Assessing Westminster: Then and Now

Norman Girvan
H.R.H. PRINCESS MARGARET DELIVERS THE THRONE SPEECH TO THE JAMAICAN INDEPENDENCE PARLIAMENT
SIR ALEXANDER BUSTAMANTE, FIRST PRIME MINISTER OF INDEPENDENT JAMAICA
I make no apology for the fact that we did not attempt to embark upon any original or novel exercise in constitutional building.... Let us not make the mistake of describing as colonial, institutions which are part and parcel of the heritage of this country.

If we have any confidence in our own individuality and our own personality, we would absorb these things and incorporate them into our own use as part of the heritage we are not ashamed of. I am not ashamed of any institution which exists in this country merely because it derives from England””
“Although this independence of the Congo is being proclaimed today by agreement with Belgium, an amicable country, with which we are on equal terms, no Congolese will ever forget that independence was won in struggle, a persevering and inspired struggle carried on from day to day, a struggle, in which we were undaunted by privation or suffering and stunted neither strength nor blood.

It was filled with tears, fire and blood.

Patrice Lumumba, 1960
The Jamaica (Constitution) Order in Council 1962

Made ----- ----- ----- ----- 23rd July 1962
Laid before Parliament ----- ----- ----- ----- 24th July 1962
Coming into Operation:
Section 3(2) of the Order in Council,
and sections 80, 81, 94(1) and (2), 103, 104, 111, 124 and 125 (in part) of the
Constitution ----- ----- ----- ----- 25th July 1962
Remainder ----- ----- ----- ----- Immediately before the 6th August 1962

At the Court at Buckingham Palace, the 23rd day of July, 1962
Present,
THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY IN COUNCIL
Her Majesty, by virtue and in exercise of the powers in that behalf by subsection
(1) of section 5 of the West Indies Act, 1962 or otherwise in Her vested, is
pleased, by and with the advice of Her Privy Council, to order, and it is hereby
ordered, as fol lows:-

1. (1) This Order may be cited as the Jamaica (Constitution) Order in Council
1962.

(2) Subject to the provisions of subsection (2) of section 3 of this Order,
this Order shall come into operation immediately before the appointed day
(in this Order referred to as "the commencement of this Order"): Provided that where by or under this Order the Governor-General has
power to make any appointment or to make any Order or to do any other
thing for the purposes of this Order that power may be exercised by the
Governor of the Colony of Jamaica at any time after the twenty-fourth day
of July, 1962 to such extent as may, in his opinion, be necessary or
expedient to enable the Constitution established by this Order to function
as from the commencement of this Order.

2. (1) The Orders in Council specified in the First Schedule to this Order
(hereinafter referred to as "the existing Orders") are hereby revoked.

(2) Notwithstanding the revocation of the existing Orders the following
Regulations-
From the Colonial Office ‘Migrated Archives’

- Vetting of staff of the University College of the West Indies 1961-62
- Visit of Russian ships to Jamaica 1962
- H A Drayton, Mrs K B Drayton; Dudley J Thompson; security report 1959-60
- Cuba: Cuban activities in Jamaica
- Transhipment of arms and ammunition to Cuba 1959
- Special Branch intelligence and training courses
- Racial antagonism; proposed legislation to control public speeches 1961
- Universal Negro Improvement Association 1960
- Proposed visit to Havana by students of the University of West Indies 1961-62
CHRISTOPHER “DUDUS” COKE OF JAMAICA IN CUSTODY IN NEW YORK CITY, 2011
Westminster Then and Now?
JACK WARNER, FORMER FIFA VICE PRESIDENT WITH KAMLA PERSASD-BISSESSAR, PRIME MINISTER OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO.
What’s wrong

• Winner Take All
• Ethnic polarisation
• Unchecked Executive
• Emasculated Legislative
• Subservient Local Government
• Citizen non-participation
• Corruption
• Money buys Power
Caricom Caribbean among highest regions globally in

- Debt burden
- Migration rates
- Dependence on remittances
- Murder rates
- Vulnerability to climate change
“Make no mistake about it. Our region is in the throes of the greatest crisis since independence.

The spectre of evolving into failed societies is no longer a subject of imagination. “

Dr Kenny Anthony, Prime Minister of St Lucia (2012)
“Our beloved Trinidad and Tobago is in a state of crisis.... The system of governance itself has failed. Our post-colonial state has collapsed.

This is not what our forefathers fought and died for.
“(June 2013)

Mr Ancel Roget, President-General of the Oilfields Workers Trade Union of Trinidad and Tobago
".. we have not managed our sovereignty well and the first requirement of sovereignty is the ability to manage your own affairs and pay your way in the world and we haven't done that well” (2013)

Dr Peter Phillips; Minister of Finance, Jamaica
"(Our) $1.7-trillion debt indicates that we have been taking decisions which were not sustainable, and we were borrowing to meet those obligations....there are issues we should have seen or felt (but) within our own Party we can’t make a move because we feel we goin’ lose some votes””(2013)

Dr Omar Davies, former Finance Minister of Jamaica
Going Forward

- Re-invention of the national project.
- Reconceptualization of sovereignty.
- Reinvention of regionalism.
- Invention of a Caribbean democracy.