FJM--19 Barbados
The Politics of Cricket and Cane

Bridgetown
Barbados, W.I.
November 20, 1969

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

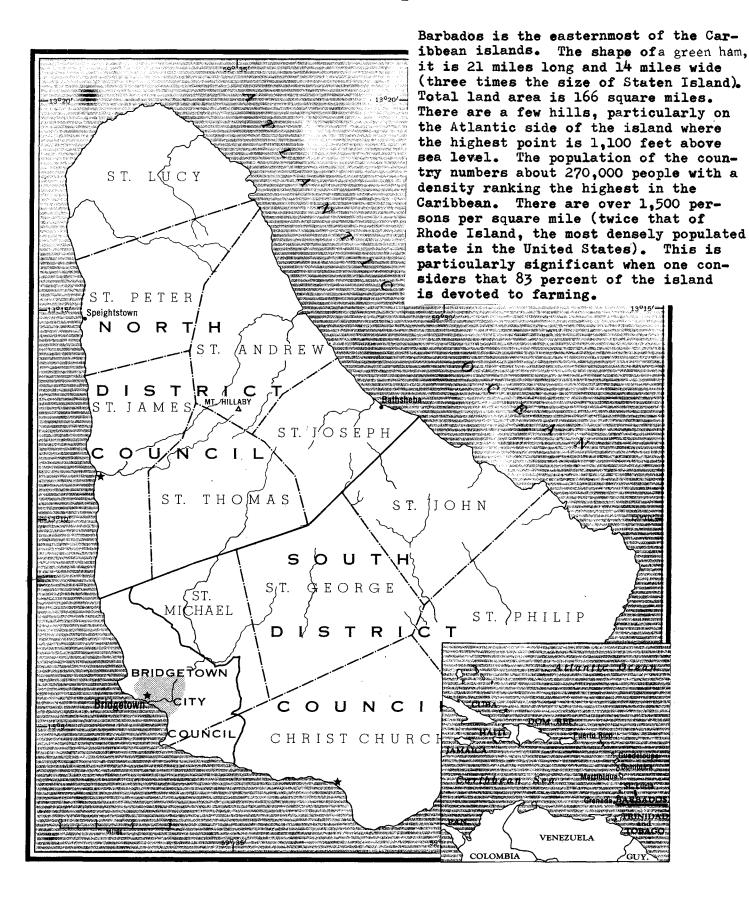
Dear Mr. Nolte:

Barbados: island aristocrat of the Caribbean.

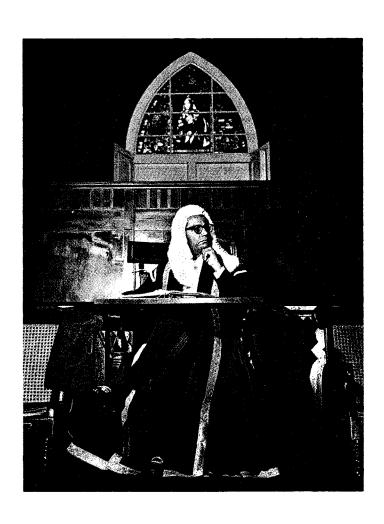
Perhaps it is the derisive attitude Barbados has for her sister islands, the notion that she is the tropical counterpart of pre-World War II England, which makes her unique. Her inhabitants, with their west-England accent, natural conservatism and traditional role as teachers or policemen of the Caribbean peoples, do not consider themselves West Indians. Rather. they are Bajans -- and as patricians of the islands, they are a people apart, encased in an unrelenting selfesteem. In turn, such attitudes elicit much mockery from West Indian brothers. But that hardly ever perturbs a Bajan.

Maybe this is also





Below:
The pride of being Bajan
Speaker of the House of Assembly
His Honor J.E.T. Brancker, QC.





Sir Grantley Adams

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why Barbados is politically the most reactionary of the four independent states in the English speaking Caribbean. In Guyana, Trinidad and Jamaica, support grows for the leftist nationalism being sparked by radicals in the University of the West Indies. But in Barbados with its ingrained traditionalism even the advocates of a more radical politics admit of little community support. In what must be a rare statement for the American State Department, an Embassy officer saw the socio-economic situation in Barbados as "stable for the foreseeable future."

"Favorable factors (for U.S. investment) are a stable, honest government committed to a market economy; current conditions for United States: trade and investment seem likely to continue for the foreseeable future. The political opposition would appear no less favorably disposed toward United States interests than the present government ... Private industry is not opposed to United States investment in the island, and traders have a growing number of contacts with the United States."

No, Barbados will not provide the leadership for radical social and political change developing in the Caribbean.

There are five political parties organized in Barbados. Three have elected members in the House of Assembly, the other two do not. In the last general elections, November 3, 1966, Prime Minister Errol Barrow's Democratic Labour Party (DLP) won 14 of the 24 Assembly seats. The Barbados Labour Party led by Sir Grantley Adams, which had control of the Government from 1945 - 1961, won 8 seats. The Barbados National Party, a conservative businessmen's party, secured 2 seats.

Two other parties which are left of the other three have not managed to gain much popular support. Most recently organized, the People's Action Movement (PAM) is a collection of middle class Bajan professionals who are moderate socialists. The PAM group has not contested any election yet, but plan on gearing for the next general election in 1971. Headed by a steering committee composed for the most part of men who have defected from the major parties (Secretary Howard Roberts was Errol Barrow's campaign manager in the 1966 General Elections), PAM stresses reform of existing political programmes and institutions rather than any new political ideas. Were they elected, their policies would differ only slightly from present Government positions.

The most radical of the existing political parties in Barbados is the People's Progressive Movement (PPM). The PPM is too radical as far as the PAM group is concerned and "doesn't stand a chance of appealing to the people of this island." Organized around a collective leadership, FJM--19 - 5 -

PPM represents the closest thing Barbados has to the radical movements gaining ground throughout the Caribbean.

PPM's programmes were outlined in the election campaign of 1966 and in a recent by-election held this year. Frankly issuing a radical programme, the PPM called for land reform, public housing programmes, control of the island's financial institutions and a withdrawal from the Organization of American States.

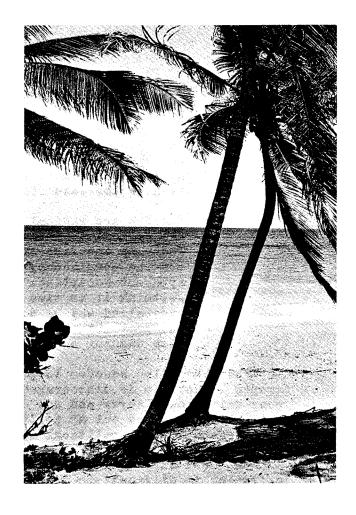
"The PPM are radical because it is the role of the radical to point the way to political progress ... Today in the face of all the political treachery and the complacency of our PEOPLE and their apparent acceptance of low, sub-human standards, we think it is time to look into black skulls to understand why we do not aggressively challenge the poor lot that successive Governments have been dishing out to them."

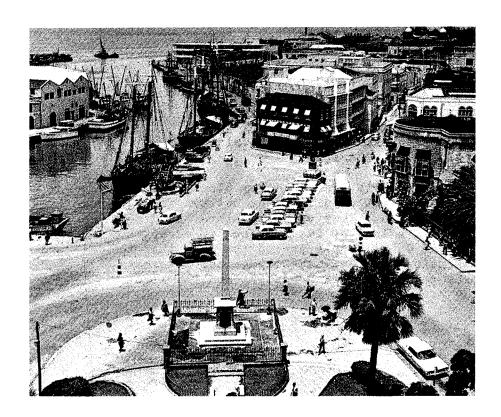
The PPM failed however to poll a very substantial vote and the group's leadership is discouraged by the results. John Connell, a young Bridgetown lawyer and one of the party's organizers, explained that the PPM started out as political education movement which then attempted to start a political organization. "We got as far as the education part of it but we never got to the organizational part. I think we must have been ploughing the ocean." Connell, who incidentally is finding it difficult to attract clients after his recent political activity, thinks that the Bajan rejects radical policies because of traditional fears of Communism, the influence of the Anglican church and a general feeling of powerlessness.

"The U.S. Government has built up such a thing about Communism that it has affected the people here with a similar hysteria. Even in the witch-hunting days of McCarthy the times were not as bad as they are here today for those who want change. For example, do you want to know how to get your garbage collected? Just say that it is offending a group of tourists and you're sure to get results."

Discussing the other leftist party, PAM, Glenroy Straughn, the PPM's chairman, said that "there isn't a bit of difference between the PAM, the DLP and the other opposition parties. They stand for three hundred years of political conditioning, a lack of identity and an acceptance of those two facts." Straughn and Connell both stress the fact that the control of the island is shifting from English to American interests, a shift that could have been prevented with foresight and the right programmes.

City and suburbs: Bridgetown, Barbados (1) and nearby the sand, sea and coconut trees (r)





"In Mid-1966 while the Barbados Independence Conference was in progress in London the PPM predicted that the entry of Borbados into the Organisation of American States in its present form would mean the direct control of Barbados' Finance by USA Banks. In less than two and a half years this is now obvious. First City National and Bank of America are already in our midst and Chase Manhattan is yet to come. Meanwhile Barbados Shipping & Trading has been quietly turning Barbados' land, commerce and utilities over to USA interests. At the opening of the new telephone exchange the Barbados Prime Minister behaved like a record of "His Master's Voice." He gave the assurance that his Government would not interfere with any foreign investments in Barbados."

The figure of Sir Grantley Adams dominates the Opposition to Barbados' present Government. As a young lawyer from a distinguished middle class family, Adams made history in the middle 1930's when he joined and subsequently led the island's early struggle for union recognition and constitutional advancement. In the "heyday" of that movement from 1941 to 1961, Adams became the most forceful personality on the Barbados political scene. He finally became the island's first Premier and for six years his party, the BLP, controlled the Government. Sir Grantley Adams is also credited with being the "Father of the West Indies Federation" and served as its first and last Prime Minister.

As a progressive in the mould of the British Labour Party, Adams was no radical when in control of the Government. He focused on and accomplished a great deal in legislating social welfare programmes. In a party manifesto, these successes were recounted:

"Increased Old Age Pensions, enlargement of the Social Welfare Department, extension of the Domestic Training Center, workers holidays with pay, extension to provide for Workman's Compensation, a law which made provision for peaceful picketing, a programme for playing fields throughout the island and steps to safeguard the wages of manual workers."

Nevertheless, Adams and the BLP never really challenged the staggering problems of unemployment or the oligarchic economic structure which was (and still is) dominated by the plantation system. On the contrary, the BLP accepted the argument (and still does) that nationalization or land reform would create an island peasantry thus bringing economic chaos to Barbados. Instead, Adams and his party concentrated on the issue of constitutional independence, a safer and more conventional

challenge. In this regard, Adams was rewarded for his efforts with Barbados' Independence in 1966.

In the forthcoming elections to be held in 1971, the BLP is of course planning on regaining political power. Many Bajans think it may be quite possible. Even the radical PPM considers it a good bet that the BLP may be able to take control of the House of Assembly by that time. But many speculate that with an aging Sir Grantley Adams at the helm, the BLP needs new leadership in order to inspire the electorate. And what better man to lead a rejuvenated BLP, they say, than the very able son of Sir Grantley, Tom Adams. Thus one of the favored topics of speculation these days in Barbados is the attitude and ability of Tom Adams.

Tom Adams is a Kennedy-like figure in Barbados Politics. A young wealthy lawyer with all the right connections, Tom Adams is able to appeal to the younger Bajan (he is on the liberal fringe of the BLP) while at the same time he has maintained all the correct ties with the older and more conservative party regulars. He is therefore acceptable to both wings of the BLP. Adams himself responds amiably when asked if he is to be the next Prime Minister of Barbados ("I think there is a lot of good competition for that job.") As for his position in the party, Adams agrees that his leftist notions are his own and not totally accepted by the BLP:

"A great deal John Connell and the PPM have to say is valid and I agree with it; but much is also emotional and cannot be accomplished. The Bajan electorate wouldn't accept it. This is a very conservative country. They (the Bajans) are even right of the British Labour Party."

On foreign policy, Adams is more explicit about the Organization of American States:

"If I were Prime Minister, and could convince the party, I would leave the O.A.S. I am opposed to membership because of the political use to which it has been put by the United States. I would also recognise Red China in the United Nations, for whatever good that would do."

On the economic policies of the PPM, Adams thinks that any nationalization of the sugar industry would not be practical. "It just wouldn't work," he said. "The small plots suitable to some agricultural development would not be workable for the sugar industry." Thus, on the crucial



Prime Minister Errol W. Barrow

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issue, Adams comes down on the side of the angels, perhaps agreeing with his father's dictum that "a radical stance on the sugar question is the ruin of a political career."

Prime Minister Errol Barrow has been in command of the Barbados Government since 1961. A "pragmatist", he is essentially an administrator rather than an ideologue. For example, Barrow's foreign policy tends to be unpopular with the more ideologically committed Eric Williams, particularly when Barrow supported the British invasion of Anguilla or rejected Williams' plans for developing a regional airline. Barrow stressed his reasons for these policies were based on practical considerations.

Barrow's domestic programme also favors the pragmatic. Consequently, since taking power he has modernised rather than revolutionised the the economy of Barbados. For example on the vital question of sugar, the Prime Minister has pressed for better management and reorganization rather than having faced the controversial issue of ownership and control of the industry. Thus, despite the fact that Barrow has purchased one or two faltering estates and turned them into experimental or tenant farms, the oligarchic pattern of the sugar industry remains unaltered.

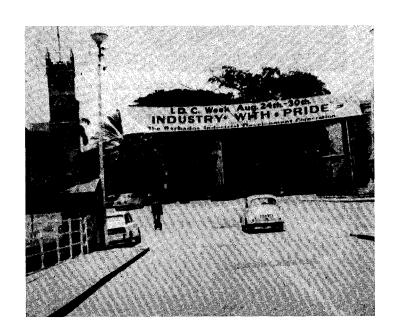
With industrial development or tourism, the same situation applies. In order to attract foreign capital, Barrow has offered very generous tax concessions, duty free incentives and other benefits to expatriates which younger and more critical economists of the region term "industrialisation by invitation." Barrow's term for his programme has been "Operation Beehive", a programme which has attracted 67 new light industries and 30 hotels to the island. And apart from Jamaica and Puerto Rico, Barbados now ranks as the region's most popular tourist resort.

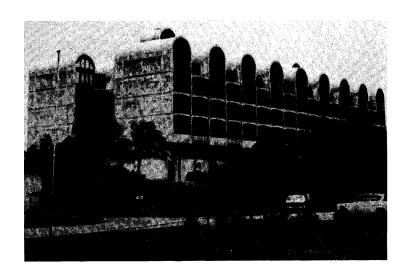
On the negative side, however, Beehive looks more beneficial than it really is. Import of food-stuffs and other goods has leaked most of the foreign exchange brought into Barbados through tourism. And the tax concessions or other benefits of pioneer status have resulted in little in the way of returns (other than some employment) for all of Barrow's efforts. For example, income tax, which is levied by the Government is often evaded by the expatriate-owner-managers of the light industries. These people pay themselves in corporate dividends, thus avoiding personal income which would provide some public revenue.

But more than any of these considerations is still the problem of sugar. Barrow or his successor must still contend with the fact that sugar is eighty percent of the island's exportable produce, that as a mono-crop-agricultural economy, Barbados is dangerously dependent upon a very unstable source of income and that if this trend continues, the country is headed for economic trouble. Realising this, the Prime Minister hopes that his "pragmatic approach to tourism and industrialisation will sufficiently diversify the economy."

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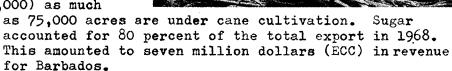
Barrow's method: The I.D.C. and its goal, a Hilton.

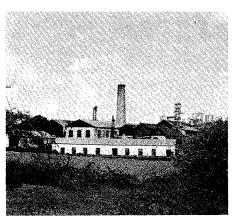


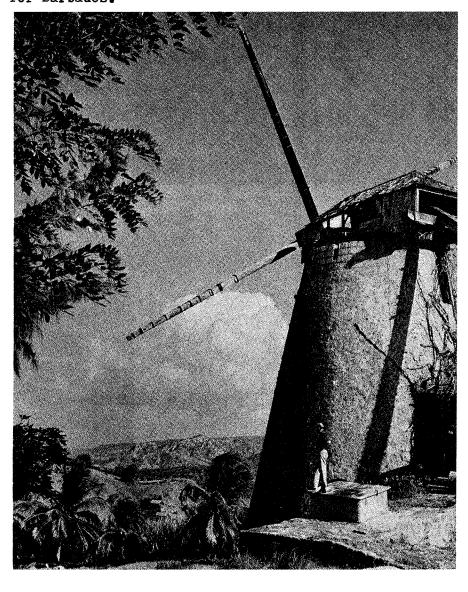


Of the four independent states in the English speaking Caribbean, Barbados is the smallest and least well endowed. While Guyana has her mineral rich interior, Trinidad her oil and Jamaica her bauxite, Barbados is almost exclusively dependent upon her sugar industry--practically a pure plantation economy.

There are 19,567 Cane growers. But only 283 of this total account for 85 percent of the total sugar cane produced. Of the island's total acreage (94,000) as much







"A study of the trend in world trade would suggest that sugar was fading out as an important commodity and by 1974, unless we rapidly diversify the economy of Barbados, we are in for a lot of trouble. The entry of Britain into the Common Market will do nothing to enhance the prospects of sugar as a major industry in the country. We are therefore left with two spheres of economic activity in our attempt to improve the economic life of the country. These are tourism and industry."

Yet in spite of Barrow's optimism about his Beehive programme, the central factor, the control of the sugar industry by a limited and generally conservative oligarchy, is still the problem. There is a very great need to diversify the agricultural crop as well as the economy of the island. Food crop and livestock must take priority in order to improve the balance of trade (cutting large imports of foodstuffs), to lower domestic food prices and to assist in making the tourist industry a viable alternative.

Barrow of course is aware of such aims; but the problem is with the Sugar Producers themselves. These estate owners have a stake in sugar, they are optimistic about its future and though they have agreed to put at least twelve per cent of their arable land under food cultivation, they are still reluctant about crop or livestock diversification. This estimate by the S.P.A. contrasts with Barrow's:

"Confidence in the future of sugar is wellfounded. In 1938 the world's consumption of sugar totalled 27.3 million metric tons. In 1967 the total was 66.7 million. Not only has there been a phenomenal increase in consumption (paralleled by a similar increase in production to meet the demand), but the price to the producer, thanks to reciprocal support agreements and to the stabilising influence of international agreements, has risen from 2 cents per pound to 3.5 cents on the free world market. Under the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement the Commonwealth Caribbean has been cushioned against fluctuations by a guaranteed price, which will for certain last until 1974. In addition they have enjoyed preferential treatment under the U.S. Quota for 188.000 tons.

"Fears have been expressed as to the consequences of Britain joining the E.E.C. and repudiating the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement; but even if this is abrogated it is unlikely that these developing territories will be treated harshly or indifferently.

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There is too much at stake for the Free World to risk infiltration from Cuba in the Commonwealth Caribbean."

In spite of the Sugar Producer's Association, the arguments for diversification are overwhelming. The essential question is how. Agronomists and agricultural economists like Bishnodat Persaud of the University of the West Indies argue that the nature of the sugar industry and its uncertainties "justify efforts to diversify." The alternatives and supplemental crops must, however, "be viable ones." Persaud thinks that food crops and livestock offer the island an alternative, but he warns that the technical, educational, economic and structural problems involved are great.

- "(1) The nature of these enterprises is demanding of agricultural knowledge, skills and management and because of inadequate research and experimentation and the lack of a strong tradition in this kind of farming there is an acute shortage of these requirements. These considerations apply especially to vegetable growing and dairying.
- "(2) Like cultivation, the marketing of food crops poses special problems. They are perishable and seasonal and because of the small internal market, gluts develop easily. Careful handling is required at the farm level and central marketing organizations are usually required to attend to such problems as the co-ordination of production with market requirements, grading, packing, storage and the finding of export outlets.
- "(3) Areas suitable for the enterprises which are to be encouraged, taking into account both economic and agronomic considerations: The diversification programme is thought of too much in terms of the utilization of marginal sugar lands. Cotton and peanuts may be suitable for some of these lands but vegetables and dairying may be competitive with cane on good cane lands and a proper disposition of the land resources on some farms may require the new crops to replace cane on some of these lands while cane is maintained on poorer lands."

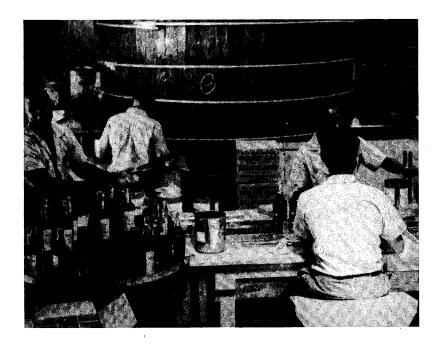
The last point Persaud makes is inevitably bound to become a political question. Barbados, unlike Guyana or even Trinidad, is land poor. Its resources, particularly land, will have to be employed more equitably than in the past. And although the S.P.A. is aware that crop

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Market scene in Bridgetown

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\*\*\*\*\* After extensive research, I find that Barbados produces the finest rum in the Caribbean; and since 1809, Mount Gay has been the source of the most splendid of Bajan rums. At the bottling plant pictured above, Mount Gay is moved from cask to consumer. Mount Gay rum is made by fermenting molasses from sugar cane, and uses what is called the Demerara method of fermentation: the molasses is diluted with water in eight 9,000-gallon wooden vats. It ferments naturally for 36 hours and then distills until the liquid is between 50 to 68 over-proof. Transferred to storage vats (made of charred oak), the rum matures until mellow.

The story of rum is as delightful as its taste. Rumbullion, a word of Devonshire origin (meaning tumult) is the source of the contemporary word. But another expression,

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"kill-devil", was popular for two centuries in Barbados and New England. It is still used in Newfoundland today.

Rum was first produced in Barbados in 1630. But its association really begins with the British Navy. As a consequence of beer's tendency to sour quickly, rum was introduced to the British Navy by Samuel Pepys in 1688. He ordered that a man's ration could be as much as an undiluted half pint each day. By 1731, however, this was altered to measure one quart water to every pint of rum. (The admiral who issued the order always wore a cloak of grogram, a fabric of wool and silk; and so he was named Old Grog, which today refers to a state of drunkeness--groggy--as well as rum drink itself--grog). By 1859, the ration was cut to five ounces, then to one-eighth of a pint, which it remains even today. Only in the British and Canadian navies is rum still issued each day to naval personnel.

Rum has other historical significance. George Washington, as an officer in King George III's army, shipped one slave to the Caribbean in return for one hogshed of Jamaican rum.

Privateers also drank rum:

Fifteen men on a dead man's chest Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum!

And though Henry Morgan preferred brandy and wine, rum was still acceptable. It must also be noted that when Admiral Nelson died at sea, he was shipped home in a cask of rum. But before arriving in England for the state funeral, that cask had been tapped and drunk by the ship's hands, thus creating another name for kill-devil...for a time, rum was called "Nelson's blood". \*\*\*\*\*\*

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diversification is necessary, it is doubtful whether the estate owners will be capable of acting in terms of the dimensions or pace required of them. It appears therefore that at some point the issue of control of the land, the sugar industry and the estates will have to be considered. There is considerable doubt whether Barrow or his Opposition (Adams and Adams) will alter the status quo.

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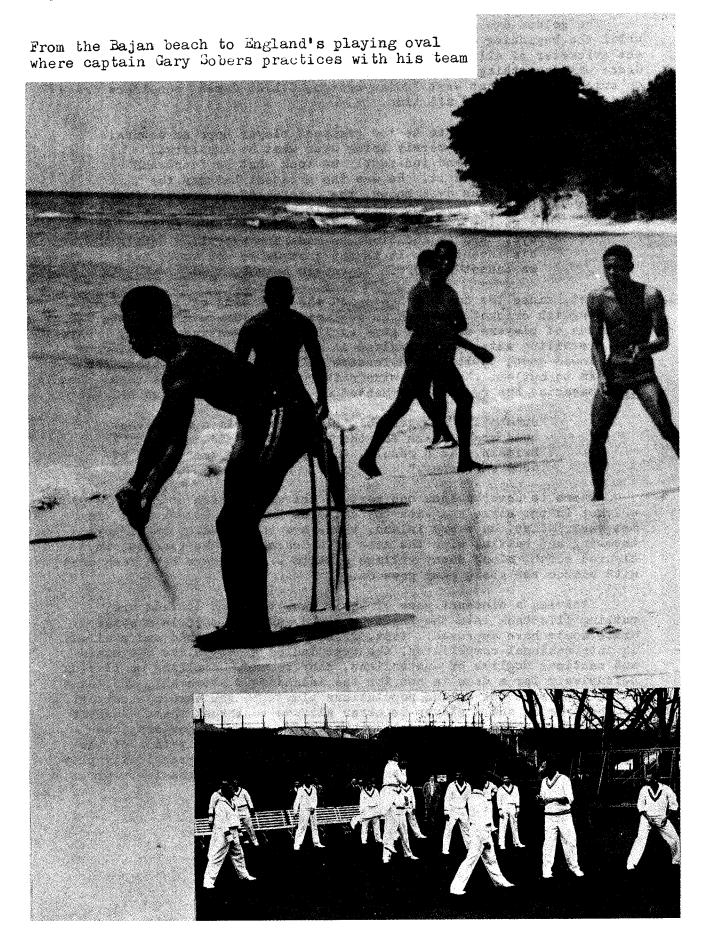
Sport and games are popular throughout the world. From the first Greek games on Mount Olympus to contemporary pre-occupation with world series and world champions, sport has been one of man's most creative and preferred forms of entertainment. But for the people of the English-speaking Caribbean, the game of cricket is much more.

Cricket for them is a way of life. It is a symbol of their social revolution and political awakening: an expression of unity and the dynamic force of the people of the West Indies. And nowhere is this game of cricket played with greater skill or more significance than in Barbados.

The origins of the game are of course in the pre-Victorian England of Dickens and Hazlitt. First played and shaped by the men of the countryside, the potters and farmers who took stick and ball to pass an afternoon, cricket was appropriated and organised by the English upper classes. Subsequently it became a part of the national culture. The boys in public schools were expected to be cricketers first, scholars second. The universities established their rivalries and as all good things English were, the game was was exported to the colonies. Indians, New Zealanders and West Indians all watched and then gripped the bat and bowled the small rubber ball themselves.

Cricket is played by eleven men on a side. Positions such as silly mid-on or silly mid-off really signify the fielders who take defensive places around the man who is batting. There are two wooden "wickets" placed 22 yards apart. The batsmen, two of them taking turns, defend the wicket. Meanwhile, the defensive side's bowler, employing an overhead motion, hurls a small ball at the wicket. The aim of the batter is to prevent the ball from hitting the wicket, in which case he is out. He also tries to hit the ball far enough through the circle of fielders so that he scores a run. Runs are made when the two batsmen are able to trade places, that is, run from one wicket to the other. An out is made either when the batter strikes out (ball hits wicket), is run out (when an opposing player is able to hit the wicket with the ball as the batter is running between), or flies out. The object of the batting team is to run up a good enough score and then get the opposition out for fewer runs by the time the match is over.

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The golden age of English cricket stretchedfrom the late 1860's until the beginning of the First World War. Playing then was the greatest cricketer of all time: W. G. Grace, the father of the modern game. Grace was everything. Batsman, fielder, innovator, genius. In his book on cricket, the great West Indian writer, C.L.R. James considers Grace the greatest player of all time.

"I hold him to be the greatest player born or unborn. He did not merely bring over what he inherited. Directly and indirectly he took what he found and re-created it. He was the greatest batsman the world has ever known, the creator of modern batting; but his greatest gift was in his head, where resided a genius for the game. He had a general's rapid eye. And in addition, he made his execution equal his invention. It is not that we do not know, but we cannot perform. Grace did both."

Yet, since the days of Grace and the beginning of the First World War, English cricket has been in decline. When Grace played, the daring attitude of players made the game exciting and creative. Today however, the prevailing attitude in England is caution and control. The game has slowed down, bowling is defensive, players are specialists, the idea is to outlast the other side rather than openly defeat them. Even Time magazine has recently commented on the state of English cricket:

"Unhappily, the genteel, slow-moving rites of cricket hold scant charm for the swingers of mid-century Britain. As a result, the sport is in the throes of decorous decay."

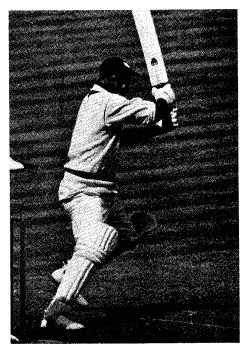
There is nevertheless one part of the world which still plays cricket in the style and with the skill of Englands Golden Age. In the West Indies, on every island, there are thousands of small boys throwing and batting with the zest of a Grace. On the beaches, in cleared scrub, along sunny village streets wickets have been fashioned with bamboo and great play goes on.

Evolving a distinct game of their own, the West Indians are putting life back into the Englishman's dying game. It is a style Grace would have approved: fast, free-swinging, dramatic and skilled. In international competition, the West Indies side, unlike the staid and cautious English or Australians, play to win. Stalling or playing defensively for a draw is not for the islanders. Above all, the teams which represent the island populations play with the absolute support of the crowds; and a player is never allowed to forget that. However quiet and composed the English cricketer finds his supporters, the West Indian players bat and bowl with the tense participation of the crowd. Indeed, the West Indians in make-shift stands practically play the match themselves as they shout or moan or applaud the feats or

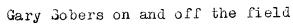
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Below: W.G. Grace





Frank Worrell at bat







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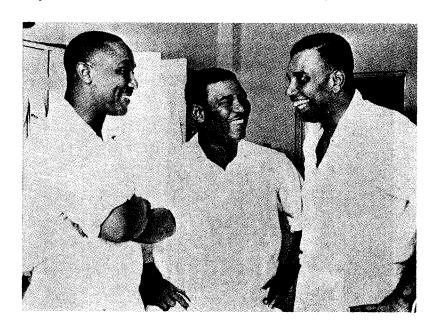
lapses of their cricket heroes.

And heroes are what the islanders consider their cricketers, for nowhere else in the world will better players be found. Today, the West Indies dominate the world of cricket. From 1960 - 1965, the islands, particularly Barbados, produced the finest players of the time, players who won eleven of sixteen test match decisions and three of four Test Series (those long, five day international competitions). In 1961, for example, the West Indies side dramatically defeated an Australian team and even the people of Melbourne cheered. In a gesture of appreciation, 250,000 Australians lined the streets of Melbourne and cheered the West Indian team goodbye.

The team cheered that day in Melbourne was a very distinguished group of sportsmen. But with distillation, the story belongs to Frank Worrell, captain of the team and Gary Sobers, destined to be the greatest cricketer since Grace himself. Both men were born in Barbados, both men captained the West Indies side and both men were black. Today, Worrell is dead and Sobers, just married, is acting captain of the West Indies Test team.

The significance of Frank Worrell was in his captaincy, for he was not only the first black man ever to head a West Indian side in international competition, but he was also able to bring unity and team play to a side which had always been known for its carefree individualism. In a sense, the fact that he was a black man inspired better play from the players themselves. All of a sudden it was a stronger team because the talent of the individuals was exploited in the interest of the side, their side. Nor was it just coincidental that Worrell's appointment as captain of the West Indies Test team coincided with the rise of West Indian nationalist and independence movements. The two were inevitably linked.

Gary Sobers, on the other hand, is the greatest living hero (probably of all time) of the West Indian masses. As one Trinidadian



The three W's:
Barbadians Frank
Worrell (from left),
Everton Weeks, and
Clyde Walcott.

(remember Sobers is Bajan) sighed as Sobers was run out in his latest Test Series against the English: "When Sobers dead man, we all dead." Considering the insularity of the islands, their jealousy, sentiments such as these are remarkable. In this regard, it is the cricketers rather than the politicians who are creating a sense of West Indian unity and nationalism. And above all, it is Sobers, the greatest cricketer of all who provides these islands with an expression of their latent greatness, he who has made cricket more a crusade than a game.

Perhaps this is best described in C.L.R. James' Beyond A Boundary, the finest book I have ever read on cricket:

"What do they know of cricket who only cricket know? West Indians crowding to a Test bring with them the whole of their past history and future hopes. English people have a conception of themselves breathed from birth. Drake, the mighty Nelson and Shakespeare... those and such as those constitute a national tradition. Underdeveloped countries have to go back centuries to rebuild one. We of the West Indies have none at all, none that we know of. To such people the three W's ... wrecking English batting help to fill a huge gap in our consciousness and our needs."

Cricket therefore is a people, once colonial, giving expression to their abilities, their right to independence; the cricket pitch is their York Town and Waterloo. And in the West Indies today, above all it is the participation of all the people, not just the white population of the region, demonstrating what might be were all sectors of the community fully activated. But then, as the cricketers anticipated the independence movements of the 60's so do they anticipate the unified potential of the future.

Yours.

Frank M: Donald

Frank McDonald

Received in New York on November 21, 1969.