Federation notes

**History of the federation ( brief)**

* First attempt to federate was in 1671 when the governor of Barbados was given charge of the leewards, however, due to the fact that planters in these countries were rivals in the sugar industry. Because of this, each country gained its own governor in chief.
* Second attempt was in 1860 to from a federation to save costs of crown colony government and decided that it would be best if the colonies shared the same officials. Due to local opposition and self interest the union failed once again and gave the leewards a single governor again
* The third attempt came in 1875 to arrange a federation amongst the windwards. Although the planter class opposed there was support from the ex slaves whos saught free movement to work for higher wages elsewhere. After a riot the year after the idea was dropped
* Only success of federations were between St. Kitts and Nevis in 1882 and Trinidad and Tobago in 1899
* Those failures were due to the fact that islanders would not put aside economic rivalries; not share either profits from trade or costs of government; each islands society was different in history, laws and customs which made a strong local pride; planters, merchants and other interet groups did not want to lose their influence

Body # 1

**Reasons for the formation of a federation**

1. Prior to world ware 11 both the British government and west Indian labour leaders had always felt that most of the west Indian colonies were to small to support
2. Because of this cost opinions of a federation were less hostile and the colonial office was willing to sponsor a federation who’s political aim was independence
3. The British Caribbean colonies hopes that the federation would lead to their political independence as ( 1. Coming together in one federation, the economic growth of the small unviable units could be greatly enhanced and could therefore better support themselves

2. they had support from several organizations such as the Associated Chambers of Commerce, the Caribbean Labour Congress, The Barbados Progressive League and the Legislative Council of Jamaica.

1. these organizations were supported by anti colonial leaders who believed that a federation would speed up the transition from crown colony to government rule. These people were backing any form of independence move from the colonies, so when the w.i.f presented itself it was obviously a good thing for them to back as they felt that the people of their territories were ready for political integration and independence
2. These countries decided to come together due to their history, having common political institutions and sharing a common social system, they were governed by the same laws, spoke the same language had similarities in culture, had similar economic and geographic structures and leaders shared similar background. In essence they were compatible to work with
3. The British government, through federations expected 1. Cost of government would be reduced, 2 The colonies would be administered more efficiently, as it was cheaper and more efficient to replace the governor and his staff in each colony with one governor general and a few officials for the entire English speaking Caribbean.
4. The colonies expected, that through federation 1. An important step to ending crown colony government, gaining self government and political independence 2. Provide opportunities for talented west Indians to become involved in government. 3. Attract more qualified politicians to participate in regional government 4. Increase bargaining power of international negotiations ( administrative benefits) reducing cost of administrating the colonies, providing more efficient administration. ( developmental) 5. Pool their resources to deal with social and economical problems 6. Saving derived from reduced administrative costs could be invested in well needed infrastructure 7. Would have a greater capacity to acquire loans, and obtain technical assistance 8. Allow freedom of movement amongst islands which would lead to a better distribution of the population and the reduction of unemployment. 9. Establishment of a custom union and a common currency within the federation would increase the domestic market and internal trade
5. The economy of the English speking caolony was dominated by European management, finance and trade patters. Britain still paid parts of the costs of government and social welfare
6. Many west Indian politicians had hoped that the federation would give the whole of the English speaking Caribbean a stronger voice in world political and economic affairs
7. Old ruling class was dying out and had less influence, these were the people in charge of the plantations, therefore they were the ones who saw federation as a threat
8. The plantations were bought up by multi national company, who often had more land in other colonies and ran them as one, therefore they saw unity economically viable
9. Many trading partners such as Canada often preferred to deal with one unit instead of one
10. The depression of the war in 1930 pushed for the revival of the west Indian trade t
11. West Indian court of appeal was set up for the whole caribbean

**Course of the formation of the federation**

1. In the 1930’s, falling sugar prices seemed to throw the Caribbean colonies into bankruptcy
2. The idea of federation was backed with the labour movement, as the labour movement challenged the colonial system by the protests. Since the main idea of the labour movement was to gain the right to vote, it would therefore mean that the colony would need to be self governed. In 1938 labour leaders had a meeting in which they drafted up a list of demands for the moyne commition. At the top of the list included setting up a federation of self governing state in which all adult citizens had the right to vote
3. Colonel oliver Stanley in 1945 who was the secretary of state asked colonial governments to consider federation
4. Advised the colonial offices of this proposal for the whole British West Indies
5. British government told west Indian governors that it now proposed to promote a british west Indian federation and secretary of state invited west Indians to a conference in montego bay to discuss the proposals.
6. After this several meetings were held to endorse this idea and lay out the details for the federation, an example was the conference in Montego Bay Jamiaca in 1947 where the members of legislatures of all the islands planned to attend
7. The british really looked forward to self rule on local topics balanced by a federatin in which they had control over
8. The first proposal came in two years time
9. All territories except for British Honduras British Guyana and British Virgin islands endorsed the proposal
10. The problems arisen from the S C A C ( this is also known as the standing closer association Committee and was composed of members from all the territories represented at the Montego Bay Conference) were examined at the idea was amended into a document called “ the plan for a british Caribbean Federation”
11. After more conferences dealing with different problems that arose such as migration problems, federal finance, administration, composition of civil services, customs unions and the site of the federal constitution
12. After the last meeting in London in 1956 the representative of each unit and the british government formally agreed to the Federal constitution
13. The british parliament finally passed the “ British Caribbean Federation Act”
14. The federation of the west indies was set up by an order in council on July 31 1957

Body #2

**Course of the Federation ( what lead to its demise )**



Body #3

**Consequences of the federation**

After federation failed, only then did self government followed by independence for some come to the colonies

Disunity people were more nationalistic than Caribbean

Who pays taxes and who has amount of seats

Some people went to independence

Carifefsta came from federation ( started ina anu in dickensons bay)

Out of carifesta, long term consequences were caricom, integration movements followed, these were not political. The wif was a political integration whilst the others were economical

It was unfair, Jamaica and anu had equal amounts of seats ( had same say) however jam had more people and contribute more money. The point was not to make a country have more say than another

Eric williams