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Racial Problems and Social Stratification in the Caribbean

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in the Caribbean

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I have been asked to talk about racial stratification in the Caribbean and my first problem was to decide what approach to adopt to this. I presume the alternatives are really to present you with a descriptive statement about the stratification and racial situation in the Caribbean; another possibility was to attempt a general theoretical statement for either or both these complexes and their relations. Instead, I've elected to choose a different approach, to proceed inductively, and to report the objective patterns as far as I know them and to attempt to determine what general relationships exist between stratification and the racial composition or distribution of the Caribbean. My problem then, briefly, is the reciprocal influences of stratification and racial differences on one another in the Caribbean and I'm trying to attempt to see if by proceeding inductively, I can make any useful generalizations about this.

Other writers interested in this area and in this range of problems have formulated a number of general statements you might wish to bear in mind. According to Eric Williams, now premier of Trinidad, economic interests determine racial ~~alliance~~ as well as stratification in this area and race relations are ~~gotten~~ by pursuing collective economic interests. According to Professor Tannenbaum, cultural factors including religious attitudes, ideologies and the like are critical to the differentiation of the racial relation

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systems that we find in the Caribbean and Latin America. According to Professor Hofink of Amsterdam, race is an independent determinant of the relationships (of) racial images, phonetic norm images and things of that sort, some very metaphysical concepts. Now I'm trying deliberately to exclude from this discussion any treatment of cultural differences which are associated with racial differences, in order to focus on exclusively structural relationships between racial collectivities and stratification. This really doesn't mean that I am minimizing the significance of culture, it is merely an attempt to focus as clearly as I can on the two dimensions of immediate interest: stratification and race.

Immediately then, our problem is to develop some meaningful definition of race and there are a variety of alternatives which have to be rejected. The biologists tell us that races are populations with differences in certain genetic frequencies although they don't know the genes involved any better than we do. The genes that they have been able to map the distributions of generally refer to invisible features whereas we generally in the ordinary world distinguish racial types by phenotypes, by their physical appearance. Alternatively, biologists, and here I'm referring to Dunn in his UNESCO discussion of race and biology, offer a geographical definition of race. The Europeans, or the Caucazoids, live in Europe and then the Amerindian race and the negroes in Africa, and there's an Asiatic race which makes nonsense in the Caribbean where the Indians, East Indians, as we call them, and Chinese are very clearly racially distinct. Indeed, the East Indian race (if we call it a race) appear to be in large part the product

of hybridization between Mediterranean peoples and Dravidians, certainly not immediately Mongol. Sociologists, represented by Prof. Blumer whose work on race has greatly impressed me and whose general direction I am following, tend to define races as groups (which they are not--no race is ever a group) recognized as racially different in populations in certain societies. Let's be quite clear that the race is a category, always a category or an aggregate and not a group, except possibly with the Bushman or some Pygmoid races; it's culturally diverse type of people and we cannot actually base general study of race relations on definitions which are situationally variable.

In the West Indies in 1943 according to the Census, 1943-1946 Census, the Portuguese represented a clear racial group; the Syrians, Lebanese, and the Jews were also distinguished as racial groups. There were a curious number of European races: German, Italian and so on, and in later tabulations these groups were classified as British Isles races (all brought together), European races, and then others. These are distinguished from creole locally born whites who were mainly of British stock. Now if we are to accept the general sociological definition of what is regarded as a race or discuss groups treated as races for purposes of analysis, then locally we're going to encounter difficulties. For example, in the successive census, 1960, which just lumps all these various branches of the whites, resident whites, into one category, that is, whites. We have then a great change in the racial composition of the West Indies in two successive censuses.

Instead, I wish to define as a race a population which is phenotypically different, distinct, and which holds its phenotype to genetic transmission. This means that for purposes of my discussion, the whites form a race (or

a racial category) in the West Indies, whether they are Portuguese, Syrian, British, French, Jewish or what have you. The other racial categories with which I have to deal include the Chinese, the Indians, East Indians, the Negroes and the Amerindians Javanease are physically distinct, endogamous, and recognized as a distinct racial type in the area, and they may be provisionally accepted as representing a distinctive race. This then is my notion of race.

With regard to stratification, the other dimension that we have to treat, I define that by the distribution of advantages, resources and opportunities or rewards in a particular population. This distribution may identify strata which are relatively homogeneous as regards the resources, advantages and opportunities that they hold, and these strata would then represent the stratification in its concrete aspects. Analytically, and of greater relevance, we are concerned with the principles that govern the distribution of these rewards, resources, opportunities and so on, and race and racial difference may of course be an important one. Now in the Caribbean the ~~sources of~~ resources and opportunities that are of immediate relevance for any free discussion of stratification include such matters as land, education, capital, occupational opportunities, political control, income and prestige.

A word should be said at this stage about an alternative type of social organization which we also find in the West Indies and which is related to racially distinct aggregates and relations between them. The stratification model, the very familiar one, tends to be like this. The strata, whether they are alligned horizontally or, as is more usually the case, obliquely, form part of a unitary aggregate. They are functionally interdependent elements, components of a single aggregate.

It is possible to distinguish this type of organization in which the social formations are related by interdependence from the model types in which they are not. Here we have a system in which there is a segmental organization represented crudely in that form. There we have two segments, virtually two different communities, encapsulated in a single society, one being superordinate to the other. Now in part my argument will turn on the contrast between this model of social organization which is historically dominant in the Caribbean and the other model which is also quite frequently found and analytically important. It is possible, further, that you have a combination of both models; and I shall instance some cases of this that we have in the Caribbean. That is to say we have segments within a given stratum in a stratified society. The segments may be down here in the lower strata or if you prefer in some superior strata. Let us then distinguish a segmental organization from a stratified one.

Now I have attempted to formulate conceptions of race and stratification which seem to me to be objective. We can photograph racial differences and we can actually quantify differences in the distribution of the various variables specified and we can attempt to see just how they correlate. This, for instance, has been done on the Jamaica census of 1943 by Leonard Bloom in an excellent article on the social differentiation of Jamaica, (Amer. Soc. Review, 1954), and more recently by Wayne De Belle in his book on Jamaican leadership. With these objective conceptions then, one is concerned to see if we can find any objective relationship between stratification and race. The procedure here is comparative, analytic, and historical.

A word should be said about the Caribbean and this might be defined in one of two ways: it can be taken to include those Central American

mainland territories of Hispanic mestizo character which are washed by the Caribbean. I think that your interest here lies, however, mainly in the Archipelago, the West Indies. These insular societies are primarily creole complexes established by colonists from Northern Europe; they contrast with the mainland Hispanic societies in several ways: in regard to density of population, racial composition, cultural tradition and so on. Now in South America and in Central America there are territories which do really form part, historically and culturally, of the West Indies in the strict sense. I am referring to British Honduras, (South of Yucatan in Central America) and the three Guianas, British, French and Dutch; Dutch Guiana being called Surinam in northeastern South America. We have to deal with certain West Indian outpost on the mainland. Historically and culturally they form parts of the creole culture zone.

Within this area we have all major racial stocks except the Australian aborigine, Pygmy and Bushman, that is, we have Amerindians, Mongols, Negroes, Javanese, Indians, and white. We also have a variety of crosses at different levels: Negro--white, Negro-Chinese, Negro-Indian, and so on. One impressive segment of society that we find in British Honduras, the Black Caribs, represent crosses between Negroes and Caribs, originally located in St. Vincent, moved from St. Vincent to the Honduran coast after a rebellion, I think around the end of the 18th century. But there are certain racial crosses that we do not find in the Caribbean despite its very free miscegenation. We do not find many crosses between Javanese and other races. We don't find Indo-Chinese crosses or crosses between Indians and East Indians and Amerindians, or between Chinese and Amerindians. We don't find those because those

populations are not in frequent contact with one another.

A word should be said about the types of society that we have to deal with. Until recently most of the islands were colonial societies whereas the mainland territories and the Hispanic territories have enjoyed autonomy of a sort for a considerable period. It is useful to distinguish the Hispanic societies in this area as mestizo though the meaning of mestizo is rather different from that which we find on the mainland, and to contrast these mestizo societies of Hispanic derivation with the creole societies established by northwest European colonists. The creole societies are bi-racially based. They are based on a combination of negro and white; they are primarily Protestant, and they have a history and evident traces persistent to this day of plantation slavery. The Mestizo-Hispanic societies are based on combinations of Amerindians and whites, primarily, but not in the Antilles. They have a Catholic tradition and their major agricultural and labor organization has been out of the hacienda and peonage.

One also wants to make a distinction between bi-racial and multi-racial societies which is relevant to this area. A bi-racial society is one in which the major components are drawn from two distinct races only. A multi-racial, as I use the term, is one in which there are three or more important racial segments represented. Now bi-racial societies in the Caribbean do include a number of minorities, what are locally classified as racially distinct minorities, and I'll have to report on the position of these. The multi-racial societies are best represented by Surinam, Guiana, Trinidad and British Honduras. The rest are effectively bi-racial. Some of

the societies in the area are mono-racial, that is to say, they are occupied almost entirely by members of one racial stock. These are very minor areas like Turks Island or Caicos Island.

Now the history of the Caribbean is relevant; it helps to explain how we got these different combinations and it also reports briefly the variety of historical combinations of different racial stocks in the area. As you know, when the Spaniards entered the Caribbean, most of these islands were occupied by Indians of one stock or another. The Spaniards proceeded to exploit the Indians, to put them to work in mines, to look for gold, to work on very simple sugar and tobacco estates. They also intermarried with the Indians. There was a considerable debate of the day as to whether the Indians were humans or not, but the Church representatives in Cuba and Hispania required Spanish males who ^{co-}habited with Indian women to go through matrimony. By 1503, the first Negroes were being brought into the area and sold. Of course as the Spaniards reduced the Indian population both unintentionally and otherwise, the negro immigrant became more prominent in the labor force. The French in Martinique eliminated local Caribs; in Granada, in the seventeenth century when they entered the island and conquered the Caribs in 1650, their treatment was such that the entire Carib population of the island threw itself over a cliff in one collective suicide. The cliff is still known as Souteras. By that time, inter-marriage of whites with Amerindians had ceased. There is a structural contradiction in marrying the members of a population that you are exploiting virtually as slaves and to whom you are denying humanity.

When the French, British, and Dutch plundered the Spanish Caribbean and established their own colonies there, they very quickly swung over to sugar production on plantations with negro slaves imported by the transatlantic trade and supplemented this economy with piracy and buccaneering throughout the seventeenth century. Sex ratios generated miscegenation; most of the whites in the area were males. Although there was a shortage of negro women, they were made available to the white men, or taken by the white men, and a population of hybrid stock immediately emerged. Initially, particularly in the French areas, the white fathers of colored offspring, freed these; rather, colored offsprings were free initially under French law until fair on to about 1670 in Martinique by virtue of descent from a white father. And in his code of 1658 Louis XIV granted these free colored people full rights of citizenship in France. These were purely nominal under an absolute monarchy but they were nonetheless granted. The free colored elements in the French territories had precisely the same civil and political rights, such as they were, as the whites. There were also tendencies for white fathers to endow their colored offspring with estates and this continued particularly during the eighteenth century until legislation had to be passed specifically to discourage this. By that time there was a fairly sizable colored population on some of the islands, fairly well off and educated, and in Haiti, sufficiently important to be regarded as a threat by the creole white planters resident there. From 1758 onward these creole whites attempted to withdraw, and did in fact succeed in withdrawing the civic and political privileges extended a century earlier to coloreds by measures of one sort or

another. The effect of this was to disenfranchise the colored people in Haiti, the hybrids, and to alienate them from whites, this way to promote the prospects of the white elimination from Haiti which took place between 1791 and 1804.

Slave responses to a system of this sort, negro responses, since most of the slaves were negroes, varied. Slaves fled when they could; they fled the estates and established separate communities inland in the interior, in Martinique, in Surinam and in Jamaica. They then fought to maintain their independence and were successful. Many of the flights were suppressed. Or they accommodated by one device or another, or they revolted. The history of the slave society in the West Indies is very heavily interlaced with histories of slave revolts. The most important of these centered around, or followed on, the French revolution and the message that it gave of equality and liberty. Haiti particularly emerged from the revolutionary struggles an independent state without a white resident element, split in two between the colored elite and the negroes, a state in which Haiti still socially persists.

By 1806 the British had for various reasons decided to terminate the slave trade and they put pressure on other colonial powers operating in the Caribbean to do likewise with more or less success. In 1833 the British introduced a measure for the abolition of slavery and slavery was abolished progressively in the French and Dutch territories as well during the latter part of the 19th century.

The abolition of slavery generated a series of crises in labor relations and economic organizations throughout the area. Different

societies responded to the crisis differently, according to their own economic situation. In many societies (Grenada, Jamaica, British Guiana, and Venezuela) slaves withdrew from the plantations on emancipation and thus left plantations short of labor. In other societies, with relatively dense populations, where all the land was already appropriated to a flourishing plantation, there was no place for the ex-slaves to withdraw to, and consequently there was no labor shortage or need to import further labor supplies. These are represented for instance by Barbados, Antigua, St. Kitts and so on.

In some territories, the sugar crisis could not be overcome by the local planters, and different responses developed. In Guadeloupe the planter class sold out and were replaced by a French company and an absentee syndicate took over the estates. In St. Vincent and in Grenada there was a conversion of the estates from sugar production to the production of arrowroot, cocoa and bananas and nutmegs in Jamaica.

The general response of planters in ^{the B.R.} underdeveloped areas with a low population and labor shortage and in which sugar production was still apparently competitive and profitable, namely the colonies of Trinidad, Guiana and Surinam, was to seek for new labor by indenture, firstly from Europe (Germans, Britains, Irish and Portuguese being imported), then from China (mainly Hong Kong) and finally from India. The Indian immigration ceased in 1917, following which the Dutch proceeded to import Javanese.

It is in consequence of this differing dependence on indentured labor during the latter part of the 19th century and the first two decades of this one that certain bi-racial creole societies have become multi-racial. Areas in which Indians were most heavily imported

are now areas in which there are two or more segments of society very loosely related to one another except by political competitions in the situation of local self government and universal suffrage. In many societies such as Martinique, Jamaica and Grenada, Indians, Chinese, Portuguese, and certain other Europeans were imported, but since economies were not viable or profitable, the numbers imported were relatively small, and we can treat such societies as still effectively bi-racial although they now have a greater variety of ethnic minorities.

At about the time that sugar ceased to be profitable in the Caribbean colonies developed by northwest Europeans, it was taken up in Puerto Rico and Cuba under Spanish direction and the Cubans and Puerto Rican sought to start their plantations by slaves imported from Africa. Despite the agreement between the Spanish and the British to restrict the slave importation from Africa in 1817 some 200,000 slaves are estimated to have been brought into Cuba alone. Puerto Rico, however, failed to mobilize a sufficient input of African slaves to start the plantations. One impressive response of the Puerto Rican planters to this situation was to pass a series of laws which forced the local peasantry, estimated between 100,000 and 200,000 at the time, to do forced labor on the sugar plantations. In short, in lieu of an adequate labor supply of African slaves, the Puerto Rican planters, with government support, proceeded to compell free peasants to work on the estates.

This is the historical sketch which I think might explain some of the varieties in Caribbean society with which we have to deal.

One other point should be made; that is that the final unmentioned response to the sugar crisis of the last century was the abandonment of certain islands by the planter class, the withdrawal of whites and white economic activity from certain islands. Many of the lesser islands in

which sugar was always uneconomic ceased in this way to have a resident elite but turned over into peasant societies.

I want now to briefly sketch the characteristics of a bi-racial creole society with regard to stratification and racial distributions, and then to proceed to compare this with patterns that we find in a multi-racial society where there is large Indian component or Javanese component as well, or where there's a large mestizo component, as for instance in British Honduras where Spaniards and mestizos moved in en masse during the civil war in Yucatan in the middle part of the 19th century.

Most Creole systems represent a white-black hierarchy with the whites at the top in the sense of having the greatest share of the income, a disproportionate share of the high income, the greatest share of the national income, the greatest access to educational opportunities, the highest level of education, a disproportionate share of the land (5% of the landowners in Martinique own 76% of the land-this is quite characteristic of the West Indies). They are over-represented in professions; they have traditionally monopolized political and administrative office; they control the local shipping and commerce, such as it is; they are historically the ministers of religion and they preside over that institution; where there was a local army or militia this was either monopolized or officered by whites. Distinctions should be made however, in discussing whites between creole, or locally born whites, and metropolitans, people from the metropole, who come in as **salaried agents of governmental or commerce**. We should also **distinguish this creole and metropolitan white block** from other white minorities who are present in this society. They, at least, generally distinguish themselves. Below the creole and metropolitan whites come the colored elite,

executives and professionals--people who manage educational and property resources and occupy positions of intermediate status and influence. This colored elite ranges from an established middle class to an ordinary middle-middle (if you wish it in Warner's terms) to a lower-middle where there is mobility and where unionized labor, receiving relatively higher rates of pay, are the dynamic element. The third class, if you wish to call it by that term, would be primarily composed of black people and they would fall into two economic or ecological categories: the proletariat and the peasantry. The proletariat itself is divided into two segments: urban and rural. Rural proletariat operates as a substitute for slave labor on the sugar estates.

As I mentioned already, work by Broom, by Duke and Wendell Bell, by myself in Grenada and by the Office of the Jamaica Census, 1943, shows that there is a very clear mal-distribution of opportunities, resources and rewards among the members of these racial groups. I've attempted to correlate the distribution of status and racial phenotype and genotype for Grenada and found quite surprisingly high correlations. Genotype was $+0.71$ and so on. There is no doubt about this aspect of the situation.

With the end of World War II, for the first time the populations of these West Indian colonies were enfranchised. Universal suffrage was introduced and local autonomy increased, political parties were formed, and very rapidly (at different rates) self-governing societies were established. An exception should be made here with regard to Martinique and Guadeloupe which were assimilated as departments of the French state in the Third Republic.

There are a variety of political constitutions that are present in the area. The kingdom of the Netherlands, for instance, integrates the

Dutch Antilles and Surinam with Holland in one way, a relationship exists between Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands in this country, and so on and so forth. (We needn't bother with that aspect of the matter.) What's important to note, however is the effect of universal suffrage and local autonomy on the colonial stratification, particularly on its racial components.

In British Guiana we have had already quite severe racial conflicts between Indians supporting one political party led by an Indian leader and creoles supporting another political party led by a creole leader. The Portuguese, an important economic and social urban element in British Guiana, also maintain their separate political party. They are there more than three-quarters of the resident white and are actually speaking on behalf of the white racial element in Guiana. In Trinidad, despite the expressed non-racial policies and integrationist policies of the creole premier, Eric Williams, there is a very sharp political split between Indians and creoles, and this has been so for several years. In Martinique some 15,000 to 20,000 Indians did attempt to form a political party. They are ~~un~~segregated ecologically on the estates in the north from the creoles. They didn't quite manage it but there does appear to be a latent cleavage between the Martinique Indians and the Martinique creoles. In Surinam, we find three major political parties: the creole party, the Indian party, and the party of the Javanese. The Javaese are otherwise not very active; they simply support and vote for the Javanese leader. In British Honduras we have a society of this sort, the dominant segment of which centers around Belize and which is mainly creole, successors of an old ^{woodcutting} slave colony. The second segment is mestizo and represents approximately twenty-two percent of the total population.

It is not engaged in politics at all. There are therefore effectively only creole elements in the British Honduran polity. On one of the smallest islands in the Caribbean, Saba, in the Dutch Windwards, some six square miles all of it, the crater of a volcano, we find two colonies of whites and blacks living quite separately and roughly quite equal in numbers, 50% of the population belonging to each. Here we have segmental oppositions and considerable political competition for jobs and for status. In the Cayman Islands, we have had since 1881 two populations of whites and blacks. The blacks have increased since 1881 by some 150, which is very small; the whites have doubled their numbers; and the colored population, the obvious product of hybridization, has tripled during this period. There appears then to be quite different types of adjustments in Cayman and in Saba.

In several societies we have peripheral groups which participate not at all in the local post-independence, post World WarII polity and which are not interested in stratification and the distribution of advantages. Most of these political competitions are focused on control over the distribution of resources and opportunities, education and the disbursements of government.

Finally one could compare the various adaptations of minorities, such as the Chinese, the Portuguese, the Indians, the Jews, the Syrians, the creoles, the metropolitan whites or the colored elites in these different countries. There does not seem however to be sufficient time for this.

In creole societies, following the introduction of universal suffrage and autonomy, political power has passed from the hands of the very small resident white minority to the educated colored elite. But economic power still remains where it originally was, in the hands of

the whites, both the creole and the metropolitan whites. There is a symbiosis developing between colored elite and resident whites, and in some cases this is strengthened by the development of a two-party system which effectively integrates a society by splitting it in two and developing an intense competition for political domination. This is a situation, for instance, such as we find in Jamaica and among the creoles in British Honduras. It is a situation which stabilizes an otherwise unstable and very unequal stratified society.

M. G. Smith

Questions and Answers

Q: I wanted to know whether in your opinion, in the political parties you described, the integration affected by race or by what you described as the segmental structure of society is stronger or weaker, or weakened, by the competition implied by the strata in the segments? I don't know if my question is clear. You described two segments with different strata and I got the idea from your position that race in these segments was integrated fully. I would like to know what other internal conflict is defined by the stratification in each segment?

A: What other internal conflict is defined by the stratification in each segment? This varies with the segments. In the creole case we have a system in which a small proportion of whites have most of the land and most of the resources; a relatively small proportion of browns, some 15% in the greatest case and varying to 6% in other societies, are relatively prosperous and a much larger population is disprivileged economically and socially. There is obviously here a cleavage between the haves and the have-nots which very easily generates racial ideologies on both sides of the fence, and you get a division. For example, in Jamaica and Grenada these people will speak of the "opposite sex", and I don't think they mean s-e-x; I think they mean s-e-c-t-s; they lump them together as "us vs. them", and you have these tensions around. Frequent riots and rebellions in Martinique and Jamaica and elsewhere at different times express this cleavage between the haves and the have-nots. When the creoles united as a block against external Indian threat, on familiar sociological principles this type of cleavage tends to get subordinated to the primary opposition against an out-group. In other cases you have some very odd

patterns. In Aruba, for example, you have a distinction within the creole society. Here there is no Indian external group, but there is a distinction between Aruba natives and immigrants, and two political parties have developed around this. There is a political party which represents the interests of the immigrants, mainly British West Indians who have moved into Aruba to work in the oil fields or the oil refinery, and against this you have the Aruba native party seeking to disenfranchise these people and to monopolize the distribution of such rewards and opportunities as the place has to offer. In Panama the husband of Margo Fontaine, ex-president Arias, was a very effective political candidate as late as 1964 on a ticket to eliminate the Negroes. This is very interesting because most of the population of Panama City is Negro, but the term Negro in Panama is reserved for the Jamaicans--the Protestant, English-speaking Negro immigrants from the West Indies who are settled in Panama -- and the elimination of the Negroes really means the eviction of these residents. Here you have again natives vs. outsiders. You can have a variety of types of segmentation and of course it is a risk as to whether ~~in~~ the principle of segmental contraposition will enhance the integration of the society or split it apart. This is a very common risk in pluralist societies: ^UCypr~~us~~, Nigeria, Malaya, Singapore, and so on and so forth. I have not answered your question fully; I have merely attempted to illustrate one aspect of it.

Q: I wonder whether you would extend your analysis of the two systems and perhaps discuss a bit the situation prevailing in Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Puerto Rico. I realize that your own work has been principally in the West Indies but perhaps you have some impressions as to

the patterns of segmentation and stratification that apply elsewhere in the Caribbean.

A: To tell you the truth, I am very ill informed about the Hispanic areas. I use them mainly as a control group. The Cuban case interests me because here you have a case in which a Negro slave population was imported; consequently hybridization has proceeded, and it is not quite clear to me whether the term mestizo in Cuba refers to a Negro-white mixture or to something else. Apparently the Cuban principle of racial classification is the obverse of the American one; nobody who has had a white ancestor can be a Negro, whereas in America nobody who has had a Negro ancestor can avoid it. But the Cuban social organization, as far as I have read the literature on it, appears to be very much more complex and specific to its own historical political traditions. Forgive me for being rather vague.

The situation in Puerto Rico seems to be that where the sugar estates have persisted, as under American capitalization and so on, you still have an extensive rural proletariat, the old Jibaro converted into a rural proletariat. Where, however, the lands are not suitable for sugar production on a large-scale basis, you have a reversion of the Jibaro to the peasant type of organization and to this extent you have regional differences within Puerto Rico, the peasantry being more or less isolated from the central stratification system and political process.

In Dominica there have been a number of interruptions of social development linked with invasions from Haiti and I think that the Dominican experience is atypical in that respect as in others. One consequence of the Haitian pressure on Dominica has been to legitimate a type of despotism of which they have had two or three quite extensive experiences. I do not know whether they will be free to shake that off. That's as much as I could comment on that.

Q: In what terms would you distinguish strata from segments?

A: A segment is ethnically separate. Insofar as strata are interdependent then there must be social mobility. A stratum is not an ethnic category or unit; a segment is. Javanese are endogamous and they mate only Javanese. A segment may contain a number of strata. East Indians, for instance, are stratified among themselves. They form an ethnic block, and a stratum is not an ethnic block unless you've got total immobility. What is very interesting to bear in mind in regard to the West Indian case is the observation in Mont Lewi's letters in 1817, that two mulattos could interbreed. This suggests that until then colored women were interbreeding with white men and colored men were interbreeding with black women. This is characteristic of a pattern of stratification; there tends to be a lot of mating across the boundaries of strata and this is one of the mechanisms of mobility. But the segment, as I use the term, tends to be a bionomically sufficient unit which is socially discrete, often physically segregated, using a different language, different religion, physically different and so on. In this sense the mestizos in Honduras represent a clearly distinct segment from the creoles, indifferent to creole society and politics.

Q: Would you care to say a few words about what you take to be the major economic trends in the region since the Second World War.

A: There has been a reliance on industrialization by invitation. Foreign capital has been invited and development orientations have prevailed in the place of any radical attempt at social reconstruction, that is to say radical redistribution of resources and opportunities. The governments of the islands of the area, whatever their professed ideologies, have backed development. This means backing stability, and this means anchoring the

symbiotic relations with expatriot capital as well as resident creole whites.

This is a rather general statement. It isn't exactly true of Martinique where for historical reasons the creole planters managed to maintain very effective control of the island's basic resources throughout the last century and are quite capable of operating on their own. They are indifferent to capital investments from outside and the development of Martinique. But in general, in other areas, this has been the case; there has been a pattern of dependence on capital and expertise, particularly from the old metropolitan country which, in the case of Surinam for instance, is now leading to political protests against this type of neo-colonialism. It is discouraging to the West Indians that when there appears to be an attempt at radical change, American troops come in and immediately call a halt to it. This is very discouraging and it effectively means that if there is a movement aimed at radical change such as was present in Dominica or in Cuba it is very likely to be suppressed by Americans. This really means that the colored elites and the beneficiaries of the system feel that they have the backing of American Marines and bayonets. Therefore, the policy of development and stability appears to be the only one which will minimize bloodshed. It is also the case that in societies of this structure and level of development there is a very high risk which is attached to radical action. Radical action can de-stabilize the system, and the West Indian example of Haiti is sufficient to show that once you have gotten into that type of spiral you may not be able to get out of it. All of us are very much concerned with maintaining the minimum stability to permit social order and development. But it is depressing to a person from the West Indies to find that whenever there is a serious attempt to make any effort at social change American Marines come in to prevent it.