from certain quarters in Trinidad. Another reason for the delay was that Albert Gomes, who was the leader of the Trinidad and Tobago delegation, was at times absent from the island in connection with his regular duties as Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce, and in the circumstances it was considered inadvisable to debate the subject until the government was as near full voting strength as possible. The necessity for this precaution had been previously demonstrated on April 17, 1953, when opportunity was taken of the absence of Gomes and Hannays, who were then attending the London conference, to present a motion of no confidence. According to Gomes, the author of that no confidence motion later confided that had the motion succeeded it would have effected the dissolution of the Legislative Council and consequently would have left the Trinidad delegates at the London conference without status, thus wrecking the plans for federation. As has been previously stated, the government was saved from defeat by A.P.T. James, member for Tobago, who, much to the chagrin of his former colleagues, changed sides and voted to sustain the government.

The no confidence motion to which reference has just been made was indicative of the necessity for the government to choose carefully the time when it would introduce a matter that was expected to arouse as much controversy as the Report of the London Conference of 1953. Accordingly, on December 10,
1954, Albert Gomes presented a resolution urging acceptance of the proposals for a British Caribbean federation as agreed to by the London conference of April, 1953, but with reservations with respect to the questions of freedom of movement and the site for the federal capital.

Gomes was extremely brief in moving his resolution, and he was immediately followed by Ranjit Kumar who proposed an amendment expressing the agreement of the House to a political federation of the British West Indies along the general lines laid down at the London conference, subject to a number of conditions: The British government should give an irrevocable pledge to set up machinery for a federal government within five years of the proclamation of a federal constitution, contribute a sum of not less than £5 million to the initial cost, guide the people's representatives in the federal government towards self-government, and at the close of five years grant self-government to the federation as a Dominion within the British Commonwealth. Ranjit Kumar also proposed that during the initial period of five years the British government should spend £50 million on development schemes in the backward colonies to reduce the necessity for emigration. Moreover, he continued, on account of existing economic conditions, it should be agreed in advance that immigration restrictions be binding on all parties and be gradually relaxed over a period of ten years; that every effort be made to include British Guiana in the federation so that the economic resources and land space of British Guiana be also available to the federated nation; that Trinidad offer its facilities to the federal government.
as a temporary capital until the seat of the federal government was determined; and that during the initial period of five years the federated nation be guided by a chief executive from the United Kingdom who would be free from any local associations or antipathies developed during the previous service in the Caribbean.  

On this occasion, Kumar rejected the idea of self-government for the federation, and set out to develop the theme of financial assistance in elaborate and somewhat ridiculous detail. Using his knowledge as a civil engineer to advantage, he suggested that the Governor-General's residence would cost something in the vicinity of ten to twenty million West Indian dollars, and the Federal parliament would cost between twenty and thirty million dollars more. In New Delhi, he said, he had once had the opportunity of walking through the Viceroy's palace. To build something like that would cost around fifty million dollars. The Governor-General of the West Indies would not want anything much less. The sum of £50 million should be spent on the development of the smaller islands to lessen the tendency of the people to migrate. He further claimed that he had spent considerable time in a caucus of the Butler party persuading his colleagues in the party to give up the idea of immediate self-government, and he had succeeded, for Butler in his turn demanded one billion West Indian dollars for the development of the territories.  

All the participants in the debate did not follow the pattern set by Kumar. A most statesmanlike contribution was
made by Mitra G. Sinanan, an East Indian lawyer who had first attracted public attention in 1937 when he participated in the legal defense of Butler and others involved in the June disturbances of that year. After campaigning without success as a member of the United Front in 1946, he ran again and entered the Legislature in 1950. In a forceful, well-reasoned speech he rejected the report of the London conference on three points: freedom of movement, the question of the federal capital, and the necessity of improving the constitutional status of the federation. His presentation was quite effective, especially as on the question of freedom of movement and the constitutional status of the federation he was able to quote extensively from speeches by Gomes and others, who on previous occasions had expressed quite advanced ideas. He emphasized that the question of revising the constitutional status of the federation had become urgent in the light of anticipated changes in Jamaica's constitution.

There were other speakers opposing the report, but their arguments were mainly different treatments of the same points. Among those favouring an acceptance of the report was Hannays, who had signed it with reservations. He explained that his reservation was due to the fact that the selection of a place for the federal capital was the responsibility of the federal government when it should be established. On the question of freedom of movement, he suggested that since Barbados, which had raised the question in the first place, was willing to have a conference, the sole question was whether
the invitation would be accepted. At any such conference opportunity would be taken to resolve the differences and arrive at some arrangement satisfactory to all.\textsuperscript{56}

Gomes, in winding up the debate, dealt with the arguments presented as forcefully as usual, but was not quite convincing. He was at the disadvantage of answering specific charges with general principles: the necessity for the scattered islands of the West Indian archipelago to be brought together under the aegis of a federal government; the black future in the contemporary world for territories having the size and resources of the West Indian islands; and similar arguments that had been repeated several times. Then he turned to a charge he had previously made of certain East Indian members having sent a communication to the Secretary of State protesting against the establishment of federation. There followed a dramatic moment as Gomes declared that Ranjit Kumar had been continuing his rounds up and down the country announcing that with the advent of federation, negroes from the small islands would come in and mix with the Indian race and pollute it.\textsuperscript{57} At this there was some interruption and both Kumar and Chanka Maharaj rose to their feet. Order was quickly restored, and Gomes proceeded to deal with what he termed 'the unfolding pattern'. While the London conference was in progress, he stated, an attempt was made to bring down the government, thus leaving the Trinidad delegates without status, and as a result wrecking the conference and the prospects of federation. On a more positive note Gomes stated that federation would confer
certain economic advantages on Trinidad by providing an
expanded domestic market for the manufacturing enterprises of
the country. Such a statement was long overdue, but it did
not go far enough, for from the time federation became a
topic of discussion, its opponents had spared no pains to
disseminate information hostile to it, while its advocates
had done little to explain the advantages to be derived from
federation. As on the present occasion, pro-federation effort
had been devoted to attacking the motives and methods of the
anti-federationists rather than to presenting a statement of
the advantages of federation.

Shortly after four o'clock on the morning of December
11, after an all-night session, the Council rejected Kumar's
amendments and by a vote of 15 to 7 accepted the London report
with the modifications proposed. [The decision to summon a
conference on immigration; to leave the selection of the
capital site to the federal government, and to provide for the
introduction of new or modified constitutions in unit terri-
tories.] But though the Council accepted the report, the
debate had pointed up the basic inadequacies of the proposals
for federation. In the special situation existing in the
West Indies, anxiety over questions of finance and immigration
was perfectly understandable. But there was no reason why the
proposals for a federal constitution should have provided such
a handy weapon for obstruction by anti-federationists. The
reactionary proposals ran counter to movements in the West
Indies, and not merely did they represent a perpetuation of
Crown Colony rule, but it created certain anomalies. For example, the Queen was empowered to legislate by Order-in-Council for the Central government – a right she did not have in the Bahamas, one of the unit territories in the federation. Again, the Head of State of the federal government was being given considerable reserve powers whereas the territorial legislatures had been greatly reducing these powers in the various colonies.

While the proposals for the federal constitution remained unchanged in the drafting stage, constitutional changes had been taking place in all the territories of the region. Indicative of those changes were those taking place in Barbados, where the first extension of the franchise in 1944 was followed by the introduction of universal adult suffrage in February 1951. On February 1, 1954, the ministerial system of government was inaugurated and Grantley Adams became the first West Indian to be given the title of Premier. In Jamaica it had been accepted that the 1944 constitution was provisional for a period of five years. On May 6, 1953, that constitution was revised to provide for the appointment of a Chief Minister and seven Ministers charged with the responsibility of government departments by the Governor on the recommendation of the Chief Minister, and the replacement of five elected members in the Executive Council by eight ministers, thereby ensuring an elected majority in that body. The great gap between the constitutions in these territories and that proposed for the
federal government was to be further widened before federation was established.

The Trinidad and Tobago constitution was not quite as advanced as those in Barbados and Jamaica, but it too was being revised. Reference has already been made to the constitution which came into force in 1950. Attention must now be given to later developments. In April 1954 the government defeated a resolution demanding further reform of the constitution on the grounds that any committee appointed then could not hope to complete its report in time to provide a new constitution for the elections due in September 1955. However, in February 1955 another resolution was presented, demanding constitutional reform, and the government announced that such a resolution could not again be turned down. However, it warned that acceptance of the resolution might involve a postponement of elections. A committee was duly appointed to prepare proposals for a new constitution. On May 12, the Legislative Council decided by a vote of 18 to 5 to postpone the elections until the middle of the following year.\(^{59}\)

The decision to postpone the elections was severely criticized, and a number of protest meetings were held throughout the country. It was accepted that legislative bodies could be dissolved before the expiration of their stipulated term, but for legislators to vote themselves an additional year in office was considered an immoral act. Among those leading the protest was Mr. Bhadase Sagan Maraj who, in 1950, had been elected for the newly created Funapuna constituency,
and since then had rapidly risen to prominence as a political leader with a large following. Bhadase Maraj had grown up in rather modest circumstances in a rural village in Caroni, but by hard work and shrewd business transactions during the Second World War, he had acquired so much wealth that by the close of the war he was reputed to be one of the wealthiest men in Trinidad. After entering politics in 1950 he rapidly increased his following by assuming leadership of the labour movement throughout the sugar belt, and also by his association with the Sanathan Dharam Mahasabha, a Hindu religious organization. Through the latter body he used his wealth in an extensive school-building programme which further increased his reputation, and established him as a leader of the East Indian community. It was primarily from his connection with the labour movement and from his activities as a philanthropist that Maraj received the support for the People's Democratic Party which he later organized.

After entering the Legislature in 1950, Bhadase Maraj gradually established himself as a power to be reckoned with. It was he who on April 17, 1953, brought in the no confidence motion which seriously threatened the government. As has been previously stated, he condemned the decision to postpone the elections, which were due in 1955, and in protest he resigned his seat, vowing to contest the by-election necessitated by his resignation to demonstrate the extent to which his constituency supported his stand on the matter. He did this, and in the by-election held in June, 1955, he was returned by a majority greater than that he had had in 1950. The real result of
his action was to boost his personal stock, and win increased support for his People's Democratic Party.

The one-year postponement of the elections affected the history of Trinidad and Tobago to a greater degree than even the most prescient observer would have dared to predict. It greatly helped to enhance the public stature of Bhadase Maraj, but it provided the opportunity for the entry into the political life of Trinidad of someone who was destined to change profoundly the history of the country. That person was Dr. Eric Williams. Dr. Williams had studied at Oxford on an Island scholarship and in 1938 he received his Doctorate of Philosophy, submitting as his thesis that economic motives were the dominant considerations in the abolition of slavery. He was the author of a number of works including *Capitalism and Slavery*, *The Negro in the Caribbean*, and *Education in the British West Indies*. After serving at Howard University as Professor of Political and Social Science he was appointed Deputy Chairman of the Research Council of the Caribbean Commission which had its headquarters in Port-of-Spain. When his contract with the commission expired in June 1955, it was not renewed and Williams was on his own. Shortly after being relieved of his employment he delivered a series of lectures on subjects of interest to the West Indies. Later, he turned to open-air meetings to conduct what he referred to as a programme of political education on problems facing the West Indies and Trinidad and Tobago.
In his campaign, Williams was an immediate success. He quickly bridged the gulf existing between the intellectuals and the masses, overcame their suspicion, and established a rapport with them. The means by which he did it were, by accepted standards, unorthodox. Politicians occasionally conducted open-air meetings during election campaigns, but once the campaigns were over they generally disappeared until another election. Williams made the open-air meeting a regular procedure. In Port-of-Spain he conducted meetings in Woodford Square, a public forum frequently used by demagogues of the Butler variety, but scarcely ever used by respectable politicians. In time, the Trinidad Guardian attacked him for "using the old Butler platform in Woodford Square," and on a later occasion claimed that "the jungle of Woodford Square is being used as a stalking ground by a new aspirant for political honours." Williams rejected the idea of Woodford Square being called a jungle, and renamed it the "University."

Williams began his lectures at the time when proposals for constitution were being formulated. In July 1955 he delivered a lecture on "Constitutional Reform in Trinidad and Tobago." This lecture, first delivered in Woodford Square, was later repeated at several places throughout the island. In it he attacked the existing constitution, as well as proposals then being formulated, and submitted his own draft constitution providing for a bicameral legislature with a fully elected Lower House, and a nominated Upper House consisting of representatives of special economic interests, representatives of the
leading religious denominations (Christian and non-Christian), three members ex-officio, and two individuals of distinction in public life. In connection with the lectures he prepared a memorandum setting forth his proposals and secured almost 28,000 signatures which he had bound in six volumes and delivered to the Governor for transmission to the Colonial Office.

Another question which Williams made the subject of his lectures was federation. However, his public utterances on federation date from much earlier than 1955. In September, 1954, in a public lecture on the subject "British West Indian Federation, Past and Present," he presented an account of attempts at federation in the British Caribbean territories. In November, 1954, in a lecture in Point Fortin in South Trinidad, he dealt with the principle of federation as a prerequisite to the development of a national point of view and the encouragement of national patriotism. This lecture was entitled "What is a West Indian?" By his position with the Caribbean Commission he was, on those occasions, limited to discussions of a non-political nature. However, early in 1956, when no longer subject to any restrictions of the kind, he delivered two public lectures on the proposed federation. In "The Pros and Cons of Federation," delivered first in Port-of-Spain on January 5, 1956, he set out first the necessity for federation, stating: "Whether federation is more costly or less costly, whether federation is more efficient or less efficient, federation is inescapable if the British Caribbean territories are not to parade themselves to the twentieth century world as eighteenth century anachronisms." Then, after discussing
the inadequacies of the proposed federal constitution, he drew up a resolution condemning it, and also wrote an open letter stating among other things that "the plan for a British Caribbean Federation as outlined in the Report of the London Conference 1953, was not in consonance with the political aspirations of the British Caribbean people, the objective necessities of the area, and the progressive spirit pervading all colonial peoples." The resolution signed by almost twenty thousand persons, was sent to West Indian delegates about to meet in London on February 7, 1956, for the final conference establishing federation. This lecture was delivered at seven different places in Trinidad in a little over a week, and was followed by "Further Thoughts on Federation" a few days later. The immediate importance of these lectures was that they carried the subject of federation to the people and provided them with information on the subject.

Dr. Williams' lectures had other results. The points on which he had criticized the constitutional proposals were substantially those raised in the Trinidad Legislature every time the subject had been debated. Consequently, he was charged with an attempt to wreck the federation. However, his views found considerable support in Jamaica where Manley's People's National Party had come into power, and on November 30, 1955, had secured the unanimous approval of the House of Representatives to have the 1953 proposals considerably revised. The points raised by Jamaica created much anxiety as the date for the conference approached. It was generally feared that
any attempt to change too much the decisions previously taken would involve a further delay in coming to a final agreement, if it did not completely destroy the prospects of federation.

The representatives from the various territories, and observers from British Guiana and British Honduras, met in London from February 7 to 23. The Trinidad delegates were Victor Bryan, Minister of Agriculture and Lands since 1950, Gomes and Hannays, both of whom had been delegates to all the previous conferences on federation. Norman Manley, as Jamaica's Chief Minister, was representing Jamaica at these conferences on federation for the first time. At the beginning of the session he tried to influence the conference to reopen discussion on a number of questions, but though some delegates were sympathetic, they feared that such a step would be inimical to the immediate establishment of federation. Accordingly, it was only on the less controversial issues that changes were effected. For example, simultaneous membership in both federal and unit legislatures which had been prohibited in the SCAC report but accepted by the London conference 1953, was again forbidden; the decision of the conference on freedom of movement held in Port-of-Spain in November 1955, was accepted, and both the federal and territorial legislatures were empowered to deal with the subject; government officials would be able to attend meetings of the Council of State though they were excluded from actual membership; and the Governor-General was to consult the Governors of unit territories on the appointment of Senators.
The conference was marked by disagreement on some very important issues. There was, for example, no agreement on the establishment of a customs union, a subject which had been discussed for many years. It was felt that the special position of Jamaica, where a development programme was in progress, rendered the establishment of a customs union inopportune. Accordingly, there was to be written into the preamble of the constitution a statement stressing the need for an integrated trade policy for the federation, including an eventual customs union as a means of economic strength.69

Another question on which there was some disagreement was the selection of a site for the federal capital. The decision of the 1953 London conference in favour of Grenada had not met with general acceptance by the various West Indian legislatures, and the decision to review the matter at this conference tended to increase the number of claimants. After lengthy discussion the conference decided to ask the Secretary of State to appoint a three-man fact-finding commission of impartial persons who had never resided in the West Indies to submit recommendation on the three most suitable sites to a Standing Federation Committee to consist of the delegations to the conference.

One important matter on which changes were made was the subject of federal finances. The conference rejected the earlier proposals by which the federal government would have retained fifteen per cent of customs revenues for its own use, and substituted instead a mandatory levy on the unit governments. This was eventually set at just over nine million West Indian
dollars. In addition, the federal revenue was to be augmented by the profits on currency. The United Kingdom government offered to increase its contribution to the cost of the federal capital from half a million to one million pounds. One point on which this conference showed some realism was in its approach to financial assistance. The delegates of the territories meeting as the Standing Closer Association Committee had virtually abjured any consideration of financial assistance. However, at this conference the question of financial assistance through loans and grants was discussed in some detail and the idea of a "Colombo Plan" for the federation was even raised. Nevertheless, it was decided that the matter of loans could not be proceeded with until specific needs could be ascertained.70

When the conference closed on February 23, the participating territories were considered to be irrevocably committed to federation, and the impression was that a milestone had been reached in West Indian history and that the decision of the conference had marked a significant development of the sentiment of nationhood among the peoples of the area. Manley, for example, expressed the opinion that the conference had finally decided that there would be a Caribbean federation from which no one would turn back.71 However, the decisions of the conference provided no grounds for unrestrained jubilation, and a note of pessimism was expressed by the Trinidad Guardian which lamented the fact that the federation had at its start a government without bargaining power, and beset with weakness and half-measures of far-fetched compromise. It went on to
state that the problems inherent in the defects of the federal structure could not be brushed aside with fair words or unthinking optimism. Continuing in a similar vein, the newspaper observed: "to sacrifice customs union has been to expose the enterprise to shoals on which it may well founder. . . . We very much fear that the federal government which was to have been a lion has turned out instead to be a mouse."72

The criticism expressed by the Trinidad Guardian was well justified. The protracted negotiations of which the London conference was the culmination, led to the establishment of a federation which met none of the needs of the West Indian situation. The provision of the federal constitution followed almost undeviatingly the extremely bad proposals formulated by SCAC. In 1949, the SCAC proposals were extremely conservative. In 1956 they were obsolete. The most serious defect of the federal structure was the omission of any machinery for effecting the economic integration of the region. Apparently this matter was never the subject of serious discussion. Therefore, the federation established in 1956 was not prepared to deal with the economic development of the West Indian territories, while it was provided with a constitution which had the effect of frustrating the aspirations of the British Caribbean peoples to self-government.

It would be instructive to discover the source of the ideas which dominated the pre-federal discussions, and influenced the decisions taken. But until the veil of secrecy has been lifted from the deliberations of the many conferences,
any such effort must remain unrewarded. However, a few things are reasonably certain. Neither Barbados nor Jamaica was in complete accord with the initial proposals formulated for federation. It will be remembered that Adams was critical of the SCAC report, and advocated certain changes in it; and while the Barbados House of Assembly did not share Adams' interest in experimenting with a fully elected unicameral legislature for the federation, it advocated the establishment of a federation having Cabinet government and in which the territories would be self-governing. As for Jamaica, it will be remembered that Manley was not only critical of the SCAC report, but that when his party came into power in 1955, he secured the passage of a measure advocating that the proposals of the federal constitution be changed so as to satisfy progressive thinking in the area. Of course, Manley's desire to improve the structure of the federation did not envisage the introduction of a customs union. According to Adams, all delegations at the pre-federation conferences wanted self-government as soon as practicable. Quite obviously, this included the Trinidad and Tobago delegation, as well as those of the smaller territories. However, what is quite remarkable in the case of Trinidad and Tobago, is that with the exception of the provision introducing freedom of movement and the location of the federal capital, the reports of the pre-federation conferences were received by a majority of the Legislature.

On account of its position as the most prosperous territory in the region, Trinidad and Tobago expected to make a proportionately greater financial contribution to the
federation than the other two countries. Consequently, Trinidad played a most influential role at the pre-federation conferences. Unfortunately, in undertaking this responsibility it was handicapped by the absence of a coherent party system. The country's effort was further affected by the opposition of the East Indian community. With the exception of Abidh, in the Legislative Council on January 3, 1947, East Indians in their public utterances opposing federation, were careful to avoid any appearance of doing so on purely ethnic grounds. They frequently dilated on the financial and economic burdens on the country, or on the inadequacies of the constitutional provisions. Thus Bhadase Maraj is alleged to have informed a gathering of East Indians that when he visited other West Indian islands, and saw the extent to which East Indians had become absorbed into the community, he did not want federation. However, in a letter later published in the press, he explained that his objections were based on economic and other grounds. That the majority of East Indians were opposed to federation has been further explained in two anthropological studies of their community recently conducted. In both these studies it was stated that East Indians opposed federation because they feared that unlimited immigration from the neighbouring islands would place them at a further numerical disadvantage. It is quite possible that, as Manley stated in a public broadcast from London on February 6, 1956, East Indians in British Guiana and Trinidad opposed federation because they aspired to political domination on a communal basis. If indeed such
was their aim, then the organization of the People's Democratic Party in 1955 made its attainment possible.

Important as was the opposition of the East Indian community, it was secondary to the absence of a coherent party system. This situation militated against the development of an informed public opinion on the subject, and an enlightened discussion of the possible benefits and drawbacks of federation. What is more important, it left the country's delegation to the pre-federation discussions without any substantial support. It could be said with some justification that Trinidad entered federation against the wishes of the elected representatives of the people. In this connection the division of the Legislature on the SCAC report is instructive. Of nine elected members in the Legislative Council in 1950, six voted in favour of a motion that the report was unsatisfactory and should be rejected. The same six voted against Gomes' amendment to accept the report and refer a copy of the debate to the Colonial Office. In spite of this adverse vote by the elected men, the report was accepted. The pattern varied slightly on the debate on the report of the London Conference, 1953. In the circumstances, Gomes, the chief protagonist of federation during the period, derived his support chiefly from the nominated and official block. The price for this support was that federation had to be made cheap enough to satisfy the business class who anticipated having to pay for it. On July 28, during the debate on the SCAC report, Mr. Alan Storey, a nominated member, stated that not only the Trinidad Chamber of Commerce but also
the Incorporated Chambers of Commerce of the British Caribbean supported federation within the framework of the SCAC report but that they considered that the contribution of twenty-five per cent of customs dues was too much to transfer from the territories to the federation, and recommended instead that the amount be reduced to ten per cent. At the London Conference, 1953, the figure was made fifteen per cent, and Adams has explained that the reduction was made at the insistence of Gomes, who frequently referred to the assertion that Trinidad would be required to pay for federation, and regularly questioned the wisdom of continuing with the negotiations.

It is not intended here to ascribe any personal blame, but the fact seems quite clear that the political situation in Trinidad and Tobago during the pre-federation period left the country's delegation without the support it needed to accept fully the responsibilities devolving upon Trinidad and Tobago as a consequence of its superior economic position in relation to other territories. The federation was therefore left dependent on financial assistance from the United Kingdom. This financial assistance was held to involve a certain degree of United Kingdom supervision and was in a great measure responsible for the constitution imposed on the federation. The conclusion seems inescapable that the proposals formulated for federation were influenced to a profound degree by the political situation in Trinidad and Tobago, where there was no collective responsibility for the commitments to be undertaken in the name of the country. This was extremely unfortunate.
for a country where there had developed a tradition of support for federation, and where self-government had always been envisioned as one of its objectives.
Footnotes


3 The Colonial Office List, 1948, pp. 52, 53.


5 Eric Williams, History of the People of Trinidad and Tobago, pp. 235-243.


7 Trinidad Guardian, Editorial, January 22, 1956.

8 The West Indies, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives, vol. 1, cols. 450, 451, June 16, 1958. Hereafter cited as H. R. Debates. In the course of this debate Adams stated that at the London Conference on Federation in 1956, Gomes objected to certain of the financial provisions on the grounds that he had to face an election later that year.

9 Trinidad and Tobago, Debates of the Legislative Council, 1947, p. 37, January 3, 1947.

10 Ibid., pp. 39, 40.

11 Ibid., pp. 40, 41.

12 Ibid., p. 42.

13 Ibid., pp. 43, 44.


15 Ibid., pp. 16-20.


18 Ibid., p. 31.
19 Ibid., p. 22.
20 Ibid., p. 27.
21 Ibid., pp. 54-56.
22 Ibid., p. 58.
24 Trinidad Guardian, April 28, 1957.

27 See above, note 16.
28 Williams, History of the People of Trinidad and Tobago, pp. 241-243.

29 Trinidad and Tobago, Debates of the Legislative Council, 1948-49, p. 917, April 18, 1949.
31 Ibid., p. 942.
32 Loc. cit.

34 Ibid., p. 25.
36 Ibid., p. 11.
37 Ibid., p. 50.

38 Trinidad and Tobago, Debates of the Legislative Council, 1949-50, p. 947, May 12, 1950.

40 Ibid., p. 1161.


42 Trinidad and Tobago, Debates of the Legislative Council, vol. 3, col. 1258, April 17, 1953.

43 Keesings Contemporary Archives, p. 12758, February 14-21, 1953.

44 496 H. C. Deb. 5s col. 156, February 27, 1952.


47 Loc. cit.


50 See above, note 42.

51 Trinidad and Tobago, Debates of the Legislative Council, vol. 5, col. 691, December 11, 1954.

52 Ibid., cols. 494-496, December 10, 1954.

53 Ibid., cols. 505-507.

54 Ibid., col. 512.

55 Ibid., cols. 539, 567.

56 Ibid., cols. 654-656.

57 Trinidad and Tobago, Debates of the Legislative Council, vol. 5, col. 690, December 11, 1954.

58 Ibid., col. 702.


61 Trinidad Guardian, January 6, 1956.

62 Eric Williams, Constitution Reform in Trinidad and Tobago, Public Affairs Pamphlet No. 3, Port-of-Spain, published by the College Press for the Trinidad and Tobago Teachers' Economic and Cultural Association, 1955, pp. 32, 36.


64 Eric Williams, Federation, Two Public Lectures, Port-of-Spain, published by the College Press for the Peoples' National Movement, 1956, p. 12.

65 Ibid., p. 28.

66 Ibid., p. 32.

67 Some of the changes recommended by the Jamaica House of Representatives are as follows:
1. That official members should be removed from the Federal Executive.
2. That the Federal Prime Minister should be given sole discretion in the appointment of Federal Senators to the Executive without minimum limitations to number.
3. That the Reserved Powers of the Governor-General should be reduced.
4. That the Federal Government be given powers of regional planning and the initiation and maintenance of consultative and advisory services.
5. The reconsideration of United Kingdom financial assistance to the new federation.
6. The working out of a new method for revising the Federal Constitution, and
7. The amendment of the 1953 recommendation on the status of unit and federal members and Ministers.


70 Cmd. 9733, pp. 7, 8.

71 Trinidad Guardian, February 24, 1956.
72 Trinidad Guardian, editorial, February 26, 1956.
73 Keesing's Temporary Archives, February 14-24, 1953, p. 12758.
74 See note No. 67.
77 Klass, East Indians in Trinidad, p. 243. See also Niehoff, East Indians in the West Indies, p. 68.
78 Trinidad Guardian, February 6, 1956.
79 Trinidad and Tobago, Debates of the Legislative Council, 1949-1950, pp. 1161, 1183.
80 Trinidad and Tobago, Debates of the Legislative Council, vol. 5, cols. 760-765, December 11, 1954.
83 Ibid., cols. 441, 447.
Chapter III

LAUNCHING INTO A NEW ERA

The decisions of the London Conference of February, 1956, provided the culmination of the protracted discussions which had begun at Montego Bay in September, 1947. In spite of its obvious defects, the agreement reached at the conference was expected to forge a closer union of the West Indian territories than had ever existed before. However, a great deal remained to be done to prepare the administrative framework for the federation and to clarify certain details in the constitution. This work was the responsibility of the Standing Federation Committee comprising representatives of the federating territories, with Sir Stephen Luke, who had been serving as Comptroller for Development and Welfare, as chairman. However, in Trinidad and Tobago, the matters concerning the federation for a while became subordinate to the all-important subject of internal politics. The country was approaching what was, until then, the most important constitutional development in its history, and interest was quite high. Reaction against the postponement of the elections from the previous year, and the introduction of a new constitution which greatly increased the scope of popular government, together generated unprecedented interest in the impending general elections. It will be remembered that in February, 1955, a Constitution Reform Committee
had been appointed to draft proposals for a new constitution. That committee submitted its report to the Governor in September 1955. On Saturday, May 19, 1956, the Legislative Council accepted the new Constitution which provided for a unicameral legislature of thirty-one members. There were two officials (the Colonial Secretary and the Attorney-General), five nominated and twenty-four elected members. A speaker elected from outside the council was to preside over its deliberations. The Executive Council consisting of the Governor as president, the Colonial Secretary, the Attorney-General, and eight elected members with ministerial positions, was to be the chief instrument of policy. Of the eight ministers who were to be elected by the Legislative Council, one was to be Minister of Finance.

Indicative of the changing political situation in Trinidad in 1956, was the growing number of political parties. Among them the greatest vigour was shown by the People's Democratic Party, which had been organized in 1955. However, the greatest stimulus of interest in the elections was the series of lectures Williams had been conducting, and the outstanding evidence of the transformation taking place was the vitality shown by the People's National Movement (popularly known as the PNM), the political party organized by Williams on January 15, 1956. This was the newest of eight political parties in the country, and it differed sharply from all the others. It had a broad base of popular support built up on the interest aroused by Williams' lectures, and although it was noticeably stronger in urban areas, it had organized branches throughout Trinidad and Tobago. Though the membership of the party has been
predominantly Negro from its inception, its philosophy is multi-racial and its officers have been drawn from all peoples and all walks of life.  

The PNM caused considerable irritation because it refused to form any alliances with existing parties or organizations, refused membership to old line politicians, and was severely critical of the government, the government ministers, and the existing political system which Williams contemptuously labelled "the Old World." In the course of his public lectures during the previous year he had been severe in his condemnation of the political life of the country, declaring at one time, that "the dishonesty and immorality of political life in Trinidad and Tobago are now a byword... Graft and corruption are eating away our society." His Party offered an escape from this situation and therefore eschewed all association with anything that savoured of the past. A noticeable feature of the Party was the rigid discipline it enforced to avoid being exploited by opportunists seeking a short cut to a political career. A few days after it was organized, it expelled a member who ignored a party directive and accepted a position in the government service.

Because of this apparent exclusiveness, the PNM soon became the target of attacks from a number of directions. Its detractors included Big Business, the Roman Catholic Church, Labour organizations, the Press, old and new political parties, and a host of independents desirous of perpetuating the existing chaotic political system. The most powerful opponent was the
People's Democratic Party (PDP), whose hostility was intensified by the fact that the emergence of the PNM effectively obstructed its own rise to power. Indicative of the alliances which developed as a result of common hostility to the PNM, was the refusal of the PDP to put up candidates in constituencies contested by Butler and two government ministers – one of them Gomes. However, this gesture did not really represent much goodwill, since the PDP was unlikely to make a strong showing in the ridings where these gentlemen were running.

As has been mentioned, the Roman Catholic Church – the largest Christian denomination in the country – was manifestly hostile to the PNM. The hostility of the church sprang from Williams' views on education and his earlier statements on the advantages of a state-controlled system of education as distinct from the existing system of dual control, and also his reference to the need for family planning to relieve excessive population pressure on the limited economic resources of the country and on the West Indies in general. The election manifesto of the party made no mention of state control of schools, birth control, or nationalization of industries, and during the campaign party candidates carefully avoided reference to these matters. However, as the election campaign progressed, all these subjects were introduced by the rival candidates who at times explained that the initial PNM meant Pre-Natal Murderers, and at other times Petroleum Nationalization Movement, thus also charging Williams with socialism.

The Press was among the most formidable opponents of the PNM. There were at the time two daily newspapers in Trinidad,
the century-old *Port-of-Spain Gazette*, later to be renamed the *Trinidad Chronicle*, before finally going bankrupt in 1959, and the more up-to-date and prosperous *Trinidad Guardian*. The *Guardian* was the mouthpiece of Big Business and the vested interests. As the organ of conservatism it consistently took the view that although constitutional reforms were inevitable and even necessary, they should only be introduced in slow stages. As soon as Williams began his public lectures, the *Guardian* attacked him "for following a certain bearded demagogue," - an obvious reference to Butler - "in trouncing and denouncing those he deems his enemies, and using the occasion to win political kudos for himself." On September 23, the day before the election, the *Guardian* in its weekly edition, the *Sunday Guardian*, levelled its final attack at the People's National Movement. It declared that desirable as party politics were, the situation in Trinidad was not ripe for such a development. Then, under the heading "Vote for These Men," it published the names and pictures of an odd assortment of candidates who it felt should be returned in the elections the following day. Among them there were only three PNM candidates.

The elections held on September 24, 1956, indicated the end of the old in Trinidad politics. On that day thirty-nine Independents were among a total of 128 candidates contesting the elections for twenty-four seats. Of nine political parties in the elections the PNM was the only party that contested all the seats. The Butler Party with twenty candidates was the party with the next highest number. The People's Democratic Party put up fourteen candidates. Two of the parties put up
one candidate each. Of the electorate of 339,028, seventy-seven per cent went to the polls, and of the number of votes cast, 39 per cent were for the PNM who elected thirteen candidates. The PDP elected five candidates. There were two Independents among those elected.7

The candidates returned by the PNM represented to a fair degree a cross-section of the people and society of Trinidad. They were business men, proprietors, professionals, and ordinary citizens who had been serving the public in one form or another. Among the professionals was Dr. Patrick Solomon, who had been persuaded to return to politics. After his defeat in the general elections in 1950, he had announced his decision to give up politics altogether and devote his interest to his profession. However, he eventually yielded to pressure to return and soon became one of the leaders of the PNM. Another was Leary (now Sir Leary) Constantine, a former cricketer of world fame who had studied law while playing professional cricket in England. Dr. Winston Mahabir, a graduate of McGill University School of Medicine, was one of the two East Indians elected by the PNM, while Ulric Lee a young Trinidad-born Chinese had the unique distinction of defeating Gomes.

The victory of the PNM created a constitutional problem which might have become quite serious, for although the party had a majority of elected members, it did not have a clear majority of the total membership of the Council. Therefore it could be outvoted by a coalition of the minorities parties, the nominated unofficials, and the two officials. However, such a
difficulty was quite easily avoided. There was a meeting between the Governor, Sir Edward Beetham, who had been Governor since 1955, and Dr. Williams. On the instructions of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr. Lennox-Boyd, the Governor included among his five nominees to the Legislative Council, two members who were subject to the discipline of the PNM. These were Mr. Wilfred J. Alexander, a coloured lawyer, and Mr. Cyril A. Merry, a scion of one of the prominent white families in Trinidad and a Director of one of the oldest business houses in Port-of-Spain. This arrangement averted what might have been a real crisis, and guaranteed the election of Williams as the first Chief Minister of Trinidad and Tobago and head of a de facto PNM government, subject of course to the formality of election of ministers by the Legislative Council as provided for in the Constitution.

The use of the nominated system to increase the majority of the PNM was revolutionary. Previously, the system had been used to buttress conservatism. That it was used to further progress was one of the consequences of success of the PNM in the elections. There were others, such as the end of the independent as a factor in politics. More important of course were the figures and philosophies that had been overthrown. Among the political figures to fall before the PNM were three ministers in the former government: Gomes, the chief protagonist of federation in Trinidad and for ten years the leading political figure in the island; Roy Joseph, Minister of Education and Social Services and for almost fifteen years a member of the Legislative Council; and Norman Tang, Minister of Health, and former mayor
of Port-of-Spain. But more important than the fall of these outstanding figures was the fact which had been clearly demonstrated that it was possible to defy the influence of traditional sources of power, and establish the political life of the country on a direct appeal to the public, and the presentation of a well prepared programme. This was the greatest significance of the emergence of the People's National Movement. It prepared the way for the development of party politics in Trinidad and Tobago. It might be mentioned too that it accomplished the eclipse of the conservative upper class as an independent force in the politics and government of the country.

With respect to the larger subject of federation, the success of the PNM indicated a new approach to the subject. In fact it can be said that the participation of Trinidad and Tobago in federation and the pre-federal discussions was influenced by the personalities of two men, Gomes and Williams. As has been previously stated, the debate on the Stanley despatch of March 13, 1945, took place in the Trinidad Legislature on July 13, 1945. From that day until the London Conference of February 1956, Gomes had been the foremost advocate of federation in Trinidad. His participation in the pre-federal conferences, and his statements on federation, were those of an individual and did not represent any clearly defined party policy. He did from time to time say a great deal about the economic advantages of federation, but he never made any great attempt to describe these economic advantages. At the same time much of what he said in public betrayed an undue attachment to
the sentiment of nationhood. As a result, some people never got a clearer understanding of federation than that expressed by a member of the Legislative Council when the Report of the London Conference, 1953, was being debated. On that occasion, A. E. James, Member for Port-of-Spain East, observed that it was manifestly clear that the anxiety of those who had attended the conference at Montego Bay had been focussed on having a structure so formed that the only benefit that should accrue as time went on was that the West Indies should be considered a nation.  

Some of the defects of the pro-federation policy pursued by Gomes derived from his failure to disseminate information on the subject. But by and large his attitude to federation, as indeed to politics in general, was ambivalent. In 1937 he had entered politics as a radical and the militant champion of labour; when he fell in 1956, he was the favourite of the Chamber of Commerce and the oracle of conservatism. In 1946 he was outspoken in his denunciation of the Trinidad constitution and of the Executive Council of which he was a member, and he demanded the introduction of Cabinet Government. Yet from 1950 onward, he was the zealous defender of the reactionary constitutional proposals prepared for federation. Gomes apparently had endorsed all the constitutional proposals of the SCAC Report, and was one of the few West Indian legislators to do so. On the question of federal finances, Gomes' views on financial assistance for the federation provide a faithful reflection of those in that Report. Even after his defeat in the 1956 elections, his views remained unchanged. He stated in an interview that the political independence he wished for the West Indies
was one based on financial solvency. Too much assistance from outside would carry with it a mitigation of sovereignty. Such visionary idealism was out of touch with conditions in the world of 1956. For example, while the House of Lords was debating the British Caribbean Federation Bill on July 23, 1956, the well known Labour peer, Earl Listowel, raised the question of financial aid for the federation and expressed his belief that the United Kingdom government could find a method of giving financial aid to the West Indies without retaining political control, because it had been done before. He pointed out that economic aid without political strings had been given by the Marshall Plan, and was also being given by the Colombo Plan. "Therefore," he continued, "It is not beyond the wit of man to devise a method of this kind and surely if ever it should apply it should apply to members of our own Commonwealth and our fellow citizens in the West Indies." The attitude adopted by Gomes on the question of financial assistance to the federation, revealed not only an unjustifiable optimism about the economic potential of the region, but also an unfortunate indifference to contemporary world trends.

Unlike Gomes, Williams had the support of a well disciplined, well organized party, and all his public acts and statements were readily identifiable with the policy of his party. And unlike most West Indian politicians he had developed an intense interest in the West Indies by virtue of his activities as a student and scholar. Through his recent position with the Caribbean Commission he was directly involved in a study of
contemporary West Indian problems, and became convinced that federation was the best means of effectively tackling the social and economic problems of the area. He was less sentimental than others about federation as a means of attaining nationhood, but was not indifferent to the political implications. In fact, he was impatient with existence of Colonial Office influence in the area and advocated the establishment of federation as a means of transferring the control of West Indian affairs from Whitehall to the West Indies. However, he considered that the ultimate purpose of federation was to provide an improved standard of living for West Indians. "If federation is to mean anything at all," Williams had said, "it must mean an economic development of all the British Caribbean which is carefully and quickly planned."¹²

On the question of financial assistance for the federation, Williams also had quite definite views. He asserted that the federation was entitled to financial assistance, and rejected any suggestion that financial contribution by the United Kingdom government was any justification for political control. He contended that a capital grant from the British government towards the establishment of federation, and an economic treaty— for a period of about twenty-four years— to guarantee a market for West Indian products until there had been enough time to reorientate and rebuild the economy, far from justifying political control were only reparations for the wrongs of the past, and repayment of the contributions made by the British Caribbean to Britain's economic development.¹³
Another subject on which Williams had quite precise views was the time during which the federation should become independent. Accordingly, he made an attempt to provide some perspective by including in the PNM general election manifesto for 1956, an undertaking to provide "full support for all constructive proposals designed to establish an economically sound federation with Dominion status, within a period of not more than five years after its establishment."\(^{14}\)

The outcome of the 1956 elections removed Gomes as the leading figure in Trinidad's relationship with the federation, and prepared the way for Williams to play a decisive role. His formal participation began on November 16, 1956, when the Legislative Council elected him as a leader of the territory's delegation on the Standing Federation Committee. Other members elected at the same time were W. J. Alexander and Bhadase Maraj, the leader of the largest opposition party in the Legislature. It will be remembered that the Standing Federation Committee was responsible for dealing with constitutional and administrative matters to be settled before the appointment of the Governor-General. On the constitutional side the work involved agreement on a complete draft Constitution, with special reference to points of detail not covered by the 1953 plan or the conclusions of the London Conference of 1956. The administrative work included the selection of key officers, the organization of the public services, the acquisition of buildings for use by the federal government and selection of a site for the federal capital, and the drafting of law, regulations and Standing Orders for the Federal Assembly.
One of the most important tasks awaiting the Standing Federation Committee was the selection of a site for the federal capital. This question was considered to be so difficult as to be capable of delaying federation if not of wrecking it altogether. The Standing Closer Association Committee had decided that the capital would be in Trinidad. At the London Conference in 1953, the question was re-opened and discussed with such intensity that as a compromise it was decided to build it in Grenada. There was never complete agreement on this and the question was raised again at the London Conference of February 1956, where the matter was discussed for twenty-four hours without any sign of agreement. Consequently it was decided to refer the selection of a capital site to a commission of three impartial persons who had never before visited the West Indies, and as a result were less capable of prejudice as a result of previous experience.

Accordingly the Commission was appointed on June 1, 1956. It was a three-man commission consisting of Sir Francis Mudie (chairman) formerly of the Indian Civil Service; H. Myles Wright, Professor of Civic Design at the University of Liverpool; and Alexander E. Cook, formerly financial officer, Overseas Civil Service. The Commission was required to submit recommendations on the three most suitable sites in order of preference, bearing in mind such factors as political and social sentiment, availability of land, costs, communications and accommodations and similar facilities. After visiting the West Indies from June 25 to August 30, and taking evidence in twelve islands and in British Guiana, the Commission completed its
report in September, 1956. However, the report was not released until the beginning of the following year.

The appointment of the Commission had achieved a temporary compromise — it had not settled anything. On December 30, 1956, Gomes predicted that the choice of the federal capital would involve a fight irrespective of what the commissioners decided. He was right, but the fight turned out to be less fierce than had been anticipated, because the report, when published, contained some rather plain speaking which aroused the hostility of most West Indians against the Commission, and against the report. The Commission, in doubt as to whether they were specifically required to select three sites, chose to recommend three islands which offered facilities for the construction of the capital within three to seven miles of an existing city capable of providing the amenities and services needed by the capital as it developed. This formula eliminated the smaller islands, for none of them, the commissioners decided, had a town with the requisite standard of services and living conditions for the temporary capital. Only the chief cities of the three largest territories — Bridgetown, Barbados; Kingston, Jamaica, and Port-of-Spain, Trinidad— met the essential requirements.

Having reduced the number of eligible islands to three, the report proceeded to eliminate Trinidad and Jamaica in that order. It stated that Trinidad was wealthy, progressive, and had good communications and a good Press. From the material point of view, Port-of-Spain would be a suitable base town.
However, it continued, in view of the instability of Trinidad politics, and the low standards accepted in public life, to put the capital near Port-of-Spain would involve a great risk which need not be taken. According to the report, another factor which militated against Trinidad's prospects was the presence of a large East Indian population who, it was alleged, had ideals and loyalties differing from those found elsewhere in the federation. They exercised a disruptive influence on the social and political life in Trinidad and would vitiate the political and social life of the capital if it were placed in Trinidad. For these reasons Trinidad was rejected.

The next of the three islands to be rejected was Jamaica. In Jamaica and Barbados the political atmosphere was healthy, the report stated, and in Jamaica the general level of education was not much inferior to that in Barbados. But Jamaica was far away from the eastern half of the Caribbean. One witness had informed the Commission that it was not so much that Jamaica was far away, as that Jamaicans were. Even more serious was the fear of the small territories that if the capital was placed on Jamaica, their needs and aspirations would be ignored. Therefore, the report continued, to place the capital on Jamaica would be a psychological mistake which would give the federation a bad start.

The elimination of Trinidad and Jamaica left Barbados as first choice. Barbados was in the unique position of enjoying the advantages of a small island, and of a large one. The report favoured Barbados because Bridgetown, the capital, was
one of the three largest cities in the area, and at the same time, Barbados was so small that it did not threaten to dominate the smaller territories to the same extent as Jamaica or Trinidad did. Barbados had certain drawbacks, of course. It was more crowded and less cosmopolitan than either Jamaica or Trinidad. A more serious drawback was the belief prevalent in the other islands that in Barbados there existed a prejudice and a colour bar not found elsewhere. But according to the report, Barbados had some definite advantages; the benefit of the trade winds, a higher general level of education, and keener average intellectual atmosphere. However, the report concluded, the main reason for choosing Barbados was that the capital should be on a small island. 19

When the report was published, it was bitterly criticized everywhere except in Barbados. Indeed, the only positive achievement of the report was to eliminate Barbados by giving that island first place. A Jamaican planter-journalist travelling in the East Caribbean declared that Barbados did not really belong to the West Indies, and should not even have been considered. 20 Another Jamaican suggested that Barbados had been chosen because it would be a convenient funnel through which Colonial Office flavouring could be dropped into the federal cake. 21 In Trinidad there was well nigh unanimous condemnation of the report. Gomes advocated the rejection of any report by persons from the United Kingdom, and declared that the battle for the capital must go on. 22 Victor Bryan, ex-Minister of Agriculture and Lands declared: "No party must stand in the way; this is a national campaign." 23
At the time the report was published, Williams was in Jamaica en route to a conference in Puerto Rico. When interviewed on the merits of the report he stated: "With reference to what it says about the political life of Trinidad the report is not worth the paper it is written on. . . . It is a joke." He later published a statement in the paper published by his party refuting the charges. The Clarion, a weekly published by the Independent Labour Party, was most militant in denouncing the commission and the report. It charged the Colonial Office and the local administration with protecting and sponsoring the very evils with which the commissioners had charged Trinidad.

In an article entitled "U.K. Commissioners Just Had to Choose an English Island," it declared that the farce of appointing an independent Commission of three Englishmen to help West Indians to decide on the best possible site for the proposed federal capital had reached a climax which although definitely embarrassing was by no means funny. Jamaica, it continued, a late entrant in the race, had surprised everyone; and Trinidad which had been agreed upon in 1950 as the federal capital site, had been relegated to third place, merely because there was no other serious contender in the field.

At a secret meeting of the Trinidad Legislative Council which was called to discuss the agenda for the forthcoming meeting of the Standing Federation Committee, a mandate was given to the Trinidad Chief Minister to defend that "large section of the population which had been attacked, libelled, maligned and ridiculed without justification whatsoever." Accordingly, the Trinidad delegation set out for the meetings of the Standing
Federation Committee which were held in the Senate House of the University College of the West Indies (now the University of the West Indies) in Jamaica from January 22, 1957. The Trinidad delegation declared that it would not support any proposals to proceed to a vote on the question of the capital site until it had been permitted to make a statement on the report. The Committee therefore agreed to postpone the selection of the capital to the end of the conference after the draft constitution and other matters pertaining to the federal establishment had been worked out.

On February 11, 1957, Williams delivered his statement on behalf of the Legislative Council of Trinidad and Tobago. The ethnic composition of the delegation he led provided him with a clear advantage and he used it effectively. Besides the East Indian member, Bhadase Maraj, the delegation included Solomon (later Sir Solomon) Hochoy, a Jamaica-born Chinese, and C. DeLisle Inniss, the white Barbados-born Attorney-General. Hochoy, who was then Colonial Secretary of Trinidad, was later to be appointed Governor of Trinidad, being the first West Indian of non-European descent to be appointed to a governorship.

In his refutation of the comments and allegations made about Trinidad, Williams gave a masterly performance using facts where they applied and statistics where facts were less helpful. The allegations made against Trinidad were three: political life in Trinidad was unstable; Trinidad was a land where corruption was not only practiced, but where the practice appeared to be accepted; and East Indians comprising thirty-five per cent of the population were likely to form a disruptive element.
After repeating the first charge about the instability of political life in Trinidad, Williams declared: "I do not need to say much about that. I stand here today as the symbol of political stability in Trinidad. . . Our political stability is second to none in the Caribbean." His delegation, he continued, was a bi-partisan delegation, representing the diverse opinions of Trinidad and Tobago and therefore capable of speaking for the entire community. From the charge of political instability, Williams took up the charge of corruption. Here he made clever use of population statistics. On the basis of the 1946 Census, he declared, ten per cent of the population of Trinidad were West Indians from the other islands. Therefore Trinidad was the West Indies in terms of "freedom of movement" and could not be condemned without involving the West Indies in the general condemnation. At this point Williams was not really discussing public morality in Trinidad. He was really canvassing for the support of the smaller territories, and the important expression was "freedom of movement." For the people of the smaller territories the immediate benefit of federation was freedom of movement — the possibility of seeking employment in Trinidad. Williams was not really answering a charge. He was exploiting an advantage. No one had been more outspoken than Williams in denouncing corruption in government, and proclaiming the need for public morality in Trinidad.

After dealing with the charge of corruption, Williams turned to the defence of the East Indian community. Sociological analysis in the modern world, he declared, inclined in the direction that diversity of population was a source of
strength and not of weakness. Continuing, he stated that he represented not only the government and people of Trinidad and Tobago, but also the political party of Trinidad and Tobago that had made inter-racial solidarity one of its basic principles and objectives. He contended, therefore, that in repudiating the strictures of the Commission against the East Indian community, he was advancing the principal objectives of his own party. Then, with a final emphatic reference to the ethnic composition of the Trinidad delegation and the territories from which they had come, he declared, "Condemn that, and you condemn the entire basis of our federal society." It was an extremely clever performance, and it was good enough to get the capital for Trinidad. But as for Williams' claim that he had vindicated the reputation of Trinidad and Tobago, even he could not accomplish that with a single speech. His government had initiated an era of reform, and time and improved conditions would redeem the reputation of the island. At the conclusion of his speech Williams asked that a copy of his statement be sent to the Secretary of State for the Colonies and to all West Indian governments. He further asked to have the statement annexed to any copy of the report to be thereafter circulated in official circles. Besides being an attempt to vindicate the reputation of Trinidad and Tobago, the statement formed part of a well-planned campaign to get the capital for Trinidad, in which case the votes of the smaller territories were the decisive ones. One writer has stated that in his approach to the smaller territories the attitude of Williams contrasted with that of Gomes. From Gomes the smaller territories had
got the impression that Trinidad was doing them a favour by federating, but in Williams they found one who was willing to lead them out of their economic difficulties. As has been mentioned before, Williams did introduce a new element into discussions on the federation, affirming that federation must mean development of all the islands; the federation's first task was to raise funds for an integrated plan of economic development. The interest thus expressed in the welfare of the smaller territories was an important factor in enlisting their support for the bid to get the capital for Trinidad.

After Williams had delivered his address, the conference turned its attention to the selection of the capital site. The smaller territories extracted some promises from the contestants as the price of their support, and submitted resolutions guaranteeing complete freedom of movement, without customs and immigration examination, to all citizens of the federation travelling to the capital to visit or to work on the construction of the federal capital; requiring the territory chosen to donate free of charge at least 2000 acres to the federation; and stipulating that workmen from all the islands be employed to work on the construction of the federal capital. All these conditions were accepted by the three contending territories, Barbados, Jamaica, and Trinidad. On the second ballot Jamaica and the smaller territories voted in favour of Trinidad which won the capital from Barbados by a vote of eleven to five. Jamaica had never been a serious contender for the capital.
Jamaicans, proud in their possession of the university, declared that they could not reasonably expect to provide the federation with the capital, the Governor-General and the Prime Minister also. They considered their Governor, Sir Hugh Foot, as the most suitable candidate for the post of Governor-General, and apparently had expected their Chief Minister Manley to be the first federal Prime Minister. They were to be disappointed on both scores. Sir Hugh Foot was sent from Jamaica to a more difficult assignment in Cyprus, and when the federation was established in April 1958, Manley elected to remain in Jamaica.

The decision taken by the Standing Federation Committee on February 11, 1957, terminated inter-island wrangling and confirmed a decision that had been taken almost eight years previously. It is quite possible that, as an ex-Governor of Barbados stated, Trinidad was the rightful place for the capital. Trinidad's accessibility and amenities established its claims without any serious challenge, and it was the island with a population most representative of the peoples of the area. There was, however, a very real reason why the federal capital should have been situated on one of the smaller islands where the federal government could establish itself without being overshadowed by a more robust territorial government and where the federal legislators and officials would be aloof from the social and political influences then revolutionizing Trinidad society. Moreover, the construction of the capital on one of the smaller territories might have acted as a stimulus to the economic development of that unit and thus produced one
of the direct benefits of federation. However, in the light of the charges made against Trinidad by the Capital Commission, the acquisition of the capital for Trinidad became not merely a symbol of national prestige, but was indispensable for a vindication of the reputation of her peoples. It was perhaps the satisfaction that they had been vindicated that incited thousands of persons to go to the airport on the evening of February 14 to cheer the return of the Trinidad delegation. Dr. Williams, in acknowledging the applause of the crowd, declared: "What we have brought back to Trinidad is not the capital of the federation; we have brought to Trinidad the respect of the outside world."  

The following day, February 15, when the Legislative Council met, there was a lavish exchange of compliments and encomiums, and Williams again seized the occasion to reaffirm that economic development was the main purpose of federation. A few days later, on February 23, the first anniversary of the signing of the agreement of the London Conference which committed the territories to federation, was recognized as a public holiday and celebrated. The PNM Weekly remarked, however, that celebrations were somewhat premature for federation was not yet an accomplished fact. It then proceeded quite soberly to state:

The two most important problems facing the proposed federation is the question of customs union and its concomitant subject of tariffs and trade and the question of freedom of movement of West Indian peoples between the units. The successful solution of these two thorny problems is cardinal to the success of West Indian Federation. Indeed we go further and say there can be no real federation without them."
The inability to make any progress on the question of establishing a uniform external tariff and the principle of freedom of trade for goods moving within the federal area, as well as on the closely related question of freedom of movement of persons, was indicative of the difficulties that still lay ahead. However, in spite of the difficulties, the establishment of the administrative machinery of federation continued. Towards the end of April the Standing Federation Committee met in Trinidad to choose a site for the federal capital and to attend to other matters preliminary to the establishment of the federal government. The Trinidad government had simplified matters by having a number of likely sites selected, and the Committee, after visiting them all, selected the site occupied by the United States naval base at Chaguaramas as the most suitable. The selection of Chaguaramas created a problem which for over three years threatened the future of federation, and which because of its crucial importance must be enough to state that it greatly divided political opinion in Trinidad.

The visit of the Standing Federation Committee to Trinidad had another important effect. It provided an opportunity for the people of Trinidad to meet the leaders of the other West Indian territories and the future leaders of the West Indies Federation, and greatly increased enthusiasm for federation in Trinidad. As the leaders addressed the people at public meetings they were greeted with much enthusiasm. Manley, in particular, was given a tumultuous ovation when he addressed crowds both in Port-of-Spain and in San Fernando.
While the Committee was in Trinidad, the PNM became officially affiliated with the West Indian Federal Labour Party, of which Manley was the president and which included Jamaica's Peoples' National Party, and the Barbados Labour Party as well as member parties throughout the smaller territories. There was some difficulty in concluding the final arrangement; the West Indian Federal Labour Party was avowedly Socialist whereas the PNM "had always been diffident about the use of eighteenth century European categories in a twentieth century world and a West Indian environment." However, it was agreed that differences in name should not prevent common action through common means for the attainment of the same objectives.

The affiliation of the PNM to the West Indian Federal Labour Party created a regional party with a triumvirate of capable leaders in Manley, Adams, and Williams. Meanwhile, other efforts were being made to organize a rival party that was also regional in scope. Early in May, Bustamente visited Trinidad to organize the PDP and their opposition parties into a Trinidad branch of the Democratic Labour Party of the West Indies. His efforts were generally successful, for of the local minority parties only the Butler party remained aloof. A number of independents also joined the Democratic Labour Party and considerable advance had been made towards the establishment of the two-party system in Trinidad.

While the political parties were being reorganized to be made regional in operation, progress was being made towards the establishment of the federation. On May 10, 1957, the appointment of Lord Hailes as the first Governor-General of the federation
was announced. Before his elevation to the peerage, Lord Hailes as Mr. Patrick Buchan-Hepburn had been a conservative Member of the British House of Commons for over twenty-five years. During that time he had served in several capacities, and from 1955 to 1957 was Minister of Works in the Conservative government. It was believed that Lord Hailes' experience as a politician would be quite valuable during the early difficult days of the federation, and especially in the light of the power of his office under the constitution. On January 3, 1958, he arrived in Port-of-Spain to assume the responsibilities of his office. He was met by members of the Standing Federation Committee, and after a procession through cheering crowds that lined the streets, he was conducted to the Legislative Council chamber where in the presence of legislators and leading citizens of the West Indies, he took the oath of office. It was a solemn moment in the history of the West Indies, and one which promised the fruition of hopes that had persisted with varying degrees of brightness for centuries, for that simple act marked the establishment of the West Indies Federation.

From the time he took the oath of office until the inauguration of the federal parliament three months later, the Governor-General had full responsibility for government of the federation. One of his first acts was to issue writs for the conduct of the first federal elections. However, before proceeding to discuss the elections and their results, it is important to consider briefly some of the actions of the
Trinidad government which provoked such widespread dissatisfaction in the country as to determine the outcome of the elections locally, and as a result to influence profoundly the federation.

When the PNM government came into power in September 1956, it inherited a Five-Year Economic Development Programme for the period 1956-60, estimated to cost $W.I.90,500,000. On Friday, November 30, 1956, Williams as Minister of Finance, Planning and Development, declared that a re-appraisal of the programme was necessary because he lacked adequate data on it, and also because of the anticipated establishment of federation. He stated that the time had come for serious consideration of the tendency towards a duplication of industries in the units of the federation, and a consequent competition for scarce capital and for limited markets. The Five-Year Development Programme was therefore delayed, but the result was insignificant. Williams further announced that the opinion had been expressed that earnings from government departments could be increased by a greater effort to collect outstanding sums due to government, of which the most important was income tax in the amount of two million dollars. He served notice that the government intended to collect its taxes, and moreover that steps had been taken to secure the services of a Canadian expert to help revise income tax assessment so that machinery could be introduced by which the collection of taxes could proceed simultaneously with the earning of income.

One year later, Williams took a further step towards the introduction of his new fiscal policy. In July 1957, he
visited the Colonial Office and outlined his development programme, asking for a grant of $W.I. 24 million (£5 million). This request, he stated, was based on the disparity between allocations made to Trinidad and Tobago and those made to other colonial territories. He pointed out for example, that between 1946 and 1955 Jamaica and British Guiana had received seven times and six times respectively as much money as Trinidad and Tobago. For territories in Africa and elsewhere the disparity was even greater. However, the Colonial Office was emphatic in rejecting his request, and informed him that Trinidad and Tobago must rely on its own resources for its development programme. Accordingly, Williams resorted to increasing taxes as a means of procuring funds for development. His 1958 budget provided for an expenditure of $W.I. 139.6 million. This was one and one-half times as much as the record expenditure for 1957. It provided also for an increase in revenue from the estimated $W.I. 90.5 million of the preceding year to $W.I. 122 million. This increase was provided by an increase in the excise tax on gasoline, a purchase tax on automobiles, an increase in the license fees for motor cars, an increase in the annual renewal fees for drivers' permits from $1.20 to $5.00, and a general increase in postal rates.

The increases in taxes were significant and so far-reaching that they affected all sections of the community. As they became effective at the beginning of January, 1958, less than three months before the federal elections, they gave the Democratic Labour Party a tactical advantage which was fully exploited. During the election campaign candidates made no
reference to federal issues, but concentrated entirely on the taxation policy of the Trinidad government. So mature a politician as Gomes could not avoid confusing the issues. In one of his campaign speeches he promised that when the DLP won the federal election they would be around the first curve of 'Operation Remove.' Then they would win the other election and get into power in the colony, and proceed to cut down taxes, and the cost of drivers' licenses. 42

Another device employed by the Democratic Labour Party was to inform people in the rural districts that government intended to extend its taxation to livestock. On March 12, one week before the elections, Mr. Syed Mohammed, of San Fernando, a PNM candidate in the election, declared that he had been informed that people with brief-cases were going around from house to house in the country districts taking stock of animals and telling people that they were government employees taking stock so that government would know the amount of taxes to impose on them and on their animals. 43

Throughout the campaign there was a tendency to exploit the policy of the Trinidad government as a means of gaining votes for a seat in the Federal House. Mr. Ashform S. Sinanan who had been a member of the Trinidad Legislative Council since 1950, and who was contesting a seat in the Federal Legislature, warned his hearers that if the West Indian Socialist Party got into power they would never get any assistance from America, Canada, or England. He declared the federal government would have to resort to imposing federal taxes, because neither
America, Canada, nor England liked a Socialist government. Sinanan went on to say that a Socialist government nationalized everything from industries to lands.  

The Democratic Labour Party also introduced the race question into the elections. In a lecture delivered by Williams after the elections were over, in which he discussed the reasons for his party's defeat, he displayed copies of a letter which he said had been circulated among members of the East Indian community. The letter appealed for Indian votes to ensure the appointment of an Indian Governor and an Indian Prime Minister. According to Williams, the letter described the position of the East Indian community (strangely referred to as our Indian nation) as critical, and expressed concern for it during the next ten years. Commenting on the letter, Williams declared: "It is a deliberate attempt of our opponents to exploit race as a basis of political power; the least offensive in language, the most offensive in terms of politics."  

There can be no doubt that the DLP did introduce considerable extraneous matter into the campaign, and that these things inevitably influenced the result of the elections. However, people were understandably alarmed and outraged by the great increase in taxes imposed by Williams. It was a credit to Williams' honesty and courage that he introduced such a policy a little over two months before the election. But honesty and courage were not enough to get him victory. Although the percentage of the popular vote won by his party showed an increase over the 1956 figure, the party won only four out of ten seats. Another factor against Williams was
that the candidates of the rival party were more experienced. Some of them, such as Gomes and Roy Joseph, had been defeated in the Trinidad general elections in 1956. Others, such as Ashford Sinanan and Victor Bryan were resigning their seats in the local Legislature to contest the election.

The results of the election in Trinidad were a severe disappointment to the Federal Labour Party; but the reverse it suffered in Jamaica was even worse. There, the campaign conducted by Bustamente and his party was marked by overt hostility to the idea of federation. It will be remembered that at Montego Bay, Bustamente was definitely opposed to federation. However, his party was then in power, and he was uncertain of the extent to which open opposition to federation would weaken his hold on power, and give an advantage to his political opponent, Manley, who was quite in favour of federation. Accordingly, Bustamente considered it politic to modify his views on the subject. The position taken here is precisely that described by Gomes in the federal Legislature on November 23, 1960. On that occasion Gomes stated that from the time of Montego Bay, Bustamente disliked federation and made it quite clear that if he could find any way of evading federation without imperilling his political position in Jamaica, he would take it. After Bustamente's party was defeated in the Jamaica general elections in 1955, he no longer needed to fear the consequences of an antifederation policy. In 1958 he found it convenient for embarrassing Manley. During the federal elections, Bustamente and his party warned that federation was going to mean added taxation and a return to second slavery.
This fact was clearly stated by Mr. Belinfanti, Member for Trelawny, Jamaica, in the Federal House of Representatives, during debate on December 10, 1958.\textsuperscript{47} It was supported by Mr. Morris Cargill, D.P member for St. Mary, Jamaica. Cargill declared that from the day when federation was proposed, and again during the federal election, Bustamente and his party were opposed to federation without financial assistance.\textsuperscript{48} As a result of this campaign the Federal Labour Party suffered a humiliating defeat in Jamaica where it won only five out of seventeen seats.

In the other territories the elections did not produce the same surprises as in Jamaica and Trinidad. St. Vincent was the only other territory to vote DLP. However, interest in the elections varied greatly from one territory to another. For example, in Barbados only 26 per cent of the electorate voted; in contrast, in Trinidad and Tobago 73.6 per cent of the electorate turned out to vote.\textsuperscript{49} The issues in the election also varied from one territory to another. As has been mentioned, in Trinidad the government's taxation policy received much attention. In Jamaica, hostility to federation was quite pronounced. The election results in these two territories presented the federation with problems of considerable difficulty. As a result of its victories in the smaller territories, the Federal Labour Party won the elections and, as will be seen later, was able to form the government of the federation. That meant that the majority of the members from the two largest territories would be in opposition. Undesirable as this was, it need not have been very serious. However, the
situation was ominous for the future of the federation because an overwhelming majority of the opposition were not merely in opposition in accepted parliamentary language, they were opposed to the very idea of federation.

The federal elections constituted the final step preliminary to the establishment of the federal government to which reference will be made in the succeeding chapter. They climaxed two years of intense activity by the Standing Federation Committee which laid the foundation for the administrative framework of the federation and provided for it its name, a flag, a constitution, and a tentative site for its capital. In Trinidad and Tobago these events were paralleled by significant political developments marked by the introduction of a new constitution which gave considerable impetus to the growth of popular sovereignty. This new situation was eminently favourable to the federation, for the PNM government which came to power had created a greater measure of pro-federation sentiment than had previously existed. At the same time, the objectives of federation were more clearly articulated. Unfortunately, these advantages were neutralized to some extent by the results of the federal election in which a majority of the territorial representatives in the federal Legislature were motivated by personal and ideological animosities to the Trinidad government.
Footnotes


2 Klass, East Indians in Trinidad, pp. 139, 221-229. Klass has stated that in the general election in 1956 and in the federal elections in 1958, the PNM won nearly forty per cent of the votes in a completely East Indian district.


5 Trinidad Guardian, January 8, 1958.


In 1950 there was a situation which provoked some criticism. The Butler Party with six out of eighteen seats was the largest single party on the Council. Butler was not asked to form a government and no member of his party was elected to a ministry. For a criticism of the government's conduct on that occasion, see Williams, History of the People of Trinidad, pp. 237, 238.


9 Trinidad and Tobago, Debates of the Legislative Council, 1946-47, p. 43. October 3, 1946. In the course of this debate Gomes severely denounced the existing system saying that self-respect was impossible in any community which did not govern itself.


12 Williams, Federation, Two Public Lectures, p. 18.
13 Ibid., p. 24.


15 Trinidad Guardian, December 30, 1956.


17 Ibid., pp. 11, 22.

18 Ibid., p. 20.

19 Ibid., pp. 20, 24.


21 David Lowenthal, loc. cit.

22 The Clarion, Port-of-Spain, January 5, 1957.

23 Ibid.


25 The Independent Labour Party was founded in 1954 by a number of young professionals and intellectuals, and included Raymond Hamel-Smith, a former mayor of Port-of-Spain who instigated investigations into the affairs of the City Council under one of his predecessors. The charge of corruption mentioned by the Commissioners derived in part from the affairs Hamel-Smith investigated.


28 Ibid.

29 Ibid.

30 Ibid.

31 Ibid.

33 Lowenthal, op. cit., p. 351.

34 Public Opinion, January 5, 1957.


36 PNM Weekly, February 25, 1937.


40 Trinidad and Tobago, Debates of the Legislative Council vol. 7, c. 150, Nov. 30, 1956.

41 Ibid., vol. 8, cols. 712-716, December 30, 1957.

42 Trinidad Guardian, March 12, 1958.

43 Trinidad Guardian, March 14, 1958.

44 Trinidad Guardian, March 16, 1958.

45 PNM Weekly, April 2, 1958.


48 Ibid., c. 925.

Chapter IV

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND ITS PROBLEMS

In the preceding chapter, reference was made to the installation of the Governor-General on January 3, 1958, and to the federal elections which were held a little over two months later. Attention must now be paid to the final step in the establishment of the West Indies Federation — the inauguration of the parliament of the federation. On April 18, a preliminary session of the parliament of the West Indies was held for the purpose of electing the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Prime Minister, and the President of the Senate. The next important step, the inauguration of the federal parliament, took place four days later and was marked by appropriate pageantry and splendour. On the morning of April 22, the leaders and senior officials of the unit governments, representatives of Commonwealth countries and of foreign nations, together with prominent citizens and a host of well wishers, assembled to mark the occasion. Her Royal Highness, Princess Margaret, as representative of the Queen, inaugurated the parliament of the West Indies and closed her address with the following words:

Today with this ceremony the Legislature becomes a fact, and the federation of the West Indies so long a dream — a living reality. Upon you, Senators, and Members of the House of Representatives, lies the great responsibility of ensuring that the federation grows in strength and in purpose so as to enhance the prosperity of its own people, and of countries in this part of the world. . . . You
yourself are already aware of the work that lies ahead of you to forge the newly fashioned federation into an effective political and economic unit... into a new nation in the Commonwealth.  

In his reply to the princess, Sir Grantley Adams, to whom fell the distinction of being the only Prime Minister of the West Indies Federation, reaffirmed the warm and devoted attachment of the people of the West Indies to the British Crown. He then reviewed the progress of the movement towards federation, and suggested that though federation was a remarkable and constructive achievement, attention should be focused on the future rather than on the past. In conclusion, he expressed the belief that through federation the people of the West Indies could most speedily and effectively fulfil their national aspirations.

The pomp and pageantry which marked the inauguration of the federal parliament were equalled if not surpassed by the popular enthusiasm and elation demonstrated throughout the celebrations. But though the leaders were heartened by this enthusiasm they were under no illusions as to the magnitude of the task they faced. The task of federating the British West Indian territories involved a number of grave difficulties, some physical, others psychological. Unlike other federations that have been established in vast land areas, and have at the time of union faced the problem of under-population and a vast unknown frontier, the West Indies Federation was from its birth beset by a problem of over-population, and had the ocean as its frontier. These difficulties were mentioned in a Press conference.
by Sir Stephen Luke, who had spent a number of years in the West Indies, first as Comptroller of Development and Welfare, and from 1956 as Commissioner for the Organization of the Federal Services. Sir Stephen stated that most of the federations he knew had been created when the countries were young and underdeveloped, but on the other hand, the British West Indies were old established communities which had reached in their own way a very high state of development with very high administrative and tax structures, and therefore the act of federation covered much greater technical problems.

In addition to the fact that the West Indies faced the task of federating mature communities, there was another difficulty in the absence of the traditional incentives to federation. In his book, Federal Government, Professor K. C. Wheare has listed six conditions as the factors underlying all federal unions. These conditions are (1) a sense of military insecurity and the consequent need for common defence; (a) a common desire to be independent of foreign powers, and a realization that only through union could independence be secured; (3) a hope of economic advantage from union; (4) some political association of the communities concerned prior to the federal union, either in a loose confederation as with the American states and the Swiss cantons, or as parts of the same Empire as with the Canadian and Australian colonies; (5) geographical neighbourhood; and (6) similarity of institutions.
Wheare has affirmed that these half dozen factors all operated in the United States, Switzerland, Canada and Australia. They operated in varying degrees in each case, but they were all present.

Of the six factors given by Wheare, some, such as "similarity of institutions," merely facilitate union; they do not create the need for common action to the same degree as the need for a common defence. In the West Indies there was no defence problem that could effectively be solved by the common action of the federating territories. On the question of the defence of the federation, Adams quite rightly stated in the Federal Legislature that the American navy was the only defence of the West Indies. As for the desire for independence, this was equally unimportant as an incentive for federation. During the years immediately preceding the Second World War, the desire to achieve self-government stimulated an interest in federation. However, in the postwar period although a federation of the West Indian territories afforded a desirable basis for independence, it was no longer necessary. Thus, in December 1959, Bustamente declared that the only benefit Jamaica could get from federation was Dominion status, and that Jamaica could achieve that without federation.

The need for economic development provided the greatest justification for a federation of the West Indian territories, but the islands varied so greatly in size and resources that some of them needed federation much less than others. Jamaica, for example, had more than half the land area and population of
the federation. Trinidad and Tobago, the next in size, was larger than the remaining territories, and had a higher population than all of them together. To stimulate her economic development, Jamaica had increased the attractiveness of her large internal markets by offering such incentives as income-tax relief and high-tariff protection of her new industries. This made the question of a customs union of such importance to Jamaica that Mr. R. C. Lightbourne, Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Federal House of Representatives, warned that to talk about customs union in Jamaica would be like waving a red flag before a bull. But while Jamaica was able to protect her internal market from competing industries, she found her foreign trade in bananas threatened by competition from the Windward Islands. Therefore, in spite of the superior position of the larger territories in comparison with the smaller ones, there was an overwhelming argument in favour of a single agency with the authority and power to plan the economic development of the territories so as to avoid what was described in the Throne Speech in the very first session of the federal parliament as "wasteful competition for investment capital between federating units."

In the West Indies the greatest justification for a federation lay in the dominant need for a concerted effort against poverty, and this required a strong central government. The need for a strong central government lay also in the desirability of achieving administrative economy and improved technical efficiency throughout the region. The situation in the mid-twentieth century was almost identical with that described in
1850 by Herman Merivale, an official at the Colonial Office, when, commenting on the West Indies, he remarked that each little community of a few thousand souls had its miniature King, Lords, and Commons, its governor, council and assembly, together with a host of administrative and paid functionaries, most disproportioned to its importance. He further declared that whatever slight reasons there might have been in former days for the maintenance of those small local governments, had been wholly taken away by modern facility of communication, and that they should be united rather by consolidation than by federation.11

As late as 1962, Eric Williams used almost the same words as Merivale in his assertion that there was no area in the world that had "so many heads of state, . . . no area of comparable size and resources that has so many heads of government assemblies of one form or another."

One great defect of the West Indies federal movement was that it left intact the existing governmental units and imposed on them an extremely weak federal structure with power to do little more than listen to requests for aid which it could not provide.

Both the historical and the geographical factors made the project of federation a very difficult one, and were to a very great extent responsible for those weaknesses which were the outstanding characteristics of federation. It had two monetary systems: Jamaica used sterling, the other units used the decimal currency of the East Caribbean Currency Board in circulation in British Guiana and the British West Indian
territories of the East Caribbean. The unit territories retained control of their individual postal systems and, while they recognized the need for a customs union as indicated in the constitution, they still operated their individual tariff structures in which they discriminated against the produce of member territories. As in the case of a customs union, so in the case of freedom of movement there was recognition in principle. But in this case the federal government was denied any jurisdiction in the matter for five years.

The greatest weakness of the federation lay in the fact that the revenue of the federal government was a little over ten million dollars, and was derived mainly from a mandatory levy on the constituent territories and from the profits on currency. The mandatory levy was just over nine million dollars, and of this Jamaica contributed a little over forty-three per cent, a per capita contribution of $W.I. 2.62. Trinidad's share of the mandatory levy was a little over thirty-eight per cent - a per capita contribution of $W.I. 4.57. One writer commenting on the contribution made by the different territories observed that Trinidadians were paying more for federation than Jamaicans were, though the volume of Jamaica's complaints gave the impression that the opposite was the case.

There is another factor which deserves consideration for the information it provides on the funds actually available to the federal government, and on the contribution by the two largest territories. When the federation was established, the federal government assumed responsibility for the operation of
a number of institutions and services already in existence. The most important of these were the University College of the West Indies (now the University of the West Indies), the Trade Commissioner Services, the West Indies Meteorological Services, the Jamaica Regiment which was later disbanded and absorbed into the West Indies Regiment, and the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture which later became the Trinidad branch of the University of the West Indies. When these institutions and services were transferred to the jurisdiction of the federal government, the expenditure contingent in their operation was likewise transferred to the federal government, and absorbed over one-half of the mandatory levy on the territories. When this expenditure was subtracted from the mandatory levy, the net cost of federation to Jamaica was $W.I. 2,175,000 as compared with a cost of $W.I. 2,413,000 for Trinidad and Tobago. These figures indicate quite clearly that Trinidad and Tobago was making a larger financial contribution to the federation than any other territory. That, however, is entirely subordinate to the main point that the finances available to the federal government were woefully inadequate.

The difficulties of the federal government were further increased by the location of the temporary capital in Port-of-Spain. Of course, Trinidadians were proud to be hosts of the capital of the federation, and the number of business places and industrial plants which adopted a "federal" or "federated" title provided fair evidence of the extent to which the city had adapted itself to its new role, and how the idea of federation had been firmly established. There was the radio station,
for example, which announced every half hour that its studios were in the federal capital. One factor which greatly helped to strengthen the federal idea was the development of Federation Park, which was a residential district built up for the legislators and the chief officers of the federation. The park was a well laid out suburban district with avenues and boulevards and crescents named after the different units of the federation, including one hopefully named for British Guiana.

It must be pointed out, however, that the construction of Federation Park in the chosen location was a mistake, for it made the absorption of the federal community into Port-of-Spain inevitable and at the same time gave an appearance of permanence to the position of the federal government's headquarters in Port-of-Spain. This situation was completely undesirable, for in Port-of-Spain the federal government, with its inadequate finances and its extremely limited sphere of operations, was placed in unfortunate juxtaposition to a dynamic and virile unit government which had set out to prove that its own rise to power would herald an era of increased prosperity for the country. The Trinidad government's estimate of revenue for 1958 was $122 million. Actual revenue was $129.3 million. For 1959 the government planned a capital expenditure of $50.5 million on its development programme, besides a recurrent expenditure of $118.5 million. Its estimated revenue for 1959 was $139.9 million. On December 15, 1958, when Williams as Minister of Finance presented the 1959
Budget, he also submitted an impressive account of its achievements in the form of services extended, schools and roads built, and other aspects of its development programme. Meantime, the federal government had its revenue fixed and was incapable of adopting any independent measures to increase it. Thus, at a time when the federal government needed to play a significant role in order to enhance its importance and make federation not only attractive but advantageous to the people of the West Indies, it was forced to function in a situation where its deficiencies were quite obvious and where it suffered from inevitable comparison with the territorial government.

One point on which the federal Legislature compared unfavourably with the Legislative Council of Trinidad and Tobago was with respect to its working hours. After the federal Legislature had been in existence for six months, a friendly critic commented on the need for better preparation on the government benches, and for the House in general to work longer hours. Members of the Legislature agreed that they were not kept sufficiently busy. On June 1, 1960, Mr. Ken Hill, Member for Surrey Jamaica, raised the question and stated that the House only rose from the dead twice a year for four weeks, and added that people wondered whether it was serving as useful a purpose as it otherwise might have. Other members were in general agreement and stated that complaints were being heard throughout the area. On July 25, 1961, Mrs. Florence Daysh, a member from Barbados, opposed an increase in members' allowances on the grounds that members were working only thirty
afternoons a year and that they were already being overpaid for what they were doing. The inactivity of the federal Legislature was due to a very great extent to the limited scope enjoyed by the federal government, but this made little difference to people who noticed that the time the federal Legislature spent in sessions was only a fraction of that spent by the Trinidad Legislature. Similarly, the ministers of the Trinidad government were kept more occupied than their counterparts in the federal government. Even Williams commented unfavourably on this, and stated on one occasion that the existing federation only provided jobs for big shots to run up and down the place. Meantime the ministers of the federal government were quite conspicuous driving through the streets of the city and frequently drew unfortunate comments – a fair indication of the extent to which the fortunes of the federal government had declined as a result of its inability to enhance its prestige while it operated in the spotlight dominated by the Trinidad government.

Although the restrictions imposed on the federal government under the constitution were largely responsible for its indifferent performance, it might have done better with more energetic and alert leadership. In December, 1958, the PNM Weekly, commenting on the work of the federal Legislature, remarked on the raggedness of the government's team and the need of better preparation on the government benches. This was an unfortunate reflection on Adams' leadership, which fell short of the standard attained by Williams. When Adams was
made Prime Minister of the West Indies Federation he was a capable and experienced politician who had served Barbados with distinction for over twenty years, and it was confidently expected that he would provide just the leadership the federation needed in its first difficult years. Adams achieved his greatest success when he represented the West Indies Federation overseas. On the local scene he was never dynamic enough to capture the popular imagination and thus inspire enthusiasm for the cause of federation. From his speeches as recorded in the *Official Report*, one gets the picture of an elderly schoolmaster who regarded the members of the Opposition as recalcitrant school boys to be humoured at times, and reprimanded quite sternly at others. He possessed a sardonic sense of humour and, in his own words, could not help seeing the funny side of things. Consequently, even when he was speaking in the Legislature on matters of the utmost gravity, he could not resist the temptation to engage in exchanges with a heckler or to mention that a member opposite had had his speech written for him. Although these things are normal in a parliamentarian, the frequent interruptions in speeches delivered by Adams, definitely detracted from their quality and made them seem second rate.

At times his conduct was no more inspiring than his speeches, and there were occasions when he certainly did not treat matters with the seriousness they deserved. For example, on November 11, 1959, a fire on the island of St. Vincent destroyed a cotton ginnery. On November 30 the matter was reported in the House of Representatives, and the question was
raised of providing some assistance in transporting the cotton to a neighbouring island for processing. Adams tried several times to evade the issue. The least reprehensible of the things he said was that he had only been informed of the matter a few minutes previously. In the general confusion which his actions provoked, the Speaker declared that out of courtesy to the House, the Prime Minister or the Minister of Finance should make a statement. After further evasion by Adams, the Minister of Finance explained that he had not yet received any request for assistance, but that any request would receive sympathetic consideration when it was received.24

Adams was perhaps extremely conscious of the limitations of the federal government, but it is difficult to reject the impression that at times he definitely was not giving of his best. It was this impression that provoked an attack by Gomes in the Legislature on November 23, 1960. After referring to the cowardly, vacillating, equivocal government of Prime Minister Adams, Gomes continued:

'Slowly but surely the prestige of the government is being eroded because of this pusillanimity that is being exemplified here on the occasion of the Motion. That is why this rapid erosion is taking place. This lack of leadership, the lack of decision in the face of younger men who do not equivocate. . . . When you contrast their resourcefulness against this quaking, quivering, senile attitude — you begin to understand.'25

The attack by Gomes was the most scathing ever directed at Adams in the Legislature. However, it was not the only time Gomes had commented on Adams' failings as a leader. Writing in the Guardian on one occasion, he commented on the lack of
enthusiasm that was being put into the preparations for the celebration which was to mark the anniversary of federation. He criticized the offhand manner in which Prime Minister Adams approached his duties, and queried: "Why is it that when people look to Sir Grantley for inspiration, they generally get a cold douche?" As Gomes further noted in his article, the chief responsibility of the federal government during the early years of the federation was to enhance its prestige, and to make it so attractive that the unit territories would be willing to give increased power to the federal government. For this reason, Adams' deficiencies as a leader were all the more regrettable.

The inept manner in which Adams sometimes handled matters in the Legislature was equalled by the tactlessness he displayed in discussing subjects of general interest elsewhere, and that, combined with his sardonic wit, rendered some of his statements liable to misinterpretation. One of his favourite remarks was that Barbadians had to work or they would starve, whereas Trinidadians had more time for leisure. Trinidadians rather enjoyed their reputation as a fun-loving people, but on one occasion that statement made in New York was taken out of context, and Adams was reported as saying that Trinidadians were lazy. Similar tactlessness and equally malicious reporting gave rise to the more damaging report which was widely circulated in Jamaica, that Adams had said that fifty per cent of Jamaicans were illiterate. Such expressions would have been unfortunate if made by an ordinary individual;
for the Prime Minister to be guilty of such an indiscretion was unpardonable.

It must be pointed out that the Press was not always honest in its treatment of what Adams did and said, and in this respect certain sections of the Jamaica Press were the more guilty. The most outstanding example of this type of dishonesty was discussed in the Federal House of Representatives by Mr. Ronald J. Williams, Member for Diego Martin, Trinidad, on April 30, 1961. It happened that in February of that year Adams had made a visit to St. Lucia and Dominica, and in the course of his addresses at public meetings he called upon the people to work hard and produce more if they wanted to see the federation prosper. Federation, he continued, existed for all, and the smaller units should realize that they were just as important as the big ones. On Saturday, February 25, 1961, the Trinidad Guardian published an article on the same topic using the heading: "P.M. calls on Smaller Islands to Produce More Benefits to Tally with Work Put In." On Monday, February 27, 1961, the Gleaner of Jamaica published an article on the same topic—under the heading: "Adams Seen Forming Small Isle ' Block Against Jamaica, Trinidad, Antigua."

The latter article was the most outstanding example of the devices employed by certain sections of the Press to discredit Adams. It was also the immediate cause of a totally unwarranted attack on him by the Minister of Agriculture in the Trinidad government who was then attending a Council of Natural Resources in Jamaica. Mr. Kamalluddin Mohammed, the Trinidad Minister of Agriculture, deplored what he described
as Adams' attempt to divide the federation, and after reviewing some of the earlier pronouncements attributed to Adams, he called on Manley to assume the leadership of the federation.

Mohammed's performance was senseless, and considering his position as a minister in a territorial government, it was quite indiscreet. Moreover, it was an embarrassment to his host and Chairman who was a member of Adams' cabinet. It is arguable, though, whether it really merited the two-day debate in the Federal House of Representatives during which the dignity of the Prime Minister was zealously defended both by members of the government and of the opposition. The Leader of the Opposition seized upon the occasion to engage in a prolonged attack upon the Premier and the government of Trinidad and Tobago. Commenting on it, Mr. Harcourt F. Rocheford, a member from Barbados, thought that the Leader of the Opposition had launched an unnecessary attack on the government of Trinidad and Tobago. He observed further that most of the debates that had taken place in the House during the three years of its existence were used as opportunities for carrying on the politics of Trinidad and Tobago, and declared that as a result he was increasingly convinced that it was a mistake to have sited the capital of the federation on Trinidad.29

It must be observed that this was not the first occasion on which Ashford Sinanan, Leader of the Opposition, had been charged with this type of conduct. As early as December 1958, one observer had noted that Trinidad DLP representatives were displaying bad taste by indulging in cowardly attacks on the chief ministers of Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica, Gomes and
Sinanan being the chief offenders. In a situation in which the Premiers of the unit territories were the principal executives of the party forming the federal government, it was inevitable that they would be involved in any general denunciation of the government and its party. However, the attacks in which Sinanan and Gomes frequently indulged were direct, and as Rocheford said, gave the impression that they were engaging in politics on the unit level. Had these attacks been calculated to deprive the federation of Williams' support they could not have been more effective, for Williams was quite sensitive to these attacks to which he could not reply directly, and in January 1962, when his disenchantment with the federation was complete, he declared that the federation had been used as a forum by Gomes and the DLP for frequent attacks on his government.

Thus far an attempt has been made to discuss the salient factors in the experience of the federation. They were: the extremely limited scope available to the federal government, the adverse effects of its Port-of-Spain location, and the poor quality of the leadership in the federal government. It would have been instructive to watch the federation grapple with these problems in the process of consolidating its position. Unfortunately, before the federal government had been in existence for six months it was confronted with two crises which were later merged. The first arose from a motion to revise the Federal Constitution, and the second involved disagreement with the Jamaica government over Adams' mention of retroactive taxation.
Mr. Ken Hill, Member for Surrey, Jamaica, and Chief Opposition Whip was responsible for the first crisis when on June 25, 1958, he presented a motion which called for the appointment of a Select Committee of the House of Representa­ tives to take the necessary steps to achieve the goal of self­ government with Dominion status within the Commonwealth. Hill's motion had no logical relationship to the contemporary experi­ ences of the federation. It would be malicious to suggest that in presenting his motion he deliberately contemplated the embarrassment and probable downfall of the federation, or conversely that he was lamentably ignorant of the financial impli­ cations of Dominion status. It will be remembered that during the federal elections, Hill's party had declared that the federation would mean higher taxation. In the circumstances, Hill stands out as a representative of a class that was willing to accept federation and all its benefits provided someone else paid the expenses.

The Hill motion was untimely. The architects of the federation, admitting that their work had been defective, had included in the Constitution a provision for a mandatory revision after a five-year period during which time the federation would have justified its existence. As has been mentioned, Hill presented his motion within two months of the inauguration of the federal parliament, and it placed the federal government in a dilemma. To accept the motion involved an admission of the Opposition's initiative in the matter; to reject it was to invite condemnation for ignoring the aspirations of the people of the West Indies. Accordingly, the government decided to
surpass the Opposition in its zeal to achieve Dominion status. It amended the motion to provide for a conference in June 1959 to revise the Constitution so as to provide for the achievement of Dominion status.\textsuperscript{34} During the course of debate the government benches gave a most regrettable demonstration of raggedness and on the second day resorted to a feverish and undisciplined drafting of amendments. The darkest moment in the sorry spectacle was when the Prime Minister proposed an amendment which he claimed he had hurriedly jotted down before getting up to speak. The amendment was subsequently ruled out of order.\textsuperscript{35} Quite aside from the fact that during the debate the government displayed the most deplorable lack of organization imaginable, it is arguable whether it adopted the most reasonable course available in the circumstances. The achievement of any progressive change in the federal constitution did not depend so much on the capacity or willingness of the federal government to accept additional responsibility as it did on the willingness of the unit governments to transfer authority to the federal government. In retrospect it seems that Adams might have had recourse to discussion with the territorial governments at ministerial level before committing his government to a revision of the constitution so far in advance of the stipulated five years.

Before proceeding to discuss some of the proposals which were advanced as the project of providing a new constitution for the federation was undertaken, attention must be paid to
the "retroactive taxation" controversy which precipitated a crisis from which the federation never recovered. In the course of a Press conference which Adams held in Port-of-Spain, at the beginning of November 1958, he discussed the financial plight of the federal government and expressed the need for more revenue. He stated that if unit territories gave extensive concessions to private investors, they would put the federal government in the embarrassing position of either having to tax people who had nothing to tax, or taxing people whom it had promised not to tax. In a case in which unit governments made it impossible for the federal government to get income tax revenue from certain sources, he suggested that it might be necessary to legislate for retroactive taxation.36

The situation constitutes a further indictment of Adams' leadership. There can be no question that his government urgently needed more revenue. The need was so urgent that it might have formed the subject of discussion at an inter-governmental conference. To discuss it in a Press conference as he did, was clumsy. Moreover, he took too much for granted. As has been mentioned, a revision of the federal constitution was mandatory within five years. On June 26 the federal Legislature had accepted a measure providing for revision of the constitution in one year. However, there was no guarantee that with a revision of the federal constitution the transfer of the taxing power to the federal government was inevitable. Consequently, Adams' remarks were quite pointless.

In Trinidad and Tobago, Adams' statement provoked little comment. In Jamaica it created so much uneasiness, that
N. N. Nethersole, the Minister of Finance in the Jamaica government, hurried to Port-of-Spain for discussions with Adams, who explained to him that he had not been discussing the policy of his government, but had only been explaining what was legally possible. Adams then asked Nethersole to explain to Manley what had really been said.

Nethersole's visit to Port-of-Spain might be described as Jamaica's second warning to Adams. In April, 1958, when Adams' appointment as Prime Minister became certain, Bustamente warned him that he would have to walk the chalk-line without turning the neck one way or the other, and that if he failed he would not only fall, he would break his neck. Continuing, Bustamente said that Manley had done Jamaica a great disservice in recommending Adams as Prime Minister. In the circumstances there was need for Adams to exercise the utmost caution in his dealings with matters touching Jamaica. But he lacked the resilience to deal effectively with the situation that had been developing in Jamaica. A few days after his Press conference in Trinidad, he paid a visit to Jamaica, and in the court of a Press conference there he was asked to explain his policy on retroactive taxation. Although he had taken the precaution of discussing with Manley questions likely to arise at the Press conference, and receiving Manley's approval for the things he was about to say, Adams failed to allay Jamaican fears. A more astute politician might have explained that although retroactive taxation was legally possible, his government had no intention of introducing it. Adams certainly denied any intention to adopt it, but
apparently he emphasized its legality. In his own words, the impression he desired to give was that "legally you could have retroactive legislation, but that the federal government was not contemplating it." He explained that it was important for the federal government to have more revenue; it would be able to levy income tax after five years and it was important for unit governments to keep the fact in mind when planning industrialization. On the basis of information acquired from the Press conference, the Gleaner published an article under the following headlines: ADAMS: CANNOT HOPE TO CONTINUE AS FEDERATION WITHOUT CONTROL OF OWN REVENUE. "West Indies Want Tax Levy Before End of Five Years. Warning Against Unrestricted Tax Concessions." Adams has claimed that he was shocked when he saw the headlines. So was all Jamaica. Manley was immediately besieged by telephone calls demanding an explanation. A few months before, during the federal elections, Bustamente had warned that federation would mean added taxation and a return to a second slavery. The headlines seemed to indicate that those dire predictions were about to be fulfilled. Commenting on the turmoil created, Morris Cargill, Member for St. Mary, Jamaica, later stated in the federal Legislature that Jamaica had been thrown into a state of consternation, "for the good reason that all of a sudden Jamaica realized that what we on this side of the House (the Opposition), as well as Sir Alexander Bustamente, had been saying all these years was true; that federation would result in expense and extra taxation for
Adams was due to leave Jamaica on the very day on which the article was published, and therefore did not have an opportunity to discuss its effects with Manley before leaving. However, when he returned to Trinidad he immediately sent Manley a cable directing his attention to certain parts of the article which were completely opposite to the content of the headline, and asked him to explain what was really said. It was a situation in which the friends of federation should speak up. However, Manley was probably too concerned about protecting his fortunes in the general elections, due to be held in July 1959, to face the Press and the public with an explanation in defence of Adams. It is possible, too, that Manley was not satisfied with the explanation given by Adams, or that he was anxious to eschew all connections with a federal government which had even mentioned retroactive taxation, for at that time the Jamaica government was conducting negotiations with the Esso Standard (SA) Oil Company for the establishment of an oil refinery in Jamaica. At any rate, when Manley spoke, his remarks were not calculated to help the situation. On November 21, 1958, he stated that income tax concessions were an accepted part of the policy of incentives approved by the West Indies Federal Labour Party, and that if the federal government contemplated policies which would disrupt that development, "Jamaica would be forced to reconsider her position in regard to the federation itself." A few days later, Manley declared in a public broadcast that there was no need for anyone to talk of the need to levy federal income tax when customs
duties, the natural source of federal revenues, could cover five times over every farthing the federation could usefully spend. To talk of retroactive taxation, he continued, was to spread confusion in the minds of prospective investors in Jamaica or any other spot of the federation, and to interfere with agreements when the first principle of national good faith was to honour agreements made. He further stated that the time had come for Jamaica to take stock of the whole position and to go no further unless a safe and secure road could be found for travel. "The federal government has announced that it proposed a review of the Federal Constitution next May or June. ... We are preparing. We will ask all Jamaica to join a united front, putting country before party to present our demands. We will ask for security and for sufficient freedom from interferences to plan and manage, guide and direct, our own economic progress."42

The retroactive taxation crisis aroused Jamaicans to a state of militancy which manifested itself at both the territorial and the federal level. While Manley talked menacingly of the need for Jamaica to reconsider her position in regard to the federation itself, Robert Lightbourne, Member for St. Thomas, Jamaica, and Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Federal House of Representatives, presented a resolution of November 19, 1958, asking that immediate steps be taken to provide a new constitution for the federation of the West Indies, under which representation of the unit territories in the Federal House of Representatives would be based on
population; and which would deprive the federal government of any power to impose retroactive taxation, to alter the tariff structures of any territory, or to impose taxes upon any territory without the territory's consent. One thing Lightbourne's motion proved conclusively is that some people who sat in the federal parliament knew little about federation, and that they cared even less. It must be said to Lightbourne's credit that on July 2, 1959, he resigned his seat in the federal parliament and entered the Jamaica Legislature. As for his motion, a debate on it was adjourned on November 19, and when debate was resumed on December 10, the government used its majority to defeat it. When the debate resumed on December 10, it occasionally degenerated into a jeremiad marked by repeated claims that Jamaica had been hurt and needed assurance, or by statements such as that made by Ken Hill, Member for Surrey, "fear and alarm were reigning in Jamaica and constitutional guarantees should be provided to reassure Jamaica.

The panic created in Jamaica was a distinctly Jamaican phenomenon for which it is impossible to account on purely economic grounds. Of course, Jamaica could not be indifferent to anything that constituted a threat to her economic development. A comparative degree of concern was to be expected from Trinidad and Tobago, for although the establishment of secondary industries had not progressed as far as in Jamaica, considerable advancement was being made. In 1958 about eighty new companies were incorporated in the country with an investment of $28.5 million. This was in addition to an investment of $20 million
in a fertilizer plant then in the process of construction, and a projected expansion of the Texaco Refinery estimated to cost $32 million. Had retroactive taxation been introduced, it would certainly have affected the country's economic development. Yet here no furore was created. The consternation that spread over Jamaica was due as much to that country's intense parochialism as to its concern for its economic development.

The panic that developed in Jamaica made it certain that discussions on the revision of the federal constitution would be marked by the emergence of a distinctly Jamaican point of view. There was also a point of view that was peculiar to Trinidad and Tobago by virtue of the country's special position in the federation as indicated by the extent to which she was simultaneously involved in the main issues of federation which were still unsolved: customs union, and freedom of movement. The PNM Weekly had previously stated that there could be no real federation until these two problems were solved. The people of smaller territories considered the privilege of travelling to the other territories in search of employment the most direct benefit they could get from federation. Jamaica had nothing to fear from freedom of movement of persons, and generally was favourable to it. However, for Trinidad and Tobago this problem was of vital importance. For years Trinidad had been receiving immigrants from the other islands. According to the census of 1946 approximately ten per cent of the population of Trinidad were people from other islands who had become domiciled there. Because of this it was feared
that following federation there would be an influx of people from the other islands to Trinidad. Accordingly, at a conference at Port-of-Spain in March, 1955, it was decided that the principle of freedom of movement within the federation would be recognized and written into the constitution, but that a period of five years would elapse before it was implemented. In spite of this agreement some Trinidadians felt that the right of the people of the federation to move freely from one territory to another was indispensable to the successful functioning of the federation. In January, 1956, Williams declared that there could be no moral justification for the attempt to preserve the right of Jamaicans and Barbadians to go to Great Britain, and to deny at the same time their right to seek employment in British Guiana or Trinidad. This view was shared by most West Indian leaders. There was, however, one very important difference. To most of them, freedom of movement of persons was an independent issue. To Williams, freedom of movement of persons was inseparable from the freedom of movement of goods or customs union, and both were in turn vital components of economic development which was the chief purpose of federation. He stated repeatedly that the rationale of federation in the West Indies lay in the opportunity it provided for the federated territories 'to attempt by their united effort to bridge the widening gap between the relatively "better off" territories and their less fortunate brethren within the federation.' Williams believed that the federation needed a vast development programme that
would promote the economic development of the smaller territories as well as the larger ones and thus minimize the need for migration from the smaller territories to the larger, or more specifically to Trinidad, for it was to Trinidad that migrants from the other territories were most likely to go when restrictions were removed.

As a manufacturing country Trinidad was also interested in a customs union. The smaller territories, too, were interested, for they derived much of their revenue from customs, and the introduction of a customs union and free internal trade would involve for them a loss of revenue. But Trinidad wanted to gain access to the large Jamaica market which was highly protected. Thus the interests of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago in a customs union were in direct conflict. For example, when in 1959, Jamaica, with the consent of the federal government, gave concessions to the Standard Oil Company for the construction of an oil refinery, Trinidad protested because the concessions given by the Jamaican government effectively eliminated competition from outside Jamaica while leaving the company free to compete in other territories within the federation, and even in Trinidad, unless the Trinidad government adopted retaliatory measures. Williams contended that the concessions given by the Jamaican government not only discriminated against Trinidad's oil industry, but were a violation of principle involved in customs union. 49

The federal government admitted that the concessions given by the Jamaican government protected the new refinery
against competition from outside Jamaica and agreed that if that technique became generalized it would render genuine internal free trade impossible. But it contended, in extenuation, that the economic advantages to Jamaica of an investment of $25 million outweighed any foreseeable adverse effects on the oil industry of Trinidad. In reply, Williams submitted that no investment could be considered large enough to warrant the sacrifice of a basic principle of federation.50

It is worthy of note that while the federal government was giving its approval to a situation which was inimical to the establishment of a customs union, an indispensable feature of federation, the government of Trinidad and Tobago was unilaterally relaxing its immigration regulations so that between January 1958 and November 1959 over ten thousand West Indians from the other territories entered Trinidad as visitors, business men, or intransit passengers and took up residence.51 Williams therefore informed the federal government that he should not be expected to continue pursuing a liberal policy in the movement of persons while with the sanction of the federal government other units were pursuing a contrary policy with respect to the movement of goods.52

Trinidad's involvement in the two outstanding problems of the federation — customs union and freedom of movement of persons — was one of the factors which influenced her attitude to the revision of the federal constitution. In this connection the need of the federation was conceived to be a strong central government capable of undertaking a programme of economic
development aimed at equalizing opportunities throughout the region. Another factor which influenced Trinidad's views on constitutional reform for the federation was the belief that for the West Indian territories the attainment of independence had been considerably delayed and should be greatly hastened. Therefore Williams suggested that the federation should aim at achieving independence within two years of the inauguration of the federal parliament, and in November 1958 his party tentatively appointed April 22, 1960, as the target date for West Indian independence. Needless to say, all West Indian leaders did not share his interest in time setting. Williams believed that haste was urgently needed if anomalies existing in the area were not to be multiplied. The Governor-General was still presiding over the Federal Council of State when Jamaica achieved self-government on July 4, 1959, and Cabinet government was established in Trinidad and Tobago on July 10, 1959. Therefore, if the federal government was to attain its position of leadership, changes had to be made quite rapidly.

Trinidad's approach to the revision of the federal constitution was further influenced by the belief that the functions of the federal government needed to be increased. The federal government was not only limited by lack of funds, it was also restricted in its scope of operations. Reference has been made to the fact that the federal Legislature did not put in enough working hours. It is difficult to peruse the Official Report of the House of Representatives without getting the impression that during much of the time that the House sat,
members were occupied making much ado about nothing. On one occasion Ashford Sinanan reminded the Federal House of Representatives that from the Montego Bay Conference in 1947, Bustamente had consistently warned that any federation without a substantial grant from the United Kingdom would be a farce. A far more reasonable submission might have been that the federation was farcical not primarily for lack of grants from the United Kingdom, but because the federal government lacked the scope and authority to function effectively. Williams once declared that the Prime Minister of the West Indies Federation with its meagre revenue of ten million dollars would be in an embarrassing position at a conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers if he ever had to discuss the finances of his government. Therefore, the approach of the Trinidad government to the problem of preparing a new constitution for the federation was characterized by a desire to correct the defects in the existing federal structure, to provide the federal government with the finances and the authority to play a decisive and effective role in the internal affairs of the federation, and to accept the responsibilities of independence in external affairs.

Shortly after the territorial governments had been invited to the conference to revise the federal constitution, the government of Trinidad and Tobago began to draft proposals for submission to the conference as a basis for a new constitution. These proposals were set forth in The Economics of
**Nationhood**, a well prepared document based on a careful study of the revenue and expenditure of the unit governments, the estimated population of the West Indies, the direction and volume of trade both for the entire federation and for unit territories, and also the volume of trade within the region. It advocated the establishment of a strong federal government with vastly increased powers, having an independent revenue, and the sole responsibility for levying and collecting taxation with respect to import and export duties, income tax, death duties and excise duties. The proceeds of some duties such as death duties and excise and export duties should be returned in full to the territories from which they were collected, while other revenue in excess of the requirements of the federal government should be distributed to the territories so as to improve the position of the poorer ones. It envisioned the West Indies Federation as a single political entity with uniform tariffs on goods entering the region from abroad, and advocated the introduction of freedom of movement of persons and capital among the units as a corollary of free trade. Indicative of the extent to which the proposals formulated in The Economics of Nationhood were designed to revolutionize the structure of the West Indies Federation, was the revenue assigned to the federal government. On the basis of the 1959 figures, it would have been $W.I. 143 million - about fifteen times the existing amount. Of this revenue, Jamaica's contribution would have been $W.I. 63.9 million, and Trinidad's $W.I. 58.9 million; for Trinidad this represented a per capita
contribution of $W.I. 67 as compared with $W.I. 38 for Jamaica. According to the proposals for the reallocation of powers, Jamaica would have been relieved of expenditures amounting to $W.I. 50.4 million as compared with $W.I. 36.1 million for Trinidad. Therefore, Trinidad's net contribution would have been greater than Jamaica's. The proposals constituted an honest and ambitious attempt to tackle the problems confronting the federation. Gomes, who was a political opponent of Williams, and one of his severest critics, commenting on the *Economics of Nationhood* on one occasion said, "I consider it in the present context of national affairs to be a document of the utmost importance, and most apposite to our situation."\(^5^8\)

The *Economics of Nationhood* constituted the most comprehensive proposals ever formulated for the West Indies Federation and embodied a philosophy of federation that was as challenging as it was idealistic. It was based on the premise that only a powerful and centrally-directed economic coordination could overcome the long history of insularity and isolation, and create the true foundations of a nation in the West Indies.\(^5^9\) It was readily appreciated by the Trinidad government that the federation envisaged in those proposals involved a diminished role for the unit territories. In the Trinidad Legislature on December 15, 1958, Williams declared that Dominion status meant more than the power and dignity accompanying sovereignty, it meant more revenue for the federal government and consequently a surrender of unit powers.\(^6^0\) The *Economics of Nationhood* was
presented to the Legislative Council on September 11, 1959, when Williams set forth the stand he proposed to take with respect to the demand for a strong federal government. His proposals were largely endorsed by the Legislature.

Although the point of view advanced in *The Economics of Nationhood* could not be assailed on any reasonable grounds, it was open to one quite serious objection: that the document was prepared without any official consultation with the other territories, and the implementation of its proposals depended on the cooperation of all. To describe his attitude to the federation, Williams frequently asserted, "Either a strong federation with all of us, or a weak federation without Trinidad and Tobago." On this point the principal difficulty lay in the attitude of Jamaica, for Manley looked forward to the proposed revision of the federal constitution as an opportunity to secure for Jamaica freedom from interferences, so that she could guide and manage her own economic progress. Of course, the Jamaican point of view had not been coherently set forth in any document comparable to the *Economics of Nationhood*, but every succeeding public statement on the subject made it unmistakeably clear that Jamaica aimed at depriving the federal government of any influence or control of her internal affairs. For example, in proposals presented to the Jamaica House of Representatives on May 29, 1959, Manley conceived the possibility of one group of territories establishing a closer relation with the federal government and entrusting it with a greater range of powers, while a unit such as Jamaica, or any other
unit, was free to have a looser association with the federal center. A further development of the Jamaican point of view was expressed in the determination to have the constitution so revised as to suit the special circumstances of the West Indies, and the maintenance and development of the life of Jamaica, and of the unit territories themselves. There was no attempt to explain how the special circumstances of the West Indies were to be met by Jamaica's attitude except to make it quite clear that Jamaica would demand representation in the Federal House of Representatives in direct proportion to population, and that she was contemplating secession if the demand was not granted. In the light of the stand taken by Jamaica, the failure of the proposals advanced by Trinidad and Tobago was certain.

The Conference for the Revision of the Federal Constitution had been set for June 1959, but the Jamaica general elections which were due to be held early in July, necessitated a postponement of the conference. With the postponement, the revising procedure was also changed to provide for an inter-governmental conference in Port-of-Spain in September 1959, and after that a conference in London to confirm decisions reached at the conference in Port-of-Spain. Accordingly, the intergovernmental conference convened in Port-of-Spain on September 28, and as soon as the opening formalities were over the first crisis developed. In the Steering Committee appointed to prepare the agenda for the conference, the Trinidad delegate suggested that Dominion status be placed as the first item on the agenda, and was supported by other members of the committee,
except the Jamaican representative who insisted that representation in the House of Representatives be the first subject for discussion. The committee found itself at an impasse and therefore decided to refer the matter to a plenary session of the conference. During the conference, Manley threatened to walk out if any other topic was discussed before the basis of representation. The deadlock which developed persisted throughout the opening day. When the conference resumed its sitting the following day, the Jamaican demand was granted, and immediately the conference became involved in another deadlock.

The second impasse arose from the representation to be given Jamaica. The Jamaican delegation presented a formula which provided one seat for every 50,000 of population on the understanding that no territory would have fewer representatives than it then had. This would have given Jamaica 32 seats in an enlarged House of 65. The Jamaica delegation announced once again that if its case was not conceded it would take no further part in the conference. The Trinidad delegation called attention to its higher per capita contribution to the federation. It then presented an alternative formula providing for one basic seat to each territory, an additional seat for every 50,000 unit of population or fraction over one-half. This formula gave Jamaica 34 seats out of 73. Jamaica retaliated with a demand for 34 seats out of 69. This wrangling occupied the first week of the conference. Meantime, Manley delivered an address to Jamaica by radio explaining the progress made at the conference and the difficulties involved. Turning to the
question of representation, he stated that representation on
the basis of population was one of the principles of democracy,
and that although at times compromise was necessary in the
interest of harmony and progress, there could never be any
compromise on principle.

Manley's action was unusual, and his remarks were
apparently directed to his colleagues at the conference as much
as to his fellow Jamaicans back home. At any rate, his attitude
was far from conciliatory. When the conference resumed for the
second week of its deliberations, Adams attempted to break the
deadlock by suggesting that all matters which might have rightly
come before the conference be referred to committees for which
the federal government would prepare terms of reference. At
this point, Manley, in a most truculent manner, addressed the
conference. Jamaicans, he said, had been second class citizens
in the federation, and would no longer acquiesce in that condi-
tion. Jamaica had peacefully entered the federation and would
leave peacefully. He then withdrew the Jamaican delegation
and left for home, leaving an adviser to follow the succeeding
events of the conference. Soon afterwards, a decision was
reached to appoint committees to work out details pending a
resumption of the conference on a date to be appointed, and
the conference adjourned.

The immediate cause of the collapse of the conference
was the divergent positions taken by Trinidad and Jamaica on
the form the federation was to take. It is surprising that
such conflicting views should have emerged within the same
political party, for two days before the conference met, the West Indian Federal Labour Party indulged in the pretense of holding a convention in Port-of-Spain. Quite obviously the policy of the party did not extend to agreement on such vital issues as the nature of the federal structure. Before the conference convened, the short history of the federation had been marred by certain glaring defects in both the structure and the function of the federal entity. The federal government lacked the finances to take care of normal expansion in its services. The limited scope assigned to federation under the constitution led to abbreviated sittings of the federal parliament and left both legislators and government ministers a degree of leisure which did not increase public esteem for the federation whose leadership was not inspiring. At the same time, restrictions against the movement of persons prevented the benefits of federation from being appreciated by the citizenry, while the absence of a customs union restricted the ability of the federation to contribute to the economic development of the region. The proposals advanced by the Trinidad government were calculated to remedy these deficiencies and to accelerate the progress of the federation to independence and Dominion status. The defect of the Trinidad position was in its idealism. Yet it did not entirely ignore the strength of insular sentiment. Rather, it challenged West Indians to conquer centuries of insularity in the interests of West Indian nationhood to which Trinidad was willing to devote its economic prosperity provided all the other territories were willing to
join in a common effort. The *Economics of Nationhood* expressed the view that if the more advanced territories intended to contribute to the less fortunate, the attempt should be made at once, for delay would inevitably result in a widening of the gap separating their positions thus rendering a greater effort necessary later on.

Unlike the Trinidad proposals, those advanced by Jamaica were reactionary in spirit, and designed to protect Jamaican interests, and in the process to compound the existing anomalies. The membership of the half-employed House of Representatives was to be increased by over fifty per cent without any appreciable increase in function. The Jamaican demand for representation in proportion to population was based on the established principles of democracy. But the population of Jamaica was not directly available to the federation either for taxation or as a part of the regional market. Its chief function was to enable Jamaica to control the federation from which she sought to become even more aloof. The Jamaican point of view was clarified during the panic which followed Adams' mention of taxation. This development was due to Manley's conduct in that crisis. As a result of one cowardly step he increasingly became the champion of Jamaica's parochialism. At one time the foremost advocate of federation in Jamaica, he later placed himself at the head of the chauvinists. Thus it was that the conference, which was called primarily to prepare a framework for the achievement of West Indian independence, collapsed because of the strength of insular sentiment.
Footnotes

1 At the London Conference 1953, the name chosen for the federation was "The British Caribbean Federation." However, in 1957, the Standing Federation Committee rejected that name and chose instead "The West Indies Federation."


3 Ibid., p. 16.

4 "West Indies Union Complex," Trinidad Guardian, April 15, 1956.


9 Trinidad Guardian, December 4, 1958. In this issue the Guardian published an article in which the Chairman of Jamaica's Agricultural Development Corporation, a government-sponsored organization, discussed the advantages of the Windward Islands over Jamaica as banana producers, and stated that Jamaica's banana industry was facing serious competition from the Windward Islands.


13 The Board of Commissioners of Currency, British Caribbean (Eastern Group) was established in 1946. Besides the Eastern Islands of the Federation it also included British Guiana. In 1950 it was given sole authority to issue notes and coins in British Caribbean Territories (Eastern Gourp). It first issued notes in 1951 and coins in 1955. The currency in use is decimal. W.I.$4.80 = £1 sterling.

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<tr>
<th>Proportionate share of maximum Mandatory Levy</th>
<th>Estimated share of currency profits</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>Per cent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Antigua</td>
<td>1.3374</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barbados</td>
<td>8.5562</td>
<td>780,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dominica</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grenada</td>
<td>1.6969</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>43.1119</td>
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<tr>
<td>Montserrat</td>
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<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Christopher-Nevis &amp; Anguilla</td>
<td>1.7256</td>
<td>157,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Lucia</td>
<td>1.7400</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Vincent</td>
<td>1.3086</td>
<td>119,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinidad &amp; Tobago</td>
<td>38.6252</td>
<td>3,523,000</td>
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There is one qualification to bear in mind when considering these figures. Several of the items of expenditure on the federal budget in this first period were simply a transfer of existing financial commitments in respect of such items as the University of the West Indies, the Shipping Services, the expenses of the Overseas Commission in the United Kingdom and Canada. When the cost of these services, which would have to be paid in any event, is subtracted from the mandatory levy, the new provision which each territory was called on to make to the federal government was as follows:

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<td>Jamaica</td>
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<td>Montserrat</td>
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The article following was cited in the federal Legislature in the course of a debate on March 30, 1961. It is cited at length as evidence of the kind of journalism which beset the federation. Considering the content of the article it seems that a considerable effort of the imagination is required to justify its title.

"Adams seen forming Small-Isle Block Against Jamaica."

Gleaner Federal Bureau

Port-of-Spain, February 26: "The West Indies Prime Minister, Sir Grantley Adams, is seen in certain political circles here as making a determined bid to form a small island block against what is expected at the Federal House to be a united Jamaica and Trinidad front, supported by Antigua, when the Inter-governmental Conference on the review of the Federal Constitution is reconvened here on May 2.

It is noted that in his tour of Dominica and St. Lucia, which
ended today, Sir Grantley repeatedly emphasized the need for small island unity. In a speech in Dominica he was quoted as stressing the necessity for all the smaller territories to work together if federation is to succeed.

In St. Lucia, Sir Grantley Adams is reported to have said that federation existed for all and the smaller units should realize that they were just as important as the big ones."

30 PNM Weekly, December 1, 1958.


33 Statutory Instrument (No. 1369) of 1957, The West Indies Federation, p. 59, Article 118.

35 Ibid., col. 628.
36 Trinidad Guardian, November 2, 1958.
37 Gleaner, April 17, 1958.


41 Gleaner, November 22; see also Keesings Contemporary Archives, p. 17004, July 12-19, 1959.

44 Ibid., col. 1532, December 10, 1958.
45 Trinidad and Tobago, Debates of the Legislative Council, vol. 9, cols. 175, 176, December 15, 1958.


47 Williams, Federation, p. 15.

48 Trinidad and Tobago, The Economics of Nationhood, Office of the Premier and Minister of Finance, 1959, p. 10.

49 Ibid., pp. 28, 29. This reference reproduces correspondence that passed between the federal government and the government of Trinidad and Tobago.

50 Loc. cit.

51 Trinidad and Tobago, Statement on Governments' Immigration Policy, by the Hon. Dr. Eric Williams in the Legislative Council, March 18, 1960, p. 4.

52 Economics of Nationhood, Appendix A, p. 29.


54 Trinidad and Tobago, Revision of the Federal Constitution, Speech by the Hon. Dr. Eric Williams in the Legislative Council, September 11, 1959, p. 40.

55 Economics of Nationhood, p. 10.

56 Revision of the Federal Constitution, pp. 37, 38.

57 Economics of Nationhood, p. 13.

58 The West Indies, H. R. Debates, vol. 4, col. 656, April 4, 1961. Gomes was a political opponent of Williams, and in this estimate of the Economics of Nationhood had completely reversed his original position. When the Economics of Nationhood was first published he said it was ill-timed.

59 The Economics of Nationhood, p. 11.

60 Trinidad and Tobago, Debates of the Legislative Council, vol. 9, col. 200, December 15, 1958.

61 Williams, From Slavery to Chaguaramas, p. 14.

62 See above, note 42.


Trinidad and Tobago, Reports on the Inter-governmental Conference, two broadcasts by the Premier of Trinidad and Tobago, the Hon. Dr. Eric Williams, on October 11, 1959 and May 24, 1961, pp. 9-11.


The federal government was in the usual position of having to appeal to the territories when it proposed to add a Faculty of Engineering to the University College of the West Indies, and when it contemplated adding a second battalion to the West Indies Regiment. Revision of the Federal Constitution, p. 17.

Economics of Nationhood, p. 10.
Chapter V

DIFFICULTIES WITH TRINIDAD OVER EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

The preceding chapter has presented an examination of the problems of the West Indies Federation arising from inadequate revenue, restrictions of the Federal Constitution, the limited incentives to federation, and conflicting proposals for revising the Federal Constitution submitted by Jamaica, and by Trinidad and Tobago. In this chapter it is proposed to study difficulties in external relations arising from efforts to find a site in Trinidad for the federal capital, and also from discussions with the Venezuelan government initiated by the government of Trinidad and Tobago. The direct relevance of these matters to the subject is due to the fact that in both instances there developed strained relationships between the federal government and the government of Trinidad and Tobago.

In an earlier chapter it has been suggested that the decision to locate the federal capital in Trinidad forced the weak and dependent federal government into an uneven competition for prestige with a strong and virile unit government, and tended to involve it in the stresses and tensions which accompanied the rise of the PNM government to power. A difficulty of considerably greater magnitude developed from the attempt to
find within Trinidad a site for the capital. Long before the final decision had been taken to locate the capital in Trinidad, suggestions were being offered as to possible sites. The Trinidad Guardian had been consistently suggesting that Chaguaramas was the most suitable site for the capital.¹ In an editorial on June 6, 1955, the Guardian stated that the American naval station at Chaguaramas had practically everything that would be needed.² In July and September 1955, and again in January, 1956, these suggestions were repeated. On the latter occasion the idea was expressed that some of the structures existing on the site might serve the federation permanently with little modification.³

The suggestions made by the Guardian deserve mention as the earliest reference to the use of Chaguaramas for the capital, though it is difficult to estimate the extent to which these suggestions influenced the final selection. At any rate its views were not unanimously accepted. The PNM Weekly, official organ of the People's National Movement, put forward a strong case for Waller Field⁴ as a more suitable location. In an article entitled "Federal Capital Site and the Elections," this journal discussed the merits of different sites that had been suggested. It conceded that Chaguaramas was a picturesque site but rejected it as far removed from the rest of the island. Waller Field, on the other hand, was a barren piece of land, well laid out and comfortably away from Port-of-Spain. It further stated that construction of the capital there would have the effect of developing old towns like Arima and Sangre Grande, and at the same time would not put added strain on the
city or the roads. In time the distance from Port-of-Spain would be about half an hour. Moreover, Waller Field not only had an airfield of its own, but was also near the International Airport at Piarco. The use of Waller Field would involve development of unused lands and would offer new opportunities for business expansion. Another possible advantage would be achieved, the article continued, if the Americans could be prevailed upon to develop the area and hand it over as a gift to the federation.5

The opinions expressed in the article were based on very practical considerations. Had they been accepted, the federation might have avoided some of the difficulties that arose over the final acquisition of the chosen site. The final selection was made in May 1957 when the Standing Federation Committee visited Trinidad. Two months before, the government of Trinidad and Tobago had appointed a committee representative of business, labour, and other interests in the community, to advise government on suitable sites for the federal capital and other matters relative to the housing of ministers and officials of the federal government. That committee, which also included the editor of the Trinidad Guardian, submitted its report on March 25, and included this special reference to Chaguaramas:

The North-west peninsula is unique in its appeal as a suitable Capital site. For the scenic beauty of its sea coast, and for obvious opportunities for development, we are of the opinion that this site would hardly be equalled. ... Should the United States Base be selected and made available, the United States Government should be requested to surrender the entire Base absolutely.6
The Report of the Trinidad Government Committee was referred to a Sub-committee of the Standing Federation Committee which met in Trinidad in April. The sub-committee, on which the representative from Trinidad and Tobago was Bhadase Maraj, called on the Trinidad government to state its position with respect to the United States bases. On April 12, 1957, Dr. Solomon, as Acting Chief Minister in the absence of Williams who was a member of the Standing Federation Committee, appeared before the sub-committee for this purpose. Solomon expressed doubts that the United States government would release Chaguaramas because of its strategic importance to the defence of the Western Hemisphere, and the vital role it played in the defence of Trinidad's oil industry. Moreover, he continued, the site was on lease to the United States and was not within Trinidad's power to give. Questioned on the prospects of securing the release of Waller Field, Solomon replied that the situation was different, for although the two areas (Waller Field and Chaguaramas) had been leased under similar terms, the United States had not only deactivated Waller Field, but had recently released it to the Trinidad government subject to reoccupation should the necessity arise. In consideration of the statement made by Solomon, the sub-committee referred the matter to a full meeting of the Standing Federation Committee with a recommendation that Chaguaramas should be rejected.  

The Standing Federation Committee met in Trinidad early in May, 1957, and visited four sites, including Waller Field and the Northwest Peninsula. Among the members of the
SFC, both Manley and Adams were enthusiastic in the desire to promote the attractions and advantages of Chaguaramas, and in a vote in which the delegates of Trinidad and Tobago did not participate, the committee selected Chaguaramas to be the site of the federal capital, and appointed a delegation led by Manley to approach the United Kingdom government to seek the release of the area from the United States.  

The selection of Chaguaramas for the federal capital was the most unfortunate decision made in the short history of the federation. No other single decision so seriously prejudiced the prospects of the federation. In the first place, it immediately involved West Indian leaders in extremely difficult negotiations on the international level. In the second place, it led to increasingly strained relations between the federal government and the government of Trinidad and Tobago. The SFC apparently believed that nothing more was required to secure the release of Chaguaramas than representations to the United States and the United Kingdom. It was soon realized that this decision involved either a protracted and fierce struggle with the metropolitan governments or humble acquiescence in their refusal, and a search for an alternative site. Subsidiary to this, the selection of Chaguaramas showed complete indifference to the possible advantages to Trinidad and Tobago involved in the selection of Waller Field. Whether or not it was for this reason that Williams withheld his agreement on Chaguaramas, is not certain. His own contention – that he did not assent to that selection – has been substantiated.
by Adams who has affirmed that because of an undertaking to honour international obligations given in the PNM Election Manifesto of 1956, Williams was unwilling to begin negotiations for the release of Chaguaramas.  

Although Williams acquiesced in the selection of Chaguaramas and later became the most militant advocate of its release, there were other Trinidadians who were severely critical of the decision and remained unwavering in their opposition to it. Among the most outspoken was Gomes who, in his role as a columnist for the Guardian, charged that "the conduct of the Standing Federation Committee was reprehensible, an affront to the people of Trinidad and Tobago, and a dagger poised at the heart of federation." Chaguaramas, he continued, besides being the subject of an historic international agreement, was the source of bread and butter to some seven thousand Trinidadians. There can be little doubt that Gomes was intent on making political capital out of the situation. Nevertheless his views were shared by thousands of Trinidadians who remembered the contribution the base had made to the economy of Trinidad during the war, and the vital part it had played in the defence of the West Indies. It might be mentioned here that the Guardian, the earliest advocate of the Chaguaramas site for the federal capital, later became unrelenting in its attacks on Williams and the campaign he waged to procure it. As for Williams, the Chaguaramas question was to be one of the most enigmatic chapters in his career as a man and a politician. He sat in sullen silence while the other West Indian leaders
overruled the arguments submitted by his government against the selection of Chaguaramas. Later, he was to exceed and exasperate them in the zeal with which he contended for its release. Williams undoubtedly knew that the existing Leased Base Agreement was incompatible with the constitution he contemplated for Trinidad and Tobago and with the status of the nascent federation. In the light of the campaign he later conducted, it is quite obvious that a revision of the 1941 agreement was inevitable. However, the selection of Chaguaramas for the capital site forced him to act ahead of time and perhaps in an area other than he had intended. At any rate, there is little reason to doubt that Williams was sincere in withholding his assent from the decision on Chaguaramas. He likewise refused to accompany the delegation appointed by the Standing Federation Committee to investigate the possibilities of securing the release of Chaguaramas. However, when it was pointed out to him that the West Indies delegation could not hold any discussion over the disposal of Trinidad soil if the government of Trinidad and Tobago did not participate actively, Williams agreed to join the delegation, and in July they went to London to meet with representatives of the British and American governments to request the handing over of the United States base at the Northwest peninsula on such terms as might be agreed upon; and to "arrive at agreement between the United States of America, the United Kingdom government, and the government of the West Indies for the security of the West Indies."
It must be pointed out that by selecting the Chaguaramas site for the capital, the SFC had confused two very critical issues: a site for the federal capital which was primarily a West Indian concern; and the equally important question of security and defence for which the United Kingdom, and to a great extent the United States, were fully responsible. Accordingly, when the conference with the United Kingdom and the United States convened in London from July 16 to 23, 1957, the United States Ambassador as leader of his country's delegation, spoke of the necessity of reconciling the political interests of the West Indies with the mutual defence interests of the United States and the West Indies. He stated that it would be impossible to give up Chaguaramas because of the general convenience of the site and because of the cost of moving the base. In reply, Williams declared that the Ambassador had disregarded the only thing that was really impossible — that was, to ask the people of Trinidad to put the seal of approval on what had been done in 1940 in defiance of the Governor's views.14

One of the remarkable developments at the conference was the way in which Williams changed from an unwilling participant to the most militant member of the delegation. Before the conference ended, he had submitted a demand for independent representation for Trinidad and Tobago on future conferences on Chaguaramas. He first studied some confidential files which had been rushed from Trinidad at his request, and then informed other members of the delegation that he considered it
necessary to make separate submissions on behalf of Trinidad and Tobago. In a statement delivered towards the close of the first day of the conference, he announced that as a result of his study of the secret files, he felt he was no longer in a position to honour the pledge given by himself and his party during the general elections in 1956: to honour international obligations with particular reference to the 99-year lease between the United Kingdom and the United States. Those files, he stated, revealed that the government of Trinidad and Tobago had resisted the cession of Chaguaramas because of the value and importance of its amenities to the people of Port-of-Spain; had opposed the dispersion of United States bases in several places; had advocated the establishment of one combined military, naval and air base; had advocated the reclamation of the Caroni swamp for the purpose, and had proposed a Joint Commission to delimit the base sites. On every point the Governor was overruled, and the United Kingdom government acceded in toto to the wishes of the United States government. He suggested further that the terms of the Leased Bases Agreement was responsible for Churchill's criticism of it in his *History of the Second World War*.15

An examination of the relevant volume of Churchill's history reveals that Churchill and Roosevelt differed considerably on the form the agreement should take. Confronted by the strength of isolationist sentiment in the country, Roosevelt was anxious to present the transaction to Congress and the American people as an advantageous bargain by which he gained
immense securities in return for fifty obsolete destroyers. Churchill, on the other hand, unwilling to give the impression that he was trading away British possessions for the sake of fifty destroyers, offered to treat the transaction as one in which he was offering the United States certain facilities for the defence of the Western Hemisphere without stipulating any return, so that his offer held good even if he did not get the destroyers. Roosevelt found it impossible to transfer the destroyers except in return for some definite consideration.

Aside from the unequal nature of the transaction involved, there were other unpleasant aspects of the negotiations. The Americans, in spite of their belief in democracy and their contempt for British imperialism, were impatient with the concern Britain showed for the interests of the people whose territories were involved. In one of Churchill's despatches to Roosevelt there was almost a note of entreaty in his insistence that if certain guarantees which he required, were refused, the transaction would be more in the nature of a capitulation than a friendly arrangement between great powers. Sir Alan Burns, who was vice-chairman of the conference at which the leases were drawn up, has commented on the attitude of the Americans, the excessive demands they made, and the ease with which they brushed aside any suggestion that the people of the territories in question had rights which should be respected. Burns has stated that the position was such that the British government had no option but to agree to practically everything
the Americans asked for. Old as those destroyers were, he said, the British needed them so badly that they were in a hopeless position for bargaining. The British delegates all felt that they had been forced into a bad bargain; bad for the Empire as a whole, "but particularly bad from the point of view of the West Indians and the people of Bermuda and Newfoundland." 18

There is ample evidence that the Leased Bases Agreement was a bad bargain both for Britain and for the West Indian colonies, but if, as Williams later contended, the real issue in 1957 was not the disposition of the base nor even the location of the capital, but rather the question of self-government for Trinidad and Tobago as well as for the federation, then the circumstances under which the original lease was procured were only indirectly relevant. A revision of the existing agreement was inevitable once the West Indies Federation had achieved independence. The important consideration is that in July 1957, the federation had not yet been established, consequently its venture in external affairs was premature. Someone at the conference quite accurately described the situation by saying that the West Indians were behaving as people who were already independent rather than as people who expected to be independent in five years. 19 The point could have been made more tactfully, but it was nevertheless quite true.

As for Williams, his stand was no less revolutionary to his colleagues than it was to the representatives of the
metropolitan powers. He effectively differentiated between himself and the other delegates and their respective objectives. He stated that whereas as representatives of the SFC all delegates were dealing with a site for the federal capital, as a representative of Trinidad and Tobago he was also dealing with something which did not directly concern the others—the disposition of Trinidad's territory. Then, as the representative of Trinidad and Tobago, he proposed the following modifications to the existing Agreement:

'The evacuation of Chaguaramas by the United States, and an amicable agreement between the governments of Trinidad, the United Kingdom and the United States on a footing of equality, regarding an alternative site for a base in Trinidad. There was no time for this in 1940. We have the necessary time in 1957.'

It is difficult to account for the attitude adopted by Williams. He probably doubted that his colleagues had the resolution to proceed with the task they had undertaken, and to pursue it to a satisfactory conclusion. It is quite possible too that because of the way sentiment triumphed over common sense in the selection of Chaguaramas in preference to a site that would have contributed to the economic development of Trinidad and Tobago, he determined that his personal intervention was necessary to protect Trinidad's interest. It will be remembered that Williams, though no less interested in West Indian nationhood than his colleagues, exceeded them in the importance he attached to economic development as a goal of federation. Whatever his motives, he amazed his colleagues by demanding independent representation for Trinidad and Tobago in future conferences on Chaguaramas, and had the satisfaction
of having his position recognized by the communique issued at the close of the conference. That communique stated:

Representatives of Trinidad and Tobago, the British West Indies, the United Kingdom, and the United States have agreed to the establishment of a joint commission composed of representative technical experts to investigate all aspects of the British West Indies request to make Chaguaramas available, taking into account military and economic considerations. The joint commission shall be set up and shall report to the parties concerned as early as possible.

The Chaguaramas Joint Technical Commission was duly appointed, and under the chairmanship of Sir Charles Arden-Clarke, at one time Governor of the Gold Coast (now Ghana), it began its investigations with a meeting in Port-of-Spain on January 13, 1958, and concluded with a visit to Tobago from February 22 to 25. The Commissioners found five alternative sites in Trinidad which fulfilled the strategic requirements and could be made to conform to the military requirements for a United States naval base in the East Caribbean, but stated that to convert these sites into military establishments would require periods varying from thirty months to seven years, and would involve financial expenditures of between U.S. $132 million and $248 million (W.I.$226-425 million). They noted also that there was no significant portion of usable area within the Chaguaramas naval base that was not essential to the base's mission, and concluded that neither the partition of the base nor a release of any portion of it as a prelude to ultimate release was practicable.
The Report of the Chaguaramas Joint Commission was completed on March 25, 1958, and by the time it was possible to take action on it the West Indies Federation had been established, and the West Indies federal government had superseded the Standing Federation Committee in negotiations over Chaguaramas. West Indian delegates to the London Conference 1957 had expected that the Conference would be reconvened to consider the report of the Chaguaramas Joint Commission. However, the governments of the United Kingdom and the United States decided otherwise. They issued separate statements to the effect that in view of the report, and of the overriding importance of the base to the defence of the Western hemisphere, it would be unreasonable to ask the United States government to relinquish the base or any part of it.23

West Indian leaders were not satisfied with the decision of the metropolitan powers or with their method of handling the situation. The decision that no part of the base could be relinquished was contradicted by the offers that had previously been made. In 1950, when the United States government deactivated the naval station at Chaguaramas, it had offered to lease the naval hospital there to the Trinidad government or alternatively to private charity. The Trinidad government turned down the offer because it lacked the hard currency to purchase the equipment the hospital contained.24 In July 1955 the retiring United States Consul-General in Port-of-Spain declared that sympathetic consideration would be given by the United States government to any request for a release of a vacated portion
of the United States Naval Station at Chaguaramas to be used as the temporary capital of a British Caribbean Federation. He further stated that use of any other portion of the station for other purposes, such as a permanent federal capital, would be a matter for negotiation with the United States government.\textsuperscript{25}

The later decision of the United States government gave West Indians the impression that a deliberate snub was intended. The action taken by the United Kingdom government was equally surprising. Manley hurried to Port-of-Spain for talks with Williams and Adams. In Port-of-Spain he described the actions of the metropolitan governments as an insult to the West Indies and a breach of a specific understanding.\textsuperscript{26} On June 2, 1958, the government of the West Indies Federation issued a statement pointing out that the declarations by the United Kingdom and the United States were in direct contravention of the understanding which the West Indies delegates had received at the London Conference of June 1957. From the statement formally presented by the leader of the United States delegation when he explained the functions of the Joint Chaguaramas Commission, it was inferred that the report of the Commission would be considered by a joint conference of representatives of the governments concerned. The federal government further expressed the conviction that publication of decisions by the governments of the United Kingdom and the United States was at variance with what was contemplated, and tacitly if not expressly agreed to, at the London Conference on the question of the need for a base in the Eastern Caribbean. It recorded its unwillingness
to make any decision inimical to the defence of the Western world, but declared it did not feel bound to accept the perpetuation of a lease for ninety-nine years. 27

The statement issued by the federal government had the full support of the government of Trinidad and Tobago. On June 6, Williams presented a motion in the Trinidad Legislature asking the House to endorse the request of the West Indies federal government for an early conference in Trinidad of the representatives of the four governments—Trinidad and Tobago, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the West Indies—to consider the report of the Joint Chaguaramas Commission. After a long debate during which the Opposition contended that the Constitution of Trinidad and Tobago was not sufficiently advanced to justify the stand that the government had taken in the matter, the motion passed.

It should be pointed out here that the Opposition was consistently opposed to the government's policy on Chaguaramas. On two occasions they raised the question in No Confidence motions. Speaking on the first such motion on September 9, 1957, Bhadase Maraj warned that the Americans would not stand for petty bullying because they partly controlled the entire globe, and therefore should be spoken to respectfully. In the second motion on February 21, 1958, he charged that Williams was nursing a vendetta against the United States government, and hampering the good will and harmonious relationship existing between the country and the United States of America. 28 However, not all members censuring the government showed
themselves equally obsequious. Some recalled the protection that the United States had provided during the last war, and contended that continued use of the base by the United States was vital to the defence of the West Indies.

In his struggle with the United States, Williams not only had to face opposition at home, but was also subject to criticism from the other West Indian territories. He was severely criticised in an editorial in the Barbados Advocate of March 15, 1958. It stated that contrary to the recommendations of the Mudie Commission, Dr. Williams went to Jamaica and wrested the capital and later found that he had no place in Trinidad really suitable for a federal capital, except a place over which the Trinidad government had no control. Having the prize and being unable to decide what to do with it, Williams had resorted to fanning the flames of anti-American feeling and to trying to blackmail the government of the United States.29

The editorial by the Barbados Advocate obviously betrayed Barbadian resentment at being rejected as the host territory for the federation. However, its tone was not quite so hostile as certain sections of the Jamaica press, as indicated by the following excerpt from the Jamaican monthly, New Day:

'The malice of the Trinidad Premier, Dr. Eric Williams, towards the Americans has turned the Chaguaramas from an honourable federal issue into a dishonourable personal one, has cooled America's friendly attitude towards the federation, is whittling away American good will, and almost depriving the federation of a valuable source of assistance. Such help as the United States has given the federation,
might have been much greater but for Williams, and is not likely to go beyond the already made token gesture, unless he gets shuffled out of power— which does not seem likely in the face of his deeply dug in home side popularity.'

The opposition Williams encountered at home and the criticism he suffered from the press throughout the region were inimical to any prospect of an early solution of the problem. However, there was ample support and sympathy for his stand by liberal opinion abroad. For example, in the British House of Commons on July 16, 1957, certain members expressed support for the West Indian cause and also advocated the release of Chaguaramas for use by the federation. Among them were two well known Labour members, Mr. Nigel Fisher and Mr. Fenner Brockway. Fisher expressed the view that the British government should give the strongest possible backing to the West Indies in their claims on Chaguaramas because although the British government had given Chaguaramas to the United States during the war, in reality Chaguaramas was not theirs to give. Speaking in a similar vein, Brockway thought it intolerable and an infamous crime that any two people, even in wartime, should have the right to hand over territory without consultation with the government concerned.

The interest with which liberal observers abroad followed the Chaguaramas question and the sympathy they expressed for the West Indian position, became all the more important for Williams when the federal government accepted a ten year moratorium on discussions, and withdrew leaving Williams the
alternative of either dropping the matter, or carrying on the campaign alone. In a statement given to the House of Represen-
tatives on June 16, 1958, Adams announced that the federal government had been informed by the British government that the United States was willing to give an assurance of its willingness to review the Chaguaramas situation in about ten years' time. Revision would be made in the light of any changes in the methods of warfare which might render unnecessary the retention of Chaguaramas. However, the United States government had stipulated that sympathetic consideration would be given to proposals for a review of the 1941 Agreement, provided that representations were made by either of the parties to that Agreement, and that any modifications should be made by mutual consent. After dilating on the information he had received, Adams announced that the federal government, while not abandoning the stand it had consistently taken on the issue, proposed to accept the terms and assurances given.32

The decision of Adams to accept the assurance given by the United States was one of the most unfortunate he made as Prime Minister of the West Indies. Without selecting an alternative site for the capital of the federation, he had tentatively surrendered the one chosen in exchange for a promise of doubtful merit. What is still more important, he had taken unilateral action on a matter which obviously required consultation with other West Indian leaders and with his colleagues in the Federal Labour Party. As Prime Minister of the West Indies he was entirely within his rights to make his decision following
discussion with his colleagues in the Council of State. But he did not have the same right to give an undertaking involving the territory of Trinidad and Tobago without consultation with the Trinidad government. The decision taken by Adams, and the manner in which it was made, opened the first rift in the ranks of the Federal Labour Party, and was also the immediate cause of strained relations between the federal and Trinidad governments which grew progressively worse until the collapse of the Federation.

The attempts made by Adams to explain his conduct in the matter reveal a great deal of confusion. Apparently he did not consider himself bound by his decision to accept the assurances given by the United States. By his own admission he affirmed that there was no need for Williams to be bound by it, for his promise to Williams was, "If you raise the matter in ten minutes, I will be behind you." This attitude of Adams not only savoured of duplicity unworthy of someone occupying so high an office, it also represented an abdication of responsibility by the federal government that was inimical to the success of federation. At the same time it was typical of a subservience displayed by certain colonial peoples which rendered them unwilling or unable to assert their rights. The same attitude was evident in the Trinidad legislature where members repeatedly cautioned Williams against antagonizing the Americans. This was really Adams' difficulty. His explanation was almost pathetic. "I could not say to the United States 'I don't trust you, I am not taking your word for it that you will
discuss it later'. " He further suggested that once the United States had given the assurances, the federal government had little recourse but to accept while expressing the hope that things would be worked out as soon as possible. 

Adams by his action had placed himself in an untenable position. Though he had virtually surrendered the liberty to pursue the matter in his own right, he had promised Williams his support. That was an unfortunate role for the federal government to assume. Quite aside from the fact that a capital site was an immediate and pressing need of the federation, the federal government by virtue of its very existence was under obligation to provide leadership, especially in the field of external affairs. The failure of Adams to accept his full responsibility in the matter was all the greater because the question of Chaguaramas was raised initially in the interest of the federation. As a result, Williams was later able to claim, with considerable justification, that he participated in proceedings against his will and was later deserted by the federal government. 

The formal withdrawal of the federal government from the Chaguaramas question left Williams the alternative of either acquiescing in the decision of the federal government, or pursuing the matter alone. It has been suggested that he found the Chaguaramas question convenient for settling a personal grievance against the Americans, and that the Americans on the other hand had abjured any intention of participating in any discussion in which he was a party. At any rate, Williams did not feel the qualms that Adams felt about rejecting the
ten-year moratorium and pressing for an immediate resumption of the discussions begun in London in July, 1957. In the circumstances he found himself in conflict with both the United States government and the Colonial Office. He later stated that when the report of the Chaguaramas Joint Commission was ready for publication, the Colonial Office sent him a copy together with the statement they intended to publish with it, but that he had informed them that although they could speak for themselves and the federal government, they should make no statement committing the government of Trinidad and Tobago to any interpretation of the report of the Joint Commission which could not stand objective examination. 37

Williams then embarked on a campaign to secure the resumption of the discussions which had been broken off on the appointment of the Chaguaramas Joint Commission. On June 20, he informed the Legislature of the correspondence that had passed between the United Kingdom government and the federal government relative to the promise given by the Americans to review the 1941 Lease Agreement in about ten years. He then declared that although the federal government had decided to accept the assurances given by the United States, the government of Trinidad and Tobago would not surrender its responsibility to protect the country's interest. To suggestions that the federal government might consider the use of Waller Field as an alternative site for the capital, Williams replied that the United States government could only surrender Waller Field to Trinidad, and that the federal government could use no
portion of Trinidad's soil without prior agreement with the government of Trinidad and Tobago. He then appointed a committee of legal experts "to go into and report upon the legal basis of the occupation by the United States of areas of Trinidad and Tobago from 1941 to the present day, and the terms and conditions thereto." 38

When Williams appointed the committee to examine the conditions of the American leased areas in Trinidad he had embarked on the most crucial issue in his short political career. He was about to enter a contest with the most powerful of all his opponents. In the situation his action was also a challenge to the Colonial Office which resented this demonstration of independence. At the same time the number of interests opposing him locally was quite impressive. It was only three months since his party had been defeated in the federal elections. During the campaign the DLP had promised that if they won the elections they would leave the Americans in possession of Chaguaramas and construct the capital at Waller Field. The establishment of the federal government provided additional opportunities for American intrigue. On Monday, December 8, 1958, the Leader of the Opposition stated in the Federal House of Representatives that a substantial sum of money "is now resting idly in the coffers of the United States in so far as a gift is concerned for the building of the federal capital." 39 The Minister of Finance informed the House that he had had no information to that effect. He did remember, however, that a
few months previously, in September, he was approached by a journalist who asked him what his reply would be if the American government offered the federal government a sum of money to build the federal capital elsewhere and leave Chaguaramas to the United States. Adams had earlier claimed that when he took up residence in Trinidad following the establishment of the federation, he was shocked at some of the information that reached him concerning the relationship of certain persons with the Americans, and he appealed to members across the House who had friends among the Americans not to subordinate the interests of the federation to their friendship to the Americans.

The Americans certainly had a number of friends and sympathizers in Trinidad who occasionally attempted to embarrass Williams in his struggle over Chaguaramas, but he was able to proceed with his campaign in spite of their efforts. In the course of a Press conference on September 20, 1958, he stated that the Chaguaramas question was daily becoming more complicated and more incredible, for he had recently been informed that the Americans were carrying on large scale agricultural activities at Tucker Valley, and that a number of crops including cocoa, coconuts and citrus fruits were being produced on a plantation comprising some two thousand acres, and were being sold on the local market. The situation, he said, raised a number of questions on subjects such as income tax, customs duty, and permits for the entry of produce from the base into Trinidad. One week later he declared at another Press conference that as Minister of Finance he had held up a cheque due
to the authorities at the base in payment for the year's crop of grapefruit because the conditions under which the payment was being made violated the currency regulations controlling the transfer of money from the colony. He stated further that the currency regulations were also being violated through membership dues being paid by local residents to an exclusive club operating on the base which had about four hundred local members who paid dues of about sixty to one-hundred West Indian dollars.  

The disclosures Williams made about commercial activities pursued at the base and the extent to which it contributed to breaches of the currency regulations were just a part of an impressive list of grievances arising from the operation of the base which he later revealed. He claimed that the base was a regular avenue for smuggling; goods that entered the base duty free in harmony with the 1941 Agreement were later being found on sale in the stores of Port-of-Spain; vehicles purchased from the base were sometimes found operating on the streets of Trinidad without going through the required customs formality and paying duty; on a single transaction involving the sale of surplus stock, the government of Trinidad and Tobago had lost revenue running into thousands of dollars. Williams contended that these abuses were possible because, under the existing Agreement, the Trinidad government was unable to establish a point for checking persons leaving the base to enter Trinidad's territory. Another very important source of irritation, he said, arose from the use of the
International Airport at Piarco by American military planes. When the Americans closed down their air base at Waller Field they concluded an agreement with the British government providing for them to use the airport at Piarco for occasional flights. He declared that such occasional flights had increased from two in 1949 to 1440 in 1957, and that late in 1958 the number was approaching 2,000. He further stated that aside from the increased wear and tear resulting from the operation of heavy military aircraft, there were other sources of dissatisfaction resulting from the long period some aircraft spent at the airport, the absence of a coordinating authority for the different branches of the United States Air Services, the increased volume of work for airport staff, and the hostility and bitter opposition with which military men responded to the request that they should comply with the regulations of the airport.\textsuperscript{45}

As a result of the disclosures made by Williams and the persistent campaign he conducted, he was able to record his first victory. On May 14, 1959, he met the United States Consul-General in Port-of-Spain at a conference over which the Governor presided, and it was agreed to hold discussions between representatives of the United States government in Port-of-Spain and the government of Trinidad and Tobago concerning the day-to-day difficulties arising from the operation of the areas leased to the United States in the territory. Williams later revealed that in the course of these discussions the Americans had also
offered to pay for the use of the airport and to provide compensation for depreciation as a result of such use, but that he had insisted that his aim was not to achieve ad hoc agreements on isolated issues, but rather to secure a resumption of the Conference which was held in July 1957.  

Williams' first victory, though not spectacular was nevertheless quite impressive. He had got the Americans to take notice of what he was saying and doing, and this represented a modification of their earlier stand. However, his success tended to discredit the faltering, compliant, policy of Adams of which Williams became increasingly critical. At a Press conference in March 1959, Williams delivered one of the sharpest criticisms ever directed at the federal government. He said that Trinidad was the champion of West Indian independence, and Trinidad and Tobago was not going to support any West Indian federal government which started off by being a stooge of the Colonial Office. Referring to this criticism at a later date, Adams deemed it beneath contempt. These remarks indicate clearly the strained relations which developed between the federal government and the government of Trinidad and Tobago, and it will be seen that the Chaguaramas question affected the relationship between the two governments to a greater degree than any other single issue.  

Meantime, Williams proceeded with his campaign to force a conference for a revision of the Leased Areas Agreement. In so doing he concentrated on public speeches at which he discussed some of the areas in which the Americans had violated
both the existing agreement and the laws of Trinidad and Tobago.

One of the most important of these speeches was delivered as the result of a crisis which arose in discussions with the Colonial Office. On September 20, 1957, the Legislative Council accepted a motion advocating reform of the Constitution to provide for the recognition of the conventions of party government – the automatic selection of the leader of the majority party to form a government, with the title of Premier rather than Chief Minister; the introduction of the Cabinet system with ex-officio members remaining as members though without voting privileges; and the establishment of commissions with executive authority for the public service and the police. On June 13, 1958, before any of the preceding reforms could be implemented, another motion was introduced advocating the creation of a Ministry of Home Affairs with responsibility for the police force, security and immigration, and also the modification in the Governor's reserve powers. In introducing this motion for further revision before the previous reforms had been implemented, Solomon urged the necessity of advancing as rapidly as possible to full self-government, and bringing the Constitution in line with the most up-to-date in the federation. He explained also that implementation of the earlier measures had been delayed because the Colonial Office, unlike its earlier policy, had requested a draft of the proposed Constitution, and the legal department had been so busy re-writing the laws of the country that it had
been unable to produce the required draft as early as had been hoped. The proposals were accepted by the Legislature and referred to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr. Lennox Boyd, who opposed the transfer of the police from the jurisdiction of the Colonial Secretary to that of the Minister of Home Affairs.

Williams decided to accept the modifications advised by the Colonial Office and proceeded to make plans for the implementation of the reforms agreed upon. He appointed June 26, 1959, as the day on which Cabinet government was to be introduced, and to mark the occasion had that day declared a public holiday. Among the events planned for the celebration of Cabinet Day were the ceremonial opening of the Legislative Council, a parade of school children in Port-of-Spain, and a large public meeting in Woodford Square to be addressed by the Premier. However, a few days before the appointed day, Williams hurriedly sent Dr. Solomon and J. O'Halloran, the Minister of Commerce and Industry, on a secret mission to the Colonial Office. There were at the time conflicting opinions on the purpose of their mission. It was generally believed that they went to London to secure the transfer of the police to the jurisdiction of the recently established Ministry of Home Affairs. On the other hand, there were some who claimed that they went to the Colonial Office to discuss the question of a tracking station which had recently been constructed at Chaguaramas, and which in the course of operation constituted a radiation hazard. As will be seen later, Williams
subsequently explained that the secret mission to London was occasioned by the discovery of radiation at Chaguaramas, and that this fact made the local control of the police imperative.

Meantime, when Solomon and O'Halloran arrived in London, Lennox Boyd found it impossible to see them or to arrange for them to have an interview with anyone at the Colonial Office. Williams accordingly advised them to return home. On June 18 the three men called on the Governor and asked him to transfer the police from the control of the Colonial Secretary to the jurisdiction of the Minister of Home Affairs. The Governor forwarded the request by telegram to the Secretary of State for the Colonies and asked him for an early reply to permit the celebration of Cabinet Day to be observed as scheduled. As no reply was received, the Governor forwarded a second request on June 13, pointing out that if a reply was not received in time, the opening of the Legislative Council and other celebrations appointed for that day would have to be cancelled. At midday on Thursday, June 25, a telegram was received from Lennox Boyd explaining that a misunderstanding had arisen from the visit of Solomon and O'Halloran, and that as he was rather concerned about clearing up the misunderstanding he was sending his parliamentary under-secretary, Mr. Julian Amery, to discuss outstanding matters with the government of Trinidad and Tobago. In the circumstances Williams consulted the Governor and announced that all celebrations planned in connection with Cabinet Day, June 26, would be cancelled.
The cancellation of all events set for June 26 at such short notice, produced a state of uneasiness and anxiety throughout Trinidad and Tobago. The tension was heightened because no official reason was given for the cancellation. Meanwhile, Mr. Amery reached Trinidad and held discussions first of all with the Chief of Police. He later had talks with the Governor and the Premier. The hurried visit that Amery made to Trinidad was the signal of Williams' victory in his struggle with the Colonial Office. On July 3 Williams held a public meeting originally scheduled for June 26 as part of the Cabinet Day celebrations. The postponement of the celebrations had created a situation ripe for exploitation, and Williams used it to advantage. In what he described as his first public act as Premier of Trinidad and Tobago, Williams proceeded to give the reasons for the cancellation of events set for June 26. The cause of all the difficulty, he explained, was Chaguaramas. He developed this point on two main lines: the Americans were abusing the conditions of the existing lease, and the 1941 Agreement, even if valid, was quite unsatisfactory. On the first point he stated that there was scarcely a law of Trinidad and Tobago which had not been violated as a result of the presence of the United States base at Chaguaramas. Aside from questions of validity of the 1941 Agreement, he said, was the fact that hardly an Article had been lived up to, either in the spirit or in the letter. He then proceeded to enlarge on the abuses he had previously mentioned. After that, he turned to a discussion of the 1941 Agreement which, he said,
was unsatisfactory not only because it had been drawn up without consulting the people of Trinidad and Tobago, but also because valuable Trinidad assets had been ceded for the defence of the United States under conditions by which the United States was not committed to the defence of the West Indies. The very people whom President Roosevelt had contemptuously dismissed as "headaches liable to impose an economic drag on the United States," he said, were forced to surrender their assets in the interests of the United States. He declared that the worst feature of the 1941 Agreement was that the Trinidad government had never been able to establish a customs point to intercept smugglers, because Roosevelt had stated that American public opinion would be hostile to any arrangement by which American troops could be stopped and searched or arrested by Negro policemen, or tried in courts over which coloured magistrates presided. Turning to more recent developments, Williams stated that without any new Agreement, a tracking station had been constructed at the base. The discovery had been made that there was a radiation hazard in certain operations on the base. As a result of that discovery the decision had been taken to send Solomon and O'Halloran to London. He then stated that the recent discoveries and developments made the transfer of the police to direct control by the government imperative.

It would be interesting to speculate on the possible tenor and content of Williams' address had it been delivered on June 26 as originally scheduled. One thing seems certain,
the Chaguaramas question was certain to be at the centre of it. It will be remembered that speaking of Chaguaramas in the Trinidad Legislature on August 7, 1957, he had said that so far as Trinidad and Tobago was concerned, the real issue involved was not the location of the capital or the disposition of the base, but self-government for Trinidad and Tobago as well as for the federation. It is a fair assumption therefore that the Cabinet Day crisis did not greatly influence the content of Williams' address. It gave him a larger and more interested audience. When Lennox Boyd refused to see the Trinidad delegation, he certainly did not intend to increase Williams' popularity. It was most likely his intention to administer a rebuke to the little West Indian leader who in two years had proposed rapid changes in the constitution of Trinidad and Tobago; had offered to surrender the unspent balance of Colonial Development and Welfare funds allocated to Trinidad and Tobago in exchange for independence; and had requested the right to nominate the next Governor of Trinidad and Tobago. If that was really Lennox Boyd's intention, he failed. And his failure rapidly diminished Colonial Office control over the affairs of Trinidad and Tobago and prepared the way for Williams to succeed in his struggle with the Americans.

Much of what Williams said during his address was intended for American ears. The 'abuses' and 'violations' of which he spoke were of a serious nature, and no self-respecting nation could remain indifferent to a situation in which its
citizens violated the laws of another country. The quotations taken from the remarks of President Roosevelt were of an entirely different nature. It was most likely expected that these remarks would have remained concealed from the pages of history for another generation. Williams was perhaps unethical to reveal them in the way he did. But his aim was to convince the Americans that they could not reasonably expect to remain in tranquil possession of the leased areas while they treated with contempt the people whose land they occupied.

It is remarkable that Williams was able to pursue his struggle with the United States with no other support than that provided by his party. The Opposition remained obdurate in its stand on the issue, and the Press was unrelenting in its hostility to Williams. The Guardian, the earliest advocate of the Chaguaramas site for the federal capital, was outspoken in its condemnation of Williams' stand on the matter. As for the federal government, the support that Adams promised was not forthcoming, and in the course of his address on July 3, Williams again repeated that he had become involved in Chaguaramas through the federal government, and because of the incompetence of the United Kingdom government in discharging its responsibilities in the field of external relations. Every succeeding advance made by Williams towards his objective was inevitably a victory gained over the federal government. This was inimical to the success of the federation but it was the inevitable result of the decision taken by Adams to accept the assurances given by the United States and to leave Williams alone to continue the struggle.
The Cabinet Day crisis was to Williams' unexpected advantage and he exploited it fully. Of course, the difficulties which necessitated the postponement were speedily overcome, agreement was reached for the transfer of the police as Williams requested, and Cabinet Day was observed on July 10, two weeks after the date originally set. After that, Williams proceeded with his agitation. His next step was a public address on July 17, which bore the rather meaningful title "From Slavery to Chaguaramas." In this speech Williams discussed Chaguaramas against the background of colonial history, and as a vital issue in the progress Trinidad was making toward self-government. Self-government, he said, was impossible in a situation in which the government had no jurisdiction over a portion of its territory and no control over many things taking place in the country. With the achievement of self-government the only authority that would be accepted was the authority of a completely independent federation. Then, speaking of independence, he said "we have fixed the day for it, April 22, 1960 . . . And we have the plan for a self-governing Trinidad, and mark my words, the Trinidad flag will fly over Chaguaramas before many of us are many days older." During the meetings of the Standing Federation Committee Williams had urged that the federation should aim at achieving independence within two years of its establishment. Accordingly, the PNM officially designated April 22, 1960, the second anniversary of the inauguration of the federal parliament as the target date for the achievement of independence and designated it Independence Day.
Before proceeding to a discussion of the importance of that day in the struggle over Chaguaramas, it is important to consider some evidence of improved relationships between the government of Trinidad and Tobago and the United States. Reference has already been made to discussions between Williams and the United States Consul-General over difficulties arising from the day-to-day operations of the base. In the course of the discussions which began on May 14, 1959, a considerable degree of agreement was reached, and there were real prospects of a final settlement on the entire question. On September 6, 1959, Williams announced publicly that the Americans were able to appreciate the principle involved in the position he had taken, and that there was some prospect of success in achieving the goal toward which he was working. However, all hopes for an immediate settlement of difficulties were frustrated by disagreement over the position Trinidad was to occupy. The British and American governments were insisting on tripartite talks, and they found Adams in complete agreement. On September 12, 1959, the federal government issued a statement referring to the proposed talks and declared that the representatives of Trinidad and Tobago would have full opportunity to present the territory's views at the conference table and to sign as a member of the West Indies delegation whatever agreement emerged from the conference. 58 This arrangement was unsatisfactory to Williams who, from the time of the London conference had consistently demanded independent representation for Trinidad and Tobago. Moreover, he was justified in the belief that the
decision to hold tripartite talks in one year rather than an Anglo-American dialogue in about ten as had been decided in 1958, was influenced greatly by the stand that he had taken, and the campaign he had been conducting. He therefore refused to agree to an arrangement which was likely to deprive him of the objectives for which he had been contending.

Another factor which strengthened Williams in insistence on direct representation for Trinidad and Tobago, was the fact that he had already been negotiating with an accredited representative of the United States government, and that it was in the course of those negotiations that proposals for further discussion had been formulated. Of equal importance was the fact that there had been no consultation between the Federal and Trinidad governments on the matter, and no agreement as to aims and objectives. The fact is, that on the question of Chaguaramas a great gulf separated the federal and Trinidad governments, and there was much ignorance of what lay on the opposite side. As Williams said, he did not know where Adams stood on the question. On the other hand, Adams knew that Williams stood for independent participation in any conference on Chaguaramas, but he knew nothing of Williams' ultimate objectives. Meantime, the first intergovernmental conference on the federal constitution intervened and nothing more was heard until December 11, 1959, when it was announced that tripartite talks were to take place with the governments of the United Kingdom, the United States, and the West Indies Federation participating, and that the West Indies delegation would
include representatives of the unit territories. The government of Trinidad and Tobago, and governments of other territories where the United States occupied leased areas, were invited to express their views on the proposals. On January 16, 1960, the Trinidad government asked for further information as to the case for the West Indies, the proposed method of presentation, the agenda for the conference, and also relevant papers. Thereafter, in spite of repeated requests from the federal government, Williams refused to correspond any further on the subject. He later stated that his views on the matter were well known.

The question of Trinidad's position at a conference on Chaguaramas not only impeded progress towards the talks, but led to greatly strained relations with the federal government. To a certain extent the British and American governments were not innocent in the matter. In 1958 they had dismissed the requests of the West Indies in a high-handed and indifferent manner. However, when their position became untenable they attempted to relegate Trinidad and Tobago to a subordinate position. It is quite possible that they desired to use their influence to buttress the prestige of the federation. It was almost too late. In so doing they only aggravated its difficulties. As for Adams, there was little justification for the stand he took in agreeing to tripartite talks. That the responsibility of the federal government lay in the field of major external affairs cannot be questioned. But it was obvious that the Chaguaramas question, and its impact on intergovernmental relations, had reached the place where it was pointless
to insist on what was constitutionally correct. A more astute politician might have recognized the expediency of supporting Williams in his demand for four-power talks. Instead of this, Adams took the view that Williams was not showing enough deference to the role of the federal government in external affairs. On March 13, 1960, Adams delivered an address by radio on the strained relations that had developed between the federal and Trinidad governments. In it he described the efforts made to begin tripartite talks on revision of the United States Bases Agreement, and the failure of the Trinidad government to cooperate. One very significant statement he made was that the desire of the Trinidad Premier to interfere was greater than his desire to help.60

The broadcast made by Adams revealed quite clearly his narrow legalistic view of the situation and also the extent to which relations between the federal and Trinidad governments had deteriorated over Chaguaramas. The following day Williams also made an address by radio. In it he replied to the charges made by Adams. He contrasted the long silence of the federal government on Chaguaramas with his own actions on the matter, and stated, as has been mentioned before, that he did not know where the federal government stood. Continuing, he asserted that quite recently a member of the United States Congress had stated unequivocally that he had had discussions with the Prime Minister and other members of the West Indies federal government who had assured him that they were in sympathy with the aims of the American government, and that they were opposed to the
policy of the Trinidad government on Chaguaramas. Williams further pointed out that although this allegation had been trumpeted throughout the West Indies, the federal government had made no attempt to refute it; therefore, he continued, there had inevitably grown up in the minds of people in Trinidad and Tobago a distrust of the federal government and a suspicion of what it would do in any tripartite talks at which Trinidad and Tobago did not occupy an independent position.

The statements made by Williams and Adams indicate clearly how fundamentally different were the philosophies of both men. Williams dismissed outright the suggestion that Chaguaramas was essentially a problem for the British and American governments, and that the federal government was being admitted as a matter of courtesy. Adams, on the other hand, was in full agreement with this view. Two years later he was still contending that "it was a matter between the United Kingdom and the United States, and because the federal capital was involved they decided to include the federal government." It was the great misfortune of the federation to have in Adams a Prime Minister who elected to be a lawyer in circumstances which clearly required him to be a politician. By adopting a more flexible policy, Adams could have tried to relieve the tension that had developed between himself and Williams. He chose instead to contend for the constitutional correctness of tripartite talks. The effect of his action was to widen still further the gap that had developed between himself and Williams. On March 18, 1960, Williams addressed the Fourth Annual
Convention of the People's National Movement and, referring to the Chaguaramas question and the proposals for tripartite talks, he made the following statement which was just as startling as it was significant: "I need no longer conceal the fact that our relations with the federal government are not calculated . . . to inspire confidence in the protection of Trinidad's interests under such an arrangement." Continuing, he declared that not only did he intend to stand inflexibly for his proposals, but he was rejecting in advance any agreement reached between the American, British, and federal governments, and the prospect was that the final settlement of the Chaguaramas question would have to be left in abeyance until the achievement of independence. Meantime, he continued, Trinidad and Tobago would take all constitutional and legal steps within its competence to protect its interests which were outraged by the American government, neglected by the British government and compromised by the negative attitude of the federal government. It should be noted that Williams linked the federal government with the British and American governments as forces which threatened the interests of Trinidad. This connection, he suggested, was not due to any animosity which the federal government nurtured for Trinidad, but rather because of its negative attitude it was becoming a willing instrument in the hands of the United States and the United Kingdom to frustrate the aspirations of Trinidad and Tobago.

The address delivered by Williams must be regarded as a significant development in the relations between the federal government and Trinidad. In the first place, that address was
delivered at a party convention so that it was tantamount to a declaration of government policy. In the second place that address bore the highly meaningful title, "The Approach to Independence." The central theme was the independence of the West Indian nation with a strong federal government, independent in external affairs, and having the necessary powers to promote economic interest of the federation. The corollary of independence for the West Indies Federation was full internal self-government for the unit territories and the end of Colonial Office influence in the region. Independence, Williams stated, meant vigilance in the protection of national interests, and the inalienable right to pursue a self-appointed role in the international power struggle. Therefore, he declared, if the site of the federal capital were London, Washington, or Tierra del Fuego, Chaguaramas was still the crux of West Indian nationalism, the symbol of West Indian independence. Subsidiary to the central theme of West Indian independence, "The Approach to Independence" also set forth independence for Trinidad and Tobago as a possible alternative. For this, Williams claimed, the country possessed among other advantages, a government supported by an effective party, and a powerful economy deriving its original impetus from oil and its strength from the increasing diversity of its industrialization programme. Independence, he concluded, would bring with it the right to repudiate international obligations to which the country was bound in its dependent status.
"The Approach to Independence" assumed added significance in the light of the collapse of the intergovernmental conference in September, 1959. At the same time it clearly revealed that Williams did not attach the same importance to acquiring Chaguaramas for the capital as Adams did. Williams did state quite definitely that if a choice had to be made between Chaguaramas as the site of the capital and Chaguaramas as a United States naval base, the West Indies federal capital must have precedence. However, the proposals he made for settling the Chaguaramas question certainly did not indicate that the acquisition of the site for the federal capital was receiving serious consideration from him. These proposals may be summarized as follows: The base to be a joint United States/West Indies base; the United States to provide full training facilities for West Indians at all levels, the governments to agree in principle that the United States must evacuate the base at a prescribed date . . . ten years dating back from 1957 when the issue of revision was first raised; the United States should immediately release all areas not being used, and the 1941 Agreement to be reviewed clause by clause.68

The proposals advanced by Williams were moderate and provided a real basis for discussion. However, they constituted a unilateral effort of Trinidad, and considered the interests of the federation only as Williams conceived them. Meantime the situation remained unchanged with Williams unyielding in his demand for direct participation in any discussions affecting
Trinidad's soil, and equally firm in his determination that Trinidad would not be bound by any agreement made by others in her name. This was still the situation on April 4, 1960, when Mr. Adlai Stevenson, on two occasions Democratic candidate for the United States presidency, visited Trinidad and discussed Chaguaramas with the Premier and his Cabinet. In an interview which he gave as he was about to leave, Stevenson stated that there were no problems between his country and Trinidad which could not be resolved in the common interest of all and for the protection and solidarity of the hemisphere. Stevenson's visit and his discussion with Williams held out hopes for a speedy and satisfactory solution to the problem.

Meantime, plans were being made for the observance of Independence Day on April 22, 1960. The original plan called for a march on Chaguaramas to hoist the Trinidad flag on the base. However, better counsel prevailed, and a less adventurous course was adopted. The demonstration of April 22, 1960, was nevertheless an impressive affair. On the morning of April 22, thousands of persons assembled in Woodford Square, and precisely at eleven o'clock Williams began to address the crowd, explaining the significance of the demonstration. He then paid tribute to three national heroes: Cipriani, Butler, and Sir Hubert Young, the Governor who in 1941 had opposed the Bases Agreement and had been removed from his office as a result. In the course of his speech Williams explained, "we march to show and tell the world that if we are not yet independent in law, we today and after today are independent in fact. We have the
spirit for independence. Only the form is lacking. Our demonstration today serves public notice that we are no longer prepared to wait for the gift as of grace of what is ours as of right."70

Before the demonstration began, two ceremonies were performed. The first was the burning of the "Seven Deadly Sins": The Trinidad Constitution Order in Council 1959, the Federal Constitution, the 1941 Agreement on Chaguaramas, the Report of the Federal Capital Fact Finding Commission, a copy of the Trinidad Guardian, and two other items of a less significant nature. The Constitution of Trinidad and Tobago was burned because, as Williams said, "it no longer fits. We demand the suit of full internal self-government." As for the Federal Constitution, Williams declared, "it is colonialism, and nothing but colonialism. . . . We demand an independent federation. We state unambiguously either independence or no federation."71

The burning of the "Seven Deadly Sins" was followed by the hoisting of the flags of the West Indies Federation, and of Trinidad and Tobago. When the ceremonies were over, the crowd, estimated at about 35,000, set out in the rain on a seven-mile march around Port-of-Spain. The route led past Memorial Park, the Governor-General's residence, the residence of the Governor of Trinidad and Tobago, and the American Consulate. At Memorial Park the procession stopped while Dr. Solomon placed a wreath at the Cenotaph "in memory of those who died defending the freedom of others." At subsequent stops
copies of a Memorial demanding an independent federation, self-government for Trinidad and Tobago, revision of the 1941 Bases Agreement and return of areas ceded "without the consent of the people of Trinidad and Tobago and against their will," were presented to the Governor-General, the Governor, and the United States Consul General. The march terminated in the downtown area at the base of a statue of Captain Cipriani. The square where the demonstration terminated has since been renamed Independence Square.

The entire demonstration was well disciplined and orderly, and provided ample evidence of the strength of Williams' support and the quality of his leadership. He frequently stated that his movement was similar to nationalistic movements elsewhere, with one important difference: there must be no bloodshed. In reality, there was never any need for the adoption of any other methods than those he employed. The progress being made towards self-government rendered possible the attainment of the goals sought by Williams by purely constitutional means.

It is quite possible that the Independence Day demonstration greatly influenced the final plans for a Conference on the Chaguaramas question, but it is difficult to judge the exact extent. The deadlock which developed over the parties to be represented at the Conference was broken by a compromise suggestion made by Mr. Iain McLeod, the new Secretary of State for the Colonies. In the course of a visit to the West Indies, McLeod arrived in Trinidad on June 7, 1960, and spent a week in discussing a number of subjects pertaining
to the federation, and also to Trinidad and Tobago. Of particular interest to Trinidad and Tobago was the agreement reached for the introduction of a new constitution providing for full internal self-government. At the same time he proposed that a conference for the revision of the 1941 Bases Agreement be held in three stages: the first stage, the preliminary or protocol stage, was to be a tripartite conference held in London, at which representatives of the unit territories would be included in the West Indies delegation; the second, the crucial or effective stage, was to be a number of conferences held separately in different islands. At these conferences all units of the federation on which the United States had established bases, would participate directly as a fourth party and present their cases. Decisions taken during the second stage talks would be referred to the third stage for translation into legal and diplomatic phraseology.  

The proposals advanced by McLeod were accepted, and the first stage of the conference was held in London from November 3 to 8, 1960. The United Kingdom, the United States, and the West Indies federal government discussed in broad outline a review of the 1941 Leased Areas Agreement. There was general acceptance of the principle that the West Indies Federation on achieving independence would have the right to form its own alliances, and to conclude agreements regarding military bases at its discretion. However, it was agreed that revision of the 1941 Agreement would proceed on the basis that the West Indies would be willing to cooperate to strengthen military
security and to contribute to the defence of the Western hemisphere. The United States offered to release unconditionally all areas held by them under the 1941 Agreement, excepting those that were necessary for worldwide and hemispheric defence. Both the United Kingdom and the United States expressed willingness to help in the economic development of the West Indies.73

At the conclusion of the London phase of the talks, the parties met in the West Indies for the second stage which comprised a number of four-party conferences in which the governments of those West Indian territories where the United States had leases, participated directly. The first of these conferences was held in Tobago from November 29 to December 9, with Trinidad and Tobago represented by a bi-partisan delegation led by Williams. Adams has claimed that had Williams so desired, he could have achieved the immediate evacuation of Chaguaramas.74 However, it will be remembered that the immediate evacuation of Chaguaramas was not included in the proposals advanced by Williams for a settlement. A new Bases Agreement drawn up at the conference provided for the United States to retain Chaguaramas as a naval base to be used jointly by the naval forces of the United States, the West Indies, and Trinidad and Tobago. Consultations would be held between both governments at the end of ten years with a view to complete surrender of the base, or a renewal of the lease should conditions require it. Areas adjacent to the base not being used, together with other areas throughout the island, would be
surrendered completely within two years. The United States would provide economic and technical assistance to Trinidad and Tobago on a number of projects including the construction of an additional highway from Port-of-Spain to Chaguaramas. From Tobago, the venue of the Stage II talks shifted to Antigua, Jamaica, and St. Lucia, where the United States also maintained bases. The parties then returned to Port-of-Spain for the third and final stage of the revision conference which took place on February 10, 1961. During the morning the Governor-General presided over the signing of the new agreement which took place at Government House. The signatories to this agreement were representatives of the United Kingdom and the United States, the Prime Minister of the West Indies, and the Premiers of Trinidad and Tobago, and St. Lucia. In the afternoon these parties, joined by the Governor of Trinidad and Tobago, boarded a ship of the Royal Navy at Port-of-Spain and proceeded to Chaguaramas, where in a moving ceremony the flags of the West Indies and of Trinidad and Tobago were hoisted alongside those of the United Kingdom and the United States. With the ceremony of the hoisting of the flag there was fulfilled a promise made by Williams on July 17, 1959: "Before many of us are many days older the Trinidad flag will fly over Chaguaramas." The revision of the 1941 Leased Areas Agreement was a tremendous achievement for the people of Trinidad and Tobago, and indeed of the entire West Indies. As the Nation stated, "by it an Agreement made by us superseded an Agreement made for us and our national personality was formally recognized
by an event that was not only historic, but historically unique." West Indians were eloquent in their expressions of delight at the outcome of the Chaguaramas question. Mitra Sinanan, a member of the Opposition, and a delegate to the first stages of the revision conference, declared that the privilege of sitting at an international conference with the world's greatest democracies was, for the federation, the achievement of a new status and dignity. A similar opinion was expressed by R. L. Bradshaw, the Minister of Finance in the federal government. Introducing a motion on the new Agreement in the Federal Legislature on March 23, 1961, he stated that for the West Indies, not yet independent, the signing of a document of international importance was an historic act.

Although the significance of signing a document of international importance should never be minimized, in the particular case of the West Indies Federation the agreement signed produced few tangible benefits. It solved a most troublesome problem which plagued the federation from the time of its establishment. But aside from some minor advantages, such as the joint use of dock facilities at the base with the naval forces of the United States and of Trinidad and Tobago, the agreement offered few concessions that were directly beneficial to the federal government. Any prospect of acquiring a Chaguaramas site for the federal capital was now out of the question for seventeen years, if not for ever. As for the international personality acquired by participation in a conference with the United Kingdom and the United States,
that honour was due less to the sufferance of the British and American governments than to the exertions of the Premier of Trinidad and Tobago. It can be said with a great deal of truth that Williams fought his way to the conference table, and he took Adams with him. In terms apparently calculated to vindicate his claim that Trinidad was champion of West Indian independence, Williams declared, "Out of courtesy we brought the federal government in. . . . We have never left the federal government out." At the conference table the federal government was largely a witness to its own humiliation. It was frustrated in its immediate bid to secure a site for the capital. But this final defeat did not affect the cause of national unity quite so seriously as the manifest bitterness and the diminished enthusiasm for federation by which the progress to a revision of the 1941 Agreement was marked.

For the problems which beset the federation as a result of the Chaguaramas question, the British and American governments must accept some responsibility. The terms of the New Bases Agreement indicated quite clearly that the American contention of June 1958 that no part of the original base could be released was not dictated by military necessity but by a desire to adhere to conventions denying dependent peoples the right to full participation in international conferences. After the London conference, 1957, it was too late to adhere strictly to protocol for a resumption of that conference was implicit in the communique issued after it. Had all the West Indian governments acquiesced in the decision of the United
States, the federation need not have suffered from it. But the stand taken by the Trinidad government, and the campaign conducted by Williams, made it quite obvious to both the United States and the United Kingdom that it would be extremely difficult if not quite impossible to abide by their earlier decision. It was most apparent to them too that their decision and the federal government's acceptance of it was adversely affecting the federation. Consequently, either because they desired to buttress the declining fortunes of the federation, or because they expected the federal government to be more amenable to their wishes at the conference table, they attempted to insist on tripartite talks. This latter decision and the federal government's agreement to it, hurt the federation more than the earlier decision to defer discussion on the 1941 Agreement for about ten years. At the final conference of the New Bases Agreement on February 10, 1961, the leader of the United States delegation spoke of the conference as a venture in "anticipatory diplomacy," dealing with a nation as though it were fully independent. ^81 Had such "anticipatory diplomacy" been practiced in 1958 when the Report of the Chaguaramas Joint Commission was published, it might have represented an act of greater condescension than it did after the situation developing in Trinidad made it advisable.

The miscalculation of the British and American governments was not the only cause of the reverses suffered by the federation over Chaguaramas. Much of the blame must go to the deficiencies of Adams as a leader. Apparently he never viewed the Chaguaramas question as one involving the territorial
rights of Trinidad and Tobago just as much as a site for the federal capital. In any circumstances it would have been difficult for him to equal the militancy of Williams. But his failure to appreciate the Trinidad point of view caused him to make the wrong decisions. The insistence of the British and American governments on tripartite talks provided Adams with an opportunity to show recognition for the special position of Trinidad and Tobago. He preferred to argue the constitutional propriety of tripartite talks and as a result Williams was able to identify the federal government with the governments of the United Kingdom and the United States as forces inimical to the interests of Trinidad and Tobago. The course pursued by Adams was doubly unfortunate, for besides his immediate aim in the matter, and his obligation to the federation, he was avowedly opposed to the American occupation of the Leased Areas in the West Indies. At the Montego Bay Conference in September 1947, he affirmed that he and others of the Caribbean Labour Congress had repeatedly deplored the transfer of the area to the United States. 82

Where for Adams the New Bases Agreement was a convincing defeat whose bitterness was mitigated only by the international personality achieved by the federation, it was for Williams a personal triumph. In his struggle with the Americans he was hampered by hostile opinion not only in Trinidad but throughout the region. The success he achieved was due to his own tenacity of purpose as well as to the material he had at hand for the task. The fact that the victory he won
for Trinidad and Tobago was shared by the other territories, some of whom had been openly critical of his efforts, tended to vindicate his claim that Trinidad and Tobago was the champion of West Indian independence. In a short address to the crowds assembled to greet him on his return from Tobago at the close of the Stage II talks, Williams declared, "the Americans have already recognized our independence." But he got a great deal more from the Americans than a *de facto* recognition of Trinidad's independence. The New Bases Agreement provided for American assistance to Trinidad and Tobago running into millions of dollars. It was as if the Chaguaramas question involved a contest from which Trinidad and Tobago emerged with tangible material benefits and the federal government illusion of international recognition.

There is something enigmatic about the conduct of Williams during the entire Chaguaramas question, and especially from the time of his intervention during the London Conference of 1957. The stand he took at that time astonished his colleagues, irritated the representatives of the British and American governments, and destroyed any sympathy they may have felt for the West Indian position. But aside from expressing his intentions to protect the interests of Trinidad and Tobago, Williams did not inform his colleagues of his ultimate goal. From now on, Chaguaramas as the most suitable site for the capital of the West Indies Federation became subordinate to Chaguaramas the symbol of West Indian nationalism, and in effecting this change of emphasis, he acted independently,
leaving the others to follow or to criticize as they saw fit. It would be malicious to insinuate that Williams deliberately intervened to frustrate any possibilities there might have been of Chaguaramas being released for the federal capital. However, it is worthy of note that in his campaign with the Americans the question of a site for the capital became progressively less important, and until the New Bases Agreement was signed the problem of a capital site was left unsolved. The Inter-governmental Conference which met in June 1961 decided that the seat of the federal government could be removed from Trinidad by a majority vote of the Federal Legislature. By that time independence for Trinidad and Tobago was considerably more attractive than membership in the federation, so that the decision was of little significance.

The selection of Chaguaramas as the site of the capital of the West Indies Federation was a colossal blunder which seriously impinged on Trinidad's vital interests from two directions. It ignored the opportunity for economic development which exploitation of the Waller Field site would have provided, and it showed complete indifference to the protection of Trinidad's oil industry of which Solomon spoke to the SFC sub-committee. The extent to which it got the urgent matter of a capital site entangled in extremely difficult negotiations involving defence, external relations and other matters of a highly technical nature demonstrates quite clearly that it was a blunder of the first magnitude and one which exposed the federation to dangers from which it never recovered.
The settlement of the Chaguaramas question left outstanding one area of friction between the federal government and the government of Trinidad and Tobago in the field of external affairs. This resulted from the initiative taken by Williams in 1957 to establish closer relations with Venezuela, with the aim of gaining access to the Venezuelan market for Trinidad produce. Of the West Indian islands Trinidad is closest to Venezuela, being only seven miles away at the closest point. Because of this proximity, Trinidad has been brought into closer contact with Venezuela than any of the other West Indian territories, serving at times as a sanctuary for political exiles from Venezuela besides being a regular importer of Venezuelan crude oil to supplement local production in the operation of the oil refineries. However, evidences of Trinidad's good will were not reciprocated by the Venezuelan government whose stringent immigration laws discriminated against West Indians and whose 30 per cent Antillean surtax, imposed in 1880 to restrict the entry of British goods transshipped from Trinidad, excluded Trinidad produce from the Venezuelan market. A notorious practice of the Venezuelan government has been to imprison under the most deplorable conditions any Trinidad fisherman who, on account of contrary wind or tide, was unfortunate enough to drift into Venezuelan waters.

Williams set out to improve relations with Venezuela, and on December 1, 1957, he paid a good will visit there, and was well received by representatives of the Venezuelan government and by the United Kingdom Ambassador to Venezuela.
There followed an interchange of visits which the British Ambassador regarded with disapproval. He therefore suggested to Williams that the correct procedure in conducting negotiations with Venezuela was through Her Majesty's representative in that country. Williams refused, contending that the British Ambassador was in no position to speak for Trinidad fishermen stranded on Venezuelan shores, and that for over eighty years the British government had been unable to secure a reduction of the Antillean surtax which was not discriminating against Trinidad's products. Therefore Williams continued his direct contacts with the Venezuelan government even after a Vice-Consul for the West Indies Federation was attached to the British Embassy at Caracas.

It was indicative of the progress that Williams had been making that on August 1959 a conference was held at ministerial level between representatives of the Trinidad and Venezuelan governments to discuss the possibility of increasing trade between the two countries. Trinidad wanted the abolition of the thirty per cent Antillean surtax. Venezuela was concerned about the increase in contraband trade to Venezuela. Meanwhile, an attempt had been made to assassinate the president of Venezuela, and it was alleged that one of the assassins was on his way to Port-of-Spain. The Trinidad police were therefore put on the alert to apprehend the wanted person for return to Venezuela. With these gestures of good will, Williams hoped to increase his chances of success.
The conference at Trinidad and Tobago took place in two parts: the first in Tobago in August, and the second in Caracas in September. While the Trinidad delegation was actually in Venezuela, the United Kingdom government entrusted the federal government with full responsibility for the conduct of negotiations and the signature of the agreements with the government of Venezuela. On November 10, 1959, Adams issued a statement reminding Williams of the responsibility of the federal government in major external affairs including diplomatic relations, and informing him at the same time of the right of the Trinidad government to pursue those aspects of relations with Venezuela that were of interest only to Trinidad and Tobago. There were some prospects of harmony when on December 14, 1959, Williams agreed to a proposal previously made to establish joint consultative machinery to ensure the most effective conduct of negotiations with the government of Venezuela. In spite of this auspicious beginning, the consultative machinery never functioned effectively, and according to Adams it was only after the Chaguaramas question had been settled that the idea was revived and the committee met on January 17, 1961. Thereafter, matters were again complicated when the Venezuelan government declared that it preferred to deal with the federal government. At the time the federation collapsed there were still no signs of a settlement in sight, and on January 12, 1962, Williams, speaking in the Trinidad and Tobago House of Representatives, expressed his dissatisfaction with the turn events had taken, and vowed
that he had no intention of participating in any future discussions with the Venezuelan government which did not begin with the elimination of the surtax. 91

The difficulties which arose between the federal and Trinidad governments over negotiations with Venezuela were due as much to the weakness of the federation as to a conflict of personalities. As Williams pointed out, in the contemporary situation the federal government was in no position to deal effectively with the specific problems of contraband and political asylum of special interest to Venezuela unless it controlled customs, immigration, and the police. 92 In the circumstances, Adams' attempt to increase the authority of his government by repeated references to the constitution was pointless. For economic reasons Williams was constantly trying to enlarge the scope of operations of his government, and although he frequently advocated a more active role by the federal government in external affairs, he was resentful of any intervention in areas where he had taken the initiative. In the difficulties which arose between the federal government and the government of Trinidad and Tobago over negotiations with Venezuela, the issues at stake were never so crucial as those involved in the Chaguaramas situation. The principle for which Adams contended was recognition in practice and in theory of the role of the federal government in external affairs. The problems which arose could have been solved quite easily with a little good will which, unfortunately for the cause of federation, never characterized intergovernmental
relations to any noticeable degree. In any federation conflicts are inevitable between the federal and the territorial governments. However, in the case of the West Indies Federation these conflicts arose quite early and were contested with a keenness which diminished interest in the federation and contributed to its collapse.
Footnotes

1 The United States naval base in Trinidad was situated on the northwest peninsula, and at one time occupied a total area of 11,741 acres. Though generally referred to as Chaguaramas, the base occupied in addition to Chaguaramas itself, a number of adjacent areas such as Tucker Valley, Macqueripe Bay on the north coast, and three small islands in the strait between the peninsula and Venezuela.

2 "America and the West Indies Federation," Trinidad Guardian, June 6, 1955.


4 Waller Field is the site formerly occupied by a United States air base by the same name. It is situated about midway across the island on a line due east from Port-of-Spain, and comprises an area of 16,991 acres.


7 Trinidad and Tobago, Debates of the Legislative Council, vol. 8, cols. 1353-1360, February 21, 1958. The information cited here has been taken from a speech delivered by Hon. B. S. Maraj during a debate on a No Confidence Motion he presented at the time. Maraj was using information from a confidential document to which he had had access as a member of the Standing Federation Committee.

8 "Background to the Selection of Trinidad as the Federal Capital and Chaguaramas as the Federal Capital Site," a broadcast by the Chief Minister, Dr. Eric Williams, The Nation, formerly the PNM Weekly, July 12, 1959. This broadcast was delivered during the peak of Williams' struggle with the Americans, and while he was careful to avoid any reference to the stand taken by his own party, he clearly referred to "the enthusiasm displayed by all the delegates, but particularly by Sir Grantley Adams and Mr. Manley, for Chaguaramas, and their complete rejection of Waller Field."

9 Eric Williams, From Slavery to Chaguaramas, an address delivered by the Premier, Dr. Eric Williams, at Arima, Trinidad, July 17, 1959, Port-of-Spain, PNM Publishing Co., 1959, p. 15.

The debate cited here took place when the government of Trinidad and Tobago had announced its intention to withdraw from the federation. Adams was at the time recounting the difficulties which developed between himself and Williams during the Chaguaramas question, and contrasting Williams' unwillingness to begin discussion with the extent to which he later assumed dominance of the entire affair.


14 Ibid., col. 2150.

15 Ibid., col. 2146-49.


19 Trinidad and Tobago, Debates of the Legislative Council, vol. 7, col. 2157, August 7, 1957.

20 Ibid., col. 2151.

21 Ibid., col. 2156.


26 Ibid., May 26, 1958.

   The statement issued by the federal government on June 2 was reproduced by the Prime Minister in the House of Representatives on June 16, 1958.

28 Trinidad and Tobago, Debates of the Legislative Council, vol. 8, col. 1345, February 21, 1958.

29 Barbados Advocate, March 15, 1958.


31 574 H. C. Debates, 5s, cols. 807, 808, 821. July 16, 1957.


34 Ibid., col. 1228.

35 Eric Williams, From Slavery to Chaguaramas, p. 15.

36 It was claimed in certain circles that Williams had some difficulties of a personal nature with the U. S. government and consequently could not go to the United States. Bhadase Maraj introduced this information into a debate on a No Confidence Motion on February 21, 1958. Maraj claimed that Williams had been forced to cancel a visit to the United States to deliver an address at Columbia University on September 29, 1956, and also to discuss loans for development with the International Credit Bank. However, Williams replied to the charge by producing his passport with visa in the Legislature. Trinidad and Tobago, Debates of the Legislature, vol. 8, cols. 1346-50, February 21, 1958.

37 Eric Williams, From Slavery to Chaguaramas, p. 15.

38 Trinidad and Tobago, Debates of the Legislative Council, vol. 8, col. 2128, June 20, 1958.


40 Ibid., col. 1363.
41 Ibid., col. 460.

42 Tucker Valley was one of the areas adjoining Chaguaramas and included in the United States naval station. It was about four miles long and varied in width from one-fourth to three-fourths of a mile. Chaguaramas Joint Commission Report, Colonial No. 338, p. 9.


46 Williams, From Slavery to Chaguaramas, p. 10.

47 "The Federalists," The Nation, March 18, 1960. Under this heading The Nation featured the text of a broadcast made by Adams on March 13, 1960, and a reply made by Williams the following day. The statement given by both Adams and Williams agrees in all particulars. Williams made a rather unsuccessful attempt to prove that no offence was intended.

48 Trinidad and Tobago, Debates of the Legislative Council, vol. 7, cols. 2439-2532, September 20, 1957.


51 "Premier Speaks to the People," an address delivered by the Hon. Dr. E.E. Williams in Woodford Square on July 3, 1959. The Nation, formerly the PNM Weekly, July 8, 1960.

Unless otherwise stated subsequent references to The Nation shall be held to apply to the official organ of the People's National Movement, formerly the PNM Weekly.
52 See above, Notes No. 44 and 45.

53 "Premier Speaks to the People," The Nation, July 8, 1959.

54 Trinidad and Tobago, Debates of the Legislative Council, vol. 7, col. 2157, August 1957.

In this reference Williams discussed Colonial Office reactions to the features he tried to have incorporated in a new constitution for Trinidad and Tobago, which included the right to appoint the Governor.

56 The Nation, July 8, 1959.

57 Williams, From Slavery to Chaguaramas, p. 26.


59 Ibid.


61 For an account of the Congressmen's Report, see N.Y. Times, December 31, 1959.


66 Ibid., p. 5.

67 Ibid., pp. 18, 19.

68 "Chaguaramas, What Dr. Williams has proposed for a Settlement," The Nation, December 11, 1959.
According to Williams, his proposals were first communicated to the United States Consul-General in Port-of-Spain on August 12, 1959. These proposals were published from time to time in The Nation and later published in Eric Williams, History of Chaguaramas, authorized version, Port-of-Spain, PNM Publishing Co., 1960.
69 "At Least He Will Understand," The Nation, April 8, 1960.


71 "We are Independent in Fact," The Nation, April 29, 1960.

72 "We Can See the Promised Land," An address delivered by the Premier of Trinidad and Tobago on June 27, 1960, The Nation, July 1, 1960.


76 Williams, From Slavery to Chaguaramas, p. 26.

77 "Chag Clears the Road to Independence," The Nation, Feb. 17, 1961


80 The Nation, June 19, 1959.


82 Colonial No. 218.


84 See above, note 75.

85 Colonial Office, Report of the West Indies Constitutional Conference, 1961, Parliamentary Papers 1961, vol. Cmnd. 1417, p. 30. For the purpose of revising the federal constitution subjects were classified as either Ordinary or Entrenched. Provisions classified as Ordinary could be amended by a simple majority vote of the federal Legislature; those classified as Entrenched required a special process of amendment involving a
majority vote of the federal Legislature and ratification by representative Houses of the Legislatures of territories representing a majority of the population of the federation. The location of the seat of the federal government was not an entrenched provision.

86 See above, note 7.

87 Trinidad and Tobago, *The Antillean Surtax, Historical Documents of Trinidad and Tobago*, Series No. 3, 1963.

88 Trinidad and Tobago, *Debates of the Legislative Council*, vol. 8, col. 320, December 6, 1957.

89 "The Federalist," *The Nation*, March 18, 1960. The speeches by both Adams and Williams reproduced in this column give this information.


Chapter VI

THE FAILURE OF THE FEDERAL EXPERIMENT

The settlement of the Chaguaramas question removed the greatest source of friction between the federal government and the government of Trinidad and Tobago. However, the federation still faced the colossal task of preparing a constitution for independence. In resuming discussion of this subject it is necessary to revert to the inconclusive intergovernmental conference of September 1959, which was rescued from complete collapse by the decision to refer the disputed matters to two committees comprising representatives of the federal and unit governments and their advisers. One committee was assigned the responsibility of studying and preparing recommendations on the constitutional and political implications of independence for the federation, giving special consideration to such matters as the division of powers between the federal and the unit governments, and the sources of independent revenue for the federal government. The second committee was given the responsibility of examining the social and economic implications of independence with special reference to such matters as internal free trade, federal financial policy, and concessions to industry. These committees met at intervals during the remainder of 1959, and during 1960, and were assisted by working parties or subcommittees which met at more frequent intervals for matters requiring detailed consideration.
Although the decision to appoint these committees preserved hopes for the survival of the federation, the circumstances under which the intergovernmental conference collapsed, indicated quite clearly that the future of federation depended mainly on the extent to which Jamaica's demands could be met, or the success that could be achieved in convincing the Jamaican government that its proposals were inconsistent with the principle of federation, and completely irrelevant to the contemporary situation in the West Indies. Of the two alternatives, the latter was by far the more difficult, for even Manley, the foremost protagonist of federation in Jamaica, was determined not to be surpassed in zeal for the protection of Jamaica's interests. The difficulties were further accentuated by the fact that there was no neutral ground. It was perhaps with a desire to provide objective examination of the situation that Williams commissioned two studies in October 1959. Professor Gordon Lewis of the College of Social Studies at the University of Puerto Rico was asked to examine the political and constitutional issues involved in the federation against the background of a case study of the relationship of Puerto Rico with the United States. For the second study, Dr. T. O. Elias, a former governor of the School of Oriental and African Studies at London University, and later Minister of Justice in the Nigerian government, was requested to give a detailed study to specific features of the Jamaican stand. Dr. Elias was asked to develop his subject on a case study of the Nigerian constitution with particular reference
to the scope and limitation of a federation as distinct from a confederation. ³

By getting these eminent scholars to comment on the situation facing the federation, Williams apparently hoped to secure a vindication of the position he had taken. On account of the ambitious proposals he had submitted, he was accused by the Guardian of desiring to go too fast, and had even been charged with wrecking the conference. ⁴ On January 25, 1960, Williams made a public statement on the Jamaican point of view as he then knew it. He stated that the Jamaican position involved three principal issues: Jamaica's fear that her economy would be destroyed by the federation; her claim as of right to representation based on population; and the contention that there was inadequate consultation of unit territories by the federal government. On the question of consultation he gave the assurance that he was in active agreement with Jamaica, for he and his party had consistently protested at the infrequency of meetings of the West Indies Federal Labour Party. On the question of increased representation for Jamaica, he stated that at the intergovernmental conference in September 1959, he had put forward a proposition which, it was admitted, had met 98 per cent of Jamaica's demands. With respect to Jamaica's anxiety for the safety of her economy, Williams denied that any federal government in which Jamaica was fully represented could adopt any measures designed to injure the Jamaican economy. With respect to the proposals that he had submitted on behalf of Trinídad and Tobago, he considered them a philosophy of
federation advanced as a basis for discussion. Then, dealing specifically with the Jamaican demands, he declared that they constituted a fundamental reversal of the powers existing under the current inadequate constitution, and that if carried out, they would completely discredit West Indian leaders with their own people no less than in the eyes of the world. In conclusion, he stated that both as the leader of his party and of the government he was committed to talk of federation in terms of the existing structure with provision for the possible accession of British Guiana, British Honduras and the Bahamas, and that any new concept of federation involving the secession of any territory would put the clock back to 1947 when discussions and negotiations on the existing federation were initiated. Williams' statement was remarkable as one of the few instances when West Indian leaders ventured upon comment on the Jamaican proposals. It might be mentioned here that until the collapse of the federation, West Indian leaders indulged in the delusion that Manley had never wavered in his devotion to federation, but that he had been forced into an untenable position by the growth of anti-federation sentiment in Jamaica. In connection with the statement made by Williams, it should be observed that he reiterated his position stated on a previous occasion, that Trinidad's continued participation in federation depended on the survival of the existing federal entity.

While Williams had taken steps to secure independent criticism of the conflicting proposals that had been put forward there was a further development of the Jamaican point of view.
In January 1960, Manley led a Jamaican delegation to the Colonial Office and discussed with Iain MacLeod, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the minimum powers and capabilities needed by the federal government of the West Indies to satisfy the requirements of effective sovereignty, and be eligible for membership in the Commonwealth. He also asked what would be the attitude of the British government to a demand by Jamaica to be allowed to leave the federation and to seek Dominion status on her own if existing differences of opinion on the structure of the federation could not be reconciled. The discussions between the Jamaica delegation and the Colonial Office constituted one of the most disgraceful episodes in the short history of the West Indies Federation, and considerably implicated the Colonial Office in the failure of federation in the West Indies. Discussions between the Colonial Office and a unit territory on matters purely pertaining to that territory were in order. To discuss the future of the entire federation with the government of a single territory was grossly irregular. Since the matters raised by the Jamaican delegation were currently engaging the attention of West Indian leaders, the Colonial Office could have best served the interests of the West Indies Federation by remaining aloof from the matter. It failed to do this; and it went even further and promised that Jamaica would be permitted to secede if the internal problems of the federation could not be solved. This promise must be considered as the greatest single external factor contributing to the collapse of the West Indies Federation. What is
extremely surprising is that the federal government, although fully aware of the grossly irregular proceedings, did not raise even a feeble protest.

In its reply to the questions raised by the Jamaica delegation, the Colonial Office, assuming an air of impartiality, declared that although the United Kingdom government had its own views on the matter, it was really for the West Indian governments themselves to determine the range of powers and distributions of federal resources between the federation and the unit governments which were likely to prove most suitable in the circumstances of the West Indies. However, before Her Majesty's Government could sponsor the federation in her ship of the Commonwealth, it would have to possess the minimum powers necessary to sustain sovereignty. Those powers were: the possession of a defence force capable of keeping the peace within the boundaries of the federation, and of deterring minor acts of aggression from without; a diplomatic organization capable of maintaining external relations of the federation; an effective central administration capable of executing the policy of the federal government within the limits of the constitution; adequate financial resources based on independent taxing and loan raising powers; a start with a workable programme for a customs union; central control of currency; freedom of movement of peoples within the boundaries; the constitutional right and ability to negotiate and implement treaties and agreements.
With this information in his possession Manley proceeded to draft Jamaica Government proposals for the revision of the federal constitution. These proposals were more comprehensive than the demands presented at the intergovernmental conference in September 1959, and were prefaced by the astonishing declaration that the existing constitution made available to the federal government a range of powers far wider in scope than was necessary for the achievement and maintenance of independence as a political entity. Accordingly, they constituted a blueprint for systematically divesting the federation of its limited authority, and rendering it incapable of playing an important role in West Indian affairs. The one positive feature in the proposals was that representation in the federal House of Representatives should be in proportion to population. Some of the other proposals were as follows: only matters entirely federal in nature should be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the federal government; the main fields of federal action should be in areas where its jurisdiction was shared with the unit governments; the existing list of such items was already too long, and contained items that should be removed; provision for the closest degree of consultation between the federal and unit governments both by normal correspondence and by formal machinery embodied in a Regional Council of Ministers should be recognized by the Constitution; the introduction of a customs union after a transitional period long enough to permit adjustment in revenue and tariffs without precipitating any dislocation; the provision for an independent
revenue derived from customs duties; the jurisdiction over income tax, excise tax and consumption duties to be given exclusively to the unit governments. The Jamaica government had quite obviously determined not merely to obstruct the progress of the federation, but to effect its retrogression. For the Jamaica government to conceive such proposals was unfortunate. However, the greater tragedy lay in the fact that West Indian leaders proceeded to incorporate the proposals into a constitution for the West Indies Federation.

Meanwhile, the committees that had been appointed were meeting from time to time, and by the middle of February 1960, agreement had been reached that the membership in the Federal House of Representatives should be increased to sixty-four of which Jamaica would have thirty-one seats and Trinidad and Tobago seventeen. On February 17, Manley, who was attending one of these committees in Port-of-Spain, expressed gratification that agreement had been reached on that point. However, the success achieved by Manley in his demands seemed only to intensify anti-federation sentiment in Jamaica. For example, early in May 1960, while Manley was once more in Trinidad attending another meeting of the intergovernmental committee, Bustamente sent him a cable demanding that Jamaica be taken out of the federation. Bustamente later sent a letter by air in which he expressed concern for Jamaica's future in "the farcical federation," and stated that he could not sit in complacency and allow the future, the people, and posterity of Jamaica to be jeopardized. He added that however embarrassing
it might be, Manley's one duty was to take Jamaica out of the federation.  

11 A few weeks later, Bustamente was even more outspoken in his hostility to the federation. On May 24, while addressing a public meeting, he vowed his determination to engage Manley in an unremitting struggle, in his own words, "to save our beloved isle from the clutches of this evil thing that Manley is driving us into."  

12 As a result of the latest outbursts by Bustamente, Manley announced that in order to put an end to the game that the Jamaica Labour Party had been playing with federation and with the future of the West Indian people since 1955, he would make Jamaica's continued participation in the federation the subject of a referendum.  

13 Manley's decision to hold a referendum was caused by the hostility of the Jamaica Labour Party and by discordant elements within his own People's National Party, who believed that Jamaica should proceed to independence alone. The decision was an unfortunate one, and the manner in which it was taken clearly demonstrated the way in which the leaders of the unit governments at times made unilateral decisions vitally affecting the future of the federation, even though they were quite frequently critical of inadequate consultation by the federal government. Manley's action deserves special attention because he acted even while representatives of the unit and federal governments were meeting in Port-of-Spain to discuss the future of the federation with the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Equally worthy of note is the fact that aside from The Nation, which expressed regret that Manley should make so important a decision with Mr. MacLeod only a few hours out of Jamaica,
no one protested his action. West Indian leaders generally, felt nothing should be done to aggravate Manley's difficulties in Jamaica. In its editorial of June 24, The Nation advanced this point of view quite clearly. After commenting on the schism in the ranks of Manley's party, it asserted that only Manley could keep Jamaica in the federation, and added, "All the help he wants we must be prepared to give, and in the way he wants." In the circumstances the objective of providing a federation suitable to the West Indian situation was subordinate to the aim of helping Manley win the referendum.

The new situation that had arisen in Jamaica reduced any possibility of compromise, and the impartial studies prepared by Professor Gordon Lewis and Dr. T. O. Elias were singularly without effect on the constitution that was provided. They served their greatest purpose in indicating how signally West Indians had failed in preparing a new federal framework. As has been mentioned, Professor Lewis was asked to examine the Jamaican proposals against the background of the position of Puerto Rico in relation to the American federation, the analogy being that even as Puerto Rico, being isolated from the American mainland, was not really a part of the United States, so Jamaica, because of its geographical remoteness from the rest of the federation, was entitled to a special position in comparison with the other territories. After discussing the factors responsible for the status of Puerto Rico being subject to the sovereignty of the United States, although not a part of the American nation, Professor Lewis
proceeded to an examination of the Jamaican demands and the premises on which they were based. He rejected the Jamaican contention that geographical separation from the other units was enough to justify her claim to a special relationship with the federation. Distance, he suggested, was as much a matter of technology and communication as of physical remoteness, and effective communication could break down the physical isolationism bred by geographical separation. He pointed out further that whereas in relationship to the United States Puerto Rico was a poor island with a foreign language, Jamaica had the same cultural heritage as the other territories, and was one of the richer territories in the federation. Continuing, he stated that the only conceivable grounds for the exempted status demanded by Jamaica were political and economic, but that those grounds had been removed by the agreement that had been reached to give Jamaica thirty-one out of sixty-four seats, in an enlarged Federal House of Representatives, for no legislature in which Jamaica had the largest block of votes could pass measures likely to disrupt her economic development. Lewis was also critical of the Jamaican concept of a federation meeting the minimum requirements of Dominion status. Dominion status, he contended, meant nothing less than the possession of full national sovereign power. He suggested that Jamaica was advocating a peculiar form of federation for which there was no precedent, and although Manley had spoken of the danger of allowing theoretic ideas to override practical considerations, that is precisely what the Jamaican concept of federation was designed to perpetrate.
As has been mentioned, Lewis in his study devoted particular attention to the exempted status demanded by Jamaica. Dr. Elias, on the other hand, presented an analysis of federal systems, citing both the old and new federations while using the Nigerian experience as the illustrative case study. Among the characteristics of a federation, according to Elias, was that the federal government must have real power and authority. "In a federation," he declared, "there is a division of power, but never of that authority which rightly belongs to the federal government." On no account, he emphasized, must the authority of the federal government be dispersed among unit governments, for it was the attribute of sovereignty in the federal entity that gave it its international personality. The absence of authority reduced any form of association of states into a confederation, or an even lesser form of government, for a federation was a state of perfect independence, whereas a confederation was a state of imperfect independence. Continuing, he stated that in modern federal systems the practice was to increase the powers of the federal government. Therefore the federal government should be given the necessary authority to husband the economic and financial resources of the whole nation in such a way that the richer and more fortunate units could be made to help the poor and less fortunate ones. In an apparent reference to the proposals currently being advanced, he declared that it was absurd to suggest that a territory could keep for itself exclusive powers of taxation and raising external loans and still be a
unit of a federation, for the power to control the national budget through taxation was a corollary of the federal government's own constitutional monopoly in the sphere of all external affairs. Dealing specifically with the Jamaican demands on representation, Elias suggested that though in most federal parliaments representation was based on population, the contemporary situation in the West Indies seemed to require that Jamaica's right to fifty per cent of the seats should be qualified in some way so as to remove the fear of Jamaica ruling the federation, not only de facto, but de jure, for the possibility was stark that all the representatives from one island would all be of the same party. On the whole, the study by Dr. Elias was a competent and forceful analysis of the criteria of independence, both in a general sense and in those points dealing directly with the West Indies. His work, together with the companion study by Professor Lewis, encompassed the basic attributes of sovereignty applicable to the West Indies Federation. Unfortunately, the principles they enunciated were largely ignored by the men preparing the framework for West Indian independence, for aside from the recalcitrant attitude of Jamaica, the necessity of Manley winning his referendum had largely enlisted the sympathy of West Indian leaders, so that principle was definitely made subordinate to expediency.

The commission under which Lewis and Elias had been invited to examine and comment on the proposals currently being advocated for a new federal constitution was a unilateral
undertaking of the Trinidad government which at the same time ordered a series of investigations of economic development throughout the West Indies. One important result of these investigations was the publication in October 1960, of a study designed to show that the economic development of the West Indies could be centrally directed. It also aimed at suggesting means by which the federal government with adequate powers and revenues could achieve the integration of the West Indian economy and a consequent rapid rate of economic growth for the entire region, and at the same time effect a reduction of the gap in productivity and living standards between the larger and smaller territories in the federation. This study, which was entitled *The Economic Development of the West Indies*, was based on information collected by officers of the Trinidad government during brief visits to the other territories in the federation as well as British Guiana, and also on material later made available by most of the unit governments from their current development programmes.  

Although these projects were undertaken by the Trinidad government in the best interests of the federation, it seems that they might have been more effective if they had been sponsored by the federal government. The tendency of member territories to act independently was one of the weaknesses of the federation and made inevitable an unofficial contest for leadership between Trinidad and Jamaica. On one occasion Manley claimed that for over twenty years Jamaica had been leading the way towards West Indian independence. Williams likewise
claimed that Trinidad was the champion of West Indian nationalism. Of course there was never any overt conflict between Manley and Williams, but these statements, though apparently quite insignificant, do seem to indicate that in matters concerning the form and the future of the federation, both men were as likely to be motivated by considerations of personal and insular prestige as by the objective appraisal of the needs of the West Indies.

Thus far, considerable attention has been devoted to a study of the Jamaican point of view and attitude. These factors not only determined the fate of the federation, but also greatly influenced Trinidad's final relationship to it. Another very important factor which influenced Trinidad's attitude to the federation was the progress being made by Trinidad and Tobago towards self-government. In the previous chapter, reference was made to the introduction of Cabinet government on July 10, 1959. That event was a significant step towards the achievement of full internal self-government to which the governing party stood committed by its platform in the general elections of September 24, 1956. In pursuing this objective the government had appointed a Select Committee on Constitution Reform on November 21, 1958. This committee began its sittings two months later and submitted progress reports until September 25, 1959, when its full report was debated in the Trinidad Legislature. The report advocated the introduction of full self-government under a constitution providing for a bicameral legislature with a fully elected lower House, vesting reserve powers in the Governor acting on the advice of the Prime
Minister, and the restriction of the sovereign's exclusive jurisdiction to powers commensurate with her responsibilities under the Colonial Stock Act.  

In a country with a long tradition of Crown Colony rule, the proposals were considered revolutionary. The transfer of control of the judiciary and civil service from the Colonial Office to locally appointed commissions met with some opposition. The plan for the creation of an Upper House was severely criticized until the press and the Chamber of Commerce declared themselves in favour of it. The Democratic Labour Party took no part in discussions on the proposed new constitution. It submitted no brief to the Constitution Reform Committee during its sittings, and it boycotted debate on the report in the Legislature. However, debate proceeded in spite of the boycott, and after the report had been accepted, a government delegation led by Dr. Solomon went to London for talks with the Colonial Office. A few days later, a delegation from the opposition also went to London. On November 25, after Solomon's discussions with the Colonial Office had been in progress for four weeks, and after agreement had been reached on a number of issues, the Secretary of State, after meeting with the Democratic Labour Party delegation, refused to proceed further and suggested to Solomon that the issue of self-government should be put to the people of Trinidad and Tobago in a general election. Solomon rejected this suggestion, contending that the governing party had already received a mandate from the people in the 1956 elections. On November 27, Williams sent Solomon a cable, advising him to return home. Williams later declared that if the
Legislature of a country, elected by the people, cannot be depended on to make arrangements for an election it had no business governing the country. Accordingly, discussions on the introduction of self-government for Trinidad and Tobago were suspended until a visit subsequently made to the West Indies by Iain MacLeod in June 1960.

While Trinidad and Tobago was making rapid progress towards self-government, the federal government lagged far behind. For example, as stated, Cabinet government was introduced in Trinidad in July 1959. In the federal government this step was not reached until August 1960. Accordingly, federation appeared to delay the constitutional advance of Trinidad, and to hinder its progress towards independence. In an address to the Fourth Annual Convention of the PNM on March 18, 1960, Williams stated that Trinidad and Tobago could not stand still nor live in a vacuum created by its rejection of the historical control by the Colonial Office. He declared that adequate measures would have to be employed to take care of the particular problems of Chaguaramas, Venezuela, defence and foreign relations. Then he added, "our political confidence, our economic strength, our popular support, all equip us to facing up to the responsibilities, if against our will, contrary to our recommendations, the federation should collapse."  

At the same time there was evidence of increasing tension between the federal government and the government of Trinidad and Tobago. The extent to which the Chaguaramas
question contributed to these tensions has been discussed in some detail in the preceding chapter. The fact that the limited scope enjoyed by the federal government allowed its ministers more leisure than their counterparts in the Trinidad government, has been noted as a factor which tended to diminish enthusiasm for federation. Attention will now be turned to the clearest evidence of this friction. On March 14, 1960, Adams declared in a public broadcast that he was no longer able to suffer in silence the attacks repeatedly made on himself and his ministerial colleagues in the federal government by the Premier of Trinidad and Tobago, in the form of direct statements made on the public platform, and of innuendos and misrepresentations at the periodic press conferences given by the Premier and generally broadcast on radio. He added that the Trinidad Premier had become so vituperative in his statements presented in a manner calculated to hurt the federal government and harm the concept of federation, that it was essential that the public should know the facts. He charged that Williams had been encroaching on the prerogative of the federal government in external affairs, and also that in his public statements he frequently used material classified as confidential. Adams further stated that it was impossible for the federal government to deal with a territorial government when secret documents were given out to the world, even though there had been previous agreement that the matter concerned should be treated as confidential.

The broadcast by Adams provided unmistakable evidence of the friction that had developed between the federal government
and the government of Trinidad and Tobago. The very next day Williams made a broadcast in which he replied to the charges made by Adams. He explained that the root cause of the friction between the two governments lay in the fact that Trinidad and Tobago was currently engaged in a series of negotiations on a variety of difficult topics affecting the lives and perspectives of the people of Trinidad and Tobago. Until independence was established and even for some time after, the political situation — the relations between the federal government and the unit territories, and the relations between the federal government and the United Kingdom government — would need to be constantly adjusted in accordance with the drive for independence in the West Indies. He repeated an earlier statement of his to the effect that in his opinion the appointment of territorial governors, and all constitutional problems within the federation, should be in the hands of the federal government. Turning to his recent difficulties with the Colonial Office on the subject of self-government for Trinidad and Tobago, he said that although various other persons of political importance had expressed their views on the matter, he had not heard one word of support or encouragement from the federal government. It might be mentioned here that on a subsequent occasion, Adams refuted this latter charge by stating that he had made no statement on the subject because no one had asked him to give his views on the matter.

It was quite unrealistic for Williams to accuse the federal government of indifference to his difficulties with
the Colonial Office when he had neglected an opportunity of inviting them to discuss his proposals for self-government and thus demonstrate his desire to see the federal government invested with full authority for all the internal affairs of the federation. There were other occasions when he might have shown deference to the position of the federal government without in any way sacrificing the rights of Trinidad or the welfare of the citizens. For example, in February 1960 a shortage of work in Curacao in the Netherlands West Indies necessitated the repatriation of West Indians who had been employed there. The West Indies vice-consul in Venezuela, whose jurisdiction included the Netherlands West Indies, was fully prepared to deal with the situation. Notwithstanding this, Williams acted independently and sent his Minister of Home Affairs to look after the welfare of Trinidadians, declaring at the same time that he had no intention of undermining the influence and authority of the federal government.35

While it is not intended to hold Williams responsible for the difficulties which developed between himself and the federal government, it must be pointed out that in certain matters pertaining to the federation, he evinced a tendency to act independently when the federation might have benefited from a greater willingness to consult and cooperate. For example, the "Independence Day" demonstration of April 22, 1960, to which reference has been made in the preceding chapter, was an undertaking of Williams' party, the PNM. As such it was entirely successful. It demonstrated that Williams enjoyed a
considerable degree of popular support in his stand on Chaguaramas on the one hand, and on his proposals for self-government on the other. However, as a demonstration in the interest of West Indian independence, it might have been more impressive if it had been sponsored by a regional organization such as the West Indies Federal Labour Party. Moreover, by burning the federal constitution on that occasion, Williams indicated that his demonstration was directed against the federal government as much as against the governments of the United Kingdom and the United States.

When the Independence Day demonstration was discussed in the preceding chapter, it was stated that one result of that demonstration was the visit to the West Indies of Iain MacLeod the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Special attention was then paid to his proposals for reaching an agreement over Chaguaramas. Reference must now be made to his discussions on the constitutional problems of the area. MacLeod arrived in Trinidad on June 7, 1960, and first held talks with representatives of the federal and unit governments on matters pertaining to the federation. He said that the United Kingdom government was convinced that federation was in the best interest of the British West Indian territories and their peoples. He encouraged the federation to hurry to independence and stated that he himself was looking forward to the day when he could introduce a West Indian Independence Bill in the House of Commons. During these talks, West Indian leaders also raised the question of financial assistance from the United Kingdom for the
federation. In addition to the official talks MacLeod had with the delegates in conference, he also had private meetings with Williams and Manley during which he discouraged an attempt by Williams to challenge Jamaica's right to hold the referendum, and persuaded Williams to modify his position on a strong federation; he also became implicated in the plot to relieve Adams of his position as Prime Minister. According to Gomes, the plot for removing Adams involved bestowing a peerage on him and giving him a pension.

At the conclusion of his talks on matters pertaining to the federation, MacLeod resumed the discussions of self-government for Trinidad and Tobago which had been broken off in London in November 1959. In this connection he met not only with representatives of the government, but also with members of the Opposition, and with leaders of representative bodies such as the Chamber of Commerce and the Trades Union Congress. The talks were uniformly satisfactory, and agreement was reached on a constitution under which Trinidad and Tobago would receive full internal self-government. The constitution provided for a bicameral legislature consisting of a senate of twenty-one members of whom twelve would be appointed on the advice of the Premier, two on the advice of the Leader of the Opposition and seven by the Governor at his discretion; and a fully elected House of Representatives of thirty members. Her Majesty's power of disallowance was to be exercised only in laws relating to the Colonial Stock Act. In assenting or refusing assent to bills, the Governor was to follow the advice of
the Premier, except where such advice appeared to be inconsistent with Her Majesty's international obligations. An interesting feature of the discussions was the compromise reached relative to the appointment of the Governor. Williams had demanded that his right to nominate a candidate for the governorship be included in the constitution. He later withdrew his demand on being assured that his nominee would be appointed, and that in harmony with the practice observed with self-governing territories, he would be consulted on subsequent appointments. Accordingly, Solomon Hochoy, the Chief Secretary, was promised a knighthood and designated successor to the incumbent Sir Edward Beetham, who was due to retire shortly. On July 13, 1960, Sir Solomon was sworn in as the first West Indian born Governor of non-European descent in the British West Indies.

The outcome of MacLeod's visit was quite satisfactory. Besides urging the West Indies Federation to hurry towards independence, he had facilitated the preparation of a new constitution by encouraging Williams to yield to Manley on the form the federation should take. The discussions affecting Trinidad and Tobago marked the final stage in a series of constitutional reforms which brought the country to the verge of independence. A cartoon in *The Nation* for June 24, depicted Williams sitting comfortably on the "Independence Train" while MacLeod impatiently urges a sleepy West Indian politician to "hurry up" and get aboard. Apparently Trinidad had attained independence ahead of the federation. A few weeks later, at the beginning of August, Williams permitted himself his first vacation since entering
politics over four years before. Accompanied by some of his
advisers he went to the island of Antigua. Manley also was
on holiday, and during the second week of August he met
Williams in Antigua, and they held secret talks with the aim
of accommodating their differences. According to Williams,
the opportunity for reconciling their conflicting positions
lay in the fact that Trinidad's proposals were unrelated to
time. Therefore this permitted agreement on a formula whereby
Jamaica accepted in principle the philosophy of federation
expounded by Trinidad and Tobago in exchange for an agreement
to delay the exercise of the federal powers. Included in the
formula was a "Reserve List" which, according to Williams,
represented "not only a formula for preserving our federation,
but also a great contribution to the thinking and the practice
of the federal systems of government." 41

Although a reconciliation of the divergent views of
Williams and Manley was urgently necessary, the manner in
which they sought to accomplish this was grossly irregular. A
secret meeting of the two premiers to settle issues vitally
affecting the destiny of the federation, betrayed contempt
for the federal government, and tended to reduce the approaching
intergovernmental conference to a farce having no other
significance or function than to ratify the decisions taken
by the two premiers. As for the Reserve List which Williams
described in such glowing terms as "a great contribution to
the thinking and practice of the federal systems of government,"
it was nothing more than an effective device by which the unit
territories, and particularly Jamaica, could permanently exclude the federal government from direct activity in certain fields, especially income tax and industrial development. Items placed on the Reserve List would be completely protected from federal legislation either for a specific time or indefinitely. Items placed on the Reserve List for a limited time could be removed at the expiration of that time by amending laws passed by absolute majorities in both Houses of the Federal Parliament, and approved by absolute majorities in a majority of the representative Houses of the territorial legislatures, providing these legislatures were representative of a majority of the voters in the federation. In the case of matters on the Reserve List for an indefinite period, the amending law required support by a two-thirds majority in both Houses of the Federal Parliament and approved by absolute majorities in representative Houses of the territorial legislatures representing not less than two-thirds of the population of the federation.42

The Reserve List constituted an unjustified restriction on the sovereignty of the federal government and Williams support for it indicated how completely he had surrendered his proposals for a strong federation based on the principles set forth in the Economics of Nationhood, and supported by the excellent studies prepared by Professor Gordon Lewis and Dr. T. O. Elias. Moreover, Williams' claim that his own proposals were unrelated to time was contradicted by the urgency with which he advocated April 22, 1960, as a possible date for West
Indian independence. Of course, he never ceased to urge the necessity of hurrying to independence. But the concept of an independent federation to which he ultimately gave his support, constituted so complete a reversal of his own proposals that his surrender to Manley seemed unconditional. At his secret meeting in Antigua, Williams gave up his proposals for a strong federation and got nothing in return but an equivocal promise of support from Manley for a further moratorium on the introduction of freedom of movement. Even this was a retreat from Williams' original position, for the Economics of Nationhood advocated freedom of movement of goods, persons and capital.\textsuperscript{43}

Meantime, the intergovernmental committees continued their meetings, consuming a great deal more time than had been anticipated, and it was not until the end of 1960 that they completed their sittings. However, the talks on the revision of the United States Leased Areas Agreement intervened,\textsuperscript{44} and it was impossible to devote much attention to the recommendations of the committees. On February 11, 1961, at the conclusion of the New Bases Agreement, a date was set for the resumption of the intergovernmental conference. On April 4, 1961, about a month before the date set for the resumption of the conference, the federal government presented the reports of the intergovernmental committees to the Legislature, and invited discussion on them for the guidance of the federal government's delegation to the conference.\textsuperscript{45} Some of the more important recommendations of the committees were as follows:
The federal government would have a revenue of about $28 million derived from customs duties on a specific number of items; the creation of a regional council of ministers consisting of the premiers of the unit governments with the Prime Minister as chairman; and the creation of a Reserve List to which reference has already been made.\textsuperscript{46} Discussion on these matters in the federal Legislature produced sharp differences of opinion. However, a full scale debate on the recommendations was not permitted since the competent authority for dealing with the reports of the committees was the intergovernmental conference for which the reports had been prepared.

The conference met in Port-of-Spain from May 2 to 16, 1961. In attendance were over one hundred delegates representing the federal and unit governments, and observers from the Colonial Office. As Williams said, this conference was vastly better prepared than its predecessor of September 1959.\textsuperscript{48} What is more important, there was a noticeable change in the relative positions of Jamaica and Trinidad. In September 1959, Trinidad and Jamaica were advocating completely different forms of federation. In May 1961, as a result of their secret meetings, Williams had been converted to the Jamaican point of view, and generally supported the Jamaican proposals. Williams later explained that although he believed Jamaica's fears were exaggerated, he decided that it was preferable to respect them rather than to insist on a course likely to drive Jamaica out of the federation, or to jeopardize her stability, and endanger her ability to contribute jointly with Trinidad and Tobago over
eighty per cent of the federal revenues. Continuing, he stated, "we of Trinidad and Tobago decided that Jamaica was not to be pushed to the wall, Jamaica was to be saved for federation." This alliance of Jamaica and Trinidad guaranteed the acceptance of proposals agreeable to Jamaica, and rendered certain the outcome of the conference. There was one hitch. In spite of concessions Williams had made to Manley, he had no assurance that Manley would support the demand he was making for a delay in the introduction of freedom of movement, which he considered necessary after relinquishing his proposals for a strong federation. The uncertainty as to Manley's position on this subject of peculiar concern to Trinidad, was to trouble Williams even at the London Constitutional Conference to which reference will shortly be made.

In spite of the agreement reached between Williams and Manley, there was much dissension at the conference. The federal government delegation challenged the recommendations regarding federal finances and advanced a proposal calculated to give the federal government absolute control of taxation. However, this proposal was rejected, and the conference accepted the original proposal giving the federal government a revenue based on customs duties from a specific number of items. Other decisions of the conference were largely based on the recommendations of the committees. Some of the more important are as follows: the membership of the House of Representatives would be increased to sixty-four members of whom thirty would be from Jamaica, and sixteen from Trinidad and Tobago; income tax and industrial development would be
removed from the jurisdiction of the federal government and placed on a Reserve List; protection for territorial interests provided in a regional council of ministers; unit territories would have the right of direct negotiations with foreign countries on matters directly affecting them, subject to ratification by the federal government of all agreements negotiated; and an agreement to delay the introduction of freedom of movement until 1970. The conference also agreed to discuss the question of economic aid at the London Conference due to be held in a few weeks. It was also decided to seek associate membership for the West Indies Federation in the European Common Market.

The decisions taken at the intergovernmental conference were subject to further discussions at a conference in London with the United Kingdom government participating as required by the Constitution. Accordingly, the West Indies Constitutional Conference convened in London on May 31, 1961, with the Secretary of State for the Colonies presiding. The opening session was marked by addresses by the chairman who expressed the opinion that no other colonial territory was so well prepared for independence as the West Indies; by the West Indies Prime Minister who quite surprisingly compared the occasion to the birth of a nation; and by other leaders present. The situation which emerged at the London Conference revealed quite clearly that in spite of the work done in committees and the intergovernmental conference in Port-of-Spain a few weeks before, the outstanding issues remained the same, and delegates were faced with the problem of yielding entirely
to the Jamaican demands. There was one noticeable difference; on this occasion Jamaica had the active support of the Colonial Office. Adams' remark that during the conference MacLeod consistently supported Jamaica, has been supported to some extent by Mr. Hugh Fraser, Parliamentary Undersecretary of State, who attended the conference. Lamenting the outcome of the Jamaica referendum, and its effect on the federation, Fraser said that since the referendum could not be stopped, all that could be done was to help it to succeed. Speaking of the London Conference he said, "All we could do was to hope it would succeed, and help it to succeed, which I think we did in June 1961. Everyone helped at that conference." Although West Indian leaders were not indifferent to the necessity of helping Manley win his referendum, they never considered it necessary to give in to all Jamaica's demands, especially after Jamaica had been given increased representation in the Legislature. Accordingly, there was no unanimity on the major issues. Nevertheless, there was always enough support for certain measures to be accepted. For example, Adams stated that Williams generally supported Jamaica until it was known that he would not have Manley's support for his plan to delay the introduction of freedom of movement. The wide area of disagreement evident at the conference was indicated by the admission that certain delegations found themselves "not in agreement with some of the conclusions set out in the Report, and recorded dissent on particular items."
The Report of the conference was a most distressing document indicating quite clearly that although May 31, 1962, had been set as the date when the West Indies Federation would become independent, it would have very few of the principal attributes of sovereignty. The Constitution set forth in the report provided for a Governor-General appointed on the advice of the Cabinet; a Senate comprising two members from each of the territories; and a House of Representatives of sixty-four members. The jurisdiction of the federal government was extended to include such items as coinage, currency and local tender, and postal services, but the federal government was excluded from direct action in the fields of income tax and industrial development and it was stipulated that proposals giving the federal government jurisdiction over these matters must be accepted by a majority in each House of the federal Legislature, and must be approved by an absolute majority of the representative House of each unit territory. If there was no agreement to review this arrangement after the end of nine years, it would continue in force. The Reserve List was created in principle but the name was rejected. In addition, every territory was given a veto over federal government legislation on those matters.

The veto was likewise given each territory over amendment of certain articles of the constitution which were classified either as Entrenched or Ordinary. Ordinary articles of the constitution could be revised by simple legislative process in the Federal Legislature. The amendment of Entrenched provisions, including those governing the basis of representation
required acceptance by the federal legislature, and ratification by the legislatures of all the unit territories. \(^{58}\) In addition to these restrictions on the authority of the federal government, the implementation of internal free trade, and freedom of movement for persons was delayed for a further period of five years. As recommended by the committees, the federal government was authorized to collect a revenue from customs duties on a specified list of items.

The report of the conference constituted a significant retreat from the position reached six years before when the agreement establishing the federation was signed. On that occasion West Indian leaders recognized the unsatisfactory nature of the work they had done, and expressly made provision for future improvement. The hopes they cherished for progress were frustrated by the decisions of the 1961 conference. Of the delegates participating in the conference, only Manley seemed satisfied with the outcome. Williams described the conference as "the most depressing conference any of us ever expects to encounter."\(^{59}\) On a later occasion he said that federation ended at Lancaster House where the conference, by giving in to every Jamaican demand produced a federation that was only an administrative superstructure.\(^{60}\) Adams was also dissatisfied with the decisions taken at the conference. In the course of a debate on the report in the federal legislature, he declared that it was his absolute determination to go out of politics rather than lift a finger to support a constitution based on the report, because it made short shrift of the future of the West Indies.\(^{61}\)
Meanwhile, in Jamaica, Manley presented the Report of the House of Representatives where it was accepted on July 12, 1961. He then proceeded to make plans for the referendum which was fixed for September 19, 1961. Later, in a move to increase Jamaican enthusiasm for the federation, he announced his intention to contest the federal elections due to be held six weeks after the federation became independent, and to succeed Sir Grantley as Prime Minister should his party win the elections.

Manley's announcement was part of his campaign to win the referendum and keep Jamaica in the federation. Very few people outside Jamaica believed he would fail. As it turned out, they had greatly underestimated the extent of anti-federation sentiment aroused by Bustamente's Jamaica Labour Party, and by the unrelenting campaign waged in the Jamaica press. Manley had also lost much ground by the series of strategic retreats in which he had engaged since the "retroactive taxation" crisis in November 1958. On September 19, 1961, 60.4 per cent of Jamaica's 774,759 voters went to the polls and, completely ignoring party lines, voted by a plurality of a little over 35,000 that Jamaica should leave the federation. Commenting on the outcome, Manley declared: "The people have settled the issue. I profoundly regret a decision which defeats what I believe to be the only safe road for Jamaica." He then dispatched a cable to the Colonial Office seeking an early meeting to initiate discussions on Jamaican independence. Later he engaged in the formality of resigning from the WIFLP - a party that had produced
the most conflicting set of proposals on a single important issue.

In the other territories the result of the referendum was regarded with incredulity. On September 26, Adams hurried off to London, ostensibly to facilitate Jamaica's secession without completely wrecking the federation. In reality he went to protest Jamaica's right to leave the federation, and was informed that nothing would be done to oppose the decision Jamaica had made. MacLeod informed Adams that having given its word to Jamaica, Her Majesty's Government would stick to it. If Adams had really desired to save the federation, he should have begun when the highly irregular discussions between Manley and MacLeod began in January 1960.

Meanwhile, there was much speculation in the West Indies as to what Williams would do. Professor Arthur Lewis, eminent West Indian economist and principal of the University College of the West Indies (now University of the West Indies) in his capacity as special adviser to the Prime Minister, visited the islands and reported that Barbados and the Leeward and Windward Islands all wished to continue in federation with each other and with Trinidad and Tobago. Lewis found widespread agreement that Jamaica's secession had made possible a much stronger and a more practicable federation. He therefore prepared proposals for the creation of an Eastern Caribbean Federation with a strong central government and a marked decrease in the administrative structures of the islands. Ardent supporters of federation hoped that with Jamaica out
of the way, Williams would implement his proposals for a strong federation. Those who cherished such hopes completely ignored Williams' repeated assertion that the success of his own proposals was dependent on Jamaica's participation, and that if Jamaica left the federation, Trinidad would follow. While friends and foes indulged freely in speculation, Williams refused to comment. He was occupied with preparations for the territory's general elections set for December 4, 1961. At a special convention held on September 23, 1961, the PNM expressed confidence with Williams' handling of federal matters, and decided to discuss federation after the elections.

As Williams faced the elections, he had a number of solid achievements to his credit. By a series of rapid constitutional reforms he had brought Trinidad and Tobago to the verge of self-government. After years of strained relations with the United States government he had negotiated a revision of the Leased Bases Agreement whereby the United States promised to release outright substantial land area and to provide economic assistance, particularly for transport and education. Evidence of the progress made by the country under his government was contained in an analysis of the economy of Trinidad and Tobago made by the International Bank on August 7, 1961. The report stated that the PNM government had a good record based on the expansion of social services and public utilities under its five year development programme begun in 1958. It stated also that with a per capita income of U.S. $500 (about W.I. $850) the people of Trinidad and Tobago enjoyed one of
the highest standards of living of any Afro-Asian community, and that Trinidad was one of the most prosperous areas in Central and South America.\textsuperscript{70} In addition to the economic development which was quite obvious in Trinidad in 1961, other evidences of Williams' strength lay in the decreasing number of his opponents. The \textit{Trinidad Guardian} which had been unrelenting in its hostility from the time Williams entered politics in 1956, was purchased by the Canadian publisher, Roy Thompson, in 1961, and thereafter its policy to the government changed. A number of conservatives and reactionaries remained implacable in their hostility to Williams, but the \textit{Guardian} was no longer their mouthpiece.

As the election approached, overt opposition to the PNM was mainly political in character. The Butler party tried to rally its strength for its final struggle. A new party called the African National Congress, in a futile effort to revive the past, mushroomed and put up three candidates. But the real opposition was expected from the DLP which showed considerable vigour under its new leader, Dr. Rudranath Capildeo. Capildeo had had a brilliant academic career beginning in 1939 when he won an island scholarship and entered London University intending to study medicine. However, he displayed such an aptitude for mathematics that he was encouraged to pursue a career in science. After obtaining a Master of Science degree he returned to Trinidad in 1946, and spent one year as mathematics master at Queen's Royal College. The following year he returned to London University and lectured in applied mathematics, and in 1951 obtained his doctorate in
theoretical physics. Leaving London in 1956, he went to the Sudan and spent one year at the Institute of Technology at Khartoum. Returning to England, he read law and was called to the Bar in 1958, and in the same year was admitted to practice in Trinidad. When the Trinidad government opened its polytechnic institute in 1959, Capildeo obtained the position of principal. Within a year he resigned on account of disagreement with the government over polytechnic policy. He was therefore encouraged to accept the leadership of the DLP whose fortunes had declined considerably following the illness of its first leader, Bhadase Maraj.

On assuming leadership of the DLP, Capildeo quickly asserted his authority to restore the morale of his party, whose membership was now more cosmopolitan than it had been before. Unfortunately, in his approach to the problems of the day he did not act with a sense of responsibility compatible with his position, and in his public statements frequently used remarks likely to promote disorder. The outstanding example of this form of conduct took place during the elections when his language was occasionally inflammatory. Addressing a public meeting at the Queen's Park Savannah in Port-of-Spain he told his audience, "We must take up arms to defend our liberty." On a subsequent occasion at Couva, he challenged the courage of his hearers, and called for volunteers "to slap Dr. Williams." Such conduct was unfortunate in one who was expected to make a positive contribution to the political development of Trinidad, and also of the West Indies,
for the DLP had included in its election manifesto a pledge of support for the federation providing assistance was forthcoming from the United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States. Another interesting feature of the party's platform was the proposal to terminate the existing union of Trinidad and Tobago, and give Tobago independence.

Ironically, the DLP pledged support for the federation, at the very time when Williams — in spite of his party's decision not to discuss federation until after the election — was openly attacking the federal government. At a public meeting at Arima on October 10, he declared that two years were wasted on federation only to have it "crumble in our hands like burnt paper." Then he promised again that the federal future would be discussed after the elections. In spite of this, Williams again attacked the federal government, referring to it as the biggest scandal in the West Indies — the only place he knew where men got paid for doing no work. He went on to say that the federal government was conceived and developed as an opportunity for intrigue against Trinidad and Tobago. On a later occasion he ridiculed the DLP pledge to support the federation, and declared that as long as he was Minister of Finance not one person was going to pick the pocket of the people of Trinidad and Tobago. It might be mentioned that on November 1, 1961, Williams interrupted his election campaign long enough to thwart an attempt by the federal government to acquire possession of British West Indian Airways, the Caribbean affiliate of British Overseas Airways. Williams bought the airline for Trinidad and Tobago.
The repeated attacks which Williams made on the federation during the campaign indicated quite clearly the action his party would take if returned to power. The elections were held on December 4, 1961, and the PNM won twenty out of twenty-nine seats contested on that date. The death of the DLP candidate on November 26, forced a postponement of the election for one seat which was later won by the DLP. On December 6, Williams addressed a "Victory Night" gathering in Woodford Square, reviewed the highlights of the election, and commented on the growing strength of his party as evidenced by the increase in the popular vote from 39 per cent in 1956 to over 58 per cent in 1961. This he said gave him an unchallengeable right to govern. Turning to the subject of federation he stated that the DLP had made federation an issue in the election and that on December 4 the people had repudiated federation. He went on to say that when the history of the West Indies was written, federation would be regarded as one of its most disgraceful episodes. As further indication of his policy he announced that Leary Constantine, Minister of Communication and Works in his previous government, would be sent to London as Trinidad's representative. Constantine was later designated High Commissioner for Trinidad and Tobago in the United Kingdom, and was the recipient of a knighthood in the Queen's New Year's Honours List in 1962.

The assertion by Williams that on December 4 the people had repudiated federation was a rather strained interpretation.
of the facts, especially since his party had indicated that federation would be discussed after the elections. However, his remarks indicated quite clearly the course he was about to take. There was a further unfolding of his purposes on December 29, at the opening of the Legislature. The speech from the throne stated that the government's first responsibility was to ensure that the continued and legitimate constitutional progress of the territory was not frustrated or inhibited by the disintegration of the federation of the West Indies. Highest priority must go to the assertion of the territory's independence in external affairs. In this statement of policy the Trinidad government's submission was that the disintegration of the federation was an historic reality. This contention was reiterated by Williams in the Trinidad House of Representatives on January 12, 1962, when he declared that the federation had died at Lancaster House and was buried in Jamaica in September 1961. Continuing, he stated unequivocally that Trinidad and Tobago would not agree that the legislation enabling Jamaica to secede should involve the continuation of the federation. "The federation is dead," he declared emphatically, "when the British government passes the necessary legislation to enable the Jamaican government to secede."

The statement by Williams was clear and unequivocal assertion that the dissolution of the federation was the inevitable result of any legislation permitting Jamaica to secede. According to Adams, this was precisely the view taken by
Reginald Maudling who had succeeded Iain MacLeod at the Colonial Office, and who arrived at Port-of-Spain on January 13 to hold talks with representatives of the federal and territorial governments on the future of the federation.

Meantime, the General Council of the PNM had met and discussed the future of Trinidad and Tobago in relation to the West Indies Federation, and on January 14 adopted a resolution to reject unequivocally any participation of Trinidad and Tobago in a federation of the Eastern Caribbean, and urging the territory to proceed forthwith to independence without prejudice to the future incorporation in the unitary state of Trinidad and Tobago of any East Caribbean territory, and also without prejudice to the future establishment of a common economic community embracing the entire Caribbean area. The resolution was embodied in an impressive document accompanied by sixteen statistical tables setting forth among other things revenue and expenditure of the Eastern Caribbean; the volume and direction of trade; and other economic and demographic data of the West Indies, together with a comparison of the per capita income of Trinidad and Tobago with that of independent countries of comparative size. A study of the Eastern Caribbean revealed that Trinidad and Tobago represented 75 per cent of the import trade, 75 per cent of total revenue, 80 per cent of income tax revenue, and 73 per cent of the total expenditure of the area. Of Trinidad's six best customers in the Caribbean, only one (Barbados) was a member of the proposed East Caribbean Federation. Moreover, the resolution continued, freedom of
movement in an Eastern Caribbean Federation would impose a serious strain on the resources of Trinidad and Tobago in terms of school places, housing accommodation, and other social services. Accordingly, it was decided to recommend that Trinidad and Tobago should proceed to independence alone. 85

The General Council's resolution made Trinidad's position unmistakably clear. However, it was quite obvious that Williams and his party had adopted a course of action that was grossly irregular and that contrasted sharply with the method employed in Jamaica where the wishes of the people were expressed in a referendum. That the government of Trinidad and Tobago was sure to follow a policy identical to that taken by the General Council of its party cannot be questioned. The important difference is that whereas the government is entitled to speak for the people of Trinidad and Tobago, the General Council of the PNM remains a partisan group. Moreover it was only two weeks later that the resolution of the General Council was approved at a party convention.

The resolution of the General Council of the PNM was published on the very day that Maudling began his meeting with West Indian leaders on the future of federation. At the meeting, the representatives of Barbados and the Leeward and Windward Islands presented a memorandum advocating the dissolution of the existing federation, and the formation of a federation of the eight smaller territories. This decision gave the smaller territories a hand in the destruction of the federation and immediately their began feverish and futile efforts to save it. On February 15, Gomes presented a motion in the federal
Legislature, deploiring attempts being made to destroy the Federation of the West Indies and requesting the United Kingdom government not to initiate legislation enabling Jamaica or any territory to secede. It also urged the federal government to take steps to see that provisions of the constitution be enforced to prevent the secession of any member. An amendment to Gomes' motion requested the United Kingdom government to hold up action affecting the federation until the federal government had had an opportunity to discuss its case with the United Kingdom government. The debate which followed was in the nature of a post mortem examination which merely provided opportunity for recrimination. Otherwise it was an exercise in futility. When positive action in the interest of the federation was necessary and might have been effective, the federal government was seized by an inexplicable inertia. It allowed the grossest irregularities to escape without comment or protest, and in the process it completely lost the initiative in matters affecting the federation. In the light of its earlier failures, the belated efforts to rescue the federation was doomed to failure. After a lengthy debate during which matters affecting the federation were discussed more freely than on any previous occasion, a decision was taken to send a delegation to London to restrain the United Kingdom government from its purpose to dissolve the federation. Adams and his delegation reached London on March 2, and were treated with conspicuous indifference. Aside from the fact that there was no representative of the Colonial Office at the
airport to receive them, they had to wait for five days before they were received by the Secretary of State. The only result of the visit was that Adams was submitted to indignities such as no government head had ever experienced.

The Bill for the dissolution of the West Indies Federation was presented to the House of Lords by the Minister of State for the Colonies on March 16, 1962, and passed by the Lords three days later. It was then sent to the Commons where it was passed on April 2, 1962. On April 18, 1962, the Bill received Royal Assent, and the West Indies Federation was dissolved on May 31, 1962, the very day on which it had been expected to achieve independence.

The immediate cause of the collapse of the West Indies Federation was the strength of isolationist sentiment in Jamaica. On account of its size and population, Jamaica occupied the predominant position in the federation, and when that position was exploited to enfeeble rather than to strengthen the federation, its collapse was inevitable. As the chief architect of the constitutional monstrosity which was painstakingly built up during the months following the intergovernmental conference in September, 1959, and which finally emerged from the London Constitutional Conference of June 1961, Manley's position is not a fortunate one. The proposals he advanced in 1960 were the logical development of the position he assumed during the retroactive legislation panic of November 1958. The stand he took on that occasion gave Bustamente an advantage which was exploited so remorselessly that Manley was
forced into a series of retreats which progressively weakened his position. Eventually he advocated a form of federation for which there was no precedent in history. The concept of federation which emerged from the London Conference, 1961, was essentially Manley's creation imposed on West Indians with the active support of the Colonial Office. Fortunately, the Jamaica referendum put an end to it before it had time to indulge in any absurd pretensions.

It is doubtful whether the difficulties Manley faced in Jamaica fully justified the extreme proposals he formulated. Without doubt he needed the benefit of impartial advice of the kind the Colonial Office might have been in a position to give. However, MacLeod's failure to inform Manley that the concept of "minimum attributes of sovereignty" was incompatible with the principle of sovereignty; he sacrificed an opportunity for positive action in the interest of federation and fell into the error of supporting the Jamaican position not on account of its merit but rather because Jamaica was the largest territory in the federation. MacLeod's promise to allow Jamaica to secede was not only reprehensible in principle but was untenable in law, and it was left for his successor to discover that MacLeod had blundered so seriously that Jamaica's secession was impossible unless the federation was dissolved.

Trinidad occupied an intermediate position in the federation, and as a result was incapable of any independent policy with respect to its actions. Hence Williams' oft-repeated assertion that if Jamaica left the federation it would affect the very logic of the situation.
In return for her large financial contributions to the federation, Trinidad expected access to the Jamaican market. However, when such prospects were removed by Jamaica's withdrawal, federation would impose on Trinidad very heavy financial burdens for which there would be no returns. Moreover, an East Caribbean Federation with one federal and nine unit governments seemed a rather cumbersome administrative system for one and one-half million people. With the facilities for communication available, the only real objection to the establishment of a unitary state as conceived by Williams would be the political ambitions of a few men. Williams' offer to establish a unit state has been criticized as being inconsistent with his refusal to enter a truncated federation. This criticism entirely overlooks the fact that the establishment of a unitary state would reduce administrative cost and release money to be used directly in the development of the islands. Williams has further stated that the establishment of a unitary state would permit the establishment of a single economic entity and permit Trinidad to promote the development of the other islands and thus reduce the necessity of their people migrating to Trinidad, or at least make the movement of persons a reciprocal matter.

Williams' suggestion for the establishment of a unitary state in the East Caribbean was based on the idea that the vital interests of the West Indies could best be served by a situation providing for the closest possible degree of
integration. In this respect it was the alternative for his proposals for a strong federation. Both plans described the respective situation in which Trinidad could make the fullest possible contribution to the welfare of the region, and get the maximum return for her contribution. In so far as the existing federation was concerned, the attitude of Trinidad was clearly dependent on that of Jamaica, and although Williams unilaterally formulated the best set of proposals ever prepared for a federation in the West Indies, he was in no position to offer to continue the federation if Jamaica withdrew. The statistics produced proved conclusively that the responsibilities certain to devolve upon Trinidad in a rump federation was out of all proportion to any possible benefits to be derived. In the circumstances, the outcome of the Jamaica referendum was a more vital matter than was realized at the time.

The predominant position of Jamaica vitally affected Trinidad's final attitude to the federation, but there were other factors. The leadership of the federal government was never inspiring, and its limited function left its ministers and legislators a degree of leisure which tended to diminish enthusiasm for the federation. For a long time Williams had grown increasingly impatient with it. At the same time the economic and political developments taking place in Trinidad had created such enthusiasm and confidence that independence for Trinidad and Tobago seemed not only desirable, but appeared easily attainable. For over a year Williams had
talked repeatedly of independence for Trinidad and Tobago, and when the federation collapsed, independence was but a short step away.
Footnotes


4 "The Intergovernmental Conference," *The Nation*, October 9, 1959. Those charges were discussed and refuted in this article.


16 In the Jamaica House of Representatives on May 29, 1959, Manley conceived Jamaica's possible relationship to the Federation as follows: "It should be possible for a group of territories to establish a closer relationship with the federal government, and to entrust the federal government with a greater range of federal powers, leaving a unit like Jamaica or any other unit free to form a looser association with the federal centre. Cited in Gordon K. Lewis, Puerto Rico: A Case Study on the Problems of Contemporary American Federation, p. 80.


18 Ibid., p. 79.
19 Ibid., pp. 87, 88.
21 Loc. cit.
22 Ibid., p. 21.
24 Ibid., p. 23.

25 Trinidad and Tobago, Economic Development of the West Indies Federation: I. The Case for United Kingdom Assistance, 1960, p. 5. Information was received from the Premier's office to the effect that this was the first section of a study to be published in three parts, but the difficulties which beset the federation for the project had to be abandoned before much progress had been made on Part II, The Case for United States Assistance.

26 This remark by Manley was contained in the Jamaica government's Ministry Paper on the West Indies Federation, reprinted in The Nation, March 11, 1960.


28 "From the Premier to the Secretary of State," The Nation, December 11, 1959. The provisions of the new constitution were reprinted in this issue of The Nation in connection with an account of Williams' instructions to Solomon to return home from discussions with the Colonial Office.

29 Ibid.
30 Williams, Approach to Independence, pp. 22, 23.
31 At times Williams openly criticized the federal government and its ministers. In a public address on July 17, 1959, he referred to the federation as "A federation to provide jobs for some big shots running about the place to get into a lot of difficulties with nomination of this, that, and the other." Williams, *From Slavery to Chaguaramas*, p. 26.

32 "The Federalist," *The Nation*, March 18, 1960. In this issue *The Nation* printed a broadcast by Sir Grantley Adams, Prime Minister of the West Indies, and a reply from the Premier of Trinidad and Tobago.


37 The West Indies, *H. R. Debates*, vol. 5, col. 330, February 22, 1960. In this reference Adams stated that MacLeod dissuaded Williams from challenging Manley on the referendum. He also stated that thereafter Williams made every conceivable effort to accommodate the difficulties raised by Jamaica.

38 The West Indies, *H. R. Debates*, vol. 5, cols. 424-426, July 25, 1961. In the course of this debate which took place on the Report of the London Constitutional Conference of June 1961, Gomes stated that during his visit to Trinidad in June 1960, MacLeod called at his home and mentioned these matters.


40 Gomes has suggested that MacLeod persuaded Williams to alter his stand on a strong federation in exchange for a free hand in rearranging the electoral boundaries of Trinidad to accommodate the six additional constituencies provided for under the constitution. The West Indies, *H. R. Debates*, vol. 5, col. 427, July 25, 1961.

41 Trinidad and Tobago, Reports on the Intergovernmental Conference, p. 22. In this report of the Intergovernmental Conference Williams referred to his secret meeting with Manley, and mentioned some things on which they agreed.

43 *Economics of Nationhood*, pp. 10, 18.

44 See Chapter 5,


46 Trinidad and Tobago, *Reports on the Intergovernmental Conference*, p. 38; see also note 4 above.

47

48 Trinidad and Tobago, *Reports on the Intergovernmental Conference*, p. 18.


51 *The West Indies (Federation) Order in Council, 1957*, Art. 118.

52 *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, p. 18361, October 9-14, 1961.


54 656 *H. C. Debates*, 5s, c. 886, March 26, 1962.


60 Williams, *Speech on Independence*, p. 21.

62 Cmd. 1417, p. 18.


66 This information is contained in Adams' speech during debate in the federal legislature, the West Indies, H. R. Debates, vol. 5, c. 1347, February 22, 1962. See also 656 H. C. Debates, c. 849, March 26, 1962.


68 For evidence of Williams' attitude on this matter, see Williams, The Approach to Independence, p. 22. See also note 5 above.

69 For particulars of the New Bases Agreement see Cmd.1369.


72 Trinidad Guardian, October 17, 1961.

73 Trinidad Guardian, November 25, 1961.


75 Loc. cit.

76 Trinidad Guardian, October 11, 1961.


78 Ibid., November 12, 1961.
British West Indian Airways developed from rather modest beginnings during the Second World War, when a service utilizing two small planes was started to provide inter-island passenger service which had been interrupted when action by submarines caused irregularity of the steamship passenger service. In time British West Indian Airways facilitated contact between the islands to such an extent that it was one of the factors contributing to the development of the federation. It has been increasingly brought up to date and now operates an international service.


The West Indies, H. R. Debates, vol. 5, col. 1347, February 22, 1962. Adams stated that in a meeting with the Federal Cabinet on January 15, 1962, Maudling had said that the federation would have to be dissolved to permit Jamaica to secede.


Ibid.


Ibid., col. 1086.

See Note 83.


Williams, Speech on Independence, pp. 33-35.
CONCLUSION

The collapse of the West Indies Federation shattered a vision of regional unity that had persisted for over three centuries. For most of this period, colonial officials considered a federation of the British West Indian territories desirable for reasons of efficient and economical administration. However, up to the close of the nineteenth century they had made no notable progress in unifying the colonies, and thereafter they regarded the project with much skepticism. In the early twentieth century, West Indians embraced the vision of regional unity as a basis for the achievement of West Indian nationhood. In 1960, Meikle, a Jamaican, advocated the formation of a regional union as a means of forestalling annexation by the United States. At the close of the First World War, Marryshow of Grenada, and Cipriani of Trinidad, were among West Indians who envisaged federation as a means by which the West Indian territories could achieve the status being enjoyed by the older Dominions. Thus, from its beginning, West Indian interest in federation was indicative of the emergence of an incipient nationalism which, although by no means militant, nevertheless had a readily identifiable objective. It is worthy of note that the Wood Commission which was sent out to the West Indies and British Guiana in 1921-22, was appointed to investigate both the extent of pro-
federation sentiment in the area, and also the interest in self-government in individual colonies.

In no other colony was the insular interest in self-government so closely associated with the question of federation as in Trinidad and Tobago, where there was a West Indian Confederation movement extolling the advantages of federation, and a Legislative Reform Association demanding the introduction of constitutional changes in the colony. Cipriani was the leader of both these movements. But Cipriani owes his place in West Indian history to the ideas he disseminated rather than to the things that he accomplished by his efforts. He envisaged the West Indian federation movement as a means by which West Indians could make a united demand for self-government. But although he succeeded in disseminating the idea of federation, he never succeeded in arousing West Indians to common action in demanding constitutional changes. The result was that constitutional reform was begun in Jamaica in 1943, and in Trinidad and Tobago in 1946, independently of federation.

In spite of the fact that there was no well defined programme of action associated with the idea of federation as it was advocated for more than twenty-five years, the movement made impressive gains among West Indian leaders during the Second World War, and when the war came to a close, was exploited by the Colonial Office as a basis for granting constitutional changes leading to eventual self-government for the West Indian colonies. Paradoxically, this decision by the
Colonial Office deprived the West Indian movement towards federation of its original *raison d'être*. No collective action was now necessary to extract concessions from the Colonial Office. The task confronting West Indians was to prepare a framework for cooperation.

When this situation developed, challenging the capacity of West Indians to work together for the achievement of a common nationhood, there were in Trinidad and Tobago no coherent political parties through which public opinion could be informed, and the popular will expressed. There is no doubt that an influential segment of the Trinidad population favoured federation. On July 13, 1945, the Trinidad Legislature debated the subject, and declared itself in favour of federation. The attempts made at the close of the Second World War to organize the West Indian National Party and later the Caribbean Socialist Party — two parties with regional membership — showed that some Trinidadians had acquired a regional perspective. Because of far-reaching changes in the membership of the Legislative Council as a result of general elections held in July 1946, the subject of federation was again introduced in the Legislature on January 3, 1947. The arguments advanced in the course of debate on this date expressed three main points of view: unqualified support for federation as indispensable for the achievement of West Indian nationhood; support of federation on condition that it made independence for the West Indian colonies immediately possible; and opposition to federation because of its alleged impracticability, prohibitive costs, and
a number of other reasons including fear of unrestricted immigration from the other islands. This last argument was most frequently used to conceal the opposition of East Indians who opposed federation on purely communal grounds.

Although the three points of view referred to reflected to some extent the attitudes of the public in general, they were primarily the opinions of the legislators who with few exceptions never took the time to inform the public of the issues involved in federation. The absence of a coherent party system was mainly responsible for this situation. It also permitted a conservative coalition consisting of a minority of the elected members of the Legislative Council, the nominated members the majority of whom were expressly appointed as representatives of business and industry, and the three government officials who were members of the Legislature, to control the affairs of the country. In spite of a new constitution introduced in 1950 which increased the number of elected members of the Legislature, the conservative element which betrayed an unwarranted suspicion of progressive ideas, remained in effective control of affairs until 1956. It was from this group that Trinidad's delegates to the pre-federal conferences which took place between September 1947 and February 1956, were chosen, and their influence was responsible to a very great extent for the ultra-conservative features of the SCAC Report.

The SCAC Report was a reactionary document which greatly injured the cause of federation. It was also a great disappointment to those who had expected federation to bring the West Indian colonies a considerable improvement in
constitutional status, if not immediate independence. On July 28, 1950, a majority of the elected members of the Trinidad Legislature supported a motion urging the rejection of the report, contending that it did not provide a satisfactory basis for federation. However, the motion was rejected, and the SCAC Report and subsequent reports on federation were accepted by the Legislative Council over a negative vote by a majority of the elected members.

The great defect of the SCAC Report lay in the fact that its proposals for a federal constitution were not sufficiently advanced to accommodate the insular impetus towards self-government. It created a dichotomy of insular and regional constitutional development and perpetuated a situation in which such territories as Barbados, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago, pursued their constitutional development independently of federation. The unfortunate result of this was that when the federation was finally established on January 3, 1958, it had not only failed to contribute to the progress made in these territories, but the constitution under which it functioned was so conservative that it appeared to nullify the gains they had made.

The rise of the People's National Movement to power in Trinidad and Tobago in 1956 was one of the factors which profoundly influenced the territory's attitude to federation. That event ended the dominance of the conservative elements in the political affairs of the country, and at the same time placed the cause of federation on a firmer basis by identifying
it with the policy of a government that had the support of a political party. Moreover, Williams, the Chief Minister in the PNM government, although a zealous advocate of West Indian nationalism, defined the function of federation primarily in economic terms. He conceived the principal of objective of a federation in the West Indies to be the provision of a framework in which the economic development of the region could best be achieved. By redefining the goals of federation primarily in economic terms, Williams won increased support for federation not only in Trinidad and Tobago but also in the other islands of the West Indies.

The increased enthusiasm for federation in Trinidad which accompanied the rise of the PNM to power was further stimulated when the territory acquired the right of being the host territory of the federal capital. This enthusiasm reached its zenith at the inauguration of the parliament of the West Indies Federation on April 22, 1958, and thereafter it began to diminish. It became painfully obvious from the moment the federal government began to function that it lacked the scope and the authority to play an important role in West Indian affairs. Moreover, it functioned under conditions which made it appear second rate in comparison with the Trinidad government, while the abbreviated sessions of the legislature and the conspicuous leisure enjoyed by the ministers in the federal government did nothing to enhance the public image of the federation.

The unimpressive performance of the federal government due to the constitutional limitations under which it functioned,
and to a lesser extent to uninspiring leadership, quickly robbed the federal government of much of the goodwill with which it began its career. But the greatest single cause of the strained relations which later developed between the federal and Trinidad governments was the Charguaramas question, involving as it did an unfortunate misunderstanding of the issues involved in the selection of Charguaramas as the site for the federal capital, open disagreement of the course to be followed in negotiations with the United States government who occupied the site, and sharp differences of opinion on the goals sought in those negotiations. The selection of Charguaramas was a colossal blunder which simultaneously ignored a matter of such vital importance to Trinidad as the protection of its oil industry, and prematurely involved the federation in international discussions of a highly complex nature. That it would be a source of friction within the federation became quite apparent at the London Conference in July 1957, when Williams stated that certain matters before the conference impinged on Trinidad's interest to such an extent that they were of peculiar concern to him as Trinidad's chief minister. However, there was no perceptible cleavage in the ranks of the federation until June 1958, when the federal government announced its intention to accept a ten-year moratorium which the Americans proposed on the Charguaramas question. Williams refused to acquiesce in that decision. He demanded a revision of the agreement under which the United States leased certain areas in Trinidad and Tobago in 1941, and he persisted in his demand until a conference was held and a new agreement was signed in February, 1961.
While Williams persisted in his efforts to secure a revision of the existing agreements, his relations with the federal government deteriorated to an alarming degree. Williams charged that the federal government had failed in its responsibility to protect the vital interests of Trinidad and Tobago, which had been compromised by the selection of the Chaguaramas site. On the other hand, the federal Prime Minister contended that Williams had been encroaching on the jurisdiction of the federal government in external affairs. This was an unfortunate position for the federal Prime Minister to take after he had surrendered the initiative in the matter. Moreover, his attempt to discuss his strained relations with the Trinidad government in terms of his constitutional rights, betrayed an unfortunately superficial understanding of the problem that confronted him, and an inadequate appreciation of the extent to which matters of vital importance to Trinidad and Tobago were directly involved. The federal government was on surer ground on the stand it took with reference to discussions between the Trinidad government and Venezuela. But the Trinidad government had begun its discussions with Venezuela before the federation was established, and since its primary objective was to find additional markets for Trinidad's expanding industries, it did not really believe that its activities encroached on the jurisdiction of the federal government in external affairs. The situation was one that required a degree of consultation and coordinated effort of which both governments seemed incapable, the federal government insisting on respect for its constitutional rights, and the Trinidad government acting to protect its interests. While
the position taken by the federal government was untenable in the peculiar circumstances of the West Indies Federation, there is no doubt that the Trinidad government could have achieved its objectives while pursuing a more flexible policy. At times it evinced a tendency to act unilaterally to a degree that was incompatible with its position as a member of the federation. For example, the terms it proposed for settlement of the Chaguaramas question were prepared without any reference to the federal government, and showed complete indifference to that government's interests in the matter. As a result, when the Chaguaramas question was settled, the United States government was left in possession of the naval base for another seventeen years, and there was no reference to an alternative site for the federal capital.

While relations between the federal and Trinidad governments remained strained over the issues that have just been discussed, plans were being made to revise the federal constitution. As a result of a motion passed by the Federal House of Representatives on June 26, 1958, the federal government summoned an inter-governmental conference for this purpose and invited the governments of the unit territories to submit proposals. The Trinidad government seized the opportunity to propose a form of federation which was idealistic and challenging in the degree of integration proposed, and the authority given to the central government. The existing federation was the product of compromises, and aside from the fact that its constitution was obsolete even before the federal government
began to function, it abounded in such glaring anomalies as the existence of two monetary systems, a diversity of tariff structures which discriminated against the products of member territories, a multiplicity of postal systems, and restrictions against the movement of persons within the federation and restrictions upon the right of the federal government to raise revenue. The proposals formulated by the Trinidad government and set forth in the *Economics of Nationhood* were calculated to remove all the defects in the existing system by the establishment of a strong federation in which the central government would have the principal responsibility for the economic development of the region, and also an independent revenue based on its authority to impose taxes.

The proposals advanced by the Trinidad government were based on an objective appraisal of the needs of the West Indian situation, and precisely suited to meet those needs. However, regardless of their merit, these proposals could not be placed before the intergovernmental conference when it met in Port-of-Spain late in September 1959. In Jamaica, where anti-federation sentiment had always been quite pronounced, the federal Prime Minister's unfortunate reference to retroactive taxation in two press conferences in November 1958, had aroused considerable alarm, and the Jamaica government, determined to protect its economic development from direct federal action, demanded a reduction of the already limited authority enjoyed by the federal government. When the intergovernmental conference convened, the Jamaican demands were pressed with such utter
inflexibility, that after two weeks very little progress had been made and the conference was only saved from complete collapse by a decision to refer disputed matters to select committees, pending a resumption of the conference at a date to be appointed.

A few months later, confronted by increasing hostility to federation in the country, the Jamaica government with the consent of the Colonial Office proposed to curtail the authority of the federal government even further, and also received permission from the Colonial Office to leave the federation, if its demands were not met. In the light of this new situation, the Trinidad government out of alleged concern to prevent Jamaica's secession, abandoned its own proposals and acquiesced in the Jamaican plan for emasculating the federation. Thus the Jamaican proposals were accepted when the intergovernmental conference resumed in Port-of-Spain in May 1961, and were embodied in the new federal constitution prepared at the London Conference held in June 1961.

The success achieved by the Jamaica government in enfeebling the federal government, did not diminish anti-federation sentiment in the country. In a referendum held on September 16, 1961, a majority of Jamaicans voted that Jamaica should leave the federation. After the adverse vote in Jamaica, some West Indians hoped that Trinidad would become the leader of a federation consisting of the remaining nine territories. However, such persons overlooked the frequent assertion of the Trinidad Premier that if Jamaica should leave the federation,
Trinidad would follow. For some time the Trinidad government refused to disclose its intention, deciding instead to await the outcome of general elections which had been fixed for December 4, 1961. In the elections the governing People's National Movement was victorious, and on January 14, 1962, the General Council of the party recommended that Trinidad take no part in federation of the East Caribbean territories. This decision, which was later ratified at a full convention of the PNM, was considered to be Trinidad's views on the matter. At an intergovernmental meeting which convened in Port-of-Spain on January 15, 1962, representatives of the smaller territories presented the Colonial Secretary, who was in attendance, with a memorandum recommending the dissolution of the federation, and the formation of a Little Eight federation. This recommendation indicated the complete collapse of the West Indies Federation. Its dissolution became effective on May 31, 1962, the date that had been originally set for the achievement of independence by the federation.

The circumstances under which the federation collapsed indicated quite clearly that Jamaica occupied the predominant position in the federation. When Jamaica resolved to debilitate the federation, Trinidad was forced to surrender her own proposals to strengthen it. Similarly, when the adverse vote in the Jamaica referendum rendered Jamaica's secession inevitable, Trinidad's continued participation in a truncated federation would have involved sacrifices that the country was in no position to make. Trinidad's offer to establish a unity state
would have involved as much pressure on her economic development as would participation in a federation. However, the administrative economy effected by the operation of a unitary state would permit the diversion of funds currently expended on administration, to providing improved social services throughout the territories. In spite of its advantages, the offer is sure to be rejected on political grounds.

Trinidad's offer to establish a unitary state in the East Caribbean was based on the same principle as the proposals for a strong federation, and it was designed to achieve a similar result - the closest degree of cooperation possible in the circumstances. The proposals for a strong federation embodied the view expressed by Williams shortly after he began his political career in 1956, and advanced more zealously when he became Chief Minister of Trinidad and Tobago in 1956 - that the primary function of a federation of the West Indian islands was to further their economic development and thus provide an improved standard of living for the people of the region. Williams entered the political life of Trinidad at a time when the goals of federation needed clarification. Previously, federation had been viewed principally as the only means by which West Indian nationhood could be achieved. It must be pointed out that the West Indies Federation while it functioned never accomplished this purpose. On the contrary, it had the effect of delaying the constitutional development of the larger territories. By defining the goals of federation in terms of economic development, Williams made it appear advantageous to all territories regardless of their economic development. He
further aimed at equalizing the status of all the participating territories by advocating a rapid transition to independence. But Williams' attitude to federation was ambivalent. He professed unswerving allegiance to the principle of federation, but took exception to the manner in which it operated in the existing federation. From the emergence of his party in 1956, he gave federation his enthusiastic support until he disagreed with the federal government's policy on Chaguaramas in June 1958. From that time on, his relations with the federal government became increasingly strained, and even before the federation collapsed, his impatience with it was quite obvious.

Trinidad's difficulties with the federal government were due in a large degree to the fact that the constitution under which it functioned made it inadequate to the needs of the West Indian situation. The constitution drawn up at the London Conference, 1961, made the federation an unjustified and unnecessary expense. In the circumstances, independence became quite an attractive proposition. The survival of small states in Central America and the Middle East, and the emergence of other small states such as Cyprus and Western Samoa, indicated that world opinion was becoming reconciled to the existence of small national units. Moreover, Trinidad was currently experiencing unprecedented prosperity, and this, coupled with constitutional changes introduced by the PNM government since it assumed office in September, 1956, gave the country the optimism and confidence necessary to assume the responsibility of independence. On December 29, 1961, Trinidad achieved full
internal self-government. On August 31, 1962, the country took the final step to independence, thus indicating that the collapse of the federation had exposed it to no hardship.
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