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Population Pressure in Kingston, Jamaica: A Study of Unemployment and Overcrowding

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IN ITS survey of conditions in the British West Indies in 1938, the Report of the West Indian Royal Commission observed:

> Behind the various social and economic defects . . . the rapid increase in population is to be found sometimes as a cause and almost always as an aggravating factor. It has contributed more than any other single influence to the formidable increase of intermittent employment in the towns and of underemployment in the country and has thus gone far to nullify the effects of wage advances in improving the standard of living.[1]

Although a quarter of a century has passed since the Royal Commission attributed the social and economic problems of the British West Indies to the increase in the population, very little has been done by Government or by private agencies to publicize family planning in Jamaica. Meanwhile, the dramatic reduction in infant mortality and the increasing expectancy of life have contributed to population growth. Emigration to Britain during the last decade has provided the only check on the increase in the population and its effect has been fairly limited.

Jamaica is typical of many underdeveloped countries. However, the inability of the island to provide all its inhabitants with adequate employment, housing, food, clothes, education and medical and social services, is an index of population pressure as well as of underdevelopment. The rapid increase in the population retards the pace of social and economic improvements, and most Jamaicans are condemned to a low standard of living, despite the efforts of successive Governments. Incomes are generally low and very unequally distributed. While 92 per cent of the classified labour force earned less than £300 per annum in 1959, almost 20 per cent of the remainder received over £1000.[2] But social contrasts are not confined to the dichotomy of poor masses and rich élite. The society is divided into three main social and cultural sections —white, coloured and Negro—the social and economic role and status of each of which were determined under slavery more than two hundred years ago. Members of the Negro social section increasingly aspire to the West European standard of living enjoyed by the white and coloured groups, and some achieve it. But the opportunities for advancement in Jamaica are extremely limited, and most Negroes live at a lower standard, which involves irregular employment, poor housing and frequently poverty. Population pressure is, in itself, a major obstacle to change, and has been partly responsible for maintaining the *status quo* in the island and for creating the recent crisis in race relations.

This paper examines some of the causes and two of the implications of population pressure in Kingston, the capital of Jamaica. The growth and present-day distribution and density of population are described, and an attempt is made to measure population pressure by reference to the economic resources and social facilities of the city, and to examine its effect upon industrialization and housing.

Recent Population Growth

Kingston is the largest city in the British West Indies. Between 1943 and 1960 its population increased by 86 per cent to 376,000, while the population of Jamaica increased by 30 per cent to 1,606,500. At least 23 per cent of the population of Jamaica live in Kingston, and the increase in its inhabitants in 1960 alone almost equalled the population of Montego Bay (24,000), the second largest town in the island. Approximately half the annual growth of 20,000 is attributable to natural increase, and the remainder to migration from the rural areas. The volume of the rural exodus between 1943 and 1960 is illustrated by the growth in the number of towns having more than 1000 inhabitants from nineteen to thirty-three. However, the majority of migrants have concentrated in Kingston, and the problems arising from population pressure are more acute in the capital than in the other towns in Jamaica.

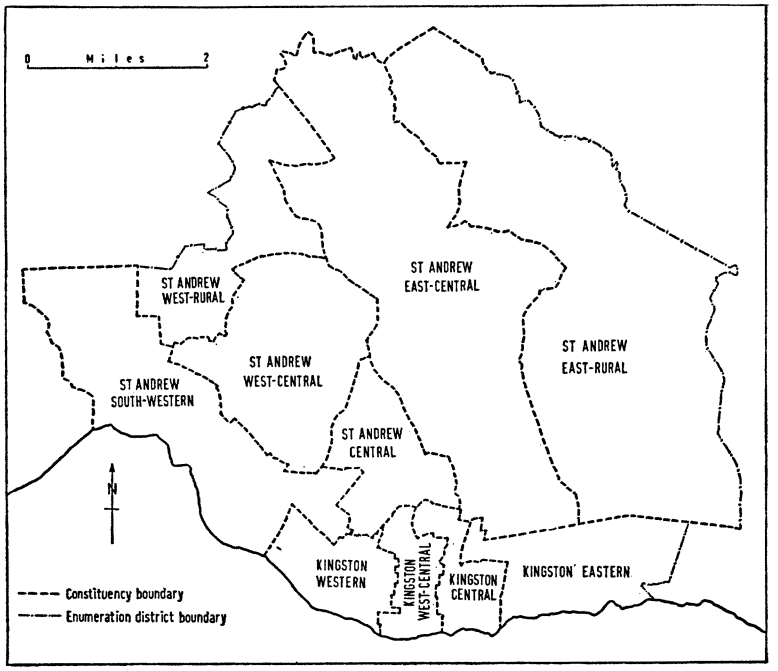

FIGURE 1—Kingston, 1960: the ten constituencies.

Migration to Kingston is explained by 'push' and 'pull' factors. The most important 'push' factor is population pressure, the rural symptoms of which are unemployment, shortage of land, and declining soil fertility. In the peasant communities which are scattered throughout the mountainous interior of the island, high rates of natural increase are accompanied by high densities of population and decreasing opportunities. In Christiana, for example, where the dissected ridges of shale and conglomerate rise above 3000 feet, densities of population exceed 640 persons per square mile and are almost double the national average. But shortage of land is related to the pattern of land ownership as well as to population distribution and growth, for over 45 per cent of the island is owned by nine hundred individual proprietors or companies. Consequently, few small farmers can purchase or rent sufficient land on which to support themselves and their dependants without seeking additional employment for wages. However, the

labour force in the sugar industry suffers from seasonal unemployment, and the wages paid to casual agricultural labourers are frequently pitched so low as to be virtually unacceptable. In 1955 62 per cent of the males and 36 per cent of the females in rural Jamaica were looking for work.[3] These figures provide an index of population pressure and a measure of the potential reservoir of migrants.

A further stimulus to migration is provided by the values and aspirations of boys and girls living in rural Jamaica. They reject the socially stigmatized agricultural pursuits of their parents, usually with their encouragement. Analysing the occupational choice of a sample of boys aged between ten and fifteen who were attending schools in rural areas, M. G. Smith writes that

> Of the occupations preferred by these boys mechanical work comes first with 29.2 per cent of the total, medicine follows with 11.3 per cent, then transport driving (9.6 per cent), teaching (7.1 per cent), carpentry (6.5 per cent), office work (2.7 per cent), police and soldiering (2.4 per cent). Road work and distributive trade were chosen by 0.6 per cent and 0.2 per cent respectively. No one selects farm labour or unskilled non-farm labour as something they wish to do.[4]

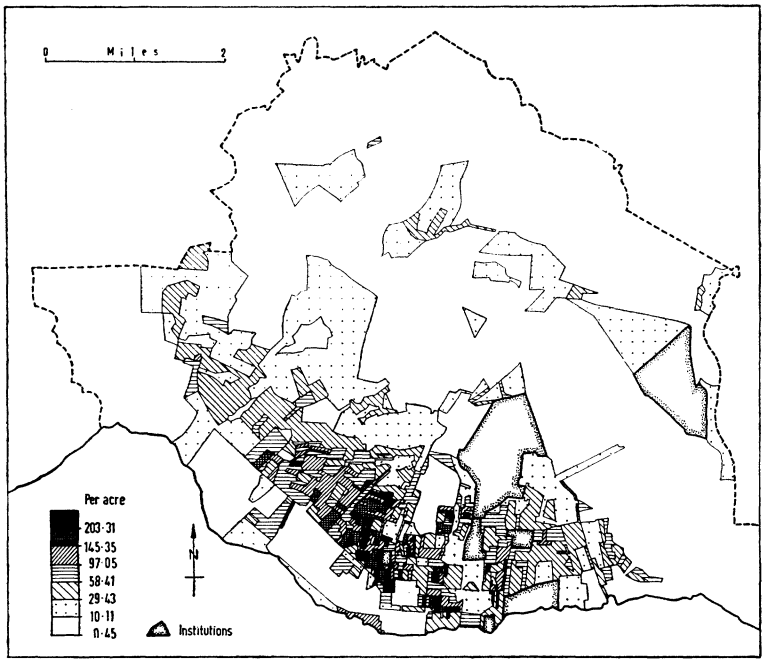

FIGURE 2—Kingston, 1960: distribution and density of population.

The occupational choice of schoolgirls follows a similar pattern. Jamaica's youth aspire to types of employment which are predominantly urban in location.

While the amenities of the capital clearly operate as 'pull' factors, Kingston has proved particularly attractive to migrants because it is believed that the opportunities for employment are greater there than elsewhere in the island. Migration to the capital is the geographical expression of a conscious attempt on the part of the Negro to escape from the poverty and isolation of rural Jamaica, and represents an attempt at social mobility; there is no aimless

'drift to the towns'. However, while the rapid growth of the population of Kingston is partly the product of population pressure in the rural parts of the island, mounting pressure in the capital is now one of the major problems facing the Government of the independent state of Jamaica.

Distribution and Density of Population

Kingston is situated on the Liguanea Plain, a coastal embayment which rises gradually from the sea to a height of 700–800 feet eight miles inland. Until the end of the nineteenth century the limits of the city were defined by the boundary of the parish of Kingston (Fig. 1), but the growth of the population during the present century has resulted in the rapid development of the suburbs of St. Andrew. However, while 67 per cent of the population live in St. Andrew, the highest densities of population are confined to the parish of Kingston and the adjacent areas of lower St. Andrew.

By mapping data for the 830 enumeration districts which were used in the 1960 census in Kingston,[5] five areas may be distinguished on the basis of population distribution and density (Fig. 2). The central business district and port area, which together make up the constituency of Kingston West-Central (Fig. 1), have been steadily depopulated since 1940, and record densities of less than 40 persons per acre. On the periphery of the central business district, densities rise to 100 and 400 persons per acre. The largest concentration and highest density is associated with the single-storey tenements of West Kingston which extend northward from the Spanish Town Road into the constituency of St. Andrew Central. Densities ranging between 2 and 320 persons per acre, and decreasing towards the periphery, characterize the belt located on the eastern, western and south-western fringes of this area, but only in the north do they fall below 10 persons per acre. Very low densities prevail throughout the greater part of St. Andrew, although isolated concentrations occur in the central portion of the suburbs where they form pockets in the area of relatively dispersed population. But only in one of these does the density exceed 90 persons per acre.

Throughout four-fifths of the urban area, therefore, the density of population averages less than 30 persons per acre. In the remaining one-fifth, in West Kingston and inner East Kingston (the constituency of Kingston Central in Figure 1), pressure on the living space is massive. The significance of these two areas of high population density is partly derived from the contrast they afford with the areas in which the density of population is low.

Unemployment

The pattern of employment in Kingston differs considerably from that for the island as a whole. This difference is explained by the low proportion of the labour force which is engaged in manufacturing, personal service, construction and public service industries (Table I). 'Public service' describes the occupation of most of the people who have been placed in the category 'other' by the census.

In most capital cities it might be expected that approximately 40 per cent of the labour force would be employed in public service, and more than 10 per cent in the construction industry. But the low proportion which is engaged in manufacturing (24 per cent) and, in particular, the high proportion which is in personal service (21 per cent), indicate a weakness in the employment structure of the city. There is also a marked difference between Kingston

and Jamaica as a whole in the distribution of employees in the various occupational groupings. In only one, manual and service, does the proportion of the island's labour force exceed that of the capital city (Table II).

TABLE I

Employment by Industry for Kingston and Jamaica as a Whole

Industry	*Kingston* *Number*	*Per cent*	*Jamaica* *Per cent*
Agriculture	2,039	1.20	37.80
Manufacturing	38,680	23.88	14.76
Construction	19,872	11.74	8.20
Personal service	36,324	21.46	14.51
Other	72,299	41.66	24.62
Total	169,214	100.00	100.00

Source: 1960 Census.

In professional, supervisory, clerical and sales, craft and technical occupations, and in non-professional occupations which require special training, the proportions employed in Kingston are much higher than for the island as a whole. Although a relatively high proportion of the labour force in Kingston is therefore employed in the clerical, technical, and professional occupations to which rural Jamaicans aspire, a large part (41 per cent) is employed in manual and service occupations. Employment in these occupations is not highly valued by Jamaicans, and this raises additional problems which have to be solved within the framework of the urban society of Kingston.

TABLE II

Employment by Occupation for Kingston and Jamaica as a Whole

Occupation	*Kingston* *Number*	*Per cent*	*Jamaica* *Per cent*
Professional	1,491	0.88	0.37
Supervisory	8,217	4.86	3.96
Clerical and sales	34,667	20.50	11.38
Craft and technical	48,693	28.80	20.83
Non-professional with special training	3,321	1.96	0.86
Manual and service	68,547	40.56	61.25
Other	4,267	2.52	1.29
Total	169,203	100.00	100.00

Source: 1960 Census.

In theory, it would be possible for the economy of Kingston to employ annual additions to the labour force in excess of 10,000 persons, provided conditions of nearly full employment existed and a large number of new jobs was rapidly being created. However, neither of these conditions obtains. In 1960, 18.4 per cent of the potential labour force of 179,000 was either voluntarily or involuntarily unemployed,[6] while 30 per cent of the classified labour force was

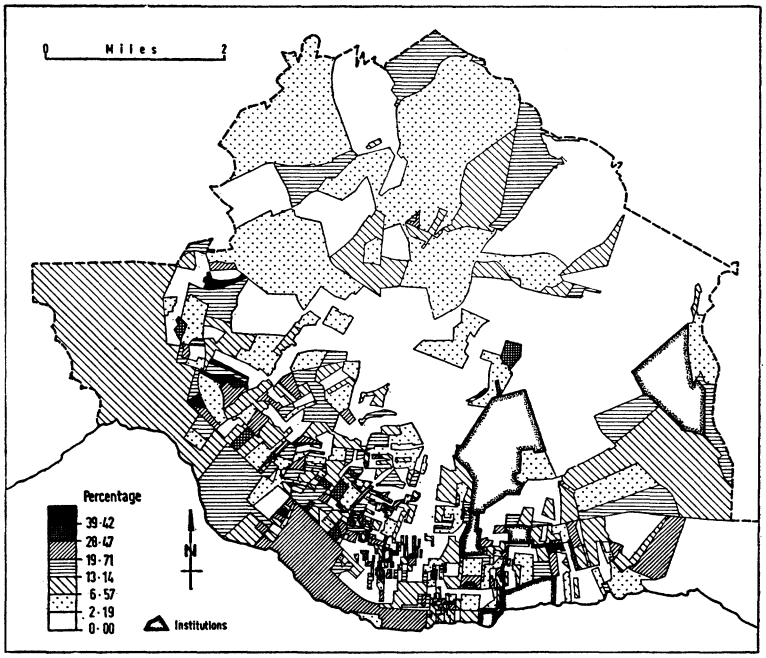

FIGURE 3—Kingston, 1960: involuntary full-time unemployment (the percentage of persons aged over 14 who wanted work but got none during the year before the census).

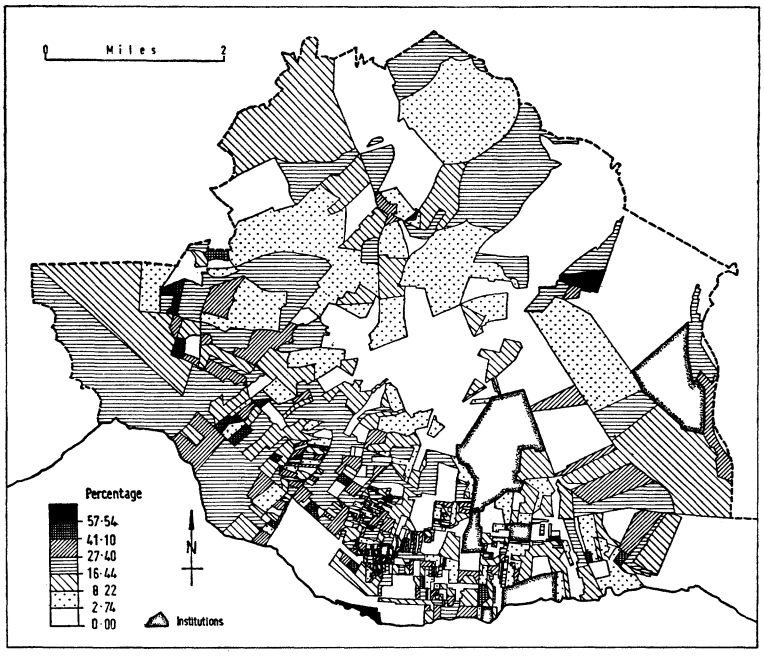

FIGURE 4—Kingston, 1960: part-time unemployment (the percentage of persons aged over 14 who worked for less than three days during the week before the census).

employed for less than five days during the week prior to the census. Eleven thousand nine hundred people in Kingston and St. Andrew were looking for their first job,[7] and they accounted for almost one-third of the total number of unemployed. Approximately 70 per cent of this group was under 21 years of age,[8] and unemployment was chronic among school-leavers. These conditions are the result of secular, and not seasonal, frictional or cyclical unemployment. They have existed in Kingston for at least the last thirty years and have been associated by W. F. Maunder with '. . . an economy in equilibrium such that there is always a reservoir of involuntarily unemployed'.[9]

While unemployment in Kingston affected 18.4 per cent of the potential labour force, the figure for the island as a whole was 12.6 per cent. The population of Jamaica is slowly concentrating in the capital, and so is unemployment. Opportunities for employment in Kingston fail completely to meet the expectations of rural migrants, and it is significant that 36 per cent of the males and 51 per cent of the females who were looking for their first job in 1960 were born in the rural parishes of the island. Manufacturing industry cannot absorb the rapid growth of the population, and no system of social security exists to cushion the effects of unemployment. Under these conditions the personal service industry is important as an employer of domestic servants, gardeners, yard-boys and odd-job men, but at wages which only slightly exceed subsistence rates. The close approximation between the proportions employed in manufacturing (23.88 per cent) and personal service (21.46 per cent) is, in itself, an indicator of population pressure.

Using full-time unemployment as the first criterion, it can be seen that population pressure does exist in Kingston, and that it affects approximately 33,000 members of the potential labour force. Since the potential labour force comprises 47 per cent of the total population of Kingston, the total number of workers and dependants who are directly affected by unemployment may be estimated as at least 60,000. However, unemployment does not affect all parts of the city equally.

Two maps of unemployment have been prepared showing involuntary, full-time unemployment (Fig. 3) and part-time unemployment (Fig. 4) among the population aged over fourteen. The former, which defines the areas experiencing 'hard core' unemployment, corresponds with the general pattern of population density. However, the correlation is only partial, for although the tenements of East and West Kingston record high densities of population, they do not suffer conspicuously from full-time unemployment (Fig. 3). Rates in these areas rarely exceed 13.14 per cent, and the highest incidence, which surpasses 39.42 per cent, occurs in the western suburbs where the density of population is decidedly lower. The highest rates of unemployment recorded in West Kingston range from 19.17 to 28.47 per cent. But these are confined to areas peripheral to the tenements and, in particular, to the ribbon developments which border the Spanish Town Road on the boundary between the constituencies of St. Andrew West-Central and St. Andrew South-Western (Fig. 1). Rates of unemployment are generally low throughout the suburbs, but some 'hard-core' unemployment is located in the pockets of population in central St. Andrew, and on the sparsely populated northern limits of the city. An interesting feature is the relationship between the high rates of unemployment which are recorded in West Kingston and the suburbs of the far west. The latter comprise housing schemes established by the Government to resettle people from the depressed parts of West Kingston. The inhabitants of these schemes were selected from the poorest element in the city, and much of the 'hard-core' unemployment was consequently transferred to, and concentrated in, this area of low-density housing.

A closer correlation with high densities of population is achieved by the map showing part-time unemployment (Fig. 4). Although the highest rate of more than 57.54 per cent was once more recorded by the resettlement schemes in the western suburbs, and two zones of unemployment were evident in central and northern St. Andrew, the tenements suffered quite noticeably from part-time unemployment, the rates rising from 16.44 per cent to 41.10 per cent. The zone peripheral to the tenements was less susceptible to part-time than to full-time unemployment, with the exception of the area of Greek Pond Beach, on the foreshore of West Kingston, where more than 57 per cent of the population aged over fourteen were employed for less than three days during the week preceding the census.

While the incidence of unemployment forms a fairly regular geographical pattern increasing from north to south and from east to west, and is generally related to increases in the density of the population, density of population by itself is not necessarily an index of population pressure. The relationship between unemployment and population density varies systematically, part-time unemployment being associated with areas of higher population density than those affected by full-time unemployment.

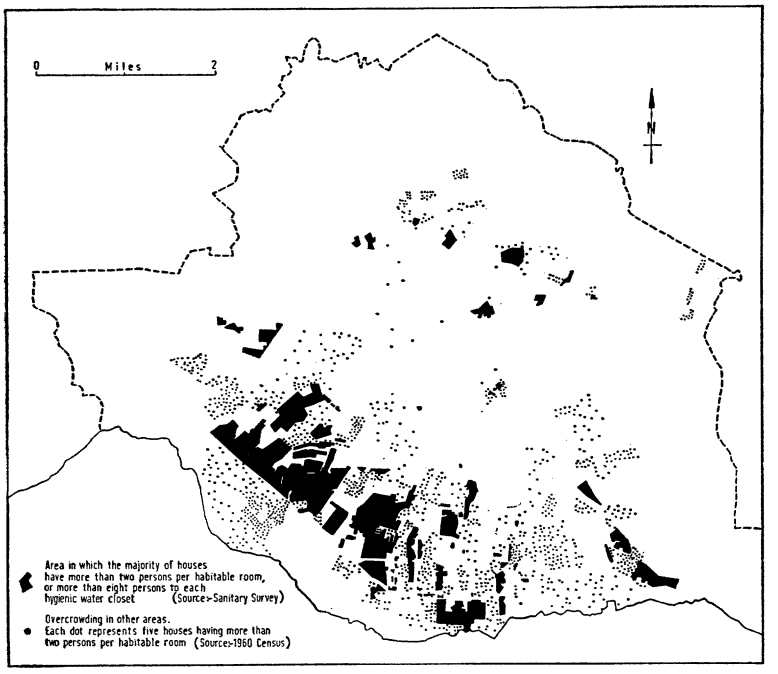

FIGURE 5—Kingston, 1960: overcrowding.

Overcrowding

Pressure of population on social facilities such as school places and hospital beds is common throughout Jamaica. In Kingston the overcrowding of dwellings is one of the clearest indices of population pressure. The Town Planning Department of the Government of Jamaica has defined as overcrowded dwellings in which there are more than two persons per habitable room or more than eight persons to each hygienic water closet. Using these criteria, areas can be

demarcated in which population pressure exists. The extent of overcrowding varies greatly in Kingston (Fig. 5), the areas which are most affected being confined to the tenements of West Kingston and inner East Kingston, while the northern suburbs enjoy better conditions. However, some overcrowding is experienced by most areas recording densities of over 10 persons per acre, and severe overcrowding exists wherever densities exceed 100 persons per acre. There is a correlation between high densities of population and overcrowding, between overcrowding and unemployment, and particularly between overcrowding and part-time unemployment. Furthermore, some neighbourhoods which recorded low densities of population and high rates of unemployment also suffer from overcrowding, an excellent example being provided by the area north of the foreshore in West Kingston. The inadequacy of social facilities in these sparsely populated parts is simultaneously a product and an index of population pressure.

In 1960 the Central Planning Unit of the Government of Jamaica estimated that 80,000 people were living in overcrowded conditions in Kingston. Most of them were living in West Kingston or inner East Kingston, and many of them also inhabited areas which suffered from unemployment. The number of persons affected by unemployment and overcrowding is remarkably similar and suggests that the two phenomena are probably closely connected. Population pressure affects at least one-sixth of the inhabitants of Kingston, and places a great burden upon the provision of housing and the Government's programme of industrialization.

Industrialization and Employment Opportunities

The absence of such raw materials as coal and iron-ore, the lack of cheap supplies of power, and the adverse influence of British colonial policy have together inhibited the development of manufacturing industry in Kingston. Furthermore, the domestic market is limited by the small size of the population and its low *per capita* income, which was estimated as £137 in 1962. Almost all consumer goods are imported, and local entrepreneurs have invested in commerce rather than industry. Bauxite is the most important mineral deposit in Jamaica, but only two alumina plants had been established by 1960, and most of the ore is exported to North America for processing and smelting. The grinding of sugar-cane is the largest factory industry in Jamaica, but this, also, is confined to the rural parishes. By 1950, however, light industries manufacturing a narrow range of consumer goods, including boots and shoes, aerated beverages, matches and bread, had been established in Kingston. One firm constructed heavy machinery for the sugar factories, and there were, in addition, a few established companies producing rum and cigars of high quality for local consumption and export.

In an attempt to diversify the economy, the Jamaican Government decided to encourage local entrepreneurs to engage in manufacturing, and, in 1949, copying techniques evolved in the neighbouring island of Puerto Rico, a Pioneer Industry Law was passed. This was followed in 1952 by the establishment of an Industrial Development Corporation, which was to 'stimulate, facilitate and undertake the development of industry'. The real object of this scheme for industrialization was revealed in the first annual report of the corporation, which admitted that 'Its origins lay in the growing awareness of the very serious problem presented by pressure of population on existing resources'.[10] The object of industrialization, outlined at this time, was to provide employment for the increasing population, and not specifically to produce more wealth; the emphasis was placed on social efficiency rather than on economic considerations.

The I.D.C. concentrated its attention almost exclusively on the capital city. An industrial estate was established on reclaimed land in West Kingston and was provided with supplies of

electricity and water. Several enterprises were started as a result of the short-term tax concessions provided by the Pioneer Industry Law, and by the Industrial Incentive Law. However, only a limited number of local capitalists were prepared to invest in manufacturing, and in 1956 a new measure called the Export Industry Incentive Law was introduced, the object of which was to attract established foreign firms which already had markets for their products. These firms were not allowed to sell in the Jamaican market, but their initial imports of machinery, all imports of raw materials and fuel, and exports of finished products were exempt from duty. Furthermore, they were allowed the tax reliefs offered by either of the two other incentive laws. The proximity of Jamaica to the eastern seaboard of the U.S.A., its location in the sterling area, and its access to Commonwealth tariff preferences, were thought to make Jamaica an ideal location for 'free-port' manufacturing.

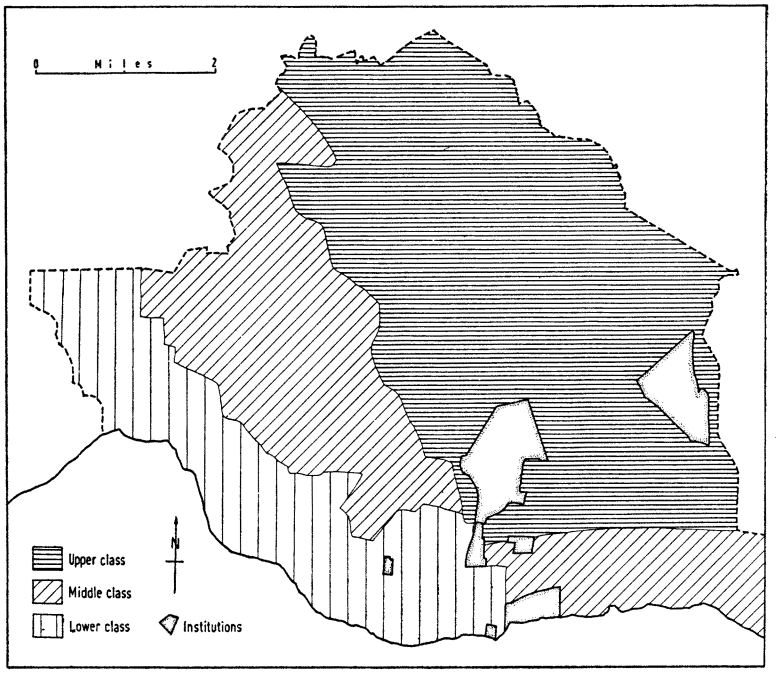

FIGURE 6—Kingston, 1960: distribution of socio-economic classes by constituency areas.

The I.D.C. was responsible for the establishment of 58 firms in Jamaica between 1952 and 1960,[11] all of which received tax concessions. These firms employed 3451 persons in 1960, and approximately 450 jobs were created every year. Assuming, as the I.D.C. does, a multiplier effect of two, the total number of jobs created in all sectors of the economy by these efforts cannot have exceeded 900 per annum. Over a period of ten years less than 10,000 jobs have been created in Kingston in this way, although this was the minimum number required in each year. Furthermore, the census figures showing that 38,700 people were employed in industry in Kingston give a false impression (Table I). Manufacturing concerns having a minimum of ten workers employed only 17,000 people in Kingston in 1960.[12] Probably no more than 10 per cent of the classified labour force are employed in factories, even when account is taken of the contribution made by enterprises established through the I.D.C. Since firms associated with

the I.D.C. have provided 3400 new jobs out of the total of 9000 added in all factories in Kingston between 1949 and 1960, or more than half the additional factory employment provided every year since 1952, the conclusion reached by W. D. Voelker is particularly significant:

> Assuming Jamaican I.D.C. plant employment grows as rapidly as in Puerto Rico, there will be about 40,000 more people employed in Jamaica in ten years—but in Jamaica about 400,000 more people will have been born.[13]

The basic problem for Jamaica as it searches for new opportunities for employment is that modern industry relies increasingly upon automation and is capital-, rather than labour-intensive. Furthermore, the availability of cheap labour is more attractive to foreign businessmen than the incentive laws, and the programme of industrialization probably depends upon the maintenance of low wages. This, however, runs counter to the idea that industry should be developed for social reasons. Another problem arises from the fact that 66 per cent of the employees of the light industries associated with the I.D.C. are women. There is therefore no sign that modern industry will be able to provide jobs for even the unemployed males in Kingston in the near future and thus create a stable basis for the development of the standard of living to which Jamaicans aspire.

TABLE III

Generalized Social Status of the Ten Constituencies of Kingston

Class	*Constituency*	*Social group** *I*	*II*	*III*
UPPER	St. Andrew East-Central	12.89	47.11	40.00
	St. Andrew East-Rural	13.59	43.50	43.49
MIDDLE	St. Andrew West-Central	6.08	56.01	37.01
	Kingston Eastern	5.35	58.55	36.10
	St. Andrew Central	4.37	55.47	41.20
	St. Andrew West-Rural	6.01	50.09	43.00
LOWER	Kingston East-Central	3.35	53.85	42.80
	Kingston West-Central	3.55	51.85	44.60
	Kingston Western	3.19	52.96	43.85
	St. Andrew South-Western	1.94	50.71	47.35

* Social groups I, II and III are based on the occupational groupings (Table II) as follows:

Group I: professional and supervisory.
Group II: clerical and sales, non-professional with special training, and craft and technical.
Group III: manual and service.

Housing Conditions

The high densities of population, high rates of unemployment and overcrowding which characterize large parts of West and inner East Kingston are indicative both of population pressure and of low socio-economic status. To test these relationships, the ten constituencies of Kingston have been allocated positions within the social hierarchy of the city, their status being defined by the proportional representation of various socio-economic groupings (Table III). Those areas which have been grouped together as upper, middle and lower class (Fig. 6)

correlate with areas of low, medium and high densities of population, and with similar intensities of unemployment, overcrowding and population pressure. Social segregation is high, but the polarization of social groups has been increased by the grave housing conditions which exist, particularly in West Kingston.

Most of the inhabitants of West Kingston rent accommodation, a large proportion of which is provided by tenements. The following description of living conditions in a tenement in Jones Town is typical of the area. Comprising nine rooms which accommodated 41 people in 1961, this tenement possessed only four water closets, all of which were defective, four shower baths and two kitchen sinks. Two outdoor stand-pipes provided the sole supply of water. The monthly rent for each room was £4 10s. 0d., a high sum when compared with the low wages of the inhabitants of the area and their susceptibility to part-time unemployment.

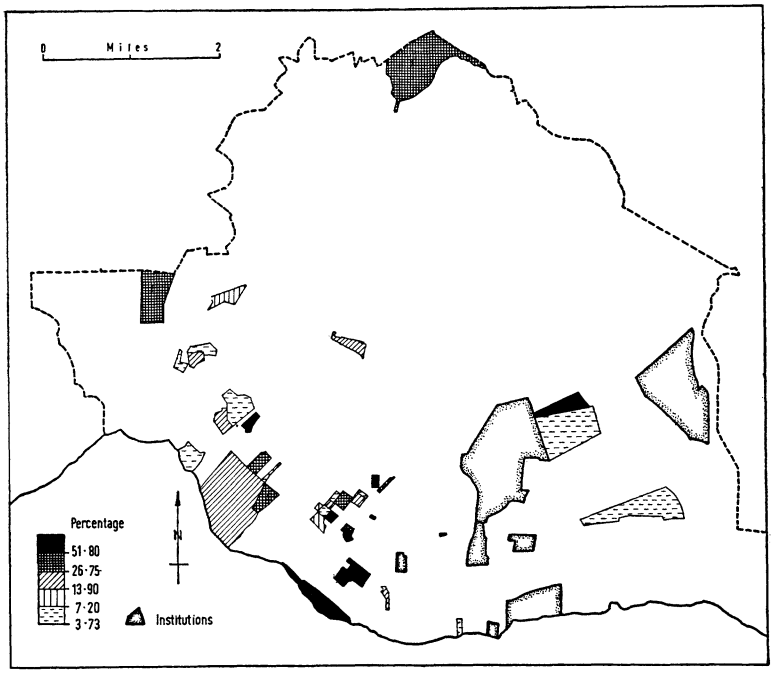

FIGURE 7—Kingston, 1960: distribution of squatters.

Pressure on the amenities was very great, but the high rent encouraged sharing of accommodation and increased the overcrowding. One room in this tenement housed eight people, while the remainder were occupied by three or four. Although these tenants had access to many more amenities than their counterparts in rural Jamaica, pressure of population had reduced these premises to the level of slums. Overcrowding has become more onerous in West Kingston than in even the most backward rural areas.

High rates of unemployment and the high rent charged for even overcrowded accommodation have led to the growth of squatting, and this in itself is another indicator of population pressure. In 1961, the police estimated the number of squatters as 20,000. Located in two main zones, on the fringe of the tenement area of West Kingston and on the outskirts of the built-up area of the city (Fig. 7), the squatters occupied mostly land which was owned by the Government. Although the density of population is lower in the squatter settlements than in the

tenements, and even in the older settlements adjacent to the tenements of West Kingston densities rarely exceed the range of 50 to 150 persons per acre, the concentration of population in them is out of all proportion to the housing and other facilities which are available. Dwellings consist of one-room huts constructed from packing cases and fish barrels, cardboard and polythene. Few public amenities are available, and pit latrines, although illegal, have to be dug, and water collected from stand-pipes or stolen from fire-hydrants. At the beginning of 1961, approximately 1000 people shared one stand-pipe in the Boy's Town squatter area near the Spanish Town Road. However, in certain respects squatters enjoy slightly better conditions than the inhabitants of the tenements. They rarely sleep more than three persons to a room and pay no rent for their accommodation. But tenancy is by no means absent from some of the older squatter areas. Squatters 'capture' a piece of land, build a high stockade around it, and then charge a ground rent to anyone who wants to build on 'their' land. It is ironical that overcrowding is both the result of poverty and a source of income, and subsequently the reason for high land values in West Kingston.

Between 1946 and 1957 only 26,000 people were housed in government schemes in the whole of Jamaica.[14] Private speculative building for rental at low rates is non-existent in Kingston. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the number and population of the squatter settlements has steadily grown. Moonlight City, on the foreshore in West Kingston, developed at the end of the 1950s, and its adult population doubled from 54 to 106 between July 1960 and July 1961.

Squatting is not only an expression of extreme population pressure, it is also a way of life. Because of the stigma attached to inhabitants of the shanty towns and of the poorer tenements, it is very difficult for people from these areas to find employment; less than 10 per cent of the factory workers on the industrial estate in West Kingston live in that part of the city. Many squatters are lapsed literates or illiterate, malnourished, and lacking in personal discipline, and are regarded in Kingston as unemployable.[15] Consequently many have abandoned, at least temporarily, the search for paid employment, and have accommodated themselves to their situation by developing a sub-culture in isolation from the rest of Kingston's society. Higglering (or vending), carpentry, metal work, shoemaking and domestic work are important occupations throughout West Kingston. But the economy of the squatter settlements, in particular, also depends on 'scuffling' or scraping a living from pimping and prostitution, begging, stealing, and selling scrap salvaged from the corporation dump or 'dungle'. The people involved in these activities are, technically speaking, self-employed, but most regard themselves as unemployed, and so does society at large. It seems highly probable, therefore, that most people who 'scuffle' for a living have been classified in the census as unemployed. 'Scuffling' is an important alternative to paid employment, especially in areas in which the incidence of full-time or secular unemployment is high, and the existence of this possibly illegal alternative prevents wages from being depressed so that conditions of full, and socially acceptable, employment can develop. However, while the incidence of unemployment does not necessarily imply idleness, the very existence of 'scuffling' provides a socio-economic index of extreme population pressure.

Many squatters depend for food on garbage which they collect from the 'dungle', and living conditions, generally, in the overcrowded areas of Kingston are such as to encourage the development of social diseases. The two most prevalent diseases of this nature are tuberculosis of the respiratory system and typhoid, the former being associated with the overcrowding of rooms, and the latter with inadequate sewage disposal (Fig. 8) or with inadequate

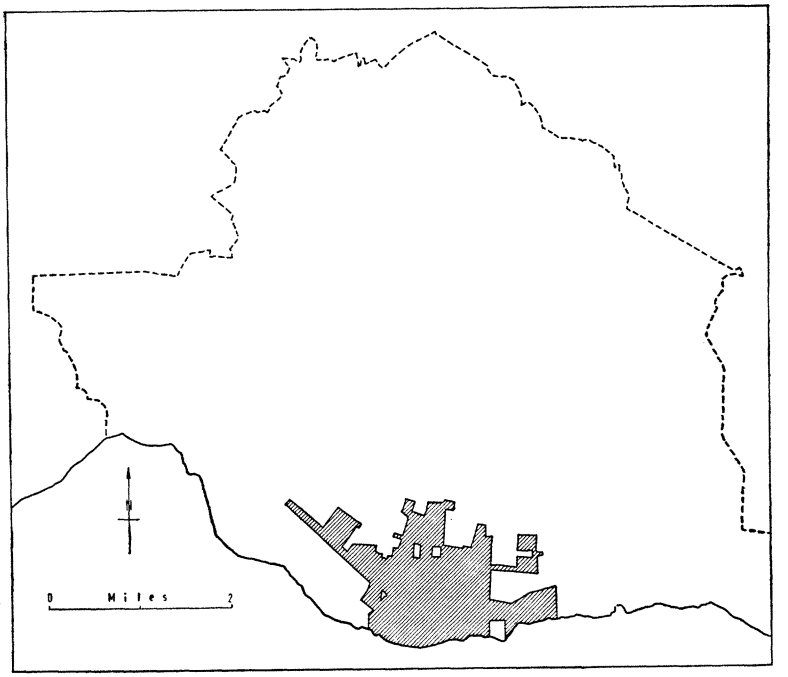

FIGURE 8—Kingston, 1960: sewered areas.

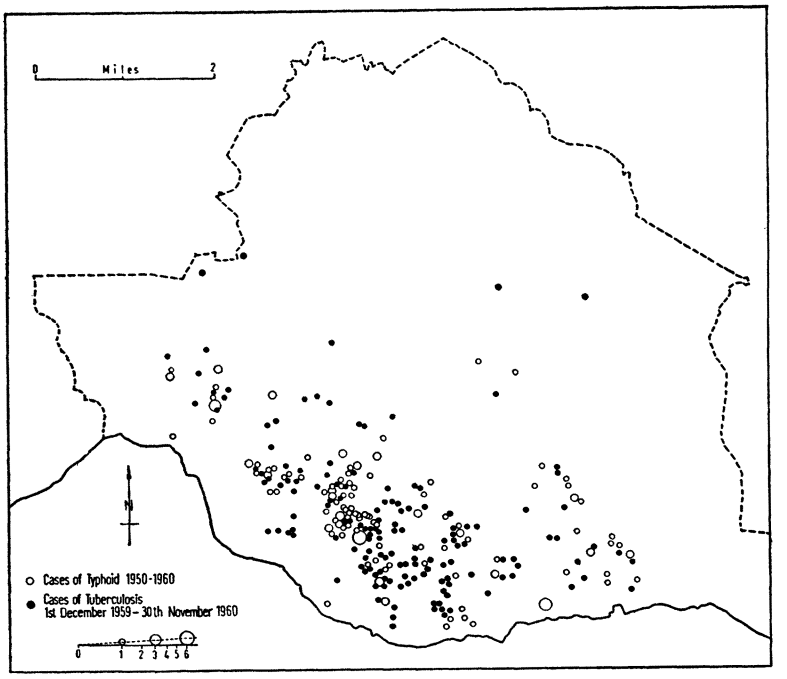

FIGURE 9—Kingston: distribution of notified cases of typhoid and tuberculosis of the respiratory system.

cesspits, and with the contamination of food and drinking-water. A map has been drawn showing the distribution of notified cases of tuberculosis occurring between 1 December 1959 and 30 November 1960, and of notified cases of typhoid between 1950 and 1960 (Fig. 9). Both these diseases are closely associated with the overcrowded areas of Kingston (Fig. 5), and their incidence is particularly high in the west of the city. Furthermore, there is a tendency for tuberculosis to be associated with the tenement districts, and for typhoid to be linked with the squatter settlements. The map of disease is an expression of population pressure in Kingston, and of the failure of individuals and the community alike to solve this basic problem.

Conclusion

The pressure of population in Kingston is increasing because population growth is self-generating, whereas the economy is not; migration to the city is completely unrelated to the opportunities for employment. Unemployment is extensive in Kingston, in spite of the efforts of the Government, through the I.D.C., to create factory jobs. The economy of the city has to support at least 60,000 too many people, most of whom live in poor and overcrowded conditions. Because of the failure to keep the rural-born population in the country, either through land settlement or the wider distribution of industrial plant, migration has transferred many of the worst problems of population pressure to Kingston. The disillusionment and frustration experienced by young migrants who fail to find employment in Kingston is a major social problem which is only exacerbated by the fact that many of them are forced to live in West Kingston under worse conditions than those they experienced in the rural areas.

West Kingston is still partly a 'peasant' settlement, an area set aside from the remainder of the city by its social structure, character and townscape. It is also the centre of the largest concentration of Negroes in Kingston (Fig. 10), their proportion reaching 100 per cent of the total population in some enumeration districts. The area is almost completely devoid of white inhabitants (Fig. 11), most of whom live in the high-class and sparsely populated suburbs of northern St. Andrew. Racial and social cleavage is marked in Kingston, and although increasing numbers of Negroes reach the highest strata of society, the close association between a black skin and poverty has provided the basis for the racist activities of the Ras Tafari movement. In view of the activities of the Ras Tafarians it is ironical that the census has called white people 'Europeans' and Negroes 'Africans' (Fig. 10 and 11). The grievances of many supporters of this cult are social and economic, rather than racial, but the high incidence of population pressure in the Negro areas of West Kingston and its low incidence wherever white people are located have forced a large number of Negroes into a state of mind where a racist interpretation of their poverty, and the claim for migration or 'repatriation' to Africa, appear logical. The creation of machinery for solving, or at least ameliorating, the problem of overcrowding in Kingston has, in the past, ranked low in the list of priorities of the upper and middle social sections of the community, and in 1961 some Ras Tafari brethren argued that a revolution, started by themselves, was necessary for the rehabilitation of the depressed areas of the city, and notably of West Kingston.

Conditions of population pressure, and the search for higher standards of living, explain the emigration of Jamaicans to Britain. Between 1953 and 1960 the number of emigrants increased from 2000 to 30,000 per annum. Approximately 70 per cent of the emigrants were inhabitants of rural areas, and most of the migrants from Kingston were drawn from the ranks of privileged, unionized labour. The slum dwellers of Kingston are not represented in this

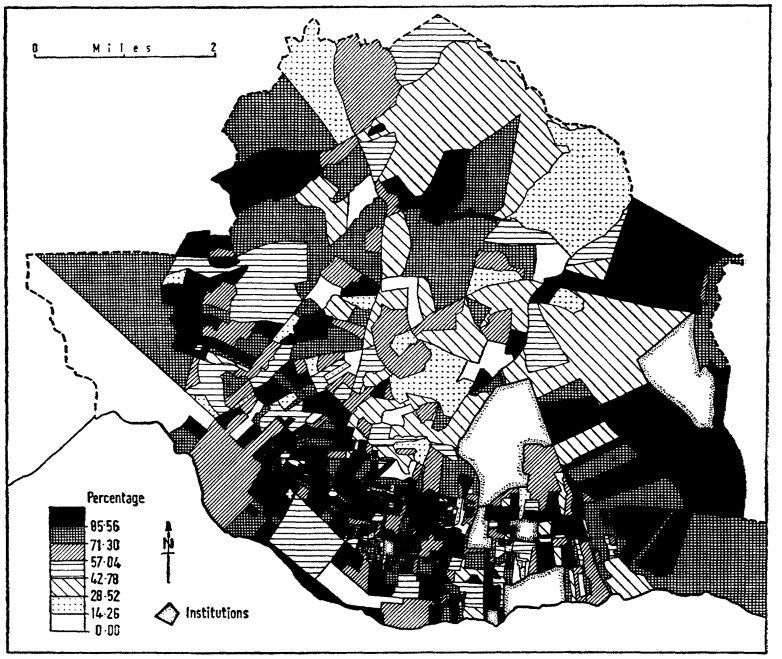

FIGURE 10—Kingston, 1960: distribution of 'African' population.

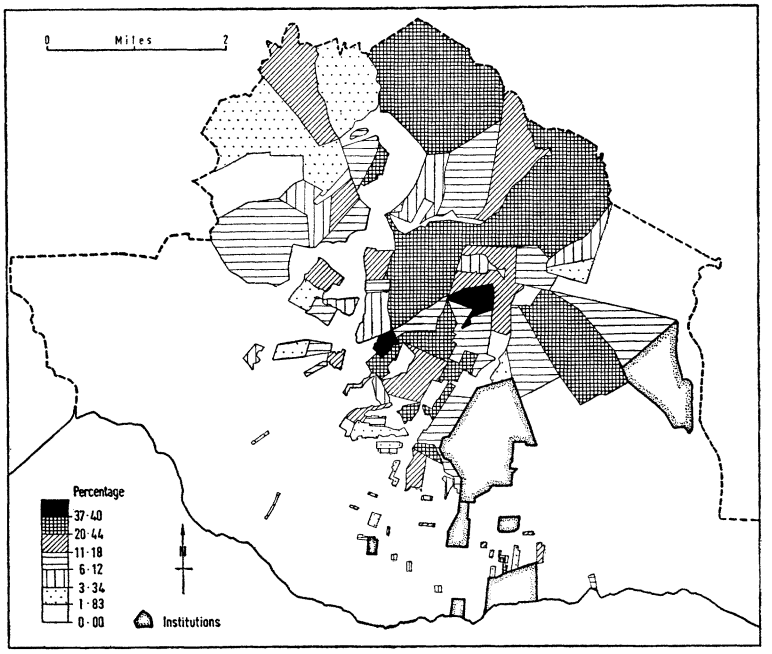

FIGURE 11—Kingston, 1960: distribution of 'European' population.

movement, which involves artisans, sugar-factory workers, tractor drivers, members of the land-owning peasantry and their dependants. The pattern that emerges is of an increasing city-ward migration of a depressed 'landless peasantry', many of whom sink to the slums of Kingston and dream of returning to Africa, and the emigration (cityward, too) of the more prosperous folk who have greater ability, if less necessity, to move. But while migration to Kingston transfers population pressure and its accompanying problems to the capital, emigration also involves the loss to Jamaica of some of its best qualified personnel, and the export to Britain of West Indian population problems.

Emigration is not a panacea for population pressure in Kingston or Jamaica. However, it can provide a permissive climate for social and economic development. In the foreseeable future, a large number of Jamaicans will want to emigrate to Britain. If that outlet is closed or severely restricted, as it may well be, and the social and economic problems of availability of land, overcrowding, squatting and unemployment are not solved, it is probable that more and more Negroes will react against Jamaican society, possibly by looking for emotional and physical contact with Africa through the cult of Ras Tafari. The fundamental problems are those of integrating the racial groups, and of balancing social and economic priorities, urban and rural population, internal and external migration, and people's aspirations and the educational and economic opportunities for achieving them. However, it seems that balance between these factors will rarely be attained. It will certainly prove extremely difficult to lower the aspirations of Jamaicans of all social groups to levels which are consistent with the resources of the island, and to instil in the minds of both town and country people the idea that there is dignity in manual labour, both agricultural and otherwise, and that without it very little can be achieved for their society.

A recent estimate of population growth in Kingston made by the Central Planning Unit indicates that the population of the city will increase by 184,500 between 1960 and 1970.[16] Without some emigration the figures will be higher. The cost of housing this population and rehousing the 80,000 already living in slum conditions, will be at least £50 million, a sum almost equal to the Jamaican budget for 1961. If this money cannot be borrowed the Jamaican Government will have to decide whether the sum should be withdrawn from schemes for economic development, or whether to approach the problem in a piecemeal fashion. It is unlikely that the Government will be able to afford not to invest in massive schemes for rehousing in West Kingston, although it has the discomforting knowledge that such a development will attract more migrants to the capital. The inescapable conclusion is that the only long-term solution to population pressure in Jamaica and Kingston is neither industrialization, nor rural rehabilitation and development, nor rehousing, nor emigration, essential as they are, but family planning.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author acknowledges a grant by the University of Liverpool towards the cost of the illustrations.

NOTES

[1] *The West India Royal Commission Report* (1945), 242.
[2] *Report of the Commissioner of Income Tax* (Kingston, 1959) 16–17.
[3] M. G. SMITH, *A Report on Labour Supply in Rural Jamaica* (Kingston, 1956), 55.
[4] M. G. SMITH, 'Education and occupational choice in rural Jamaica', *soc. and econ. Stud.*, 9 (1960), 338.

[5] The 1960 census data used in Figures 2, 3, 4, 7, 10 and 11 have been mapped by enumeration districts. The tabulation from which Figure 2 was produced is on sale to the general public, but Figures 3, 4, 7, 10 and 11 were constructed from the tabulations of a 10 per cent sample of census cards drawn from all the enumeration districts in Kingston. This sample was made available to the writer by the Jamaican Department of Statistics, whose co-operation he gratefully acknowledges.

[6] The statistics relating to unemployment have been taken from the *Report of the 1960 Census of Jamaica*, 1 (1964).

[7] O. C. FRANCIS, *The People of Modern Jamaica* (Kingston, 1963), 8.2–8.3.

[8] Ibid., 8.5.

[9] W. F. MAUNDER, *Employment in an Underdeveloped Area, A Sample Survey of Kingston, Jamaica* (Yale, 1960), 8.

[10] JAMAICA INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, *Annual Report*, 1952.

[11] The information about employment was made available to the writer by the Industrial Development Corporation in Jamaica.

[12] Report of the Factory Inspectorate (Kingston, 1960), unpublished.

[13] W. D. VOELKER, *Survey of Industry in the West Indies*, Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of the West Indies (1961), 28.

[14] *First Annual Report of the Department of Housing* (Kingston, 1960), 4.

[15] E. E. HOYT, 'Voluntary unemployment and unemployability in Jamaica', *Br. J. Sociol.*, 11 (1960), 129–36.

[16] A similar estimate has subsequently been published in G. W. ROBERTS, 'Provisional assessment of growth of the Kingston–St. Andrew area, 1960–70', *soc. and econ. Stud.*, 12 (1964), 441.