

INSTITUTE OF CURRENT WORLD AFFAIRS

FJM-15 Trinidad and Tobago
The Radical Alternatives.

Chaconia Inn,
Saddle Road,
Maraval,
Trinidad, W.I.

August 1, 1969.

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

Dear Mr. Nolte,

Dr. Eric Williams has governed Trinidad for thirteen years and in that time he has practically institutionalized himself. His People's National Movement was, and still is, the first and most effective example of party politics in Trinidad.



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Trinidad's independence and the nationalist movement which spurred it was largely the result of pressure exerted by Williams and PNM organizers. And the economic development of the country has been guided, almost exclusively, according to principals and practices conceived, programmed and implemented by the Doctor. Let Williams interpret Williams:

"The Trinidad and Tobago Government and people have sought, and believe they have found, a middle way between outright nationalization and the old-fashioned capitalist organization backed by the marines and the dollars of the United States of America."

"That middle way is an active partnership between government and major foreign investors in both the formulation and achievement of the Government's development targets and the Government's social objectives. The view of the Government ... is that it is impossible to nationalize an economy which depends on foreign trade more than most countries do, and whose limited domestic market of 900,000 people could not possibly absorb the total production of the large scale industries such as petroleum and sugar, which combined contribute over ninety percent of the total export trade.

Nevertheless, there are painful conditions here. Some of the problems Government readily admit. Others remain below the surface: racial divisions, vast numbers of unemployed (between an official 12% and a more realistic 25%), poverty and political hostility for Williams because he has become too much of a one-man government. Consequently, in different sections of the Trinidad community there are many voices (as yet not heard very loudly) calling for more radical, social and economic changes.

The Democratic Labour Party is the official party in opposition. It is ideologically committed to what its leadership calls Democratic Socialism. However, there are no effective action programmes coming from the DLP, and its political organizations are split, disorganized and inactive. In time, with new leadership, the party may offer a viable alternative to the PNM; but presently the DLP has no answers to Trinidad's problems and remains an Opposition in name only.

There are however other opposition speakers outside of Red House, the Trinidad Parliament. They are key men in the labour unions, the University of the West Indies, the Trinidad press and one or two individuals who have some independent influence in the Trinidad community. But before examining the current opposition to Williams, one should know about an early and very significant defector from the PNM -- C.L.R. James.

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C.L.R. James

C.L.R. James (Nello to his friends) was born a Trinidadian, educated at Queen's Royal College (Williams' own alma mater) and after emigrating to England became a journalist and commentator on a whole range of topics from cricket to communism. It was during this period that he and the Oxford scholar, Eric Williams, first became friends.

Consequently, when Williams returned to Trinidad and assumed the leadership of the People's National Movement, he asked James to return to the island and take charge of the party weekly, The Nation. James, of course eagerly accepted the appointment for it meant an opportunity to become part of a nationalist movement he had openly supported for many years. In fact, for

James, the PNM represented the vanguard of a new politics for the West Indies, political power to the once dis-enfranchised Trinidadian.

"One result of centuries of living /under colonialism/ is that we have no experience of any other way of life. Nothing shows that more than our present political leaders. They know they have to win the election. But after that the only type of government they know is that of power and subordination. Their concept of government, their practice of government, is that of the old, colonialist governors".

To understand what this meant to James, one must realize that for three hundred years, the mass of West Indian peoples had been accustomed to the authoritarian principal of change always emanating from the top or the bureaucratic elite. As a political commentator James had come to see that the greatest danger for the independent Caribbean states was a continuation of elitism in the form of dictatorship. As a result, James returned to Trinidad with one aim -- to help construct a populism such that political power devolved from the top to the bottom.

"Politics is an activity. It is not a lecture room where the people are supposed to listen to all the government has done for them. It is not a struggle over function, how much the government gets and how much the people get. It is not a play in which the applause of the audience (election) ensures five years of further employment for the more active performers. Politics is an activity, everybody, government and people. It is not activity that is shared, divided up. The more active the people are, the more active the government can be. But you cannot teach the people to govern. That is the special stupidity of the Colonial Office. You cannot appoint the "the people" overnight to this committee or that board. You have to encourage them, you insist that they practice self-government, that is to say, to govern themselves in their own organizations".

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As a populist, James hoped that a new form of political activity could be structured which would bring life to a process the colonial powers had made inert.

"I cannot conceive of any other way of developing a sense of the rights and duties of democracy in an inexperienced and untutored population. Making speeches to them is useful to a point. But they cannot live on that. They must have experience, experience of organization and of action. Organizing to seek votes is a form of degradation. It is only by independent organization and independent action that people discover their needs, discover their capacities. You don't, you can't teach the people everything. They are not children at school. A great part of political education is letting them know what is done elsewhere, watching what they instinctively choose, what models they adopt and what they reject. The day they spontaneously in their own independent organizations say to their party or their government "We don't like what you are doing: it is not what we understood you to promise; please come and explain ... then the party leader will rejoice: he knows he has something behind him.

On the other hand, Williams has never taken any interest in the problems of political institutions, the question of politicizing the people, of creating a mass, political party. Rather, Williams himself is more oriented to a different philosophy of political change, a more "conventional politics" in which the student-teacher relationship is carried over from the classroom to the ministry. With his capable intellect and his authoritarian temperament, Williams was simply unsympathetic to James' point of view.

As a result, Williams and James soon severed their social and political connections. In a now famous phone conversation in which James asked Williams about the possibility of making some institutional changes in the PNM, Williams' responded curtly: "There is nothing to discuss".

James then resigned. He left the PNM and decided to return to England where he has remained since except for a brief stay in Trinidad during the 1966 elections when he helped to form an abortive, opposition party of Workers and Farmers. His party (W.F.P.) was crushed at the polls because the population voted along racial rather than ideological lines.

Nevertheless, James' ideas have remained; and although some activists consider him too much of a romantic, it is clear that he has made an impact in the strains of criticism and comment directed against Williams today. Consciously or not, the opposition which is building in the press, labour, and in the University is indebted to him.

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The newspaper in the larger cities of the United States or Europe is often much more than a media of communication. In some ways it is responsible for moulding public opinion and at times even effects the decisions of government.

In the islands of the Caribbean, however, this is normally not the case. Traditionally, the newspapers have been controlled by the governments or at least reflected conservative opinion in the community. Ask anyone who has read a newspaper in the West Indies and the response will almost certainly be drab.

There is, however, one Trinidad daily, The Express, which offers itself as an alternative to the usual pattern. What would be termed a cross between the New York Post and The Manchester Guardian, The Trinidad Express is without question the best daily newspaper in the english speaking Caribbean. The staff of the paper is striking for both its youth and ability. Most of the writers are in their late twenties or early thirties and the editors are not much older. Started only two years ago as a rival to the more conservative and uninspiring newspaper of the establishment, The Trinidad Guardian, The Express has increased its circulation rapidly and is now read throughout Trinidad and even in the other islands as well.

The significant thing about The Express, however, is the role it has established for itself in the Trinidadian community. It has become, because of its content and style, the inadvertant organ of Williams' opposition. This would normally not be so troublesome to Williams except for the fact that often the articles in The Express are insightful, defensible and hit too close to home. It was not surprising, therefore, when Williams' party weekly, The Nation, began a series of feature articles attacking the paper as "the pawn and mouthpiece of the new opposition". (Whether in fact The Express is "a pawn and a mouthpiece" is a debating point; but it is true that the newspaper has become a serious source of opposition to the government and particularly Eric Williams.)

Four weeks ago, for example, the lead headline read: "Express Pages Open To Subversive Intents". The daily, said The Nation

"...is out to overthrow the present system... in order to introduce 'participatory politics with a participatory republic'. This is not intellectual fare with the sole purpose of educating and informing the population. This is intellectual fare with the sole purpose of undermining the present political and cultural institutions.

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The series, however, only served to focus further attention on the subjects and criticism raised by The Express and the only valid comment critical of the paper (that the government point of view was under-represented) was remedied when the managing editor of the paper contracted Karl Hudson-Phillips, a PNM representative, to do a regular column for him.

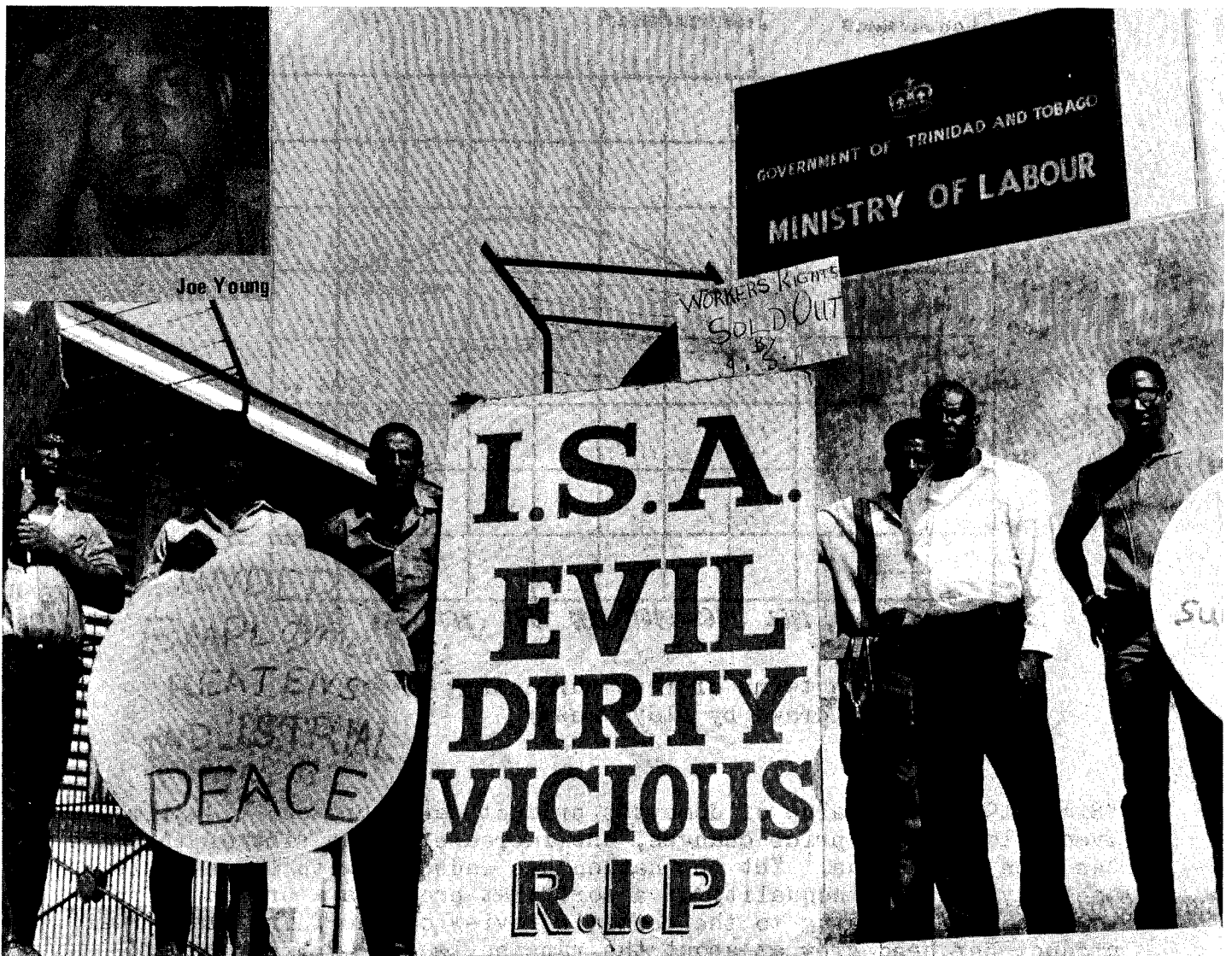
But what was really bothering Williams was summed up by one of the young writers on the Express staff:

"What Williams is most worried about is the fact that the Express is creating community dialogue in which for the first time the people are beginning to talk to each other about their problems instead of just listening to the Doctor tell them what they should be thinking".

This is how many of the writers conceptualize their role, and if this is subversive, it is only subversive in the sense that C.L.R. James would have been. Wally Look Lai, one of the staff writers echoed James himself when he wrote:

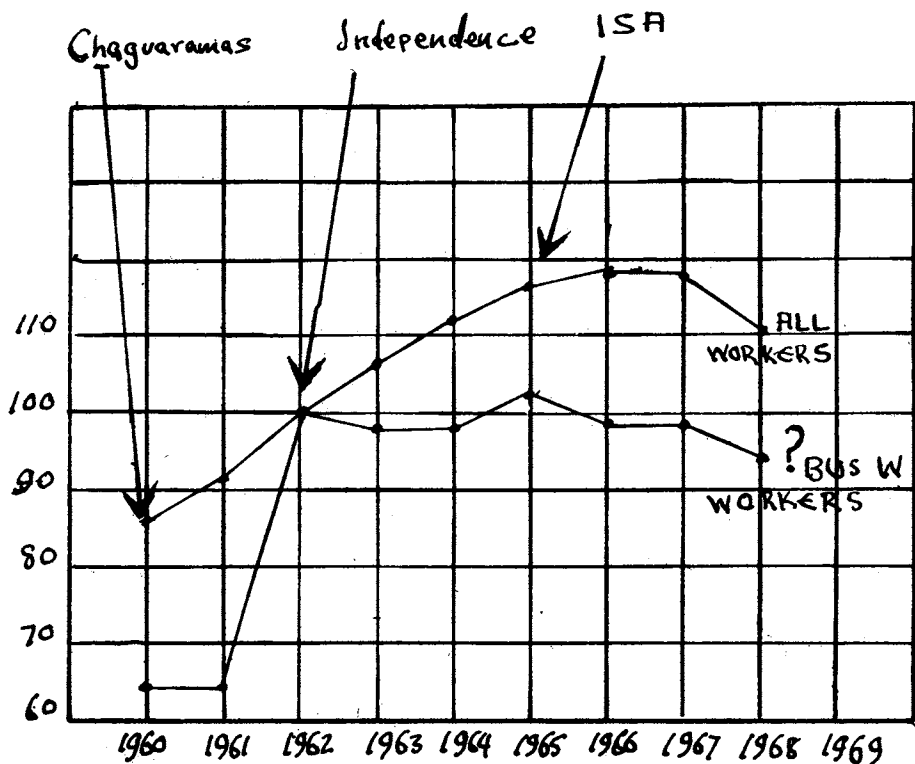
"The serious newspaper, in the West Indian context, has possibilities open to it which are not open to its metropolitan counterparts. However this will pose a greater challenge to the local newspaper in as much as it will have to develop styles and methods which will at once be serious in content and popular in appeal. Knowledge of history, economics, politics and culture must become the common property of the man-in-the-street in order to break the traditional monopoly of such information intellectuals now possess. At the same time.... the local paper has the power to even broaden (its) material to include the kind of scholarly analyses left to academic journals and magazines".

One of the central sources of Williams' opposition comes from disaffected labor. In fact the most crucial test Williams has faced this year was the bus worker's strike of last May and June (see FJM-13). The bus workers, led by Joe Young of the Transport and Industrial Workers Union, went out on strike against the Public Transport Corporation (government owned) because the workers considered a judgement passed by an Industrial Court had ruled unfairly against them.



"This strike is another manifestation of the inability of the ISA to work in a practical way. It reveals once again the impossibility of attempting to regulate industrial relations by legal methods.... If a working man cannot freely withdraw his labour then he is a slave. The workers will have their freedom to strike, and no Parliament or politician should seriously think that denial and suppression of the fundamental right to strike will last forever."

Statement by Joe Young,
President of the Transport and
Industrial Workers Union.

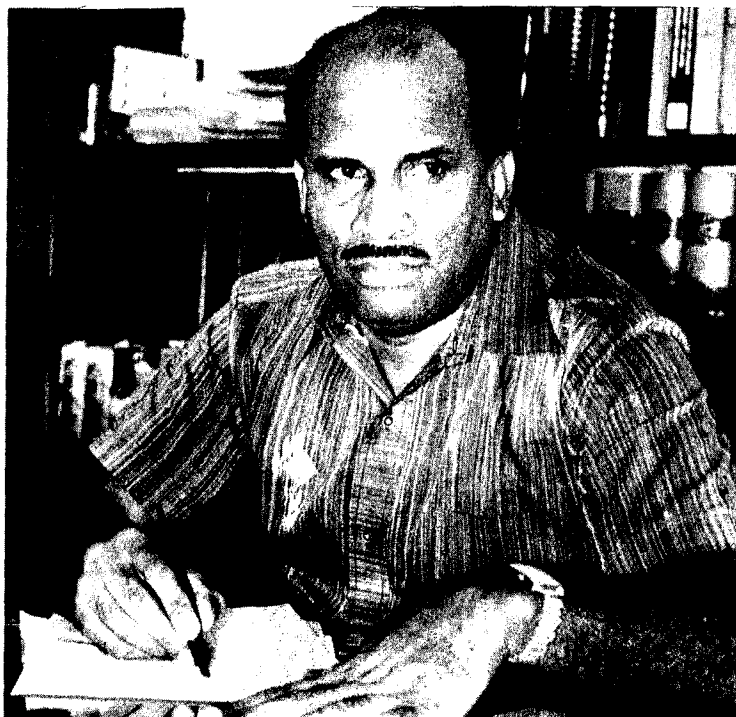


(Wages in terms of real purchasing power
Diagram drawn by Lloyd Best)

"Since 1951, the value of domestic product has increased five times. Even allowing for price changes, the increase in the size of the cake has been tremendous. Yet the nation has ended up with large-scale unemployment and inequality of a sort that produces a profound frustration.....According to the economic review of the Third Plan, real product per head grew at about the rate envisaged (2.1 per cent). National income per head grew more slowly. The foreign share increased. The real minimum wage of manual workers seems not to have grown at all. Employment grew at less than one per cent per year. Unemployment rose from 47,000 to 53,000. Since 1962 the real value of busworker's labour has not gone up at all. Last year (wages) have fallen. The fact of the matter is that many Trinidad workers seem to be on the same bus."

From Lloyd Best's The Busworkers:
Case for the Defence. May, 1969

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George Weekes

Disregarding a Court order to return to work, the strikers demonstrated. Williams was therefore forced to decide whether to act against the union. Meanwhile, Joe Young had attracted the support of other trade union leaders, principally the Oil Field Workers Trade Union leader, George Weekes.

Weekes, better known as P.G. (President General), is perhaps the most powerful union leader in opposition to Eric Williams. As leader of the Oil Field workers, he represents the most powerful union in terms of wealth and influence. The OFWTU membership numbers roughly 11,000 workers.

P.G. operates out of what used to be an old hotel near San Fernando in the southern part

of Trinidad. Near the OFWTU headquarters is the center of the oil industry of Trinidad, the Texaco and Shell oil refineries. Pointing to them after Government's recent acquisition of British Petroleum's only refinery in Trinidad, Weekes smiled and quipped: "One down and two to go".

He is equally pointed about his feelings about Williams.

"Trinidad needs new leadership. Williams has failed to act against the employers who are chiefly responsible for a system which worships a god, a god of profit....If Government is afraid to meet up with this (business sector) and tell them where to get off they can leave us to deal with them -- because we are not afraid to deal with the employers who are chiefly responsible for black Trinidadians suffering as they are today because of the profit motive".

On the wall opposite his desk, Weeks has two photographs. One on the right pictures Stokely Carmichael in a serious pose, the other on the left is the famous photograph of Malcolm X pointing at his listeners. (Both of these men have a significant following in Trinidad -- Stokely because he is Trinidad born and recently banned by Eric Williams from returning to the country, Malcolm X because of the work of Michael X, a Trinidadian Black Muslim who has recently come from London for a short stay on the island).



George Weekes (l.) marching with Michael X (r.) during May-June bus strike.

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Weekes then started to explain his relationship to larger issues and particularly the revolution developing in the Third World:

"The fact that we call ourselves the third world is significant. People who at present are being exploited are binding themselves together to fight for their rights; both in the western world and the eastern world; under Communism and under Capitalism. And these comprise the third world.....Do we not know that today the 'power elite' have blocked all hopes for a solution under the democratic system developed by the western world? That now the only hope of solving the unemployment situation, the hunger and want is the fact that people are dying at this particular time on three continents fighting for what they regard as white imperialism. And oil is the leading force in this policy of exploitation."

Thus within a week, the bus strike had become the focus of an anti-government movement and everyone was head-counting in an effort to see just how much anti-Williams feeling there was in the country. Soon it became clear. Joe Young could count on some of the other union leadership, the University lecturers and students, some black power groups and fragments of other opposition groups.

On the other hand, Williams was supported by the business community, some union leaders, and surprisingly by both of the daily newspapers, including The Express. (The Express opted for changing the law rather than breaking it).

Finally, Williams decided that he could move against the workers. He began operating the buses on a limited basis, using school children as cover. When some workers returned to work they were protected by the regiment. Within a week, the strike had been broken and Williams had squeaked through.

Yet from the opposition's point of view, the strike was a success. For the first time in many years, what had been diverse and unconnected pockets of opposition to Williams had an opportunity to work together, to test their strength and evaluate their mistakes. The greatest benefit came in simply the alliance they formed as a result of the strike; and in this respect, the June work stoppage may have been a catalyst for any future exchanges of ideas or action programmes these groups may develop.

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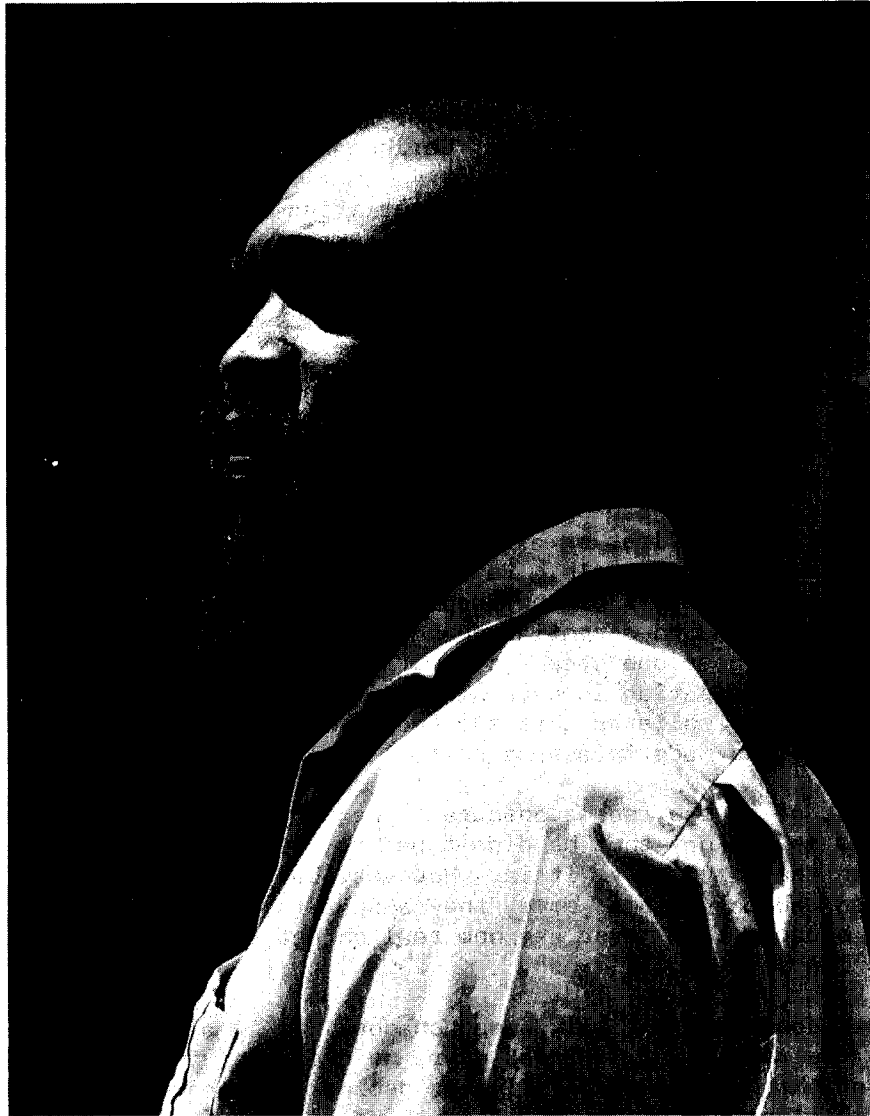
Apart from the press and labor, the most serious criticism of Eric Williams and the PNM comes from two lecturers in the social science faculty of the University of the West Indies, James Millette and Lloyd Best. Both of these individuals are academics, Millette a political scientist, Best an economist. Both were responsible for founding and were identified with a Caribbean based movement of intellectual-activists called the New World Group which publishes a "journal of Caribbean affairs and opinion". And although both have different conceptions of how to bring about a change in government in Trinidad each is seriously committed to that end.

James Millette is one of the four men on the editorial board of the Group's journal, New World. He is also the editor of a small, four-page, radical weekly called Moko. He was an advisor to the labor leaders in the June bus strike and a speaker at their rallies. He is articulate and he is an "activist". It is therefore not surprising that fragmented opposition groups and even the disorganized, parliamentary opposition, the Democratic Labour Party, have approached Millette about being a possible leader for a new party which would oppose Williams in the 1971 elections.

Lloyd Best on the other hand is not so openly political. In fact, he has strong reservations about activism when it is premature -- which is one of the sore points recently arisen within the New World Group between Millette and Best. Best is convinced that too premature an attempt to take power in the country would only produce a change of leaders rather than a true change in social or economic policies. Best is adamant about this point.

"We are told that we need a leader who will martyr himself. This draws applause. We refuse the hard, collective effort. Why? It is a self-view imposed on us by the colonial condition. The tradition says that change must be brought about by some external agency, by a Moses or a government. And so the answer has always been to find the leader who can get control. This is a dangerous illusion. The problems cannot be solved by Doctor Politics. Even if we were to gain political power now we would never be able to implement any radical change unless the population had first been fully committed. It follows that the first principal is popular involvement."

Born in Trinidad, schooled at Queen's Royal College (as C.L.R. James and Williams were), Lloyd Best won a scholarship to Cambridge where he read economics. Since then he has lectured at the University of the West Indies in Jamaica and at McGill University in Canada. He has also been an advisor to several governments in the Caribbean, including Cheddi Jagan's when Jagan was Premier of Guyana.



Lloyd Best

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Best is considered one of the most original, political thinkers of the region. He speaks french and spanish fluently and has influence in the French Antilles as well as the english-speaking islands. More than other individuals in the region today, I think Best will have a significant impact on the younger generation of Caribbean leaders.

On meeting Best, several characteristics immediately come out. He is impressively articulate. He never fails to answer a question, no matter how probing; and if he doesn't know the answer, he'll usually say "we're now playing for the answer"---which means that it will come in time. This is how he is. Very optimistic. Very honest. Very creative.

One other important Best quality is a patience and willingness to do hard work. These qualities separate him from many of his peers because most of the region's younger thinkers are activists in a more immediate way. Best, as I noted above, thinks that a great deal of "serious work" must be done before any true change can be effected in the politics of the Caribbean. For Best, this means first of all going into the villages and working with (not lecturing to) the people. He stresses this point because he believes that unless the attitudes of the people are changed, their image of themselves and what they can do, no essential change can take place. In this regard, he echoes James but goes one step further. James would have brought the people into active participation in government after the party had taken control of the country. Best believes that the people must become aware of their role before any move is made to assume control of the government.

This, of course, seems obscure. For many of the men in labor (George Weekes told me one day that he didn't understand a word of what Best was saying) and even in the University, it is. However, Best is doing something, and as he says, "when radical changes come, they appear to come suddenly and everyone is surprised because they never see how real change comes about but things are happening you'll see".

Best does not just talk about change. He is also putting his ideas into effect in the village of Tunapuna where he grew up. About six months ago, he and some of the neighbouring villagers decided to construct a community center. Today it is almost completed and soon there will be plays, song festivals, courses on West Indian history, politics and even a community "sou-sou" organized (a sou-sou is a form of credit union). The center will be called Tapia House after the materials from which it is constructed.

Tapia House is more than just a community center. It is a symbol of Best's conception of change in the Caribbean. Tapia House is constructed from local clay and thatch. The people built it themselves, using their own resources and ingenuity. What programmes are organized will be performed by the villagers themselves. In short, Tapia House signifies the ability of a people to create the sort of cultural, economic and political institutions which are adapted to suit themselves. This is the level at which Best is working. Change begins at the bottom -- not the top.

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It takes a great deal of patience and vision to do what Best is talking about: to break the authoritarian tradition of West Indian politics, a mass passivity to one-man-rule. Far easier is the strategy to simply replace the present leadership with new "doctors" who will carry on in the personalistic tradition which has been dominant to this time. But Best argues that to have new leaders without altering the "political culture" would not ensure the total transformation of the institutional foundations upon which political power is exercised. He says that the problems of the country and of the Caribbean as a region are not problems of faulty leadership, but of a more fundamental sort. He argues that the real problems are rooted in the historical record of colonial rule, authoritarian institutions, the conception the people have of themselves, in their potential to govern themselves.

Best bases his hopes for political and social change on a new coalition of young and unemployed Trinidadians; the dissenting academics, professionals, technocrats, bureaucrats and intellectuals; organized labor; and finally the farmers. In concrete terms:

"The feasibility of a coalition will depend upon the success we are able to achieve in the coming months in devising, first, a constitutional framework for a genuine participatory republic to limit the excessive power of the Executive when Westminster Institutions are uncritically imported into post-colonial situations; secondly, upon the gains we make in establishing viable and vibrant municipal government throughout the land once we have taken power; thirdly, upon the steps we take towards more purposeful collaboration among the whole range of Caribbean territories -- steps based not on a phoney analysis that we are too small or that some nonentity in the State Department has declared that it is in order, but on a clear appreciation of the boundaries of our historical experience; finally, upon unleashing the creative power and entrepreneurial talent ... among the civil servants, the industrialists, the farmers, the workers and the unemployed".

This sort of interpretation of the political problems of Trinidad also extends to Best's interpretation of the economic ills besetting the country. What Best is saying is that once the people of the Caribbean realize that they are capable of governing themselves, once they have evolved political institutions which fit their needs, the next step will be a transformation of their economic institutions as well.

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"Our hope for binding the nation together will turn on how seriously we address ourselves to the substitution of an active for a passive (local for foreign) strategy of economic transformation -- one that will stand or fall by our own efforts, however much or little we choose to work with other peoples. This will demand a framework for a just division of the national income. The element of lottery in the division of the cake much be eliminated once and for all so that each and all can work in the certainty that he or she would receive what by common consent is deserved. Next, is required a settlement with the foreign sector about the location of controlling decisions an issue raised by the Chaguaramus questionand by inexorable logic extended to all national resourcesIn 450 years the Caribbean peoples have learnt that the metropolitanisation of economic decision-making has been the most important single cause of their cultural dependency, of irrational public policy and therefore in the final analysis, of political instability. Finally, though it cannot be programmed, there is a need for a cultural revival. Speculation in the fields of government, politics, economics and history have just begun.

The implications are clear. Best conceives that following the change of political institutions, the population will realize that the destiny of the islands remains in their hands, and that they will be prepared to participate fully in the economic development of their region. This of course extends to the ownership and operation of the industries, businesses, hotels, transportation systems and agricultural production of the Caribbean. At the same time, the people of each separate island will recognize that in order to own and operate their own economies they will have to integrate their islands. Thus political and economic integration would follow.

It is understandable therefore to see why Best is opposed to Eric Williams. Best looked at Chaguaramus as a defeat, not a victory. So as Eric Williams delivered a speech called "From Slavery to Chaguaramus", Best was writing his own article for the New World Group entitled "From Chaguaramus to Slavery". And while Eric Williams was saying that economic growth was a prerequisite for social justice, (a favourite doctrine of AID as well) Lloyd Best was saying that this was not so, that social justice must come now for it was not under-development which was causing social injustices, but the system itself. Williams pursued a policy of accommodation to American Investment (with the consequent loss of internal autonomy) and Best argued that "industrialization by invitation" was getting the Caribbean nowhere.

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"The risk of this approach is that the more immediate and spectacular benefits, though not necessarily the largest and most lasting ones, are enjoyed by the more privileged groups. That is, by the foreigners and the small ethnic groupings....not the negroes and the indians. This makes it difficult to implement policies of wage and import controls. What is needed is a reform of the ownership patterns of the economy.

"The rewards for work and even the right to work are distributed as if it were a lottery. Luck, colour, texture of hair, shape of nose all loom large in the gamble. Government has settled on a strategy of seeking external help to raise output while postponing the tough and thorough reform of the traditional economic rules. That was when the Chaguaramus decision of 1960 accepted the doctrine of imperial responsibility. This early disappointment has since demoralised the entire nation --- losers as well as winners."

In a talk with Lloyd Best, one discovers that he is more than just a man of politics. He is also something of a philosopher -- even though he would deny it. Fingering a wooden flute he might have picked up in Martinique, Best will talk about the way in which change comes about, what motivates a man to try and bring it about, even when it means great sacrifice.

"Since we are not gods we cannot be certain what it is that moves people to adopt new habits of thinking or living. We may say it's necessity, but that doesn't take us very far since it remains to be decided what has been perceived as necessary and whyI think it is just as well we do not know how people learn. If we did some would be in a position to manipulate othersWe have, fortunately, to settle for being mere men, which means if we think change desirable and feel bound to work for it, we must work by 'play'. Playing for change entails some appropriate mixture and sequencing of engagement and disengagement; it needs some delicate blend of appeal to intellect and to sensibility; it requires poets as much as it does publicists and politicians."

I asked him if he thought Marx was right, that the basis of a man's motive to act was essentially economic. "In that case, why are so many of the radicals in the United States from the upper-middle class families", he said. No he didn't think so. What then did he think about Lenin's tactics in bringing about change in Tsarist Russia. He didn't think of himself as a Lenin type

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"When we survey the problem of changewe see how much it is a matter of orchestration and choreography. There is room, to be sure, for programming and engineering but not half as much as is usually implied....It would demand more moral certainty than we can ever have, to be able to issue directives for change, devise schedules for it and impose rigid deadlines. We can only play, with sensitivity, discrimination and good sense.

Best on the "generation gap":

"A solution to the problems of the generation gap cannot be reached on young people alone; it is because adults have not been participating authentically in education, in family life and in running the economy and government that they have not been in a position to come to terms with the preoccupations of youth. We are thus dealing with the problem of the whole culture."

On the dominance of the North Atlantic:

"Culturally we are in a tug-of-war between the metropole and ourselves, the balance of advantage always going against us. We back North Atlantic evaluations against our own. For the non-whites this is straight self-rejection -- in so far as self-rejection can ever be straight.

On the concept of "masses":

"There is no such thing as 'the masses'. This is a favourite concept of radicals and conservatives alike. We are perpetually searching for a denominator so low as to be common to all....No, let us admit that we will reach some, miss others. We will hit the same man now, miss him another time. Sometimes we will miss the whole field. And this is perhaps not a bad thing. It sets up work for the community.

On the use of the press as a means of reaching the people:

"A change from the platform to the press as a medium of popular communication may bring a change in the place of political contest, from the streets and the halls of government to the homes and local areas. That is the strategy I envisage. Clearly it will be necessary to publish the strategy. One effect of making the strategy public is that the population can respond by offering alternative strategies. Another is that the forces of reaction will be forced to react. But then who will be calling the tune, who dancing? Orchestra and choreography.

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On leaders:

"There is always a magical quality about leadership for the simple reason that although there is no perfect leader, leaders are men who have a little more skill and technical control, or a little more insight, judgement and cool, or perhaps a little more energy and dedication than the rest. In the nature of the situation, other men always wonder how leaders manage to cope and are therefore forced to regard their achievements with some wonder. However, in situations where participation is open to large numbers most of the skills are acquired by experience. Participation by the community brings the role within the reach of many if only within the grasp of a few. But they emerge with credentials earned by work.

On Doctor leaders:

"In situations of impotence we find Doctor leaders. These are recognized because their skills are not acquired in the situation nor need their skills be really relevant to the problems....this is because problems are not seen as soluble by hard work and grappling with concrete tasks. It is more of a lottery and if one is lucky he makes it. The Caribbean situation tends to be like this.

People worked hard but it was difficult to establish any connection between hard work and size of reward. So we over-emphasized the magical element in life and leadership at the expense of the instrumental component. This was all reinforced by the meaninglessness of our educational system into which went a lot of work because that was the most open road to advancement. The more educated a man, the more he was an imperial clerk, the less a creative West Indian person.

On Eric Williams:

"At Chaguaramus perhaps there arose an opportunity to escape. A stand then and a link with Cuba would have created great pressure for the emergence of widespread leadership and solid organization to block the yankee and Soviet hawks. But Williams bungled it, perhaps for reasons related to his willingness to exploit his "blessings" rather than to stress the real contribution he had made to the national life at the time of his emergence.

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A new politics, participatory republic, active economic strategy and cultural renaissance, these are the concepts and the labor of Lloyd Best. Tapia House is just the beginning. It will take time, perhaps many years. But the time will come when Best will have built his coalition and then neither Trinidad nor the Caribbean will ever be the same again. As Lloyd Best would have it put: He is continuing to "play for change".

"The Nation has to move on. Now the task is to consider the options for the future. The options are the high point of the story. They will unravel themselves in the end. There is no great hurry. I am told that we must hasten because the PNM is likely to try for a quick knockout in a snap election..... it need not disturb us. The best political strategy in my judgement ...and I advised my Union friends accordingly-- is to plan for the full distance and budget to win on points. If we are working in the communities, we will pile on a score which will tell in the end. In the context of widespread, informal, popular participation in community life, an electoral knockdown is no knockout at all. Government is not politics.

Yours,

Frank Mc Donald

Frank McDonald.

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