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THE CARIBBEAN AND ITS INCOMPLETE CLASS STRUCTURE

Essay on the logic of its negotiations with the metropolitan countries

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Many prospective papers are being written outlining economic scenarios to the year 2000. Those very serious papers are useful for designing measures to be taken currently for achieving certain goals in the referred time horizon. We would like to advise the reader that the ideas which follow, despite the fact that they go back to a remote past, aim in the same direction. They do not, however, describe a future scenario. They are an attempt to find the guiding thread in certain trends which are believed to be observed in the development of Caribbean social structures and they carry through to its ultimate implications the explicative proposal formulated. The aim of this paper is to contribute to a theory of Caribbean development. However, instead of stressing its internal relations, the paper focuses on its relations with the metropolitan countries and in the same line of reflexion it points out its connection with Latin America. It deliberately offers a partial and schematic reading making the case for a working hypothesis (with implications for social policies).

1. Access to capital goods

Proposing and demanding specific approaches for the study of the Caribbean countries involves a long series of working hypotheses whose codification has not been completed. The following premise is proposed as a starting point to address the issue of Caribbean development; institutionalized communal solidarity in the Caribbean appears within the framework of metropolitan states designed to prevent such development. That is, there is an initial contradiction between the articulation of the general will of the corporate Caribbean people and the State, and the history of the region is nothing more than the slow resolving of this contradiction. As an example of this underlying contradiction, it may be submitted that family in the region is a product of class struggle and not a constituent element of colonial societies. The State is prior to the family, the community and the nation.

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The preceding paragraph naturally refers to the colonial State, which literally and legally possessed all of the Caribbean and all that the Caribbean contained. Capital and labour both belonged to the State, which exercised its rights at the outset through large commercial companies, and later through the colonial administration and army, aided by a plantocracy of larger or smaller magnitude. It should be noted that the presence of the metropolitan political powers was not a response to a call from the planters, but what prepared the stage for and made possible this entrepreneurial activity. The daily life of the planters and administrators formed the basis of the civil colonial (and anti-national) society.

Private ownership of the means of production was transferred to the plantocracy within this framework, and the productive process was organized whenever and wherever the colonial State was capable of guaranteeing militarily its monopoly over capital and labour resources. The metropolitan, commercial and financial bourgeoisie directed the production process because of and by means of its insertion into the colonialist State.

As a result the colonialized population - that is, the population of the colony minus the plantocracy and its employees - acceded to the means of production only insofar as it could withdraw from the prevailing system. This gave rise to what has been described as the counter-plantation system and with it, the oppressed culture. This latter system was quite similar to peasant simple mercantile production, and departed from it by its unavoidable relation to the plantation system and the colonial culture which accompanied it. Counter-plantation and local oppressed culture constitute the core of Caribbean national society.

One must therefore distinguish a type of civil society, which by virtue of colonization does not express itself in corresponding political institutions, and a type of State, which because of its colonialist nature is not rooted in a colonialized civil society.

2. Social negotiation and social satisfaction

It must be borne in mind once established colonial societies are being focused that class struggles could not be actualized and enacted in an overt way. It is suggested that potential class struggle was never

actual. In other words, the level of reality of what was potential and virtual remained sometimes so embryonic that it was not necessarily reflected in social processes and movements of empirical reference. Class struggles in a relatively large mountainous colony, held by a metropolitan country in deep crisis - France between 1780 and 1804 - differed substantially from those which can be observed in a small island dominated by the British Empire at the height of its power. This is at the root of the difference between the early independence of Haiti and the situation of Montserrat which nowadays is deliberately choosing to remain a Crown Colony. The rationale of the current attachment of Montserrat to England or of Puerto Rico, Martinique, Guadeloupe and the Netherlands Antilles to their respective metropolitan countries is the issue being dealt with in this paper. The attempt is to show that the accession to independence of the other islands continues to retain elements of the same rationale because of structural reasons unrelated to any loyalty to the colonial powers. It is being argued that allegiance to the metropolitan country can be considered as a social calculation similar to the pursuit of formal independence.

The colonial State, once it has the power to implement its designs, establishes ipso facto the parameters within which social relations can evolve. The ability to improve on living conditions and standards is then determined by the colonial State. It follows from there what has been described as a process of "creolization", acculturation or ascendant social mobility. The creolization process in the colonies operates to the extent that the development of the class struggle is

hindered and the scale of stratification legitimized.

Population, living within these contexts have no other alternative than to learn the standards and principles of colonialism and attempt to attenuate the excesses of colonial exploitation within the normative frame of the colonial system itself. Given the rigid framework referred to, it is understandable that the different forms of social mobility which appear, remain incapable of affecting the colonial structures. In this context, emerge the exceedingly small middle classes of the colonial territories, and the peculiar scale of stratification which characterizes them.

It must be stressed¹, in the first place, that this solution has not been arrived at without a prior step, that is, the materialization of open class struggle under obvious conditions of inviability of that struggle. The suicidal struggles of the indigenous populations resulted in the large-scale genocides which eliminated the Amerindian settlers from the Caribbean islands. To eliminate any doubts on their nature

those struggles were accompanied by collective suicides in the case of the Carib population and by frequent poisonings and infanticides among the enslaved population of African origin.

In the second place, it should be noted immediately that the concept of class struggle in the colonial context is incorrect. The impossibility of negotiating an acceptable settlement which predated processes of acculturation and upward social mobility indicates the prevalence of national struggles, i.e. struggles between nations, conquering and conquered. This extreme solution is subsequently replaced by a form of negotiation based on acknowledging, at least in principle, submission and defeat and which results in the so-called acculturation process. The inconspicuous development of national struggles underneath the overt processes of social mobility and integration into the colonial system, should be considered as the process of creation of the Caribbean nations, or possibly of the Caribbean nation, - a national-building process.

3. Races and social classes

If it is quite easy in the Caribbean context for national liberation or struggles to be mistaken for class struggles by contemporary social sciences, there is no doubt that the same obtains with respect to the local population. In the region, distinct captive nations emerged and evolved within the colonizing State themselves - although not within the colonizing nations. This form of insertion and the necessary identification within and in opposition to a larger whole constitute one of the basic aspects of the specificity of the Caribbean. This specificity is reflected not only in peculiar ideological structures, but in a geographical distribution of the Caribbean nation which in many aspects is similar to the phenomena characterizing the Jewish diaspora.

It follows that the perception of the class struggle in the Caribbean has certain measures that are sometimes irritating for those observing it from the outside and especially for Latin American revolutionaries. To us class struggle in nearly all cases is firstly a conflict between locals and foreigners, that is, an anti-imperialist struggle. No attention is paid to the mediation of a dominant local class or to an alledged national bourgeoisie. Those terms are obviously not used in the vernaculars where opposition with respect to foreigners is expressed in an opposition between whites and blacks.

This fact deserves an entire sociolinguistic study, still to be carried out. We are the blacks, and this includes, when reference is being made to local society, the poor European, who settled as woodcutter, pirate, indentured worker (36 months) and the mulatto, along with their descendants. In the cases where international relations are being examined after centuries of common history, the term encompasses rich "whites" and "mulattos", whose lineages go back as far as any other group. Now in the specific development of disturbances and protests, many accounts are settled and rich "whites" or "mulattos" may be identified with foreigners.

The dominant colonial class, "the white", was, at one level, the planter and the colonial administration which defined him. Since very few Caribbean islands were under the domination of a single colonial power - and I believe that only Barbados is in this situation - each new conquest defined new planters, new "foreigners", new "whites". Those who possessed the nationality of the conquered power came to hold a subordinate position in the system of domination, with all that that obtains with respect to the reformulation of their dealings with the enslaved population. Dominica and Saint Lucia exemplified this process during the second part of the eighteenth

century and Trinidad the nineteenth. In this way some Europeans became if not exploited, at least subject to discrimination by the colonialist "foreigners", the most recent "whites".

Thus there was a regular renewal of the group of petty whites who very quickly, upon being cut off from their respective mother countries, began to mix racially and to become creolized, that is to adopt the local dominated culture. The national project of the Mulatto Aristocracy of Dominica in the nineteenth century, is the best example found in this respect. The current expressions "French Creoles" in Trinidad and "mulattos" in Haiti aim in the same direction. These persons may be racially white, but, so to speak, not nationally so.

One is justified in thinking that the term white is used to mean, according to context, the planter, the colonialist or the foreigner. The term black always refers to us in all our variety: worker, employee, peasant, racially black, white, poor, rich, but always "native". In Trinidad during and after the 1970 disturbances, two types of blacks were distinguished, the descendants of Africans and the East Indians. It was as if, in a region from which the Amerindians had disappeared, the term black had come to be a synonym of what is called indigena and mestizo in Latin America. Since the entire local population descended from immigrants, there were successive layers of "natives". In the Caribbean countries where blacks are in the minority, - the former Spanish colonies -, the term "creole" plays the same role. When speaking of creole culture, local culture is meant.

It thus appears that the shape of institutionalized communal solidarity, (civil society) in the Caribbean, for having always been organized if not in open opposition to, at least independent from the objectives of the colonial powers, was undergoing successive formulations in its type of social consensus or contrat social, while the metropolitan States further

developing their capitalistic structure. The captive civil societies did, it would appear, inherit and absorb subordinated infraordered groups of the oppressive system, which, whether they wished it or not, would gradually come to share certain national interests typical of the primary groups of the colonial society. The new «blacks», new natives or creoles appear to have experienced gradually the hardships of colonialism, but not the harshness of enslavement, indentured labour and peonage. They obviously retained their class interests, which they set forth in the organization of the local political and social system; that is, they would continue to defend their position within the institutions regulating daily life in the captive society.

4. The creation of a local dominant class

It will be recalled that England inaugurated the plantation system in the small islands. France participated in the colonial plunder, but its navy was able to conquer very few islands of small size. It is useful to point out, in order to provide an idea of the importance of smallness for a tropical territory, that that power preferred the island of Guadeloupe to Canada, which Voltaire scornfully called «quelques arpents de neige». In a word, since plantation production is predicated upon the possibility by the colonial power to ensure at the least possible cost, both the defense of the colonial territory and its internal order, the smaller the territory, the more productive it should turn out to be. At the end of the seventeenth century and especially during the eighteenth, while they were hindering the normal operation of the Spanish colonization formula, England and France ceased to be interested in establishing colonies of settlement. The system

they organized in their exploitation colonies was maintained and reproduced with a minimum of participation by the local social groups. The degree of freedom of the social classes, including the dominant ones, was thus reduced to a minimum.

It is self evident that the planters of the Caribbean could not control a colonial territory without the unrestricted support of a foreign power. The ratio of enslaved population to whites amounted to 20 to 1, in a well-developed plantation system (e.g. Saint Domingue). In turn, the enslaved population and subsequently the emancipated workers never fought against the planter class alone, but against the metropolitan navy. A colonial territory was not capable of undertaking any type of economic development without some metropolitan sponsorship. The market capital of and therefore any possibility of realizing a product was determined in and by the metropolitan countries. Food production and peasant multi-crop farming flourished in the nineteenth century, but it remained impossible to turn that production into money, much less into capital. It was decided in the metropolitan market which commodities would be exchanged against money and what terms of trade were in effect between exports and imports. In other words, as stated by an observer from Dominica, the population found itself in need not of food, but of money.

If by dominant class one means a class that is capable of designing the features of tomorrow's society and of organizing existing resources in order to satisfy the requirements of such a project, it follows that the Caribbean has never had a dominant class. It is suggested that its class structure should be considered as incomplete. It possesses only classes that

are dominated to various degrees. The planters were and are at the mercy of the metropolitan commercial bourgeoisie, the enslaved population and the emancipated workers who succeeded them, were and are at the mercy of the planters or more exactly of the oppressive machinery which allows the planters to exist.

It will be noted that the proposal stated above, that the class structure of Caribbean society is incomplete, is similar to ideas derived from the theory of dependence. The difference is that this latter body of ideas assumes the existence of an actual or potential national State, which is not argued in this analysis. One is observing a colonial State, and it will later be proposed that the same situation obtains in the neo-colonial State. It is being suggested that the Caribbean dominant class - if it deserves this term - is a daily creation of the metropolitan country, without the sponsorship of which it would immediately cease to exist. The contradiction between the metropolitan countries and the colonies is always primary while the opposition between local dominant and dominated classes is secondary and subordinate to the former. The replacement of English planters by French ones in Dominica and in Saint Lucia is a case in point. We expressed the same idea when we repeatedly suggested that at the local level in the Caribbean, political structures determine the economic fabric of the society and not the opposite. We believe that, although at a world level it may be maintained that economic structures determine political ones, no evidence can be found that their mode of operation in colonies and neo-colonies is similar. The type of colonial (or neo-colonial) State defines the prevailing type of economy.

5. Geopolitics and use of the labour force

The economic exploitation of the Caribbean by the colonial powers did not survive the eighteenth century. In the nineteenth, the land-owning aristocracy and the labour force both experienced poverty, although to different degrees. The planters did not complain of exploitation by the metropolitan countries, but of being forgotten by an ungrateful mother country. The region possessed a single important resource for imperialist development, that is, its strategic position. It could not fall into a political vacuum similar to the economic vacuum which had characterized Latin America in the previous century.

Until the struggle between imperialist powers were resolved, no country of the region obtained independence. The frequent military interventions in Haiti, its occupation during the early years of this century and the fact that it was kept under economic tutelage until the Second World War were merely moments in the cancellation of what had been obtained by the Revolution of 1803. The independence war of Cuba and the subsequent creation of a neo-colonialist State as a model of political organization, as well as the occupation of the Dominican Republic and the phenomena which followed it aimed in the same direction. I would venture to propose that political independence appeared in the Caribbean after the Second World War. That of the Dominican Republic aborted, and two types of independence remained: that of revolutionary Cuba on the one hand, and that of the English speaking Caribbean on the other. The first type broke with neo-colonialism by creating a socialist State with the massive support from the Soviet Union, and in the second, a type of independent State is still being negotiated with great difficulty - through the Fedreation, Carifta and now Caricom. From 1975 on, the other countries of the area followed the same path, still quite timidly, with the creation of the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee (CDCC).

The geo-political role performed by the Caribbean in the world map from the nineteenth century on was complemented by a passive role in economic areas. Besides sugar, the region did not produce many things: and even in that case, production had to be protected against the free play of market laws by subsidizing it and creating a guaranteed quota system. All this did not prevent a series of labour disturbances from spreading through the colonies or the need to support iron-fisted military dictatorships in the neo-colonies. It was then and only then that the issues of political autonomy - self-government - and universal suffrage were raised. These measures along with the development policies which were implemented since the war - development understood as improvement in the standards of living - made possible the emergence of a middle class, a phenomenon which had not been observed in the Caribbean since the time of the freed men in the eighteenth century.

In the first half of the twentieth century, while the Caribbean share in the markets of products and raw materials was being reduced, its supply of labour force on the international market was increasing, parallel to the strengthening of the imperialist system through the development of transnational corporations. Labour migration began in the direction of the ephemeral growth poles of the Basin. It started with the contracting for the construction of the Panama Canal, the sugar and banana plantations of Cuba, Dominican Republic and Central America, and the oil fields of Venezuela and the Netherlands Antilles. Remittances towards the countries of origin did not put an end to stagnation in the local economies nor did they prevent the labour disturbances referred to above.

After the Second World War, local economic structures, experienced no outstanding changes. The development of tourism and of mining favoured the progress of the transnationals which sponsored them, and the form of labour participation in these activities did not vary from what was observed at the beginning of the century in Panama or Venezuela. The intra-Caribbean migration was replaced by a long range one, but this time considerable improvements were to be observed in the standards of living of the colonized

countries.

In other words, there were both an increase in services made available to the population and an unprecedented out-migration in the post-war Caribbean colonies. The large cities of the north Atlantic were (and are) all besieged by social security. Forty years after the war, the non-independent countries (with the exception of Montserrat) undeniably have the highest standards of living in the entire Caribbean. The Netherlands Antilles, Guadeloupe, Martinique, and Puerto Rico cannot be offered as models of economic organization, but indeed represent examples of high standards of living for the workers of the neighbouring islands.

Migration before and after the Second World War tended to produce an equalization in the standards of living, although not necessarily in the wages of the workers. It is not clear that payment of the work force employed in the Caribbean before the war can be conceived of as a wage. The workers began to receive salaries when they migrated towards the so-called growth poles. Their remittances were a first element of equalization in the standards of living. They did not however appear sufficient to explain the progress observed, especially in view of the fact that this progress was more substantial in the non-independent countries, whose emigration process did not appear to be markedly different:

Together with the acceleration of the Caribbean diaspora the metropolitan countries - The United States, England, France and Holland, - made investments for the improvement of the standards of living in the region. They can be interpreted either as a measure of containment of the migration flows, or as efforts at training the labour force heading towards the metropolitan countries; in either case, it appears to us that they may be considered as a price paid for the use of the strategic position of the territories referred to. The non-independent countries would be those which were most used for strategic purposes and which, therefore, would receive better payment. We are proposing that the difference between the standards of living in Barbados and Martinique, Curaçao and St. Kitts, Haiti

and Puerto Rico, is due less to a difference in indigenous economic structures than to the value of these territories in the world geo-politics.

There is no doubt that some of the metropolitan countries noted above and especially Holland now lack vital strategic interests in the Caribbean, and would gladly repeat the British policy consisting of getting rid of a burden which for them had lost much of its usefulness. We will return to this last point. It should simply be noted here that Holland would definitely achieve this objective if it were not for the fierce opposition of the population involved. The latter, not perceiving any economic advantage in political independence, maintains that "it is just as colonialist an attitude to occupy a country against its will as it is to force it, against this same will, to achieve independence". The logic of international negotiations undertaken by the Caribbean is rooted in this form of opposition to the designs of the colonial powers.

6. The terms of social negotiation

Although the standards of living in the non-independent territories compare favourably to those of the other countries of the Caribbean, they are still patently inferior to those of the dominated classes of the metropolitan countries. From this emerges one of unexpected consequences of colonialism and neo-colonialism. In contrast to the integration into the labour market of the European migrants of the nineteenth century, the present absorption into this market of the colonized workers, far from destroying the national loyalties, inflames them. Not only do they recreate their "little homeland" and its far-reaching differences, on foreign soil, but they sustain the economic life of the island with their remittances and they enrich its peculiar culture with new productions.

In the colonies and neo-colonies of the Caribbean, it is as if the perpetuation of the proximity to and of the difference from the metropolitan country were two inseparable parameters in the negotiation of the value of those territories. The delivery to the colonies and neo-colonies of the services required by the population is obtained if a link is maintained with the metropolitan country, but if at the same time a distinction from the

metropolitans is duly entertained. What is negotiated with the metropolitan country is not political status or economic autonomy. The form and nature of the political and economic institutions may vary in the direction of greater or lesser self-determination. The essential point in dealing with the metropolitan country appears to be the guarantee of a growing standard of living and of respect for human freedom. This emphasis on the quality of life instead of an emphasis on the nature of the institutions regulating the society, would derive from the specificity of the class structure, which, as we are suggesting, lacks dominant groups monopolizing the social negotiation. The ideology and rhetoric of independence cannot overshadow the concrete problems of producing material life. The difference between the Caribbean and Latin American national liberation processes would be located at this level.

The proposal above would explain why the problems of capitalism vs. socialism or communism, raised as an alternative economic and social development, does not manage to receive detailed consideration by Caribbean public opinion. The local economic apparatus, i.e. the size and level of development of the local productive forces, is too weak to receive a treatment of the sort. Within the world economic system, the Caribbean cannot dream of an endogenous and self-sustained production. Its presence within in imperial system is unavoidable. Nevertheless, to the extent that that presence makes itself felt, the lack of assimilation into the system and the terms of the social negotiation are perpetuated. It will be noted that improvements in the standards of living of the workers who live in the Caribbean or in the metropolitan countries are obtained in negotiations which nearly always involve the metropolitan state or its economic representatives. Naturally there are protests against local governments, such as in Curaçao (1969) or Trinidad (1970), but when all is said and done improvements are obtained directly or indirectly from transnational corporations.

Since not all the countries host transnational corporations and mineral resources of interest to these corporations, the difference in their negotiating power introduces certain nuances into the basic proposal. However, it continues to be valid, since, with the exception of Cuba, the standards of living are generally higher in countries which achieved "independence" since the Second World War, and among those countries, they are still higher in those which did not emancipate themselves totally from the colonial system. In any of the latter countries, the inequality in income distribution is several times lower than in Haiti and the Dominican Republic, and the resources and services available to the population considerably higher.

In this century, the following types of Caribbean countries may be distinguished;

a) the neo-colonial countries, that is those who were "occupied" by the United States at a recent date and which became "independent" before the Second World War; these are pre-revolutionary Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Haiti;

b) the colonial countries, which continue to be dependent; Montserrat, Puerto Rico, Guadeloupe, Martinique and the Netherlands Antilles;

c) the colonies which became "independent" after the Second World War, that is, the countries of the Caribbean Community; and Suriname (concerning which our information is insufficient),

In the neo-colonies freed from occupation forces, Cuba, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic, the class structure is as incomplete as it is in the remaining countries. The Cuban popular army, in fact, did not defeat the dominant local class and its army, but North American imperialism itself, as the discourse of the Revolution and post-revolutionary history show.

Now, either because of the features of Spanish colonization, or the independent history of nineteenth-century Haiti, in these countries creole landed aristocracies have emerged, entertaining with the rest of the population social relations fairly similar to those observed in the Latin American continent. Negotiations with the outer world are monopolized by those sectors, facilitating the creation by the United States of civil and military bureaucracies which nursed among others, Trujillo, Batista and Magloire. The volunteers of the National Security or the Tonton Macoute are a Haitian creation, but they do not differ from the armies mentioned above with respect to their source of power. In the social negotiation established between these countries and the United States, investments were made in each country which did not succeed in substantially improving the productive structures and the standards of living of the population. The military and civil bureaucracies remained with the benefits of those investments and the population with its proverbial poverty.

In the colonial countries which are still dependent, where the armed forces continue to be a colonial army, once self-government is achieved, the local bureaucracy is faced with the need to legitimize its existence and establish a prudent distance between itself and the representative of the colonial power. It distributes religiously although not always rationally the payment it receives for the use of the territory's strategic position. The phenomena of corruption does not affect public funds directly and blatantly. In addition, in these countries, liberal democracy, individual freedoms and trade-union rights are expected and used as the ideological bases for those bureaucracies to accede to power.

It is a serious mistake to believe that the populations living in those conditions do not appreciate political independence. Indeed in any of the islands mentioned, the use in daily life of languages which are not those of the colonizers appears to indicate the stubborn preservation of their particular way of life. Mention has already been made that even in the diaspora these populations reproduce their life-style and we do not believe that there exists any evidence of their national identity being in any more danger than that of the independent countries. It may be proposed that the populations referred to would consider political independence only if it were capable of ensuring an even higher standard of living than the one they have.

In the colonies which became independent, the countries of the Caribbean Community (and Suriname), a phenomenon similar to the previous case occurred with respect to the features of income distribution and liberal democracy. But those countries (with the exception of Suriname) belonged to the British Community. Their number added one element more to the negotiating power they possessed because of their ^{geo}political situation. The protection of the standards of living achieved so far appears to have lain in the collective manipulation of this increased bargaining power. There lay the strength and the ups and downs of Caricom (and of CDCC).

In addition, especially after the Second World War, the collusion of interests between England and the United States did not seem to justify a British acceptance of too many sacrifices in order to ensure a comfortable negotiating position in relation to the hegemonic country. In contrast to the other European colonial powers, the British Empire was thus in a position to avoid the need to finance the colonies which had become useless for its

own objectives. These colonies, in turn, having ways of obtaining collectively funds from sources better endowed than England, logically began to evolve towards "independence".

Among the countries of the Caribbean Community, Guyana and Belize inherited certain problems created by England in its imperialist expansion. The interesting and naturally irritating element for the Latin American countries affected is the way in which especially Belize defends itself. We believe that it exemplifies to perfection the logic of the path to national liberation chosen by the Caribbean. According to the Belizeans, it is as if they were not the ones having conflict with Guatemala. This would be a matter concerning England and which it is up to England to resolve without affecting the rights of the population which it transplanted into the territory. In other words, it is up to Great Britain to make the political independence of Belize viable. At a practical level, Belizeans know very well that some 2 000 English soldiers are worth more than the entire Belizean population in a fratricidal war with Guatemala. It is unfortunate but true that the murder of some American nuns in El Salvador had quite different weight in "international opinion" than the still unfinished killing of the population of that country. Be that as it may, until now the defence of Belize has not involved the militarization of the country and the maintenance of order does not appear to be departing from the standards of liberal democracy. Guyana did not follow the same direction in search for a solution to its conflict with Venezuela, but it might be wondered whether the army of that country has any importance for the defence of the national territory. One might think that from this point of view, it would be less costly to use the English men for the job.

The various types of countries mentioned, including Suriname, are facing the problem already referred to of migration outside of the Basin, and for which we lack a single set of explanation. In the case of the neo-colonies, migration is accompanied by a deterioration in standards of living; it is concomitant with an improvement in the standards of living in the colonial countries whether they have become independent or not; and finally in socialist Cuba it occurred to an extent similar to that of the remaining countries. It could be argued that this is due to specific causes for each group of countries; but one must also confront the need to account for the also generalized resistance to being absorbed by the receiving society. What is more, it appears to us that any research which is undertaken on the nationality of persons born in the Caribbean who adopted United States, Dutch, Canadian, French or English citizenships, would reveal that they continue, with no concern whatsoever, to identify with their native land, when not with the native land of their parents.

For whatever reason, this phenomenon gives a new dimension to the Caribbean situation, one which approximates it more to the Jewish case. The Caribbean States have allies in the metropolitan countries, who even possess metropolitan citizenship. They do not control the mass media nor the financial system; but all aspects of current daily life in the large cities of the North Atlantic depend upon them: from the underground to public hygiene. Their dialogue is not with the transnationals but with the common people of the metropolitan countries, those who received the least benefit from the imperialist ventures; i.e. the United States Negro, the Chicano, besides the other proletarianized minorities of Mexicans, Colombians, Pakistanis, Indians, Spaniards, etc.

To the extent that the people from the Caribbean do not become integrated into the metropolitan countries, they constitute the most advanced of the social forces of the region. They possess, along with the emigrated Mexicans, Colombians and Peruvians, one of the keys to welfare and peace for all of America. They are once more in a strategic place, but one which appears designed to integrate a Third World-oriented geopolitics.

7. Our America in the twenty-first century

In conclusion, it appears to us that, despite their lack of large territories, numerous populations and outstanding natural resources, the Caribbean countries because of their position in world geopolitics, have certain possibilities of obtaining and protecting relatively satisfactory standards of living. In their case, what is commonly understood as development of the productive forces have no meaning. The Strategy for the Third Development Decade, developed at a meeting held by ECLA in Barbados, correctly notes that development in this region is defined as the maximization of the negotiating capacity of the whole and its individual parts.

To understand and acknowledge the logic of this position, it is necessary to question several ideas that are solidly rooted in intellectual circles or at least to nuance them. The recent history of the Caribbean appears to suggest three ideas:

a) The task initiated by the theory of dependence should be continued and the limitations of national States in their management of a planetary economy recognized. It is difficult to conceive the independence of the Caribbean without support from the dominated classes in the metropolitan countries.

b) Political independence by itself is not a value for all social classes. It should be recalled that a society does not need dominant classes and that the State apparatus serves the latter on many occasions as docile

midwife and experienced nurse. In other words, not all "political independences" are beneficial since they can create conditions for the establishment (or re-establishment) of creole oligarchies that are more difficult to combat ideologically and politically than colonialist ones. Political independence is only a means (a path) to ensure successive improvements in the quality of life. Both colonial societies and others must give primary encouragement to the emergence of the majority groups and their participation in the solution of their own problems.

c) The large cities of the industrialized countries are the real place in which regional integration takes place and should be given priority as a subject for Caribbean studies. It is to them that the migrants bring their knowledge and work. The state which receives them must attend to their demands and will attend to them within the normal framework of class struggles. Those migrants also show an unquestionable national loyalty and perform an important role in maintaining the standards of living of the region. The Caribbean States should offer the services necessary to ensure that contribution and will end up doing so because they need to safeguard their negotiating power vis a vis developed countries.

It can be stated categorically that no Caribbean State ventures to offer services to its nationals abroad. The truth is that, as far as we know, the need for that task is not even perceived. This paper does ~~not~~ not approach that issue; at most we wish to establish the fact that it is urgent to undertake specific and fairly wide-ranging actions oriented in that direction.

However, we would like to point out that although migrants are capable of accepting sacrifices which have the effect of alleviating not only the living conditions of their close relatives, but of reducing the

economic difficulties of the national society in general, it would be fair for the latter to make a corresponding contribution, if only on the basis of a simple cost-benefit calculation. The migrants need certain services which the receiving society cannot, and at times will not offer; mention may be made of legal assistance in cases of conflict with the immigration authorities, information on workers' rights and available social services, organization of leisure time and provision of cultural events by the mother country, information on national achievements and crises, teaching of mother tongues and provision of grading materials in them, facilities for tourism and temporary return to the native country, information on customs and habits of the metropolitans and of other ethnic minorities residing in the receiving countries.

The fact of interest is that those persons, by integrating themselves into the market economy, are in a position to pay for services which besides helping them to establish themselves with less conflicts, will provide at the same time more reasons not only to make remittances to their native country, but to become interested in the global negotiations between their country and the former colonial powers.

The immediate objection raised by these ideas is that the governments of the region, because of the very fragility of the system of negotiation with the metropolitan countries, will not carry out any of these measures. This argument makes no distinction between political will and political structure. If the governments do not do so, the States will, proof of this trend is the fact that leaders of opposition parties travel to the metropolitan countries to solicit support and funds from the migrants. In other words, the very logic of Caribbean development implies an acceleration of contacts with the diaspora and a social praxis able to bring benefits

to nationals on both sides of the ocean. We therefore suggest that there would be no harm in planning process.

If common denominators could link all Caribbeans inside and outside of the area, and if the migrants were inserted more appropriately into the class structure of the receiving societies, it would follow that the terms of the North-South relations would ipso facto be altered. A better insertion into the metropolitan class structure implies a new type of relationship with Latin America, and it would appear that the Mexican and Colombian migrants, within the scope of these thoughts, become necessary intermediaries between the two regions which form the sub-continent.