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**REPORT OF
THE CARIBBEAN REGIONAL
SEMINAR ON
CENTRAL SERVICES TO
LOCAL AUTHORITIES**



**GEORGETOWN, GUYANA
8 - 18 March 1971**

**UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA**

REPORT OF THE
CARIBBEAN REGIONAL SEMINAR
ON CENTRAL SERVICES TO
LOCAL AUTHORITIES*

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*Convened jointly by the United Nations (Economic Commission for Latin America and the United Nations Public Administration Division) and the International Union of Local Authorities, and supported by the Netherlands Government.

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I

INTRODUCTION

Sponsorship

The Caribbean Regional Seminar on Central Services to Local Authorities held in Georgetown, Guyana, from 8-18 March 1971 was sponsored jointly by the United Nations (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Public Administration Division, New York) and the International Union of Local Authorities, and financially supported by the Netherlands Government. The Government of Guyana provided the necessary physical facilities for the Seminar and assisted in the various stages of its preparation and conduct. The German Foundation for Developing Countries and the Universities of the West Indies, Guyana and Amsterdam also lent substantive support to the Seminar.

Objectives

2. The main objectives of the Seminar were:
 - i. to acquaint the participants with contemporary trends in the theory and practice of local government;
 - ii. to improve the appreciation of the senior officers of central government and agencies concerned with local government and rural development, of the roles and functions of local government institutions in the planning and implementation of various local and national development programmes, and of the inter-relationship between local authority and central government responsibility in overall development effort;
 - iii. to exchange information on the methods of improving local government for the purpose of accelerating the development process, both economic and social, the measures for strengthening central services to local authorities and alternative approaches to the provision of such services; and

- iv. to identify particular lines of action appropriate for application to the circumstances prevailing in the countries of the Caribbean region.

Participation

3. Eighteen participants from eight territories in the Caribbean attended the Seminar. The countries represented were Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago. The delegates who were nominated by the respective governments participated in the deliberations of the Seminar in their individual capacities. The list of participants is at Annex 1.

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Documentation

4. Discussions were based mainly on a detailed basic discussion paper and two other working papers. They were:

- i. Central Services to Local Authorities in the Caribbean (Basic Discussion Paper).
- ii. Inter-regional Study on Central Services to Local Authorities; and
- iii. The Work and Development of Local Government Associations.

5. In addition, other background papers and documents, as listed at Annex 2, were distributed to the participants.

Inaugural Session

6. The Seminar was inaugurated on 8 March 1971 by the Hon. L.F.S. Burnham, Prime Minister of Guyana. In the course of his inaugural address, the Prime Minister expressed the view that the development process in the Caribbean could be greatly benefited and accelerated by a strong system of local government which permitted the exercise of initiative at the local level. He also stressed the need for adapting successful practices obtaining elsewhere to the needs and aspirations of the Caribbean region. The Prime Minister's inaugural address is at Annex 3.

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7. Statements were made at the inaugural session on behalf of the Executive Secretary, ECLA, the Public Administration Division, New York, the International Union of Local Authorities, and the Commonwealth Caribbean Regional Secretariat. Texts of these statements may be found at Annexes 4, 5, 6 and 7 respectively. A member of the Jamaica delegation made a statement on behalf of the participants.

Method of Work

8. The seminar method of exchange of experience, discussions of problems and outlining possible solutions and guidelines was employed. After the adoption of the agenda, which may be seen at Annex 8, the participants divided themselves into two working groups, each of which considered certain items of the agenda in depth in relation to the main objectives of the Seminar. Each working group had its own chairman and rapporteur, and there was a general rapporteur for the Seminar as a whole.

9. Each agenda item was introduced in the plenary by a Consultant or a representative of a sponsoring organization. The subject was then discussed in detail by one or both the working groups, whose reports were then considered by the plenary. The final report of the Seminar was adopted by the plenary on 18 March 1971.

Closing Session

10. The closing session was held on the morning of 18 March under the chairmanship of the Honourable Vibert Mingo, Minister for Local Government, Guyana. Mr. Terrence Richmond, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry delivered the closing address. At this session the participants adopted a motion of thanks to the agencies which sponsored the Seminar and to the Government of Guyana.

II

THE EXISTING PATTERN OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN THE
CARIBBEAN: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS ^{1/}

11. The country papers presented by the participants described the evolution and the present position of local government institutions and central-local relationships in the respective territories.

Background

12. The Seminar noted that the history of local government institutions in the Commonwealth Caribbean dated back to the arrival of the first British settlers in Barbados and Jamaica in the seventeenth century. In the growth of local government in the Caribbean, a distinction between the development of local authorities in 'settled colonies' like Jamaica and in 'conquered' colonies like Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana was noticeable. In the former, the establishment of rural units of local self government was more or less automatic, whereas in the latter it was not. It was also to be noted that in some of the 'conquered' colonies, generalist officers were posted in the rural districts - wardens in Trinidad and Tobago and district commissioners in (the then) British Guiana - who were the general agents and 'eyes and ears' of the government. In such a framework, the development of any particular area came to depend unduly on the central government and on the personality of the individual district officer.

^{1/} This chapter is based upon country statements prepared by the delegations, and discussions in the plenary on their presentations.

Local Government Structure

13. In the English-speaking Caribbean territories there was a single tier system of local government. There were city councils for urban centres and district or village councils in the rural areas. ^{2/}

14. In Suriname, there were no local self government units, but the Government was contemplating the establishment of representative district councils in the near future. ^{3/}

15. In some of the territories, there was provision for the composition of functional committees of the local authorities, e.g., finance committee, roads and works committee, buildings committee, and health committee.

16. Except in one or two territories, where there was a property qualification, election to the local councils was based on universal adult suffrage. In most of the West Indies Associated States, ^{4/} there was a system of nomination of a stipulated number of councillors by the central government.

17. The Seminar also noted that in the wake of the implementation of community development programmes, ad hoc associations and community councils had emerged alongside the statutory local

^{2/} In one of the territories, although the local authorities ordinance provided for the establishment of rural councils, none had been established so far; but the government had decided to establish rural councils on a pilot basis very shortly.

^{3/} It should, however, be noted that in some districts in Suriname, there were autonomous corporations with statutory sanction to promote the common interests of communities, e.g. drainage and village corporations. The administration of such corporations was in the charge of an elected council with a president appointed by the ministry in charge, on the recommendation of the council.

^{4/} Antigua, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, St. Lucia and St. Vincent. Of these, Antigua, Grenada and Montserrat were not represented in the Seminar.

authorities. In one of the territories, whilst the existing legal local government body was at the county level, village councils, which were not statutory bodies, had sprung up with the advent of community development. On the other hand, in another territory, whilst the village councils were statutory bodies, the process of execution of self-help programmes had led to the formation of informal district councils, with no more than an advisory role.

Powers and Functions

18. By and large, the functions entrusted to local authorities in the Caribbean were primarily traditional regulatory and basic service functions, like regulation of markets, cattle pounds, cemeteries, public lighting, refuse disposal, provision of local water supply, public assistance and construction and maintenance of minor roads and bridges. They were yet to be involved in developmental functions which concerned the process of economic growth and social change and development. There was, however, a general clause in some of the ordinances governing local authorities "to provide for the good government and improvement of the area under its control". Involvement at present of the local authorities in planning and development was but marginal, though there was an increasing awareness among the governments of the importance of their involvement in the development process.

Staffing

19. In most of the territories in the Caribbean, there was no technical or professional staff engaged by the rural local authorities. In a few of the territories where such staff existed, they related to communications and works and poor relief.

Central Services to Local Authorities

20. Three territories in the Commonwealth Caribbean, viz., Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, had a separate ministry with the specific responsibility for local government. In Guyana, there was also a local government board, a statutory body, exercising general powers of supervision, inspection and control over the district councils; the permanent secretary of the ministry of local government was the chairman of the Board. In the other countries, where the pattern was to have a combination of related main subjects in a single ministry, local government was generally the responsibility of the ministry which had also the charge of community development and social affairs.

21. The functions of the ministry in charge of the subject 'local government' covered mainly policy formulation, legislation, administration and supervision, and liaison with other ministries and agencies which were to provide technical support and guidance to the local units.

22. Generally, the provision of loans and grants was taken care of by the Ministry of Finance. There was no special loan agency in any of the territories to provide credit for the local authorities. The central tenders boards assisted local authorities with regard to contracts and purchases. Ministries of Health and Works provided technical guidance and supervision as regards their respective services.

23. A local government services commission had been constituted in two territories as required by law, and such an authority was about to be established in another.

24. National training institutions for public services, where they existed, gave some assistance to local government training. Academic support of the Universities of Guyana and of the West Indies was available to these institutions for this purpose.

25. In some of the territories, the field officials of various central government ministries had been specifically directed by the central government to attend the meetings of the local government bodies regularly and explain to them the various development schemes planned for their areas.

26. There were national associations of local authorities in four territories, whose objectives included facilitating co-operation and mutual understanding in dealing with matters affecting the councils, promotion of a well-informed interest in local government among the communities, and provision of representation on the committees of the central government or other public undertakings.

27. In recent times, a body of engineers who were members of the Guyana Association of Professional Engineers, had been visiting local authority areas on request, and advising councils without charge on matters relating to construction activities.

Problems

28. In addition to the problems common to local authorities in most of the developing countries, such as inadequacy of financial resources, lack of qualified staff, insufficient technical support, over-centralisation, excessive central control, administrative weaknesses and lack of long-range planning, there were problems especially noteworthy in the Caribbean region. These included:

- i. unduly constricted powers of taxation of the local government units;
- ii. the consequences of neglect by the colonial regime to involve people at the local level and their representative institutions in local development;
- iii. lack of a sense of identity of the communities with the areas in which they lived;

- iv. a general apathy towards participation in local government affairs, mainly owing to the restrictive scope of their operations;
- v. limitations imposed by the smallness of size of many of the island territories;
- vi. lack of encouragement in some cases by national political leadership; and
- vii. a very heavy burden for the provision of basic services imposed on the local authorities of the metropolitan centres due to the increasing migration of rural inhabitants to the city centres.

Prospects

29. Despite the problems, however, prospects for local government institutions becoming effective partners in the development process appeared quite bright in the Caribbean. Of great importance among the favourable factors was the prevalence of a considerably high degree of literacy. Also, increasing contact with other countries in the world and appreciation of the requirements of economic development were tending to minimize parochial and limited group loyalties. Again, widespread acceptance of community development, with its attendant encouragement of local initiative, had prepared the ground for a wholesome growth of local government.

III

THE ROLE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN NATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT IN THE CARIBBEAN

30. The Seminar noted the growing recognition in the Caribbean of the important role local authorities could play in national development. For instance, the recently held Caribbean Regional Workshop on Integrated Rural Development had identified "decentralization of political and administrative structures to enable concrete participation of the rural communities in decision-making processes affecting local and national development as an objective of integrated rural development". ^{5/} The Seminar endorsed the view that local involvement in development effort could not be achieved solely by means of informal ad hoc councils and committees. Whilst the latter were useful in paving the way for successful local government, they were inadequate to perform the functions of local authorities. ^{6/}

31. Conditions in the Caribbean were propitious for a healthy development of local authorities though, owing mainly to historical reasons, they were at present functioning under rather handicapped conditions. Nevertheless, many of the area governments were increasingly aware of the need for closer involvement of representative institutions at the local level in decision-making essential to the processes of development, and this awareness was reflected in official statements of public policy. For instance, The Third Five Year Development Plan of Trinidad and Tobago had expressly stated "the central government will, as a matter of deliberate policy provide greater scope and incentives to the local government bodies". ^{7/} Recently, in the same country, far-reaching proposals for expanding the functions and

^{5/} Report of the Workshop, E/CN.12/846 (1969), p. 6.

^{6/} See Decentralization for National and Local Development, United Nations Sales No.: 62.II.4.2., p. 37.

^{7/} Third Five Year Plan, 1969-73, Government of Trinidad and Tobago, 1969, p. 342.

responsibilities of local authorities and associating them intimately with the process of regional planning and development had been circulated to the local units and other interested organizations to elicit their views. The recent local government reform in Guyana aimed to make local government units "an important concomitant to the democratic way of life".^{8/} The White Paper on Human Resources Development of the Government of St. Lucia had declared that "local authorities - at present executors of traditional municipal and maintenance functions - will be required to participate in the very process of development".^{9/}

32. The Seminar noted that the area governments regarded local authorities as potential instruments to achieve the following development objectives:

- i. provision of an institutional framework for increased popular participation for development;
- ii. assistance to the central governments in the execution of development programmes and provision of services like housing, welfare and health;
- iii. promotion of an integrated development of all sectors of the country according to national priorities and programmes;
- iv. provision of a training ground for the exercise of political responsibility;
- v. increased mobilization of local resources; and
- vi. promotion of national unity and integration.

^{8/} Memorandum by the Ministry of Local Government on Local Government Reform, Sessional Paper No. 1/69 (1969)).

^{9/} Policy Statement on Community and Human Resources Development, Government of St. Lucia (1969)).

33. The Seminar considered the validity of local government in the context of the smallness of size of most of the Caribbean territories and was of the view that the concomitants of good local government like improvement in the quality of local leadership, mobilization of local resources for development, opportunity for education in political responsibility, and encouragement of community spirit were necessary and desirable for all countries, irrespective of size.

34. Whilst recognizing the problems encountered by local authorities in performing a development role, the Seminar was confident that given the necessary encouragement, support, counsel and incentive by the central government, the local authorities in the Caribbean would soon become effective instruments of dynamic development and useful vehicles of planned change.

IV

CENTRAL-LOCAL RELATIONSHIPS

35. The Seminar identified three major elements that were responsible for the existing relationships between the central government and local authorities in the Caribbean region, which required considerable attention:

- i. The form and influence of political parties:
In the process of political development, national politics in the Caribbean region had become centralised in character. Decisions on party leadership by a small central elite and reluctance on the part of dominant parties to accept or work with opposition groups had engendered political apathy at the local level, broken only at times of national elections. This prevented a healthy interest in local government elections and stifled the desire of many citizens to serve on their local councils.
- ii. Financial controls: The failure to promote local initiative and the retention of narrowly construed central control over local budgets had given rise to a dependence on the central government for financial viability, and had not encouraged a feeling of responsibility over the optimum use of local funds and the mobilization of local resources.
- iii. The scope and range of functions of local government:
Restriction of the scope of activities to routine and stereotyped matters had hindered the development of local resources and initiative. Moreover, in most territories, there was little or no involvement of local authorities in national planning, the prerogative of a small central elite, and in decision-making for local development. There was, in consequence, little feeling of involvement in national development by the local communities.

36. The Seminar was strongly of the view that harmonious central-local relationship was a pre-requisite to a development role for local authorities. In order to foster and promote local initiative,

confidence and responsibility, local authorities had to be given a wide measure of freedom in decision-making and in arriving at their priorities within the framework of broad national policies. At the same time, the central government had to ensure that local authorities discharged their functions with efficiency and integrity, and in harmony with national interest and policies. Nevertheless, the central government should not exercise an unduly restrictive measure of control over the local authorities in the course of assisting them to develop. The central government should view its role mainly as one of advice rather than direction, assistance rather than control.

37. In this regard, the Seminar recommended that in the present context of development the responsibility of the local government units should include a wider range of development activities which were best planned, co-ordinated, and executed at the local level, and which would increase the capability of the local population to participate effectively in the overall process of development. Even where local authorities were as yet incapable of discharging a wide range of duties, the legislation should still specify the full range of functions which local authorities should handle; the latter might start with limited responsibilities for development functions, but over time more could be added by the issuance of instruments of authority by the central government, depending largely on the quality of their performance.

38. Consideration was given to the forms of decentralization most suitable for the Caribbean. The following broad categories of the forms of decentralization based on international experience were noted: ^{10/}

^{10/} See Decentralization for National and Local Development, op. cit., pp. 9 - 10.

- i. The comprehensive local government system, in which most government services at the local level are administered through multi-purpose local authorities. A concept of substantial unity of purpose among representative bodies at all levels underlies the system. Local authorities perform some functions pursuant to general statutory authority and others on behalf of central ministries. The distinguishing feature of this system is that local authorities render all, or almost all, direct agricultural, educational, health and social welfare services that reach the individual.
- ii. The partnership system, in which some direct services are rendered by field units of central agencies and others by local authorities. The local authorities perform some functions more or less autonomously, pursuant to general statutory authority, and they perform others on behalf of and under the technical supervision of central ministries.
- iii. The integrated administrative system, in which central government agencies directly administer all technical services, with central government area co-ordinators or district administrators responsible for field co-ordination. Such rural local authorities as exist have little control over government activities and staff in their areas.
- iv. The dual system, in which central ministries administer technical services directly, with local authorities having legal autonomy to perform local services and to do what they can to foster local development, but actually performing few if any technical services either directly or on behalf of the central agencies. Formal organization for field co-ordination is rare under this system.

39. In the Caribbean context, the Seminar agreed that the 'partnership system' was the most suitable. Since this involved field representatives of central government as well as local authorities operating at the local level, arrangements for co-ordination were needed, especially at the urban regional level.

40. It was felt too, that there should be willingness on the part of the central government to foster increased popular participation in the development process, and promote an institutional structure to sustain the participation. A clear enunciation of such a policy was necessary in view of the hesitancy, and sometimes even opposition, on the part of those in positions of authority at the centre to delegate functions to local government units. It was also important to ensure that responsibility for functions or aspects of functions were clearly outlined and the local government authorities were made fully aware of their part in the development process.

41. Most development functions involved shared responsibilities among authorities at central and local levels. Due to technological and other changes in circumstances, including the increasing administrative capability of local authorities, the division of responsibilities between central government and local authorities should be viewed as dynamic, and kept under constant review.

42. Under Caribbean conditions the system obtaining in some territories of nomination of some of the members of the councils by the central government, was an important issue in the sphere of central-local relationship. The Seminar was of the view that this system was a relic of the colonial past which also lent itself to abuse. Steps should be taken, however gradually, to promote fully representative local councils. There was, nevertheless, the problem in some territories of an insufficient interest among the ablest persons in the locality to contest for elections to local authorities, mainly because the present functions of these authorities were very limited and thus not challenging enough.

It was therefore suggested that those persons whose skills were needed should be co-opted on to committees of the local authorities by their elected members, without the right to vote. In this way, the Seminar felt, adequate expertise would be available to the local authorities and yet only persons who were popularly elected could serve as voting members.

43. The question of local authority areas and structure had an important bearing on central-local relationship. In this regard, the Seminar made the following recommendations:

- i. A single tier system was preferable in the Caribbean region, under the present circumstances.
- ii. The basic guideline should be that local authority areas must be viable enough to perform developmental functions. Also, where 'community boundaries' did not coincide with the geographical boundaries of local authorities, which were fixed long ago, re-delimitation of areas might be considered.
- iii. In the process of demarcating new local government areas or in redefining the existing boundaries, attention should be given to the area requirements of functions to be performed and to those of regional planning.

44. The Seminar recognized the need for finding solutions to conflicts that might arise when the central government and the local bodies were 'controlled' by majority groups of different political parties. The following courses of action were suggested:

- i. There should be built-in safeguards in the legislation. For example, a system could be devised whereby each local authority was given funds on the basis of objective criteria, such as geographical size, population and needs. A system of matching grants was also relevant in this context. If each local authority was legally entitled to certain funds, discriminatory action could not then be taken by a central government which was of a different political persuasion.

- ii. The central government should have the necessary reserve powers to suspend, after due inquiry, a local authority which was guilty of abusing its powers or mis-spending funds. The conditions which would warrant suspension should, however, be clearly defined in the law.

45. The necessary steps to be taken by the central government in the devolution of more responsibility for development functions to local authorities were considered. The Seminar was of the view that unless purposive steps were taken by the central government to encourage, aid and guide the local authorities, the latter would not be able to perform their new role in development effectively. The Seminar identified the following types of central services:

- i. improvement of personnel administration at the local authority level;
- ii. finance and financial administration;
- iii. training of councillors and staff;
- iv. provision of adequate incentives and appropriate safeguards; and
- v. supervision and guidance.

V.

CENTRAL SERVICES TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES

A. PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

46. The Seminar recognized that the availability of competent and committed staff, improvement in the quality of public services, good rapport between the staff and the members of the councils, and an effective system of technical support and supervision from the centre were basic to the successful performance by the local government of its new challenging task in the field of development.

47. In this connection, the Seminar considered the criteria for a sound personnel system ^{11/} for local government in the Caribbean context and suggested the following requisites:

- i. posts in local government should be as attractive as those in the central government;
- ii. there should be a wide range of choice to obtain qualified persons;
- iii. minimum standards of entry qualification for posts in local government should be prescribed;
- iv. selection of personnel for local government jobs should be made by an independent authority to ensure that candidates were chosen on the basis of objective criteria; and this authority should also be responsible for disciplinary matters;
- v. there should be a career service for local authority officials which would provide considerable prospects for promotion based on merit and seniority, and provision should be made for in-service training to develop functional capabilities;
- vi. mobility of senior officers between different authorities should be facilitated; and

^{11/} See Local Government Personnel Systems, United Nations, Sales No. : 67. II. H.1.

- vii. there should be a definite understanding of the working relationships between local authorities and their employees, the basis for which should be clearly specified in regulations.

48. The Seminar noted that achievement of these objectives would depend to a large extent on the choice of an appropriate type of personnel system suited to the conditions obtaining in the Caribbean territories. Three different types of personnel systems were considered: ^{12/}

- i. Separate Personnel System, in which each local authority appoints and dismisses its own personnel who are not transferable to another local authority by a central body;
- ii. Unified Local Government Service, in which all or some categories of personnel of local authorities throughout the country constitute a career service and personnel are subject to transfer between different local authorities; and
- iii. Integrated Service for national and local government personnel, in which transfers are possible, not only between local authorities, but also between levels of government.

49. The Seminar regarded the 'unified service' as the most suitable under the Caribbean conditions. This system would involve the creation of a career service for local authorities, and also provide for transfer of staff between different local authorities. In fact, such a system had already been adopted by some Caribbean countries. However, for certain other territories, a judicious combination of the elements of both the 'unified' and the 'integrated' systems might seem preferable under the present circumstances. The Seminar felt that a

^{12/} See Local Government Personnel Systems, op. cit.

complete adoption of the 'integrated system' would, at present, impose a serious financial burden on the local authorities and could be supported only by considerable subsidy from the centre.

50. It would also seem necessary and desirable for some time to provide for the secondment of certain categories of central government officers particularly professional and technical staff, to local authorities. It should, however, be ensured that the central government officers thus seconded must be made to realise that they should be responsive to the local authorities they served. Also, whilst such 'loaned' officers would be responsible to the councils on matters of policy and administration, they would require technical guidance, support, and advice on national planning policies from their departmental superiors in the central government hierarchy.

51. The Seminar attached considerable importance to the evolution and sustenance of a harmonious staff-council relationship. A clear specification of working relationships between local authorities and the staff in the relevant regulations would, no doubt, contribute to the creation of a healthy relationship between the two. Nevertheless, some additional measures were also called for. They might include:

- i. systematic training for the chairmen and members of local authorities as well as the staff;
- ii. organization of combined orientation courses for both the councillors and the staff;
- iii. formation of associations of local authorities and of local government staff;
- iv. regular, periodic meetings between the staff and the councillors to develop a better understanding between both; and
- v. preparation of manuals which could serve as guidelines and sources of reference for the officials and the councillors.

52. The Seminar also suggested arrangements for exchange visits for both councillors and staff between different Caribbean territories. Study tours to other areas would also be useful in that they would promote a widening of perspective and improvement of the quality of administration. The system of 'twinning' between councils within the Caribbean, which would facilitate close contact, exchange of experience and reciprocal visits, might also be considered.

53. The Seminar felt that members and secretaries of the local government service commissions should be oriented in modern techniques of personnel administration and in the concepts and practice of local government.

54. A close examination of the organizational structure of local government units and the formulation of suitable models was also recommended.

B. FINANCE AND CREDIT

FINANCE

55. The Seminar noted that the success of local authorities as agents of development depended to a large extent on an improvement in their financial capabilities, both in resource-mobilization and in resource-management. To that end, means should be devised to ensure availability of adequate sources of finance to the local authorities, to increase and refine their capacity to tap these resources fully, and to ensure their management with effectiveness and integrity.

56. At present, the local government institutions in the Caribbean were poor, and the large majority of them had little scope - both statutorily and administratively - to improve their financial position on their own. The result was an undue dependence on the central governments for grants even for performing a limited range of functions.

Financial Policies

57. From the standpoint of the local authorities, the Seminar regarded the ideal local tax system as one which would be selected by the local authorities themselves, who would also fix its basis and amount. In fact, because local taxation was an integral part of the taxation system of a country, local authorities could have only limited freedom in choosing their taxes or in deciding their form. New taxes invariably needed central government approval in some form at some stage, and where the local authorities did formally possess some right of initiative, this might be of little value because of the extent of taxation powers already pre-empted by higher authorities.

58. The Seminar was of the view that local authorities in the Caribbean should be enabled to select, from a comprehensive list of taxes defined and regulated by the central government, those which could be applied at the local level. Such a system would presuppose greater decentralization and efficiency than obtained at the moment. However, this system should be regulated by law, and it should be ensured that the particular local authorities carried out adequately the functions for which the revenue from the taxes was intended, as in the case of car-marked taxes.

59. Some local authorities would then use their resources in different ways which could be advantageous, although as a consequence, there might be unequal provision of services and the possibility of the same services being taxed differently by different authorities. The latter might in any case arise due to differences in the levels of development of the various local authority areas and differences in their natural endowments and potential.

60. It was felt that comparative studies of the experience of operating different kinds of taxes in a variety of circumstances would be useful in considering new sources for local finance.

61. Central governments in the Caribbean should seek to establish arrangements for sharing the proceeds of central government taxes with the local government bodies, as practised in a number of both developed and developing countries. The basis for tax-sharing should, however, have to be specified by law. The allocation to each local authority unit should be determined by a formula based on objective criteria. ^{13/} The Seminar considered that the concept of tax-sharing between different levels of government in the Caribbean was very appropriate in the context of a 'partnership' system of decentralization. If such a system were introduced the quality of available statistical services would require considerable improvement. A comparative study of various tax-sharing schemes would also be very useful.

Financial Administration and Management

62. The present inefficiency in tax-collection was a major problem in all the Caribbean territories. The Seminar considered that refinement of legal procedures and appropriate training would be the most effective remedies. "Tax-morality" should also be a matter of national pride, to be promoted by all levels of government and the political parties.

63. Existing laws should be made specific in the time limits permissible for the payment of taxes, and the methods

^{13/} Suitable criteria might include those enumerated in paragraph 44(i).

of enforcement of tax law should at the same time be made as stringent as possible. Consideration should also be given to the advisability of establishing a special court to deal with cases of tax-evasion so as to accelerate the resolution of tax cases.

64. Central governments should give increasing technical assistance to local authorities in the implementation of tax laws. A study of the possibilities of developing uniformity in the principles of tax legislation, including local taxes, in the Caribbean area could also be considered.

65. The Seminar identified the following as the main inadequacies of the present system of financial management:

- i. inadequate guidelines for management, budgeting and administration;
- ii. lack of trained personnel and training facilities;
- iii. the absence of a feeling of partnership between central government officials and local officials, often because of little understanding of each other's problems and responsibilities; and
- iv. rigid budgeting controls, which only emphasized the 'narrow' accounting view, without due regard to the effects - objectives, results and outputs - of local budget activities.

66. In a programme for improving local financial administration in the Caribbean, the following measures should be accorded priority:

- i. standardization of the accounting procedures for local authorities with emphasis on the measurement of performances and results;
- ii. speedy consideration by the central government of the budget and estimates of local units; and
- iii. regular inspection of local accounts and records by central government officials accompanied by on-the-job training for local officials.

CREDIT

67. The increasing role of local authorities in development in the face of serious financial problems emphasised the need for a programme to provide loans for local authorities. Loans were often needed if local authorities were to finance the local infrastructure for economic and social development.

68. It was difficult to determine the credit needs of local authorities since generally, they were engaged neither in long-term local planning nor in national development activities and had not developed the basic information necessary to define such needs precisely and reliably. Moreover, up to the present time, most local authorities in the Caribbean region seemed to have relatively small needs for capital financing. National governments had satisfied much of these needs through grants and loans. On occasion a national government might guarantee loans incurred by larger local authorities with its approval. The Seminar, however, questioned whether the expanded role of local authorities in development might not outpace the ability of central governments to continue meeting local development credit needs through present arrangements which were mainly through central budget subventions. It observed that these arrangements did not provide the requisite amount of loans, even for self-liquidating projects, as needed, nor the supporting services required for sound project development and management. Furthermore, the current practice of linking loans and loans management with annual budgetary control was considered inadequate.

69. With a view to achieving a national loans programme for the provision of credit for local authorities, the creation of a local government loans agency or other appropriate unit devoted to local government loans in ministries

concerned with local government, in national development banks or in any other similar agency was recommended. Such a unit could make available to local authorities guidelines for developing individual projects and formulating infrastructure programmes utilizing the capital made available by national governments. It could likewise act on behalf of all local authorities in seeking loans on favourable terms that met with actual credit needs. Lastly, it could regulate local authority inputs in infrastructures for development, by linking its loans programme to the priorities and goals of the national government in national development.

70. The Seminar also stressed the advisability of exploiting all existing sources of credit at national and regional (Caribbean) levels before resorting to the creation of new credit institutions.

71. Where institutional facilities for deposit of individual savings did not exist, as in some rural communities in the Caribbean, they should be established. Moreover, savings deposits and other capital resources of the Caribbean territories should be utilized for investment for national and local development.

72. It was important, however, that these institutions provided terms of local credit that were as favourable as possible to the local authorities. To this end, national governments should seek to obtain loans from international sources at low interest rates, and then arrange to make such loans available to local authorities at similarly favourable terms.

73. Whilst the larger territories in the Caribbean might benefit from specialized credit institutions for local authorities at the national level, special attention should be given to the distinctive financial problems of local authorities in the smaller territories. A study of these problems should be undertaken with a view to working out alternative methods for solving them.

C. LOCAL GOVERNMENT TRAINING

74. It was the view of the Seminar that there was a widespread recognition of the need for the training of local government staff in the Caribbean and that a well-designed programme of training for officials connected with local authorities was among the basic central services the local authorities would need. A pre-requisite to a realistic and effective training programme designed to meet the present and future needs of local authorities would be a manpower survey. This would assess the existing staff resources, identify inadequacies and needs, and help establish priorities for the improvement and expansion of training.

75. The Seminar considered that training, which in the present context would include 'orientation', might be taken to denote an aggregate of three components:

- i. imparting knowledge and skills;
- ii. bringing about a clear understanding of aims and objects; and
- iii. the shaping of attitudes.

It was felt that local government training should be geared to a more effective participation by local authorities in national development, and should reflect greater recognition of the contributions of science and technology to the solution of problems. The training should not only aim at making the staff perform the normal administrative functions of local government efficiently, but should be viewed in a wider context of equipping them to become effective agents of change and development.

76. The Seminar was of the opinion that training in local government should have both a theoretical content comprehending local government concepts and public administration principles, and a practical aspect designed to equip the trainees for work in the field. The content, methods, and techniques of training should be kept under close and constant review so that training would remain responsive to emerging trends and needs in the field.

77. It was also felt that the training programme should be accompanied by a system of evaluation, including arrangements for feed-back from ex-trainees. It was the expressed view of the Seminar, however,

that no specific institution should be set up for local government training alone; but the existing resources in each territory and within the Caribbean region should be utilized. After courses in basic skills procedures and techniques, the particular orientation on local government would come from within each separate territory depending on its system of local government.

78. Within each territory there should be a national training institution or agency which could identify and draw upon all the expertise available in the different sectors and each agency of government for training purposes. Under the aegis of such an institution, or closely associated with it as a separate unit, a local government training programme should be established. It was felt that all sectors, private and public, should co-operate and participate in the training programme.

79. On the question of the relative priorities of training such personnel as top level administrative staff of local authorities, middle level management staff, financial staff, professional and technical staff and other types, the Seminar agreed that all categories of training were important, but that the emphasis on any particular category of training would depend on the situation and the requirements of the territory concerned.

80. Since the central government and local authorities were partners in the common endeavour of national development, it was considered important that senior central government officials should be oriented in the concept and expanding role of local authorities.

81. The Seminar agreed that the training of elected members of local authorities was of crucial importance if local government was to function successfully. Councillors performed a vital role in local government, and orientation in their duties was necessary to the effectiveness of local authorities and to promote a harmonious staff-council relationship.

82. The Seminar also considered any special preparations that might be necessary to provide for the local government trainers in order to equip them for their task. On this question, it was felt that in organizing courses for local government trainers, co-ordination between the training agency and academic institutions was of great importance. In this regard, the facilities of extra-mural departments, where they existed, should be fully utilized.

83. The Seminar suggested that:

- i. there should be consultation with the relevant university faculty in planning the academic content of the training courses and a close co-operation with the government on the type of curriculum best suited to provide the trainee with the basic knowledge and experience required;
- ii. the selected trainers should have practical experience in the field wherever possible; and
- iii. local government trainers should be instructed in the skills and techniques of teaching in order to increase their ability to communicate knowledge and ideas.

84. The Seminar considered that mobile training units would prove valuable and economic in operation to provide short courses on techniques or in the arrangement of orientation courses for councillors and elected chairmen. The feasibility of correspondence training might also be explored within the Caribbean region, as this method of instruction appeared to have some potential advantages.

85. Greater opportunities should be made available for providing training outside the Caribbean region in those fields in which local facilities either did not exist or were inadequate. Where overseas courses were necessary, however, it was important that the candidates were chosen with greater care and that the curriculum offered was the best available and fully germane to their needs.

86. Finally the Seminar considered that, in terms of practical training, the possibility of attachments for senior local government staff within the Caribbean region itself should be

explored.^{14/} This would provide an opportunity for officials at the policy-making levels to broaden their horizons and study common problems in other local government systems.

D. REGIONAL PLANNING^{15/}

87. The Seminar noted the gradual recognition in the Caribbean that planning for integrated development should take into account spatial considerations besides sectoral ones, for regional disparities had their effect on the dynamics of social and economic change. An area or zonal approach, selecting a unit of planning and execution, smaller than the national scale, yet large enough to provide an adequate spatial perspective but small enough to ensure organized and fruitful popular participation was now gaining ground, especially in the larger Caribbean territories.

88. These trends, the Seminar noted, had an important bearing on the development of local government and the areas of central services to local authorities, as the partnership of both the central government and the local government in the planning process was of paramount importance.

89. Owing to inhibiting factors like an inadequate complement of competent technical personnel, meagre financial resources, lack of tradition for planning in the local authorities, absence of a proper machinery for co-ordination between adjacent local authorities in matters of planning that affected more than one local authority area, and the 'communication gap' between the central planning authorities and the local government units, local authorities in the different Caribbean territories were not as yet well equipped to perform their role in planning.

^{14/} In this connection, the provisions of the recently concluded agreement among the Caribbean Governments on "Public Service in Commonwealth Caribbean Countries", would provide scope for this action. (See Para 120 infra.)

^{15/} In this section the term 'regional' denotes 'sub-national' as against 'multi-national' region.

90. The Seminar suggested the following measures for remedying the situation, and for enabling the local government units to discharge their recognized role in regional planning and development effectively and efficiently:

- i. Appropriate regional councils might be constituted, composed of representatives of local authorities and central government agencies in the area and of various interest groups and associations.
- ii. There should also be a consultative committee of representatives of these councils to the central planning organization.
- iii. These regional machineries should be given adequate professional and technical support by the central ministries concerned.
- iv. In 'breaking up' regional or national plans into sub-regional and village level plans, the concerned local authorities should be fully involved. The technical officers of the central ministries should assist the authorities in their deliberations in this regard.
- v. Local authorities should be closely associated in the process of surveys that might be conducted before the formulation of regional plans. This would give the local government units an insight into the problems and prospects of the areas and would thus enable them to contribute meaningfully to the formulation of the plans.

E. INCENTIVES AND SAFEGUARDS

91. The Seminar stressed the importance of the formulation and implementation of an appropriate scheme of incentives and safeguards for the local authorities in the context of their envisaged increasing role in overall development.

INCENTIVES

92. The Seminar felt that the community development agency could provide a valuable incentive to the promotion of strong and sound local government. In the Caribbean context, community development had aided local authorities in many ways and could continue to support it in the following spheres:

- i. community development, by promoting group action and encouraging popular participation of local activities, contributed to the development of capabilities of 'integration', 'mobilization' and 'participation' in the local communities, thus setting the stage for a wholesome growth of local government;
- ii. with its educational and organizational process, community development enabled the people to develop the requisite competence called for by the processes of economic and social development;
- iii. the group-action approach introduced by community development programmes generated a realization among the people that it was possible to work co-operatively for common benefit: Creation of an atmosphere conducive to the proper functioning of local government institutions was thus facilitated;
- iv. execution of community development projects in consultation with individuals and groups, acted as a catalyst for increased and more intensive social participation, which was a pre-requisite to the growth of local government; and
- v. experience in participating in the deliberations of community councils, which were generally formed in the wake of the implementation of community development programmes, assisted in the removal of impediments to the growth of local government, such as lack of perspective among the local population and inexperience of operating within a formal impersonal institutional framework.

93. Apart from assistance by the community development agency, and fiscal and such monetary incentives as grants and measures for tax-sharing, the Seminar recommended the following measures to provide encouragement to local authorities:

- i. provision of developmental incentives like extra investment by the central government in development projects in the areas of those local authorities which had shown good progress;
- ii. a scheme of special awards for successful local councils;
- iii. presentation of trophies and public recognition of achievement of local authorities on national days;
- iv. national awards to chairmen and councillors who had shown outstanding qualities of leadership in the efficient running of the local authorities; and
- v. stimulation of public interest in local government through appropriate measures of dissemination of information regarding the activities of local authorities including exhibitions, publications and visits.

94. The Seminar also considered that a ready and willing devolution of functions on the local authorities by the central government would by itself prove to be a powerful incentive.

SAFEGUARDS

95. The Seminar noted that the central government should provide adequate safeguards which would help build up public confidence in the new representative institutions and ensure proper and objective functioning of the local authorities. Such safeguards would fall into three categories, legislative, administrative and financial.

96. With regard to legislative safeguards, the local government statute might contain provisions for dissolution of a local authority on grounds like gross mismanagement and inefficiency and persistent violation of the principles of good administration, cancellation of any resolution which ran counter to national policy and objectives, and suspension of resolutions pending investigations by the central government on any serious complaint that might have been made.

97. Administrative safeguards could include the following:

- i. periodic issue of guidelines and instructions to local authorities on sound and impartial administration of their affairs;
- ii. authorization of designated officers of the central ministry of local government and field officials of technical ministries to attend meetings of local authorities and offer advice, without the right to vote;
- iii. constitution of a Local Government Service Commission with powers over methods of recruitment, conditions of employment, promotions, transfers, disciplinary action, classification of posts and salaries and allied service matters; and
- iv. provisions to ensure that councillors did not interfere with the day-to-day administrative functioning of the local government staff.

98. A scheme of financial safeguards might cover the following:

- i. establishment of a sound system of financial control including specification of responsibility for receipt and disbursement of funds, authorization of payments, certification of receipt of goods, etc.;
- ii. supervision of personnel who handle funds by various means including spot-checks, taking care, however, to ensure that this does not become so oppressive as to inhibit action;
- iii. arrangements for enquiry into complaints of irregularities;

- iv. provision of a system of personal surcharge on office bearers in local government institutions;
- v. arrangements for quick and safe deposit of money collected by tax collectors;
- vi. requirement of competitive bidding on local government contracts and purchases except those involving small amounts;
- vii. enforcement of regulations prohibiting councillors in the consideration of bids and award of contracts in which they had a private financial interest;
- viii. publication of the financial statements of local authorities - with a stipulated time-limit for such publication - which should be open for inspection by the public; and
- ix. publication of the auditor's report and the specification of a central government agency to follow up any irregularities reported, if the local authority failed to do so.

VI.

CENTRAL AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS FOR THE
IMPROVEMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN THE
CARIBBEAN

99. The Seminar, whilst considering the central agencies and institutions for providing the necessary assistance and services to the local authorities in the Caribbean, reiterated the need for a clear specification of the development role for local government and widespread acceptance of it. This was necessary to facilitate a clear definition of the central services required by local authorities and the identification of the central agencies to provide them.

100. Considering the wide range and varied nature of the different types of central services required, the Seminar felt that it would be difficult for a single central agency or institution to provide the whole gamut of such services. A cluster of central agencies and institutions - both governmental and non-governmental - would seem necessary. Nevertheless, the basic responsibility for assisting the local authorities and in securing for them the various types of services would rest upon the central ministry in charge of local government.

101. In this connection, the Seminar recognized that where there was no separate ministry for local government, the functions pertaining to assistance and guidance to local authorities might be assigned to a department in the Premier's office or in a ministry also responsible for other allied functions, such as community development. The Seminar was, however, opposed to the practice of placing central government responsibility for local government in a ministry charged with functions unrelated to local government.

The Ministry of Local Government

102. In considering the role of the central ministry concerned with the development and administration of local authorities, the Seminar considered the following tasks as the most important to be undertaken by that agency:

a. Policy formulation

- i. Acting as principal adviser to the central government on all matters affecting local authorities and in respect of policies concerning their organization and functions;
- ii. conducting broad investigations and enquiries through committees and commissions into the affairs and working of local authorities and otherwise assisting in the framing of general policies;
- iii. taking all measures to develop local government in accordance with the policy of the government, including the investigation, preparation and promotion of schemes for extension of local government throughout the country; and
- iv. to assist and promote through the appropriate authority (usually the planning ministry) capital development programmes at local level to enable local authorities to play an effective role in national, economic and social development.

b. Legislation, Administration and Supervision

- i. Defining the organization, powers, duties and other basic features of local authorities and preparing necessary legislation for the purpose;
- ii. prescribing standards for the guidance of local authorities in matters of administration, development and training;
- iii. framing rules and model by-laws and proposing legislation on local government matters;
- iv. providing legal advice and ensuring the adequacy of judicial and other machinery to enforce local ordinances and to prevent the abuse of their powers by local authorities and officials;
- v. inspecting and supervising the working of local authorities;
- vi. arbitrating in disputes between local authorities, and between local authorities and other parties;

- vii. assisting in the organization of associations of local authorities and promoting services to authorities by such organizations; and
- viii. introducing measures to improve the standards of administration of local authorities, informing local authorities of government policy and providing all possible support for the improvement of standards.

c. Training and Personnel Management

- i. Fostering the development of a career service for the staff of local authorities;
- ii. framing rules for the regulation of conditions of service in local authorities;
- iii. encouraging local authorities to develop on-the-job and other forms of in-service training particularly through the training of instructors;
- iv. co-ordinating and advising on the training programmes for local government personnel at training and educational establishments; and
- v. providing training for key personnel employed by local authorities through refresher courses and seminars; training for the more experienced officers in foreign countries; organizing staff development programmes and arranging orientation training for elected members of local authorities.

d. Fiscal Policy and Financial Assistance

- i. Advising the central government on fiscal policies affecting local authorities;
- ii. suggesting methods of improving the sources of local revenue, assisting and advising in tax administration including the formulation of rules and regulations in regard to the assessment and collection of taxes;
- iii. fostering the establishment and maintenance of standards in budgeting, accounting, tax collection and other aspects of financial administration through rules, financial supervision and audit;
- iv. ensuring adequate finance for the maintenance and development of services and for infrastructure costs for local authorities through the media

of grants, subsidies or loans; and

- v. guiding and encouraging development programmes in local authorities and advising on investments for development.

e. Programme Planning and Coordination

- i. co-ordinating plans for local works and other development activities of local authorities with state and national plans;
- ii. co-ordinating development plans of local authorities with those of neighbouring authorities and other agencies at the local level; and
- iii. evaluating the effectiveness of programmes and advising local authorities on methods of improving them.

f. Coordination

- i. acting as a clearing house of information for local authorities on the programmes and plans of central ministries that concern them;
- ii. following up the requests of local authorities to technical ministries and assisting in resolving difficulties that may arise between them;
- iii. assisting in town and country planning, including village planning and surveys, if these are not taken up by other ministries and departments; and
- iv. liaising with the ministry of finance over financial procedures, budget review and financial assistance to local authorities.

g. Technical Supporting Services and Research

- i. assisting in the procurement of materials and equipment;
- ii. assisting as necessary in the design and execution of major legal projects e.g. water supply, sewerage, electrical installations etc.;
- iii. promoting, initiating or guiding research into aspects of local administration,

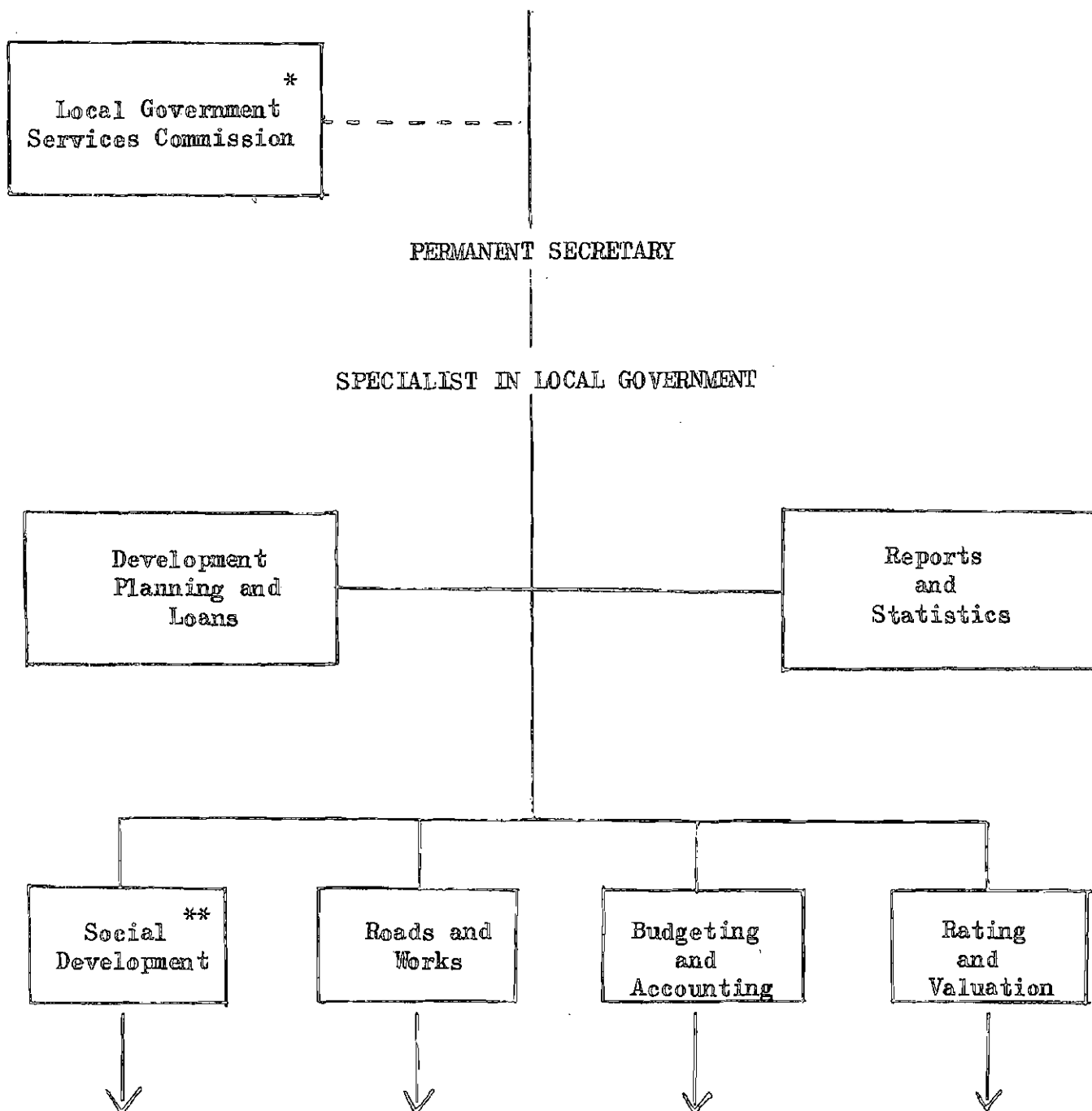
organization and management problems;

- iv. provision of information and statistics, including publications on matters relating to local government; and
- v. organizing or guiding research seminars into current problems affecting local government and evaluating the effectiveness and acceptability of existing services.

103. Of these functions those under Fiscal policy and Financial Assistance and Programme Planning and Co-ordination were considered most essential. This role might best be discharged through the medium of a planning cell within the Ministry.

104. The organization of the Central Ministry itself to carry out its role effectively might be undertaken in a variety of ways. The Seminar felt however, that bearing in mind the important development role of this central agency in promoting local government, a model might be valuable to indicate the minimum functions of the Ministry of Local Government. The actual staff requirements would depend upon the relative importance attached to each department in the country concerned. An illustrated chart of a suggested model would be as follows: -

MINISTER OR PARLIAMENTARY
SECRETARY



FIELD OFFICERS AT LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

* Where a separate Local Government Services Commission did not exist, the personnel functions and services to local authorities would be the responsibility of the Ministry of Local Government.

** This might include the promotion of community development, where that task was among the charges of this Ministry.

105. The Seminar stressed that the central ministry responsible for local government, should be sensitive and responsive to the specific needs of individual local authorities. These would require keeping under periodic review, the areas, structure and powers of local authorities to enable them to emerge as effective partners in development.

106. Relationships between field representatives of central agencies were of particular importance. Arrangements for organization of central and local authorities at the regional (sub-national) level through regional development councils or other means were proposed.

107. Central agencies and institutions in addition to the ministry of local government that might be needed for the improvement of local government could include the following:

- i. a local government services commission to administer a unified personnel system for local authorities;
- ii. a local government training unit in the national training institution or in a university;
- iii. an appropriate unit within the ministry of local government, ministry of finance or development bank to provide loans and related technical services to local authorities;
- iv. a unit under the Auditor General to conduct periodic and special audits, including management audits, of local authorities;
- v. arrangements in the central government's purchasing agency to provide, upon request, purchase and supply services to local authorities in respect of major items;
- vi. arrangements in the central government's organization and methods unit to provide management improvement services to local authorities;

- vii. arrangements in the central planning agency and the ministry concerned with public works and physical planning to involve local authorities in national planning and to assist local authorities in developing their own planning capability;
- viii. specified staff in the Attorney-General's Office to provide legal services to local authorities; and
- ix. an association of local authorities and professional and staff associations.

Local Government Associations

108. The Seminar agreed that national local government associations could make a significant and increasing contribution towards the improvement and development of local government and that the governments within the Caribbean region should encourage the establishment and growth of such institutions. The Seminar noted that the role of local government associations was two-fold:

- i. the representation and promotion of municipal interests vis-a-vis higher authorities (usually the central government); and
- ii. the provision of services, including information and advice, directly to the member authorities.

109. Such associations would serve an important purpose in bringing pressure to bear on the central government concerning local government affairs and in acting as a resource agency on the needs and wishes of local authorities. It might be advantageous in this respect to include representation of associations on national committees and commissions concerning local government and, where a bicameral legislative system existed, to consider representation of the association in the national Senate.

110. Both national associations and an international organization within the Caribbean region could provide a positive incentive to development. The 'service tasks' of national local government associations might include:

- i. legal and technical assistance to local authorities;
- ii. research projects on behalf of member authorities;
- iii. an investigation into techniques to improve rate collection;
- iv. orientation courses for the benefit of councillors and chairmen;
- v. tours between authorities to allow staff and councillors to meet their counterparts in other areas; and
- vi. recreational and other welfare activities on an inter-authority basis.

111. It was noted that one country was in the process of organizing a 'loans pool' through its local government association and the Seminar considered research might be initiated to determine the feasibility of such an operation in other areas.

112. It would be difficult to enumerate the functions of a Caribbean regional association of local authorities, but it was felt that the promotion of inter-country recreational and sporting activities might provide one of the first tasks for such an association.

113. Associations for local government staff existed in two territories and these had been active and successful in promoting the interests of local authority staff. The establishment of such associations could do much to ensure that local government staff obtained salaries and conditions of service commensurate with those of the central civil service.

114. The Seminar also noted that voluntary efforts of professional associations, like those of the Professional Association of Engineers in Guyana who rendered advisory services without cost to the local authorities, could, if properly mobilized and co-ordinated, significantly augment the resources available to local government.

VII

TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION FOR THE IMPROVEMENT
OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN THE CARIBBEAN

115. Representatives of organizations that sponsored the Seminar and consultants made statements on -

- i. arrangements for mutual assistance among countries in the Caribbean region;
- ii. the programme of the University of the West Indies;
- iii. the United Nations technical co-operation programme in the field of public administration, including local government;
- iv. the activities of the International Union of Local Authorities designed for developing countries; and
- v. the programme of the Public Administration Promotion Centre of the German Foundation for Developing Countries.

116. The Seminar concluded and recommended as follows:

Financial and Technical Assistance

117. The Caribbean Development Bank should accommodate requests for loans relating to local authority projects in the Caribbean, especially those in the smaller territories. Assistance should also be provided to such countries in developing sound projects and especially inter-related projects for local development in a rural or urban region that might provide the basis for a single loan request.

118. Governments should include in their national development plans measures to increase the administrative capability of local authorities and request such external technical assistance as might be necessary for the purpose. For example, fellowships for development of staff of central agencies and institutions for the improvement of local government and the advice of specialists in fields in which new institutional development was needed (e.g. in the establishment of a unified personnel system) could be especially helpful.

119. Arrangements for multi-national experts (e.g. specialists in municipal planning and administration whose services would be available to more than one country) should be made easier than at present. Moreover, the inter-disciplinary planning advisory team which was being organized by the United Nations for the Caribbean area should include a specialist on public administration with ability to advise on local government matters. In this regard it was observed that with the present very limited UNDP funds allocated to countries in the region, little, if any, assistance was available for improvement of local government.

120. The Seminar expressed the hope that the agreement among Caribbean governments on Public Service in Commonwealth Caribbean Countries would be implemented so as to facilitate the availability of top personnel in fields such as local government for advisory services in other countries in the region.

Education and Training

121. The capacity of universities in the region to provide education and training in public administration and local government should be increased. Their extension programmes should be strengthened. United Nations, bilateral programmes and foundations were urged to respond generously to requests of the universities to strengthen their research as well as education and in-service training capabilities. At the same time, the universities should take the lead in formulating a concrete programme in local government training that would supplement national efforts. Specific mention was made of the need for in-service training in specialized fields such as tax collection, unified local government personnel systems and municipal management, and of convening short seminars for local government officers with comparable duties related to local government. The proposal for a regional training and staff development centre for the public services, including local government, merited support.

122. There was also need for a local government information centre, including a journal or newsletter and exchange of information on technical matters of special interest to local authorities, and production and distribution of films and other materials of value for training purposes. Whether or not a single regional centre could meet the needs of both national and local training and information exchange deserved consideration. Another possibility would be to include local government research and training among the activities of the regional centre for training, study and research in integrated rural development, which the 1969 Caribbean Regional Training Workshop on Integrated Rural Development recommended to be established with UNDP Special Fund financing. ^{16/}

Research

123. Training to be effective, must be founded on sound systems of administration. Training prior to necessary reforms in local government and administration would be futile. Accordingly, there was need for research as a basis for programmes of local government reforms.

124. The Seminar noted that the United Nations was carrying out a world-wide study of local government reform programmes, the report of which would be of interest to governments in the region. With respect to other United Nations studies related to local government, the Seminar suggested that priority be given to those relating to grants-in-aid and shared revenue, administrative aspects of comprehensive urban planning, guidelines for the preparation of basic legislation on the local government systems, and administration for regional development which should comprehend also administrative aspects of integrated rural development.

125. It would be useful to initiate within the Caribbean region pilot or demonstration projects for the improvement of local government, as in the case of integrated rural development.

^{16/} See Report of the Workshop, op. cit., p. 12.

General

126. It was also recommended that as a follow-up of this Seminar, a Caribbean regional conference of ministers in charge of local government and their principal advisers should be convened.

VIII

SUMMARY OF MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

CENTRAL-LOCAL RELATIONSHIPS

1. Harmonious central-local relationship was a pre-requisite to a development role for local authorities. The central government should view its role mainly as one of advice rather than direction, assistance rather than control. (paragraph 36)
2. In the present context of development in the Caribbean, local government units should be given responsibility for a wider range of development activities which were best planned, co-ordinated and executed at the local level. (paragraph 37)
3. The 'partnership' system of decentralization, under which some direct services were rendered by field agencies of the central government, and others by local authorities, was the most suitable in the Caribbean context. (paragraphs 38 and 39)
4. There should be a clear enunciation of policy by the central governments aimed at fostering increased popular participation in the development process, with an institutional structure to sustain the participation. (paragraph 40)
5. Local authorities should be made fully aware of their part in the development process, and their responsibility for development functions should be clearly outlined. (paragraph 40)
6. Steps should be taken, however gradually, to promote fully representative local councils. (paragraph 42)
7. Under the present circumstances, a single tier system of local government was preferable in the Caribbean. (paragraph 43)
8. Where 'community boundaries' did not coincide with the geographical boundaries of local authorities fixed long ago, re-delimitation of local authority areas might be considered. Also whilst demarcating new local government areas or in re-defining the existing boundaries, attention should be given to the determination of

planning regions as part of the process of regional
(sub-national) development.
(paragraph 43)

9. Appropriate safeguards should be built in to the legislation concerning local authorities to prevent possible discriminatory action by the central government against certain local units in the event of central government and the local bodies being 'controlled' by majority groups of different political parties.
(paragraph 44)

10. Central services were necessary to the local authorities to enable the latter to perform their development role effectively and efficiently. Such services should cover improvement of personnel administration at the local level, finance and financial administration, training of councillors and staff, provision of adequate incentives and appropriate safeguards and supervision and guidance.
(paragraph 45)

CENTRAL SERVICES TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES

A. PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION

11. A unified local government service system, under which personnel of local authorities throughout the country constituted a career service subject to transfer between different local authorities, was most suitable under Caribbean conditions. For some territories, however, a combination of the elements of this system and an integrated system, under which transfers were possible not only between local authorities but also between levels of government, might seem preferable under the present circumstances.
(paragraph 49)

12. Appropriate measures should be evolved to generate and sustain a harmonious staff-council relationship.
(paragraph 51)

13. Members and secretaries of the local government services commissions should be oriented in modern techniques of personnel administration and in the concepts and practice of local government.
(paragraph 53)

B. FINANCE AND CREDIT

Financial Policies

14. Local authorities in the Caribbean should be enabled to select from a comprehensive list of taxes defined and regulated by the central government, those which could be applied at the local level.
(paragraph 58)
15. Arrangements should be made for sharing the proceeds of central government taxes with the local government bodies. The basis for tax sharing should be specified by law, and the allocation to each local authority unit determined by a formula based on objective criteria.
(paragraph 61)

Financial Administration and Management

16. Legal procedures should be refined and appropriate training courses conducted to improve efficiency in tax collection.
(paragraph 62)
17. Existing laws should be made specific in the time limits permissible for the payment of taxes, and the methods of enforcement of tax law should at the same time be made as stringent as possible.
(paragraph 63)
18. Central governments should give increasing technical assistance to local authorities in the implementation of tax laws.
(paragraph 64)
19. In a programme for improving local financial administration, the following measures should be given priority:
 - i. standardization of the accounting procedures for local authorities with emphasis on the measurement of performances and results;
 - ii. speedy consideration by central government of the budget and estimates of local units; and
 - iii. regular inspection of local accounts and records by central government officials accompanied by on-the-job training for local officials.
(paragraph 66)

Credit

20. A local government loans agency, or any other appropriate unit devoted to local government loans in ministries concerned with local government, in national development banks or any other similar agency, might be created.
(paragraph 69)

21. Where institutional facilities for deposit of individual savings did not exist, they should be established. Moreover, savings deposits and other capital resources of the countries in the Caribbean should be used for investment in national and local development.
(paragraph 71)

22. Special attention should be given to the distinctive financial problems of local authorities in the smaller territories. A study of these problems should be undertaken with a view to working out alternative solutions.
(paragraph 73)

- C. TRAINING

23. A manpower survey should be undertaken to assess existing staff resources, identify inadequacies and needs, and help establish priorities for the improvement and expansion of training.
(paragraph 74)

24. Local government training should be geared to a more effective participation by local authorities in national development. Such training should have both a theoretical content and a practical bias.
(paragraphs 75 and 76)

25. The content, methods and techniques of training should be kept under close and constant review so that training would remain responsive to emerging trends and needs in the field.
(paragraph 76)

26. The training programme should be accompanied by a system of evaluation, including arrangements for feed-back from ex-trainees.
(paragraph 77)

27. Within each territory there should be a national training institution or agency which could identify and draw upon all the expertise available in the different sectors and each agency of government for training purposes. Under the aegis of such an institution, or closely associated with it as a separate unit, a local government training programme should be established.
(paragraph 78)
28. Senior central government officials should be oriented in the concepts and expanding role of local authorities in development.
(paragraph 80)
29. Training of elected members of local authorities was of crucial importance to the successful functioning of local government.
(paragraph 81)
30. In organizing courses for local government trainers, co-ordination of efforts between the training agency and academic institutions should be ensured.
(paragraph 82)
31. Mobile training units could also be valuable and economic for providing short courses.
(paragraph 84)
32. Greater opportunities should be made available for providing training outside the Caribbean region in those fields in which local facilities either did not exist or were inadequate.
(paragraph 85)
33. The possibility of practical attachments for senior local government staff within the Caribbean region should be considered.
(paragraph 86)

D. REGIONAL PLANNING

34. The following measures might be adopted for enabling the local government units to discharge their recognized role efficiently in regional planning and development:
 - i. Appropriate regional councils might be constituted, composed of representatives of local authorities and central government

agencies in the area and of regional interest groups and associations.

- ii. There should also be a consultative committee of representatives of these councils to the central planning organization.
- iii. These regional machineries should be given adequate professional and technical support by the central ministries concerned.
- iv. In 'breaking up' regional or national plans into sub-regional and village level plans, the concerned local authorities should be fully involved. The technical officers of the central ministries should assist the authorities in their deliberations in this regard.
- v. Local authorities should be closely associated in the process of surveys that might be conducted before the formulation of regional plans. This would give the local government units an insight into the problems and prospects of the areas and would thus enable them to contribute meaningfully to the formulation of the plans.

(paragraph 90)

E. INCENTIVES AND SAFEGUARDS

- 35. The formulation and implementation of an appropriate scheme of incentives and safeguards for the local authorities was very important in the context of their envisaged increasing role in the development process.
(paragraph 91)
- 36. The community development agency could provide a valuable incentive to the promotion of strong and sound local government.
(paragraph 92)
- 37. Non-monetary incentives like a scheme of special awards, presentation of trophies, national awards to outstanding chairmen and councillors, and stimulation of public interests in local government might also be considered.
(paragraph 93)
- 38. Adequate legislative, administrative and financial safeguards should be worked out to ensure proper and objective functioning of local authorities. This

would help build up public confidence in the new representative institutions.
(paragraphs 95 to 98)

CENTRAL AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT
OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

39. Where there was no separate ministry for local government, the functions pertaining to assistance and guidance to local authorities might be assigned to a department in the Premier's Office, or in a ministry also responsible for other allied functions, such as community development. The central department responsible for local government should not be placed in a ministry charged with functions unrelated to local government.
(paragraph 101)
40. The tasks of the ministry of local government should cover policy formulation, legislation, administration and supervision, training and personnel management, fiscal and financial assistance, programme planning and co-ordination, liaison with other ministries and central agencies, and technical supporting services and research. Of these, fiscal and financial assistance, and programme planning and co-ordination were most important.
(paragraphs 102 and 103)
41. It would be useful to formulate a model to indicate the minimum functions of the ministry of local government.
(paragraph 104)
42. Central agencies and institutions, in addition to the ministry of local government, that might be needed for the improvement of local government could include the following:
- i. Local government services commission to administer a unified personnel system for local authorities;
 - ii. a local government training unit in the national training institution or in a university;
 - iii. an appropriate unit within the ministry of local government, ministry of finance or development bank to provide loans and related technical services to local authorities;

- iv. a unit under the Auditor General to conduct periodic and special audits, including management audits of local authorities;
- v. arrangements in the central government's purchasing agency to provide, upon request, purchase and supply services to local authorities in respect of major items;
- vi. arrangements in the central government's organization and methods unit to provide management improvement services to local authorities;
- vii. arrangements in the central planning agency and the ministry concerned with public works and physical planning to involve local authorities in national planning and to assist local authorities in developing their own planning capability;
- viii. specified staff in the Attorney-General's Office to provide legal services to local authorities; and
- ix. an association of local authorities and professional and staff associations.

(paragraph 107)

- 43. The governments in the Caribbean should encourage the establishment and growth of national local government associations, which could make a significant contribution towards the improvement and development of local government.
(paragraph 108)
- 44. These associations could perform a two-fold role: viz., the representation and promotion of municipal interests vis-a-vis higher authorities, and provision of services to the member authorities.
(paragraph 108)
- 45. Research should be initiated to determine the feasibility of local government associations organizing and operating a 'loans pool'.
(paragraph 111)
- 46. Active associations of local government staff should be promoted.
(paragraph 113)

47. Voluntary efforts of professional associations should be properly mobilised and co-ordinated to augment significantly the resources available to local government.
(paragraph 114)

TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Financial and Technical Assistance

48. The Caribbean Development Bank should accommodate requests for loans relating to local authority projects, especially those in the smaller territories.
(paragraph 117)
49. Governments should include in their national development plans measures to increase the administrative capability of local authorities, and request such external technical assistance as might be necessary for the purpose.
(paragraph 118)
50. Arrangements for multi-national experts in the field of local government should be made easier than at present.
(paragraph 119)
51. The interdisciplinary planning advisory team, being organized by the United Nations for the Caribbean region, should include a specialist on public administration with ability to advise on local government matters.
(paragraph 119)

Education and Training

52. The capacity of the universities in the Caribbean to provide education and training in public administration and local government should be increased and their extension programmes strengthened.
(paragraph 121)
53. The universities should supplement national efforts in the field of in-service training in specialised areas like tax collection, unified local government personnel systems, and municipal management.
(paragraph 121)
54. There was need for a local government information centre, including a journal or newsletter, and exchange

of information on technical matters of special interest to local authorities.
(paragraph 122)

55. The proposed Caribbean regional centre for study, training, study and research in integrated rural development, when established, should include local government research and training in its activities.
(paragraph 122)

Research

56. The United Nations in its studies on local government should give priority to those relating to grants-in-aid and shared revenue, administrative aspects of comprehensive urban planning, guidelines for the preparation of basic legislation of local government systems, and administration for regional development.
(paragraph 124)

57. Pilot projects for the improvement of local government should be initiated within the Caribbean region.
(paragraph 125)

General

58. As a follow-up measure to this Seminar, a Caribbean regional conference of ministers in charge of local government and their principal advisers should be convened.
(paragraph 126)

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GOVERNMENT OF GUYANA

Mr. W. Persaud)
Mr. A. Crawford) (Liaison Officers)

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS
AND DOCUMENTS CIRCULATED

1. Problems of Institutional Transplantation: The Case of the Commonwealth Caribbean Local Government System, (CRS/CSLA/BP.1), reproduction of an article by Dr. Paul Singh, Lecturer in Local Government in the University of Guyana in Caribbean Studies, Vol. 10., No. 1.
2. Summary of Proposals of the United Nations Meeting of Experts on Credit Institutions for Local Authorities, (CRS/CSLA/BP.2), reproduction of an article in Public Administration Newsletter, No.: 34, September, 1970, United Nations.
3. Decentralization for National and Local Development, United Nations, Sales No.: 62.II.H.2.
4. Report on Local Government Study Tours of Yugoslavia and India by Senior Officials of African States, United Nations, Sales No.: 64.II.H.4.
5. Report of the Caribbean Regional Training Workshop on Community Development and Local Government, United Nations ECLA, E/CN.12/847.
6. Local Government Personnel Systems, United Nations Sales No.: 67.II.H.1.
7. Local Government Training, United Nations, Sales No.: E.68.II.H.2.

ADDRESS BY THE PRIME MINISTER, HONOURABLE L.F.S. BURNHAM,
S.C., M.P., AT THE OPENING OF THE ECLA CONFERENCE
ON MONDAY, MARCH 8, 1971.

Your Excellencies the members of the diplomatic corps, ladies and gentlemen, my comrades,

Welcome to Guyana! I say to those of you who are not natives and to those of you, who, like Mrs. Pollard, have now acquired dual citizenship. It is good to have you here and to have you discuss such an important question as the future of local government, and its involvement in the development process in the region. I consider it a privilege and an honour, because committed as we are on to regionalism we feel that the oftener agencies such as those you represent come together on a regional basis the greater is the potential for a truly dynamic regional organisation in the Caribbean. It is apposite perhaps also to observe that we have with us representatives from international organisations like U.N. agencies and also, I understand, that the International Union of Local Authorities is represented, and is also a co-sponsor. These foreign elements, shall we say, to a certain extent can add new experiences and give us a certain lesson through which we can learn. But in the final analysis though they are most important, for we live in a world and not in a small region, I think that it should be the duty of the participants from the Caribbean to realise that they cannot copy, but they can borrow, they can learn and they can adapt and in the final analysis progress must depend upon our initiative and our capacity to recognise what is relevant, our ability to see what are the realities in the Caribbean and what we can make of those realities in the quest of further development.

Now you all look like a very serious number of ladies and gentlemen and you really didn't come here to listen to politicians. But it is a custom when conferences, seminars like this are opened that some politician, notably the chief talker, the Prime Minister, is asked to come along and say a few words. My few words I hope to be very few; but you will permit me perhaps to indulge in the prerogative

of a politician and that is to pretend a knowledge of a number of subjects in which he, the politician, is inexpert.

That I was Minister of Local Government was a fortuitous circumstance, but, I think a happy one - happy for me because it gave me an opportunity of seeing at closer range, so to speak, the various local government agencies which operate in Guyana. We in Guyana have prided ourselves in having the oldest and the best local government system in the Caribbean, but to my mind that is all balderdash and conceit. We also have the oldest railway in Latin America - but it is the worst! mutatis mutandis, apply the concept to our local government system which existed until very recently. In the past local government in Guyana was but an arm of the central government: responsible for some minor housekeeping functions and a certain amount of maintenance; calling upon the central government from time to time for grants or for loans, interest free; asking the central government to write off loans which had been unpaid and perhaps sometimes asking the central government to assist it in the collection of its rates and taxes. The local government agencies were so much like children to the central government, and the central government itself operated like an insensitive parent: condescending, but hardly giving any leadership to its children.

The concept of my government, however, of local government is, that it is an expression of the will, the desires, the objectives and the goals of the people in the various communities and areas. It is not a collection of elected bodies for membership of which people vie from time to time; but it is a collection of bodies put there by the people after they had carefully thought what they wanted and in the conviction that these bodies can carry out the wishes of the people and act as co-ordinators.

In Guyana, recently, greater emphasis has been placed on making the local government agency or council part of the society

and part of the community. That perhaps explains the significance of one of our representatives being the Deputy Chief Community Development Officer: because the people must know what they want, must work for what they want and must therefore have agencies or councils which work in harmony with their own wishes, their own desires and their own objectives. We feel, and I believe, we are not original in this, there is very little original in Guyana really, though some people like to think to the contrary, flattering us. We feel that the people, through their local government agencies, must be involved in the development process and there are two good reasons for that feeling, that idea, in our context: Number one - I think it is dehumanising to have some central agency issuing dictates and laying down the laws of the Medes and Persians. The result of that could hardly be the production of real citizens, but of a number of dependent robots; and secondly, in a country like Guyana, which I believe is not peculiar in the Caribbean, there aren't enough resources for the central government to provide all that is needed at the local government level, and consequently we have got to recognise that part of our national capital is the initiative of the people, the labour of the people, the intellect of the people, the minds of the people, and if we do not get all these aspects of our national capital involved in the national exercise of development, we are pro tanto poorer, and to that extent less effective in our national goals and quests.

The argument has gone on about it and about as to the merits and demerits of centralisation and decentralisation. My government is convinced that there must be decentralisation, that there must be a wider area of responsibility given to the local government agencies, there must be a greater autonomy than we have had in the past, there must be specific tasks undertaken by them, which in the past were undertaken, and ineffectively carried out by the central government, oblivious of the wishes and the aspirations of the people in the far-flung corners of our country.

It seems, therefore, to us, that the recent local government reform which was carried through in Guyana, is but the beginning of a new era and a new phase. Now! But a country cannot be a collection of autonomous bits and bodies, councils and committees, for then we are playing with anarchy in its absolute sense and chaos; we are playing with the possibility of having a number of little Caesars, each one going in quest of his own peculiar Gaul and forgetting the interests of the larger society and community of the nation. Therefore to my mind, and to the mind of my government, some golden thread is necessary to connect these various local government agencies, allegedly, and in fact, operating in the national interest. And you will forgive the conceit of the professional, and, may I pause for a moment and observe that in every profession you find proponents of the thesis that without that profession, the world will fall apart. Now, you will forgive the conceit of my profession - the profession of politics - when I say that I feel and am convinced that that golden thread has got to be the political party and the political commitment; so that though we may vary in our physical objectives from place to place, the co-ordinating force to give us that relationship to and connection with the central authority has got to be the political party. And that is why, in our recent local government reform, we made it specific that there could be no contesting of these elections by individuals and independents, with all due respect to other systems which permit the luxury of individuals contesting as independents - it is impossible under the system of local government in Guyana, at the moment, as it is at the centre, for any ambitious little individuals to thrust themselves at the electorate. They must be organised within a group, they must be organised within a political party, so that whatever political party the councillors may be drawn from is identified with the political party at the centre. And so you have the golden thread, so to speak, and you are able, I contend, to achieve a consistency as between central and local government.

You will forgive me, if with the aplomb of an Alec Waugh, I make an observation on what I noticed in Yugoslavia. I was able to observe in Yugoslavia that they have the nationality problem, a problem which perhaps is different in size, though not in quality, from the problems one may encounter in Guyana of differences between one local government area and another local government area. A great deal of autonomy I noticed, has been given to these various nationalities: to the point where, in some of the independent republics, you have Parliaments and Ministers, etc., etc.; and I asked the Prime Minister what keeps these people together. He said, "Comrade, it is the party that keeps these nationalities together. Throughout the nationalities you have a party that has a commitment to certain ideas, has a commitment to certain objectives." And it does seem to me that though you gentlemen would claim not to be politicians - and those who shout most loudly about not being politicians, I have found, are the most competent and astute politicians; they are the Neville Carduses of the game of politics - though you may claim not to be politicians, I would ask you to recognise that there is a place for the political party, and without the political party sort of connecting these various agencies, what you would have but chaos, failure. We in the Caribbean have failed for too long, and we cannot afford to fail at this level of local government.

I want to thank you for coming to Guyana. I want to thank you for participating in this conference. And I want to tell you that when you come to Guyana, there is no need to thank us for any courtesies which we may extend, or any hospitality of which you may be the recipient. We consider it our duty to be courteous; we consider it our bounden duty to be hospitable because that is part of our national character. But in life there is always a quid pro quo asked for. The quid which we ask for or the pro which we hope you will give for the quid is that the deliberations will be meaningful, that you will apply your minds to the subjects discussed seriously, that you will be forever cognisant of the fact that you are West Indians, and that you are seeking to make a contribution not merely to the development of local government in the region and in the theory, but to the national

development of a nation that has been too long divided and which will disappear unless we come together.

Thank you very much.

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA

Mr. Chairman, Hon. Prime Minister, distinguished guests and delegates,

It is a pleasure, and privilege, for me to address you on behalf of Dr. Carlos Quintana, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA), at this inaugural session, of the Caribbean Regional Seminar on Central Services to Local Authorities. The Seminar brings together important senior officials from eight countries in the region, and consultants from several institutions engaged in continuous research into crucial and practical aspects of the subject matter of the Seminar.

First, I would like to express the appreciation of the United Nations and the ECLA to the Hon. Prime Minister and the Government of Guyana for agreeing to act as host to this project, which is being conducted under the joint sponsorship of the Economic Commission for Latin America, the United Nations Headquarters Public Administration Division, and the International Union for Local Authorities, and with the support of the Government of the Netherlands. I should also like to express my appreciation to the Universities of Guyana, the West Indies, and Amsterdam and to the German Foundation for Developing Countries, for their academic support.

ECLA is deeply conscious of the dynamic pace and purposive direction of development efforts in the Caribbean. We value highly our close association with the area Governments, and the opportunities to assist actively, particularly in the fields of planning, training and research. The conduct of seminars and workshops of this kind is one of the important aspects of the Commission's technical co-operation activities, and we feel a deep sense of gratitude to the Governments for their ready and keen response to such projects.

The theme of this Seminar is very timely and of great importance to the Caribbean region. The promotion of popular participation in the development process, and the creation of an institutional structure

to sustain such participation, are integral and essential elements in the development strategy. It is therefore significant, in the context of important economic and social developments in the area, that the Governments have been taking initiatives to secure a wider, organized and discerning popular participation in plan formulation and implementation. And we have the advantage that this has been the active concern of the United Nations and its related agencies for quite a few years, and that we can draw on this body of expertise.

The unprecedented growth in the number and complexity of functions which area Governments have to undertake as a result of recent constitutional advances, especially those arising from the task of planning for overall development, throw a great strain on the machinery of Central Government. The Governments, therefore, have decided as a matter of national policy, to involve the people and their representative institutions at the local level, in the development process. In this process, simultaneous action has to be taken to increase the functional and financial capabilities of the local institutions to perform their functions with efficiency, integrity and despatch. The means by which this could be achieved and the various approaches to its accomplishment are, therefore, among the primary concerns of the Regional Economic Commission.

The interest of the area Governments in economic and social development planning, and their various activities aimed at these objectives, are getting keener and more intense. In this Second United Nations Development Decade, greater and closer bi-lateral and multi-lateral technical co-operation is envisaged. These efforts, however, cannot produce the expected results unless a new awareness exists at all levels, and the representative institutions, particularly at the local level, are closely involved in the process, and work in concert with the Central Governments in a climate of new confidence, greater effort and closer mutual co-operation and understanding.

The importance of local authorities as partners in development, and the responsibility of the Central Governments to encourage and guide them, are thus more important now than before. As local

participation fulfils itself, and as local government institutions grow in their capabilities, they would effectively complement the task of the central governments in planning and executing development programmes, and form an essential link between the social and economic aspects of development.

The Caribbean is in a state of transition and the whole machinery of public administration is undergoing critical examination, more far-reaching in some states than in others, with a view to making it more suited to cope with the new circumstances. I therefore expect that out of the Seminar will emerge concrete proposals that could contribute substantially towards achieving this desired end.

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
DIVISION, UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK

Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Prime Minister, Ladies and
Gentlemen,

We in the United Nations Public Administration Division are happy to be associated with the ECLA Caribbean Office and the International Union of Local Authorities in co-sponsoring this Caribbean Regional Seminar on Central Services to Local Authorities. I wish to associate myself with Mr. Clarke's expressions of gratitude to the Government of Guyana for its warm hospitality and its provision of conference facilities and services, to the Government of the Netherlands for providing funds for the Seminar, and to other agencies and institutions which have made consultants available to assist in the work of the Seminar. We hope that the Seminar proves beneficial to all concerned and most of all, of course, to the participants and their Governments.

The subject of this Seminar is a vital one. The Secretary-General, in his Proposed Objectives and Programmes in Public Administration for the Second United Nations Development Decade, which the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly will consider at their forthcoming sessions, states that -

"The establishment and strengthening of key institutions and agencies for the improvement of public administration at all levels is one of the basic requirements for increasing administrative capability for development."

With reference to the agencies likely to be needed in most countries for the improvement of regional (sub-national) and local administration, he mentioned the ministry primarily concerned with regional and local administration and units for the provision of personnel services, training loans and management advisory services for local authorities.

Arrangements for central services to local authorities are essential wherever Governments seek to decentralize to local bodies decisions and operations that require co-ordination at the local level,

where they want to encourage communities to do as much as they can to improve their living conditions and where they want to associate local communities with national development efforts. Over centralization is a common affliction of public administration systems. Moreover, economic and social development measures often require local infrastructure and services and changes in the attitude and practices of people which can best be brought about with the active co-operation and participation of the communities concerned. Local authorities are potential institutional means for these purposes. But realization of their potential may require revamping of the local government system, including modification of local government structure and areas, and technical, administrative and financial strengthening of the local bodies, all of which usually require initial action and continuing support from national agencies and institutions.

A comparative study of the problems of Decentralization for National and Local Development, which the Division completed in 1962, highlighted the need for a cluster of central agencies and institutions for the improvement of local government if local authorities are to play a significant role in the development process. To probe this subject more deeply, the Division requested the International Union of Local Authorities to examine the relations between central government and local authorities on a world-wide basis and especially the arrangements for providing central services to local authorities. We defined the word "central" to include states in federal systems and to include not only governmental but also non-governmental bodies such as associations of local authorities. We also defined "services" broadly to include financial as well as technical assistance and even arrangements for supervision of local authorities.

The term "central services for local authorities" was also used to emphasize that traditional concepts of central control on the one hand and "local autonomy" on the other were counter-productive in a national development context and would need to be replaced by attitudes and arrangements that are conducive to a partnership of national and local authorities in the pursuit of development objectives.

The draft report of the IULA study was used as background document for regional seminars which the Division co-sponsored in the 1960s with three of the regional economic commissions, ECA, ECAFE, and ECLA, and also at a seminar for Arab States. The previous ECLA Seminar was held in 1968 for the Spanish-speaking countries in the region. During the 1960s the Division also carried out studies of local government training institutions, local government personnel systems, and credit institutions for local authorities. The last mentioned study has just been completed and will be issued later this year.

The Division arranged for the International Union of Local Authorities to synthesize the reports of all these regional seminars and studies. Mr. Campbell, who is representing IULA here, prepared the synthesis which constitutes one of the basic documents of the Seminar. Reports of the previously-mentioned studies of the Division have been distributed to the participants. We also have available here a set of other publications of the Division that may be of use to participants, including one on Administrative Aspects of Urbanization which includes an examination of institutional aids for dealing with problems of rapid urban growth.

I mention the background of our work in this field not only to stress the importance we attach to the subject, but also to highlight a special task that confronts the Seminar participants. Although we have been aware of the distinctive problems of small states, none of the studies or seminars could examine in detail the effect of smallness in the size of area or population of a country upon the role of local authorities in economic and social development and on arrangements for central services to local authorities.

The basic discussion paper prepared by the ECLA Caribbean Office gives the Seminar a good start in appraising the situation in the Caribbean and the relevance to countries in the region of lessons from world-wide experience. The task of the Seminar participants is to share each other's knowledge and perceptions and, drawing upon information on world-wide experience, to formulate generalizations that

may merit consideration by Governments in the region. I am sure that the Seminar's observations will also be of interest to small states in other regions.

The Public Administration Division like other offices in the United Nations Secretariat will give increased attention in the 1970's to the distinctive problems of small countries. Last August and September, the Division, with the co-sponsorship of ECLA and the University of the West Indies, conducted a six-week pilot course for the training of trainers in the public services in the Caribbean. A similar course will be held in the South Pacific later this year. We will welcome recommendations from the participants on research, seminars and other types of technical co-operation projects in the field of public administration that may be especially helpful to Governments in the Caribbean.

Mr. Chairman, we are fortunate to be meeting in a country which is taking steps to modernize its local government system, to promote co-operative and self-help activities and otherwise to develop innovative forms of administration to accelerate economic and social development. My colleague Mr. Villanueva, who has been responsible for the Division's preparatory work for the Seminar, and I look forward to learning more about what is being tried here and elsewhere in the Caribbean and what might be done on an international basis to lend a helping hand.

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE INTERNATIONAL
UNION OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Prime Minister, distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to have the opportunity to add my sincere thanks to those of Mr. Clarke and Mr. Sady in recognizing the generosity of the Government of Guyana in acting as the host for this Seminar. The assistance and personal attention that I received on my arrival and that has been accorded to me since, assures me that the administration of this Seminar could not have been in better hands and augurs well for its success. My thanks are due also to the Caribbean Office of ECLA and to the United Nations Public Administration Division, New York, for undertaking the bulk of the preparatory work, which, I know from experience, is long and painstaking if the objectives are to be achieved and the discussions made fruitful and worthwhile.

Although the International Union of Local Authorities has been engaged in training activities since 1964, this is the first regional Seminar that we have succeeded in initiating to augment and complement the research and training undertaken in Europe. We hope that with the continued support of technical assistance agencies in Europe and the Economic Commissions of the United Nations that they will become a regular feature of our activities. The choice of the Caribbean for this innovation is a happy one for two reasons. Firstly, it is an area in which we wish to increase our connections and research activities. Secondly, because, as Mr. Sady already indicated, it is a region that faces special problems in connection with development and difficulties that are not experienced by the majority of the developing world. It is therefore an area which demands special attention within the context of development studies.

The Netherlands Government, in providing the financial support for this Seminar, is very conscious of the importance of local participation in national development and of the need for a healthy and

effective partnership between a central government and its local authorities. Recognising the value placed upon democratic institutions by the states of the English-speaking Caribbean, and by the two self-governing territories in which it takes a special interest, the Dutch Government has felt that a gathering of this nature, in which senior officials can compare and discuss common problems, can do nothing but good in exchanging ideas and promoting inter-co-operation in the development of the region as a whole. We are very grateful to the Dutch Technical Assistance Bureau for their generous support for this Seminar which is in keeping with the Netherlands' unceasing and increasing efforts to provide aid overseas.

I am also grateful to the German Foundation for Developing Countries, with whom IULA has had a long and happy association, for their assistance in making available two experts to assist us in our deliberations. Their experience and that of a Dutch expert will provide a valuable comparative study of the industrialized countries.

The previous speaker has already spoken of the importance of the Seminar topic and of the involvement of IULA in the earlier research. The objectives of my Union, which has now been in existence for almost sixty years, are broadly to promote and encourage local government throughout the world and to serve as a co-ordinating and resource agency for municipalities and local government associations in both their national and supra-national activities. With members in over seventy countries, we also undertake research into a wide range of municipal activities for international institutions and agencies. The subject of the provision of central services to local authorities however is one of particular interest to IULA, as it is fundamental to a recognition of the value of local government in national development and to a realistic evaluation of its role in the developing countries.

Mr. Chairman, the task before us in this Seminar is not inconsiderable, and in my own view crucial to a valid interpretation

of the inter-governmental relationships best suited to development. We are, by way of simile, engaged in a test match of our own in the next few days. The wicket is a good one and I think that we can be assured of a good and strenuous innings. The great advantage of our context of arguments however is that both sides can win through a common experience of studying a problem of immediate concern to all. I would add, however, that I for one am glad of this preliminary practice in the nets before facing up to the bowling of the participants.

I think, however, similes aside, that all of us here believe in the need for decentralisation in government and of the importance of a potent central-local relationship. Given the acceptance of these basic criteria, and with the high standard and composite experience of the participants and consultants alike, I am confident that we can provide a realistic and well-reasoned consensus of views on the particular needs of the Caribbean area. IULA is proud to be associated with this effort and with the contribution that this will undoubtedly make to the furtherance of democratic local government.

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE COMMONWEALTH
CARIBBEAN REGIONAL SECRETARIAT

It is my pleasure today to represent the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Caribbean Regional Secretariat at this opening session of the Caribbean Regional Seminar on Central Services to Local Authorities. The importance that the Secretariat attaches to this Seminar arises not only from the fact that it is convened jointly by the United Nations (The Economic Commission for Latin America and the United Nations Public Administration Division) and the International Union of Local Authorities, and supported by the Netherlands Government, but also because it attempts to deal with what is in the Caribbean today one of the most pressing and crucial issues i.e. the question of greater involvement of the population through Local Government.

For in this critical period of the restructuring of Caribbean society it is clearly recognised that the entire population must be involved if development efforts are to succeed; and it is in this area that the institution of Local Government, probably more than any other, has a vital contribution to make. In this context, the Regional Secretariat welcomes the continued efforts of the United Nations Agencies in this area.

Within recent years, two regional Workshops on the broad subject of popular involvement in the development process were convened in Commonwealth Caribbean countries. In March, 1968, the first Workshop on Community Development and Local Government was held in Port of Spain and this was followed 19 months later by a second Workshop on Integrated Rural Development convened in Kingston, Jamaica. Today, 16 months later, it is now Guyana's turn to host a Seminar on this very important subject.

The Commonwealth Caribbean Regional Secretariat was established in 1968 and it is vitally interested in these areas of national development, and in regional programmes which aim to improve the expertise of Commonwealth Caribbean nationals. The importance of increasing the

supply of skills to the Region needs no emphasis.

This Seminar, with its focus on local participation and the development of local expertise, represents an effort towards meeting one of the crucial requirements in Caribbean social and economic development. Accordingly, the Secretariat wishes to commend this effort and to convey best wishes for its success.

AGENDA

1. Registration
2. Opening Session
3. Organization of the Meeting
4. Adoption of the agenda
5. Role of Local government in national development
6. Presentation of country statements on problems and prospects of local government and its role in the development process in the Caribbean and arrangements for central services to local authorities
7. Central-local relationships and the role of the ministry of local government
8. Local government personnel administration
9. Local government training
10. Local government finance and financial administration
11. Credit institutions for local authorities
12. Incentives and safeguards to local authorities
13. Role of associations of local authorities in improving local government
14. Central agencies and institutions for the improvement of local government in the Caribbean
15. Comparative approaches to the provision of central services to local authorities
16. The role of local authorities in regional and national planning
17. Technical co-operation for the improvement of local government
18. Review and approval of the report of the Seminar
19. Closing Session.

