

5. In French the word Soufrière means "sulfur," a chemical that is always present during volcanic eruptions and produces an egglike smell. This word appears repeatedly throughout the mountainous islands of the eastern Caribbean.
6. The illegal drug industry has become well developed in the Bahamas. Because it is a clandestine industry, nobody knows what its precise contribution to the Bahamian economy is, but there is no doubt that it does add very significantly to the country's economy. The 70–80 percent figure just stated for tourism's contribution does not take into consideration profits from the drug industry.

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3

The Historical Context

Stephen J. Randall

The complicated historical legacy of the Caribbean, like the colonial legacy throughout Latin America, has largely determined the challenges that the region has faced over the past centuries and those it faces in the twenty-first century. Christopher Columbus, searching for a passage to China, first landed in the area at the end of the fifteenth century. From then on the region has played an important role in international relations, as detailed by Jacqueline Braveboy-Wagner in Chapter 6. The Caribbean was often at the center of European colonial rivalries. Even when the region was of peripheral concern to competing European and North American imperialisms, the competition invariably affected domestic politics, society, and economics.

As Richard S. Hillman indicates in Chapter 1, both unity and diversity characterize the Caribbean. There is a striking cultural and linguistic diversity within the region, as well as significant differences in terms of socioeconomic development and political traditions. For example, some of the islands of the West Indies have traditions of British parliamentary government, whereas Cuba and the Dominican Republic, former Spanish colonies, have experienced authoritarianism and strong presidential regimes. There are contrasts between larger nations such as the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Cuba, which have played a major role in hemispheric politics in the past century, and the smaller islands of the eastern Antilles. There are also critical differences between the island nations of the Caribbean that remained within the imperial system into the twentieth century and the larger, more powerful mainland nations. Haiti, of course, was the first of the colonies to achieve independence as the result of the 1790s revolt, but burdened with a massive debt by France, it continued to struggle over the next two centuries. African slavery had a substantially lesser impact

on Colombia, Venezuela, and Mexico, each of which attained independence from Europe in the early nineteenth century.

Notwithstanding such diverse currents, the countries of the Caribbean have endured common experiences. Settled primarily by English, Spanish, French, and Dutch colonists with imperial interests who rapidly destroyed all but a small remnant of the indigenous populations, the Caribbean took on a different appearance with the massive forced migration of African slaves from the seventeenth century through the middle of the nineteenth century. This forced migration, combined with the institution of slavery and the postemancipation importation of indentured workers from India and China, essentially created the human contours of the region.

Moreover, slavery, economic exploitation, and political domination have profoundly influenced the converging cultural, socioeconomic, and political patterns within the region. Thus, as Thomas J. D'Agostino discusses in Chapter 4, contemporary Caribbean governments and their leaders face similar socioeconomic and political challenges. These governments, despite their disparate structures and traditions, have developed common ways of addressing these challenges.

In this chapter I introduce the major historical developments in the Caribbean region since the end of the fifteenth century and provide background and context for the more specialized chapters that follow. The approach is necessarily synthetic and interpretative, touching on the main historical currents and highlights of the region with a focus on the insular Caribbean.

■ Conquest and Colonization, 1492–1800

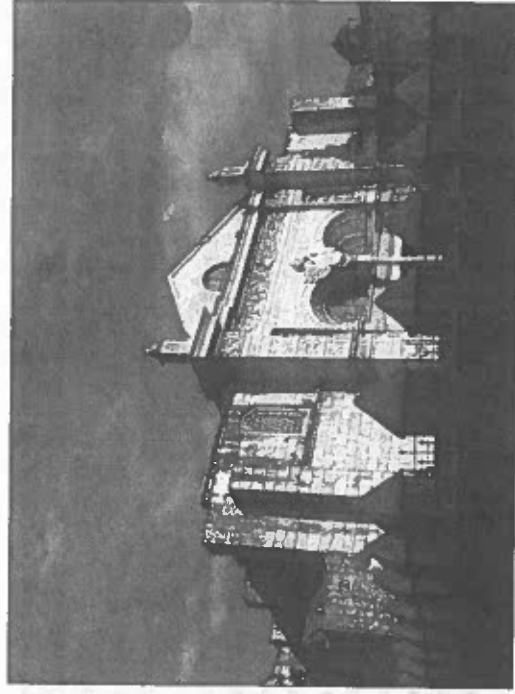
Although debate continues in regard to Christopher Columbus's arrival representing a true "discovery" of the Americas, there can be little disagreement about the historical importance of the colonization of the Caribbean by European imperial powers after 1492. As Thomas Boswell details in Chapter 2, that first voyage ultimately led to the large-scale movement of European, African, and Asian peoples to the Americas, completely altering the demographic composition of the region. It also led to the formation of European colonies throughout the Western Hemisphere, many of which would become independent states during the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Columbus conducted four voyages to the Caribbean from 1492 to 1502. The primary interest of Queen Isabella of Spain was not in the settlement of a new world but rather in mineral wealth—particularly gold—believed under the economic theories of the age to be the source of all national wealth. It was only on Columbus's third voyage in 1498 that gold was discovered in Santo Domingo and not until 1508 that Juan Ponce de León would locate deposits in Puerto Rico. Columbus's initial forays into the area, therefore, were of less

economic significance than the major developments that followed in Mexico, Peru, and Bolivia, which became the main sources of gold and silver.

Between Columbus's first voyage in 1492 and 1519, when Hernán Cortés invaded Mexico, the Spanish held unchallenged supremacy in the Caribbean. By the time of Cortés's onslaught on the Aztec and Mayan peoples of Mexico, the Spanish had established varying degrees of authority and settlement in Cuba, Santo Domingo (the island of Hispaniola, which became Haiti and the Dominican Republic), Puerto Rico, Jamaica, Trinidad, and Martinique. What was especially important about this period was the rapidity with which the Spanish sought to turn the region into one that could be successfully exploited in the interest of the metropolis, and that interest soon went beyond the quest for gold. For example, Juan de Esquivel set up sugarcane cultivation and processing shortly after establishing a colony in Santo Domingo in 1509, within a few years sending the first shipments of sugar back to Spain.

The Spanish quickly sought to institutionalize the relationship between the metropolis and the new colonies and their peoples (including the indigenous population) and to regulate trade. Prior to the advent of the African slave trade, the indigenous population was the most pressing social concern. At the time of the Spanish arrival in the Caribbean, the indigenous population is estimated to have been between 750,000 and 10 million composed primarily of Ciboney, Arawaks, and Caribs, with the main concentration of the population on the island of Hispaniola (Knight 1978:6). There, the population of perhaps



The Cathedral of Santa María,
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

200,000 was reduced to only a few thousand in less than two decades as the result of warfare, enslavement, and disease. Although there was some outrage in Spanish circles about this devastation, by the time any effort was made to address the problem, the population was already hovering on the brink of extinction. In the Laws of Burgos (1512), the first of the European colonial charters, King Ferdinand sought to address the persistent problems over the treatment of indigenous peoples, recognizing the need for some degree of regulation. The Laws of Burgos, which permitted colonial officials to free native people from the *encomienda* system (in which they were enslaved) when they were Christianized and capable of self-government, in practice simply continued the policy of *repartimiento* (distribution of lands and forced labor) granted to the conquistadors by the Spanish crown. More significant, although perhaps equally ineffectual, was the appointment of friar Bartolomé de las Casas as protector of the Indians. De las Casas, who arrived in Hispaniola in 1502, himself utilized forced Indian labor on his allotted lands until 1515, when he renounced his *repartimiento* of Indians and returned to Spain in an effort to alter Spanish policy. In his efforts to improve the condition of indigenous peoples throughout the region, de las Casas underlined the deficiencies and tragedy of Spanish policies. His historical legacy became one of the major inspirations of modern liberal attitudes toward indigenous peoples and produced an account of Spanish atrocities toward the first inhabitants of the Americas.

Spanish mistreatment of native peoples, the unwillingness of Spanish colonists to engage in agricultural labor, and the singularly exploitative nature of Spanish colonial policy had other, farther-reaching consequences. The rapid decimation of the potential labor force left Spain with few options except to seek alternative sources of manual labor. In 1518 the Spanish crown authorized the importation of African slaves. That initiative would ultimately bring several million African slaves across the Atlantic Ocean to the Americas and create new societies that were an amalgam of European, African, and Asian cultures and peoples.

By the early sixteenth century, Spain began to face increasing challenges to its exclusive presence in the Caribbean, although it was almost another century before it was forced by other European powers to relinquish its monopoly. For much of the sixteenth century, the other major European countries were distracted by other ventures or too weak to confront Spain. Spain controlled the Netherlands until 1568, and though France had the financial capacity to challenge Spain in the Americas, its exploration of North America inspired little initial interest. For much of the century, French raiders were little more than an irritant to Spanish authority in the Caribbean, resulting in intensified security, improved fortifications, and the use of convoys to move shipments of gold to Spain. France made a brief foray into present-day Florida in the 1560s and an equally unsuccessful attempt to colonize in the area of Port Royal in what is now South Carolina. The more serious challenge came from England

during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1558–1603). English merchants initially sought to legitimately challenge the closed Spanish trading system in the Caribbean. However, the officially sanctioned voyages in the 1560s of John Hawkins, which met a favorable response from Spanish colonists anxious to obtain goods Spain could not provide, provoked a hostile military response by Spain. In 1569 the majority of Hawkins's ships were captured at Veracruz by a Spanish fleet.

Spain's refusal to allow other countries to trade with its West Indian colonies gave other European nations little option but privateering and warfare if they wished to crack the Spanish monopoly. English privateers were the most successful during the balance of the sixteenth century, with Francis Drake the most notable. Having narrowly escaped capture at Veracruz with his cousin John Hawkins, Drake became a major threat to Spanish interests. Operating from a base in Central America and employing native allies and escaped slaves, Drake captured Nombre de Dios on the isthmus in 1572, as well as Spanish ships carrying South American silver to Europe. The following year he captured Panama City, in the process looting its shipments of silver as well. Drake returned from subsequent privateering ventures on the Pacific coast of South America to raid major Spanish ports in the Caribbean region, including Cartagena and Santo Domingo, as well as St. Augustine in Florida.

England and Spain moved to open warfare in 1588, although the Caribbean colonies were almost irrelevant to the conflict. The startling defeat of the Spanish armada by seemingly inferior English naval forces in the English Channel was a minor setback to Spanish power, yet it heralded a more aggressive European challenge to Spanish authority. In 1604 in the Treaty of London and five years later in the Truce of Antwerp, Spain conceded that it could not maintain a monopoly in the Americas. The seventeenth century thus became a period of dramatic change in the Caribbean and of radically increased colonization and mercantile efforts by other European nations, led by the English, the Dutch, and, to a lesser extent, the French.

As much as these nations challenged Spain for hegemony in the Caribbean, they did not seriously threaten the major Spanish colonies or Spain's economic status. The focus of England was on British North America and, like the Dutch, on the smaller islands in the eastern Antilles and on the northern coast of South America in the area that would eventually become the countries of Guyana, Suriname, and French Guiana. Their colonial strategy also differed radically from that of the Spanish, with a stronger emphasis on colonization, the development of agriculture, and imperial trade and less emphasis on the quest for mineral wealth. The Dutch moved expeditiously, for instance, to establish a salt industry on the Caribbean coast of Venezuela. By 1616 they had a foothold in the area that would become Dutch Guiana and later Suriname, and in 1621, to exploit trading opportunities in the region, they established the Dutch West India Company. A few years later they joined the English in settling

St. Croix (part of the present-day US Virgin Islands), and the English in turn gained control over Barbados and St. Kitts in the 1620s. During the seventeenth century, the Dutch moved into Tobago, Curaçao, St. Maarten (the French portion is St. Martin), St. Eustatius, and Saba, all of which, with the exception of Tobago, became part of the Netherlands Antilles. The English gained control of Antigua, Montserrat, and St. Lucia; took Jamaica by force from the Spanish in 1655; and established a firm foothold on the Central American coast in British Honduras (present-day Belize), which proved to be a useful military base and source of tropical timbers and dyes. All of this came at the expense of the Spanish monopoly, although with the exception of Jamaica, given its strategic importance, such gains were made only on the periphery of Spain's Caribbean empire. French acquisitions were even more modest: Martinique and Guadeloupe in the 1630s and a claim to a portion of Guiana. The major French inroad into Spanish territory was the acquisition of the western portion of Santo Domingo in 1697 through the Treaty of Ryswyck, ending the Nine Years' War in Europe. Under French control, St. Domingue (as the colony that would ultimately become Haiti was called) became the wealthiest non-Spanish possession during the eighteenth century.

These inroads by the other European powers may not have threatened Spanish hegemony, but they proved profitable to the other nations and became the source of imperial wars in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Once the other nations had established a presence in the Caribbean, conflict ensued among the other European powers as well as between them and Spain. Between 1652 and 1678 the English and the Dutch fought three wars; in 1669 the Dutch monarch William of Orange ascended to the throne with his English wife, Queen Mary, cementing a military-economic alliance that resolved half a century of conflict. The English, Dutch, and French were also more successful in establishing the economic basis for longer-term prosperity in their colonies, moving quickly to nurture a profitable sugar industry that Spain brought to Cuba only in the nineteenth century. England exported its first shipments of sugar from Barbados in the late 1640s. In St. Domingue, French settlers mixed agriculture and ranching with their share of piracy, and their very occupation of the western half of the island was made possible by the Spanish decision to move Spanish settlers out of that area to reduce support for pirates and smugglers. The Dutch from early in the seventeenth century held a virtual monopoly over salt production and trade. Yet none of these gains did more than nibble at the edges of Spanish authority and hegemony in the area. Spain lost only one major possession—Jamaica—and even what would become St. Domingue had a long road toward economic prosperity after 1697.

For much of the seventeenth century, officially condoned buccaneering by English, Dutch, and French privateers challenged Spain's power in the region. The privateers, often provisioned by colonial officials and given safe haven in colonial ports, cut a swath of terror through the Spanish Caribbean until the

end of the seventeenth century, attacking and looting Spanish treasure ships as well as territory. The Englishman Henry Morgan, perhaps the most notorious of the buccaneers, dealt a serious blow to Spanish prestige in 1670 when he and his men captured Panama City and burned it to the ground. Such activities also provided social, political, and economic mobility for a privileged few. In spite of his notorious past, Morgan was later appointed governor of Jamaica. By that time, the other major powers found piracy as disturbing to their own interests in the Caribbean as they had hoped it would be to Spanish authority, with the result that the English and Dutch began to turn their own military might against the buccaneers, bringing to an end a colorful—if violent—period in Caribbean history.

European imperial rivalries, a series of major wars, and continued expansion of and debate over slavery dominated developments in the eighteenth century. The century began with the demise of the Spanish Hapsburg dynasty and the ascendancy of the more reformist Spanish Bourbons, triggering war with Great Britain, which feared a French-Spanish alliance. The War of the Spanish Succession (1701–1714) involved naval actions in the Caribbean as well as land conflicts in North America and Europe. However, the treaties at the end of the war had only limited significance for Spain and other imperial powers in the Caribbean. England's main gain in the Caribbean area was the Spanish concession of the *asiento* (license) to enable England to trade in slaves and other goods in the Spanish colonies. French gains from these conflicts were far more peripheral to Spain's main Caribbean possessions, focusing on the coastal areas of Florida and Texas.

Between 1739 and the mid-1780s, war was constant. One source of conflict between England and Spain was disagreement over the application of the *asiento* at the conclusion of the War of the Spanish Succession. Rather than liberalizing its colonial trade, Spain sought to tighten controls at a time when Spanish demand for European goods continued to increase. With Spain lagging behind both France and England in industrial production, it was unable to meet that demand, and its effort to curtail imports from England only served to exacerbate tensions. War between Spain and England erupted in 1739 over claims by English captain Robert Jenkins that his ear had been severed by zealous Spanish authorities mandated to curtail English trade. The English fleets failed to take the heavily fortified Cartagena and were equally unsuccessful in their attack on Santiago de Cuba, but they seized Portobello in Panama, which had considerable strategic value. The War of Jenkins's Ear involved only England and Spain, but it was evident that in subsequent conflicts England could expect to be confronted by a Bourbon alliance between Spain and France.

By 1740 hostilities had widened into the War of the Austrian Succession, an eight-year conflict. Although the war ended inconclusively, the Spanish decision to cancel the British *asiento* guaranteed future conflict over trade access to the Caribbean. Furthermore, the increased competition between England

and Spain's ally, France, foreshadowed a future Anglo-French war. When conflict (the Seven Years' War/French and Indian War) erupted in 1756, most combat took place in French and British North America, but inevitably the conflict spilled into the West Indies. With France as an ally of Spain, Spanish possessions in the region were fair targets for England's men-of-war, and England—in a crushing blow to Spain's strategic interests as well as its pride—captured the major port of Havana.

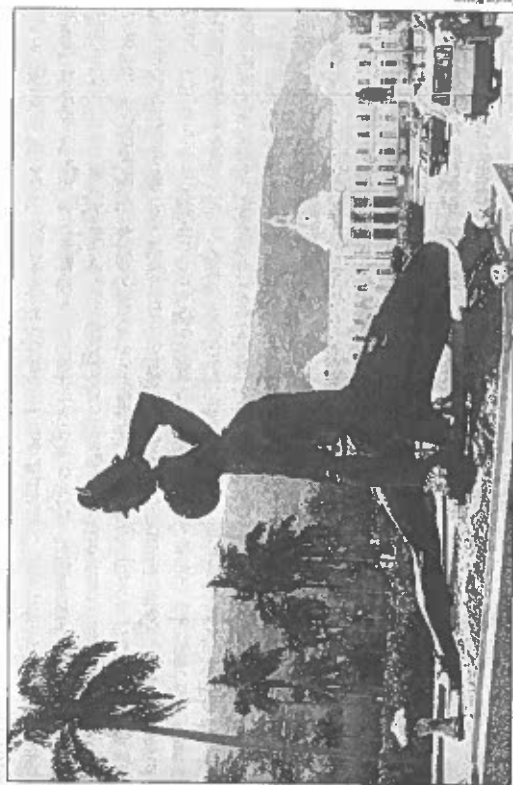
Unlike the conclusion of the War of the Spanish Succession, the War of the Austrian Succession, and the War of Jenkins's Ear, the Seven Years' War led to dramatic transfers of power in the Caribbean and the North American mainland. England returned Havana to a humbled Spain, which also retained control over the Floridas. The war had significant implications as well for the evolution of the European presence in North America. France transferred to Spain possession of the lands west of the Mississippi River and its Louisiana Territory at the same time that military losses to the English ended French control over New France as well as disputed territories east of the Mississippi River and south of the Great Lakes. England had emerged as the undisputed hegemon in North America; ironically, when that hegemony was challenged, it came not only from its European rivals but also from North American colonists attempting to sever imperial ties. In diverting its naval and military power to confront the rebellious American colonies after 1775, Britain's capacity to fend off imperial challenges elsewhere in the region was weakened, as evidenced by Spain's regaining control over much of the Floridas as well as temporary possession of British Honduras and the Bahamas.

The French Revolution, hastened not only by an incompetent and arrogant French government but also by the financial disaster occasioned by the unsuccessful Seven Years' War, changed the face of Europe as well as the power structure in the Caribbean. The most significant impact in the Caribbean was France's loss of St. Domingue (Haiti), its most profitable colony and the site of a massive investment in sugar cultivation, processing, and export. When France erupted into revolution in 1789, St. Domingue had an overwhelming majority population of enslaved and free Africans. There were only slightly more than 40,000 whites on the French part of the island, in contrast to more than 440,000 black slaves and some 26,000 free blacks and mulattos (Knight 1978:149–152). In liberating one of the largest slave populations in the Western Hemisphere, the revolt in what would become Haiti also had significance throughout the slaveholding areas of the Americas, including the southern United States.

The slave revolt with the longest-term impact began in St. Domingue in 1791, two years after the outbreak of the French Revolution. The French government not only increasingly lacked the capacity to control its colonies, but the ideology of the French revolutionary governments in the early 1790s, with their emphasis on liberty, fraternity, and equality, tended to favor the end of slavery. In 1791 the French assembly granted full political rights to the free

colored population in St. Domingue, and when the white elite refused to accept this act of political enfranchisement, the free colored leaders, perhaps unwittingly, unleashed the mass of black slaves. The French also ended the legal slave trade in 1793 and abolished slavery the following year, but by then the revolt could not be contained. By the end of the decade, the Haitian revolution was led by free blacks and former slaves, the most important of whom were the educated, propertied freedman Toussaint L'Ouverture and his main military commander, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, an African-born former slave. L'Ouverture himself did not survive the rebellion; he was captured and imprisoned in France, where he died. By 1804, however, with France shifting back to empire under Napoleon and departing from its revolutionary ideology, Dessalines had firm control not only of Haiti but also briefly of the rest of the island. Although slavery remained a viable institution in the Spanish Caribbean for another eight decades, the Haitian revolution was a vivid reminder of the potential for change.

Even where major slave revolts did not occur, the resistance to slavery remained a constant fact of life in the slave communities. In most of the slave colonies, the existence of communities of escaped slaves, or maroons, vividly reminded colonial authorities of the resistance to slavery that was always just below the surface, even in times of relative stability. There were large and well-established colonies of escaped slaves in the interior mountainous regions of



Monument commemorating the slave revolt, with the National Palace in the background, Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

Jamaica, as there were in the less accessible interiors of St. Domingue and eastern Cuba. Such maroon communities were a constant threat not only to the white slaveholding populations of the Caribbean but also to the institution of slavery itself, although the maroons were not in themselves above trading and holding slaves. Although most of the slave opposition to forced labor came in the form of day-to-day resistance, there were also large-scale revolts. White slaveholders, especially on the larger, more isolated plantations, where the ratio of black slaves to white slaveholders overwhelmingly favored the former, lived in constant fear of slave rebellion. There was a serious maroon war in 1734 in Jamaica and another in 1795.

The diversion of French attention from its colonies in the 1790s and its alliance with Spain provided an opportunity for other imperial powers to make gains in the region. England captured Trinidad in 1797 and seized the Dutch islands when France defeated the Netherlands as well as Spain. England also gained temporary control over Martinique, St. Lucia, and Guadeloupe. The Treaty of Amiens in 1802 confirmed English control over the harbors of Trinidad, which occupied a key strategic location near the South American coast.

The Napoleonic Wars and political instability in Spain had a more significant impact on the mainland areas than on the insular Caribbean. Napoleon's conquest of Spain in 1808 disrupted Spain's already tottering capacity to control its American colonies. Spanish energies initially were devoted to resisting the French occupation. In the colonies, loyalties were divided between those who favored a restoration of the Spanish monarchy and liberals who sought political reforms, which they achieved to some degree in the 1812 constitution. By the time Ferdinand II restored the Spanish monarchy in 1814, the level of resistance to Spanish colonialism in the Americas was intense. This resistance served to thwart recolonization efforts over the next decade, as did opposition from the United States and other European powers, especially the English, whose efforts to promote trade would be undermined by the reassertion of Spanish authority. By the early 1820s, Mexico and the rest of Central America, Venezuela, and Colombia had achieved independence from Spain, although Great Britain retained control over British Honduras and Nicaragua's Mosquito Coast. On the northern coast of South America, Britain, the Netherlands, and France still had firm possession of the Guianas. Spain's loss on the mainland was only marginally compensated by its retention of Puerto Rico and Cuba, which remained a powerful foothold in the region for another century.

■ Nation Building and Socioeconomic Transition in the Nineteenth Century

Nothing was of such profound importance in the nineteenth-century Caribbean as the debate over slavery. In the eighteenth century, the Caribbean was the

destination for approximately 60 percent of the African slaves forcibly removed to the Americas, with some 5 million people brought to the Caribbean during the course of the slave trade. Eighteenth-century Enlightenment ideas on the equality of man provided an intellectual context for the debate, although more practical considerations led to the termination of the trade and then slavery itself during the nineteenth century. The socioeconomic and demographic impacts of slavery in the Caribbean were profound, as was the impact of emancipation, which opened the door for tens of thousands of immigrant laborers from various parts of the world.

The English and French Caribbean colonies dominated the trade in the eighteenth century, with Dutch vessels providing most of the shipping. In that period the Spanish Caribbean absorbed only some 10 percent of the traffic, in contrast to the nineteenth century, when the Cuban sugar industry took flight, creating a huge demand for labor (Randall and Mount 1998:20). Despite any opposition to slavery and the trade that existed in the Caribbean colonies in the nineteenth century, the critical decisions affecting the institution were made in the metropolitan capitals, which were more insulated from local considerations of racial balance.

Great Britain and the United States declared the international slave trade illegal in 1807–1808, and it was the effort of the British Admiralty to enforce its own decree that significantly curtailed traffic from Africa. Parliamentary action to end the slave trade followed more than a decade of rising opposition within Britain. Antislavery forces established the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade in 1787, under the leadership of William Wilberforce. Thomas Clarkson, and others. Wilberforce was clearly the most powerful voice for reform, and his close association with William Pitt added credibility to his cause. Antislavery forces secured passage of the Foreign Slave Bill in 1806, prohibiting the importation of slaves into Britain's territories that had been acquired as a result of the Napoleonic Wars. The following year the British Parliament went farther by banning the slave trade in all British territory.

The Dutch agreed in 1814, at the end of the Napoleonic Wars, to comply with British policy. Britain concluded a treaty with Sweden shortly after, ending a rather marginal Swedish involvement in the traffic. France followed the Dutch example, agreeing by treaty with Britain to end its involvement in the African slave trade by 1818. Responding to critics who found the British expenditure on the initiative excessive, Wilberforce asked: "How can money be so well employed as in thus effecting the deliverance of so great a portion of our fellow creatures from the most cruel scourge that ever afflicted the human race?" (Wilberforce and Wilberforce 1840). However, like officials in the other major slaveholding imperial powers, French authorities turned their backs as another 80,000 slaves entered Guadeloupe and Martinique before the 1830s. Spain paid lip service to the policy by 1820, although there was widespread violation by Spanish colonial officials, with the result that in the decade after

official Spanish adherence to that policy, approximately 500,000 African slaves were forcibly removed to Cuba alone, and another 50,000 to Puerto Rico, to toil in the sugarcane fields and processing factories.

Reformers were increasingly disillusioned by the difficulties of enforcement, as even Britain was not vigilant in its enforcement efforts until it declared slavery illegal in its colonies after 1833. Reformers realized that the institution was unlikely to crumble solely through the restriction of international slave traffic. Thus, Wilberforce and his compatriots turned their attention to the abolition of slavery itself in the British Empire, and the legislation finally succeeded in 1833, the year after his death. This was more complicated economically and sociologically than simply ending the traffic, for the end of slavery would result in the loss of a massive investment in forced labor and create an unpredictable racial situation in a number of the colonies. The British government was also sensitive to the fact that its ill-conceived imperial policies had contributed only a few decades earlier to the successful rebellion of the thirteen American colonies. The British approach to emancipation was consequently cautious, but it was still well in advance of thinking in Spain, France, and the southern United States. In 1815 the Parliament passed legislation requiring the registration of all slaves in its colonies. This measure was partially designed to control trafficking, but it was seen as necessary preparation for emancipation. Britain followed its registration policies with legislation in the 1820s to improve the conditions under which slaves lived and worked, although local slaveholders largely ignored and resented such interference. Nonetheless, Britain persisted and appointed an abolitionist, Sir James Stephen, as the administrator of Caribbean affairs within the Colonial Office.

Colonial officials continued to impede application of such legislation, however. In Jamaica, it was not until 1831, two years before actual emancipation, that the colonial legislature passed legislation adhering to the spirit and letter of the Amelioration Acts of the 1820s; even then it did so largely as a response to the massive rebellion that swept through the northwestern section of the island. There, some 40,000 slaves, in part inspired by Baptist lay preacher Sam Sharpe, destroyed several hundred plantations, although the loss of life among white planters was minimal. The rebellion struck fear into planters throughout the Caribbean, but it also inspired the optimism of British abolitionists.

In the aftermath of Sharpe's rebellion, the British Parliament passed the Abolition Act in 1833, ending slavery in British territory. The act provided £25 sterling per capita for compensation to slaveholders, as well as a period of indenture for newly emancipated slaves to ensure the continuity of the labor force. That indenture requirement did not apply to all the colonies. Antigua and Barbados, for example, were exempted. In areas where the policy applied, the indenture was six years for field hands and four years for domestic slaves. There seemed to be no recognition of the irony of compensating slaveholders for their loss of property but not the slaves for their years of free labor and lost freedom.

Although in Cuba and Puerto Rico both the slave trade and slavery itself continued into the late nineteenth century, the passing of the Abolition Act raised serious challenges relating to the labor supply in the British colonies. At the time of emancipation, the overwhelming majority of the slaves—some 300,000—were in Jamaica, with 80,000 in Barbados, 22,000 in Trinidad, 15,000 in British Guiana, and a scattered population in British Honduras. Although there is some evidence that the majority of emancipated slaves remained on the plantations, largely for want of real economic alternatives, there was a near universal belief that slaves would not work the plantations with any enthusiasm after gaining their freedom. Many former slaves in the British colonies also seized the opportunity to become freeholders themselves, even if the landholdings they were able to acquire were often too small to be economically viable. In Jamaica it is estimated that the number of black freeholders in the twenty years after 1838 increased from 2,000 to more than 20,000. In Antigua, freedmen and freedwomen brought thousands of new acres into cultivation after emancipation. In British Guiana, freed slaves between the 1830s and 1848 purchased more than 400 estates with an estimated value of US\$100,000 (Randall and Mount 1998:23).

Consequently, there was great interest in attracting immigrant labor in the British Caribbean, particularly in those colonies where the shortage of unskilled labor was most acute. Despite the pressing need for labor, European immigration to the Caribbean in the nineteenth century never approached levels found in North America, Argentina, and Brazil. This may be attributed to several factors, including the climate, the lack of economic diversification in the largely monocultural economies, and the racial composition of the islands. Interestingly, Cuba, despite the continuation of slavery, was, along with Costa Rica, the most attractive to European (almost exclusively Spanish) immigrants, primarily because of the economic boom that accompanied the expansion of the sugar industry.

In the non-Spanish Caribbean, the main immigration was of indentured East Indian workers into Trinidad and British Guiana, along with some Chinese to various colonies. More than 140,000 East Indians arrived in Trinidad between the end of slavery there and World War I. British Guiana was even more active in recruiting East Indian labor, with approximately 238,000 arriving prior to World War I. More than 30,000 East Indians and Chinese came to Jamaica in the nineteenth century, and smaller numbers were brought to St. Kitts, St. Vincent, and Grenada. The indenture system in Trinidad remained in place until 1917, when the British government ended the practice. By that time East Indians and their descendants constituted one-third of the island's population, and the existence of that substantial population was further incentive for continued movement from South Asia (Laurence 1971; Lai 1993). East Asian and South Asian migration into the Caribbean created one of the other enduring features of modern Caribbean history: tension between the Indo-Caribbean

and Afro-Caribbean populations. This tension has been especially pronounced in British Guiana and Trinidad.

The pattern of development in Cuba throughout the nineteenth century stood in marked contrast to that of the British Caribbean. With the thriving Cuban economy generating great demand for slave labor, the slave trade (and slavery itself) persisted long after Spain had agreed to end its involvement in 1820. The proportion of Cuban slaves relative to the population increased markedly between the late eighteenth and the mid-nineteenth centuries with the expansion of the sugar industry. Between 1774 and 1827, while the Cuban population increased from approximately 170,000 to more than 700,000, slaves increased from 25 percent to more than 40 percent of the total population (Knight 1978:96–97, 101). That dramatic increase had significant implications for the independence movement as well as for the social and political history of modern Cuba. By 1860, the free colored population in Cuba was only 16 percent of the total population, compared to more than 40 percent in Puerto Rico. Not surprisingly, there was less racial tension in Puerto Rico than in Cuba and less resistance to emancipation (Knight 1978:105). Although the distribution of Cuba's free colored population tended to parallel the urban concentration in the other colonies, Cuba was distinct in the high percentage of the free black population in the largely rural areas of eastern Cuba that a century later provided Fidel Castro with his strongest base of support.

The wealth of the Cuban sugar plantations and slaveholders in the nineteenth century paralleled that of the plantation aristocracy in the United States. They also held a similar degree of political power, although in Cuba it was not muted by the tensions of sectionalism. In terms of their size relative to the black and slave populations, the white populations in Cuba and Puerto Rico also bore greater similarity to that of the southern United States than to the rest of the Caribbean, where slave societies were characterized by the dominance of a small white elite over a massive black majority. As late as 1870, approximately 60 percent of the Cuban population and some 50 percent of the Puerto Rican population were classified as white (Knight 1997:130; Engerman and Genovese 1975).

Between the late 1840s and 1868, small groups of US privateers known as "filibusters"—mainly southerners anxious to extend the area of slavery by annexing Cuba—attempted invasions of Cuba. Unsuccessful as their efforts were, the filibusters were one important manifestation of a long-standing US interest in Cuba, underlined as well by several equally unsuccessful efforts to purchase Cuba from Spain. With the end of the US Civil War in 1865 and the emancipation of US slaves, combined with the extensive trade ties that had emerged between Cuba and the United States, Cuba's colonial status as well as the institution of slavery became increasingly anachronistic. In 1868 Cuban Creole nationalists, frustrated by Spain's refusal to permit a greater degree of political autonomy or to implement meaningful economic reforms, launched

their first struggle for independence in what came to be known as the Ten Years' War.

The revolt had little support from the large slaveholding planters in wealthier western Cuba, who had too much at stake to support such an initiative. Neither was there a slave revolt to bolster the ranks of nationalists, led by Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, in large part because the rebels had no clear policy on the abolition of slavery. Although the rebels failed to gain the independence they sought from Spain, the lengthy rebellion had major consequences. The most important was the emancipation of Cuba's slaves over the next few years, providing an additional base of support for later rebellions and reducing some of the power of the slaveholding planter class.

A second important consequence was that the conflict clearly demonstrated that Spain lacked the military power, and perhaps the political will, to suppress a large-scale war for independence. Yet it was also apparent that the rebels did not possess the means to defeat Spain militarily. Without external assistance, Cuban nationalists would likely be condemned in the future to another drawn-out stalemate.

A third significant consequence was the massive destruction of property and the high level of indebtedness that sugar planters and producers suffered. US investors moved in quickly to acquire sugar properties, helping to establish a strong US presence by the time another war for independence broke out in Cuba in the 1890s. By that time, US private direct investment in Cuba exceeded \$50 million; bilateral trade, primarily in sugar, industrial goods, and consumer goods, was worth \$100 million. Spain had already lost the economic war for its wealthy colony.

Finally, the war spawned nationalist heroes as well as the poet laureate of Cuban nationalism—José Martí. After exile in Spain and Mexico and a brief return to Cuba, Martí settled in New York, where he and other Cuban nationalists established a government-in-exile. Martí wrote extensively on the United States as well as Cuba during his lengthy exile, and his writings on the United States reflected a complex mixture of admiration for US political and economic successes with a fear of the threat the Colossus of the North posed for the Americas' future. By the late 1880s, Martí had become a passionate, idealistic, revolutionary nationalist prepared to lay down his life for his *patria* (country or fatherland). He had also by that time moved away from his earlier disinterest in labor and the peasants to adopt a broader status of egalitarian, democratic, and racial equality that gave him legendary status with Fidel Castro's revolutionary movement more than half a century later (Ruiz 1968: 62–71).

Support for the nationalist cause from Cubans was strong in the United States, where Martí and other exiles raised funds and recruited forces for the independence struggle. Powerful Cuban exiled nationalists also worked from bases in other countries, including Antonio Maceo in Costa Rica and Máximo Gómez in the Dominican Republic. Ultimately, Cuban discontent with continued

Spanish imperial control and unfulfilled promises of political and economic reforms spilled over into open revolt in February 1895.

Although insurgent forces were stronger and domestic Cuban public opinion more supportive of the independence movement than during the Ten Years' War, this conflict rapidly moved toward a bloody stalemate. Pro-independence sentiments were inflamed by the Spanish anti-guerrilla warfare tactic of reconcentration of the civilian population in the countryside, designed to cut off insurgent forces from food and other supplies. Although the tactic of moving civilians into what were little more than concentration camps was brutal indeed, Spanish forces had little choice if they were to regain control of the insurgent-dominated countryside. For their part, insurgents burned sugarcane fields and destroyed processing plants, plantations, and infrastructure, a good deal of which was US-owned by that time. The widespread violence directed against property and the brutality of Spanish policy under Governor-General Valeriano Weyler—which included the destruction of crops and livestock in an effort to starve out the insurgents—served further to provide a cause célèbre for the yellow press in the United States, primarily Joseph Pulitzer's *New York World* and William Randolph Hearst's *New York Journal*, which vied for circulation with lurid stories of Spanish atrocities.

By 1898 war still raged. Although under US pressure the Spanish government promised to end the policy of reconcentration and move toward political reform, neither the US public, Congress, nor William McKinley's administration were confident that anything short of Cuban independence would end the persistent conflicts on the island. Not only were Cuban-US trade and US investment constantly disrupted by Spain's inability to control its colony, but also the instability in such a strategic area of the Caribbean threatened US security. President McKinley called Cuba's instability a "constant menace" and reluctantly moved toward war (Smith 1965:284–286). A combination of domestic politics, genuine humanitarian concerns, pressure from US commercial interests, and US security concerns, especially following the February 1898 sinking in Havana Harbor of the battleship USS *Maine*, thus led to the US declaration of war against Spain in April of that year.

The rapid destruction of the Spanish fleet in the Philippines and Cuban waters ended Spain's claim to great power status and marked a significant movement of the United States into world affairs. More than 200,000 Cubans and Spaniards had already perished prior to the US declaration of war, and more than 3,000 US personnel died in the conflict, all but a few hundred from yellow fever and malaria. The war also brought the United States into a new role as colonial administrator in the Caribbean, setting the stage for the next century of US hegemony in the region. The United States established protectorate status over Cuba, formally occupied the island from 1898 through 1902, and returned troops again to restore domestic order in 1906. Under the terms of the Platt Amendment, a rider appended to the Army Appropriations Act of

1901, the United States exercised a high degree of control over Cuba until the amendment was abrogated in 1934.

Cuba was only a protectorate, but Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and Guam became US possessions. As such, the United States wielded considerable influence over the evolution of the Puerto Rican political system. Initially, the US president appointed the governor, cabinet, and all judges sitting on Puerto Rico's supreme court. In contrast to the later occupations of Haiti and the Dominican Republic, where officials appointed to such positions were not nationals of those two countries, at least these appointees were Puerto Rican. In addition, Puerto Ricans were able to elect an assembly on the basis of a franchise that was much wider than in the English and French Caribbean. In 1910, Puerto Ricans elected their first resident commissioner to the US Congress, Luis Muñoz Rivera; seven years later, with the passage of the Jones-Shafroth Act, Puerto Ricans gained US citizenship.

■ The Non-Spanish Caribbean in the Early Twentieth Century

In the late nineteenth century, the British Caribbean enjoyed a greater degree of stability than the Spanish colonies, even before the final collapse in the Spanish-American War. The earlier end of slavery in the British colonies and the arrival of East Indian immigrants in many of those colonies set them on a path toward political maturity and economic development more rapidly than in the colonies of the Spanish Caribbean, although none of them approximated the wealth of Cuba. However, while Cuba was plagued by turmoil and suffered widespread destruction during the war, the British were able to maintain order and stimulate development in their colonies.

Politically, Trinidad and Tobago (united in 1888) and Jamaica remained rigidly under the control of small, mostly white elites. Even the gradual introduction of British parliamentary institutions did not obscure the fact that these societies were neither democratic nor free of imperial dominance at the turn of the century. Jamaica's black population did not gain a legislative majority until the 1920s, although women gained the right to vote just before that, paralleling that development in the United Kingdom and preceding it in the United States. Property and literacy requirements for the franchise remained in effect until 1938, and full racial and gender equality before the law did not come to Jamaica until the adoption of a new constitution in 1944.

In both Jamaica and in Trinidad and Tobago, the effort to improve agriculture and trade involved crop diversification, pest control, and low-interest loans to facilitate the improvement of infrastructure, including the expansion of rail and road links to ease the movement of goods. The attempt to diversify the Jamaican economy met with some success. Although large sugar estates retained

their importance, the number of plantation workers declined from 30,000 in 1860 to 20,000 in 1910; the relative importance of sugar to the Jamaican economy also declined, by 1896 representing only 18 percent of the value of Jamaican exports (Randall and Mount 1998:47). Conversely, the number of smaller freeholders operating banana plantations increased, and the country began to export bananas. There was a significant level of Canadian and US investment in the bauxite industry in Jamaica over the next few decades, increasing economic diversification. Yet the demand for labor and the opportunities for economic advancement in Jamaica remained limited, and the lure of either seasonal migratory work or permanent migration from the island became constant. Thousands of Jamaican workers and their families migrated to Panama in the mid-nineteenth century to assist in the construction of the Panama Railroad linking the Caribbean and the Pacific. After the United States gained control of Panama from Colombia in 1903, thousands more sought employment in the construction of the Panama Canal.

Like Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago experienced some degree of economic diversification in the first half of the twentieth century, in particular with the development of an oil industry after World War I. However, such economic development did not guarantee democratization. Given the high percentage of East Indian immigrants, many of them indentured workers, Trinidad enjoyed less self-government than most of the other British colonies until the end of the indenture system in 1917. Most residents were people of color, and most Europeans were Roman Catholics. What minimal representative government there was disappeared in 1898 as part of the so-called reforms organized by Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain. Chamberlain, who assumed office in 1895 as part of Lord Robert Arthur Salisbury's Conservative cabinet, envisioned a centralized British Empire—a Greater Britain—that would compete with the United States, Russia, and Germany. Before 1898, Trinidad's Legislative Council, which advised the governor, was hardly representative, dominated by wealthy planters, businessmen, and professionals. Even that was too much for Chamberlain. As of 1898, appointees of the Colonial Office would outnumber Trinidadians. Chamberlain also abolished the elective local council in Port of Spain, which had existed since 1853. Despite a high property requirement for the franchise, blacks as well as mulattos had served as councilors, with the result that the abolition of the local council eliminated one of the few avenues for the colored population to participate actively in colonial politics. As late as 1934, only 25,000 Trinidadians out of a total population of more than 400,000 had the right to vote, and in Barbados the franchise was even more restricted, with only 2.5 percent of the population entitled to cast a ballot as late as 1937 (Knight 1978:161).

In terms of its degree of democratization, British Honduras fared little better than Trinidad in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. One factor accounting for the limited local self-government in British Honduras was the ongoing threat posed by Guatemala, which maintained a long-standing claim to

the territory. From 1814 until 1851, authority rested with the superintendent, a British military officer, and the Public Meeting. At first all free citizens could attend the Public Meeting, but as the society grew, property qualifications—higher for people of color than for whites—became mandatory. A civilian superintendent was appointed in 1851, and in 1854 British Honduras abandoned the Public Meeting, establishing a legislative assembly of eighteen elected members plus three members appointed by the superintendent. Voters had to meet the property requirements; assembly members had to meet even higher ones. In 1862, while the United States was embroiled in the Civil War, Great Britain constituted British Honduras as a formal colony. In 1871 the legislative assembly voted itself out of existence and transferred authority to the governor and his appointees. The threat from Guatemala was not the only factor; the tiny European minority did not want to be governed by the large nonwhite majority. A legislative assembly did not return until 1954, when all literate adults gained the right to vote. In 1964, British Honduras gained full internal self-government, a significant advance but a far cry from the independence enjoyed by Jamaica and Trinidad.

There were similar pressures for more representative government in British Guiana in the late nineteenth century. The emerging Afro-Guyanese middle class was pressing for constitutional reforms, in particular the conversion of the governor-appointed Court of Policy into an elected assembly, as well as less onerous qualifications for the franchise. Yet as in most of the colonies, wealthy planters, who had little difficulty exercising their political influence in London with the West India committee, vigorously resisted such reforms. Nevertheless, by the early 1890s the pressures began to work; voter qualifications were gradually relaxed, the College of Electors was abolished, and eight elected members were added to the Court of Policy to balance the eight appointed members. Still, the governor and planters retained the real power, as the executive duties of the Court of Policy were transferred to an Executive Council that the court controlled. It was not until 1909 that electoral reform made Afro-Guyanese the majority of the voting population. Those reforms were sparked in part by the massive 1905 Ruimveldt riots, which began with a strike by Georgetown stevedores and turned into the country's first general strike uniting urban and rural workers. The strikes and the rioting were quelled by British troops, but the uprising underlined the depth of the discontent that the masses felt with their economic and political condition.

French colonial policies underwent considerable evolution from the early nineteenth through the early twentieth centuries. St. Domingue, prior to its successful revolt against France, had representation in the French National Assembly, as did Martinique and Guadeloupe by 1815. This status went far beyond what England and the United States accorded their possessions by the early twentieth century. The surviving colonies lost that status until after the 1848 revolution in France, although in the intervening years there were some

advances in the development of elected councils in both Guadeloupe and Martinique, restricted as the franchise was to men of property. After the failure of the Paris Commune in 1871 and the establishment of the French Republic, French colonial representation in the National Assembly was restored, paving the way for recognition as actual overseas departments of France after World War II (Knight 1978:161).

The legal end of slavery in 1863 in the Dutch West Indies (Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, St. Eustatius, St. Maarten, Saba, and Suriname) brought, as elsewhere in the region, economic decline and the search for alternative sources of labor and alternative economic activities. In Bonaire, abolition was followed by a serious and prolonged decline in the production of salt, long the mainstay of the economy. In Aruba, gold mining remained an important economic factor until World War I. Later, as the Venezuelan oil industry experienced rapid growth during the 1920s, Aruba became an important locale for oil refining, by 1929 boasting the largest refinery in the world. Curaçao followed a similar pattern. There the major investments by Dutch Shell in oil refining in the 1920s revived a stagnant economy, and World War II stimulated the development of an offshore oil industry as well. Shell's refinery remained operational until the 1980s, and in the interim the island had also developed, along with Bonaire and Aruba, a vibrant tourist industry.

The experience of Suriname deviated somewhat from that of the other Dutch colonies in this period. As in the others, the abolition of slavery in 1863 was followed by a ten-year transitional period of indentured labor for former slaves, but indentured workers from South Asia significantly supplemented the labor force. Between 1873 and 1916, when the indenture system ended, some 34,000 East Indian contract workers reached Suriname. Most of them were Hindu, but some were Muslim. As with most immigrant labor experiences in the West, the return rate of the Indian indentured workers was high, with an estimated one-third returning to India before the system was discontinued. They left an indelible imprint on the politics, language, culture, and economics in Suriname, and in 1927 their importance was recognized by the grant of eligibility for Dutch citizenship (Hoeft 1998). In the twentieth century, the Surinamese economy came to be dominated by foreign-owned bauxite production and export, most of which was destined for the United States. Rice remained the main agricultural product, supplemented by citrus fruits, bananas, and other tropical crops. In Suriname, as in Curaçao, a complex racial and ethnic mixture of Dutch Europeans, Afro-Caribbeans, Spanish, and Indians has engendered societal divisions and at times spilled over into conflict.

■ The Emergence of US Hegemony, 1898–1930s

After 1898 the United States emerged as the unchallenged power in the Caribbean region. French interest in the construction of a canal across the isthmus

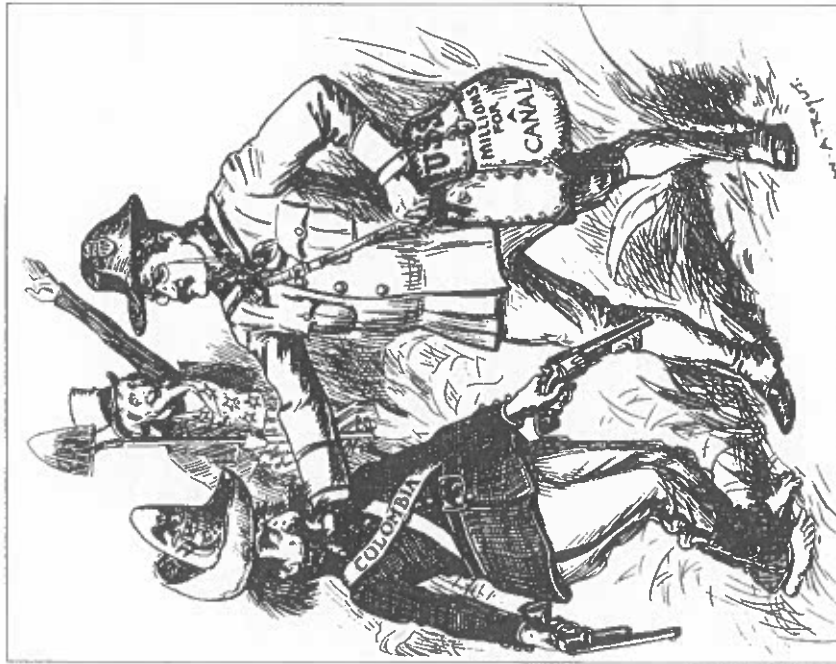
of Panama collapsed late in the nineteenth century. With the 1903 separation of Panama from Colombia and the conclusion of the Panama Canal Treaties with Panama, the United States moved rapidly ahead with its plans for a canal linking the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans to facilitate commercial and military naval operations. Distracted with its own colonial problems, mainly in South Africa during the Boer War, and confronted by an increasingly powerful Germany, Great Britain ceded dominance in the Caribbean to the United States. Prime Minister Arthur Balfour renounced any intention of acquiring additional territory in the Americas and explicitly accepted the principles set forth in the 1823 Monroe Doctrine.

No other European power had either the capacity or the political will to challenge the United States in what became a special sphere of influence. Germany, however, briefly presented a challenge early in the century when its warships were active in the Caribbean, protecting and expanding commercial and strategic interests. Without formal colonies in the Caribbean, Germany nonetheless had extensive commercial interests in Venezuela at the time. Confronted with the failure of Venezuelan officials to meet their international financial obligations, Germany blockaded Venezuelan harbors in 1901. During the next few years, German, Italian, and French naval vessels all made shows of force in Caribbean waters. This spurred President Theodore Roosevelt to take a stronger stand against European encroachment, as well as what he considered to be the irresponsible economic practices of Caribbean countries that led them into increased indebtedness abroad.

In the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, the president declared that the United States had a responsibility to exercise police power in the Caribbean.¹ His successor, William Howard Taft, pursued a policy called "dollar diplomacy" that substituted financial controls to promote greater political stability and reduce the threat of further European involvement in the region, a concern made more acute with the outbreak of World War I. In fact, the greater willingness of Woodrow Wilson's administration to dispatch US troops, as occurred in Mexico in 1914 and 1917 and in Haiti in 1915, may be attributed as much to the war in Europe as to instability in the Americas.

Much like the specter of communist expansion in the 1920s and the rise of fascism and Nazism in Italy and Germany in the 1930s, the possibility of European encroachment in the Caribbean was perceived as threatening to US security. In response, the United States assumed substantial responsibility for security in the region, as evidenced by the protectorate status of Cuba; the level of control exerted in Puerto Rico; and the establishment of military occupations and/or customs house controls in Nicaragua, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic. This degree of involvement was basically limited to the Caribbean region; with the exception of Mexico during World War I, the more powerful and independent mainland countries remained relatively untouched by direct US action.

Haiti was especially vulnerable and of strategic importance because of its deep-water harbor at Môle St. Nicolas. Although the United States had no



"Held Up the Wrong Man"
President Theodore Roosevelt strong-arms Colombia to secure control of territory for the construction of the Panama Canal.

pressing need for another naval base beyond those it possessed at Guantánamo in Cuba. In Puerto Rico, and in Panama, US officials did not want the port to fall under German control. Seeking stability following the collapse of the government of Guillaume Sam in 1915, President Wilson ordered US forces to occupy Haiti, where they remained until 1934 as the effective power behind a series of governments. Brenda Plummer (1992:110) concludes:

The Haitian protectorate was unprecedented in its duration. the racism that characterized US behavior in the black republic, and the brutality associated with pacification efforts. . . . The devaluation of Haitian culture by Protestant,

positivist and dogmatic North Americans recalled an age of imperialism that was rapidly becoming obsolete in other parts of the world.

The governance structure imposed by the United States provided for financial oversight of Haitian affairs by US officials, including the power to deal unilaterally with Haiti's creditors, and a national police force commanded by US Marines. There were improvements in health, education, and infrastructure development, as occurred in Cuba and elsewhere in the Caribbean where the United States exercised direct or indirect controls. But US policy measures were universally unpopular in Haiti, and the attitudes as well as the practices of US officials during the lengthy occupation provoked violent resistance.

The political impact of the US occupations was, on the whole, even less positive. In contrast to the British, Dutch, and French colonies, where a variety of civic organizations and political institutions were emerging, the lessons in democracy meted out by US officials seemed to breed more authoritarian than democratic impulses. In the Dominican Republic, for example, where the United States began an eight-year military occupation in 1916, the congress was dissolved and all senior Dominican officials were replaced with US military officers, many of whom did not even speak Spanish. Here, as elsewhere, there were improvements in education, sanitation, and infrastructure. But for all the rhetorical commitments US officials made to equality and democracy, there was little, if any, change in the distribution of wealth and power. Culturally, the US occupation produced a Dominican passion for baseball, which over the coming decades provided a small window of opportunity for economic mobility. But even in that game, the racism that characterized the US presence tended to prevail.

Decades of interventionism and intimidation under the guise of the Roosevelt Corollary, dollar diplomacy, and Wilson's "democratic crusade" engendered considerable ill-will within the region (Smith 1996:64). In recognition of the implications of mounting anti-US sentiment, the United States changed its policy approach toward Latin America and the Caribbean. In his inaugural address on March 4, 1933, Franklin Delano Roosevelt made reference to this new approach: "I would dedicate this nation to the policy of the good neighbor—the neighbor who resolutely respects himself and, because he does so, respects the rights of others." Roosevelt's Good Neighbor Policy sought to enhance the image of the United States and to develop a spirit of cooperation within the hemisphere. Following Herbert Hoover's withdrawal of US forces from Nicaragua in 1933, Roosevelt brought home the remaining troops from Haiti and the Dominican Republic and abrogated the infamous Platt Amendment in 1934. Such measures aside, the United States clearly did not abandon the Monroe Doctrine as the basis of its hemispheric policy. Rather, it was able to pursue its objectives through less confrontational means, including economic leverage and diplomatic pressure (Smith 1994). Although the Good Neighbor Policy appeared

to portend improved US-Caribbean relations, the previous era of intervention and occupation left an inauspicious legacy. This legacy set the stage for the eventual rise of brutal dictators such as Rafael Trujillo in the Dominican Republic, Anastasio Somoza in Nicaragua, Fulgencio Batista in Cuba, and François Duvalier in Haiti.

■ The Emergence of Labor Organizations

In the first few decades of the twentieth century, Caribbean colonies and independent states continued to experience political and economic change. As foreign (especially US) investment increased, economic growth, continued imperial control over many colonies, and the growing strength of foreign-owned enterprises stimulated an emergent nationalism. In those nations still under US or European control, this meant an increasingly strong desire for independence. Despite periods of economic growth, high levels of poverty among the majority of previously indentured and enslaved peoples persisted, while political systems throughout the region remained dominated by small, typically white, elite groups. However, the growth of the working class and the slow emergence of a middle class contributed to the formation of labor movements and political parties as much of the Caribbean achieved a greater degree of political institutionalization.

A major development that occurred throughout the Caribbean during the interwar period was the emergence and growing political power of labor organizations. During World War I, the rising cost of living and frequent shortages of basic commodities, including foodstuffs and housing, provoked popular discontent. There were strikes by oil and asphalt workers in Trinidad in 1917, and from 1918 to 1924, strikes and labor violence became more common throughout the region. There were labor disturbances and strikes in Jamaica in 1918 and 1924, in Trinidad in 1919 and 1920, in St. Lucia in 1920, in the Bahamas in 1922, and in British Honduras in 1919 and 1920.

On the mainland, banana workers in the Santa Marta area of Colombia began to organize in the 1920s, with the assistance of European socialist and anarchist groups, which targeted the subsidiaries of the United Fruit Company (UFCO), the main foreign interest in the banana industry throughout the region. Workers tended to have the sympathy as well of local Colombian planters who were seeking with limited success to break UFCO's monopoly over crop transportation and export. Tensions between labor and UFCO climaxed in 1928 in a bloody strike that ended with Colombian troops firing on unarmed civilians, a scene that inspired Gabriel García Márquez in his brilliant novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and that also brought to prominence the young socialist politician Jorge Eliécer Gaitán.

Trade union activity gained momentum in British Guiana, Jamaica, and Trinidad. Led by the popular cricketer Herbert Critchlow, the British Guiana

Labour Union, beginning with black dockworkers and then expanding to encompass East Indian agricultural workers, claimed a membership of 10,000 by the early 1920s. Restricted as trade unions were in Jamaica, the labor movement met with limited success in the 1920s, with only the longshoremen organized briefly by the mid-1920s. Workers realized more success in Trinidad in the interwar years, where Arthur Andrew Cipriani played a crucial role as a labor organizer, encouraging returned veterans and workers to join the Trinidad Workingmen's Association (TWA) in a major dockworkers strike in 1919. Their success emboldened workers who later struck across the island, reflecting a broadened base of participation by sugar workers and tradespeople. Alarmed by the rising level of militancy and violence on the part of labor, British authorities made strike action illegal while simultaneously paying lip service to the need to investigate workers' concerns about wages. Cipriani then shifted his focus to political action, converting the TWA into the Trinidad Labour Party in 1934. In addition to Cipriani, a number of other trade union leaders emerged in Trinidad during the 1930s, including Uriah Butler, who formed the British Empire Workers and Citizens Home Rule Party in 1938. Butler and Adrian Rienzi, a young East Indian lawyer and Leninist activist, contributed to the general strike among oil workers in 1937, the most important labor action in the country to that date.

Jamaica also experienced major labor actions in the late 1930s as workers, whose standard of living continued to decline as economic conditions deteriorated, voiced their growing discontent. The 1938 disturbances began with a major strike on a sugar estate, where striking workers clashed with police. Conflict quickly reached the docks of Kingston and then spread to include public works employees, former soldiers, and cane and banana workers in the rural areas. Suppressed though they were, these strikes led to the establishment of the West India Royal Commission (the Moyne Commission) to study social and economic conditions in the British West Indies, and then to the formation of the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union, which by the end of World War II was the largest labor organization in the Caribbean (Randall and Mount 1998:66-69).

■ War and Cold War, 1939-1959

The period from the end of the Great Depression to the Cuban revolution was turbulent in the Caribbean, although the attention of the great powers was diverted largely to European and Asian affairs. World War II brought tensions to the region, especially with the German defeat of the Netherlands and France, which threatened the future of their Caribbean colonies. Britain's weakness, the defeat of the Dutch and French, and the threat that German submarine activity posed to shipping all contributed to a strengthening of US power in the Caribbean. The war also created unprecedented demand for Caribbean products, from petroleum and bauxite to sugar and other foodstuffs. The unsettled

nature of the imperial connections during the war served as a further stimulus to sentiments favoring a greater degree of self-government and liberalization of laws governing political participation.

Events in Europe during World War II sparked concern over the transfer of colonial territories in the Caribbean. When Germany defeated the Netherlands and France by June 1940, US and British officials feared that those countries' Caribbean possessions would fall into German hands. There was also concern that Great Britain, given the threat of German invasion, would be unable to defend its West Indian colonies. In response, the United States and other countries signed the Act of Havana on July 30, 1940, committing to the principle that no territory in the Americas could be transferred from one power to another. They agreed that in the event of an imminent German takeover of colonial territory, one or more countries in the Americas could establish a trusteeship for the duration of the war. In addition, with British consent, Canadian troops moved into Jamaica, the Bahamas, Bermuda, and British Guiana to replace British forces needed in Europe from 1940 to 1946 (Randall and Mount 1998:71). In return for transferring US destroyers to Britain in 1941, the United States also acquired control of a number of British air bases in the region. In the end, although Vichy control over the French colonies posed some problems, there was no transfer of any Caribbean colonies to a hostile power, and no serious security threat emerged during the war.

With European powers debilitated by war, increased political mobilization in their colonies stimulated a growing sense of nationalism and demands for reform. In British Guiana, for example, the Moyne Commission's inquiry underlined the rift between the Afro-Guyanese and the larger Indo-Guyanese population, the latter of which had played little role to that date in the colony's politics. The commission recommended increased democratization of government as well as socioeconomic reforms, including extending the franchise to women and those who did not own land. In contrast to prewar British policy, the commission also encouraged the emerging labor movement. The reforms introduced by Governor Sir Gordon Lethem included reducing property qualifications for holding office and voting and making elected members a majority of the Legislative Council in 1943. By 1952 there was universal adult suffrage, prefacing the movement toward independence.

This political liberalization, albeit limited and with little impact on the distribution of wealth and power, occurred elsewhere, particularly in the British Caribbean. In 1944 suffrage was extended to women in British Guiana, Barbados, and Bermuda. In that same year Jamaica and Trinidad achieved universal adult suffrage, and Jamaica also gained limited self-government. Martinique and Guadeloupe were made overseas departments of France in 1946. Universal adult suffrage came to Barbados in 1950 and to the Leeward and Windward Islands in 1951. After years of debate over its political status, Puerto Rico obtained its first taste of local self-government since the US occupation in

1898, ultimately gaining commonwealth status in 1952. In 1954 the Netherlands Antilles and Suriname were granted the right of internal self-government and universal suffrage and became autonomous parts of the kingdom of the Netherlands.

Along with decolonization, economic development and Cold War tensions dominated the regional agenda in the postwar decades. Puerto Rico experimented with aggressive economic change under the program Operation Bootstrap. Intended to promote industrialization and to diversify the economy, Operation Bootstrap sought to attract large corporations from the mainland with tax incentives and comparatively inexpensive labor. In the short term, at least, the island boomed with manufacturers anxious to take advantage of their ability to export into the US market duty-free. Throughout the region, state planning became increasingly popular in the postwar era, led to a large extent by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the influential ideas of the Argentine economist Raul Prebisch. The model of industrial development behind protectionist tariff walls was widely adopted in the area during these years, contributing to increased rural-urban migration and the decline of the rural labor force. Economic changes notwithstanding, the traditional polarity between an impoverished rural peasantry and urban proletariat, and a small, largely white urban and landed elite, remained the norm. With inflation rampant by the 1960s, there were few signs that poverty and disparities of wealth were on the wane.

Politically, the non-British Caribbean had slipped decidedly into an authoritarian mold beginning in the 1930s, with the Somozas in Nicaragua, Trujillo in the Dominican Republic, and later with Batista in Cuba and Duvalier in Haiti. Even Colombia came briefly under the control of the military under Gustavo Rojas Pinilla until 1958. Throughout the 1950s, democracy reeled under the onslaught of right-wing dictators considered by the United States to be safe bets in the Cold War struggle. That trend was particularly evident in Guatemala, which emerged with more progressive elements under the leadership of Juan José Arévalo and Jacobo Arbenz. Their efforts to bring sorely needed reforms to landholding and agriculture and to support the rights of labor ran up against US Cold War paranoia as well as the vested economic interests of private capital, in particular the United Fruit Company (UFCO). Confronted with what US officials considered to be a wedge for communism, Dwight Eisenhower's administration in 1954 gave support (through the Central Intelligence Agency) to the reactionary forces of the Guatemalan military, led by US-trained colonel Carlos Castillo Armas, in overthrowing the democratically elected government of Arbenz. In addition to rolling back a decade of socioeconomic and political reform, this coup ushered in three decades of repressive military rule.

In the postwar years the British Caribbean experimented less with revolution than with political evolution, including a failed attempt at federation between

1958 and 1962 (the West Indies Federation) involving Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad, and the Windward and Leeward Islands. The federation was less a colonial initiative than one inspired by British officials anxious to curtail the costs of empire for a weakened postwar Britain while seeking to minimize the impact of decolonization on the smaller island economies unable to survive on their own. The federation was doomed to fail as an artificial creation that accurately represented neither the political will of the majority nor the historical reality of the ties among the British West Indies. Ultimately, Jamaica's physical separation from and weak economic links to the other islands led to its withdrawal. When Trinidad followed suit, the British House of Commons was left with little choice but to end the short-lived federation in 1962. The failure of the West Indies Federation presented an early indication of the obstacles to political changes that might address historical inequities in the Caribbean.

The onset of severe East-West tensions heightened concerns in the United States and other imperial powers over the threat of communism specifically and political radicalism generally. However, it was Fidel Castro's seizure of power in 1959 and the Cuban revolution's turn to socialism that brought home the realities of the Cold War in the Western Hemisphere.

■ The Cuban Revolution

No event in the postwar years had a more significant impact on the Caribbean than the 1959 Cuban revolution. In toppling the regime of dictator Fulgencio Batista, Fidel Castro initiated a true revolution that resulted in a massive redistribution of political, social, and economic power in the insular Caribbean's largest and most powerful nation. This revolt, and Castro's subsequent embrace of Soviet-style socialism, dramatically affected the East-West balance of power and made Castro and Cuba a symbol of defiance against the United States, one that has endured for some fifty years.

Cuba's alliance with the Soviet Union appeared to provide communism a beachhead in the Western Hemisphere. It conditioned the US response to any political change in the area that seemed to portend radical socioeconomic transformation or provide more leverage for Soviet- and Cuban-supported insurgencies. The first and only direct US effort to overthrow Castro, with the use of a surrogate force of Cuban exiles, ended in disaster at the Bay of Pigs in April 1961. The Cuban Missile Crisis in October 1962 resulted in a more cautious, if still determined, effort to undermine the Castro regime. The rupture of diplomatic relations and the US-imposed economic embargo by the Organization of American States in 1962 heightened Cuba's isolation within the region, ultimately leading to a greater level of dependence on Soviet aid and trade with Eastern bloc countries. Although the embargo did take a toll on the average Cuban, for whom basic necessities would become scarce, as well as



A portrait of Fidel Castro in a cigar shop in Cuba.

on the infrastructure of the island, it failed to bring about Castro's demise. In fact, he and the revolution have endured, and Cuba has wielded considerable influence both within the Caribbean as well as on the world stage.

Among other things, the Cuban revolution served to increase the paranoia and sensitivity of Western powers and Cuba's neighbors to political change in the region. Thus, after civil war broke out in the Dominican Republic in 1965 when supporters of ousted president Juan Bosch tried to return him to power, Lyndon Johnson's administration sent 23,000 troops to forestall what was perceived as a threat of revolutionary change. Ultimately, US forces helped to defeat the pro-Bosch movement, preventing the restoration of the democratically elected government and facilitating the establishment of an authoritarian regime headed by longtime Trujillo associate Joaquín Balaguer.

The Cuban revolution and the Cold War also brought tension to the British Caribbean, in particular to British Guiana (independent Guyana after 1966) and Jamaica. In the former, US and British authorities were concerned with the political dominance in the early 1960s of the left-leaning Cheddi Jagan and his People's Progressive Party (PPP). Canada also had extensive economic investments in the country, primarily in the financial sector, and generally shared the US desire to avoid a political crisis. Under US pressure, the British government in 1964 introduced a new electoral system employing proportional representation, a significant departure from traditional British electoral politics, in order to provide an opportunity for the People's National Congress (PNC) under Forbes Burnham and other opposition parties to break the stranglehold of the PPP. The tactic worked, with the PNC winning the election and establishing a minority government in alliance with the United Force Party in 1964. Ironically, Burnham himself drifted to the left and adopted a more radical stance in the early 1970s, nationalizing a number of foreign-owned enterprises, including the extremely important bauxite holdings of the Canadian-owned

company Alcan. and establishing closer links with Cuba, Libya, North Korea, and East Germany.

Further evidence of the Cuban influence can be found throughout the 1970s. With the nationalization of bauxite production in Guyana, greater attention was focused on production in Jamaica, where Alcan's holdings had more potential and where there were also extensive investments by Anaconda, Kaiser, Revere, and Reynolds. The political situation in Jamaica in the early 1970s was viewed with alarm in the United States, as the electoral victory by the People's National Party (PNP) in 1972 led to the formation of a government committed to a program of democratic socialism under the leadership of Michael Manley. Manley and the PNP won reelection in 1976 and proceeded to establish diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and to host an official visit by Fidel Castro in late 1977, provoking an ever-more hostile response from the United States.

By the end of the decade, the worst fears of the United States—the potential expansion of Cuban and Soviet influence—seemed to have been confirmed. Cuba's military activism in Africa, particularly its remarkable success intervening in conflicts in Angola (beginning in 1975) and Ethiopia (1977), did much to enhance the country's global stature, as did Havana's hosting of the Sixth Nonaligned Summit in 1979. The success of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional, or FSLN) in overthrowing the regime of Anastasio Somoza in Nicaragua in 1979 provoked a crisis within the region and raised US fears of a second Cuba in what had become known as the Caribbean Basin. That same year, Maurice Bishop's New Jewel Movement came to power in Grenada after overthrowing the regime of Sir Eric Gairy and made immediate overtures to Castro. With Cuba attempting to expand its economic and political ties throughout the region, this period marks the high point of Cuban power and prestige in the Caribbean. However, as Jacques Braveboy-Wagner examines more fully in Chapter 6, such revolutionary change precipitated ongoing hostilities with the United States and varying degrees of military intervention that contributed to a diminishing of Cuban influence as time went on.

■ The Post-Cold War Years

The dismantling of the Berlin Wall at the end of 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 marked the end of a half century of Cold War. To a significant extent those changes also wrought a different dynamic in the Caribbean. Castro's Cuba remained an irritant in domestic and foreign policy for the United States even with the departure from power of Fidel Castro, initially in 2006 and more formally in 2008, when titular power passed to his brother Raúl. Yet it was an irritant that had lost its Cold War symbolism. Nor did Cuba

cast a long shadow over the politics of the region in the way it had during the height of the Cold War. Hugo Chávez's Bolivarian revolution in Venezuela had a far more important impact on politics and foreign policy in the Caribbean Basin as he sought to deepen relations with Cuba and influence political events in Colombia, Nicaragua, and elsewhere in Latin America. In 2005 Chávez took the lead in hosting the first Caribbean Energy Summit in Puerto La Cruz. Thirteen countries participated in the summit, which Chávez touted as part of Venezuela's commitment to exporting cheaper oil to Caribbean countries faced with high-cost imports and to enhance technological development. In 2006 Chávez was also a vocal presence in the months leading up to the Nicaraguan election that returned an aging Daniel Ortega and the Sandinista National Liberation Front to power. In early 2008 he engaged in saber rattling over the brief entry into Ecuador by Colombian forces attacking a base belonging to the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, or FARC).

Chávez's posturing, even with the leverage provided by the nation's oil wealth during years of high oil prices in the early twenty-first century, appeared to matter little to the region as a whole. In the post-Cold War period, Caribbean political leaders have focused more on expanding trade relations within the region; coping with the same pressures of globalization that face the major powers; and dealing with the continuing challenges of poverty, organized crime, and out-migration that have long characterized the region. The early promise of the potential benefits of a Free Trade Area of the Americas rapidly faded as the initiative lost momentum in the first decade of the twenty-first century, and the conclusion in 2005 of the Central American Free Trade Agreement by the United States heightened anxieties among Caribbean nations that they would be left further behind in the increasingly competitive global marketplace. The Association of Caribbean States (ACS), established at Cartagena in 1994, has been particularly focused on addressing issues of regional economic integration and protecting the interests of the smaller economies in the context of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Remittances to families in the region from family members who have migrated to North America or Europe have had some positive impact, especially in Jamaica, but remittances are hardly a substitute for real economic development and a reduction of the region's continued dependency.

Even as Chávez's Venezuela has been the economic powerhouse in the Caribbean basin, Haiti has continued to struggle with political instability and economic weakness. There were raised hopes for Haiti when Jean-Bertrand Aristide was elected president by a large popular majority in 1990, but those hopes were dashed when he was overthrown by military coup in September 1991. After a period of exile in Venezuela and the United States, he was returned to power with US military support during the Clinton administration in Operation Restore Democracy. During rule by the military junta, the international

community, including the OAS and UN, imposed economic sanctions on Haiti, which had little impact on the junta but intensified the suffering of the Haitian populace. Aristide was succeeded ultimately by René Préal in 1996, who served his full presidential term (1996–2001). In 2000, Aristide's Lavalas Family Party won control of the Senate, and later that year Aristide himself was returned to the presidency in an election that was boycotted by most of the opposition parties. Faced with mounting violence, military opposition, and international pressures, Aristide once again left office in 2004, fleeing into exile first in Jamaica and then the Central African Republic.

The internationally supervised presidency and parliamentary elections in 2006 that returned Préal to the presidency were viewed as relatively free of problems and a promising indication of increasing stability in Haiti. Préal appealed to the international community for the kind of substantial and long-term development aid that is essential if the country is to move beyond its endemic economic problems. However, socioeconomic and political stability have continued to elude what is by all accounts the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere.

Jamaica, governed after 2002 by the fourth successive government led by the People's National Party (PNP), also experienced times of turbulence, driven in large part by inflation in the cost of such basic commodities as gasoline. Troubled by perceived high levels of illegal immigration from Jamaica, the British government in 2003 for the first time imposed visa requirements on Jamaicans wishing to enter the United Kingdom. The Dominican Republic also witnessed violent public protests in 2003 in response to the high cost of consumer goods and energy shortages. The previous year, Patrick Manning, the prime minister of Trinidad and Tobago, had felt compelled to suspend parliament in the face of an ongoing political crisis but was returned to power in the third election in only three years. Dominica also faced serious economic problems in the first years of the new century confronted as it was by a decline in both exports and tourism.

■ Conclusion

Some historical patterns have emerged from this discussion. First, the insular countries of the Caribbean have had divergent colonial experiences, yet they share to varying degrees common problems of underdevelopment, out-migration, and political instability. A second important feature is the continuing interaction between the insular Caribbean and the larger Caribbean Basin, in particular with such major countries as Venezuela. A third characteristic of the region has been the range of political experiences as the former colonies achieved independence, from the earliest experience of Haiti and its slave revolt against both

planter and French authority to the more gradual and constitutional transitions experienced by the British Caribbean.² Aside from those remaining vestiges of colonial power, governance in the region ranges from authoritarian to constitutional democracy. Although the colonial heritage imparted different traditions, values, and institutions to the region, the movement toward political independence has done little to foster economic autonomy. As Dennis Pantin and Marlene Atzts demonstrate in Chapter 5, the economic dependency of the region may have lessened somewhat with the greater diversification of national economies, but dependency rather than self-sustaining economic growth is more the norm than the exception. In Chapter 4, Thomas J. D'Agostino explores the political implications of this condition. The countries of the Caribbean have endured a common historical experience of slavery, economic exploitation, and political domination. Confronting the implications of this historical legacy remains the main challenge for the Caribbean nations in the twenty-first century.

■ Notes

1. On December 6, 1904, in a message to Congress, Roosevelt stated:

Any country whose people conduct themselves well can count upon our hearty friendship. If a nation shows that it knows how to act with reasonable efficiency and decency in social and political matters, if it keeps order and pays its obligations, it need fear no interference from the United States. Chronic wrong-doing, or an impotence which results in a general loosening of the ties of society, may in America, as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation, and in the western hemisphere the adherence of the United States to the Monroe Doctrine may force the United States, however reluctantly, in flagrant cases of such wrong-doing or impotence, to the exercise of an international police power. (P. Smith 1996:38)

2. The current and former British West Indies had the most complicated road to independence of the Caribbean territories. Some, like Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Montserrat, and the Turks and Caicos Islands, remain possessions of the United Kingdom with internal self-governments. Others, like most of the former British Lesser Antilles and the Bahamas, have become independent. The first to become independent were Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago in 1962. Barbados became independent in 1966, and the rest achieved independence during the 1970s and early 1980s, with St. Kitts and Nevis being the most recent to become independent in 1983.

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