

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

FJM-10

Anguilla, W.I.

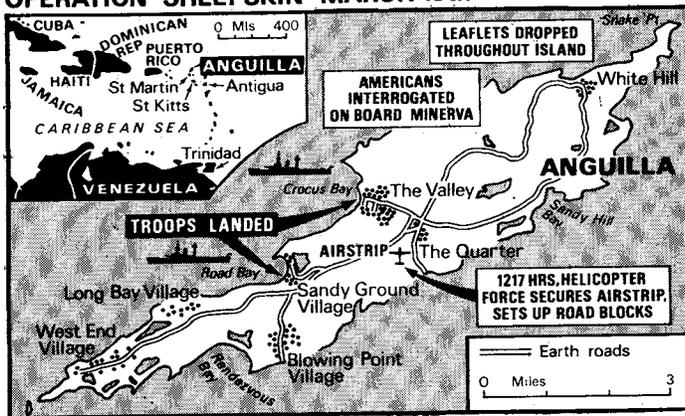
Anguilla: Operation Sheepskin.

April 15, 1969.

Mr. Richard H. Nolte,
 Executive Director,
 Institute of Current World Affairs,
 535, Fifth Avenue,
 New York, 10017,
 N.Y.

Dear Mr. Nolte:

OPERATION 'SHEEPSKIN' MARCH 19th



The planning for 'Operation Sheepskin', code name for the invasion of the rebel island of Anguilla, began at a Cabinet Defence meeting held on the evening of Friday, March 14. During this meeting, it was decided that Colonel Richard Dawney, Commanding Officer of the 2nd Parachute Regiment would fly to Antigua on Saturday in order to formulate details of the invasion and cable them back to Whitehall on Sunday.

As a result of Colonel Dawney's plan, a landing of 331 British paratroopers and marines took place the following Wednesday morning, March 19, at 5:30 A.M. Greeted by approximately sixty television and press reporters who had dubbed the invasion "Bay of Piglets", a platoon of Red Devil paratroopers accompanied by a small detachment of British Marines waded onto the shore of Crocus Bay from H.M.S. Minerva. At the same time another detachment of Marines was landing further west on the island at Road Bay from the frigate H.M.S. Rothesay.



British paratroops (Red Devils) boarding H.M.S. Minerva in Antigua (above) and following invasion on Anguilla (below)



Message to the people of Anguilla from the British Government

When Mr. Whitlock came to Anguilla on 11 March he made proposals under which Her Majesty would appoint a Commissioner to deal direct with you.

These proposals are in the real interests of the people of Anguilla. They would permit peaceful progress under an orderly Administration, formed of people you can trust.

Mr. Whitlock came unarmed and was forced to leave the Island by a small group of people who used the threat of weapons to prevent him from discussing his proposals with you.

It is not our purpose to force you to return to an Administration you do not want.

Our purpose is to end intimidation so that you can live in peace and express your opinions without fear.

Her Majesty's Government have therefore taken the necessary measures to appoint Mr. Lee as Her Majesty's Commissioner so that there can be peace, stability and progress in the Island. He comes as your friend.

Please co-operate with him and with the Police and Armed Forces who have come to assist him.

The quicker law and order is restored, the sooner you can resume a normal and peaceful life.

Copy of leaflet dropped by British as they invaded



Above, British bobbies play football with Anguillians while below, another constable tries to keep order. Ronald Webster is to his left.



5.

Neither landing met any opposition from the Anguillans (Ronald Webster having told his Defence Force that resistance was futile) and by six A.M. that morning these troops were moving easily in double file toward the key points of the island. Roadblocks were established at three different intersections on the island, the airstrip was secured (a helicopter from H.M.S. Rothesay landed a section of paratroopers on the runway), supplies were landed by an Andover aircraft and a large Hercules followed to drop light jeeps by parachute.

By 6:30 A.M. the Senior Naval Officer of the West Indies, Commodore Lucey, reported to London that Operation Sheepskin had been a success, that the island had been secured, that the leaflets explaining H.M.G.'s policy regarding Anguilla had been distributed by helicopter and that Tony Lee, duly sworn in as the Island's Commissioner, had gone ashore.



Asst. Commissioner Way

With Lee went Assistant Commissioner Andrew Way, a burley 235 pound Scotland Yard Inspector, (Way was too large to be fitted into tropical gear so he was forced to wear his 16 ounce uniform intended for use in London) who was placed in charge of the forty British Bobbies used to police the island. These men were drawn from London's Special Patrol Groups and are usually employed to flood an area where there have been an unusual number of crimes. They place a premium on mobility. For the Anguilla job, the Bobbies were required to resign from the Metropolitan Police Force and were reassigned to the Foreign Office. The exact composition of these police is one Superintendent, two Inspectors, three Sergeants, and forty Constables.

Lee's authority as Commissioner had been affirmed Tuesday morning, March 18, in what has become known in Parliament as the Anguilla Order in Council. This document, providing for the appointment of a Commissioner to exercise responsibility for the administration of Anguilla, gave Lee the powers formerly exercised by the St. Kitts Government and consequently, Lee became Prime Minister, Cabinet, Legislature and Judiciary all in one. The Order legally takes its authority from section 7 (2) of the West Indies Act, 1967, which states that:



Above: Tony Lee on the left trying to outline H.M.G.'s policy on Anguilla for newsmen. On the right is Mr. Cecil Greatorex, Information Officer.

Below: Lee meets the hostility of Anguillan opinion with obvious patience and with great earnestness.





Communication media: Above, a news conference the afternoon of the landings. Below, Lee prepares to tour Anguilla to speak to the Anguillan people.



8.

"Where it appears to Her Majesty that in the interests of the responsibilities of Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom relating to defence and external affairs a change should be made in the law of an associated state, Her Majesty may by Order in Council expressly stating that fact make, as a part of the law of that state, such provision as appears to Her Majesty to be appropriate, including (if by reason of war or other emergency it appears to Her Majesty to be necessary and that fact is expressly stated in the Order) provision derogating from the provisions of the Constitution of that state relating to fundamental rights and freedoms."

Because of the importance of the Order in Council (the legal basis of H.M.G.'s invasion of the island), the difficulties it poses for the future, legal position of Anguilla vis-a-vis St. Kitts and Great Britain and because of the confusion or duplicity this Order has made of H.M.G.'s justification for Operation Sheepskin, the complete text of the Order is given below:



New York Times

"Whereas Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Government of the Associated State of St. Christopher Nevis and Anguilla (hereinafter called "the Associated State") have consulted together concerning the situation that now exists in Anguilla and have agreed that appropriate measures should be taken to restore law and order in Anguilla and to preserve the territorial integrity of the Associated State in order to ensure that the discharge of the responsibilities of her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom under the West Indies Act 1967 (a) relating to defence and external affairs is now prejudiced:

And whereas it appears to her Majesty that in the interests of the responsibilities of her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom relating to defence and external affairs, a change should be made in the law of the Associated State whereby provision is made for the exercise in Anguilla of certain functions by her Majesty's Commissioner in Anguilla:

And whereas the Government of the Associated State who, subject to the provisions of the West Indies Act 1967 are responsible for the peace, order and good government of Anguilla have signified their agreement that such provision should be made by Order of her Majesty in Council:

Text of the Emergency Order in Council, Continued.

Now, therefore, her Majesty in exercise of the powers conferred upon her by section 7(2) of the West Indies Act 1967 is pleased by and with the advice of her Privy Council, to order, and it is hereby ordered, as follows:-

1. (1) This Order may be cited as the Anguilla (Temporary Provision) Order 1969.
- (2) This Order shall come into operation on such date as a Secretary of State may by order appoint.
- (3) This Order shall cease to have effect on such date as a Secretary of State may by order appoint.
2. (1) In this Order - "the Commissioner" means such person as her Majesty may appoint by instrument under her sign manual and signet to be her Majesty's Commissioner in Anguilla for the purposes of this order and includes any person appointed by her Majesty to act in that office:
"the Constitution" means the Constitution of the Associated State (b); and
"the Courts Order" means the West Indies Associated States Supreme Court Order 1967 (c).
- (2) The Interpretation Act 1889 (a) shall apply, with the necessary adaptations, for the purpose of interpreting this Order and otherwise in relation thereto as it applies for the purpose of interpreting and in relation to Acts of the United Kingdom Parliament.
3. (1) The Commissioner shall have such powers and other functions as may be conferred upon him by this Order or any other law for the time being in force in Anguilla.
- (2) In the exercise of the functions conferred upon him by this Order or any other law as aforesaid the Commissioner shall act in accordance with such instructions as may from time to time be given to him by her Majesty through a Secretary of State.
- (3) The question whether the Commissioner has complied with any such instructions as aforesaid shall not be enquired into in any court of law.

Text of the Emergency Order in Council, Continued.

4. (1) The Commissioner may by regulations make provision for securing and maintaining public safety and public order in Anguilla and generally for securing and maintaining within Anguilla, as part of the Associated State, such conditions as are required in the interests of the responsibilities of her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom relating to defence and external affairs.
- (2) Regulations under the fore-going subsection may amend, suspend or revoke any law for the time being in force in Anguilla other than the Constitution or the Courts Order.
5. So long as this Order is in operation and subject to any regulations made under section 4 of this Order, all laws for the time being in force in Anguilla (except the Constitution and the Courts Order) shall have effect as if any function conferred thereby upon the Governor, the Cabinet or any Minister of the Associated State were exercisable by the Commissioner to such extent as he may consider necessary for the purposes mentioned in section 4(1) of this Order.

This document has been the focus of much debate within the Commons and in the British Press. In Parliament the Opposition Tory Party Leader, Edward Heath criticized the nature and timing of the Anguilla invasion, and also questioned the failure of the British Government to find some other way other than the use of force to solve the Anguilla problem. It seemed to him that the section of the West Indies Act which the Government had used as authority for its actions had been "stretched to the limit, far beyond its normal or previous meaning".

In the British Press there was also questioning of the legality of the use of troops on Anguilla and a debate over the powers given to Tony Lee under the authority of the Order in Council. Generally, two objections were noted about Lee's authority. The first was that the case for British intervention derived from H.M.G.'s responsibility for Foreign Affairs and Defence. However, as Heath and the press noted, the Anguillan situation was an internal matter over which Britain had no rights to intervene.



A tired Tony Lee above and a determined Ronald Webster below



Jensen



"Outrageous how' people still use any tiny excuse to vilify me!"



Paps.

'Get yourself some kith and kin'

Cartoons from British press: Above left, Daily Mirror; below, the Guardian. Above right, The Spectator and below, The Times.



THE SMACK OF FIRM GOVERNMENT.



Pandora's Box

The second and more serious objection queried the wide-ranging powers granted Lee in administrating the island. Critics noted that the West Indies Act of 1967 makes no provision for derogating fundamental rights and liberties of the citizens of the Associated State unless "by reason of war or other emergency it appears to Her Majesty to be necessary and that fact is expressly stated". Yet Clause 3 (2) of the Order in Council gives Lee the power to "act in accordance with instructions as may from time to time be given him by Her Majesty through the Secretary of State; and Clause 3 (3) goes further by stating that "the question whether the Commissioner has complied with any such instruction shall not be enquired into in any court of law". Critics of British policy contend that this puts Lee well outside of the law with no legal justification, that the Order in Council is an abuse of the original West Indies Act, that there is no war or similar emergency and that the Order has deprived the people of Anguilla of their fundamental rights and freedom.

Aside from the possible illegality of the British invasion, critics pointed to its duplicity and its "absurdity". Specifically, comment faulted Britain for its use of force in Anguilla while doing nothing about the rebellion in Rhodesia; for poor diplomacy; for failing to clarify its position regarding Anguilla's future; for bad timing ("too much, too late"); for being over-dramatic in charging Mafia control on the island, and for failure to date to find the guns the islanders were supposed to have obtained from American sources. (After twenty days of search only twenty-eight weapons have been found).

The Times of London, in a series of editorials critical of British policy on Anguilla, expressed the feeling "that those who were responsible for deciding policy have completely lacked imaginative insight into the minds of the people with whom they were dealing..... What is so odd is that anyone should have thought that the right way to deal with the Anguillan situation was by a dramatic display of force."

The Guardian's comment -- "Too Much and Too Late"-- warned that "flea-bites can turn septic, and for the British Government the Anguillan Affair may yet prove to be poisonousa small matter has been badly handled.... too late with too little explanation".

In the United States, reaction from the New York Times was sceptical: "The lack of bloodshed was one of the few credit marks earned by any of the parties and outsiders will expect early evidence to support the notion that the real enemy here is some mafioso descendent of Captain Kidd".

The Washington Post said that "London looks silly. What is left to it now is to do something substantial to upgrade the welfare and status of Anguilla so as to level off the discrepancies which made Anguilla fearful of federation with St. Kitts. If Britain is to release Anguilla back into the Caribbean federation -- and this is a better solution than setting up a mini-state -- then Anguilla should be given the benefits of a fair launching".

The Chicago Tribune ridiculed Britain declaring that "British valour has at one stroke wiped out the stain of Dunkirk, Singapore and other debacles of British arms in recent memory".

Obviously hedging on the issue, the State Department said that "Washington shared an interest in Caribbean stability and sympathized with Britain's long range goal of maintaining prosperity in the islands", adding that, in Anguilla's case, "the Monroe Doctrine does not apply".

In France, Le Figaro wrote somewhat ironically: "It is the case with islands as with daughters when they are too poor; they run the risk of falling into the temptation of gallantry ... that is what happened to Anguilla".

Le Monde's impression, in a long editorial, was that the problem "could have been settled without resort to a military operation".

Tass, the Soviet news agency reported that by its action on Anguilla "Britain had discredited itself by a new crime against 6,000 strong people of Anguilla". The official New China News Agency said "the armed threat against independent Anguilla once again laid bare the ugly features of the rapidly declining British imperialism which was still putting up a last ditch struggle".

Only in Holland, in the independent newspaper Algemeen Dagblad was there some sympathy for Britain's position editorializing that it was necessary for Britain to quell a reign of terror. "The British Government knew well what it was doing".

In the Caribbean, where the Anguillan crisis has had front page attention for the past month, commentary has been divided between support and condemnation of British policy. Of the "Big Four" independent countries in the region, Jamaica and Trinidad have condemned the use of force and called upon Britain to withdraw its troops, while, on the opposing side, Barbados and Guyana have supported Britain's case. In general, aside from Grenada and St. Vincent, the Associated States have sided with Barbados and Guyana and also support Britain. (An Associated State is independent except for external affairs and defence -- Anguilla was once part of such a State.)

Consequently, the region has been divided over the issue and the heads of state in the Caribbean have tried to avoid making Anguilla too great a source of conflict. In some cases, however, the opposition party has used the Anguillan affair to embarrass the party in power. In Antigua for example Opposition Leader, Robert Hall of the People's Labour Movement condemned Premier Vere Bird's decision to allow British troop carriers to use Antigua's airport and dock facilities, and in St. Vincent, Opposition Leader Mr. Ebenezer Joshua cabled British Foreign Secretary Michael Stewart demanding that Britain pull out its troops from Anguilla. In St. Kitts, Deputy Premier, Mr. Paul Southwell accused "certain West Indian Governments (Trinidad and Jamaica) of being "two faced". Southwell pointed out that at a recent summit meeting of all heads of Government in the Caribbean, a resolution was unanimously passed calling upon Great Britain "to take whatever steps were necessary to confirm the territorial integrity of St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla". He queried why some had reneged on that resolution.

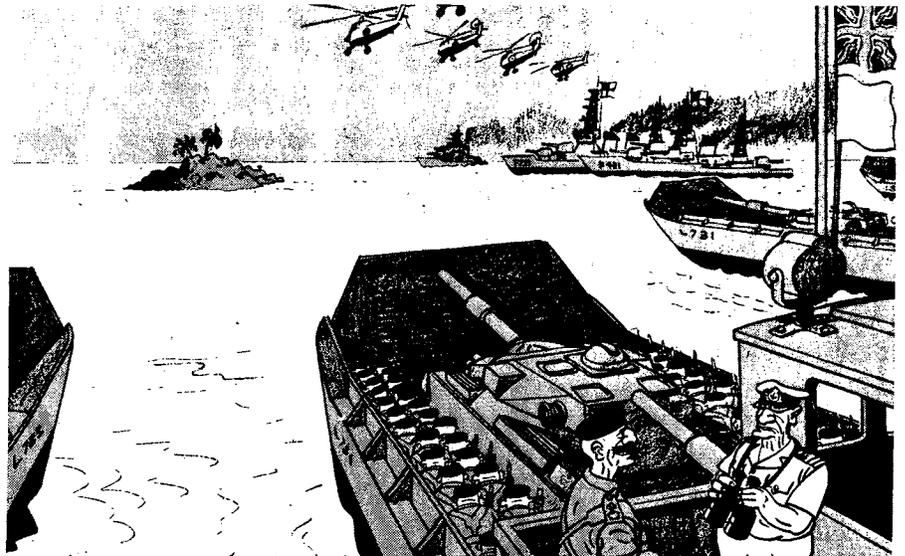
The resolution of the Heads of Government Conference (held on February 3-7 this year) was therefore the focus of a heated debate. Countering Southwell's charge, Prime Minister Eric Williams of Trinidad declared that he had never agreed to the use of force on Anguilla and that Britain had not consulted him about it. Williams then asked: "What I want to know now, is what is Britain going to do about Rhodesia?". Then, turning to a favourite theme, Dr. Williams said that "the only answer to political fragmentation is economic integration in the West Indies". He then called for a re-examination in depth of the whole system of Associate Statehood: "For if Britain had given some thought two years ago to this innovation in the Caribbean, the present squalid dispute between St. Kitts and Anguilla need never have happened".

In the Caribbean, Hugh Shearer of Jamaica was the most outspoken critic of Britain's use of troops in Anguilla: "The Anguillan situation involves the right of every state to self-determination. We will not support the Government in any course that is contrary to basic rights in keeping with the charter of the United Nations. We call for prompt withdrawal of British forces from Anguilla!"

Trinidad Guardian

"Before we actually storm ashore.

you're sure it is Anguilla?"



Barrow

Williams

Shearer



Barbados' Prime Minister, Errol Barrow, came out in support of the British however. In a statement in the House of Assembly, he gave an explanation for his position by saying it was his understanding that all Governments in the region had agreed that Britain should take whatever steps were necessary to deal with the Anguilla problem. "The only difference between my position and that of Dr. Eric Williams was on the matter of timing: I was for immediate action; he was for a waiting period of some weeks". Continuing, Barrow gave a detailed explanation for his conclusion that Anguilla's situation required "immediate action". The text of his statement, because it illustrates one side of the argument so clearly, follows below:

"The unanimous statement issued by the Fifth West Indian Heads of Government Conference on 7th February this year explicitly stated that the Conference saw Anguilla's attempt to secede illegally from the State of St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla as disturbing to peace in the region. Delegates reaffirmed their commitment to the democratic process as the basis of all Governments in the Commonwealth Caribbean, and the Conference called upon Great Britain to take all necessary steps in collaboration with the Government of the State to confirm the territorial integrity of St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla.

"Mr. Speaker, no responsible Government can lightly advocate that each fragment of a State which has just grievances should seek to solve its problems by declaring itself independent. No one has sought to offer so simplistic a solution to other similar cases that currently exist. We in the Caribbean have acquired some expertise in the ancient art of destroying Federations. We really do not need to try our skills on unitary States.

"What has particularly disturbed us is the evidence that some of the solutions which have been mooted in Anguilla were clearly not inspired by patriotism or a real concern for the good of Anguillans themselves. It has been clear for some time that there is a foreign element in Anguilla more related to the shark than the sprat, bent on exploiting the constitutional vacuum in its own interest.

"I have with me a copy of the draft Constitution of the Republic of Anguilla - so called. It has some very curious features. Article X1 prohibits the Republic of Anguilla, its Legislators, Executives, or Judiciary from confiscating or "ex-appropriating" - I quote - any business, firm, company or corporation or any property belonging to or possessed by such business, firm, company or corporation either local or foreign, or any holdings acquired lawfully by a citizen or non-citizen, except as may be required by law in support of commercial contracts or levy for debt, unpaid taxes, or other lawful process as may arise out of commercial transactions, personal debt or ordinary disabilities. Article X11 prohibits the Republic or any Government Agency from engaging in any private business or commercial enterprise in competition with any person, firm, company, or corporation, in which a service, facility product or goods is offered for sale, lease, rental fee or other compensation etc. Mr. Speaker, no Government in its right mind and acting of its own free will would bind itself by its very Constitution not to perform acts which are the sovereign right of Governments from time immemorial?

"Three weeks ago, Mr. Speaker, the British Government finally secured the agreement of the legal Government of the State of St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla to a proposal to establish in Anguilla a Commissioner of Her Majesty the Queen to restore the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of the West Indies Associated States, and to offer an amnesty covering all political activities in the past twenty-one months. It was proposed to institute direct rule in Anguilla as an interim measure in the search for a constitutional accommodation. It was not proposed to hand Anguilla and the Anguillans over to St. Kitts.

"These proposals were taken to the Anguillans personally by the hand of a British Minister, who went into the island armed with nothing more than a briefcase and patent goodwill. Anguillian leaders had themselves mooted such proposals before. We can regret that the Whitlock mission was not, perhaps, conducted with the utmost of tact. But we must be disturbed when a legitimate emissary of a legitimate authority is escorted out to the accompaniment of shotgun music.

As for Guyana, its Government's position has been consistently against Anguilla's secession from the start; and the fact that while Anguilla was celebrating its independence in January of this year, the Guyanese Government had its Rupununi uprising which threatened the territorial integrity of the state only reconfirmed the opposition. Fragmentation is Guyana's greatest fear and therefore there is no quarter given regarding Anguilla on its part.

There was strong support for Anguilla in the American Virgin Islands, however, particularly on St. Thomas. There, "a sense of sympathy from Virgin islanders for the people of Anguilla" was expressed by the Senate legislative leader, Senator Earle B. Ottley. Ottley, aware of the fact that Anguillans living on St. Thomas numbered roughly 2,000, spoke of Anguilla's right to self-determination. "It's pretty late in the day for Britain to become interested in Anguilla and in fact the rush to federate them with St. Kitts seemed more like a move to get rid of them ... I speak for the people of the Virgin Islands when I say that we are proud of the courageous people of Anguilla".

In the center of the entire controversy over Anguilla are the two principal antagonists, Commissioner Tony Lee and ousted but still self-proclaimed President of the Republic of Anguilla, Ronald Webster. From the time British Troops landed on the island, each has been aware that Anguilla was too small a place for both of them, and that in the end, one or the other would dominate. Lee of course realized that his task was to try and reconcile the many antagonisms which had been generated by the invasion; and to achieve this he set out to assure the Anguillans of his support for their separation from St. Kitts and his Government's intention "not to force the islanders to accept a regime which they did not want".

At the same time, Webster realized that his position as leader of the Anguillan people depended upon his ability to undercut Lee's popularity and consequently his authority on the island, that if Lee was securely established and accepted by the islanders, his own days as a political power on Anguilla were over. The fact that Britain intended to maintain an administrator on the island for years (that's years with an 's' said Tony Lee) indicates that H.M.G. aimed at developing new political leaders on the island with the hope that more moderate, responsible Anguillans would eventually replace "Webster and Co." (Phase used by British Officials when referring to Ronald Webster and his associates, Jere Gumbs, Wallace Rey and others.)

Consequently, from the days immediately following the invasion, both Lee and Webster vied for the popular support and allegiance of the mass of Anguillans: Lee knowing that without that support he could never effectively administer the island; Webster understanding that mass resentment against Lee could cripple H.M.G.'s plans.

Thus, Lee and Webster held several press conferences, waged propaganda campaigns and radio broadcasts in order to get their respective messages across to the people. Lee established "Radio Anguilla" on the frigate H.M.S. Minerva which beamed the British position on why troops had invaded the island; a jeep with a Union Jack and loudspeaker toured the island announcing British policy; a personal letter from Tony Lee to the Anguillan people was mimeographed and passed out by British paratroopers. Webster meanwhile indirectly organized counter-demonstrations against Lee; and not unlike the confrontation politics of the radical-left in America, he forced the British into the unhappy position of beating back over-eager (Lee called them hoodlums) demonstrators. Webster also used an already sympathetic press in order to carry his position beyond Anguilla where he realized that international opinion could undercut Lee's base back on the island. The United Nations was the perfect setting while the Committee of Twenty-Four (now really twenty-three) became the ideal forum; and so Webster twice went to New York in a space of ten days to pressure Great Britain to remove Lee and to restore to himself some of his former presidential powers.

"Woman is a weak vessel" said Webster, in a recent press conference on the second floor of the United Nations Secretariat, and went on to charge British troops with destroying the moral standards of the Anguillan women. He said "they are forced to comply with British troops carrying guns ... the next nine months will see our proof ... the conduct of British troops is generally bad".

Asked about specifics, Webster went on to relate how two British soldiers had recently been fined and sent home to serve a twenty-eight day brig sentence for "breaking into the home of two old people". This story has been repeated several times, not only by Webster but by Freeman Goodge, an American preacher still living on the island.

The facts of this case were verified by British diplomats who admitted that on one occasion two British troopers had been invited into the home of an Anguillan and had proceeded to become drunk and then asked the householder if he had any women available. The two were arrested by British Bobbies and found guilty of drunk and disorderly conduct, fined and sent home. This has been the only case of trouble caused by British paratroopers; and in fact, the soldiers have been very careful about their conduct.

The consequences of this campaign however, and its outcome are already well known: Lord Caradon, Britain's Representative at the United Nations made two separate trips to the island (during the time, incidentally, when he was in the midst of a four power conference on the Middle East) -- the second visit resulting in Lee's taking a "temporary leave" from the island and the re-appointment of Mr. John Cumber as the new Commissioner. Considering Webster's tactics and the fact that on Anguilla not even the Queen could win a popularity contest with him, the eventuality could have been easily predicted.

The agreement reached by Caradon and the Anguillans, later repudiated by Webster because he claimed Lee did not live up to it, was reached after a series of five meetings held over the weekend of March 28-30. The text of the agreement and a letter from Lord Caradon to the Anguillans follows:

DECLARATION

1. We who sign this declaration believe that what is now needed is a period of constructive co-operation in the interests of all the people of Anguilla .
2. We are convinced that this can be achieved only by working together in agreement and friendship.
3. The administration of the island shall be conducted by Her Majesty's Representative in full consultation and co-operation with representatives of the people of Anguilla.
4. The members of the 1968 Council will be recognised as elected representatives of the people, and will serve as members of a Council to be set up for the above purposes. This Council may be expanded if so desired by election or co-option.
5. Our hope is that this initial period can start at once to enable a very early return to normality and withdrawal of the Parachute Regiment.
6. There will be further consultations, including consultations with Caribbean Governments, on the future of the island.
7. The following undertaking of the British Government given in the House of Commons has been noted: "It is no part of our purpose to put them (the Anguillans) under an Administration under which they do not want to live".

Letter to the seven Members of the 1968 Committee from Lord Caradon, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs. Anguilla. March 30th. 1969.

Before I return to New York I wish to express to each one of you my very sincere gratitude for the welcome you extended to me and for the patience and understanding which you have shown in our long and amicable discussions together. We set ourselves the aim of taking a first step in agreement, and I am happy that we have succeeded. I on my side came to offer **friendship** and co-operation. You have assured me that you respond in the same spirit. Neither you nor I believe that we can achieve a final settlement in a few days. We know that further consultations are essential, and we believe that Caribbean Governments will come forward to help in those consultations. But it is important to start right. That we have done, and we have done it together.



Ronald Webster



Lord Caradon, British Ambassador to the United Nations

Letter to the seven Members of the 1968 Committee from Lord Caradon,
Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Cont'd)

May I add this personal word? You have come through difficult and anxious and troublesome times. But I am convinced that from to-day there is a new bright prospect for the island. I know how strongly you feel your patriotic devotion to your island. I have no doubt that every one of you wishes to serve the interests of all the people of Anguilla to the utmost of your ability. I wish to say that I admire the qualities I have seen in you. I think that we trust each other, and I repeat my promise to come back in the future if you so wish. I should greatly like to help you.

Caradon.

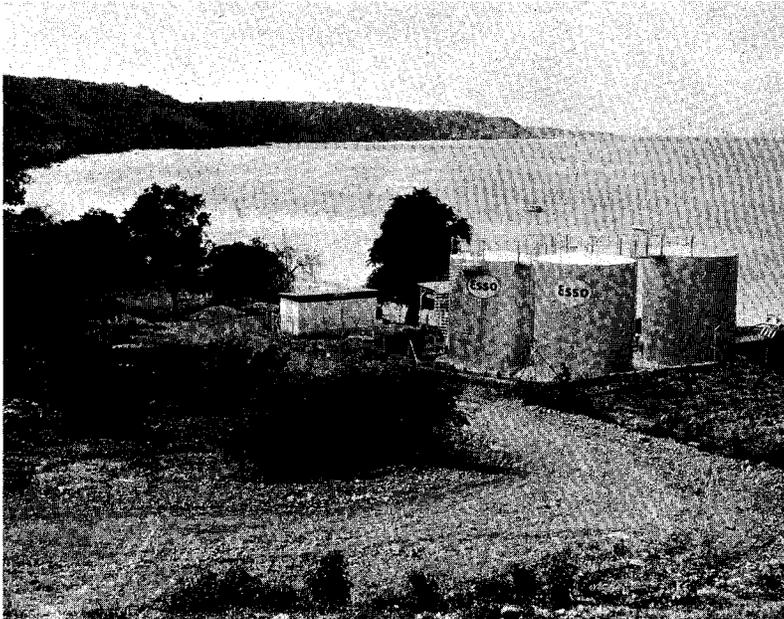
As a "Monday-morning diplomat", it seemed stupid on Britain's part to have sent Lee, the only British Diplomat who really knows and understands Anguilla and Anguillans, onto the island with the troops. He might have been able to do a good job of compromising had he been held in reserve and sent in as "the protector of Anguilla in the British camp" -- as in fact he has been viewed by Anguillans, Webster aside, all along. As it was, Lee became an easy target for Webster's charge that he had brought troops with him.

Lee was also hurt by the fact that no cache of weapons was found to support H.M.G.'s claim that large numbers of rifles and machine guns had been brought to the island by Webster and his American supporters. The pre-invasion build-up of mafia controlled islanders by Under-Secretary Whitlock (see FJM-9) did damage to Lee's more reasoned case of undue influence by American speculators. The British were also unprotected by other Caribbean Governments, particularly Williams in Trinidad and Shearer in Jamaica; and therefore H.M.G. did not have the specific support of West Indian states to use force in Anguilla. Finally, the explanations for the use of troops emanating from Whitehall and in the Commons were weak and left the British vulnerable to Webster's counter-attacks.

Britain, in fact, had a sound case in its interpretation of the situation on the island; and (see FJM-5 and FJM-9) reviewing the past few months, capped by Whitlock's expulsion from the island, it is understandable that H.M.G. considered the island in grave danger as a result of unwise or unscrupulous leadership. Whether the use of troops was wise or necessary is another matter, however, and one that has not been adequately answered by Her Majesty's Government -- either in terms of achieving stability on Anguilla itself or in terms of the costs to Great Britain in world opinion.

There is no question however, in my judgement, as to the correctness of H.M.G.'s analysis of what was happening on Anguilla (aside from the over-dramatized Whitlock statements.) For the past eighteen months, the central question has always been: To whom is Ronald Webster listening today? -- And the response to that question determined the fate of the small island's six thousand people.

Therefore, if, at the time, Webster happened to be under the influence of anyone of five or six "legitimate" advisors -- as opposed to the "wheeler-dealer" variety -- or if, as Chairman of the Island's Council, he had aligned himself with the more honest and reasonable of the Council's membership, one could be optimistic about the island's future. If, however, Webster was seeking the advice of the sharks or power-hungry speculators who came from within and from outside of the island, that optimism dimmed. Thus, the influence of outsiders has always been crucial, throughout the history of the Anguillan problem. For example, compiling an Anguillian "Who's Who", the legitimate advisors would include:



Professor Roger Fisher of Harvard's Law School who first went to Anguilla in July of 1967 as a legal advisor. Fisher wrote the island's first Constitution and continued to assist the Council with its legal problems. When, for example, Esso Standard of New Jersey refused to fill the oil tanks on the island and the fuel situation was desperate, Fisher outlined the procedures for confiscating the tanks and in no time Esso had taken a second thought about the matter and was back re-fueling the island.

(Left: Esso tanks which were requisitioned by Fisher. British troops also landed there.)

Frank McDonald, who arrived on Anguilla in early November of 1967 and became what Ronald Webster called his Executive Administrator. Working with Roger Fisher, McDonald's task was to help and advise the Island Council when they requested assistance, to expedite matters arising from the day-to-day administration of the island, to organize the treasury and check out the numerous offers of assistance which flooded across Webster's desk at the time. With the establishment of the interim agreement on February 1968, and the arrival of Tony Lee, the need for such an advisor was, in the opinion of Ronald Webster and Jere Gumbs, eliminated.

Tony Lee, who, under the terms of the Interim Agreement reached between Anguilla, St. Kitts and H.M.G., was an adviser to the Island Council and responsible for maintaining Anguilla's ties with the Crown. He served as a constitutional link for the islanders as well as a safeguard against over-eager speculators. Lee's influence was generated by his ability to gain the confidence and respect of the islanders.

Professor William Brisk, political scientist and lawyer who spent several weeks on the island with his students from Puerto Rico's Inter-American University. In early February, 1968, Brisk spent much time and effort in compiling an extensive report on Anguilla's problems and then together with his students held a large "Anguilla Conference" in Puerto Rico. Brisk is soon to have a book published about Anguilla.

Clark Abt, who, as head of Abt Associates, agreed to do an economic study of the island's needs and resources for the sum of one dollar. Abt himself spent about a week on the island and did quite a good study of its economic condition and had the study bound in a characteristic, black, psychedelic brochure.

Billy Herbert, leader of the People's Action Movement in St. Kitts and legal advisor to Ronald Webster who has been in and out of Anguilla several times. He has also been in and out of favour several times.

Karl Hudson-Phillips, of Trinidad, who is another legal advisor. Hudson-Phillips accompanied Webster to London in a series of talks with H.M.G. and Robert Bradshaw just prior to the ending of the Interim Agreement. Recently Hudson-Phillips has been in Anguilla and has been outspoken in Webster's behalf, particularly with reference to Webster's anti-British line.

At one time or another, each of these individuals has had an impact on Webster and at one time or another has lost favour with him. Some have regained his ear or helped in other ways apart from having personal contact with the people's leader. Each of the lawyers has been snubbed or disregarded at some point by Webster and often he has listened with only half an ear to their advice. Fisher, for example, has been attacked several times by Webster's closest associates (though no one is really close for an extended time since Webster's tactic seems to be to play one personality off against the other) and on a recent visit to the island he was shouted down by several Anguillians.

On the other side, there were the "wheeler-dealers" who came and went over a period of time and who have, as far as the British are concerned, finally managed to dominate Webster's thinking these past few months. In a sense these speculators and the more legitimate advisors have been engaged in a continuous struggle for Anguilla in so far as each group has attempted to influence Ronald Webster's decisions.



Above and below: Webster being carried or leading in demonstrations against the British landings.



Included in a speculator's Who's Who of Anguilla must be:



Mr. Jere Gumbs, Anguillian born American citizen, who has been the spokesman for Anguilla at the United Nations. Gumbs, considered one of the influences British diplomats would like to undercut, has made it his aim to contest for Webster's ear against all other outsiders. There were also several instances when Gumbs brought speculators to the island, one under indictment for embezzlement. There was even the day he made an offer to a British diplomat suggesting that if the British let him run the island he could oust Ronald Webster. This of course is the same man with his arm around Webster's shoulders as they greeted the press together at the United Nations. Gumbs' aim is obviously very simple: to be the dominate figure in Anguilla's future.

But perhaps a bit of dialogue from Mr. Gumbs would better illustrate the man:

.....describing his inability to get the Anguillans to accept his idea about an International Anguillian Bank....."The trouble is, will I get my people to go for itor to understand it"

.....on the possibility of an invasion from St. Kitts....."They'll be sorry if they attacked us.....When we have finished with them the British Government will have to feed them on crackers and molasses"

.....on the Anguillian people....."They don't know, they don't know... the trouble with them is that colonialism has made the Anguillian a shell"

.....on Jack Holcomb....."He was gonna invest plenty. He wasn't gonna make money for four years...these people don't understand economics. If Webster could worry he'd be worried. Holcomb was gonna build that road, open up that whole area, put value on people's property. But these people don't understand. Look at me. I put this place up (his hotel), I advertised it. I advertised Anguilla. I paid for the hospital. The tourist comes. I advertised"

Freeman Goodge, American Baptist preacher, who has lived on the island for six years. Goodge, while not a dishonest man, is an extremist who can intimidate those he considers not extremist enough. He has never been reluctant to shout down or libel an opponent. Webster has often relied on Goodge's advice.

Jack N. Holcomb, an American from Florida who has become the central "bad guy" figure in the Anguilla affair. Holcomb was deported by Lee on the same day the British troops landed (his comment about Lee was that the Commissioner "had all the diplomacy of a hog on roller skates.....who is happy as long as he can play God on Anguilla and have his bottle of scotch at noon"). Holcomb first arrived on Anguilla in December of last year with a proposal for big money-making projects (see FJM-5). Holcomb had big plans, and they were not confined to development projects. By middle February this year, Webster had appointed him his legal advisor and a practicing lawyer on the island (Holcomb has never had any schooling in law, though he claims to have had "a wide experience in the field of law"). According to some council members, Holcomb was due to become the island's only magistrate as of April 4 had not the British intervened. Consequently, he would have had judicial powers to draw up and legalize any business proposition that came to the island

Holcomb was also fast becoming Webster's personal secretary: it was Holcomb who wrote the second Anguilla Constitution, the declaration of Independence, and who wrote and even typed out all the deportation orders issued to English subjects living on Anguilla the week prior to Operation Sheepskin. Who was Jack Holcomb? He was a man indicted on one count of selling narcotics in California, on two counts of wire tapping and who had nothing to do with building at all. He once held employment as a watchman on a Florida resort among many other odd jobs. Who were his backers? Holcomb claims they were respectable but has refused to say who they were. It is most likely that there were no backers, and that Holcomb's aim was to establish himself firmly on the island, obtain the franchise to develop Anguilla and then peddle his position as an entrenched economic czar to the highest bidders in the States.

The list could be longer, though these and one or two lesser figures had come to dominate Webster's thinking of late. For example, over the course of the rebellion, there was an American doctor who wanted to set up an abortion clinic; another group with a scheme to turn seawater into gold, a Canadian dressed in a sixteen ounce suit who wanted to become the economic adviser on Anguilla in return for guaranteeing the island's independence within two week's time; an American who wanted to set up a floating hotel with the Montreal Exposition boat he had not yet purchased; a Chinese Jew in a kilt who wanted to establish a nudity camp under the pretext of forming a religious cult; a man who said he represented Aristotle Onassis whose Greek shipping line wanted to use Anguilla's flag-- in exchange for a million dollars; a New York banker, A. Hunter Bowman, who had been indicted for embezzling a half million dollars from Marine Midland Bank who wanted to establish the International Bank of Anguilla -- a scheme Jere Gumbs still thinks should work; a Vancouver based Canadian who contracted with Webster to start Radio Anguilla in exchange for several acres of land -- the only catch being that the speculator gave a false address and was wanted by several electronic companies for long overdue bills.

Finally, with regard to the question of arms shipments to Anguilla, there is no doubt that approximately six thousand dollars worth of automatic rifles were purchased by the Anguillians in Chicago. The deal was negotiated by David Bergland, a Chicago veterinarian who had spent several months on Anguilla during the past eighteen months, and who had recently decided to settle on the island and build a cinema above Ronald Webster's grocery store. The last time I saw him he was bringing in provisions for a house he had rented on one of the bays.

According to other reports, Jack Holcomb had also been bringing in arms prior to the invasion in crates which were marked "glass"; but thus far, with the exception of about twenty (20) rifles and one anti-tank weapon found last week, British patrols have been unable to find the cache of weapons buried somewhere on the island. Dauntlessly, they are continuing to search; but if I know the Anguillan ingenuity for hiding things, I doubt these "search and find" patrols will uncover anything more.

Webster, in the meantime, continues to deny any knowledge of the existence of such shipments, and he has also repudiated the other British allegations of outside influences on the island; and he is continuing to keep up the pressure, lately claiming that Anguillan children are so frightened of British troops that they will not go to school. He is also considering another referendum to see if he can document his claim that the Anguillians want the British out.

Beyond Anguilla and the events which have drawn the world's attention to the plight of that isolated, and until four weeks ago, relatively unknown island in the Caribbean, there is the more vital and larger issue of the future of the roughly ninety-six (96) mini-states (like Anguilla) which are hidden in land-locked niches or dot the oceans around the world. In this respect, Anguilla's problems are the common problems shared by the inhabitants of these places: the last remnants of colonial empires which will soon be seeking a fuller independence from their metropolitan powers.

These mini-states (a mini-state is defined as a territory with a population of less than a million or with a very small area size such as Hong Kong or Singapore) are usually fragments of what were once the larger empires of Britain, France, Holland and other lesser powers -- though today the United States has acquired its share of island mini-states, particularly in the Pacific Ocean.

Located over the entire globe, most of them virtually unknown, these territories do actually have an international identity of their own. Some of them are mainland territories (thirty nine); but for the most part they are islands or groups of islands (fifty seven). Of the mainland territories, fourteen are in Africa, five in the Americas, six in Asia, two in Oceania, seven in Europe and five in the Near East. The island mini-states are primarily in the Atlantic Ocean (eleven), the Caribbean (seventeen) and in the Pacific (twenty); but there are also eight mini-territories in the Indian Ocean and two in the Mediterranean.

In the eventual evolution of these territories toward self-government, these units will become more and more the concern of the United Nations -- to which, as Ronald Webster put it, these mini-nations are turning "as babes to a mother". Already proliferating, today there are seventeen mini-states which have full membership in the United Nations -- most of them having been admitted within the past few years. For example, Trinidad and Tobago was admitted in 1962; Malta in 1964; The Gambia and the Maldives Islands in 1965; Guyana, Botswana, Lesotho and Barbados in 1966; and Mauritius, Swaziland and Equatorial Guinea (Rio Muni and Fernando Poo) in 1968. Aside from these mini-states, recently some territories have gained independence and then elected not to join the United Nations. Nauru, an island in the Pacific Ocean with a population of only 6,000 (like Anguilla) has been independent since 31st January 1968, but did not join the United Nations. More are certain to follow.

For the most part, however, these "little bits and pieces" left over after the independence movements of the 1960's are still dependent or non self-governing territories. In fact, of the ninety six (96) recognized, potential mini-states, more than half are non self-governing territories today. Others are Trust Territories (The U.S. Trust Territory in the Pacific has 2,100 islands, over an area of 1,779 square kms.), Associated States (internally self-governing but dependent in terms of external affairs), Protectorates or other international associations with a number of larger powers or nearby states.

In an age of rapid communications, common markets, regional associations and political integration, the idea of mini-states has caused great concern among member states in the United Nations. Most of the membership of the United Nations fear the fact that mini-states are proliferating, that if "insignificant" territories with very minute populations are given statehood status, given time, certain segments of larger states may decide to establish themselves as mini-states as well. As a result, very little has been done to structure acceptable procedures for handling this proliferation.

Theoretically of course, it might be best to have these small places aspire to regional associations or federate. However, as many have learned here in the Caribbean, successful evolution toward political and economic integration is likely only if the people of the separate units understand and prepare for it. As Britain found, to federate little islands without their full co-operation, or to impose association from outside is certain to produce situations like the one between Anguilla and St. Kitts, or worse, like the breakdown of the West Indies Federation in the early 1960's. To expect then that small, isolated territories with long colonial attachments to metropolitan powers should immediately see the benefits or need to federate is pushing the theoretical to the extreme.

Consequently, for the time, mini-states are going to proliferate; and fear of that fact, or to deal with the problem ad-hoc as some wish to do, is a mistake for the larger powers and a misfortune for the mini-units themselves. There can only be other Anguillas as a result.

Apart from the international aspect of the mini-state problem, there are the economic and political difficulties these territories will encounter. Often, these places face the same under-development problems that the larger ex-colonial nations do: lack of developed political institutions, resources, talent and self-sustaining economies. However, because of their size and small population, mini-states must contend with additional difficulties directly related to their "mini-ness".

For example, a remote island often lacks communication or contact with the outside world which results in a vulnerability to the cheap speculation of the "Holcomb" variety; small populations have political structures rooted in family ties where sometimes leaders assume the role of father-figures having unlimited or unquestioned powers; small area size may make one big land owner or a big businessman the dominate figure in the economy -- thus developing economic monopolies, and the paucity of talent is always a problem in small places such that even the most basic professions become under-staffed (an accountant or doctor were always outsiders on Anguilla).

The social patterns of a small community also effect economic and political structures. Rumours play a very large role in the political life of a mini-state. When everyone knows the leader's personal problems, or when everyone is related in some way or another, political opposition tends to take on personal overtones which have to be taken into account. It takes great courage, for example, to risk the animosity of one's wife, in criticizing the political leader of the opposition, if he happens to be her brother.

What happens to these mini-states of the future is gradually becoming recognized as a problem, even if no solutions have as yet been found; and awareness of the existence of mini-states is at least a start in the right direction.

Some concerned with the problems of mini-states suggest that a small office be established at the United Nations which would deal exclusively with the future of such small states. The "office of mini-state affairs" would be a central information center, aiming at providing the evolving units with technical assistance and information about the political options they might have. Others suggest that a new form of non-voting membership -- associate membership -- be established in the United Nations. In association with the U.N., the mini-state would have access to all the specialized agencies and yet further, direct contact with the international community for purposes of settling, or assisting in, any mini-disputes which might develop. The fact that the voting patterns of the U.N. would not be upset should make the present members of the Organization more acceptable to such an idea.

Meanwhile, Anguilla is still a mini-crisis for Her Majesty's Government and the Caribbean. On the island, police have several times been called to restore order as the Anguillans continue to demonstrate against the emergency regulations continued under John Cumber, the replacement for Tony Lee (Lee left for southern France on a well deserved holiday the 19th of April -- a month to the day British troops first landed at Crocus Bay).

Jack Holcomb on the other hand has returned to the Caribbean and has been "vacationing" on nearby St. Martin, an island six miles south of Anguilla. Webster has been in touch with him during the past few weeks and has gone on several "shopping" trips to St. Martin. On one of those trips, Scotland Yard police followed Webster, but were chased off of St. Martin by an aroused crowd sympathetic to Webster.

Some opposition to Webster however is developing. In Atlin Harrigan's BEACON, the editorial last week disputed Webster's reasons for breaking the Caradon agreement and gave departing Tony Lee some support. Because the editorial illustrates the divisions on the island and particularly the moderate point of view, the text is given in full:

The statement by Ronald Webster that H.M. Commissioner had breached the agreement reached by Lord Caradon, and that Mr. Tony Lee declared martial law, seems to be based on a deliberate misunderstanding.



The Interpretation of the agreement signed by Mr. Webster and other members of the Council, made it clear that the island would be administered by H.M. Commissioner, in full consultation and cooperation with the Council, that would consist of the same seven men who were duly elected in 1968. Item 4 specially says, quote, "The members of the 1968 Council will be recognised as elected representatives of the people, and will serve as members of a council to be set up for the above purposes." unquote. If Mr. Webster did not understand the document, he should say so. If it is that he now realises that there is no office of "Chief Executive" under the agreement, and would like to retain that office, then he should impress upon Lord Caradon the necessity of a constitutional conference as soon as possible, to set Anguilla legally on a course with some form of association with Britain. Meanwhile we see no reason why the island could not be administered as agreed, until such constitutional agreements has been reached.

The question of who is Commissioner should not arise at this stage; and let us for the sake of the late and Noble Martin Luther King, and for ourselves, keep racial differences out of it. Mr. Lee we all know very well to be a staunch supporter of Anguilla's cause, this was said by Mr. Webster himself last October when he returned from the London Conference. He told us that Bradshaw had even accused Mr. Lee of being bribed by Anguillans. Even at the end of last year, the council asked H.M.G. to allow Mr. Lee to remain on the island.

He is now a victim of unfounded rumours that have been circulating in this island since the bogus Republic Constitution was introduced. Mr. Webster's other statement that the document that contained martial law was back-dated to 19th March, but made public after the agreement had been reached by Lord Caradon, is also untrue. The Beacon had a copy as of March 24th, (before Lord Caradon arrived). On the outset of this revolution, the aim of Anguilla was to seek some form of association with Britain. Truthfully, the legal string with St. Kitts, is not yet broken, but we have secured a written undertaking from H.M.G. that they will not put us under an administration under which we do not want to live. They also agreed with us to consult other Caribbean Gov'ts on working out a status for Anguilla. We should draw the line some place, and don't let the crave for power strangle us. Let us settle down for this initial period and assess the situation, and make plans for the type of Gov't that is best for us.

Meanwhile, even a month after the launching of Operation Sheepskin, the issue of Anguilla's invasion is still very much a lively debate in the Caribbean -- particularly in Trinidad, where Dr. Eric Williams is quietly trying to repair the fissure between the 'Big Four' over what to do about Britain's use of force. Williams' position, outlined above, is based upon the assumption that the islands of the Caribbean must begin to take charge of their own affairs if the region is ever to become truly independent; but that before this is feasible, the region must begin to act as a single entity, which means economic -- then political -- integration of the West Indies.

This is Williams' dream; a Federation by 1975, in which the mini-states of the Caribbean would finally be in a posture to deal with their own internal problems without having to call upon a former colonial power for help. In this respect, Anguilla has forced the regional heads of government to re-evaluate the question of regional unity and has given Williams another opportunity to demonstrate that unless the West Indies acts as one in the future; the islands will remain politically weak and economically vulnerable mini-states.

Frank Mc Donald

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